



ATTITUDE OF PHYSIOTHERAPISTS TOWARDS DISABLED PERSONS

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ABSTRACT

BACKGROUND: Attitude is a point of view of some one about unspecified thing. Attitude is a reflecting tool which presents our personality and response towards something or someone which based on knowledge and experience or the personal thoughts. **OBJECTIVE:** The objective of this study is to assess the response of physiotherapist towards disabled person. **METHODS:** A Cross sectional study was conducted over two thirty eight participants. Non probability purposive sampling technique was used. And data was collected form physiotherapists (students and professionals) of different private and government sector. Overall response of physiotherapists was obtained. SPSS version 21 was used for data analysis. Attitude towards disabled person (ATDP Form O) scale was used to assess the attitude towards disabled person. Attitude towards disabled person scale (ATDP Form O) is used for one-dimensional attitude and consists of 20 item scale. **RESULTS:** Out of total 238 participants 216 (90.4%) were those who showed positive attitude towards disabled person and 22 (9.2%) were those who showed negative attitude. In this study overall a very positive response of physiotherapists was obtained towards disabled person. **CONCLUSION:** In this study positive response was obtained by physiotherapists towards disabled person who showed the professional attitude of physiotherapists towards their patients. And further investigation is required to assess what disabled person thought about physiotherapist's response towards them.

KEY WORDS: Disabled person, Attitude, Physiotherapists, ATDP.

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INTRODUCTION

Attitude is a point of view of some one about unspecified thing. Attitude is a reflecting tool which presents our personality and response towards something or someone which based on knowledge and experience or the personal thoughts. Attitude ranges from positivity to the negativity. It shows the personality of someone which may be influenced by environment, understanding and behavior.¹ For measuring the response towards disability, Attitude towards disabled person (ATDP) scale was used which consisted of 20 items. By this scale

maybe evaluated there is positive and negative attitude towards disabled person. Different sub-Scales are also used as measuring tool for assessing attitude towards disabled person which are multi-dimensional scales. But ATDP is used for assessing one-dimensional attitude.² People with special needs face so many issues .There are so many patients lie in this category; neuromotor disorders (e.g. CP, stroke,) and genetic disorders (e.g. Down syndrome), musculoskeletal disorders (e.g. arthritis) which may lead to discontinuity of functions in daily life and make a person disabled. It may occur

due to some accidental causes like loss of limbs etc^{3,4}. Demographic data may not effect on attitude. But in some cases attitude may be changed with demographic variables like age, gender, nationality, socio-economic status and the experience and knowledge of physiotherapist.⁵ These variable may influences the positive and negative attitude towards disabled person. For example, in Nepal in the case of gender, the pregnant females get fewer chances for treatment as compared to non-disabled one. ⁶ Children with special needs suffered very badly as compared to normal one by the negative attitude of society. They faced so many issues in competing with other children having normal life. Stereotype attitude makes such children more reserved and their parents also suffered from the condition of their children from special needs.⁷ Studies have shown the interaction, experience and knowledge impact on his/her attitude towards the disabled person. Researchers have found that positive results may obtained by knowledge and interaction of physiotherapists towards the disabled person. Due to their vast knowledge and as professionals their thinking is different towards disabled person ⁸. Their negative attitude will lead the hurdle to successful rehabilitation.⁹ The attitude may influence a positive or negative impact on the field and may also impact on the reputation of physiotherapist. Positive attitude shows their professionals skills their knowledge. But if there is negative attitude than this will not good for their profession and it may create hurdles in the progress of field.¹⁰ Health care professional's response other than physiotherapists towards such kind of person is different. Occupational therapist has more positive response as compared to nursing group from allied programs. If it is categorized on the basis of undergraduates and professionals, the professionals show more positive response as compared to the undergraduate students .^{11, 12} The purpose of conducting this research is to find out the attitude of physiotherapists towards the disabled person. In our society disabled person are considered very low category where there is no value of disabled person. Disabled persons have so many issues for survival for example they get no proper rights in our

society. The disabled get disappointment and discouragement by the behavior of some professionals. The disabled persons are part of our society and are treated very badly not only by the society but also by some professionals. Proper training and workshops should be conducted for training professionals to treat disabled persons in a better way.

METHODOLOGY

Sample size of Two thirty-eight participants was included in this research and 238 questionnaires were distributed to all students and professionals of physiotherapy and taking consent to participate in the study. Data was collected from physiotherapist of private and government sector and different therapists from different hospitals and private clinics. The participants of different age group were included. Questionnaires were distributed randomly to male and female physiotherapists. Inclusive criteria were fulfilled. Participants were explained about the scope and purpose of the study. "ATDP form O" scale was used in the research to evaluate the response of physiotherapists towards person with special needs. SPSS version 21 was used to analyze the result after scoring the scale. Data was analyzed by the frequency and tables. Mean and standard deviation will be calculated for numerical data like age while qualitative variables will be provided in the form of frequency and percentage.

