

Title: Quality of Life of Youths with and without Disabilities: A Comparative Study

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Abstract

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Introduction: The objective of this paper is to compare the self-perceived Quality of Life (QOL) of youths with and without disabilities using WHOQOL-BREF instrument.

Methods: A comparative study design was used in this study. A total of 300 disabled students and 523 non-disabled students (Controls) from Malaysian Higher Learning Institutions were involved. Data were collected by face to face interviews using WHOQOL-BREF instrument. The calculation of the mean score of each domain is using computational methods have been provided by WHO in manual WHOQOL-BREF. Descriptive analysis was used to analyze the characteristics of the respondents. The *t-tests* and one-way *ANOVA* were used to compare the mean scores of each domain with selected type of socio-demographics.

Results: Mean age of disabled students were 21.7 years old (SD = 1.9), while non-disabled students were 22.34 years old (SD = 2.59). Overall mean score QOL Controls are higher than disabled students. Except in the social relationship domain, the disabled, students have significantly higher score compared to controls in domain physical, psychological and environmental. There are no significant differences in Overall QOL, physical, social relationship and environment between fields of study of controls. No significant different on overall QOL between types of disabilities, but, there are significant differences in the mean score between the types of disabilities with physical and social relationship domains.

Conclusion: The mean score overall QoL of disabled students is significantly lower as compared to the non-disabled students. There are four items were identified as a factor contributes to lower overall QOL disabled students compare to controls. The items are two from social relationship domain (personal relationship and social support) and also two from global items (overall quality of life and general health)

Keywords: WHOQOL-BREF; disabilities; university students, quality of life; comparative study