Original Article

Self-Esteem Levels among Patients in a Surgical Ward in Public Sector Tertiary Care Hospitals in Karachi, Pakistan

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ABSTRACT

Objective: To find out the self-esteem levels of the patients admitted in surgical wards of government sector tertiary care hospitals in Karachi.

Study Design: Cross sectional study.

Place and Duration of Study: This study was conducted at the Department of Surgery at Civil Hospital Karachi, Lyari General Hospital, Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Center, Karachi from May 2018 to October 2018.

Materials and Methods: A written informed consent was obtained from each and every patient. A total of 198 subjects were enrolled by non probability convenient sampling majority of which were postoperative. The patients of both sexes of the age ranging from >15 years were included in the study. The State Self-Esteem scale was used for evaluation of self-esteem. The 20 item scale has an acceptable internal consistency (alpha = .92). Self-esteem evaluated can be subdivided into performance self-esteem, social self-esteem, and appearance self-esteem. All items are answered using a 5-point scale (1= not at all, 2= a little bit, 3= somewhat, 4= very much, 5= extremely). All the data was analyzed using SPSS version 17.0.

Results: The studied patients comprised of 144 males and 54 females. The mean age of the patients was 31.36 ±12.31. The mean score of SSE was found to be 45.62 (7.08) showing an overall low self-esteem of the subjects. The mean scores for performance SSE was 17.02 (3.21), Social SSE was 17.12 (3.5) and appearance SSE was 14.5 (3.49). The duration of the disease was found to be significantly associated with the Appearance SSE (p value= 0.000).

Conclusion: Those who have high self-esteem are presumed to be psychologically happy and healthy whereas those with low self-esteem are believed to be psychologically distressed and perhaps even depressed. It was found that duration of disease had a significant impact on the psychological state of the patient which lowered their overall self-esteem.

Key Words: State self-esteem scale, surgical patients

INTRODUCTION

In modern times, reconstructive intervention like surgeries can have very traumatizing effects on psychological health of patients' including their self-esteem. Self-esteem state is actually a feeling of having respect for yourself and your abilities[1].

Self-esteem is built on peoples perspective about themselves by analyzing their mind and body they build a certain emotional response to their body which develop their self-esteem[2]. People with low self-esteem see the world in a more negative way and their general dislike for themselves fades every color around them.

Self-esteem is strongly related to different aspects like depression, loneliness, shyness and alienation which bring down their confidence and their self-image. Acertain law was passed in California to encourage schools to develop programs for improving self-esteem in young children.[3]

Among general surgery patients post-operative complications are the most significant independent risk factors leading to 30-day hospital readmissions[4] which usually leads to change in patient's self-esteem[5]. Patients known surgical results even with the known post-operative discomforts to which they are submitted, is highlighted in many studies, alleging gains because of improvement in appearance which reflects a patient desire to recover self-esteem[6]. Oncoplastic surgeries have shown to have a positive impact on self-esteem of patients undergoing breast-conserving treatment[7]. There has been a lack of consensus on role of hospital

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facilities which were available during the post-operative stay of the patient in hospital which has been shown to be an important aspect of building self-esteem. The objective of the present study was to study self-esteem in post-operative patients in surgical ward of tertiary care public sector hospitals in Karachi, Pakistan.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A cross-sectional study was conducted in the patients of department of Surgery at Civil Hospital Karachi, Lyari General Hospital, Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Center, Karachi, from May 2018 to October 2018. A written informed consent was obtained from each and every patient. A total of 198 subjects were enrolled by non-probability convenient sampling; all of which were postoperative. The patients of both sexes of >15 years of age were included in the study.

The State Self-Esteem scale (SSES)[8] is a commonly used tool to measure self-esteem that is sensitive to laboratory manipulations of self-esteem. The Urdu version of SSES was used in the present study[9]. The scale has acceptable internal consistency (alpha = 0.92) and it is responsive to temporary changes in self-evaluation. Psychometric studies have shown SSES to be separable from mood. The SSES consists of 20 items that tap momentary fluctuations and a participant's self-esteem at a given point in time. The items are subdivided into performance self-esteem, social self-esteem, and appearance self-esteem. All items are answered using a 5-point scale (1= not at all, 2= a little bit, 3= somewhat, 4= very much, 5= extremely).To calculate the total score, all the positively coded items 1, 3, 6, 9, 11, 12, & 14 and reverse coded items 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, & 20 are summed up together. The higher numbers indicate higher state self-esteem. The performance subscale is made up of items 1, 4, 5, 9, 14, 18, & 19. The social subscale is made up of items 2, 8, 10, 13, 15, 17, & 20. The appearance subscale is made up of items 3, 6, 7, 11, 12, & 16. All the data was analyzed using SPSS version 17.0. The study was approved from Ethics Review Committee of Bhitai Dental and Medical College.

