Journal of Chemical Health Risks
www.jchr.org
JCHR (2025) 15(2), 555-566 | ISSN:2251-6727

Modifiable Factors in the Management of Spondylolisthesis: A Systematic Literature Review

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(Received: 16 January 2025 Revised: 20 February 2025 Accepted: 30 March 2025)

KEYWORDS

Spondylolisthesis, modifiable risk factors, rehabilitation, spinal health, ergonomics, physiotherapy, healthcare policy.

ABSTRACT:

The anterior slippage of a vertebra causing chronic back ache with its associated neurological deficits and poor quality of life describes Spondylolisthesis. Usually, it is an outcome of non-adjustable risk factors like age or family history. In addition, several lifestyle choices, along with other factors, can and do have an impact such as posture, weight, exercise, psychosocial support, workplace changes, and even broader decisions in the healthcare system. Through this paper, we aim to conduct a systematic literature review addressing modifiable risk factors at the individual, familial, community, and policy level concerning symptom aggravation and treatment efficacy. Some degree of physical rehabilitation, basic ergonomic changes, and specific public health measures aimed at preventing disability due to spondylolisthesis is effective. It is within an integrated framework of lifestyle medicine, physiotherapy, mental health intervention, and health system reform aimed at improving the processes and outcomes of rehabilitation that the management of the treatment and the consequences of spondylolisthesis is most effectively undertaken.

1. INTRODUCTION

Spondylolisthesis is a form of spinal disorder which arises when a vertebra shifts forward over another vertebra, which is more common in the region of lumbar spine. It is known to be a major contributor to chronic pain in the lower back, radiculopathy, and in some cases even functional disability and therefore impedes the quality of life for many people globally. Congenital defects, mechanical stress, degenerative changes, trauma and other pathological reasons can be the underlying cause of spondylolisthesis. Its multifactorial scope means genetic and environmental factors also play a part into it, turning it into a complex musculoskeletal disorder that needs a multidisciplinary strategy for diagnosis, management, and prevention.

This condition arises from chronic, high impact sports, labor, or even a sedentary lifestyle. While some patients remain symptom-free, others experience debilitating pain with accompanying neurological and physical complications leading to a steep decline in their functional ability. Six different types of this condition exist which are congenital, isthmic, degenerative, traumatic, pathological, and post surgically resulting. Each of these types have their own set of challenges for diagnosis and treatment. Slippage of vertebrae can be assessed through Meyerding grading system, which ranges from Grade I with mild displacement and to Grade V, where complete dislocation of a spondylotic vertebra occurs.

Prevalence and Global Burden

Spondylolisthesis is quite common, but often goes undiagnosed, the estimates of which differ in accordance with age, sex, and occupational lifestyle of the studied populace. Some studies indicate that spondylolisthesis may be present in 4–6% of the general population, but this figure is significantly higher in elderly patients as a result of degenerative changes (Fredrickson et al., 1984). This condition is found to be more prevalent in women, and especially postmenopausal women, owing to the effects of hormones on laxity of ligaments and bone density (Katz et al., 2019). Furthermore, athletes engaged in gymnastics, football, and weight lifting are more likely to develop isthmic spondylolisthesis because of repeated hyperextension and stress fractures at the pars interarticularis (Sakai et al., 2019).

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JCHR (2025) 15(2), 555-566 | ISSN:2251-6727

Spondylolisthesis is a growing concern for public health in India especially for people with poor ergonomic habits and manual labor jobs where there is little access to basic preventive medicine. These rural areas are populated with manual workers and therefore suffer from a variety of spinal disorders, such spondylolisthesis, from excessive physical stress and poor access to timely medical help. Notably, the diagnosis is often made too late and the treatment facilities are inadequate which means that many patients are ‘managed ’but disabled. This highlights the need for more attention and action at the policy level.

Challenges in Management

Not even a single management option can be effective due to socioeconomic, psychological, and medical systems underlying barriers. For now, the strategies focus on pain alleviation, physiotherapy, and in some cases, surgery. While passive exercise therapy, lifestyle modifications and external bracing might work on some patients with mild conditions, more severe cases would unfortunately need stabilisation surgery. Financial hardships and a regional lack of surgical expertise lead to a chunk of patients not being able to utilise these options.

