An individual’s ethnocultural beliefs and values play a significant role in defining the chronic pain experience

INTRODUCTION:
- Chronic pain is a major global health issue, affecting 20% of the US population.1,2
- Despite its prevalence, it is difficult to treat, precisely because of its multifaceted nature.3
- Contributing factors can include a variety of individual biopsychosocial factors including demographics, lifestyle behaviors, attitudes and beliefs, past trauma, and clinical data.1
- Relatedly, we know that one’s ethnocultural background plays a key role in acute pain as well, and that cultural competence is crucial when caring for others.
- Can ethnoculturally-nuanced approaches be applied to PT to foster greater patient engagement and improved outcomes and if so, what do these approaches look like?
- We hypothesize that yes, ethnoculturally-specific treatment can improve patient outcomes compared to general physical therapy treatment.

METHODS:
- Presenters: Will Danse SPT, Jackie Schloemp SPT, and Conner Anderson SPT
- The importance of culturally diverse values and beliefs within chronic pain management in physical therapy and their impact on patient outcomes.
- More research needs to be conducted to establish specific objective tools for physical therapists to use with patients to effectively address cultural values/beliefs in chronic pain treatment.

RESULTS:
- Only 2 of 19 articles reviewed looked specifically at chronic pain interventions with an ethnocultural lens. Current lack of RCTs means making conclusions is difficult.
- Brady et al. 2018 found that PT treatment tailored to cultural beliefs and practices of three CALD communities improved treatment attendance, adherence, and completion.
- PRISM and PRISM+ found to have moderate to good reliability and validity for pain assessment within three CALD communities.
- Seven sociocultural themes found to be most prominent within the chronic pain experience and which PTs can use to better understand their patients with diverse backgrounds (see image 1).

CONCLUSIONS:
- Culture impacts the chronic pain experience and should be addressed by the physical therapist.
- Providers can address this by acknowledging cultural identity throughout treatment and by participating in bias training to optimize equitable care.

LIMITATIONS:
- Only studies in English were chosen for review.
- Complex nature of chronic pain experience and thus wide scope of current literature along with minimal research on tools specific to ethnocultural care.

REFERENCES:

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