RESULT

Out of 238 participant's maximum 197 participants were agreed that parents of disabled children should be less strict than other parents. 186 showed positive response about disabled person are just as intelligent as non-disabled one. 154 were agreed that there should be special school for disabled children. Highly positive results of 200 participants out of 238 were obtained in that they declared special community for disabled person and 201 were those who agreed that government should take care of disabled persons. 124 participants showed negative response that disabled people should not be expected to meet same standard of living.

Table 1: Frequency distribution of first ten items of attitude towards disabled person scale

| Sr. no | ATDP items | I disagree very much | | I disagree pretty much | | I disagree a little | | I agree a little | | I agree pretty much | | I agree very much | |
|--------|---|----------------------|------|------------------------|------|---------------------|------|------------------|------|---------------------|------|-------------------|------|
| | | Freq. | %age | Freq. | %age | Freq. | %age | Freq. | %age | Freq. | %age | Freq. | %age |
| Q1 | Strictness of parents of disabled children | 9 | 3.8 | 8 | 3.4 | 24 | 10.1 | 41 | 17.2 | 64 | 26.9 | 92 | 38.7 |
| Q2 | Intelligence of disabled person | 16 | 6.7 | 7 | 2.9 | 29 | 12.2 | 56 | 23.5 | 60 | 25.2 | 70 | 29.4 |
| Q3 | Disabled people easier to get along | 4 | 1.7 | 11 | 4.6 | 50 | 21.0 | 75 | 31.5 | 66 | 27.7 | 32 | 13.4 |
| Q4 | Disabled people feel sorry for themselves. | 10 | 4.2 | 11 | 4.6 | 27 | 11.3 | 68 | 28.6 | 63 | 26.5 | 59 | 24.8 |
| Q5 | Disabled people are same as others | 22 | 9.2 | 15 | 6.3 | 47 | 19.7 | 56 | 23.5 | 54 | 22.7 | 44 | 18.5 |
| Q6 | Special school for disabled | 40 | 16.8 | 28 | 11.8 | 25 | 10.5 | 39 | 16.4 | 45 | 18.9 | 61 | 25.6 |
| Q7 | Special community for disabled persons | 9 | 3.8 | 15 | 6.3 | 14 | 5.9 | 50 | 21.0 | 56 | 23.5 | 94 | 39.5 |
| Q8 | It's up to government take care of disabled | 10 | 4.2 | 6 | 2.5 | 21 | 8.8 | 62 | 26.1 | 55 | 23.1 | 84 | 35.3 |
| Q9 | Most disabled person worry a great deal | 5 | 2.1 | 7 | 2.9 | 12 | 5.0 | 68 | 28.6 | 76 | 31.9 | 70 | 29.4 |
| Q10 | Disabled should not expect same standards | 41 | 17.2 | 24 | 10.1 | 59 | 24.8 | 37 | 15.5 | 39 | 16.4 | 38 | 16.0 |

Table 1: Frequency distribution of first ten items of attitude towards disabled person scale

Out of total 238 participants 144 participants showed positive response that disabled are as happy as others.173 participants were those who agreed that severely disabled people no harder to get along with than those with minor disabilities and 140 participants showed positive response that disabled children don't have normal life.146 participants were agreed that you should not expect too much from

disabled persons.196 participants showed positive response about disabled they agreed that disabled tend to keep themselves much of time on the other hand 196 participants were agreed that disabled persons easily get upset. 218 participants showed high positive attitudes they agreed that we should be careful about speaking in front of disabled person while 178

participants were agreed that disabled people are often grouchy.

Table 2: Frequency distribution for last ten items of attitude towards disabled person scale

