

# Rehabilitation Science Dissertation Defense



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Rehabilitation Science  
Final Dissertation Defense

## **PAIN-RELATED INJUSTICE APPRAISAL AMONG ARAB AMERICANS WITH CHRONIC LOW BACK PAIN**

Pain-related injustice appraisal has emerged as a psychosocial predictor of deleterious chronic low back pain (CLBP) outcomes. The appraisal is defined as the individual's perception regarding the magnitude and irreparability of pain-related loss and suffering, externalized blame, and unfairness. Research in diverse samples revealed racial differences in pain-related injustice appraisal, suggesting that it may reflect broader racial/ethnic, sociocultural, and socioeconomic factors. This agrees with theories recognizing the role of unique ethnic and cultural characteristics in ethnic minorities' health. Despite global data showing that Arabs represent the population with the second-highest prevalence of CLBP worldwide, a reliable characterization of CLBP among Arabs living in the US is almost lacking. A lack of research on CLBP in Arab-Americans may contribute to an inadequate understanding of the impact and scope of CLBP in this population. Given their unique ethnic characteristics and cultural challenges, this dissertation aimed to examine the role of pain-related injustice appraisal on CLBP outcomes among Arab-Americans. The first aim sought to obtain an in-depth understanding of how Arab-Americans conceptualize perceived injustice concerning their CLBP. Twelve participants reflected on the Injustice Experience Questionnaire (IEQ); the principal questionnaire to assess pain-related injustice appraisal. Qualitative data suggested that Arabic culture and Islamic beliefs influence the interpretation of the IEQ. The second aim revealed that pain-related injustice appraisal is associated with higher pain intensity, disability, and depressive symptoms, and it predicted disability and depressive symptoms above and beyond other pain-related variables. The third aim demonstrated that ethnic identity and religiosity buffered the positive relationship between pain-related injustice appraisal and depressive symptoms. History of discrimination was associated with greater pain intensity, disability, and depressive symptoms. Pain-related injustice appraisal appeared as a potential mechanism in which discrimination affected disability and depression. In summary, although Arab-Americans distinctly interpreted pain-related injustice appraisal, its manifestations concerning CLBP outcomes were comparable to other populations (e.g., appraisals of pain magnitude and irreparability). Also, their unique ethnic and cultural characteristics influenced CLBP-related injustice appraisal (e.g., acceptance appraisals and buffering effects of ethnic identity and religiosity)

**UAB** SCHOOL OF  
HEALTH PROFESSIONS  
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## EVENT DETAILS

Free to UAB  
students, faculty and  
clinicians.

## DATE/TIME

Tuesday,  
November 16  
11:00a-12:00p

## LOCATION

SHP 226 or  
[https://zoom.us/  
j/8908520571?](https://zoom.us/j/8908520571?pwd=Q25pazlaNXJCaVo4dlFUSzUrZHdPU)  
pwd=Q25pazlaNXJC  
aVo4dlFUSzUrZHdPU  
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