



RESEARCH ARTICLE

INVESTIGATING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SELF-ESTEEM AND LIFE QUALITY OF
PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED INDIVIDUALS

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between self-esteem and life quality of physically handicapped individuals. Population of this study consisted of physically handicapped individuals who receive treatment at different rehabilitation centers of Istanbul province, and sample consisted of 172 volunteer participants who were selected randomly. Personal information form to determine demographical characteristics of participants prepared by researcher, self-esteem scale to determine self-esteem levels of participants developed by Rosenberg (1965) and adapted to Turkish by Çuhadaroğlu (1986) Life Quality Scale translated in Turkish by Aksungur (2009) were used in study. The data obtained were recorded in SPSS 23.0 Package Program. In accordance with the purpose of researcher, it was determined that this study was a non-parametric study. In this direction Mann Whitney U test, Kruskal Wallis and Spearman correlation analysis were applied. As a result, according to gender; a significant difference was determined in self-esteem levels of physically handicapped individuals and also a significant difference was found in life quality according to ages and participation in sports status. In addition a positive relationship was determined between self-esteem and life quality levels of physically handicapped individuals.

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INTRODUCTION

Although it is known that the disabled people have a very close history, their existence is almost as old as human history. Since the earliest periods of history, attitudes in societies towards disabled people have significantly influenced the health and education services available to people with disabilities. Within the historical development, the approaches of the societies to the disability have been different. In parallel with scientific, technological and cultural developments, it is also seen that there is a tendency in the positive way (Öztürk M. 2011). Nonetheless, personality traits have also gained a momentum. Self, which is the most important factor affecting personality, can also be defined as the special aspect of personality. In this sense, the self is a spiritual and physical concept as a dynamic component of the opinions of the individual's abilities, value judgments, aspirations and ideals. It can be defined as all of the physical and mental potential and self-evaluation according to this potency. (Lawrence D. 1988), (Pişkin M. 1997). Self-concept is the condition that the individual is aware of his identity (İkizler C, and Karagözoğlu C. 1997). Self-esteem can be described as an important personality variable that determines human behavior (Pişkin M. 1997).

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In other words, while one self-evaluates oneself in a positive attitude, self-esteem is rising, but if one self-evaluates oneself in a negative attitude, self-esteem is decreasing. The low level of self-esteem creates an emotion of emptiness in the inner world of the individual, causing various adjustment disorders in social life and gradually disturbing the psychological well-being of the individual. (Karahana TF, and ark. 2004)). The adventure of life, which started with the arrival of human beings in the world, is carried out under difficult conditions and it is in an effort to realize this in the most efficient and high quality manner. The quality of life is expressed as the individual response to the physical, mental and social effects of discomforts affecting individual satisfaction in certain living conditions in daily life (Beal CA, et al. 2004), (Eser E, and ark. 2008), (Üneri Ö, and Memik ÇN. 2007). Life expresses that a person is physically, socially and psychologically active, feels good, and involves life satisfaction. It also says that the quality of life is composed of many components such as health and education services, healthy environment, rights, opportunities, and gender equality, participation in daily life, respectability and security. If one of them is missing, then the feeling of "I live a quality life" is damaged (Zorba E. 2008). This information supports our investigation on the relationship between the level of self-esteem and the level of quality of life in the physical disability, which is the main purpose of our study.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

172 volunteer physically handicapped individuals are selected randomly and treated in different rehabilitation centers in İstanbul. In order to determine the demographic characteristics of the participants by using the data collection tools, the personal information form which was developed by Rosenberg (1965) and Çuhadaroğlu (1986) first formed by the researcher with the aim of measuring the self-esteem levels of the participants, validity coefficient as 0,71, reliability coefficient as 0,75, Self-Esteem Scale in the form of (1) Strongly Disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Agree, (4) Totally agree, which is quart Likert that was adapted in Turkish, and SF-36 (Short Form 36, short form 36), which was translated into Turkish by Aksungur (2009) were used only 9 measures aiming at measuring feelings as one dimension. Reliability coefficient of the scale is 0.86. The scale consists of by five-point Likert scoring and Quality of Life Scale rating form as(1) Strongly Disagree, (2) Rarely, (3) Sometimes, (4) Mostly, (5) Always is used. The data obtained in the study were recorded in the SPSS 23.0 package. By looking at the parametric and nonparametric distribution of the data, it was determined that this research is a nonparametric research. In this direction Man Whitney U and Kruskal Wallis and Spearman correlation analysis were applied.

