

Impact of Physical Disabilities on Sexual Esteem and Sexual Depression among Male and Female, Universities' Students in Peshawar

Saima Parwez and Raheela Begum

Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Women University

The present study investigated the impact of physical disabilities on sexual esteem and sexual depression among male and female physically disabled, universities students. A sample of (N=100) physical disabled students were included in this study, consisting of equal number of male and female disabled students, with (N=50). It was assumed that male disabled students score high on sexual esteem scale as compared to female disabled students, and female disabled students score high on sexual depression as compared to male disabled students. Sexual esteem and sexual depression were investigated by the sub scales of sexuality scale. Detail of onset of disability was determined by demographic sheet. Independent sample t-test was run for data analysis. Result of the study showed that male disabled students obtained higher score on sexual esteem scale as compared to female disabled students; while for sexual depression, results showed no difference between male and female disabled students. Our finding concluded that male disabled students have higher sexual esteem than female but have no difference regarding sexual depression .

Keywords: physical disability, sexual esteem, sexual depression, university students

The level of normal functioning, great efficiency and well adjustment, shows that the person is healthy. Health shows that an individual can adjust and perform all daily routine tasks. Healthy individual can perform all necessary activities for balance life. If there are any physical, mental or social challenges, so in humans it is the ability of individuals or communities to adapt and self-manage according to these challenges (Knottnerus, Green., Horst , Jadad, Kromhout, & Smid, 2011). A person will be able bodied if he/she has no illness and can perform daily functioning normally; otherwise he/she will be disabled (Blaxter, 2010).

Disability is an impairment that can be physical, mental and sensational etc, which might be congenital, present from birth or may be non congenital which is acquired during life span (WHO, 2010). The term physical disability refers to the impairment in physical structure, which restricts normal functioning of body parts or movement (World Health Organization, 2007).

In Pakistan, the situation for the physically and mentally challenged is bleak. At state level physically impaired people are much neglected. Although both gender are neglected but condition for female is very worse and this situation is more common in rural areas because of the poor facilities provided to them for example absence of proper healthcare; guidance at puberty, awareness regarding coping strategies of disability. Statistically the number of female handicapped is

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Dr. Saima Parwez, Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Women University. Email: seemipervez82@hotmail.com

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1. Dr. Saima Parwez has contributed in Structuring and Streamlining the Paper
2. Miss Raheel Bagum has contributed in data collection and data analysis.

more than disabled male. Attitudes towards physically disabled girls are very disappointing, in this male-dominated society, physically impaired girls are even more neglected than their counterparts, so often they suffer from psychological problems such as low self esteem, depression, anxiety, adjustment problems, etc (Mohsin, Saeed, & Zaidy, 2013).

Self-esteem can be defined as our evaluation about ourselves either in positive or negative way. It is what we think about our self (Orth, Trzesniewski, & Robins, 2010). Self esteem may be general or specific, if it is related to over all aspects of life then it will be complete self esteem but if it is related to specific aspect of life then it will be specific self esteem, for example it will be known as body esteem if it is related to body image (Leary, & Baumeister, 2000). General self esteem and specific self esteem is highly co related. So it can be affected by sexual esteem (Taleporos, & McCabe, 2005).

Sexual esteem is the person's evaluation of their sexual aspect as how they are capable of relating sexually with others (McCabe & Talepore, 2002). It can be the positive value an individual view their self sexually appealing and evaluate their sexual personality (Mayers, Heller, & Heller, 2003). As per DSM criteria, depression is feeling of sadness, worthlessness, low mood, irritation which must be present for specific duration and must affect daily life (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). Symptoms of depression relating to sexual aspect of life is known as sexual depression, as a person feel sad and worthless regarding their sexuality (Jennifer, Thurman & Silver, 1997).

A research was conducted by McCabe, Taleporos and Dip (2003) to investigate sexual esteem, sexual satisfaction, and sexual behavior among people with physical disability. For this purpose a sample of 748 members from handicapped population were taken, among which 367 were male and 381 were females and a sample of 448 persons were taken from physically able bodied in which 171 were male and 277 were females. Purpose of the study was to find out a relationship between the intensity and duration of physical disability and sexual esteem, sexual depression, sexual satisfaction and the recurrence of sexual conduct. The result revealed that low level of sexual esteem and higher level of sexual depression was related to severe physical disability as compared to those who have either not a disability or have a low level of physical disability.

