



The effectiveness of Traditional Chinese Medicine in prenatal anxiety: A meta-analysis

Man-Ting Mao¹, Hoan Thi Nguyen¹, Li-Chi Huang^{2,3}

¹Department of Health Care Science, China Medical University,

²School of Nursing, China Medical University, ³Department of Nursing, China Medical University Children Hospital

Background

Anxiety during pregnancy can negatively impact both mother and fetus, leading to complications like prolonged labor and fetal asphyxia. Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) interventions, including acupuncture and auriculotherapy, have demonstrated efficacy in alleviating anxiety by modulating neurotransmitter levels and promoting physiological equilibrium, thereby improving mental health during the perinatal period.

Objective

This systematic review and meta-analysis aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of TCM in mitigating perinatal anxiety. Additionally, it sought to explore the differential impacts of TCM, perinatal stages, and modes of delivery on anxiety reduction.

Results

- This meta-analysis incorporated 13 RCT studies with 465 experimental and 99 control participants.
- The findings revealed that women receiving acupuncture and auriculotherapy treatments reported significantly lower anxiety scores compared to those in the control group (SMD = -0.65, 95% CI -0.87 to -0.42) (Figure 1).
- Subgroup analysis indicated that auriculotherapy (SMD = -0.69, 95% CI: -1.22 to -0.17) was marginally more effective than acupuncture (SMD = -0.64, 95% CI: -0.93 to -0.36) (Figure 2).
- Furthermore, interventions during pregnancy (SMD = -0.76, 95% CI: -1.40 to -0.11) was slightly effective than those during labor (SMD = -0.62, 95% CI: -0.88 to -0.35).
- Additionally, interventions associated with vaginal delivery (SMD = -0.69, 95% CI: -1.07 to -0.32) were slightly effective than those associated with cesarean-section (SMD = -0.53, 95% CI: -0.92 to -0.15).

Methods

A comprehensive literature search was conducted across PubMed, Embase, Web of Science, the Cochrane Library, and CINAHL for studies published between 2014 to May 2024. Random-effects meta-analyses and subgroup analyses were employed to estimate the pooled effects of various TCM interventions, different perinatal stages.

Conclusion

Auriculotherapy and acupuncture are effective in significantly reducing prenatal anxiety. These findings support the utility of TCM as a viable therapeutic approach for managing perinatal anxiety. Further high-quality randomized controlled trials are needed to confirm these results.

