

Evaluation of Women's Perceptions toward Wellness

تقويم مدارك النساء نحو العافية

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المستخلص

الأهداف: لتقويم مدارك النساء اتجاه العافية.
المنهجية: تم اعتماد تصميم وصفي وأسلوب التقويم في الدراسة الحالية لتقويم مدارك النساء اتجاه العافية في مدينة بغداد. اختيرت عينة عرضية غير احتمالية من (١٤٠) أمراه من ثلاث مراكز للرعاية الصحية الأولية في مدينة بغداد. تم تصميم وبناء استمارة استبائية لغرض الدراسة مكونة من (٥٧) فقرة. حدد صدق الاتساق الداخلي وثبات المحتوى للاستمارة الإستبائية من خلال احتساب معامل ارتباط كرو نباخ ألفا وتحديد صلاحيتها من قبل مجموعة من (٨) خبراء. تم جمع البيانات من خلال استخدام استمارة البحث والمقابلة كوسيلتين لجمع البيانات. استخدم الأسلوب الإحصائي الوصفي لتحليل البيانات المتضمنة التكرارات، النسبة المئوية، الوسط الحسابي والوسط الحسابي للقيم.
النتائج: بينت نتائج البحث بأن أغلبية النساء يمتلكون إدراك جيد اتجاه ابعاد العافية الخمسة، وهذا بالتالي سينعكس إيجابيا وبشكل مؤكد على صحتهم العامة.
التوصيات: أوصت الدراسة ببحوث أخرى لتقويم نمط حياة النساء باتجاه العافية.

Abstract:

Objective(s): To evaluate women's perceptions toward wellness.

Methodology: A descriptive-evaluation design is employed through the present study to evaluate women's perceptions toward wellness in Baghdad City. A non-probability (purposive) sample of (140) woman is selected from three primary health centers in Baghdad City. A questionnaire, of (57) items, is designed and constructed for the purpose of the study. Split-half internal consistency reliability of the study instrument is determined through computation of Cronbach alpha correlation coefficient and the content validity of the instrument determined through a panel of (8) experts. Data are collected with the study instrument and the interview technique as means of data collection. Data are analyzed by using the descriptive statistical data analysis approach of frequency (F), percentage (%), total score and mean of scores (MS).

Results: The findings of the study reveal that the majority of women have good level of perceptions toward the five dimensions of wellness. Such perception can affect positively and definitely on their overall health.

Recommendations: The study recommends further researches regarding evaluating women's lifestyle toward wellness.

Key Words: Evaluation, Women, Perceptions, Wellness.

Introduction:

Wellness has been known as the positive component of optimal health evidenced by a sense of well-being reflected in optimal functioning, a good quality of life, meaningful work, and a contribution to society⁽¹⁾.

Wellness is an overall well-being. It incorporates the mental, emotional, physical, intellectual, occupational, and spiritual aspects of a person's life. Each aspect of wellness can affect overall quality of life, so it is important to consider all aspects of health⁽²⁾.

Dimensions of wellness is a style to living a healthy and balanced life by recognizing the influences on our well-being. Each dimension is being considered individually but it is important to recognize that the dimensions are not independent of one another: they are interconnected. This means that factors affecting one dimension will often affect others⁽³⁾. A major determinant of communities' health and future generation is women's health⁽⁴⁾. A "well" woman is satisfied with her work; is fulfilled spiritually; enjoys leisure time; is physically fit; is socially involved; and has a positive emotional- mental outlook. The way one perceives each of the dimensions of wellness affects total outlook. The term self-perceptions describes these feelings. Many researchers believe that self-perceptions about wellness are more important than actual ability⁽¹⁾.

Today, evidence is accumulating to indicate that people with a positive outlook are better able to resist the progress of disease and illness than those with a negative outlook. Thinking positively has been associated with enhanced results from various medical treatments and surgical procedures⁽⁵⁾.

Well-being is a positive outcome that is significant for people and for many sectors of society, because it conveys that people perceive that their lives are going well⁽⁶⁾.

The present study aims at evaluate women's perceptions toward wellness to comprehend how women perceive health and wellness to aid in future planning of women's health promotion related strategies.

Methodology:

A descriptive design is used to evaluate women's perception toward wellness in Baghdad City . A purposive "non-probability" sample of (140) woman is selected from the Ideal Training Primary Health Care Center in Al-Rusafah Health Sector and (2) Primary Health Care Centers (Al-Adel and Al-Biya'a) in Al-karkh Health Sector. Women, who are selected, are (18-65) year old and above.

