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Health-related factors associated with knee pain among patients attending the orthopedic clinic in Teaching Hospital Jaffna

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Introduction & Objectives: Knee pain is associated with disability, reduced mobility, impaired daily functioning, and poorer quality of life. Identifying factors associated with pain severity is essential for improving clinical outcomes. Therefore, this study aimed to assess health-related factors associated with 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 at Teaching Hospital Jaffna, recruited using systematic random sampling. Data were collected using interviewer-administered questionnaires. Knee pain severity was assessed using the Visual Analogue Scale (VAS). Logistic regression was used to adjust for age and sex and identify factors associated with knee pain severity. Ethical approval was obtained from the Ethics Review Committee, Faculty of Medicine, University of Jaffna (ERC/151/4.2.1/NUR/09).

Results: A total of 426 patients were included in this study. Among them, 41.3% (n = 176) were male. The mean age was 58.47 ± 14.83 years. The highest level of education for most participants was up to the Ordinary level (48.6%). The majority (91.8%) reported moderate or severe pain, with around half of them experiencing knee pain bilaterally (50.2%). Family history of knee pain (adjusted OR 2.18, 95% CI 1.24 - 3.82, $p = 0.006$), previous injection treatment in the knee joint (adjusted OR 1.97, 95% CI 1.19 - 3.27, $p = 0.008$), Instability in knee joint (adjusted OR 2.11, 95% CI 1.34 – 3.31, $p = 0.001$), having pain on both knees (adjusted OR 1.76, 95% CI 1.06-2.92, $p = 0.02$) and history of fractures in the affected leg knee (adjusted OR 1.73, 95% CI 1.08 – 2.75, $p = 0.02$) were significantly associated with severity of knee pain.

Conclusions: Several health-related and knee-specific factors were associated with knee pain severity. Considering these factors during clinical assessment may support appropriate pain management and help reduce disability.

Keywords: Knee pain, Health-related factors, Orthopedic