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Quality of Life of Parents of Children With Disabilities in the Northern Region of Morocco

Topic: Disability Studies

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BACKGROUND

Childhood disability affects not only the child but also the entire family, particularly the parents, who are at the forefront of care-giving. They must navigate continuous challenges which significantly impact their quality of life (QoL).

This QoL is not only a key indicator of the well-being of the involved adults but also a crucial factor for the child's overall health and development. Despite its importance, parental QoL remains an overlooked area, especially in contexts where institutional support is limited or inadequate. This study aims to assess the QoL of parents of children with disabilities by examining their psychological and social well-being.

METHODS

This cross-sectional descriptive study was conducted using a questionnaire administered directly by the investigator. The target population included parents of children with various types of disabilities living in the northern region of Morocco. The PAR-QoL questionnaire was used to evaluate their QoL.

RESULTS

A total of 214 parents participated in the study, of whom 86.51% were mothers, 55.30% had a basic educational level, and 90.65% were housewives. 86.45% of the parents had basic health insurance coverage. The children's age means was 9.90 ± 6.17 years old. Among them, 28.04% had an unidentified intellectual disability, 27.57% were diagnosed with cerebral palsy, 25.70% had an autism spectrum disorder, and 18.69% suffered from Down syndrome. Rehabilitation sessions were attended by 82.71% of the children, with 96.60% receiving weekly therapy, while only 39.72% were enrolled in school. The questionnaire analysis revealed a significant impairment in parental QoL, with a mean total score of 48.53. A statistically significant difference was observed between the type of disability and emotional and adaptive scores. The most affected parents were those of children with cerebral palsy (48.66 ± 14.69), whereas parents of children with Down syndrome reported a comparatively better QoL (37.15 ± 12.22) with a $p < 0.001$.

CONCLUSION

This study revealed a significant impairment in parental QoL, especially for those with children having cerebral palsy. Financial and healthcare challenges worsen their burden. Tailored support, including psychological assistance, financial aid, and better services, is crucial for enhancing family well-being and achieving a balanced family dynamic.

Statement of Disclosures

None

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