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Response to the letter to the editor

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Dear Editor,

In response to the letter to the editor regarding our article Quality of Life and Sexual Function in Women with Liver Cirrhosis in Colombia[(1)], we would like to state the following: Female sex has consistently been identified in various studies and geographic regions as a negative predictor of quality of life in patients with liver cirrhosis. The observations made about the absence of certain sociodemographic data (educational level, place of origin, and health insurance coverage) in the analysis of these patients' quality of life are valid. In this regard, we would like to clarify that all patients were beneficiaries of the Colombian Mandatory Health Plan (affiliated with a Health Promoting Entity [EPS in Spanish]) and resided in the urban area of Cartagena. Therefore, due to the homogeneity of this information across the sample, these variables were subsequently excluded from the analysis.

Unfortunately, information on educational level was not collected during patient interviews, and a reliable source to obtain this data afterward was not found, which is why it was not included in the study. Although we were unable to quantify the patients' income, we did gather socioeconomic stratum data (ranging from 1 to 6) through the Social Program Beneficiary Identification System (SISBEN), which classifies patients based on income and living conditions. Eighty percent of the patients belonged to strata 1, 2, and 3, which are considered low-income groups.

Regarding the use of the SF-36 version 2 scale, it was selected for the study due to its accessibility, widespread use, and extensive validation in multiple languages, including Spanish, which has proven its utility in various clinical settings. Conversely, although the Liver Disease Quality of Life Instrument (LDQOL) was specifically designed for patients with cirrhosis, its application is more limited, and the fact that it has been used in studies conducted in Colombia and Brazil does not necessarily imply that the survey underwent a validation process prior to its use in those contexts.

We sincerely appreciate your comments and will take them into account for future research in this area.

Sincerely,

The authors

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REFERENCE

1. Yepes Barreto IJ, Arboleda Rivero LA, García Doria ML. Calidad de vida y función sexual en mujeres con cirrosis hepática en Colombia. Rev Colomb Gastroenterol. 2023;38(4):439-47. https://doi.org/10.22516/25007440.1063