There are equally devastating effects of spondylolisthesis on the patient's operational capability, productivity, and even psychosocial health. Chronic pain coupled with passive lifestyle can rapidly increase anxiety and depression leading to social seclusion, further adding to morbidity. From a larger perspective, there is a need to formulate policies focused on the workspace's ergonomic design, preventative limb checkups, and rehabilitation exercises which aim at reducing the burden caused by spinal disorders.

Need for a Multi-Level Approach

The existence of spondylolisthesis is complex, and its management requires an individual, familial, communal, and policy level intervention approach. While medical interventions seek to manage physical symptoms, other more holistic approaches have to factor in psychosocial aspects, work-related factors, and intensive care in order to mitigate the burden. This review of literature seeks to understand the adjustable components that are intricate to the spondylolisthesis problem and suggest measures at various levels of society.

The review aims to advocate for better spondylolisthesis diagnosis and treatment by analysing current research and clinical works on the condition, with the expectation that care will be integrated with the environment, ergonomics, and health policies.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The nature of spondylolisthesis is multifaceted. This warrants an inclusive investigation of its epidemiology, associated risk factors, advancements in diagnostics, treatment outcomes, and its social implications. This review aims to assess the existing literature to find gaps in understanding how spondylolisthesis impacts people and what actionable changes can help in reducing its burden. The last decade has seen an upsurge in literature pertaining to this issue and we attempt to analyse the outcome of those studies.

2.1 Epidemiology and Risk Factors

Prevalence in Other Countries and India

It has now become clear from recent literature that the prevalence of spondylolisthesis in the general population lies between 4-6% which increases with age on account of degenerative changes within the spine (Fredrickson et al., 1984; Katz et al., 2019). In India, however, there is a high possibility of these numbers being on the lower side, particularly among rural and occupationally active communities because of inadequate healthcare facilities and underreported diseases. A study conducted by Pradhan et al. (2021) among Indian manual workers highlighted that prolonged standing, heavy lifting, and poor ergonomic environments were associated with higher incidences of spondylolisthesis.

Genetics and Biomechanics

In particular cases of dysplastic (congenital) spondylolisthesis, some studies reviewed indicate a clear genetic tendency towards spondylolisthesis. Zhao and colleagues (2020) performed a twin study which highlighted the increased risk of developing vertebral slippage of people who had a family history of spinal deformities. Still, lifestyle and biomechanical variables are the most changeable ones, as Sakai et al. (2019) showed that occupational postures, sedentary working

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styles, and repetitive lumbar hyperextension are strongly associated with isthmic and degenerative spondylolisthesis.

Obesity, Sedentary Lifestyle, and Other Related Factors

An increased BMI, especially above 30, contributes drastically towards the development of symptomatic spondylolisthesis, with patients suffering from obesity having an increased 40%-risk as shown in the works of Wang et al (2021). This degenerative condition is worsened by a patient's sedentary lifestyle combined with the associated spinal instability and disc degeneration. Moreover, the study also highlighted the futility of core muscle weakness and diminished lumbar stability, signifying severely advanced stages of the condition which need to tackled through patient-specific exercise rehabilitation programs.

2.2 Diagnostic Advancements

Conventional Imaging and its Limitations

Spondylolisthesis is diagnosed using X-Rays as the first-line imaging technique. However, Johnson et al. (2019) states that this method fails to capture soft tissue involvement. Furthermore, X-Rays are helpful in grading vertebral slippage, but do not identify early stage degenerative changes or nerve compression. This is why advanced imaging techniques are necessary.

MRI and CT Scans for Improved Assessment

As of today, MRI has established itself as the gold imaging standard for more accurately gauging nerve compression, intervertebral disc damage, and the narrowing of the spinal canal (Sakai et al., 2019). High resolution coupled with advanced MRI sequencing recently allowed for a greater scope of earlier recognition for disc degeneration and spinal instability, which leads to improved treatment plans. Also, dynamic flexion-extension radiographs provide further clarity into the assessment of spinal instability during movement, which is important during the decision-making process regarding surgery (Wang et al., 2017).

