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Associated lifestyle factors for knee pain among patients attending the orthopedic clinic at Teaching Hospital Jaffna

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Introduction & Objectives: Knee pain is a common musculoskeletal complaint that affects mobility and daily functioning. Lifestyle-related factors may influence knee pain severity, but evidence from Sri Lankan populations is limited. Therefore, this study aimed to assess the association between lifestyle factors and knee pain severity among patients attending the orthopedic clinic at Teaching Hospital Jaffna.

Materials & Methods: A cross-sectional study was conducted among 426 patients attending the orthopedic clinic, Teaching Hospital Jaffna, using systematic random sampling. Ethical clearance was obtained from the Ethics Review Committee, Faculty of Medicine, University of Jaffna (ERC/151/4.2.1/NUR/09). Data were collected using an interviewer-administered questionnaire. Knee pain severity was assessed using a Visual Analogue Scale (VAS). Logistic regression adjusted for age and sex was performed to identify lifestyle factors associated with knee pain severity.

Results: The patients' ages ranged from 19 to 93 years, with a mean age of 58.47 years (SD=14.832). The majority were females (59.4%). Nearly half of the patients (48.8%) reported a monthly income of 5,000–10,000 Sri Lankan Rupees. 53.3% of patients suffered from severe knee pain. Severity of knee pain was significantly associated with work (adjusted OR 2.25, 95% CI 1.50 - 3.37, $p=0.0005$), and walk/run or exercise (adjusted OR 3.22, 95% CI 2.14 - 4.84, $p=0.0005$). Severity of knee pain was not significantly associated with climbing more than one floor a day (adjusted OR 0.61, 95% CI 0.27 – 1.39, $p=0.2$), footwear (adjusted OR 1.55, 95% CI 0.69 – 3.35, $p=0.2$), smoking (adjusted OR 1.38, 95% CI 0.74 - 2.56, $p=0.3$) and alcohol (adjusted OR 1.46, 95% CI 0.78 - 2.70, $p=0.2$).

Conclusions: Work-related activities and physical exercise were significantly associated with knee pain severity. These findings highlight the importance of considering occupational and physical activity-related factors in knee pain management. Further research is needed to guide lifestyle-based interventions.

Keywords: Knee pain, Lifestyle factors, Orthopedic, Physical activity