

Evaluation of Stress Management Among Physical Therapists

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Abstract— Objective: To analyze the stress management among physical therapists. **Methodology:** This cross sectional study was conducted in different clinics and physical therapy departments of hospitals situated in Karachi city from Jan 2013 to June 2013. Convenience non probability sampling technique was used to select the participants for this study. A validated and modified questionnaire was used to explore the lifestyle habits of physical therapists. The participants for this study were all physical therapists working in different areas of Karachi city. Those physical therapists that filled the inclusion criteria were selected for the study. 100 validated and modified questionnaires along with introductory letter were sent out to the participants. Questionnaires used in this study contained closed ended questions which were analyzed by quantitative methods. After analysis data were presented in the form of tables and figures. **Results:** Study results revealed that findings related to stress management were found to be significant. Majority of respondents individuals always recognize readily when they are under stress condition. They perform effective stress management techniques and have friends and relatives with whom they can discuss their personal problems, feelings and emotions freely and approach for help when needed. **Conclusions:** This study identified that physical therapists manage their stress always. They used to discuss their problems with their close friends and relatives and often spend time in leisure time activities in order to prevent the affects of stress on their daily life and physical/emotional well-being.

Index Terms— Stress Mangement, Physical Therapist

1 INTRODUCTION

The way a person lives is said to be his lifestyle. These are actually the healthy behaviors adopted by any individual in his life. If a person lives his life in such ways that have good impressions and effects upon his health, this will said to be a healthy lifestyle. One who will follow the recommendations of being fit and well will automatically adopt a healthy lifestyle. [1]

- Express his emotions more effectively
- Have good relations with others around him
- Will develop his decision making ability more
- Pay attention towards ethics, values and spirituality
- Anyone's lifestyle reflects his attitude towards the society and for himself as well. Lifestyle of any individual helps us to conclude that is that individually is having or will have highest level of well being or not.
- A healthy lifestyle has great impacts not only on the individual but towards the society as well. Person having a healthy lifestyle will must be having highest levels of well being and thus this will be very good for any society as he or she will give his best in the benefits of the society. [2]

If we go through the components and needs for a healthy lifestyle we will definitely came to know that the healthy lifestyle and wellness and fitness somehow somewhere are interrelated with each other. Like in a healthy life style traditions and family relations are of due importance, yet if go in flashback that we have discussed in the components of wellness the importance of emotional and social wellness. Here we got to

know that both are complimenting each other. Presence of social and emotional wellness will results in good family as well as social relations and that will build up a healthy lifestyle of an individual. This was just the one example. [2], [3]. Daily exercises and adequate sleep, and balancing the demands of work will help to offer a healthy lifestyle. The essential components found in a healthy life style are also related with handling of stress. [4]

There are some very simple ways to keep a physiotherapist from falling prey to stress like following a fitness plan. But the fact is that what you love to do is the thing that could get out of emotional stress. Just a simple example if one hates jogging, but what he observes is that, the jogging is "in" nowadays, so he prefers jogging rather than any other activity. Due to this what happen will be that he could not continue this for a lifetime. Therefore choose what you love to do and what makes you feel relaxed. The physical therapist can adopt any kind of activity that he actually loves to do and which is a source of enjoyment for him. [3], [4].

To get the best benefits from any exercise or fitness plan, the physical therapist must emphasize on the principal of overload. Overload means to give positive stress to your body to some extent that it can adapt it after sometime. A physical therapist can do heavy weight building exercises. In the beginning the body will resist but after sometime it will become use to it and will adopt the change. This will be a positive outcome towards his fitness program. The body will adjust itself to the imposed demands. [5].

2 MATERIAL AND METHODS

100 physical therapists working in different clinics and physical therapy departments of hospitals situated in Karachi city were selected for this study. The participants for this study were selected randomly through the Pakistan Physical Therapy Association database by the convenient non probability sampling technique. The duration of the study was six months from Jan 2013 to June 2013.