A questionnaire, of (47) items, is designed and constructed for the study by comprehensive review of the relevant literature and related studies. It measures women's perceptions toward the domains of wellness as physical domain (26) items; emotional domain (4) items; intellectual domain (6) items; spiritual domain (4) items and social domain (7) items. All items are rated and scored on three levels type Likert scale as (3) for agree, (2) for not sure and (1) for disagree. Split-half internal consistency reliability of the questionnaire is determined through computation of Cronbach alpha correlation coefficient of ($r=0.87$)⁽⁷⁾. This coefficient has indicated that the scale is adequately reliable measure for the phenomenon underlying the study. Content validity of the questionnaire is determined through panel of (8) experts. Data are

collected by the utilization of the study instrument and the interview technique as means of data collection. Data are analyzed through the application of the descriptive statistical data analysis

approach of frequency (F), percentage (%), total score, Cronbach alpha correlation coefficient, and mean of scores (MS) which is measured as:

$$MS = \frac{(3 * \text{Agree}) + (2 * \text{Not Sure}) + (1 * \text{Disagree})}{\text{Sample Size}}$$

Mean of scores is considered highly significant (M.S = 2.34-3), significant (M.S= 1.67 – 2.33), and not significant (M.S= 1– 1.66).

Results:

Table (1): Overall Evaluation of Women's Perceptions toward Wellness

| Women's Perceptions toward Wellness | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Excellent (176-137) | Good (136-97) | Poor (96-57) |
| 33(23.5%) | 107(76.5%) | 0(0.0%) |

This table depicts that the overall evaluation for the women's perceptions toward wellness is good which is accounted for (76.5 %) of the sample.

Table (2): Mean of Scores for Items of Women's Perceptions toward Physical Wellness

| Items | Agree | Not sure | Disagree | MS | Sig. |
|--|-------|----------|----------|------|------|
| Physical Wellness: | | | | | |
| 1. I think that eating breakfast every day is very necessary. | 129 | 9 | 2 | 2.9 | HS |
| 2. I think that eating fruits and vegetables is very necessary. | 129 | 7 | 4 | 2.9 | HS |
| 3. I think that eating three major meals and two minor meals is important for regulating metabolism. | 73 | 42 | 25 | 2.34 | HS |
| 4. I think that eating fried food is harmful to health. | 96 | 30 | 14 | 2.5 | HS |
| 5. I think that avoiding meals contain high amount of fat is necessary to prevent some diseases. | 118 | 6 | 16 | 2.72 | HS |
| 6. I think that saturated fat (butter) is harmful more than un saturated fat (olive oil). | 101 | 27 | 12 | 2.65 | HS |
| 7. I think that avoiding food that contains high amount of salt can prevent some diseases. | 95 | 33 | 12 | 2.59 | HS |

Continues...

Table(2)To be continued...

| | | | | | |
|---|-----|----|-----|------|----|
| 8. I think that natural food is more healthy than canned food. | 129 | 10 | 1 | 2.9 | HS |
| 9. I believe in avoidance of food that contain preservatives. | 91 | 30 | 19 | 2.5 | HS |
| 10. I do not think that drinking soda is very necessary. | 99 | 25 | 16 | 2.59 | HS |
| 11. I do not think that eating fast food is bad habit. | 56 | 39 | 45 | 2.0 | S |
| 12. I believe that sleeping (8) hours daily is useful to brain health. | 125 | 10 | 5 | 2.85 | HS |
| 13. I do not believe in compensate sleep deficit through napping. | 45 | 35 | 60 | 1.89 | S |
| 14. I think that exercising is useful to health | 130 | 8 | 2 | 2.9 | HS |
| 15. I think that house holed practices e.g. cleaning, garden cleaning and laundry is a type of physical activity which is useful for the body health. | 119 | 16 | 5 | 2.8 | HS |
| 16. I do not believe that maintaining normal weight is necessary to avoid some chronic diseases. | 46 | 18 | 76 | 1.78 | S |
| 17. I do not believe with importance of adhering to treatment by drugs treatments. | 24 | 18 | 98 | 1.7 | S |
| 18. I do not believe in avoidance of narcotic drugs. | 47 | 22 | 71 | 1.83 | S |
| 19. I do not believe in avoidance of illegal drugs. | 42 | 20 | 78 | 1.42 | NS |
| 20. I do not think that taking pain killer drugs is harmful to health. | 36 | 33 | 71 | 1.75 | S |
| 21. I do not believe that avoiding smoking is harmful to health. | 30 | 10 | 100 | 1.28 | NS |
| 22. I do not believe in the importance of avoiding smoking "tobacco or hookah". | 24 | 13 | 103 | 1.43 | NS |
| 23. I do not believe that visiting primary health care centers every year for health assessment is necessary to reach wellness. | 36 | 29 | 75 | 1.72 | S |
| 24. I do not believe that going to a physician, when I feel that there is a need, is necessary for health. | 29 | 14 | 97 | 1.51 | NS |
| 25. I do not believe that knowledge about signs and symptoms of common health problems is necessary to recognize diseases. | 34 | 44 | 62 | 1.8 | S |
| 26. I believe that acquisition of health education is very useful for health. | 133 | 6 | 1 | 2.95 | HS |

