**README FILE – MODIFIED DELPHI STUDY [SHERRIFF ET AL., 2023]**

Dataset Title:

Perceptions of contextual factors during chronic low back pain care: a modified Delphi study

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[Note: This dataset was generated as part of a doctoral research project conducted by Bronwyn Sherriff. Supervisory and intellectual support was provided by the co-authors.]

Corresponding Publication:

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Files Included:

1. Delphi\_Round1\_Responses.xlsx – Anonymised data from Delphi Round 1;

2. Delphi\_Round1\_CodingKey.docx – Codebook with variable descriptions for Round 1;

3. Delphi\_Round2\_Responses.xlsx – Anonymised data from Delphi Round 2;

4. Delphi\_Round2\_CodingKey.docx – Codebook with variable descriptions for Round 2; and

5. README\_Sherriff\_Delphi.docx – README file including brief Delphi study information.

Data Overview:

This dataset includes the anonymised results of a modified two-round Delphi consensus survey exploring United Kingdom (UK) musculoskeletal (MSK) practitioners’ perceptions of contextual factors (CFs) that may influence outcomes in the treatment of chronic low back pain (cLBP). The study aimed to establish consensus on the acceptability, perceived influence, use, and practitioner confidence regarding CF-based care approaches.

Date of Data Collection:

Round 1: 13 January – 11 March 2020; and

Round 2: 23 June – 23 July 2020.

Ethics:

Ethical approval was obtained from Bournemouth University’s Research Ethics Panel (IDs: 28052 and 32406 respectively). Informed consent was obtained from all participants. No identifiable data are included in the shared files. Participation was voluntary and data were anonymised before analysis.

Methodology:

A modified online Delphi design was used, following CREDES guidance for consensus studies. Recruitment was conducted via professional networks, social media, publicly available email lists, and snowball sampling. Participant responses were collected via the JISC Online Survey platform.

Methodology (continued):

Participants were eligible for inclusion if they:

– Were qualified Physiotherapists, Chiropractors, Osteopaths, or Sports Therapists;

– Had at least three (3) years of clinical experience providing regular care to patients with chronic low back pain (cLBP);

– Were currently practising in the United Kingdom (UK); and

– Were able and willing to complete an online survey in English.

This experience threshold aligns with common UK admission criteria for master’s-level training and ensured inclusion of panellists who may have received biopsychosocial training relevant to contextual factors (CFs). All participants self-identified as MSK ‘experts’ proficient in the rehabilitation of patients with cLBP.

Round 1 (n = 39) involved 64 statements and open-ended questions across five CF domains. Round 2 (n = 23) included 74 refined statements, which participants rated using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). Additional response options included ‘Not Valid’ (coded as 0) and ‘Do Not Recall/Use’ (coded as missing), which were appropriate given the diversity in professional backgrounds. Descriptive statistics and consensus thresholds (≥75% agreement, i.e., ratings of 4 or 5) were calculated using SPSS version 28.0.

Limitations:

– Statements reflect the opinions of a UK-based MSK panel and may not generalise to other settings or professions.

– Participant ratings are based on retrospective recall and self-reported confidence, which may be subject to bias.

– Small-to-moderate attrition occurred between rounds, a common issue in Delphi studies.

Recommended Use:

This dataset is suitable for secondary analyses related to consensus methods, clinical decision-making in chronic low back pain care, MSK practitioner perceptions, and contextual factor research. Users should refer to the published article for further context and interpretation.