Jennifer, Thurman and Silver, (1997), conducted a research on a topic of sexual esteem, sexual depression, and sexual preoccupation in the exchange approach to sexuality. 124 undergraduate students filled the Scale and a Questionnaire sheet. The investigation demonstrated that high score on the Exchange approach to deal with sexuality showed less score on Sexual Esteem and more on Sexual Depression and Sexual Preoccupation than the individuals who showed less score on Exchange. Moreover, male showed higher scores on the preoccupation scale than female.

Mona, Gardos and Brown (1994) explored a relationship between sexual esteem and occurrence of physical disability. The sexual self-regard of 43 ladies with physical disabilities regarding movement was analyzed on the premise of period of-onset and nature of inability. The result showed that as time of-onset of handicap expanded, positive sexual self-esteem diminished fundamentally.

Lowery, Kurpius *et al.*, (2005) conducted a study on college students to find out health related behavior and their impact on self esteem and body image. This study compared both male and female students and found that female has lower self esteem due to negative evaluation of body image and health related behaviour. But in both groups i.e male and female students good health status related to a more positive self esteem body image and behaviour.

Sheldon (2010) conducted a study on college students found that it is because of the social pressure that people evaluate their body negatively or positively, because students compare themselves with the ideal body figure due to perfectionism's relationship and this study concluded that women reported lower body esteem than men.

Disabled people are a large part of our country, but unfortunately they are ignored in all aspects of their life. A lot of work has been done on impact of disability on self esteem, depression and quality of life. The aim of this study is to examine various traits of personality of disabled people, such as sexual self esteem and, sexual depression.

Objectives

- To find out gender differences regarding sexual self esteem, and sexual depression among disabled students

Hypothesis

- Level of sexual self esteem will be higher in male disabled students as compared to female disabled students.
- Level of sexual depression will be low in male as compared to female disabled students.

Method

Sample

The sample was consisted of 100 participants (n=50 male physically disabled students and n=50 female physically disabled students) with age range from 17-35 years. They were selected as purposive sampling techniques. They were recruited from all universities in Peshawar. Physically disabled with other medical conditions (which can cause psychological problems were excluded from the study.

Instruments

Demographic sheet

This form consists of important information regarding students, name, age, the onset of disability, education level, kind of disability, family members, family structure, birth order, marital status, etc.

Sexuality Scale

Sexuality scale was developed by William Snell and Dennis Papini (1989). This scale measures three aspects of your sexuality, which are sexual self esteem, sexual depression and sexual preoccupation. It consists of 30 items, ten for each sub scale. Internal consistency of sexual self esteem scale and sexual depression scale is determined by Cronbach alpha coefficients. Combined alpha for sexual self esteem is .92 and combined alpha of sexual depression is .90.

Procedure

University students having any physical disability, both male and female were included in this study. For this purpose a list of disabled students (list for quota for disability) was taken from administration offices of different universities and students were approached after taking permission from authorities and some time students were directly approached if universities have not any list for their disabled students. Purpose of the study was explained to the students and informed consent was also given to show their willingness to participate in the study, after that scales were administered on them and were thanked at the end.

Results

The research attempted to empirically examine how differences are occurred among male and female regarding their perception of physical disability. The data analysis is mainly consisted of independent sample t-tests. All statistical analysis was carried out with the help of statistical software SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences)

Table 1

Means, Standard Deviation and t- values of the Scores of Male Physically disabled Students and Female Physically disabled Students on Sexual Esteem Scale (N=100)

Groups	N	M	SD	t	p	95% confidence interval of the difference		Cohen's d
						LL	UL	
male	50	2.49	.474			.04	.43	
				2.4	.016			0.49
female	50	2.26	.49			.04	.43	

Table 1 shows mean differences of physically disabled male and female students on sexual esteem scale; that is significant (<0.05). So the table shows that physically disabled male students obtained higher score as compared to physically disabled female students on sexual esteem scale

Table 2

Means, Standard Deviation and t- values of the Scores of Male and Female Physically disabled students on Sexual Depression Scale. (N=100)

Groups	N	M	SD	t	p	95% confidence interval of the difference		Cohen's d
						LL	UL	
male	50	2.30	.56			-.29	.18	
				-.52	.61			0.1
female	50	2.37	.63			-.29	.18	

Table 2 shows the mean difference of male and female physically disabled students on sexual depression scale that is not significant (<0.05) with a p-value of 60.6 %. The table shows that the sexual depression of both the male and female physically disabled student is same.

