

## OPINION

By Assoc. Prof. Emilia Petrova Georgieva, PhD,  
Vice Principal "Career Development, Quality and Accreditation"  
Medical College - Varna to  
Medical University "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov" Varna

**Subject:** procedure for the defense of a dissertation work and the awarding of an educational and scientific degree "Doctor" to **Muzhgyan Ismail Sabri**, a full-time doctoral student in the doctoral program "Health Care Management" in the field of higher education 7. Health care and sports, professional direction 7.4 Public health, in the Sliven Branch of the Medical University - Varna on the topic: "Cervical cancer prevention: assessment of awareness among healthy and sick women".

**Scientific supervisors:** Associate Professor Diana Dimitrova, Ph.D.

Prof. Dr. Stefan Ivanov, MD, PhD, DSc

### 1. Descriptive characteristics of the dissertation work

Muzhgyan Ismail Sabri's dissertation work contains 175 standard pages, it is structured in five chapters according to the standard requirements, including: Introduction, Literature review, Aim, tasks, methodology and organization of the study, Results and discussion related to the prevention of cervical cancer, evaluation of awareness in healthy and sick women, Strategy for increasing women's awareness and health behavior regarding the prevention of CC, Conclusions, Contributions, Recommendations and publications related to the dissertation work. It is richly illustrated with 87 figures, 15 tables and 5 appendices. The literary reference includes 182 literary sources, of which 30 are in Cyrillic and 152 are in Latin alphabet.

### 2. Assessment of topicality of the topic

According to statistics, cervical cancer is the second most common cancer amongst women aged 15-59 in Bulgaria. Every year, more than 1,254 new cases are diagnosed in our country and about 200-300 women die. According to data from the Bulgarian National Cancer Registry, the negative statistics for cervical carcinoma are well-known, very startling and unfortunately, completely real. Every year, 270,000 women worldwide die from cervical cancer, one woman every 2 minutes. According to data from the Ministry of Health in Europe, this happens every 18 minutes. In Bulgaria, one woman dies every day and 3 new cases of the disease are diagnosed. The most frightening thing about these indicators is that cervical carcinoma is the only one that is completely preventable and curable if diagnosed in time. The disease is caused by the human papillomavirus (HPV) and is more common in young women, many of whom have never given birth. In addition to age, additional risk factors are early onset of sexual life, frequent change of sexual partners, sexually transmitted diseases, compromised immunity. Annual prophylactic examinations remain the only way to detect the disease early.

Timely diagnosis of cervical cancer and successful treatment of precancers is possible only through regular gynecological examinations. In recent years, a primary prevention program has been introduced that includes HPV vaccines. They are included in the list of recommended immunizations (according to Ordinance No. 15 of 2005 on immunizations in the Republic of Bulgaria (promulgated, SG No. 45 of 2005) and are recommended for girls aged 10 and 13, with



the possibility to be applied to women up to 25 years of age.

### **3. Literature review**

The PhD student conducts an analytical review of the literature, looking at the prevalence of CC, etiology and risk factors, diagnosis and diagnostics of the disease. The causes and risk factors and criteria for classifying CC have been thoroughly examined. In a logical sequence, Muzhgian Ismail Sabri examines the types of prevention of CC. The experience and knowledge of the doctoral student contribute to the correct and thorough analysis of the role of the midwife in prevention and her competence according to the legislative framework. A comparative analysis of the awareness and health culture of women from different countries and different religions was made. The media means aimed at raising awareness among the community are indicated. The need to increase awareness, resp. the knowledge of women of all ages, which will help change attitudes and health behaviors related to their sexual and reproductive health. The structured literature review shows the broad competencies of the doctoral student in the field of the considered problem.

### **4. Methodology of the research**

The established goal and tasks are specifically formulated and reflect precisely the research work carried out by Muzhgian Sabri. The PhD student uses a wide range of methods adequate to achieve the goal. Two hypotheses are presented. The subject, object and scope of the study are well described. The structure and content of the developed toolkit are subject to the specifics of the collected information from the respective group of respondents. The methods are selected and described in detail. Documentary, statistical and sociological methods were used. A high degree of correspondence was achieved between the five tasks set, the number of surveyed respondents and the results obtained. The research toolkit was developed by the doctoral student and includes a survey card for the opinion of female students regarding their knowledge and attitudes about cervical cancer. A survey on the opinion of women with CC regarding their knowledge and attitudes about the disease. Questionnaire surveying the opinion of healthy women regarding their knowledge and attitudes about cervical cancer. The methodology of the dissertation work includes traditional and original methods specially developed for the study, meets modern requirements, prepares the doctoral student for the research work and is a guarantee of the reliability of the obtained results.

### **5. Results and Discussion**

The results of Muzhgian Sabri's own research are presented in the third chapter of the dissertation. They are grouped into five thematic sections following the chronology of the tasks and applied methods. The contribution of the conducted survey is determined by its scale: it includes 600 respondents, divided into three groups; it was held in three regional cities of Shumen, Veliko Tarnovo and Varna. The socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents were analyzed. The results obtained from the responses of the respondents provide original scientific information about the awareness and attitudes of the respondents about cervical cancer. Assessment of risk factors and behavior of women with CC and analysis of data related to health behavior. The survey data show that health behavior is determined by demographic factors, financial status, level of health culture, awareness, etc. The lowest level of awareness about CC is observed in the group of young women (students), and women living in rural areas are the least informed. The results regarding the risk factors related to CC show that the surveyed women lead



a risky lifestyle (smoke regularly, started having sex before 18, do not use or only sometimes use a condom, do not have the practice of regular prophylactic examinations). The detailed analysis of the group of female students shows that those studying in the "Healthcare" field are better informed about CC and HPV vaccination.

Based on the literature review and the results obtained in the fourth chapter, a strategy for increasing women's awareness about the prevention of CC is proposed.. It is based on the fact that the natural history of the disease provides opportunities for prevention throughout the life cycle.

The scientific-theoretical contribution is the developed integrated strategy with information and materials targeting common risk factors for an effective and meaningful way to reach the most people, as well as the considered midwife competencies in the context of the prevention of malignant diseases of the reproductive system and raising awareness among young women. A practical-applied contribution is the analyzed and compared awareness and behavior among young, sick and healthy women, as well as an assessment of gaps in women's awareness of the risk factors, prevention and treatment of cervical cancer. Strategic guidelines and an action plan are proposed to increase women's awareness and health behavior regarding the prevention of CC.

The formulated recommendations and contributions of the dissertation work were made on the basis of the self-gathered data from the scientific study. The dissertation is written in good language, precise in terms of terminology.

The content and quality of the abstract meets the requirements of the Regulations of the Ministry of Education - Varna, faithfully and adequately reflecting the main results of the study.

The dissertation work is the personal work of the doctoral student, and I accept the formulated contributions and obtained results as her personal credit.

**In conclusion**, I believe that the dissertation work of Muzhgyan Ismail Sabri topic "Cervical cancer prevention: assessment of awareness in healthy and sick women" is of high scientific and practical value, which contributes to increasing women's awareness and health behavior regarding prevention of CC. Based on the overall assessment of the documentation provided to me, I consider that Myuzhyan Ismail Sabri fully meets the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Rules for its Application and the Rules for the Development of the Academic Staff at the MU "Prof. Dr. P. Stoyanov" Varna.

I give my positive vote for awarding Myuzhyan Ismail Sabri an educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in the field of higher education 7. Health care and sports, in professional direction 7.4 Public health and scientific specialty "Health Care Management".

03.10.2022

Prepared the opinion:



Assoc. Prof. Emilia Petrova Georgieva, PhD