E-Poster

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Association Between Disability and Perceived Discrimination in Chilean Youth: The Role of Social Support and Peer Relationships - Results From the National Disability and Dependency Survey 2022

Topic: Disability Studies

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BACKGROUND

Children and adolescents with disabilities face significant challenges, including limited opportunities, loss of autonomy, and higher rates of discrimination compared to their peers without disabilities. This discrimination negatively impacts their health and well-being. This study aimed to: *i)* examine the association between disability and perceived discrimination among children and adolescents aged 10 to 17 years with and without disabilities; and *ii)* explore how this association varies based on perceptions of social support and peer (SSP) relationships.

METHODS

Data were analyzed from 2,424 participants in the 2022 National Disability and Dependency Survey. Disability was categorized as mild-moderate or severe using the Model Disability Survey criteria. Discrimination was assessed based on self-reports of experiencing discrimination in the past 12 months due to various factors, including gender, age, appearance, nationality, skin color, ethnicity, economic status, place of residence, religion, health or disability, behavior, opinions/thinking style, learning difficulties, or other reasons. SSP relationship was measured using the SSP domain of the KIDSCREEN-27 quality-of-life questionnaire. Logistic regression models were used to assess associations and stratifications by SSP levels.

RESULTS

Youth with disabilities reported higher episodes of discrimination compared to those without disabilities (mild-moderate: 1.77 [±2.23]; severe: 2.31 [±2.35]), with a direct gradient by disability level. Stratified analysis revealed that participants with lower SSP levels experienced higher discrimination incidents. Adjusted association models showed that youth with severe disabilities had more than double the odds of experiencing discrimination compared to their peers without disabilities (OR = 2.20 [95% CI = 1.57, 3.12]). This association remained significant across SSP levels (Low-SSP: OR = 2.25 [95% CI = 1.44, 3.57]; High-SSP: OR = 2.13 [95% CI = 1.25, 3.69]).

CONCLUSION

Discrimination disproportionately affects children and adolescents with disabilities, particularly those with severe disabilities. While perceived SSP relationships marginally reduce the likelihood of discrimination, these findings underscore the urgent need for targeted interventions to address discrimination and strengthen support networks for this vulnerable population.

Statement of Disclosures

None

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