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A Comparative Study on the Quality of Life among Veteran Students in Physical Education and Other Fields of Study

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ABSTRACT: This study attempts to compare the quality of life among veteran students in physical education and other fields of study at the Islamic Azad University, Islamshahr Branch. The statistical population comprises a group of veteran students studying at the Islamic Azad University, Islamshahr Branch. A total of 330 subjects were selected as sample based on Morgan's Table. For measuring the quality of life, the Ivans and Coup's quality of life questionnaire was employed. The independent t-test was employed to compare the two groups in terms of quality of life. The findings suggested that there is a difference between the veteran students in physical education and other fields of study in terms of quality of life, altruistic behavior and social relations (01/0 = α). However, there was no significant difference observed between several other factors such as physical environmental, personal development, job satisfaction and innovative behavior.

Keywords: Quality of life, Veterans, Physical education students

INTRODUCTION

Quality of life refers to overall health of individuals, people around them and the conditions provided by a society. It also involves the intrinsic reaction of individuals to their environment. The structural conditions of a society, however, influence an individual's quality of life when it dominates for a long time. Quality of life has been discussed over the recent years concerning how people think, what they wish, and what they need. The definition people associate with their living environment becomes crucial when they have information about the status quo, values, expectations and aspirations (Hardman and Morris 1998).

Quality of life has been defined as perception of an individual or group regarding the fulfillment of their needs and the opportunities to attain wishes and aspirations. Quality of life is an inherent multidimensional factor combined by cognitive and emotional (Anand and Arora 2009). Human body resembles a machine in need of care so as to best carry out vital tasks. One way to keeping the body healthy is continuous workout, which both strengthens body and leads to liveliness and motivation, and ultimately improves human quality of life. In defining the quality of life, it can be stated that such phenomenon can be assessed and elaborated on at individual level, depending on the current lifestyle, past experiences, prospect, dreams and ambitions. Quality of life is supposed to entail the entire living areas, experiences, illness and treatment (Calman, 1990).

With regard to the emphasis on life satisfaction proposed by the quality of life theory, it can be argued that quality of life implies to a certain extent to the quality of awareness, i.e. how positive an internal human experience such as thoughts and feelings are. Quality of life is supposed to entail the entire living areas, experiences, illness and treatment. Accordingly, Ayesha Tabassum (2012) conducted a study titled "Relationship between the Importance of Work Life Quality and Job Satisfaction among Professors at Bangladesh Open University". The findings indicated that there is a positive relationship between job satisfaction and quality of life among professors at Bangladesh Open University. Moreover, the improvement of work life would lead to higher job satisfaction (Ayesha, 2012). On the other hand, Patel *et al.* (2012) investigated "the Effects of Yoga on Physical Performance and Health Concerning the Quality of Life among the Elderly", the results of which derived from a total of 18 qualified papers. The study on 35 elderly people suggested that the benefits of yoga might surpass mere conventional interventions. In fact, it might improve self-esteem, health status, aerobic fitness and strength (Patel *et al.*, 2012).

Randi Jepsen (2015) did the study. The purpose of this study was to examine associations in the patterns of change between objectively assessed physical activity as the independent variable and physical, mental, and obesity-specific QoL and life satisfaction as the dependent variables during a two-year lifestyle intervention. Forty-nine severely obese adults (37 women; years; body mass index kg/m2) participated in the study. Assessments were conducted four times using Medical Outcomes Study Short-Form 36 Health Survey (SF-36), Obesity-Related Problems (OP) scale, a single item on life satisfaction, and accelerometers. The physical component summary (PCS) score and the mental component summary (MCS) score were used as SF-36 outcomes. Associations were determined using linear regression analyses and reported as standardized coefficients (stand. coeff.). Change in physical activity was independently associated with change in PCS (stand. coeff. = 0.35), MCS (stand. coeff. = 0.51), OP (stand. coeff. = -0.31), and life satisfaction (stand. coeff. = 0.39) after adjustment for gender, age, and change in body mass index (Ramezaninejad and Vaez 2010).

