

FEAR-AVOIDANCE BELIEFS AND BEHAVIORS OF BURN SURVIVORS: A MIXED METHODS APPROACH



Conclusion:

The previously modified fear-avoidance (FA) questionnaire did not demonstrate the ability to quantify or reflect the burn survivors' lived-experience.

Methods:

- Mixed methods approach
 - Quantitative data: Fear-avoidance measure by Sgroi (2005)
 - Qualitative data: Individual interviews (cognitive debriefing & exploration of lived experience)
- Recruitment of participants
 - Purposeful sampling (range of FA beliefs and behaviors)
- Data analysis
 - Thematic analysis of qualitative data
 - Convergent comparison of quantitative vs qualitative data

Significance Statement:

Fear-avoidance beliefs and behaviors are an important issue since more than half of the participants reported avoiding engagement in valued life activities due to fear of pain or injury even months or years after their burn injury.

The evaluation tool that has been used is four items extracted from the Tampa Scale of Kinesiophobia, which were modified for burn survivors but never validated with this population.

The aim of this study was to explore the lived-experience of burn survivors with respect to fear-avoidance and determine whether the questionnaire reflects and accurately measures their lived-experience.

Population and Results:

Table 1- Sociodemographic Characteristics of Participants (n=17)

Variable	Mean (SD)
Age (years)	51 (18)
Sex, male	9 (53%)
Overall score of Questionnaire (> 1 is considered fear avoidance)	1.63
Variable	Median (IQR)
% TBSA burned	17 (8-32)
Time post burn (days)	344 (235-681)

Figure 1. Fear-Avoidance Themes from Interviews



The questionnaire results identified 12 fear-avoidant participants vs 9 based on the interviews.

Only one of the questions was able to discriminate fear-avoidant from non-fear-avoidant participants and none of the current questions clearly resonated with burn survivors' fear-avoidant lived experience.

Lessons Learned:

- No current questionnaire screens adequately for the presence of fear-avoidance of meaningful activities in this population.
- There is a need for valid, reliable, and sensitive questions.
- Early identification of fear-avoidance beliefs and behaviors, and appropriate intervention, is required to support burn survivors' re-engagement in meaningful activities and community re-integration.