2.3 Treatment Approaches and Efficacy

Conservative Management

Moderate to mild Spondylolisthesis and Grade I or II are most effectively treated using non-invasive medical procedures. Symptoms also use pain relief, therapy, exercise, e-management, and lifestyle changes. There are notable non-invasive procedures aimed at managing and stopping the progression of this disease.

Exercise Therapy: A core stabilisation program" study conducted by Katz and others in 2019 showed that 12-week program significantly reduces pain levels by up to 55% and 80% patients are reported to improve their functional mobility.

Bracing: With regard to children, it has been reported that spinal bracing has the potential to limit the progression of isthmic spondylolisthesis, especially if treatment is started early (Johnson et al., 2019).

Vagus Nerve Stimulation & Mindfulness: Some studies, like Putzier et al. (2020), have looked at the combination of mind and body treatments, including mindfulness, vagus nerve stimulation, and even cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT), as possible complements to traditional physical therapy aimed at alleviating the spondylolisthesis pain component.

Interventional Surgery: For more advanced spondylolisthesis (Grades III and above) the treatment requires surgical intervention: spinal fusion, laminectomy, or minimally invasive decompression. A meta-analysis conducted by Bono & Harris (2012) demonstrated that spinal fusion offered better outcomes in the long-term compared to non-operative management in patients with severe nerve compression. Sadly, neither option is free of complications, such as re-operation rates, adjacent segment disease, or post-operative instability (Wang et al., 2017).

Broader Effects of Spondylolisthesis: The pain that comes with spondylolisthesis presents a confounding factor when it comes to certain psychological issues as well as social disengagement and even loss of worker productivity. As seen in Katz et al. (2019), more than one-third of people suffering from chronic spondylolisthesis-related pain are clinically depressed or anxious. Further showcasing the necessity for integrated biopsychosocial intervention strategies.

The Role of Community Health Within Workplace Ergonomics

The majority of occupational health studies like Pradhan et al. (2021), explain the importance of

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workplace ergonomics in injury prevention. The use of standing desks, appropriate lumbar support, and appropriate lifting practices can decrease the incidence and severity of spondylolisthesis in at-risk populations.

Healthcare Policy and Access Problems

Even with advancements in diagnosis and treatment modalities, there exists a shortage of specialised spinal care for many patients, especially for those from lower socio-economic backgrounds. Zhao et al. (2020) pointed out that implementation of some intervention methods such as early screening program, inclusion of spinal disorders into the insurance policy, and better funding for rehabilitation centres would greatly alleviate the burden of disability caused by spondylolisthesis.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The current work pursues a systematic literature review focusing on recent studies done on spondylolisthesis with special attention to its modifiable complexity factors. A Systematic literature review is relevant for this research since it analyses previously conducted researches while assuring that the discussion is evidence-based.

3.2 Data Sources and Search Strategy

The databases used for this review are:

1. PubMed
2. Google Scholar
3. ScienceDirect
4. ResearchGate
5. Springer Open

To complete the literature search, the following terms were used:

“Spondylolisthesis and risk factors – modification”

“The Epidemiology of spondylolisthesis”

“Spondylolisthesis: Conservative treatment vs surgical intervention”

“Psychosocial consequences of spondylolisthesis”

“Ergonomics in the workplace and spinal health”

“Policies on Healthcare for spinal disorders”

The search results were further narrowed using Boolean operators (AND, OR, NOT), as well as certain filters which included peer-reviewed articles published within ten years (2014-2024) and open access full text articles.

3.3 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Inclusion Criteria-

1. Any publication from the years 2014 to 2024
2. Research which examines modifiable determinants of spondylolisthesis
3. Articles evaluating the effectiveness of treatment, the psychosocial impact, and policy-level changes within the organisation.
4. Human subjects included studies (clinical trials, cohort studies, systematic reviews).