MS: Mean of Scores, Sig.: Level of Significance, NS: Not significant (1-1.66), S: Significant (1.67-2.33), HS: Highly Significant (2.34-3)

This table indicates that the mean of scores on items of women's perceptions toward physical wellness is not significant on items 19, 21, 22, 24 and 27; significant on items 11, 13, 16, 17, 18, 20, 23 and 25; highly significant from item 1 to item 10, 12, 14, 15 and 26.

Table (3): Mean of Scores for Items of Women's Perceptions toward Emotional Wellness

| Items | Agree | Not sure | Disagree | MS | Sig. |
|--|-------|----------|----------|------|------|
| Emotional Wellness: | | | | | |
| 1. I think it is important to set your own goals and self-expectations. | 130 | 6 | 4 | 2.87 | HS |
| 2. I don't think it is important to build self-respect and self-confidence. | 42 | 33 | 65 | 1.83 | S |
| 3. I believe in the ability to recognize and share a wide range of feelings with others in a constructive way. | 125 | 8 | 7 | 2.84 | HS |
| 4. I think it is important to learn skills that help to cope with difficult emotions and situations. | 28 | 27 | 85 | 1.9 | S |

MS: Mean of scores, Sig.: Level of Significance, NS: Not significant (1-1.66), S: Significant (1.67-2.33), HS: Highly significant (2.34-3)

This table reveal that significant items of emotional wellness are 2 and 4, and highly significant items are 1 and 3.

Table (4): Mean of Scores for Items of Women's Perceptions toward Intellectual Wellness

| Items | Agree | Not sure | Disagree | MS | Sig. |
|---|-------|----------|----------|------|------|
| Intellectual Wellness: | | | | | |
| 1. I think that reading books is useful for mental health. | 126 | 12 | 2 | 2.88 | HS |
| 2. I think that reading newspaper and magazine is necessary to expand knowledge. | 88 | 18 | 89 | 2.77 | HS |
| 3. I think that learning new language is worthy for developing new skills. | 26 | 19 | 95 | 1.5 | NS |
| 4. I think that participation in cultural activities is very necessary. | 105 | 18 | 17 | 2.62 | HS |
| 5. I think that practicing in activities that develop skills like knitting and sewing. | 108 | 19 | 13 | 2.67 | HS |
| 6. I think that participation in challenging that is dependent on cogitation is useful for my mind. | 118 | 16 | 6 | 2.0 | S |

MS: Mean of scores, Sig.: Level of Significance, NS: Not significant (1-1.66), S: Significant (1.67-2.33), HS: Highly significant (2.34-3)

This table shows the significant item of women's perceptions toward intellectual wellness is 6 and the highly significant items are 1,2,3,4 and 5.

Table (5): Mean of Scores for Items of Women's Perceptions toward Spiritual Wellness

| Items | Agree | Not sure | Disagree | MS | Sig. |
|--|-------|----------|----------|------|------|
| Spiritual Wellness: | | | | | |
| 1. I believe that our spirituality is defined in religious faith, values, ethics and morals. | 127 | 9 | 4 | 2.87 | HS |
| 2. I believe in having a clear sense of right and wrong, and act accordingly. | 124 | 7 | 9 | 2.82 | HS |
| 3. I believe in being able to practice forgiveness and compassion in life. | 122 | 10 | 8 | 2.81 | HS |
| 4. I believe in development of a purpose in life and find meaning to it. | 29 | 41 | 70 | 1.7 | S |

MS: Mean of scores, Sig.: Level of Significance, NS: Not significant (1-1.66), S: Significant (1.67-2.33), HS: Highly significant (2.34-3)

The table present the significant items of perception to spiritual wellness are item 4 and the highly significant are 1, 2 and 3 items.