Participants were asked to complete the validated and modified questionnaire and returned to the researcher or the person who gave it to them after one week of time. The targeted population of this study was both gender have age range 25 to 55 years and working in different clinics or physical therapy departments of hospitals. Physical therapy students, physical therapists working in academics and who are not currently practicing were excluded from the study. All the questionnaires were delivered in person to the participants along with the introductory letter for participants' convenience. The introductory letter included introduction of researcher, aims of study, and details of data collection and how participants were selected and approached. All the responses were collected in person by the researcher. Initially all responses were coded with a unified coding system and data were entered in to the SPSS 20 according to the unified coding to assure participants anonymity. Each question was coded according to the number of options and a unique code was used for each option of the closed questions. Data analyzed by using Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20. One-way ANOVA followed by Post-Hoc Tuckey multiple range tests and Duncan mean test were used for comparison. Statistical significance will be taken at $p < 0.05$. Data was summarized and reported in the aggregate.

their close friends and relatives the P value was found to be significant (0.638). Those participants who spend time in lei-

| ANOVA | | | | | | |
|---|----------------|----------------|----|-------------|-------|-------|
| | | Sum of Squares | Df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
| I readily recognize when I am under stress (distress). | Between Groups | 0.124 | 1 | 0.124 | 0.313 | 0.577 |
| | Within Groups | 38.786 | 98 | 0.396 | | |
| | Total | 38.910 | 99 | | | |
| I am able to perform effective stress management techniques. | Between Groups | 0.044 | 1 | 0.044 | 0.098 | 0.755 |
| | Within Groups | 44.066 | 98 | 0.450 | | |
| | Total | 44.110 | 99 | | | |
| I have close friends and relatives that I can discuss personal problems and approach for help when needed and with whom I can express my feelings freely. | Between Groups | 0.103 | 1 | 0.103 | 0.222 | 0.638 |
| | Within Groups | 45.457 | 98 | 0.464 | | |
| | Total | 45.560 | 99 | | | |
| I spend most of my daily leisure time in whole-some recreational activities. | Between Groups | 0.277 | 1 | 0.277 | 0.336 | 0.427 |
| | Within Groups | 42.713 | 98 | 0.236 | | |
| | Total | 42.990 | 99 | | | |

sure time activities the p value was a significant (0.427).

3 RESULTS

100 questionnaires were sent out and 100 physical therapists gave their responses to this questionnaire survey. There were 59 female and 41 male. Majority of the participants belonged to an age group whose ages were within 25 years. The results of the study revealed that with respect to stress management there was a significant difference ($P = 0.577$) for those individuals who readily recognize when they are under stress and distress). And for those individuals who are able to perform effective stress management techniques, P value is 0.755 so it is significant. Those individuals who discuss their problems with

Table 1. Stress Management

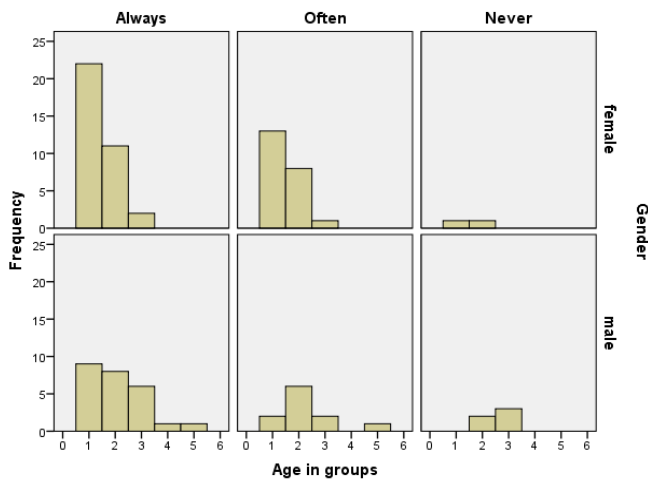


Fig 1. I readily recognize when I am under stress distress

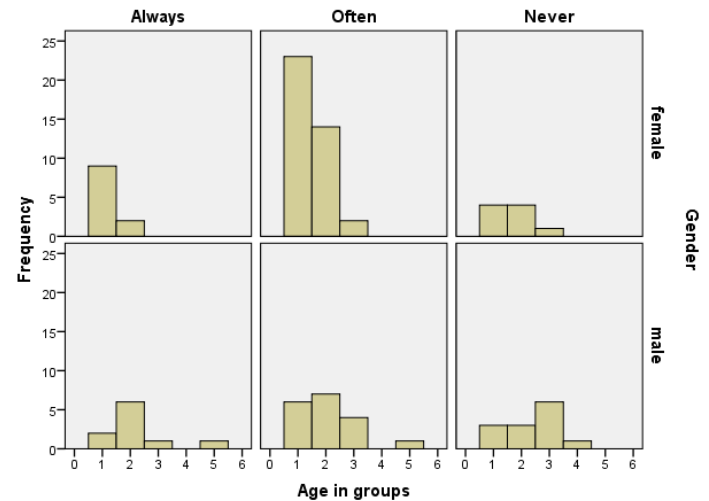


Fig-3. I spend most of my daily leisure time in wholesome recreational activities.