Furthermore, Ramezaninejad *et al.* (2010) revealed that quality of life, biological subscales, job satisfaction, social relations and innovative behavior was better in the participants than in the non-participants.

Saglam. M & etal (2015) did a study. The aim of this study was to compare functional capacity, physical activity, and quality of life in hypoxemic and non-hypoxemic patients with COPD. Results: The number of emergency visits and hospitalizations were higher in hypoxemic patients ($P<0.05$). Lung function parameters, 6MWT distance, exercise oxygen saturation, IPAQ total score, and energy expenditure during daily life were significantly lower, but percentage of maximum heart rate reached during the 6MWT was significantly higher, in hypoxemic COPD patients than in controls ($P<0.05$) (Saglam, 2015).

Universities are regarded as organizations in charge of educating and supplying highly competent and specialized manpower for a society, whereas students are counted as the key elements of future manpower at any university. A close look would clarify how an efficient education at different academic levels relies on instructors and students as well as their quality of life. In this respect, there has always been uncertainty whether the attitude and quality of life among students majoring in physical education should be distinguished from those from other fields of study due to a wide variety of practical courses and doing various sports. The problem of improper situation and the broad gap between quality of life among veteran students, inadequate attention paid to their educational conditions, poor quality of life can lead to a wide range of behaviors and performances. Considering this fact that IAU Islamshahr Branch educates a total of 580 veteran students and playing a key role in promoting the culture of self-sacrifice and martyrdom, about 80 of the community major in physical education. Therefore, the researcher aimed to examine the current quality of life among these students through comparing two groups. Hence, a convincing answer should be provided for the question whether there is a difference between veteran students in physical education and those from other fields of study at IAU Islamshahr Branch in terms of quality of life.

METHODOLOGY

This is a causal-comparative research, employing a questionnaire as instrument for data collection. The statistical population comprised a number of veteran students majoring in different fields at Islamic Azad University, Islamshahr Branch. In total, they were reported to be 554 students, from which about 78 majored in physical education and the rest came from other fields of study. Moreover, a total of 301 sample subjects (i.e. 60 majoring in physical education and 241 in other fields of study) were selected randomly based on the Morgan's Table.

In order to assess the quality of life, the Ivans and Coup's questionnaire (1989) was employed. The QLQ was constructed so as to assess the quality of life among the adult subjects. The questionnaire covered 16 aspects of quality of life, containing a total of 192 items. This questionnaire was re-tested by Houshangi *et al.* (1996) who administered six out of sixteen aspects entailing 72 items on a 140-subject sample with an overall reliability of 0.85. The aspects included: physical environmental (12 items), personal development (12 items), job satisfaction (12 items), social relations (12 items), innovative behavior (12 items) and altruistic behavior (12 items).

The statistical measure adopted in this research was independent t-test for comparing quality of life in the two mentioned groups.

FINDINGS

The students were averagely 28.52 years old, while students from other fields of study were 24.52 years old. Moreover, the mean quality of life among physical education students was 38.2, while students from other fields of study obtained 35.14. The results indicated that there was a significant difference between veterain students in physical education and those from other fields of study in terms of mean quality of life factors, social relations and altruistic behavior at significance level of 0.01.

However, there was no significant difference observed between several other factors such as physical environmental, personal development, job satisfaction and innovative behavior (Table 3).

Table 1: Description of mean age among veteran students in physical education and those from other fields of study sorted by gender.

Age				
Field of study	**Gender**	**Mean**	**Number**	**Standard deviation**
Other fields of study	Female	95.25	142	22.8
	Male	12.23	99	44.8
	Total	21.24	241	33.8
Physical education	Female	95.27	21	6.7
	Male	82.28	39	27.9
	Total	52.28	60	38.8

Table 2: Description of quality of life among veteran students in physical education and those from other fields of study.

