

Peer Review File

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Reviewer A: This review article summarizes the history of Traditional Chinese Medicine in Hungary and details the regulation, education and research in the field, which helps future researchers to understand historical facts and trends for the introduction of TCM in Hungary.

Reviewer B

Comment 1: Introduction - Line 35: change “an own” to “its own”

Reply 1: The Author changed the term in question rearranging the sentence to “which was incorporated into the 11th edition of the International Classification of Diseases as a chapter named Traditional Medicine (1).” (see lines 34-36).

Comment 2: Be more specific when discussing mainstream healthcare in the west as there are several countries that still do not utilize TCM and consider TCM theory pseudoscience. It is better accepted, but progress could still be made.

Reply 2: Thank you for this farseeing comment. The Author changed the related sentence in lines 32-33 by deleting “acceptance by the mainstream healthcare system in the west” and replacing it with “this widening interest” (line 32). The Author also added an explanation to the new chapter in line 37 “This new chapter makes possible to record traditional medicine diagnoses in a standardized method worldwide (<https://icd.who.int/en/>)”.

Comment 3: In an academic paper, terms like “our” and “my” are not typically used. It makes the paper sound less credible. Delete them and rephrase the sentence.

Reply 3: The requested changes were made in line 27 “In this review article the Author summarizes”, line 43: “and their connection” line 44: “In this review article the Author” Lines 227-231: “Ajándék Eőry and her colleagues examined the association of regular practice of 3 1 2 Meridian exercise with mental health and well-being (18). In a cross-sectional study they found, that practicing 3 1 2 meridian exercise, at least 3-5 times weekly was associated with higher level of mental and physical well-being and lower level of allostatic overload (18).”

Comment 4: History - Line 57: refer; not refers

Reply 4: The requested correction was done.

Comment 5: Lines 82-90. Every sentence begins with They. It becomes very redundant. Consider revising to make the information more interesting. Using a table would be better. Also I think it should be emphasized that deep needling into organs is contraindicated and should not be performed by healthcare practitioners due to the potential dangers.

Reply 5: The following changes were made: “Medical professionals in Europe as well as in Hungary used one- or two-hand techniques or tube-guided needle insertion into

the most painful part(s) of the body, leaving the needle shorter or longer time in place, until the pain disappeared. They applied needles with different lengths with the purpose to reach the target area even if it was an internal organ (e.g. the stomach, the liver or the heart). Europeans used exclusively local points (or points near by the affected area or organ) because they supposed that a dynamic connection will be formulated between the needle and the affected body part, resulting in a direct reaction. They thought that the nerves (through dynamic affinity to the needle), the vessels and the cellular and interstitial fluid system of the body mediated the effects. Main indications of acupuncture were pain relief of any kind, paralysis, deafness, inflammation of the eye, neurosis (if there wasn't a somatic origin), musculoskeletal conditions, and acute and chronic inflammation of the joints. Acupuncture was recommended after other methods (drugs, cupping, leeches) proved to be ineffective. This method was thought not to be effective in psychiatric diseases, allergy, or purulent inflammation. Treatment-related symptoms and side effects were cramping pain, fainting, traumatic fever in a minority of patients, light bleeding after needle withdrawal or occasionally a small haematoma." Regarding the second part of the comment, I emphasized that this was the European/Hungarian application (in the 19th Century). As this is historical fact and is related to the European concept at that time, I did not make a comment on it.

Comment 6: An important note to make would be to explain who was authorized to perform acupuncture during these times. Was acupuncture performed by anybody? Was it performed by a healthcare professional?

Reply 6: Medical professionals were authorized according to the thesis. I mentioned this in line 82 "Medical professionals in Europe as well as in Hungary"

Comment 7: You discuss acupuncture quite a bit over the first 3 pages, but do not discuss Chinese medicine, which includes qi gong, herbs, tai chi, etc. Where do these modalities come into play?

Reply 7: The Author writes about historical facts and according to the current knowledge there isn't any information on the application of other modalities like qi gong, herbs and tai chi from the 19th Century. Cupping and herbs were applied at that time in European medicine, but they were not of Chinese origin.

Comment 8: "Two divergent directions of the establishment of TCM formulated in the late 1980s in Hungary." This is not a sentence. You need a verb.

Reply 8: The Author changed the sentence to: "Two divergent directions of the establishment of TCM were formulated in the late 1980s in Hungary"

Regulation and practice of Traditional Chinese Medicine in Hungary:
312 Meridian Exercise

Comment 9: Provide some research studies that show that this therapy is effective to support what you are saying.

Reply 9: Reference 18 contains the scientific evidence regarding 3 1 2 Meridian Exercise.

Comment 10: Teaching Traditional Chinese Medicine - Line 162: Change following to followed

Reply 10: The Author did the requested change.

Comment 11: You mention schools that offered TCM degrees. Were these degree programs regulated? Were they deemed credible at the time? Did they require a Bachelor degree?

Reply 11: The title of the mentioned paragraph is “Postgraduate education for specialist medical doctors”. These were official postgraduate courses for Hungarian specialist medical doctors. Only they were allowed to carry out TCM – especially acupuncture – in Hungary between 1997 and 2015.

Comment 12: The outline of the paper is confusing to me. It starts with history and then ends with research. The paper needs to be reorganized to make more sense and help the paper flow more smoothly. I recommend eliminating the research section of the paper. Take the information from the research section and integrate it into the sections of the paper where the research is relevant. Use the research related to the 312 Meridian exercise in that section. Also add the 312 Meridian exercise to the history portion as it is a special technique brought into the region. Add the research information about Ajándok Eőry to the area that he is first discussed.

Reply 12: The Author intend to introduce the past and the present of Traditional Chinese Medicine in Hungary. Therefore, the first part of this review article considers the past, however, the second part focuses on the present which contains the current regulation, teaching, clinical practice and research. The Author’s opinion is that Traditional Chinese Medicine should be approached from an academic point of view that is the reason for the triple division of teaching, practice, and research. However, the Author fully agree with the reviewer that the last section should be more clearly organized. According to this the following changes were made:

1. The Author rearranged the “Postgraduate education” under “Teaching” section cutting those courses which are currently non-available or out-of-date and placed them to the history part under “Present era” “Sources and fault lines”.
2. The Author added a “Clinical Practice of TCM in Hungary” section with “Prevention” and “Teaching and Rehabilitation” subsections.
3. The Author deleted 312 Meridian exercise from the Regulation section and placed it into the “Clinical Practice” section under “Prevention”.

Comment 13: Also the regulation for the practice of TCM therapies requires education first. It makes sense to discuss the introduction of TCM to Hungary before talking about regulation.

Reply 13: The Author wrote about the introduction of TCM in the history section. This precedes regulation. Under “Present era” the first book which was published in Hungarian based on reliable Chinese sources is discussed.

Comment 14: However, at the first part of the regulation section, there should be a discussion of who is eligible to take classes and earn a TCM degree or get a certificate to perform TCM modalities and then discuss how it is regulated by the governmental organizations.

Reply 14: The first paragraph under “Regulation and practice of Traditional Chinese Medicine in Hungary” considers this issue. This is part of regulation.