RESULTS

In total, 198 post-operative patients were recruited among which 144 (72.7%) were males and 44 (27.3%) females. Most of the patients 81 (40.9 %) were among the age group of 15-25, 78 (39.4%) were 26-40, 31 (15.7%) were 41-55, 8 (4.0%) >55 years of age. The educational status of the enrolled patients was 41 (20.7%) illiterate, 30 (15.7%) primary, 46 (23.2%) secondary, 57 (28.8%) intermediate, 24 (12.1%) were graduate. The occupational status was 56 (28.3%) unemployed, 90 (45.5%) employed, 47 (23.7%) student and 5 (2.5%) were self-employed. The duration of disease in years was 142 (72.7%) less than 3 years, 45

(22.7%) 3-5 years of age and 11 (5.6%) were greater than 5 years of age. (Table 1)

Minimum age included was 15 and maximum age presented was 65 years; mean age was 31.36 ± 12.3. The overall mean SSE score was 45.62 ± 7.08. The mean score on Performance Self-esteem items was 17.02 ± 3.21, Social Self-esteem items was 17.12 ± 3.5 and Appearance Self-esteem items was 14.5 ± 3.49. (Table 2)

Table No.I: Demographics of the studied subjects (N=198)

Parameters Studied	Classification	Frequency	%age
Age in groups (years)	15-25	81	40.9
	26-40	78	39.4
	41-55	31	15.7
	>55	8	4.0
Gender	Male	144	72.7
	Female	54	27.3
Duration of Disease (years)	Less than 3 years	142	71.7
	3-5 years	45	22.7
	Greater than 5 years	11	5.6
Educational Status	Illiterate	41	20.7
	Primary	30	15.2
	Secondary	46	23.2
	Intermediate	57	28.8
	Graduate	24	12.1
Occupational Status	Unemployed	56	28.3
	Employed	90	45.5
	Student	47	23.7
	Self employed	5	2.5

Table No.2: Statistics of Studied variables

Study Variables	Mean (± SD)	95% CI	Range (Min – Max)
Age (in years)	31.36 (12.31)	29.64 – 33.09	53 (15-65)
Overall SSE scores	45.62 (7.08)	44.63-46.61	35 (29-64)
Performance Self-esteem items	17.02 (3.21)	16.56 – 17.47	16 (9-25)
Social Self-esteem items	17.12 (3.5)	16.63 – 17.61	19 (7-26)
Appearance Self-esteem items	14.5 (3.49)	14.01 – 14.99	16 (8-24)

Upon screening for association of duration of disease with performance self-esteem patients with duration of disease less than 3 years were mostly found to have moderate self-esteem n=84 (59.2%), n=25 (17.6%) were having high self-esteem, n=33 (23.3%) had low self-esteem. And those with duration of disease 3-5

years mostly had n=23 (51.1%) moderate self-esteem, n=12 (26.7%) high self-esteem, n=10 (22.2%) were having low self-esteem. While patients had duration of disease greater than 5 year n=6 (54.4%) were having low self-esteem, n=1 (9.1%) had high self-esteem, n=4 (36.4%) were found to have moderate self-esteem. Mean performance self-esteem was found to 17.02 ±3.21. p value was 0.113. (Table 3)

Upon screening for association of duration of disease with social self-esteem patients with duration of disease less than 3 years were mostly found to have moderate self-esteem n=86 (60.6%), n=28 (19.7%) were having high self-esteem, n=28 (19.7%) had low self-esteem. And those with duration of disease 3-5 years mostly had n=27 (60.6%) moderate self-esteem, n=14 (31.1%) high self-esteem, n=4 (8.9%) were having low self-esteem. While patients had duration of disease greater than 5 year n=5 (45.5%) were having moderate self-esteem, n=5 (45.5%) had high self-esteem, n=1(9.1%) were found to have low self-esteem. Mean performance self-esteem was found to 17.12 ±3.5. p value was 0.117.Table 4.

Table No.3: Association of Duration of Disease with Performance Self esteem

		Performance Self-esteem items							
		High self esteem		Moderate Self esteem		Low self esteem			*P* value*
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	
Duration of the Disease	Less than 3 yrs.	25	17.6	84	59.2	33	23.3	142	0.113*
	3 – 5 years	12	26.7	23	51.1	10	22.2	45	
	Greater than 5 yrs.	1	9.1	4	36.4	6	54.5	11	
	Total	38	19.2	111	56.1	49	24.7	198	

P value < 0.05 is significant

Table No.4: Association of Duration of Disease with Social Self esteem

		Social Self-esteem items							
		High self esteem		Moderate Self esteem		Low self esteem			*P* value*
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	
Duration of the Disease	Less than 3 yrs.	28	19.7	86	60.6	28	19.7	142	0.117*
	3 – 5 years	14	31.1	27	60.0	4	8.9	45	
	Greater than 5 yrs.	5	45.5	5	45.5	1	9.1	11	
	Total	47	23.7	118	59.6	33	16.7	198	

