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Post-traumatic stress reactions among individuals with visual impairments:

A systematic review

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Purpose: to conduct a systematic review of post-traumatic stress reactions among individuals with visual impairment (VI).

Materials and Methods: Qualitative and quantitative studies were identified through searches in MEDLINE, EMBASE, PsychINFO, CINAHL, Web of Science, and Cochrane Libraries. The literature search was limited to humans, English and Scandinavian languages, and publication year between 1980 and 2017. Study quality was assessed for all the included studies and extracted data were synthesized using narrative analysis.

Results: Of 4235 records identified through literature search, eleven were included in the analyses. Results from the qualitative studies illustrated multiple physical, behavioural, emotional, and cognitive manifestations of trauma. Four out of five quantitative studies showed that various types of potentially traumatic events were significantly associated with mental health adversities ($p < 0.05$). The prevalence of post-traumatic mental disorders was 4.2% for post-traumatic stress disorder, 4–21.2% for depression, 0.9% for dysthymia, and 32% for substance misuse. The quality of the reviewed studies was considered low to moderate.

Conclusions: Traumatic experiences appear to have a great impact on the mental health in people with VI, and these results highlight their need for mental health care. Future studies with higher methodological rigor are recommended.



Bullying among people with visual impairment: Prevalence, associated factors, and relationship to self-efficacy and life satisfaction

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AIM: To examine associated factors of bullying and to determine associations between bullying and psychosocial outcomes among individuals with visual impairments (VI).

METHODS: We conducted an age-stratified cross-sectional survey of adults with VI who were recruited from the Norwegian Association of the Blind and Partially Sighted. Data were collected through structural telephone interviews in the period between February and May, 2017. Linear regression models were used to examine factors related to bullying and associations of bullying with self-efficacy and life satisfaction.

RESULTS: A total of 736 individuals were interviewed. The lifetime and 6-months prevalence of bullying was 41.7% and 8.2%, respectively. The majority of bullied participants reported VI-specific bullying (65.1%). Victimization of bullying was associated with young age, early onset-age of VI, and having other impairments. Participants who reported bullying had lower levels of self-efficacy [Adjusted relative risk (ARR): 0.40, 95% confidence interval (CI): 0.19-0.85] and life satisfaction (ARR: 0.68, 95% CI: 0.51-0.91).

CONCLUSION: Bullying is highly prevalent among individuals with VI. Our findings suggest that interventions to reduce bullying may be beneficial for improving the well-being and life quality of people with VI.



Loneliness among adults with visual impairment: Prevalence, associated factors, and relationship to life satisfaction

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Background: There is a lack of knowledge about loneliness in adults with visual impairment (VI). The aim of the study was to examine the prevalence and associated factors of loneliness among adults with VI, and to study its association with life satisfaction.

Methods: This cross-sectional interview-based study included a probability sample of 732 adults with VI (≥ 18 years) who were members of the Norwegian Association of the Blind and Partially Sighted. The interviews took place from February to May, 2017, collecting information about sociodemographics, VI, adverse events, loneliness (Three Item Loneliness Scale) and life satisfaction (Cantril's Ladder of Life Satisfaction). The prevalence of loneliness was compared to data obtained from the general Norwegian population.

Results: The prevalence of moderate and severe loneliness was 28.7% (95% CI: 25.4–32.1) and 19.7% (95% CI: 16.9–22.8), respectively, demonstrating consistently higher rates across age groups than that of the general population. The risk of loneliness was greater among those with young age, blindness, having additional impairments, a history of bullying or physical or sexual abuse, being unemployed, and being divorced or widowed. Loneliness was inversely associated with life satisfaction among both women (Adjusted RR: 0.58, 95% CI: 0.52–0.65) and men (Adjusted RR: 0.72, 95% CI: 0.65–0.82).

Conclusions: Loneliness is common in adults with VI. Strategies focusing on reducing loneliness of adults with VI could improve their satisfaction with life.



Sexual assaults in individuals with visual impairment: A cross-sectional study of a Norwegian sample

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Objective: To examine the prevalence of sexual assaults among individuals with visual impairment (VI) compared to the general population, and to investigate the association between sexual assault and outcomes of self-efficacy and life satisfaction.

Design: Cross-sectional interview-based study conducted between February and May, 2017.

Participants: A probability sample of adults with VI (≥ 18 years) who were members of the Norwegian Association of the Blind and Partially Sighted. A total of 736 (61%) members participated, of whom 55% were of female gender. We obtained norm data for sexual assaults from a representative survey of the general Norwegian population.

Outcome measures: Sexual assaults (Life Event Checklist for DSM-5), self-efficacy (General Self Efficacy Scale), and life satisfaction (Cantril's Ladder of Life Satisfaction).

Results: The prevalence of sexual assaults (rape, attempted rape, and forced into sexual acts) in the VI population was 17.4% (95% confidence interval (CI): 14.0–21.4) among women and 2.4% (95% CI: 1.2–4.7) among men. For women, the VI population had higher rates of sexual assaults across age strata than the general population. For men, no significant differences were found. In the population of people with VI, the risk of sexual assault was greater in those having other impairments in addition to the vision loss. Individuals with VI who experienced sexual assaults had lower levels of self-efficacy (Adjusted relative risk (ARR): 0.18, 95% CI: 0.05–0.61) and life satisfaction (ARR: 0.31, 95% CI: 0.19–0.50) than others.

Conclusions: The risk of experiencing sexual assault appears to be higher in individuals with



VI than in the general population. Preventive measures as well as psychosocial care for those who have been exposed are needed.