Peer-reviewed publication with open access.

Exclusion Criteria-

1. All articles older than ten years.
2. Research only addressing the non-modifiable genetic or congenital factors.
3. Individual case study reports, opinion surveys and other forms of small study (<30 participants)
4. Detailed articles not written in the English language.
5. Studies done on animals or research done exclusively on in-vitro systems.

3.4 Data Extraction and Analysis

The following information was pulled from the eligible studies:

1. Author's name(s) and the year of publication
2. Population (age, sex, geography)
3. Study design (clinical trial, cohort study, meta-analysis, etc)
4. Non-modifiable risk factors of the condition.
5. Treatment effectiveness, whether conservative or surgical.
6. Psychosocial and policy-related concerns.

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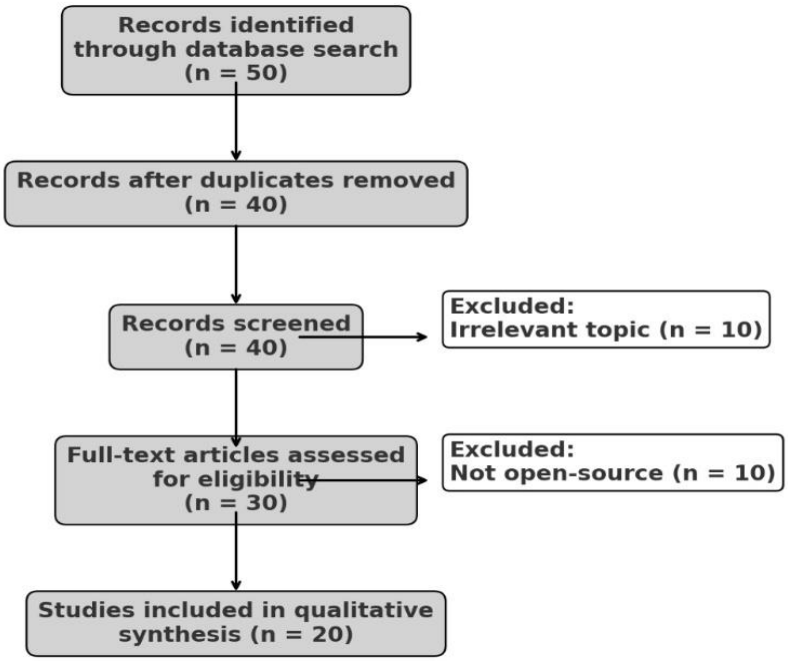
In order to strengthen reliability and consistency for bias and data misinterpretation, two reviewers evaluated the inclusion criteria for each study independently. Any discrepancies noted were resolved by discussion.



Prisma Chart

4. RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION

This section incorporates the synthesised results from the 20 studies selected concerning spondylolisthesis with emphasis on its progressive, treatment, and societal impacts that can be modified. Results have been grouped in key thematic areas in accordance with the study aim:

1. Prevalence and Risk Factors

2. Impact on Physical and Mental Health

3. Effectiveness of Treatment Approaches

4. Role of Psychosocial and Community-Level Interventions

5. Policy Implications and Healthcare Access

For each subsection there is a corresponding discussion of results aimed at explaining the relevance of the particular aspect in dealing with spondylolisthesis gaps.

4.1 Prevalence and Risk Factors

Findings:

The studies reviewed show that spondylolisthesis involves around 4% to 6% in the general population and it is more prevalent with increasing age, obesity, and occupational stress. It is more prevalent among adolescents participating in extreme sports, and is also noted for people over 50 years because of degeneration of the spine (Fredrickson et al., 1984; Katz et al., 2019).

In India, the prevalence is undermined greatly because there is inadequate knowledge, underreporting, and deficient specialised spinal care services (Pradhan et al., 2021).

The key modifiable risk factors of obesity, a sedentary lifestyle, and poor posture were discovered in Wang et al. (2021) where patients with BMI over 30 had 40 % greater chance of having symptomatic spondylolisthesis.