	Research groups	**Number**	**Mean**	**Standard deviation**
Physical well-being	Physical education	60	4.7	87942.1
	Other fields of study	241	07.7	94.1
Personal development	Physical education	60	38.6	87.1
	Other fields of study	241	37.6	05.2
Job satisfaction	Physical education	60	88.5	06.2
	Other fields of study	241	73.5	58.1
Social relations	Physical education	60	65.6	71.1
	Other fields of study	241	6.5	81.1
Innovative behavior	Physical education	60	6.5	58.1
	Other fields of study	241	87.5	57.1
Altruistic behavior	Physical education	60	28.6	47.1
	Other fields of study	241	47.4	97.1
Quality of life	Physical education	60	2.38	19.6
	Other fields of study	241	14.35	41.6

Table 3: Comparing the quality of life and contributing factors among veteran students in physical education and those from other fields of study through independent t-test.

Quality of life	**T**	**Degree of freedom**	**Significance level**	**Mean difference**
Physical well-being	154.1	299	249.0	321.0
Personal development	034.0	299	973.0	009.0
Job satisfaction	627.0	299	531.0	153.0
Social relations	040.4	299	001.0	04.1
Innovative behavior	-227.1	299	221.0	-297.0
Altruistic behavior	648.6	299	001.0	80.1
Quality of life	329.3	299	001.0	05.3

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

There was a difference between veteran students in physical education and those from other fields of study in terms of mean quality of life and two factors including social relations and altruistic behavior at significance level of 0.01, while there was no such difference observed in case of other factors. The mean quality of life among veteran students in physical education was 2.38, while it was 12.35 among students from other fields of study, which suggested the quality of life was better for veteran physical education students.

The results were consistent with those obtained by Ramezaninejad (2010) [7], Azkia (2010), Patel (2012), Karegarfard (2011) and Elavsky & *et al.* (2005). The results of those researches suggest that physical activity and exercise plays a dramatic role in improvement of individual quality of life across different societies. Similarly in this study, it can be argued that the role of physical activities in improvement of quality of life among veteran students in physical education was more prominent than in students from other fields of study, mainly due to the intrinsic nature of their major engaging students in sports required by credit courses. Exercise and physical activity plays an essential role in public general health, regarded as a vital element in today's society leading to higher quality of life. Illness and disability caused by inactivity can give rise to human suffering and damage to quality of life. People leading an inactive life increase the risk of cardiovascular diseases (World Health Organization 1996). The results demonstrated that mean of social relations among quality of life factors was 65.6 for veteran physical education students, while it was only 6.5 for the others, which indicates the better social relations built by veteran students as compared to those from other fields of study. Moreover, the altruistic behavior proved a greater mean among physical education students than students from other fields of study. The results were consistent with those obtained by Ramezaninejad (2010), Azkia (2010), Patel (2012), Karegarfard (2011) and Elavsky & *et al.* (2005). The results of those researches suggest that physical activity and exercise play a dramatic role in improvement of social relations and altruistic behavior. Similarly in this study, it can be argued that the role of physical activities in improvement of social relations among veteran students in physical education was more prominent than in students from other fields of study, mainly due to the intrinsic nature of their major engaging students in sports required by collaborative credit courses. As for the effect of exercise on physical activity, it can be stated that casual physical activity (playing games) influences social growth, while opinions vary in case of competitive sports. Some scholars deem sports as conducive to personality or character development, while others pose the destructive consequences of sports (Hall *et al.,* (2006). Herpes (1988) argues that sports can be a factor contributing to new friendships, building social bonds among different strata of society, religion and ethnicities. This can engage players and non-players, i.e. spectators and the coach. Regular workout can positively influence the public mental/social health (Sawatzky *et al.,* 2007). The results of this study indicated that there was no significant difference between veteran students in physical education and those from other fields of study in terms of several factors including physical environmental, personal development, job satisfaction and innovative behavior, which was inconsistent with the findings reported by Ramezaninejad (2010), Hagut (2008) and Luke S. Acer *et al.* (2006). The main reasons of inconsistent findings might be associated with the research population. The prior research carried out on the quality of life and contributing factors to the communities constituting the elderly, athletes and ordinary people. This study, however, concerned the veteran students with unique characteristics hindering any dramatic effect on the examined factors due to the practical credit courses to be passed by physical education students. On the other hand, the physical issues plaguing the members of this community could probably explain such inconsistency.

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