The effects of a combined psychotherapy and physiotherapy group treatment program for survivors of torture incarcerated in an adult prison in Kurdistan, Iraq: A pilot study

The excitation: The survivors of torture are exposed to a large number of psychological problems, and it is possible that they face a series of physical effects, and some of the most common are the long-lasting pain. Like the survivors of torture, prisoners also face mental and physical health problems and long-lasting pain and physical disabilities. The goal of this study is to evaluate the group therapy approach that includes both psychotherapy and physiotherapy for the survivors of torture incarcerated in one of the prisons in Kurdistan, Iraq.

Method

A comparative study was used to compare the group therapy (n = 16) and the waiting list group (n = 11). The group therapy was conducted in a gym with multiple specialties for ten sessions per week. The initial results were measured by a group of symptoms, which included pain, anxiety, depression, and immediate and delayed effects. The secondary results included physical performance and quality of sleep and general satisfaction of the participants.

Results

A statistically significant decrease in all symptoms was observed after the treatment.

Discussion and Conclusions

These results indicate that the combined psychotherapy and physiotherapy program for survivors of torture in an adult prison in Kurdistan, Iraq, is effective in reducing the short-term effects of anxiety and depression and immediate and delayed pain. This study has limited size, deficiencies in measurement, and inability to isolate the effect of each component of the therapy. This study confirms the feasibility of conducting research that follows international standards and practices in areas that were not previously subjected to enough research.