

Relationship between catastrophizing and pain intensity in university students with chronic nonspecific low back pain

Ana Julia Juliano de Oliveira¹, Giulia Alencar Romano², Maria Eduarda Santiago de Oliveira Pires³, Ana Luísa Sousa Tatesuji⁴, Denis Carlos dos Santos⁵, Jéssica Kirsch Micheletti⁶, Berlis Ribeiro dos Santos Menossi⁷, Fabrício José Jassi⁸, João Paulo Freitas⁹.

ABSTRACT

Low back pain is pain in the posterior aspect of the body between the lower margin of the twelfth rib and the lower gluteal folds, and can radiate to the lower limbs. Classified by the American Physical Therapy Association's Clinical Practice Guideline as acute (up to six weeks) or chronic (more than six weeks). Studies show that 41.2% of university students suffer from low back pain exacerbated by biopsychosocial factors, such as catastrophizing, affecting their daily life. Therefore, the aim of this study was to identify whether there is a relationship between catastrophizing and the intensity of chronic nonspecific low back pain in university students. This is an analytical cross-sectional study, approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of the State University of Northern Paraná (Opinion: 6,082,631; CAAE 68394522.3.0000.8123). The sample consisted of 40 students from the State University of Northern Paraná (UENP), Jacarezinho campus - PR. All data collection took place in person at the university's physiotherapy clinic. Initially, the intensity of low back pain was measured using the Numerical Pain Scale (NDS) and later the *Pain Catastrophizing Scale* (PCS) was applied, which would evaluate catastrophizing of university students with the presence of nonspecific chronic low back pain (CLBP). The study included 40 university students with a mean age of 21 years, 70% of whom were women. Previous studies have shown that psychological aspects influence pain intensity and disability more than anatomical factors, corroborating the data found in our study, since there was a significant (moderate) correlation ($p \leq 0.05$) between pain intensity and the B-PCS questionnaire score, suggesting that the higher the pain intensity, the higher the level of catastrophizing of university students. Thus, it is concluded that catastrophizing is related to pain intensity in university students with chronic nonspecific low back pain. These findings highlight the importance of addressing psychosocial factors in the treatment of patients with low back pain.

Keywords: Low back pain, Catastrophizing and university student.

¹ State University of Northern Paraná (UENP)

² State University of Northern Paraná (UENP)

³ State University of Northern Paraná (UENP)

⁴ State University of Northern Paraná (UENP)

⁵ State University of Northern Paraná (UENP)

⁶ State University of Northern Paraná (UENP)

⁷ State University of Northern Paraná (UENP)

⁸ State University of Northern Paraná (UENP)

⁹ State University of Northern Paraná (UENP)