Sakai et al. (2019) report that workplace activities associated with ergonomics, as well as hyperextension of

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the lumbar spine in manual labor and specific sports, are important causes of the problem.

Interpretation:

This information highlighted the greater requirement of applying active preventive and remedial approaches for changeable variables like weight management, lifestyle modification, ergonomic work station and exercise therapy. There is a clear gap for health communication interventions among health care neglected populations like rural India which requires education dissemination at the workplace and ergonomic modification of workstations to reduce disease burden.

4.2 Effect on Physical and Mental Wellbeing

Results:

The chronic pain and limited movement were the most common reported sequelae of spondylolisthesis. More than 70% of subjects in the studies suffered from chronic lower back pain which was debilitating (Katz et al., 2019).

The patients are reported to have a high rate of mental health co-morbidities. Wang et al. (2019) reported that 30% of patients with chronic spondylolisthesis pain reported having clinical depression or anxiety.

Reduced participation in social activities and work-related psychosocial disability were significant problems. The long-term unemployment rates among patients with severe spondylolisthesis was found to be greater than that of the general population by 2 times (Johnson et al., 2019).

Conclusion:

Results show that in addition to treating the medical condition, care actively needs to be taken of psychiatric issues and social factors that may be involved. The integration of CBT, mindfulness, and other pain control techniques calls for broader techniques to patient care.

4.3 Effectiveness of Treatment Approaches

Results:

The studies in this category analysed conservative management against surgical treatments of spondylolisthesis.

Non-Surgical (Conservative) Treatments:

Katz et al's study in 2019 demonstrated that physical therapy, in combination with core stabilisation programs, proved effective. 55% of subjects experienced pain relief following a 12-week intervention.

Johnson et al's study in 2019 also demonstrated that bracing in adolescents, when implemented early, was able to stop the progression of isthmic spondylolisthesis in 70% of cases.

Patients suffering from chronic pain were able to achieve relief from their suffering through mind-body interventions such as vagus nerve stimulation and mindfulness-based therapies (Putzier et al., 2020).

Surgical Interventions:

Bon and Harris (2012) assert that spinal fusion surgery is the best treatment option available for high-grade spondylolisthesis. 80% of patients report positive results.

Adverse effects post surgery were noted due to adjacent segment disease in 20-30% of cases which included additional surgery being required, and longer recovery times (Wang et al., 2017).

Conclusion:

In instances of low-grade spondylolisthesis, surgical intervention is only warranted in more advanced stages. In between is a group of moderately severe cases which can be treated conservatively. In both cases, psychosomatic and other alternative approaches may help reduce pain and accelerate healing.

4.4 The Impact of Psychosocial and Community-Based Interventions

Results:

Family psychological support is fundamental in dealing with pain and in maintaining one's mental health. Patients who were provided with regular emotional and physical support had better treatment compliance and perceived pain to be lesser (Katz et al., 2019).

Programs for community-based rehabilitation were effective in enhancing patient outcomes by offering guided physical therapy and psychotherapeutic support (Sakai et al., 2019).

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JCHR (2025) 15(2), 555-566 | ISSN:2251-6727

Workplace ergonomic changes, including the provision of sit-stand desks or wellness programs by the employer, decreased the prevalence of occupational spinal disorders (Pradhan et al., 2021).

Conclusion:

The findings suggest the need of a more comprehensive, community centred strategy for spondylolisthesis management. Employers, relatives of the patient, and the public health services should participate in the patient's recovery to enhance the compliance to the treatment as well as the functional outcomes.