FINDINGS

When Table 1 examined, it is observed that 44.2% of the volunteers who participated in the study were male, 55.8% were female, 30.2% of them are in the range of 20-29, 14.5% of them are in the range of 30-39, 19.8% of them are in the range of 40-49, and 35.5% are in the age range of 50 and over; 47.7% answered Yes to the question of “do you do physical exercise?”and , 52.3% answered No to the same question; the question of sports year was answered by 59.3% them as 1-5, by 14,0% of them as 6-10, by 16,3% of them as 11-16, and by 10,5% of them as 17 and above; 25,6% of the respondents said that their income level was low, 61,6% of them said it is middle, and 12,8% of them it is high; and 47,1% of the respondents said Yes to the question of “do you have a sportsman in your family” and 52,9% of them said No to the same question.

Table 1. Socio-demographic Attributes of Participants

		Frequency	Percentage
Sexuality	Women	96	55,8
	Men	76	44,2
	Total	172	100,0
Age	20-29	52	30,2
	30-39	25	14,5
	40-49	34	19,8
	50 and above	61	35,5
	Total	172	100,0
Do you sport?	Yes	82	47,7
	No	90	52,3
	Total	172	100,0
Sport Years	1-5	102	59,3
	6-10	24	14,0
	11-16	28	16,3
	17 and above	18	10,5
	Total	172	100,0
Level of Income	Low-income	44	25,6
	Middle-income	106	61,6
	High-income	22	12,8
	Total	172	100,0
Do you have a sportsman in your family?	Yes	81	47,1
	No	91	52,9
	Total	172	100,0

Table 2. Quality of Life and Self-Esteem Level Analysis According to the Gender of Participants

	Sexuality	N	median	min	max	Z	p
Quality of Life	Women	96	27	24	33	-,553	,580
	Men	76	28	26	30		
Self-Esteem	Women	96	24	20	36	-	,006
	Men	76	25	21	31	2,774	

When we look at Table 2, it is seen that the quality of life scores of the women are 27, the males are 28; the self-esteem score of the women is 24, and the males are 25. It has been found that men have a higher score than women in their quality of life and self-esteem scores. A statistically significant difference was found in self-esteem score according to gender ($p < 0.05$). Table 3. When participants' quality of life and self-esteem scores according to age were examined; it is observed that their quality of life has a significant difference between the ages of 30-39, 40-49, and above 50. ($P < 0.001$). Although there was not a statistically significant difference in the self-esteem scores, it is observed that the age group of 50 and above has the highest self-esteem score.

Table 3. Quality of Life and Self-Esteem Level Analysis According to the Age of the Participants

	Age	n	median	min	max	X ²	P	Variation
Quality of Life	20-29 ¹	52	28,00	26,00	33,00	20,070	,000	2-3
	30-39 ²	25	29,00	27,00	31,00			2-4
	40-49 ³	34	28,00	26,00	33,00			
	50 and above ⁴	61	27,00	24,00	33,00			
Self-Esteem	20-29 ¹	52	24,50	21,00	31,00	1,296	,730	-
	30-39 ²	25	24,00	22,00	25,00			
	40-49 ³	34	24,00	22,00	28,00			
	50 and above ⁴	61	25,00	20,00	36,00			

Table 4. Analysis on Quality of Life and Self-Esteem of Participants According to Their Sportiveness

	Sportiveness	N	median	min	max	Z	p
Quality of Life	Yes	82	29,00	24,00	33,00	-2,594	,009
	No	90	27,00	26,00	33,00		
Self-Esteem	Yes	82	24,00	20,00	36,00	-,223	,823
	No	90	24,00	21,00	31,00		

When Table 4 is examined, according to the sporting status of the participants, it was determined that the participants who do sports have a quality of life score as 29.00, and that of non-sportsmen was 27.00; the participants who do sports has a self-esteem score as 24.00, and that of non-sportsmen was 24.00. As a result of the statistical analyzes conducted, a significant difference was found in the quality of life ($p < 0,05$).

