

## REVIEWER'S REPORT

Manuscript No.: IJAR-53367

Date: 18-08-2025

**Title: Beyond the Surface: How Skin Disorders Affect Mental Health in Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder"**

### Recommendation:

**Accept as it is .....YES.....**

Accept after minor revision.....

Accept after major revision .....

Do not accept (*Reasons below*) .....

Rating	Excel.	Good	Fair	Poor
Originality			✓	
Techn. Quality		✓		
Clarity		✓		
Significance			✓	

Reviewer Name: Dr Aamina

### Reviewer's Comment for Publication.

### Abstract and Scope:

The abstract introduces the central focus of the manuscript: the interplay between autism spectrum disorder (ASD), inflammatory processes, skin conditions, and psychosocial health outcomes. It effectively frames the study as an exploration of the intersection between neurodevelopmental pathology, dermatological manifestations, and mental health. The outlined connection between systemic inflammation and dermatologic conditions such as atopic dermatitis and eczema highlights the biological underpinnings of the issue. The emphasis on behavioral and sensory processing challenges adds depth, situating dermatological treatment within the broader context of autism care.

### Introduction and Contextualization:

The introduction situates ASD within a global framework, using epidemiological evidence to illustrate its growing prevalence. The citation of data from the ADDM Network and meta-analyses enhances credibility and underscores the urgency of addressing comorbidities that impact quality of life. By focusing on skin disorders, the manuscript identifies an often-overlooked dimension of ASD-related health challenges. This context helps justify the study's relevance in both clinical and psychosocial domains.

## **REVIEWER'S REPORT**

### **Biological and Clinical Dimensions:**

The manuscript explains how elevated neuroinflammation, abnormal cytokine levels, and astrocyte activation in individuals with ASD contribute to systemic and dermatologic vulnerabilities. The biological mechanisms linking ASD to skin dysfunction are clearly delineated, showing how chronic inflammation contributes to conditions like eczema. Furthermore, the challenges in treatment due to sensory processing difficulties and behavioral rigidity are well articulated, reinforcing the clinical complexities faced by healthcare providers.

### **Psychosocial Implications:**

The discussion extends beyond biological aspects to the psychosocial impact of skin disorders in individuals with ASD. Issues such as stigma, visible skin lesions, and chronic discomfort are directly linked to anxiety, low self-esteem, and diminished quality of life. The identification of a feedback loop—where inflammation, skin disorders, and behavioral challenges interact to exacerbate psychological distress—is a key strength of the manuscript, providing a holistic understanding of the problem.

### **Clinical Relevance:**

The paper stresses the importance of provider adaptability and communication in managing patients with ASD and dermatologic conditions. It highlights how clinical encounters require sensitivity to behavioral differences and family dynamics, positioning healthcare practitioners as central figures in shaping not only treatment outcomes but also psychosocial well-being.

### **Clarity and Organization:**

The manuscript is coherently structured, beginning with prevalence and context, moving into biological mechanisms, and then discussing psychosocial implications. The logical flow ensures that technical details are integrated into a broader narrative about quality of life and holistic care.

### **Overall Contribution:**

This manuscript provides an insightful exploration of how dermatologic conditions intersect with mental health in the context of autism spectrum disorder. By combining epidemiological data, biological mechanisms, clinical challenges, and psychosocial consequences, it paints a multidimensional picture of the issue. The focus on an underexplored area in autism research makes the work significant for clinicians, researchers, and policy stakeholders alike.

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### **Overall Assessment:**

The paper succeeds in integrating biological, clinical, and psychosocial perspectives on the relationship between autism spectrum disorder and skin disorders. It is a thoughtful, well-organized contribution that highlights an important and underrecognized aspect of autism care.

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