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**Katedra Dermatologii, Chorób Przenoszonych Drogą Płciową i Immunodermatologii**

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**Review of doctoral thesis of Dimitre Tanev Dimitrov, M.D.,  
entitled „Stigmatization in Arabic psoriatic patients”.**

Research on psoriasis pathogenesis has increased knowledge on general skin biology. In the past ten years, all informations about understanding of the pathogenesis of psoriasis have been translated into targeted and highly effective therapies providing great insights into the pathogenesis of chronic inflammatory skin diseases. The recurrence of the disease process, even when using the modern therapies is associated with strong stress, which reduces the quality of life of patients suffering from psoriasis and leads to exacerbation of the disease process. In this way arises the mechanism of a „vicious circle” with which the patient, a dermatologist and often a psychologist or a psychiatrist must cope. Psoriasis is a chronic skin disease associated with high levels of psychological distress and considerable life impact. Feelings of shame and stigmatization can lead to avoidance of social activity and low self-estimation. An important aspect of this burden is the experience of stigmatization. While stigmatization is known to be disabling and stressful for patients, little is known about its correlates, and effective interventions are lacking. Bearing in mind

the significant reduction in the quality of life of patients suffering from psoriasis, the subject of research undertaken by Dr. Dimitre Dimitrov is very interesting. The author's research and clinical interest are consistent with most current problems of contemporary psychodermatology.

The PhD dissertation presented for review is a series of thematically related publications. The material for analysis consists of four papers (two review and two original) describing the available instruments for assessing stigmatization in dermatology and their practical use in clinical practice in patients suffering from psoriasis. In all articles Dr. Dimitre Dimitrov is the first author.

First article entitled „Instruments to assess stigmatization in dermatology” appeared in *Advances in Hygiene and Experimental Medicine* (Impact Factor 0,783). The aim of the study was to review the available instruments that can be utilized to measure the stigmatization level among patients with dermatological diseases. In this publication, the author emphasized the role of the correct selection of disease-specific instruments in order to obtain optimal results for further analysis.

In second review publication entitled „Stigmatization in dermatology with a special focus on psoriatic patients” which also appeared in *Advances in Hygiene and Experimental Medicine*, the author analyzed and described current understanding and knowledge about stigmatization proces in dermatological patients, especially those suffering from psoriasis.

Third publication entitled „Arabic language skin-related stigmatization instruments: translation and validation proces” (Impact Factor 1,262) appeared in *Advances in Clinical and Experimental Medicine*. It is an original article and the aim was to create and validate Arabic language versions of stigmatization instruments - the 6-item Stigmatization Scale and the Feelings of Stigmatization Questionnaire. Author revealed a strong correlation between total score of the 6-item Stigmatization Scale and DLQI. Significant negative moderate correlation was documented between the Feelings of Stigmatization Questionnaire and DLQI. Moreover, both stigmatization

instruments correlated significantly with each other. The conclusion was that developed Arabic language versions of the abovementioned stigmatization instruments can be successfully used in daily clinical practice as well as in clinical research.

The last, original article entitled „Stigmatization in Arabic psoriatic patients in the United Arab Emirates-a cross sectional study” appeared in *Advances in Dermatology and Allergology* (Impact Factor 1,471). The goal of the study was to evaluate the stigmatization level in an Arabic population of psoriatic individuals. Author showed that stigmatization is common among psoriatic Arabic patients and postulated that measurement of stigmatization level could contribute to the holistic therapeutic approach of such patients.

The total score for the articles contained in doctoral thesis submitted for review is 4,299, which confirm the high value of the evaluated publications and allows the admission of Dr. Dimitre Dimitrov to further stages of the PhD procedures. Except of a few editing errors, I did not find any major essential and methodical mistakes. The methods used in all articles, statistical evaluation of the results obtained and the discussions have already been reviewed by journals’ reviewers and I also have no comments on them.

Overall, I assess doctoral thesis of Dr. Dimitre Dimitrov positively. The full implementation of the objective based on the analysis of the research material, the correct application of research methods and statistical tests, indicate that the author of the above publications is a person able to plan and conduct research studies, formulate conclusions and correctly discuss the results obtained.

The doctoral thesis complies with the conditions set out in the Act on scientific degrees and scientific title as well as on scientific degrees and scientific title in the field of art (Dz.U. nr. 65 poz. 595, 14/MAR/2003) and Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education on the detailed procedure and conditions for performing doctoral thesis, habilitation thesis and proceedings for giving the title of full professor (30/SEP/2016). In relation to the above, I have the

honor to submit to the High Council of the Faculty of Medicine Postgraduate Education of the Piastów Śląskich Medical University in Wrocław application for admission Dr. Dimitre Dimitrov to the next stages of the doctoral procedures. I also apply the doctoral thesis distinction.

*Yours faithfully*

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