



## PEER-REVIEW REPORT

**Name of journal:** *World Journal of Gastroenterology*

**Manuscript NO:** 86335

**Title:** Enduring association between irritable bowel syndrome and war trauma during the Nicaragua civil war period: A population-based study

**Provenance and peer review:** Unsolicited Manuscript; Externally peer reviewed

**Peer-review model:** Single blind

**Reviewer's code:** 07025170

**Position:** Peer Reviewer

**Academic degree:** MD

**Professional title:** Doctor

**Reviewer's Country/Territory:** China

**Author's Country/Territory:** Spain

**Manuscript submission date:** 2023-07-07

**Reviewer chosen by:** AI Technique

**Reviewer accepted review:** 2023-07-07 02:46

**Reviewer performed review:** 2023-07-21 19:45

**Review time:** 14 Days and 16 Hours

|                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| <b>Scientific quality</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Excellent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Very good <input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: Good<br><input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Grade E: Do not publish            |
| <b>Language quality</b>   | <input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Priority publishing <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Minor language polishing<br><input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: A great deal of language polishing <input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Rejection |
| <b>Conclusion</b>         | <input type="checkbox"/> Accept (High priority) <input type="checkbox"/> Accept (General priority)<br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Minor revision <input type="checkbox"/> Major revision <input type="checkbox"/> Rejection             |
| <b>Re-review</b>          | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No   |



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|-------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Peer-reviewer<br/>statements</b> | Peer-Review: [ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ] Anonymous [ <input type="checkbox"/> ] Onymous |
|                                     | Conflicts-of-Interest: [ <input type="checkbox"/> ] Yes [ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ] No  |

### **SPECIFIC COMMENTS TO AUTHORS**

This is original research article about the relationship between war exposure and IBS prevalence. Overall, the manuscript is very well written. English language is great, the length of the text and its subdivision are appropriate, explanations are clear and tables are of a high standard. Referencing is very good and an appropriate set is included for readers to understand the relative background. I feel that results of the study have been overstated in some places, which seems to be common for this type of work. However, I believe that the study is worthy of publication. The authors could consider the following questions and comments:-

1. Military personnel may experience different types of treatment during their participation in war, and this variability in treatment between populations may have contributed to the introduction of bias. This topic is worth exploring in the future.
2. Data collection in the form of questionnaires requires good compliance of subjects. This way of including patients may itself exclude residents with emotional problems caused by war (or other factors). This may introduce unnecessary bias.
3. The inclusion of patients needs to be explained graphically (why 1600 people were chosen for the total population), how patients were finally excluded, and how many patients were excluded at each step.
4. Disclose the approval and approval number of the ethics committee in the text.



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**Peer-review model:** Single blind

**Reviewer’s code:** 03645449

**Position:** Peer Reviewer

**Academic degree:** MD

**Professional title:** Doctor

**Reviewer’s Country/Territory:** Iran

**Author’s Country/Territory:** Spain

**Manuscript submission date:** 2023-07-07

**Reviewer chosen by:** Geng-Long Liu (Quit 2023)

**Reviewer accepted review:** 2023-08-03 13:55

**Reviewer performed review:** 2023-08-06 12:20

**Review time:** 2 Days and 22 Hours

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| <b>Scientific quality</b>                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Very good <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade C: Good<br><input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Grade E: Do not publish |
| <b>Novelty of this manuscript</b>                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Excellent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Good <input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: Fair<br><input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: No novelty   |
| <b>Creativity or innovation of this manuscript</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Excellent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Good <input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: Fair<br><input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: No creativity or innovation                                |



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|---|--|
| <b>Scientific significance of the conclusion in this manuscript</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Excellent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Good <input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: Fair<br><input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: No scientific significance   |
| <b>Language quality</b>   | <input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Priority publishing <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Minor language polishing <input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: A great deal of language polishing <input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Rejection |
| <b>Conclusion</b>   | <input type="checkbox"/> Accept (High priority) <input type="checkbox"/> Accept (General priority)<br><input type="checkbox"/> Minor revision <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Major revision <input type="checkbox"/> Rejection          |
| <b>Re-review</b>  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No  |
| <b>Peer-reviewer statements</b>                                     | Peer-Review: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Anonymous <input type="checkbox"/> Onymous  |
|   | Conflicts-of-Interest: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No   |