Table (6): Mean of Scores for Items of Women's Perceptions toward Social Wellness

| Items | Agree | Not sure | Disagree | MS | Sig. |
|--|-------|----------|----------|------|------|
| Social Wellness: | | | | | |
| 1. I believe in having supportive network of family and friends. | 108 | 22 | 10 | 2.7 | HS |
| 2. I believe in balancing social and personal time. | 105 | 25 | 10 | 2.67 | HS |
| 3. I believe that interact with others is a reflection of our social wellness | 128 | 8 | 4 | 2.85 | HS |
| 4. I believe that living with other persons in the community leads to increase of feeling with security and stabilization. | 125 | 10 | 5 | 2.85 | HS |
| 5. I believe that spending time with friends in a meaningful relationships creates better social relations. | 123 | 11 | 6 | 2.83 | HS |
| 6. I believe that the formation of happy and safe Wife hood life is very necessary. | 129 | 6 | 5 | 2.88 | HS |
| 7. I believe that the good social relation with others lead to increase of social connection. | 128 | 9 | 3 | 2.89 | HS |

MS: Mean of scores, Sig.: Level of Significance, NS: Not significant (1-1.66), S: Significant (1.67-2.33), HS: Highly significant (2.34-3)

The table shows that all items of women's Perceptions toward social wellness are highly significant.

Discussion:

Analysis for the evaluation of women's perceptions toward wellness indicates that most of them have good level of perceptions (76.5%) (Table1). This finding indicates that the study sample perceive wellness positively in a way can affect definitely on their overall health.

Overall, wellness is composed of five individual dimensions of health. The goal is to find a good balance between all five dimensions, and continuously pursue equilibrium between each of them. In the pursuit for wellness, strive to improve emotional health, intellectual health, spiritual health, social health, and of course, physical health⁽⁸⁾.

Physical Wellness is the aptitude to maintain a healthy quality of life that allows us to get the most out of our daily activities without undue fatigue or physical stress. This means living responsibly and taking care of our body, and recognizing that our daily habits and behaviors have a significant impact on our overall health, wellness and quality of life. Furthermore, adopting healthful habits (i.e. a balanced diet, regular physical activity, adequate sleep, routine health checks...etc.) while avoiding

destructive habits (i.e. tobacco, drugs, alcohol... etc.) will lead to optimal physical wellness and reduced risk of preventable chronic illness⁽⁹⁾.

In the current study, physical wellness domain in table (2) evaluate how women perceive items regarding healthy eating, sleeping well, exercising, adherence to drug treatments and unhealthy habits; topics that shows women's opinions and believes about physical health and wellness.

Concerning women's perception toward healthy eating (Table2), most of them agree for eating breakfast meal daily, eating fruit and vegetables is very necessary, eating three major meals and two minor meals is important for regulating metabolism, avoiding meals contain high amount of fat and saturated fat (butter) is harmful more than un saturated fat (olive oil), natural food is healthier than canned food and avoidance food that contain high amount of salt. However, there is fluctuation in agreeing for whether eating fast food is bad habit. Now a days fast food become a style to fallow in Iraq. Overall, they seems that they do perceive and value the right ways for eating healthy.

Maintaining a healthy balanced nutrition is important for maintaining optimal health throughout life. For women of childbearing age, good nutrition is essential for preparing the body prior to conception for the demands of pregnancy; women also have special nutrient needs, and, during each stage of a woman's life and these needs change. They should ensure that they informed about and attempt to maintain health ^{(10), (11)}.

Physical activity and exercise is another aspect in physical wellness (Table 2). Exercise helps manage stress and feel better, reduce risk of developing high blood pressure and high cholesterol, maintaining a healthy weight and improve overall mental awareness and psychological wellbeing, social engagement, enhance sleep and reduced risk of fractures ⁽¹²⁾ ⁽¹³⁾ ⁽¹⁴⁾ ⁽¹⁵⁾. The findings regarding this issue revealed that the majority of women agree that exercising is useful to health and that house-holed practice is useful for the body health, in addition to that, most of them believe that maintaining normal weight is necessary to avoid some chronic diseases. Such perception is may be going to reflex positively on their vigor and shape.

