

# Autoimmune Liver Diseases: The Value of Geographic Differences

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**Cite this article as:** Beenet L. Autoimmune liver diseases: The value of geographic differences. *Turk J Gastroenterol.* 2022;33(3):271.

Dear Editor,

I read with great interest the very interesting study by Demir et al. who determined the scientific status of original articles related to autoimmune liver diseases (AILD) from Turkey.<sup>1</sup>

This topic is of great relevance since AILD are relatively rare and the difficulty of diagnosis and less knowledge of these diseases makes their epidemiology not yet widely known. In particular, the epidemiological data are poor in Turkey and expanding the knowledge on this topic is very relevant.

The authors searched the Web of Science database, the Science Citation Index Expanded, and the Social Sciences Citation Index by using the keywords "autoimmune hepatitis," "primary biliary cholangitis/primary biliary cirrhosis," and "primary sclerosing cholangitis" in conjunction with "Turkey."

Forty-five original articles were analyzed, 9 of which were published from 1997 to 2008 and 36 of which were published from 2009 to 2019. The authors found that the overall number and quality of papers related to AILD in Turkey are low and therefore more epidemiological research projects, both prospective and multicenter, are required to progress the knowledge of AILD.

I would like to add an additional perspective that I believe is crucial in the research and knowledge of AILD. In particular, it would be crucial that the studies from various geographical areas would also report data on the predisposing genetic human leukocyte antigen as well as a detailed analysis of the different autoantibodies profile

that remain the pivotal serological markers for the screening of patients with raised liver enzymes and those that are included in the diagnostic criteria.<sup>2-5</sup>

Therefore, it would be crucial that the authors suggest promoting particular interest to genetic and autoantibody profiles in the prospective and multicenter studies in order to verify whether AILD in Turkey is similar or different from the diseases in other geographical areas.

**Peer-review:** Externally peer-reviewed.

**Author Contributions:** Supervision – L.B.; Writing Manuscript – L.B.

**Declaration of Interests:** The authors have no conflict of interest to declare.

**Funding:** The authors declared that this study has received no financial support.

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Received: March 9, 2021 Accepted: June 14, 2021 Available Online Date: January 25, 2022

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DOI: 10.5152/tjg.2022.21196