

Dear Editor:

We are so excited that our manuscript is going to be accepted for publication. The reviewers and editors have provided a lot of valuable comments and instructions. This helped us to improve the manuscript significantly.

The first author has decided to not be an author and thus has been removed.

We have made the required revisions which are marked in yellow. Please let us know if there are any unresolved issues.

Best regards,

Dr. Houcai Wang

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Reviewer #1:

Scientific Quality: Grade C (Good)

Language Quality: Grade B (Minor language polishing)

Conclusion: Accept (General priority)

Specific Comments to Authors: Thank you for such study that deal with a new index that may help in differentiation between TT and IDA. I have a few comments :

1. the type of the study has to be mentioned in the methods.

Answer: Thanks for the suggestion. We have mentioned the study type in the Methods. “This was a retrospective study analyzing the clinical data of the patients diagnosed with IDA or TT during January 2019 through December 2021 at our hospital.”

2. On what bases did authors choose this index ?

Answer: Thanks for the suggestion. We proposed this index to discriminate between IDA and TT based on our clinical experience. We also tried to avoid including RDW which require fancy laboratory instruments. The aim was to design an index that can be applied in underdeveloped countries.

3. Please add, in the section of statistics , the type of ROC curve used in the study. Also mention sample size calculation .

Answer: ROC curves were drawn using a non-parametric method. We have added this in the Statistical analysis. Due to the retrospective design of our study, all the eligible cases had been collected. Therefore, we did not perform a sample size calculation.

4. Gold standard diagnostic methods will need to be mentioned in the tables.

Answer: Thanks for the suggestion. We have added the gold standard diagnostic methods in Table 2.

5. -in the results : Formula of the new index, please rewrite the last paragraph in a more clearer way.

Answer: Thanks for the suggestion. We have rewritten this part.

6. Please revise the english mistakes in the manuscript.

Answer: We have checked the manuscript and corrected all the language mistakes.