



**An exploration of how Portuguese individuals with non-specific chronic low back pain disorder understand and make sense of their condition**

The research carried out within the area of non-specific chronic low back pain (CLBP) has demonstrated that the individuals' cognitions about pain, which include what they think and how they make sense of pain, influence their response to it. Simultaneously, cultural values embedded in each society have a significant influence on individuals' interpretation and response to pain.

Based on the assumption that understanding the individuals' cognitions about pain can facilitate the design of approaches closer to their needs, and considering the low volume of research produced in Portugal within this area, this study aims to explore how Portuguese individuals with non-specific CLBP disorder understand and make sense of their condition. The knowledge produced by this study will contribute to a better understanding of Portuguese individuals' experiences of having non-specific CLBP disorder and will possibly inform recommendations to help improve non-specific CLBP management in Portugal.

The study has been conducted through the "lens" of the interpretative paradigm, which means that the researcher has been focused on developing a deep understanding about the interactions between participants with non-specific CLBP disorder and their contexts in making sense of their disorder.

Individuals with this disorder referred to physiotherapy in Portuguese health centres have been recruited purposefully, according to a range of inclusion and exclusion criteria. Semi-structured one to one interviews have been carried out in order to collect Portuguese individuals' accounts about their experiences of having non-specific CLBP disorder. The interpretative phenomenological analysis has been employed to collect and analyse the data.

This presentation provides an overview of this study, outlining the preliminary findings as well as the researcher's reflection over the process and the considerations for future work.

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