

Screening for perceived health and wellness among professional physical therapists through a holistic viewpoint

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Objective: To look into the perceived health and state of wellness of professional physical therapists in six dimensions of wellness, and compare them on the basis of gender and qualification.

Methodology: This cross sectional survey was performed from February to July 2017 on graduates and postgraduates working physical therapists. A total of 386 participants of both gender aged 24 and above were included in the study via convenience sampling. Undergraduates, non-working graduates and graduates with illnesses were excluded from the study. Perceived wellness survey (PWS) questionnaire was used. T-test and one way ANOVA was applied for statistical analysis of the data using SPSS 20.

Results: The mean scores of the participants for psychological, physical, emotional, spiritual, social

and intellectual dimensions of wellness were 3.9 ± 0.6 , 4.3 ± 0.7 , 4.2 ± 0.7 , 4.3 ± 0.7 , 4.4 ± 0.7 and 4.3 ± 2.2 , respectively. A significant difference was observed between males in females only in terms of physical and spiritual dimensions of PWS, with males scoring higher as compared to females ($p < 0.05$). No statistically significant differences were observed among all the dimensions of wellness in terms of qualification of the participants ($p > 0.05$).

Conclusion: Male professionals had better sense of self perceived wellness in terms of physical and spiritual dimensions as compared to females, however qualification had no effect in terms self-perceived health.

Keywords: Holistic health, physical therapist, wellness.

INTRODUCTION

The dynamic balance between three well-integrated crucial elements; body, spirit and mind, is present in every human being. Various external forces such as poor socioeconomic status, societal pressure, improper health care facilities, cultural pressure and an individual's behavior and attitude towards health leads to the disruption of this essential dynamic balance.¹ The term "Health" is not merely the absence of disease, but a multi-dimensional concept, and it affects every aspect of life including family and social role, work commitment and general well-being.^{2,3} The state of being in good health and the maintenance of equilibrium between mind, body and spirit termed as "wellness".⁴

The transformation of the definition of health towards more holistic perspective emerged at the end of Second World War when the health care needs of the society increased dramatically. This led to the emergence of the term "wellness".⁵ Wellness is a multidimensional term and a holistic concept that includes six aspects of wellbeing; physical, spiritual, emotional, psychological, intellectual and social wellbeing.^{4,6} When an individual is exposed to an alteration, issues among all the domains of wellness arise, and the identification of differences

and ways to correct these alterations is imperative to the maintenance of this equilibrium.^{4,7} It is also important to point out that health is also affected by one's own perception of wellbeing.⁸ Mental evaluation of a person's own health status is referred as "perceived wellness"⁹ and an individual's own knowledge and self-perceived wellness aids a person in to adopt different coping strategies to avoid unfavorable conditions.^{7,9}

The six dimensions of perceived wellness were first pointed out by Adam et al in 1997.¹⁰ Taking physical care of one's own body to fight illnesses or injuries is referred as physical dimension of wellness.¹¹ It is based on the concept of healthy intake of food, water and ample amount of exercise for the physical benefits.¹² Availability of support from friends and family reflects social wellness, and it also refers to the promotion of a positive environment that encourages effective communication within the members of the community.^{9,13} Assurance of lifelong learning by developing skills and abilities in self to live a successful life is termed as intellectual wellness.¹⁴

Physical therapists play an active role to enhance the well-being of the society.^{15,16} However, there is lack of evidence on the status of wellness dimensions among

the professional physical therapists themselves. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to determine dimensions of wellness among professional physical therapists, and to compare them on the basis of gender and qualification.

METHODOLOGY

This cross sectional analytical study was conducted from February to July 2017 at Pakistan Railway Hospital (Rehabilitation Department), National Institute of Rehabilitation Medicine (NIRM) Islamabad, Benazir Bhutto Hospital (BBH), Rawalpindi, Riphah College of Rehabilitation Sciences (RCRS), Islamabad and Lahore campus and University of Lahore (UOL) with a sample size of 386. Data were collected via convenience sampling from graduates and post graduates working physical therapists of both gender aged 24 and above. Undergraduates, non-working graduates and graduates with illnesses were excluded from the study. All participants signed a written informed consent. Perceived wellness survey (PWS) was used as an outcome measurement tool to assess the six dimensions of perceived health including physical, psychological, emotional, spiritual, social, intellectual and emotional wellness, with an internal consistency of ($\alpha = .88$ to $.93$).^{10,17} This questionnaire included 36 items in which 21 were positive items and 15 negative items, randomly placed throughout questioner. Questionnaires were distributed among the participants and their response was collected via six point Likert scale with response score ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree).¹⁷

Statistical Analysis: Wellness domains were compared using independent sample t-test, whereas one way-ANOVA test was applied to determine six dimensions of wellness in terms of qualification of the physical

therapists. Statistical analysis was done using SPSS 21. $p < 0.05$ was considered significant.

