

CLINICAL AND ECONOMIC BURDEN OF LOW BACK PAIN IN LOW- AND MIDDLE-INCOME COUNTRIES: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW

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Background: Low back pain (LBP) is the leading cause of disability and work absenteeism globally, and it poses significant clinical and economic burden to individuals, health systems and the society.

Purpose: This study aimed to synthesise the clinical and economic burden of LBP in Low- and Middle-Income Countries (LMICs).

Methods: A systematic review following the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses guidelines was performed. PubMed, Medline, Cinhal, PsycINFO, AMED, Embase and Scopus databases were systematically searched for studies that examined the clinical and economic burden of LBP in LMICs, published from inception to December 10, 2021. Only studies with clearly stated methodologies and published in English were eligible for review.

Results: Nine studies met the inclusion criteria and were reviewed. Of these, three of them were clinical burden studies. The mean Newcastle–Ottawa quality assessment scale (NOS) score of the included studies was 4, with an average from 3 to 6. The included studies were conducted in Argentina, Brazil, China, Ethiopia, Nigeria, and Republic of Serbia. The rates of hospitalisation due to LBP ranged between 13.4% to 18.7%. Due to variation of methodological approaches, the reported cost estimates were inconsistent across the studies. A total cost of US\$2.2 billion per population and US\$1226.25 per patient were reported annually due to LBP.

Conclusion(s): This systematic literature review suggests that LBP is associated with significantly high rates of hospitalisation and costs.

Implications: As LBP is an important threat to the population, health professionals and policymakers are to put in place appropriate programmes to reduce the clinical and economic burden associated with LBP and improve the health outcomes of individuals with this condition in LMICs.

Keyword 1: Low back pain

Keyword 2: Economic burden

Keyword 3: Low & middle income countries

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Did this work require ethics approval?: No

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Ethics committee: N/A

Please state the reasons why ethics approval was not required and upload any supporting evidence: The study is a systematic review. For this study ethical approval was not required.

Has any of this material been/due to be published or presented at another national or international conference prior to the World

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Consent: Yes

Consent: Yes