| Sr. no | ATDP Items | I disagree very Much | | I disagree Pretty Much | | I disagree a little | | I agree a little | | I agree pretty much | | I agree very much | |
|--------|---|----------------------|------|------------------------|------|---------------------|------|------------------|------|---------------------|------|-------------------|------|
| | | Fre q. | %age | Fre q. | %age | Fre q. | %age | Fre q. | %age | Fre q. | %age | Fre q. | %age |
| 11 | Disabled are happy as others | 21 | 8.8 | 34 | 14.3 | 39 | 16.4 | 64 | 26.9 | 52 | 21.8 | 28 | 11.8 |
| 12 | Severely are no harder to get along | 11 | 4.6 | 25 | 10.5 | 27 | 11.3 | 83 | 34.9 | 60 | 26.1 | 30 | 12.6 |
| 13 | Disabled children can't have normal life | 24 | 10.1 | 19 | 8.0 | 55 | 23.1 | 58 | 24.4 | 52 | 21.8 | 30 | 12.6 |
| 14 | You should not expect too much from disabled. | 35 | 14.7 | 15 | 6.3 | 42 | 17.6 | 65 | 27.3 | 46 | 19.3 | 35 | 14.7 |
| 15 | Disabled tend to keep themselves Much | 1 | 0.4 | 4 | 1.7 | 37 | 15.5 | 75 | 31.5 | 81 | 34.0 | 40 | 16.8 |
| 16 | Disabled person easily get upset | 14 | 5.9 | 6 | 2.5 | 22 | 9.2 | 80 | 33.6 | 72 | 30.3 | 44 | 18.5 |
| 17 | Disabled can't have normal social life | 25 | 10.5 | 13 | 5.5 | 52 | 21.8 | 52 | 21.8 | 54 | 22.7 | 42 | 17.6 |
| 18 | Disabled are not good as others | 8 | 3.4 | 3 | 1.3 | 23 | 9.7 | 59 | 24.8 | 82 | 34.5 | 63 | 26.5 |
| 19 | To have to say in front of disabled people | 4 | 1.7 | 5 | 2.1 | 11 | 4.6 | 52 | 21.8 | 55 | 23.1 | 111 | 46.6 |
| 20 | Disabled people are often grouchy | 20 | 8.4 | 6 | 2.5 | 34 | 14.3 | 91 | 38.2 | 53 | 22.3 | 34 | 14.3 |

| Total ATDP Score | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| Positive attitude | 216 | 90.4 |
| Negative attitude | 22 | 9.2 |

Table 3: Frequency distribution for total score of Attitude towards disability scale

Out of 238 participants 216(90.4%) were those who showed positive response towards disabled person as their ATDP scale score was more than (-60%) and 22(9.2%) were those who showed negative response and their score was low. Overall positive response of

physiotherapists towards disabled person was obtained in this research.

DISCUSSION

In 2015 research was conducted in which students of physiotherapy from UK, Canada, USA, and China was included. They used Hc-Paris questionnaire to evaluate the response of physiotherapists towards person with special needs. The results were very favourable however, the present research study was conducted to assess the attitude of physiotherapists only from single area and instead of Hc- questionnaire, Attitude towards disabled person (ATDP Form O) scale was used here which is designed to assess the one dimensional attitude towards disabled person.¹³

Cross sectional study was conducted to evaluate the response towards disabled persons and different undergraduates of medical field were included and they used interaction with disabled person (ID) scale was used to evaluate the response towards people with disability. However, in this research student of only one discipline was included.¹⁴ Yorke Am, et al, conducted the research in 2017 they used two scales "Attitude towards disability scale" and "Disability attitude in health care" to check the response of physiotherapists towards disabled persons. Students of first and third year were included. Minor difference was found in the attitude of undergraduates of physiotherapy. Overall the attitude of physiotherapists was positive towards disabled person.¹⁵

Similarly a cross sectional study was designed by Morgan, et al, in which 47 students from second year and 45 from fourth year were included. Physiotherapist's response towards specified disabled persons (neurologically disabled persons) was included. They used interaction with disabled person (ID) scale to evaluate the attitude they got, positive response from physiotherapists. On the contrary the research study have not specified group of disabled persons instead of interaction with disabled (ID) ,ATDP Form O was used in this research.¹⁶

Shields, et al conducted the research to evaluate the attitude of nurses towards people with disability similarly to the present study they found the many variables including age and gender may affect the attitude of physiotherapists. They found that knowledge and experience of physiotherapists and their

interaction with disabled person may also affect the results.¹⁷

In future it is investigated to assess the attitude of different health care professionals towards disabled person and also asses the disabled persons thought about attitude of physiotherapists towards them. There were some limitations in this research for example shortage of time and small sample size.

CONCLUSION

In this study positive response was obtained by physiotherapists towards disabled person to show the professional attitude of physiotherapists towards their patients. Further investigation is required to assess the response of disabled persons about the behavior of physiotherapist to him.

ETHICS APPROVAL: The ERC gave ethical review approval.

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE: written and verbal consent was taken from subjects and next of kin.

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AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS:

All persons who meet authorship criteria are listed as authors, and all authors certify that they have participated in the work to take public responsibility of this manuscript. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST: No competing interest declared

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