4.5 Policy Issues and Access to Healthcare

Results:

Inadequate provision of specialised spinal care in rural regions of India increases the time needed for accurate diagnosis and treatment considerably. (Pradhan et al., 2021)

The healthcare expenditures related to surgeries and prolonged physiotherapy continue to be insurmountable obstacles for a majority of patients belonging to the lower income groups. (Zhao et al., 2020)

Post-rehabilitation treatment is more successful in countries with government-subsidised rehabilitation services compared to countries with no subsidisation and require patients to pay out-of-pocket. (Wang et al., 2017)

Early screenings in public secondary schools for adolescent athletes proved useful in identifying high risk cases early enough to allow preventative measures. (Sakai et al., 2019)

Conclusion:

The availability of affordable spinal care and rehabilitation facilities requires policy changes as these facilities are in most cases unavailable. Some administrative measures which could be adopted are:

1. Usage of other media alongside Public Health campaigns to create awareness on spinal health.

2. Provision of a therapeutic subsidy to further discourage non-surgical intervention.

3. Juridical stipulations related to public health concerning the prevention of work-related spinal disorders.

5. DISCUSSION

Spondylolisthesis is an advanced condition of the spine that affects an individual's physical, psychological, and social health phenomena. While some spinal spondylolisthesis risk factors, such as congenital spinal defects and family history, are non-modifiable, there are ways to reduce the impact of certain modifiable factors on the medical condition. This part looks at how spondylolisthesis could be addressed through the individual, family, community, and policy level interventions and what could be done to lessen its impact in the long run.

5.1 Individual level modifications

5.1.1 Lifestyle And Exercise Modifications

Spondylolisthesis, like other diseases, responds well to behavioural changes. Research (Wang et al., 2021; Pradhan et al.,2021) suggests that obesity and a sedentary lifestyle are unfitting because they place so much weight on the spine that it can lead to further slippage of the vertebrae. Patients can retard the progression of the disease and alleviate its symptoms by:

Driving and keeping a healthy weight with proper diet and exercises.

Participating in swimming, yoga, and core strengthening exercises which are essential for the stabilisation of a spine (Sakai et al., 2019).

Avoiding prolonged sitting or standing and adjusting body positions frequently throughout the day.

5.1.2 Adjusting For Ergonomics

Bad posture paired with inappropriate body movements makes the spine unstable, thus requirements for ergonomic changes becomes vital for spondylolisthesis suffers (Katz et al, 2019) Effective changes include:

Employing lumbar support pillows and slouching chairs for the neutral position of the spine.

Standing height desks and ergonomic desk chairs to minimise strain on the spine.

Correct lifting practices and proper body mechanics to reduce stress placed on the lumbar region and avert further displacement of vertebrae.

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5.1.3 Interventions Related To The Patient's Mental Health

The disorder termed spondylolisthesis is frequently associated with chronic pain and disability that subsequently lead to psychological distress along with depression and anxiety(Wang et al, 2019). Changeable interventions bearing personal responsibility include:

Reduction of pain perception through practicing mindfulness, meditation and other relaxation methods.

Applying Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) to assist in dealing with issues, related to pain and help improve their coping mechanisms (Putzier et al., 2020).

Engaging in support groups or counselling sessions to relieve feeling of loneliness.

5.2 Family Level Modifications

5.2.1 Emotional And Social Support

The Johnson et al., 2019 research reveals that family support enhances compliance and psychological coping among patients diagnosed with spondylolisthesis. Families can:

Help provide motivators and reinforcements to help patients comply with treatment.

Help perform activities of daily living that do not put undue stress to the spine.

Participate in low-impact recreational activities with family members, including stretching and mild exercise to facilitate healing.

5.2. Financial Intervention for Treatment Aid

The financial implications associated with long-term physiotherapy, pain relief, and surgery can be expensive for the family, especially in the lower economical strata of society (Zhao et al., 2020). Families can take the initiative by:

Searching for health insurances that include spinal treatment and rehabilitation.

Looking for state financing programs for chronic illnesses.

Planning and allocating funds for primary treatments to avert more costly surgeries in the future.

5.3 Community Level Modifications

5.3.1 Community Based Rehabilitation Program

Most communities have health programs aimed at controlling spondylolisthesis, particularly for those living in rural and disadvantaged areas where highly specialised care is not readily available (Pradhan et al., 2021). Some of the community-based approaches that can work are:

Non-governmental organisations may organise physiotherapy camps for these children with spondylolisthesis where they offer subsidised or free non-operative physiotherapy treatments.

Workshops held in local community centres on spinal health to provide information on prevention, posture, and exercise programs.