RESULTS

Out of 386 participants, 119 (30.8%) were males and 267 (69.2%) were females. A significant difference was observed between males in females only in terms of physical and spiritual dimensions of PWS, with males scoring higher as compared to females ($p < 0.05$). However, no significant differences were observed in terms of psychological, emotional, social and intellectual wellness in terms of gender ($p > 0.05$) (Table 1).

Table 1: Difference in six dimensions of wellness using independent T-test.

Dimensions of Wellness	Male Mean \pm SD	Female Mean \pm SD	P-value
Physical	4.54 \pm 0.6	4.27 \pm 0.7	0.001
Psychological	4.04 \pm 0.6	3.97 \pm 0.6	0.287
Emotional	4.3 \pm 0.7	4.1 \pm 0.7	0.085
Spiritual	4.5 \pm 0.7	4.2 \pm 0.7	0.000
Social	4.4 \pm 0.7	4.4 \pm 0.7	0.917
Intellectual	4.3 \pm 0.5	4.3 \pm 2.6	0.907

In terms of comparison based on qualification, the values of psychological and physical wellness were found to be highest in MS-SPT participants. Highest value of social wellness was found in participants with MS-CPPT. Intellectual wellness was found to be highest in MS-OMPT whereas the most qualified participants' i.e. PhD showed peak values in emotional and spiritual dimensions of wellness respectively ($p > 0.05$) (Table 2).

Table 2: Comparison of six dimensions of wellness according to qualification using one way ANOVA test.

Qualification	Dimensions of Wellness					
	Psychological	Physical	Emotional	Spiritual	Social	Intellectual
DPT	3.9 \pm 0.6	4.3 \pm 0.7	4.1 \pm 0.7	4.2 \pm 0.7	4.3 \pm 0.7	4.2 \pm 0.6
PP-DPT	4.0 \pm 0.4	4.4 \pm 0.7	4.1 \pm 0.7	4.3 \pm 0.7	4.4 \pm 0.7	4.2 \pm 0.5
MS-OMPT	3.9 \pm 0.5	4.3 \pm 0.7	4.2 \pm 0.6	4.2 \pm 0.7	4.3 \pm 0.6	4.7 \pm 4.8
MS-CPPT	3.8 \pm 0.7	4.2 \pm 0.7	4.2 \pm 0.7	4.3 \pm 1.0	4.5 \pm 0.7	4.2 \pm 0.6
MS-NMPT	4.0 \pm 0.7	4.3 \pm 0.6	4.3 \pm 0.6	4.3 \pm 0.8	4.5 \pm 0.6	4.2 \pm 0.5
MS-SPT	4.2 \pm 0.6	4.5 \pm 0.8	4.2 \pm 0.7	4.8 \pm 0.7	4.3 \pm 0.8	4.4 \pm 0.7
PhD	3.8 \pm 0.6	4.3 \pm 0.5	4.6 \pm 0.5	4.9 \pm 0.6	4.1 \pm 0.6	4.6 \pm 0.5
P-value	0.721	0.844	0.457	0.052	0.730	0.677

DISCUSSION

The current study explores all six dimensions of self-perceived wellness among professional physical therapists, and to the best of our knowledge, no study till date elaborated the wellness dimensions, and determined the gender and qualification based differences in terms of self-perceived wellness, among working physical therapists. However, various studies in terms of social wellness and physical wellness among medical students have been reported.^{11,13}

In the current study, the average values of social and intellectual wellness in females were equal to males but the difference was statistically significant ($p > 0.05$). However, the results of the study conducted by Rehman et al on undergraduate medical students showed higher values of social wellness in females compared to males and difference was found to be statistically significant in terms of group leading qualities and contribution towards social projects.¹³

Another study by Naz and Rehman showed that female medical students had higher intellectual wellness compared to males in terms of analytical reasoning and reading.¹⁸ The current study was specifically conducted on physical therapy practitioners that were working closely with the patients. It has previously been reported that health care professionals experience decline in health and wellness along with some degree of job burnout.¹⁷ Similarly, a study on the military mental health care providers showed increased level of emotional exhaustion among the health care professionals.¹⁹

To measure the six dimensions of wellness, perceived wellness survey was used as a data collection tool. Previous studies also used the similar method to measure the dimensions of wellness.^{17,20} Perceived wellness survey is a reasonably valid and reliable tool for the measurement of dimensions of perceived wellness with an internal consistency 0.91 and convergent validity ranging from $r = 0.37$ to $r = 0.56$.^{17,21} A study by Naugle et al reported no significant differences among males and females in terms of overall score of perceived wellness survey ($p > 0.05$), however, men had greater emotional and less social well-being despite of having more working hours per week compared to female athletic trainers.¹⁷

CONCLUSION

In terms of physical and spiritual dimensions wellness, male physical therapist professionals were found to have better sense of perceived health as compared to females. However, no significant difference was observed in terms of physical therapists' qualification compared to all six dimensions of wellness. This showed that

qualification has no effect on self-perceived wellness of professional physical therapists.

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