P value < 0.05 is significant

Table No.5: Association of Duration of Disease with Appearance Self esteem

		Appearance Self-esteem items							
		High self esteem		Moderate Self esteem		Low self esteem			*P* value*
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	
Duration of the Disease	Less than 3 yrs.	8	5.6	41	28.9	93	65.5	142	0.000*
	3 – 5 years	7	15.6	23	51.1	15	33.3	45	
	Greater than 5 yrs.	3	27.3	1	9.1	7	63.6	11	
	Total	18	9.1	65	32.8	115	58.1	198	

P value < 0.05 is significant

Upon screening for association of duration of disease with appearance self-esteem patients with duration of disease less than 3 years were mostly found to have low self-esteem n=93 (65.5%), n=41 (28.9%) were having moderate self-esteem, n=8 (5.6%) had high self-esteem. And those with duration of disease 3-5 years mostly had n=23 (51.1%) moderate self-esteem, n=15 (33.3%) low self-esteem, n=7 (15.6 %%) were having high self-esteem. While patients had duration of disease greater than 5 year n=7 (63.6%) were having low self-esteem, n=3 (27.3%) had high self-esteem, n=1(9.1%) were found to have moderate self-esteem. Mean performance self-esteem was found to 14.5 ±3.49. p value was 0.00.Table 5.

DISCUSSION

To determine mental well-being, health and self-esteem which is the part of self-concept has always been the focus of many psychological studies particularly after the patient has gone through any reconstructive procedure which, in any form, has altered his/her body image[10-12]. The present study is conducted in a wider angle to observe and compare results with the previous findings and empirically derive a post-surgical screening instrument by which different psychological

outcomes like self-esteem and post-operative satisfaction of a general surgery can be understood.

On different occasions researchers have observed lowered overall self-esteem[1] and 'universal helplessness' among patients diagnosed with chronic illness resulting in long stays in hospital[13]. Similarly, in the present study, duration of the disease due to any chronic illness for which the patient seek stay in hospitals after surgery had significant impact on psychological state which lowered their overall self-esteem.

Although, we did not come across many studies on self-esteem of patients undergoing non-specific general surgical procedures, however, several studies have been conducted on specific surgeries related to specialties especially those procedures which were associated with the appearance and self-esteem of the patient. Honigman et al. (2004) conducted a review of 37 retrospective and prospective studies published from 1960 to 2002 which included preoperative and post-operative states of psychological outcomes including self-esteem(6). Most of the patients were contended and had positive views about them, but these results were more consistently satisfying for breast reduction and augmentation which was directly related to the appearance as compare to other general procedures which otherwise showed lowered self-esteem in the present study.

Individuals with low self-esteem may additionally fail to fulfill and form new social relationships due to the fact they are less likely to go out and participate in social activities. Especially, after surgical treatment, the appalling self-concept due to prolonged stay in hospitals is associated with low self-esteem which might also hinder them from absconding to their 'disease focused world', making it further challenging for them to involve themselves in social interactions and attachments. Another important fact in such patients can be the poor self-image after any surgical procedure which prevents them further from making any interpersonal or social interaction. Evidence suggests that the social interaction and community participation is more important in alleviating the low self-esteem due to chronic disease in such patients[14].

Moreover, it is absolutely necessary that psychological and functional issues related to social interaction, low self-esteem and other negative impacts that might hinder patient's quality of life and performance be identified. A study was conducted to evaluate women's sexual function, self-esteem, body image, and health-related quality of life after colorectal surgery which concluded that surgical treatment of colorectal diseases leads to overall improvement in quality of life and self-esteem, however, a significant decline in sexual function was seen postoperatively[12].

In the current study, association of duration of disease with self-esteem showed that majority of the patients carrying the disease for less than 3 years had moderate self-esteem (59.2%). Majority of those with duration of disease between 3-5 years had (51.1%) moderate self-esteem while those with duration of disease greater than 5 year (54.4%) were having low self-esteem. Thus, making it clear that as the duration of the disease was increased, performance self-esteem decreased deliberately, however, it could be improved if there were positive impact of surgery like in a study on cognitive performance before and after coronary artery bypass graft surgery indicated beneficial effects of CABG surgery on cognitive performance and highlighted the importance of controlling the medical and demographic factors[15,16].

CONCLUSION

Those who have high self-esteem are presumed to be psychologically happy and healthy whereas those with low self-esteem are believed to be psychologically distressed and perhaps even depressed. It was found that duration of disease had a significant impact on the psychological state of the patient which lowered their overall self-esteem.

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