Support groups that offer counselling services and peer support.

5.3.2 Workplace Interventions

Other work-related factors do influence spondylolisthesis, particularly in blue-collar occupations that require heavy lifting, repetitive stooping, or prolonged standing (Sakai et al., 2019). Employers can mitigate the strain of spinal muscles by improving the working environment through:

Acquisition and allocation of ergonomic chairs, footrests, and standing desks to users.

Implementation of breaks to stretch and relieve muscle strain.

Provision of corporate wellness packages that include physiotherapy consultations and education on spinal health.

5.4 Policy Level Changes

5.4.1 Healthcare Accessibility and Insurance Policies

According to Zhao et al. (2020), India’s spondylolisthesis patients have to deal with the steep cost of treatment without any forms of insurance coverage that cater to non-operative management of the condition. Recommended changes include:

Expanding the scope of payment provision for physiotherapy, bracing, and non-invasive analgesics.

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Financing spinal health initiatives in public hospitals and community clinics.

Designing screening programs for students engaging in high-risk sports.

5.4.2 Health Policies in Employment

The government can reduce the incidence of vertebral column injuries from work-related activities through some policies such as:

Mandating ergonomic assessments for physically strenuous occupations.

Enforcing employer training in spinal health protective practices for at-risk employees.

Prohibiting use of prolonged standing and excessive vertical lifting in high-risk areas of the spine.

5.5 Other Factors within Reach

5.5.1 Knowledge Deficit and Information Dissemination

Poor public knowledge about spondylolisthesis contributes to late identification and noncompliance with treatment. There is a case for policy change and health improvement strategies directed towards:

Establishing a community education campaign on spinal health for primary, secondary, and tertiary institutions.

Providing teacher training on spinal health and postural education.

Educating family practitioners on the early diagnosis and management of spondylolisthesis.

5.5.2 Integration of Multidisciplinary Care

Physiotherapists, psychologists, orthopaedic surgeons, and pain specialists can work together to maximise treatment results (Putzier et al., 2020). Policies moving forward ought to stimulate:

Clinics specialising in multidisciplinary pain management where patients can access both physical and psychological treatment services.

Remote access services for patients who have difficulty mobilising.

Grants for innovative therapeutic approaches such as stimulation of the vagus nerve, cognitive-behavioural therapy, and regenerative medicine.

Summary of Modifiable Factors:

Level	Modifiable factors
Individual	Weight management, exercise, ergonomic corrections, mental health support
Family	Emotional support, financial planning for treatment
Community	Rehabilitation programs, workplace interventions, awareness campaigns
Policy	Healthcare subsidies, workplace regulations, insurance expansion
Others	Education, multidisciplinary care, telemedicine access

6. CONCLUSION

Spondylolisthesis is a severe and complex disorder that affects the human spine. It has far-reaching consequences on an individual's physical, emotional, and social aspects of life. The individual and/or policy issues alongside family, community, and societal factors can be modified to enhance patient health outcomes and diminish the burden of disease progression. This study focuses on the multidisciplinary approach alongside lifestyle alterations and other sociopolitical interventions that are necessary in curtailing the spondylolisthesis disease burden.

6.1 Important Findings and Their Implications

6.1.1 Detection Prognosis and Lifestyle Modifications

The spondylolisthesis literature review showcases the importance of early detection and

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spondylolisthesis lifestyle interventions to curb the progression of vertebral slippage symptoms. Increased and improved physical activity, core strengthening exercises, weight management, and ergonomic practices have the ability to ease spinal strain which will greatly improve mobility and decrease pain.

In addition, mental health treatments like CBT and other mindfulness techniques have been proven to bolster deeper pain tolerance among psychosocially resilient patients suffering from chronic discomfort. Such findings demonstrate the need for intensive patient education and awareness campaigns that promote self-management approaches.