Discussion

Disabled people face a lot of problems in all aspects of life, but one of the most important aspects which totally ignored in our society is their sexuality. Due to stigmatization of disability, people perceive them as asexual and hence resulted in low sexual esteem and other symptoms. It is because of lack of awareness among people regarding the feelings of disabled people. So research should be done on this aspect to increase knowledge and information regarding sexuality of disabled people, and how it affect male differently from female in our society. Because it is easy for disabled male to get married but very difficult for disabled female to get married, because people perceive them as

unable to involve in sexual activity. So the first hypotheses of the current study stated that “Level of sexual self esteem will be higher in male disabled students as compared to female disabled students”

In male dominant society of Pakistan, female are discouraged in any field of life to live their life satisfactorily, because parents take them as a burden and nothing else and they feel inferior. And male are fully encouraged by their parents and society members to achieve their goal and hence they feel superior to that of female. So therefore their sexual self esteem level is low as compared to male. Table No 1 of the study shows that the mean score of male disabled students is higher than that of the average score of female students. So male disabled students have high level of sexual esteem as compared to female disabled students, and this is also confirmed by previous studies. Snell and Papini (1989) also showed the same result for male and female on sexual esteem. Snell, Fisher, and Schuh (1992), conducted a study on the validity and reliability of sexual self esteem scale and other constructs, they conducted this study for the purpose of finding evidence for validity and reliability of their scale, for this purpose they conducted two studies, so it shows that male have higher level of sexual esteem as compared to female. In one study they found a slightly greater sexual esteem of male than female but in second study found a significant difference in sexual esteem of male and female, with a greater score for male than female. Kelly and Erickson, (2007) also shows the same result that male has higher level of sexual self esteem as compared to female, study was conducted on 84 undergraduate students. They also found that although men score higher on sexual esteem scale as compared to female but still both groups possess low level of sexual esteem.

It is the attitude of others towards disabled people that affect disabled people’s perception about their self and especially their sexual concept about themselves. People considered disabled people as asexual, and it affect disabled people to the extent that disabled people internalized this concept of asexuality and then feel depressed regarding their sexual aspect of life. So there is an intense need to improve knowledge in this aspect of disability. To know about differences it will make the point clear that how disability impact male and female differently. So the second hypotheses of the current study comparing the Level of sexual depression in male as compared to female disabled students

As showed in Table No 2 of the current study, the differences are not significant in the level of sexual depression between male disabled students and female disabled students. This result is compatible with previous results as that of Snell and Papini, (1989), which shows that participants are greatly different on sexual esteem and sexual preoccupation scale but not on sexual depression. Gesinde, Adejumo and Ariyo, (2013) conducted a study on university students to find out their psychological concepts of sexuality aspect of their life. Result of the study showed that there was no significant difference in male and female regarding sexual depression. This is compatible with our result. Snell, Fisher, and Schuh (1992) conducted a study on the validity and reliability of sexual self esteem scale and other constructs, they conducted this study for the purpose of finding evidence for validity and reliability of their scale, for this purpose they conducted different studies. Result of the studies shows the same result that there is no significant difference in sexual depression of male and female. Wiederman and Allgeier (1993) conducted a study on the investigation of sexuality scale, which confirm the results for sexuality scale and also present the same result, which shows that men and women show different score on sexual preoccupation and sexual esteem but have not show any significance difference on sexual depression scale.

Conclusion

The present study was aimed to determine the relationship between physical disability, sexual esteem, and sexual depression, in physically disabled university students in terms of gender and age of onset of disability. The hypotheses of current study compare sexual esteem, sexual depression in male and female disabled students.

Through our result it was found that that male disabled students score high on sexual esteem scale as compared to female disabled students. So it can be concluded that congenital disabilities existed by birth or by early age of life. Individual with this type of disability have more positive concept of their self because they have better adapt to their disability, as they have never seen their self without disability. So they have positive sexual esteem and hence better quality of life

In male dominant society of Pakistan, disabled female are discouraged in any field of life to live their life satisfactorily, because parents take them as a burden and nothing else and they feel inferior. And male are fully encouraged by their parents and society members to achieve their goal and hence they feel superior to that of female. So therefore their sexual self esteem level is low as compared to male. But sexual depression is same for both because unconsciously both are affected by their disability at the same level.

Limitation and Recommendation

The first limitation is that only universities students were taken in the study; however any physically disable persons can be affected by the same type of problems. Secondly uneducated persons were not focused. The socioeconomic status of students was not considered. The sample size is 100 which is too short and is taken from universities of only one city so the result cannot be generalized to the whole population.

For future researches physically disable students should be selected from other areas, i-e school and colleges etc. and also disabled from other general population. Uneducated disabled people should also be taken in to consideration that how they feel different from educated disabled people.

As this research study is focused to only one city, so more cities should be included and to make it a comparative study across different cultures.

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