Table 5. Relationship between Quality of Life and Self-Esteem of Participants

		1	2
Quality of Life	r	1	
	p	-	
	n	172	
Self-Esteem	r	.427**	1
	p	.021	-
	n	172	172

As seen in Table 5, there was a moderate correlation between quality of life and self-esteem in the positive direction ($r = .427$ $p = .021$).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In the study we conducted to assess the relationship between the quality of life and the self-esteem levels of physically handicapped individuals; When the relationship between the qualities of the participants according to the genders is examined; no significant difference was found between gender and quality of life. When the quality of life scores are examined, it is seen that men have higher quality of life than women. When we look at similar studies; such as the one of Muhwezi (2010), the perceived level of quality of life by women is lower than the one of men. It can be regarded that this situation resulted from the differentiation of the conditions that allow disabled people to benefit from the advantages that the social life offers. It was determined that there was a statistically significant difference in the self-esteem levels of participants according to gender. This difference is due to the fact that men have higher self-esteem than women. When the literature was examined, it was reported that there was no statistically significant difference in self-esteem averages in terms of sex variable in the study performed by Yanlıç (2011). In another study that Büyükşahin (2009) conducted, it was concluded that self-esteem did not differ according to gender. When the related studies are examined in general, (Mullis AK, *et al.*, 1992), (Coopersmith, S. (1959), (Karagöllü, 1995), there is no significant relationship between gender and self-esteem. These findings are not in line with our study.

In this situation, socio-cultural activity areas and transportation possibilities recognized for disabled people have been increased. In this context, it can be said that male individuals may have a more developed self-confidence than women because they have more opportunities to participate in these activity areas. This self-esteem is thought to promote the self-respect of the disabled individuals. In this context, the increase in self-confidence in individuals can be expected to be higher for males than females. When the relation between the level of quality of life of the participants and their age are considered; a statistically significant difference was found. This difference appears to be between the ages of 30-39 and 40-49; and between the ages of 30-39 and 50 and above. The highest quality of life score belongs to the 30-39 age groups. When the literature is examined, there are studies that examine the

relationship between the quality of life and the ages of different participant groups. (Memik NC, and ark. 2007), (Çopaoğlu B. (2008) It is necessary to integrate disabled people at the highest level in society. In order for such integration to be fruitful, it is necessary for the individuals with disabilities to be provided with the living conditions which will allow them to conduct their lives in a way that they receive no or potentially minimum help and support by any other person. The need for assistance varies according to the disability status of the disabled people. When the self-esteem scores of the participants are considered, it is seen that the highest score of self-esteem belongs to the age groups of 25 and 50 and above, although there is no statistical difference. It can be thought that this is because of the fact that the maturation of the people is due to self-fulfillment and good living conditions.

As a result of the statistical analysis, it was found that there was a significant difference in the quality of life among the participants; which is comprised of the ones who do sport (quality of life score is 29.00) and the ones who do not do sports (quality of life score is 27.00). It has been determined that the self-esteem scores of the ones who do sports and the ones who do not do sports is the same, which is 24.00. No statistically significant difference was found between the self-esteem scores and the sporting conditions as a result of the analysis made. Sport offers an environment in which people can develop human relationships. Individuals interact with the people through sport, and they realize that they can overcome any obstacle and be a part of other people. So, we believe the quality of life for people with disabilities may increase as a result of such interactions. A moderate correlation was found between the quality of life and self-esteem in the positive direction. When the literature is examined, no studies that examine the relationship between quality of life and self-esteem have been found. It is thought that as factors in the lives of disabled people such like the opportunities offered to them, the improvement of their living standards, the degree of adoption for personality traits through enjoyment of life, their psychological well-being, the quality of life they have, and the possibilities of their socio-cultural life increase, their self-esteem will also increase in the same direction. As a result, it is observed that disabled people have a significant difference of self-esteem regarding their gender, and of their quality of life regarding their age and sports conditions. In addition, a positive relationship was found between the levels of quality of life of the physically handicapped people and their self-esteem levels. This, we believe, will show parallelism with the socio-cultural differences, the personal characteristics, the habits, the models of behavior, the self-recognition and self-realization of individuals through self-development; along with the conjuncture of individuals for their positive/negative emotions and feelings in the way that they know and realize their own identities.

Advice;

- Disabled persons can be brought into the social environment by expanding the work needed in order to increase the quality of life of disabled people.
- The general self-efficacy, quality of life and self-esteem levels of disabled people can be evaluated.
- This study can be carried out by expanding the sample group representing the general for the determination of the level of quality of life and self-esteem of individuals with disabilities.

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