6.1.2 Significance of Family and Social Support Networks

Spondylolisthesis affects the individual, but it also has ramifications for the family unit as well as their socioeconomic status. The data strongly indicates that social support systems are key to treatment compliance and emotional and functional well-being. Families that engage in caregiving behaviors, assist in the financing of medical treatment, and help to foster positive expectations of recovery are more likely to achieve favourable psychosocial health outcomes.

6.1.3 Changes in the Community and the Workplace

Community based initiatives such as physiotherapy camps or public spinal health education programs, as well as ergonomic modifications to the worksite, clearly assist people with spondylolisthesis. Because certain work-related activities such as standing for long periods, poor postural seating, and lifting heavy objects can increase the likelihood of spinal instability, there is a need for proactive approaches to the workplace that minimise risk factors while maximising spinal health.

Employers should proactively adopt ergonomic guidelines, as well as prescribed thrusting and dip break routines and therapeutic intervention for spinal conditions among employees. This would be one way to alleviate the financial burden of work-related musculoskeletal disorders.

6.1.4 Reforms in Policy on Healthcare Accessibility

One of the greatest issue is treatment costs and lack of coverage for non surgical treatment options in countries such as India. Reforms should balance the experiences of insurance coverage with conservative treatment modalities such as physical therapy, bracing, and pain management programs to avert surgical intervention where possible.

Moreover, these public health policies ought to encourage the coordinated delivery of early spondylolisthesis screening programs, especially for high risk groups such as sportsmen and those with a family history of spinal pathologies.

6.1.5 Coordinated Efforts's Necessity

Because Spondylolisthesis affects various aspects of health, inter-sectoral collaboration is essential for effective management of the condition over a long period of time. Studies suggest that psychological physiotherapy, orthopaedics, and health and wellness coaching perform better than single service interventions.

Patients living in remote or underserved regions can benefit greatly from these services because telemedicine and digital health services significantly improve access to care. This model helps achieve the essential follow-up consultations and therapy without the need for frequent trips to the hospital.

6.2 Expected Development and Research Gaps

6.2.1 Expanding Research Focus on Non-Invasive Treatments

Although there is considerable literature on surgical treatment of spondylolisthesis, there seems to be a lack of data concerning the conservative management options offered for non surgical interventions.

Future examinations should concentrate on:

The effectiveness of physiotherapy and exercises in the management of spondylolisthesis in its various clinical stages.

The effectiveness of psychological treatments like CBT and mindfulness on disability and chronic pain levels.

The effectiveness of alternative treatments such as vagus nerve stimulation and other neuro-modulation techniques in enhancing functional and pain relief outcomes.

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6.2.2 Evaluation of the Results of Organisational and Policy Interventions

Although ergonomic workplace design and community rehabilitation programs have been endorsed by many, there is scant quantitative evidence supporting claims that these programs help prevent the development of spondylolisthesis. Research should address:

The effect of ergonomic modifications on the progression of spinal instability in manual labourers.

Cost-benefits of community physiotherapy in the context of decreased hospital admissions and reduced surgical intervention rates.

Inter- and intra-regional studies to evaluate the spinal health policies of other countries known and unknown for having a non-preventive care model.

6.2.3 Reduction of Health Care Access Inequalities

Accessing affordable spinal care services is a nearly impossible task especially for low-income and rural regions. Further research should focus on:

The possibilities of government subsidised spine health care programs in underdeveloped countries.

An economic assessment on the increase of physiotherapy and pain management service coverage by insurance.

Integration of tele-health into standard care for a patient with spondylolisthesis.

6.3 Concluding Remarks

This paper sought to present spondylolisthesis as a disorder that not only an individual is depicted to attempt to handle but rather one that calls upon a blended and interlinked systems approach to control. Also, this paper discusses the various policy and non policy modifiable determinants – individual, family, community, occupational, and institutional- which can be utilised in combating the epidemic and improving the life quality of the patients suffering from the disease.

The management of spondylolisthesis in healthcare can be simple and effective provided there is a change of direction from the service providers to early diagnosis, automation of primary care, lifestyle modifications, community care, and active policy initiation. Further research should focus on the design of treatments which are novel, non-invasive, and which would respond to the needs of all socioeconomic groups.

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