

Sexual Activity of Young Adults With Cerebral Palsy

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Sexual activity is an occupation within the scope of occupational therapy. One of the diagnoses with little discussion within occupational therapy education programs is CP (Lohman, Kobrin, & Chang, 2017). There is limited research regarding the sexual satisfaction of individuals with CP, especially within the occupational therapy literature (Mc Grath & Sakellariou, 2016; Sellwood et al., 2017). The purpose of this proposed study was to examine the prevalence of sexual activity, interest, and satisfaction level of sexual activity for young adults with cerebral palsy (CP) and possible effects of sexual orientation, gender identity, and relationship status using a quantitative non-experimental cross-sectional research design. The study included 82 young adults with CP, ages 18-39 years old, who had access to web-based communication. Demographic information and data from the Patient-Reported Outcomes Measurement Information System (PROMIS) Sexual Function and Satisfaction (SexFS) Version 2.0 was collected via REDCap. Data analysis included descriptive statistics and a one-way ANOVA to compare the effects of sexual orientation, gender identity, and relationship status on interest and satisfaction. Results indicate that young adults with CP identify more as LGBTQAI+ than the general population. Young adults with CP engage in various sexual activities. Young adults' mean scores for interest and satisfaction are within the average range. Cisgender men have more interest in sexual activity than cisgender women, while cisgender women report greater satisfaction. No difference was found between straight and bisexual individuals. Individuals in a relationship have more interest and satisfaction than those who are single. The diverse sexual activities, gender identities, sexual orientations, and relationships statuses of young adults with CP combined with interest and satisfaction levels may be used by occupational therapists and other professionals. Occupational therapists can use the knowledge gained from occupational science to strengthen the understanding of occupation and to therapeutically apply the knowledge so individuals can fully engage in occupations (Society for the Study of Occupation: USA, 2020). This study explored the engagement in the occupation of sexual activity for young adults with CP and interest and satisfaction levels with sexual activity. The knowledge gained from this study, including the diversity of sexual activities, gender identities, sexual orientations, and relationships of young adults with CP, can be used in practice by occupational therapists and other professionals.

References

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