

Reviewer's opinion of doctoral thesis/dissertation

IDENTIFICATION DATA

Thesis name: Tobacco control in the CR and Canada aimed especially at socioeconomic, political and environmental aspects

Author's name: Keely Gabrielle Fraser, MSc. PDt.

Faculty: Charles University, First Faculty of Medicine

Thesis reviewer: Michala Lustigová, PhD

Faculty: Charles University, Faculty of Science

EVALUATION OF DOCTORAL THESIS

Submitted doctoral thesis by Kelly Gabrielle Fraser, MSc. PDt. consists of broad introductory commentary and four selected case studies/articles focused on tobacco control (TC) aspects in Czechia. These case studies/articles were already published in journals with IF and present just part of the author's publication activity.

The theme of this doctoral thesis is relevant and topical. Smoking persists as the main health-related risk factor, and smoking-related morbidity and mortality are still high among the Czech population. The author shows the large gap in tobacco control between Canada and Czechia and the insufficient tobacco control and treatment gap in tobacco dependence in Czechia.

The thesis is divided into two parts, the author's commentary to solve the issue and the presentation of the case studies/articles. The author's commentary provides a comparison of tobacco treatment strategies and policies as well as smoking cessation support in Canada and Czechia. Further, the author emphasizes that based on her research problematic zones of TC in Czechia were revealed, namely the accessibility of treatment, the intervention practices among general and critically ill populations, and the lack of organizational capacity for TC. Subjectively, what I missed in that part of the thesis is a clear definition of research questions and closer coherence and references to case studies.

The selected case studies/articles are presented in the form as they were published and are shortly introduced. As the case studies/articles had already undergone review, I would like to emphasize that the author used several sources and types of data and different methods in her research. Namely, she used self-collected cross-sectional survey data on Czech national capacity on tobacco control, longitudinal data on smoking cessation from the Centre for Tobacco Dependent Patients, and cross-sectional data on patients in the National lung transplantation program. That is something I see as a crucial part of the author's knowledge in biomedicine and epidemiology. The author's ability to quantify the problem and provide the evidence is critical for public health research, health promotion, including prevention.

As summarised in conclusion, the selected case studies/articles demonstrate the critical situation in tobacco controls strategies, underestimating the problem in Czechia at all levels (from the state and non-governmental organizations to medical professional societies), and the treatment gap in tobacco dependence.

OVERALL EVALUATION

The thesis brought an original contribution to the knowledge of tobacco control in Czechia. The author demonstrated a sufficient understanding of the research topic and the ability to scientifically answer the research questions.

Thus, I recommend the submitted doctoral thesis/dissertation to be accepted for the defence and based on a successful defence, that Keely Gabrielle Fraser, MSc. PDt. awarded the academic title of doctor, abbreviation PhD.

In Prague, May 13th, 2021

Michala Lustigová, PhD

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QUESTION FOR DEFENCE

Your findings provide empirical evidence on a large gap in the treatment of tobacco dependence in Czechia and tobacco control more generally. You point out that there is a need to build a comprehensive and sustainable national strategy for multi-sectoral tobacco control. My question is if there is a chance to improve the situation by “bottom-up” actions?