Regarding women's perception toward sleep in physical wellness (Table 2), the majority of them believe that sleeping (8) hours daily is useful to brain health and more than halve of them agree that napping compensate sleep deficit.

The science of sleep physiology tells us that the physical, mental and emotional balance of individuals depends on adequate sleep; Managing sleep may be one of the most effective strategies for supporting short-term and long-term well-being ⁽¹⁶⁾.

Another important finding is that the majority of women believe with importance of adhering to drugs treatments, avoidance of narcotic and illegal drugs, and importance of avoiding smoking (Table 2). The Office of the US Surgeon General stated that women are less likely to smoke than men are. In 2013, a large study of women in the United Kingdom found that 2 out of 3 deaths in smokers who were in their 50s, 60s, and 70s were caused by smoking ⁽¹⁷⁾.

The last aspect in physical wellness is adherence to health care and health awareness, most of the sample believe that regular health check-up is necessary to reach wellness and that the acquisition of

healthy awareness and is very useful for health (Table 2).

The second dimension is emotional wellness (Table 3). An important part of emotional wellness is to value who we are and what we do.

A guide for women's emotional wellness stated that women often have many roles and responsibilities in their lives. They can be a mother, a daughter, a friend, a leader, a co-worker, a wife, a partner, a volunteer, a bill payer, a homemaker, and so on – all at the same time. These many roles and tasks can make women feel overwhelmed ⁽¹⁸⁾. According to women's responses, almost all of them agree for the importance of setting our own goals and self- expectations, believe in the ability to recognize and share a wide range of feelings with others in a constructive way, building self-respect and self-confidence. Although, most of them disagree about the importance to learn skills that help to cope with difficult emotions and situations. Such skills need to be learned and aware about from professionals trainers in Iraq and we lack for such activities.

Table (4) deals with the dimension of women's intellectual perceptions toward wellness. To be well intellectually means engaging in

creative and stimulating mental activities to expand knowledge and skills and help in discover the potential for sharing our gifts with others ⁽¹⁹⁾.

The study sample apprehend well that reading books is useful for mental health, participation in challenges that depend on cogitation is useful for mind, participation in cultural activities , reading newspaper and magazine to expand knowledge are all actions promote intellectual wellness. Nevertheless, the majority of them seems not aware that learning new language is worthy for developing new skills.

Items of women's Perceptions toward spiritual wellness (Table 5) is also significant in terms of believing in establishing peace and harmony in their lives. The women agree in believing that spirituality can be present in religious faith, values, ethics and morals, having a clear sense of right, wrong, and act accordingly, and able to practice forgiveness and compassion in life, we as a Muslims believe in such values. But, unfortunately most of them didn't believe in in development of a purpose in life and find meaning to it.

Love and compassion are essential to the spiritual path of the

Muslim. Love, is described as the remedy of all ills and the alchemy of existence; love transforms poverty into riches, war into peace, ignorance into knowledge and hell into heaven. Islam as a comprehensive way of life encompasses a complete moral system that is an important aspect of its world-view⁽²⁰⁾⁽²¹⁾.

Last of all, the perception toward social wellness among the women. Social wellness refers to one's ability to interact with people around them. It involves good communications, having meaningful relationships, respecting our self and others, and creating a supportive system that encompasses family members and friends⁽¹⁹⁾; all these items has been perceived well by the study's sample responses in Table (6), all items are highly significant.

Perceiving health is an indicator of overall health status, it is often more effective than clinical measures for predicting help-seeking behaviors and health service use⁽²²⁾.

Evidence is accumulating to indicate that people with a positive outlook are better able to resist the progress of disease and illness than those with a negative outlook. Thinking positive thoughts has been associated with enhanced results from

various medical treatments and surgical procedures⁽⁵⁾.

In conclusion, most of the sample have good perception toward the five dimensions of wellness. Evaluating women perception toward health and wellness can offer a subjective understanding to health, in general the study sample has believed in wellness as a style for optimal health. Unfortunately, there is no international and national studies to support the finding of the current study.

Recommendations:

Based on the discussion and interpretation of the findings, the study recommends a further research regarding evaluating women's lifestyle toward wellness, and issues of the present study domains printed as a guidelines booklet of promoting women's health toward wellness.

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