

Social Factors Appear To Be More Relevant in People with Greater Severity of Chronic Low Back Pain

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Background

Low Back Pain (LBP) is the leading cause of years lived with disability. It is estimated that 40% of LBP people develop chronic symptoms. The management of chronic LBP has shifted from a biomedical to a Biopsychosocial (BPS) approach. Evidence suggests an association between pain severity and BPS factors. This association appears to be more complex in low- and middle-income countries, considering that pain is an individual experience and influenced by the context.

The aim of this study is to analyze the association between BPS factors and pain severity in Brazilians with chronic LBP.

Methods

- Cross-sectional study
- 422 participants chronic LBP 18 years or older
- Movimento Project Department of Physiotherapy (UFC, Brazil)
- Linear and logistic regression analysis

Outcome:

Pain Severity

Numerical Rating Scale - NRS(0-10)
Greater LBP severity: NRS > 6

Exposure:

Biological:

sex, age, duration of pain, comorbidities, body mass index (BMI) and mobility.

Psychological:

Fear of movement (Tampa Scale for Kinesiophobia).

Social and Lifestyle:

income, schooling, employment, marital status, smoking, alcoholism, pain medications, physical activity, sedentary behavior (IPAQ)

Results

Female – 75.8%
Age – 49.38 (± 16.55)
NRS - 5.05 (± 2.73)
Greater LBP severity – 46.1%
Pain medication - 0.98 (± 1.0)

Table 1. Association between pain severity and BPS outcomes.

	β	95% CI	p-value
Schooling	-0.13	-1.28 – -0.95	0.02
Sedentary Behavior	-0.14	-0.20 - -0.02	0.01
BMI	0.15	0.02 – 0.13	0.01

* Multivariate Regression analysis (stepwise method) (R²=0.12; p<0.0001; n=305). Medications as the control variable. SPSS statistical software 22.0.

Table 2. Association between greater severity of chronic LBP and BPS outcomes.

	OR	95% CI	p-value
Gender	0.53	0.30 – 0.93	0.01
Schooling	0.54	0.34 – 0.87	0.02

* Logistic Regression analysis (stepwise method) (X²=30.02; p<0.0001; Nagelkerke R²=0.13); n=311). Medications as the control variable. SPSS statistical software 22.0.

Conclusion

Pain severity is associated with biopsychosocial factors in Brazilians with chronic LBP. **The interaction between sedentary behavior, BMI, and schooling seems to be a way to explain the severity of pain.** Social factors such as schooling have a greater influence on Brazilians with greater severity of chronic LBP.

Relevance to Patient Care

The assessment of social factors seems to be especially relevant in people with greater pain severity. These findings show the need for health, education and political efforts to implement a more efficient approach to manage chronic LBP.



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Ethical permission:

This study was approved by the Ethics Committee of the Federal University of Ceará. (3.232.102).

References

