Background: Burnout is frequent among physicians and has significant implications for the healthcare system. However, it seems to be underestimated so far among rheumatologists, with few studies indicating a prevalence of 51-57%.

Objectives: To estimate the prevalence and predictors of burnout among rheumatologists practicing in Arab countries.

Methods: A cross-sectional study was conducted by the Arab League of Associations for Rheumatology (ArLAR) Research Group (ARCH) using an anonymous electronic survey developed and tested by a core steering committee and hosted on the Google Forms platform. All rheumatologists practicing in the Arab countries were invited in spring 2022 to participate in the e-survey by mass e-mail and via societies’ WhatsApp groups and ArLAR social media accounts. In addition to demographic data, workload, practice profile, income, and specialty satisfaction (assessed indirectly through work-related factors), the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) was distributed by PANLAR, which included demographics and work-related factors. Rheumatologists were considered as having burnout if at least one of the three MBI domains was positive (Emotional Exhaustion ≥27, Depersonalization ≥10, or Personal Accomplishment (PA) ≤ 33). Factors associated with burnout were analyzed using a multivariable binary logistic regression.

Results: Among 3,227 rheumatologists practicing in Arab countries, 408 responded to the survey, and 394 were included in the final analysis (12.2% of all practicing rheumatologists). The mean age was 45.2 years (SD 11.5), 60.7% were females, the median practice duration was 13 years (IQR 6–22), 49% were from North Africa, 33% were from the Levant, and 18% were from the Gulf. In total, 73% worked full-time, 48% worked in the public sector, 21% in the private sector, and 31% in both; 74% worked in an urban setting only, monthly income was <1,000 USD in 31%, 1,000–1,500 USD in 41%, 5,000–10,000 USD in 9% and >10,000 USD in 8%. The prevalence of burnout among rheumatologists was 61.3%. It was mostly driven by a low PA score (58.1%) (Figure 1). Also, 15.6% had a positive EE score, and 11.6% had a positive DP score. After adjustment for demographics, practice profile, and workload variables, burnout was independently associated with an income <10,000 USD/month (OR 2.28 [95% CI 1.01; 5.10]), unsatisfaction with rheumatology specialty (OR 2.04 [95% CI 1.20; 3.48]) and younger age (OR 1.92 [95% CI 1.20; 3.08]) (Table 1).

Conclusion: The prevalence of burnout among rheumatologists in Arab countries is significantly high and driven mainly by a low personal assessment score. Associated factors were a lower income, lower satisfaction with the specialty, and younger age. Therefore, burnout among rheumatologists needs to be adequately addressed to prevent its negative impact on the healthcare system.

Table 1. Predictive factors of burnout in rheumatologists practicing in the Arab countries (multivariable analysis)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>OR</th>
<th>95% CI</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Income &lt; 10,000 USD/month</td>
<td>2.265</td>
<td>1.006 – 5.098</td>
<td>0.048</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialty unsatisfaction</td>
<td>2.036</td>
<td>1.199 – 3.457</td>
<td>0.009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age ≤ 44 years</td>
<td>1.921</td>
<td>1.196 – 3.078</td>
<td>0.007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receiving phone calls from patients</td>
<td>1.616</td>
<td>0.714 – 3.659</td>
<td>0.249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infusion center at the rheumatology</td>
<td>0.733</td>
<td>0.435 – 1.236</td>
<td>0.733</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Figure 1. Venn diagram of the physicians fulfilling the domains of the MBI

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AB1582

DEPRESSION IN RHEUMATOLOGIST FROM LATIN AMERICA

Keywords: Quality of life, Epidemiology, Quality of care

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Background: Depression, burnout, and suicide are becoming a major problem among physicians. A survey estimated that around 21% were depressed and 1 in 10 had had suicidal thoughts.[1]

Objectives: Determine the prevalence of depression in rheumatologists from Latin America and factors associated with it.

Methods: Cross-sectional study. Data was collected through an online survey distributed by PANLAR, which included demographics and work-related factors. Depression was measured with PHQ-9 questionnaire, burnout with the Maslach Burnout Inventory, happiness with the Subjective Happiness Scale and satisfaction with a 7-point Likert scale. Analysis of data was done with SPSS V 27 and included descriptive statistics and association between variables using Chi square and Student’s T test.

Results: 297 rheumatologists were included from 15 countries, mainly Argentina 28.3% and Brazil 26.3%. Most were women 62%, married 65%, practiced adult rheumatology 82% and earned less than $50 K/year 74.8%. Depression