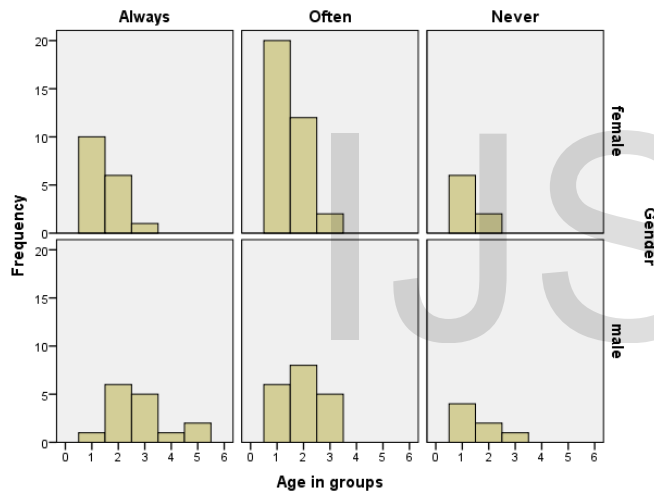


Fig-2. I am able to perform effective stress management techniques.

4 DISCUSSION

This study provides us very important information about the stress management of the physical therapists of Karachi city. There was an acceptable response rate to this validated and modified questionnaire. Number of authors all over the world investigated the fitness of different health care providers and general population. They investigated and included different factors. Some of them are Kadri Suija et al in 2010 conducted a study and reported that the patients themselves took active participation and showed their concern/ interest towards physical activity in order to low their stress level. Especially those patients showed their concern and interest who are suffering from chronic disease (heart disease, diabetes 2, depression and obesity). Most of the people found that physical activity is the key to healthy life. Through physical activity they lower their depression and stress level [4].

Whereas in our study majority of the physical therapists do perform stress management techniques often but not always when they found themselves under stress. They have friends and relatives with whom they can discuss their personal problems, feelings and emotions freely and approach for help when needed.

In another study of Jessica J. Groth, in 2008 results revealed that cigarettes smoking have been common in general population, especially among the young generation. It is reported that athletic trainers make more use of tobacco and cigarettes than the general population and this is not at all good way to lead healthy life style. Tobacco has no health benefits and cigarettes are termed to cause depression and are an unhealthy nutrition. [5]

The results of this study showed that physical therapists

spend their leisure time in wholesome recreational activities in order to lower their stress and depression level rather than indulging themselves in unhealthy habits i.e. consumption of alcohol or tobacco.

In another study of Sarah M. Fenning et al it was reported that in their study have reported that physical therapists as compared to student physical therapists frequently ate a healthy and balanced diet and also consumed caffeine, but they does not ate fast food and if they do then not frequently. The usage of alcohol and cigarettes were same among the Physical therapists and student physical therapists but when drowsiness report was made it was found that student physiotherapists take more naps than physiotherapists. As a PT the stress level of PTs was more than as compared to student physiotherapists but student physical therapist had more techniques to manage their stress level than PT. It was merely not a surprise to know that physical therapists exhibited less frequency, intensity and duration of exercise and exhibited more flexibility as compared to student physical therapists. Over all it is deduced from Sarah M. Fenning et al study that physiotherapists exhibited healthier life style than student physical therapists and broadly their lifestyle differ from each other in areas of their careers.

Whereas our study is comparatively similar to Sarah M. Fenning et al study as for in this study a very few Physical therapists have been reported to exercise regularly, whether it is strength training exercise or flexibility. Here in this study as well majority of the physical therapists do not use alcohol or drugs or don't smoke. They tend to sleep at least 7 to 8 hours per day to begin a healthy new start of the day. In this study as well around 20%-35% PT recognize that when they are under stress and are capable of managing their stress level through sharing it with their friends or families or others and some do it through recreational activities. On over all bases this study shows that, neither all nor few, PTs are lead a healthy life style but they are leading in a manner that they can set an example for their patients and fort coming physical therapists and student physical therapists to lead a healthy life.

5 CONCLUSION

It is evident that majority of the physiotherapists readily recognize themselves when they are under stress conditions and more often they also able to perform stress management techniques. They used to discuss their problems with their close friends and relatives and often spend time in leisure time activities in order to prevent the affects of stress on their daily life and physical/emotional well-being.

6 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is the primary responsibility of physical therapists to endorse healthy living and behavior in their patients. As they are

the role models, so, it is imperative that they themselves should show positive health behavior and healthy way of life.

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