**SPECIFIC COMMENTS TO AUTHORS**

Overall, the manuscript presents an interesting study investigating the relationship between war trauma and Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS) development in civilians from the Nicaragua Civil War period. The topic is relevant and has potential implications for understanding the impact of war events on gastrointestinal health. However, some parts could benefit from further clarification and improvement:

1. Introduction:
  - o The introduction provides a general overview of IBS prevalence in different regions but lacks a clear statement of the research objective and the rationale for the study. It should clearly state the main research question and hypothesis, which will help readers understand the purpose of the study from the outset.
  - o You should cite relevant reviews on the association between IBS and psychological conditions (<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/31157418/> ; <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/34927759/>)
2. Background and Literature Review:
  - o The literature review on the association between IBS and war trauma is primarily focused on studies conducted on U.S. veterans. To strengthen the relevance of the study, it would be beneficial to include more literature on the association between war trauma



**Baishideng  
Publishing  
Group**

7041 Koll Center Parkway, Suite  
160, Pleasanton, CA 94566, USA  
**Telephone:** +1-925-399-1568  
**E-mail:** [bpgoffice@wjgnet.com](mailto:bpgoffice@wjgnet.com)  
**https://**[www.wjgnet.com](http://www.wjgnet.com)

and IBS in civilian populations, especially from other regions with similar conflict histories.

3. Methods:

- o The methods section needs more information about the specific inclusion and exclusion criteria for participants in the study. Clarifying the criteria for selecting individuals and households for the survey will help readers understand the representativeness of the sample.
- o The number of participants selected for the study (1,600) and the number of eligible adults (1,000) need further justification or explanation. How were these specific numbers determined, and why were they considered adequate for the study?

4. Variables and Instruments:

- o The description of the poverty index (UBN) used for socioeconomic status measurement needs more clarity. Provide a brief explanation of the four indicators and how they are combined to determine the poverty index score.
- o The methodology for the Rome II Modular Questionnaire (R2MQ) validation in Nicaragua needs to be elaborated further. Explain how the 400 individuals were selected, and provide more details about the physician interviews and blinding process.

5. Statistical Methods:

- o The statistical methods section should include more details about the analysis plan and how the associations between war trauma and IBS were assessed. Specifically, provide information on the type of regression model used, covariates included, and statistical significance levels.

6. Ethics:

- o The ethics section mentions approval from the Institutional Review Boards of the University of North Carolina and UNAN-Leon, but it does not elaborate on the ethical considerations taken into account during the study. Include information on informed consent, participant confidentiality, and any potential conflicts of interest.



**RE-REVIEW REPORT OF REVISED MANUSCRIPT**

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**Position:** Peer Reviewer

**Academic degree:** MD

**Professional title:** Doctor

**Reviewer’s Country/Territory:** Iran

**Author’s Country/Territory:** Spain

**Manuscript submission date:** 2023-07-07

**Reviewer chosen by:** Cong Lin

**Reviewer accepted review:** 2023-09-15 10:25

**Reviewer performed review:** 2023-09-15 10:31

**Review time:** 1 Hour

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|---------------------------|---|
| <b>Scientific quality</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Very good <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade C: Good<br><input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Grade E: Do not publish            |
| <b>Language quality</b>   | <input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Priority publishing <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Minor language polishing<br><input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: A great deal of language polishing <input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Rejection |
| <b>Conclusion</b>         | <input type="checkbox"/> Accept (High priority) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accept (General priority)<br><input type="checkbox"/> Minor revision <input type="checkbox"/> Major revision <input type="checkbox"/> Rejection             |
| <b>Peer-reviewer</b>      | Peer-Review: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Anonymous <input type="checkbox"/> Onymous   |



**Baishideng  
Publishing  
Group**

7041 Koll Center Parkway, Suite  
160, Pleasanton, CA 94566, USA  
**Telephone:** +1-925-399-1568  
**E-mail:** [bpgoffice@wjgnet.com](mailto:bpgoffice@wjgnet.com)  
**https://**[www.wjgnet.com](http://www.wjgnet.com)

statements

Conflicts-of-Interest: [ ] Yes [ **Y** ] No

#### **SPECIFIC COMMENTS TO AUTHORS**

Thanks for your revisions.