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Attitudes of Healthcare Providers Towards People With Disabilities in Morocco

Topic: Disability Studies

Kaoutar El Aabedy, Omar El Akadi, Mourad El Madouchi, Yasmine Tirizit, Nabil Soba, Maryam Fourtassi

Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, Mohammed VI University Hospital Tangier, Tangier, Morocco

BACKGROUND

The attitudes of healthcare professionals towards people with disabilities (PWDs) play a crucial role in determining the quality of care they receive. Negative or uninformed attitudes can lead to inadequate healthcare provision, reduced accessibility, and disparities in medical treatment. Despite growing awareness of the challenges faced by PWDs, little is known about the specific perceptions of healthcare providers in Morocco. This study aimed to assess the attitudes of medical and paramedical staff toward PWDs in both clinical practice and daily interactions. Additionally, it sought to identify potential sociodemographic and professional factors influencing these attitudes, with the ultimate goal of informing targeted interventions to improve inclusivity in healthcare settings.

METHODS

This cross-sectional study targeted physicians, medical trainees, nurses and allied-health professionals (including physiotherapists, speech therapists, psychomotor therapists, and prosthetists), in the city of Tangier, Morocco. Participants' attitudes PWDs were evaluated using the Attitudes Toward Disabled Persons (ATDP) scale, a validated tool adapted and translated for the Moroccan context to ensure cultural relevance and accuracy. Additionally, sociodemographic data, professional experience, and personal exposure to PWDs were collected to assess their potential influence on participants' attitudes.

RESULTS

A total of 300 healthcare professionals participated in the study. Among them, 12.1% were physicians, 22.4% were training physicians, 48.8% were nurses, and 16.8% were allied-health professionals. The mean age of participants was 29.86 ± 8.4 years, with 54.1% being men. The average professional experience was 5.42 ± 8.24 years. Notably, 58% reported having a close relationship with a PWD in their personal environment. The mean ATDP score was 64.96 ± 12.8, indicating a moderate level of positive attitudes toward PWDs. The analysis revealed no significant correlation between ATDP scores and sociodemographic factors such as age, gender, marital status, or years of professional experience. However, physicians exhibited the highest ATDP scores, followed by allied-health professionals. Moreover, healthcare professionals with personal exposure to PWDs demonstrated significantly more positive attitudes compared to those without such exposure ($p < 0.05$).

CONCLUSION

The results observed in our study clearly highlight the need to raise awareness among medical and healthcare professionals regarding the specific needs of PWDs. More positive attitudes towards PWDs would definitely improve the quality of healthcare they receive.

Statement of Disclosures

None

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Corresponding Author:
Kaoutar El Aabedy
Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, Mohammed VI University Hospital Tangier, Tangier, Morocco
Email: koukielaabedy@gmail.com