

ANALYSIS OF STUDIES ON THE EPIDEMIOLOGICAL AND CLINICAL PROFILE OF PATIENTS TREATED BY PHYSIOTHERAPY: LITERATURE REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Epidemiology investigates the distribution and determinants of diseases, with a view to prevention and control. This research addresses the integration between epidemiological profile and physiotherapy practices, examining different clinical contexts. The objective is to explore how epidemiological profiles influence physiotherapy intervention strategies, based on a descriptive and quantitative literature review of articles published between 2008 and 2019. The aim was to evaluate the epidemiological profile of patients in different physiotherapy care contexts and discuss the importance of physiotherapy in these scenarios. The review analyzed studies of patient records in health institutions, such as hospitals, clinics, and meatpacking plants. Articles that presented relevant epidemiological and clinical data were selected, with specific inclusion and exclusion criteria. The studies showed that burn patients are at high risk of nosocomial infections, highlighting the need for physical therapy to prevent complications. Meatpacking plant workers reported musculoskeletal disorders, highlighting the importance of preventive physical therapy. Patients in higher education institutions presented degenerative conditions, predominantly among older women. Physical therapy is crucial for the rehabilitation and prevention of chronic conditions and complications in different contexts. The analysis of epidemiological profiles should guide physical therapy practices, adapting interventions to the specific needs of the populations served. Future studies are needed to improve intervention strategies and optimize patients' quality of life.

Keywords: epidemiological profile, physical therapy, prevention, rehabilitation.

INTRODUCTION

Epidemiology studies the distribution and determinants of diseases in populations, proposing measures for prevention, control, and eradication. This approach provides fundamental support for the planning of public health actions (Rouquayrol & Goldbaum, 2003). The main objective of epidemiology is to identify population subgroups that are most vulnerable to certain diseases,

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seeking to understand the causal factors involved in order to modify conditions that may prevent future complications (Gordis, 2017).

As a health professional, physical therapists are responsible for assessing and rehabilitating patients based on functional diagnoses. According to Bispo Jr. (2010), health professionals should not limit themselves to performing methods and techniques, but should also engage in the analysis and generation of new knowledge. The concept of epidemiological profile refers to the analysis of the health of a specific population and is essential for understanding the conditions that influence the work of physical therapists. Justo (2023) emphasizes that knowledge is always evolving and that new studies generate additional questions. Therefore, the objective of this summary is to examine how epidemiological profiles relate to physical therapy practices.

The epidemiological profile of patients in different clinical contexts is crucial for guiding prevention and treatment strategies in physical therapy. The review of articles explores the role of physical therapy in diverse populations, such as burn patients with infections, meatpacking plant workers, and patients with musculoskeletal conditions in higher education institutions. The objective is to synthesize findings about the profile of these populations and discuss the importance of physical therapy in each context.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This research is a descriptive and quantitative literature review that analyzes the epidemiological and clinical profile of patients in physical therapy, using data from studies published between 2008 and 2019. Articles on patients treated in hospitals, clinics, and meatpacking plants were selected, with inclusion criteria of epidemiological and clinical data, publications in Portuguese and English, and full text available.

RESULTS

The studies by Macário et al. (2021) and Silvestre Andrade Ribas (2020) analyzed 190 medical records of patients from specific services in different periods. Despite the varied criteria for selecting medical records and distinct analyses

, both identified essential information such as gender, age group, race, profession, clinical diagnosis, main complaint, affected body segments, functional kinesiological diagnosis, and physiotherapeutic treatment.

The study by Ferreira et al. (2020) examined 175 burn patients at the Metropolitan Emergency Hospital in Ananindeua, Pará. Most were male (70.85%) and over 18 years of age (49.14%). *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* was the most common etiological agent of nosocomial infection (57.14%), and the chest was the most affected area (23.4%). Second-degree burns were the most prevalent (44.57%), and the extent of burns was mostly moderate (45.14%).

The data highlight the vulnerability of burn patients to nosocomial infections, emphasizing the need for specialized care and early physical therapy. Physical therapy is essential in rehabilitation, improving respiratory capacity and preventing contractures and deformities.

The reviewed study analyzed workers treated at a physical therapy clinic in a meatpacking plant in Rio Grande do Sul, with a majority of males (63.3%) and an average age of 35 years. The main complaints were discomfort and pain in the upper limbs (46.7%), with chest and neck pain being more common in women.

The study highlights the importance of preventive physical therapy in the workplace, allowing for the early identification of occupational disorders. This enables the implementation of prevention and treatment strategies, reducing the risk of absenteeism and improving the quality of life of workers.

The study by Silvestre et al. (2020) analyzed 181 patient records at a higher education institution in Curitiba. The majority were female (78%) and had an average age of 51.97 years. The most common conditions were degenerative diseases (21%), inflammatory processes (18%), and pain (14%).

The findings indicate that osteoarthritis is the most common diagnosis, followed by upper limb tendinitis and low back pain. The high prevalence in women

may be linked to hormonal factors and aging, which favor joint degeneration and the development of tendinitis.

The data showed that most cases involved female patients, with 79.6% in Macário et al. (2021) and 78% in Silvestre Andrade Ribas (2020). The most common conditions were knee, cervical and lumbar spine, and hip problems, highlighting osteoarthritis, neck pain, and lumbosciatica. The information was organized into tables in a systematic manner.

The analysis of the studies shows distinct patterns, but important ones for physical therapy. Burn patients need specialized interventions to prevent infectious complications and improve recovery. In work environments, such as cold storage facilities, preventive physical therapy is crucial to reduce WMSDs and increase well-being and productivity. In higher education institutions, physical therapy is vital for managing chronic degenerative conditions, especially in older women.

Physical therapy goes beyond post-injury rehabilitation to include prevention and management of chronic conditions to promote health and quality of life. Studies suggest that the epidemiological profile should guide physical therapy practice, adapting interventions to the needs of each population.

CONCLUSION

The information in this study is essential for developing new physiotherapy intervention strategies, improving the epidemiological profile of the populations served. Factors such as geographic location can influence health and treatment outcomes. The studies reviewed highlight the importance of a well-defined epidemiological profile to guide preventive and therapeutic practices. Future studies are needed to explore better intervention strategies and optimize patient outcomes and quality of life.

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