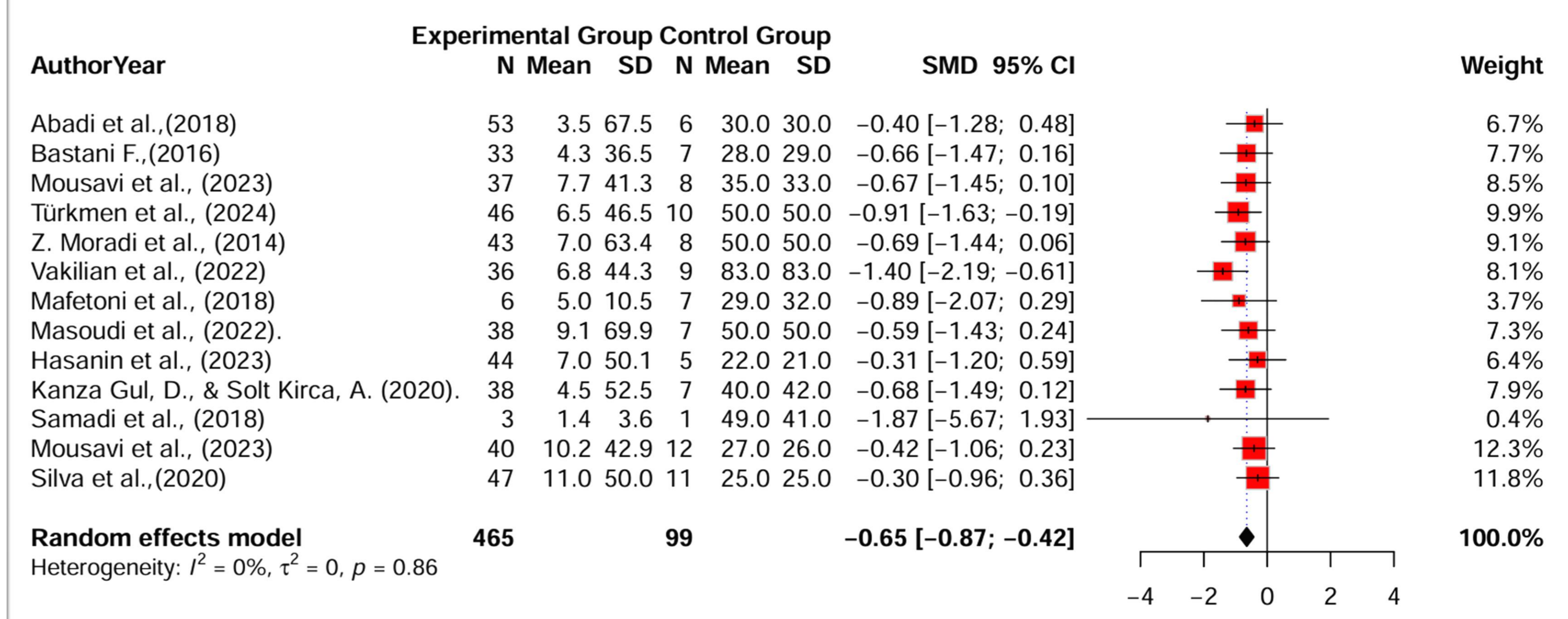


Figure 1. The effective of TCM on Pregnancy and Delivery Anxiety

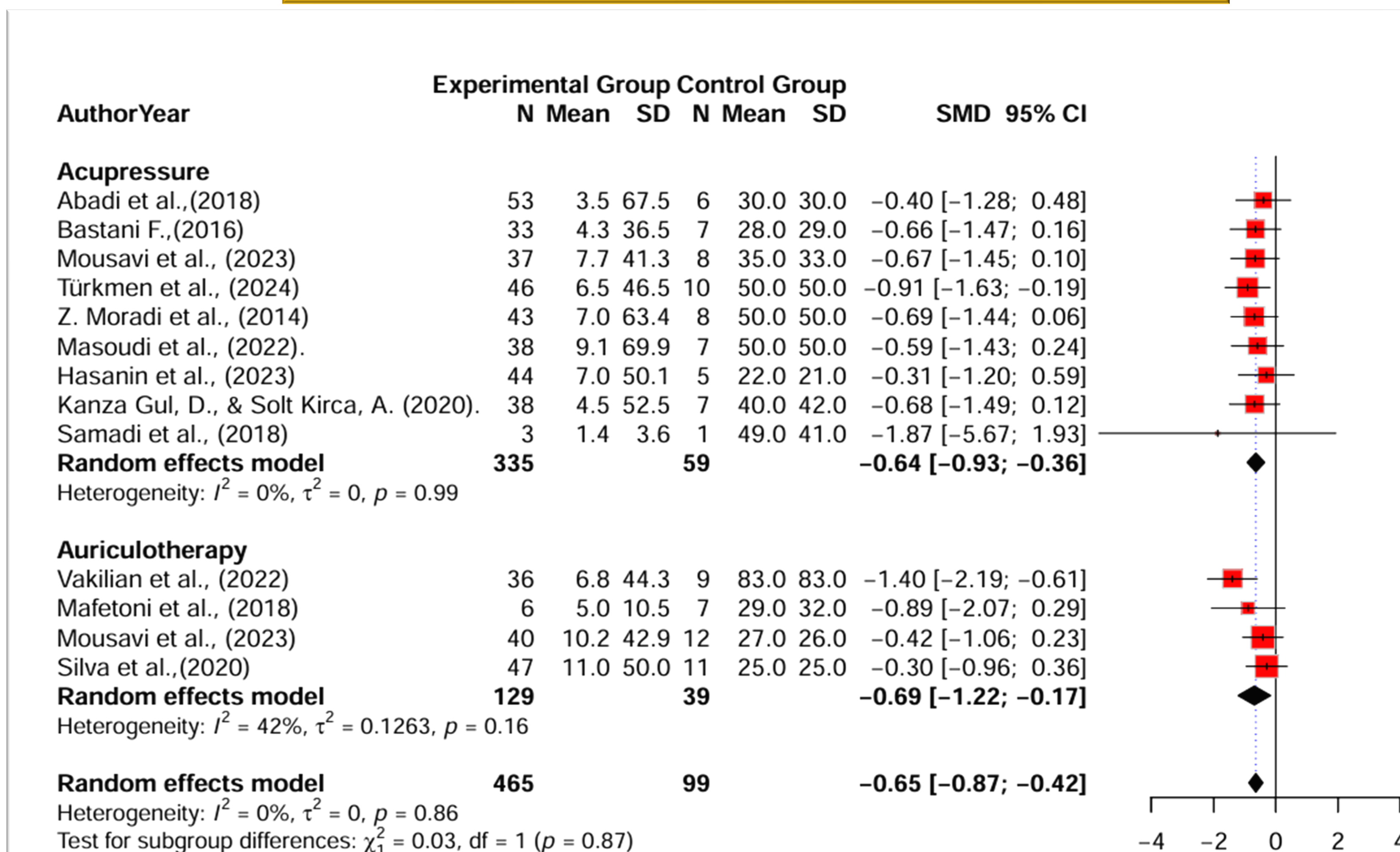


Figure 2 The subgroup analysis of the effective of different TCM on Pregnancy & Delivery Anxiety



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China Medical University

