Work-related musculoskeletal disorders in ultrasound practice, the contextual concerns of sonographers

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Abstract

***Background*:** Work-related musculoskeletal disorder (WRMSD) are already widespread among sonographers, at least partly due to the additional physical stresses of working in understaffed environments (Harrison & Harris, 2015). While contemporary research has described the broad picture regarding WRMSD in ultrasound (Bolton and Cox, 2015), none has, to date, extensively explored its personal and professional impacts from a qualitative perspective.

Method: Extended semi-structured interviews with N=9 experienced sonographers working in the UK were conducted and analysed using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA; Miller, Booth and Spacey, 2019). Core thematic areas that emphasised personal and professional impacts of WRMSD were then further examined to highlight how participants specifically made sense of them.

***Results*:** Analysis revealed six pertinent themes: (a) Sonographers' attributions around WRSMD; (b) Resistance to sickness-labelling; (c) Making sense of vulnerability and risk; (d) Sickness, pain and impact on self; (e) Health, fitness and self-preservation.

***Conclusion*:** The research built upon and extended existing accounts which have offered broad insights into WRMSD (Gemark Simonsen and Gard, 2017, Bolton and Cox, 2015). By utilising IPA as a foundation for thematic analysis, the research has provided rich contextualised narratives of the experiences of the participants selected.

References

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