Oral Communication
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Functioning Profiles of Children with Neurodevelopmental Disorders in Libreville

Topic: ICF

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BACKGROUND

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), neurodevelopmental disorders (NDDs) comprise a group of complex conditions that interfere with behavior and cognitive functioning during development. Worldwide, the prevalence of NDDs among children ranges from 5% to 15%. The resulting mental disability requires precise clinical and functional assessment and profiling to support effective management. This study aimed to describe the clinical and functional profiles of children with NDDs in Libreville.

METHODS

This multicenter, descriptive, cross-sectional study used retrospective and prospective data from seven public and private rehabilitation centers over a six-month period, from May to October 2024. Children diagnosed with and receiving care for an NDD according to DSM-5 diagnostic criteria were included. Forty-three relevant items from the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health for Children and Youth (ICF-CY) were selected: 12 body-function items (b), 19 activity and participation items (d), and 12 environmental-factor items (e). The variables examined included epidemiological and clinical characteristics, such as age and sex; functioning in the domains of body functions, activities and participation, and environmental factors; and family experiences.

RESULTS

A total of 303 children were included, with a male predominance of 66.7%. The mean age was 7.5 ± 3.3 years. Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) was present in 42.9%, followed by social communication disorder (SCD) in 40.5% and attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) in 25.4%. The main diagnostic combinations were ASD–ADHD and ADHD–SCD. Among children with ASD, 50.8% had impairments in global psychosocial functions and 39.9% had impairments in mental functions of language. Among children with ADHD, 29.7% had participation restrictions in undertaking multiple tasks. Family attitudes were an important facilitator for children with ASD and ADHD, respectively, in 50% and 43.86% of cases. Government attitudes represented an important barrier for more than 50% of parents. Daily life was considered difficult by 30% of families. Denial was present in 36.8% of parents.

CONCLUSION

ASD appears to be the most frequent NDD, followed by SCD and ADHD. Parents' knowledge of these disorders facilitates their management by rehabilitation professionals.

Statement of Disclosures

None

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