

The Perceptions of the Employees of the General Hospital of Komotini "Sismanoglio" Towards People with Physical Disabilities

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Introduction

- According to WHO data, about 16% of the world's population, which corresponds to 1.3 billion people, currently faces some form of disability.¹
- The prevalence of disability has been steadily increasing in recent years due to the increase in life expectancy caused by advances in medicine resulting in an ageing global population, and the emergence of chronic diseases.²
- The attitudes of health professionals towards people with disabilities are correlated with the quality of health care provided to them, as well as their ability to adapt to their disability, form their self-image and ultimately evaluate themselves.³
- Health professionals' lack of knowledge about people with disabilities and their perceptions affect access to health care services.⁴

Objective

The aim of this study was to investigate the perceptions of the Hospital's staff towards people with mobility disabilities.

Methods

- A cross-sectional study was performed from December 2023 to January 2024.
- The sample constituted by 162/200 (response rate: 81%) employees of G.H of Komotini, in North Greece.
- A questionnaire was prepared which was based on the standardized scale "Attitudes towards People with Disabilities - Form B" in accordance with other demographic questions followed by questions on the employees' knowledge about disability, the frequency of contact and their relationship with people with mobility disabilities.

Results

- The analysis of the results revealed that most participants were women (73.5%), 40-59 years old (65.4%), married (62.3%) and had higher education level (70.3%) (table 1).
- Also, most of the employees were nursing (35.8%) and medical (24.1%) staff while 58% of the employees were permanent, 25.3% were contract workers and 16.7% were auxiliary workers. 67.9% had worked less than 20 years in the health sector overall while 49.4% had a monthly income of 1001-1500€, 25.9% had less than 1001€ and 24.7% had more than 1500€ (table 2).

Table 1. Demographic data of the sample

| Characteristics | N = 162 | % |
|---------------------------|---------|------|
| Sex | | |
| Male | 43 | 26.5 |
| Women | 119 | 73.5 |
| Age | | |
| 18-29 | 11 | 6.8 |
| 30-39 | 42 | 25.9 |
| 40-49 | 49 | 30.2 |
| 50-59 | 57 | 35.2 |
| 60-69 | 3 | 1.9 |
| Marital status | | |
| Singles | 37 | 22.8 |
| Married | 101 | 62.3 |
| Divorced | 19 | 11.7 |
| Widowers | 5 | 3.1 |
| Number of children | | |
| 0 | 45 | 27.8 |
| 1 | 36 | 22.2 |
| 2 | 67 | 41.4 |
| 3 | 14 | 8.6 |
| Educational status | | |
| Compulsory education | 1 | 0.6 |
| Secondary education | 47 | 29.0 |
| University degree | 82 | 50.6 |
| MSc / PhD | 32 | 19.7 |
| Religion | | |
| Muslims | 23 | 14.2 |
| Christians | 135 | 83.3 |
| Other | 4 | 2.5 |

Results

- Additionally, they had a moderate level of knowledge about disability while the main sources of acquiring knowledge about disability and the life of people with disabilities were the internet, newspapers/magazines/television as well as personal experience with a disabled person, during their work((table 3).
- Also, 65.4% of the participants contacted people who have a mobility disability, mainly due to their work.
- At the same time, 61.1% of employees declared a positive attitude towards people with disabilities, while participants who had contact with people with mobility disabilities but also had more years of professional employment overall in the health sector, had more knowledge about disability.
- Finally, participants with more knowledge showed more positive attitude towards people with disabilities, compared to those with less knowledge.

Table 2. Professional data of the sample

| Characteristics | N=162 | % |
|--|-------|------|
| Category of staff | | |
| Administrative-Technical-Scientific | 42 | 25.9 |
| IMedical | 39 | 24.1 |
| Nursing | 58 | 35.8 |
| Paramedic | 23 | 14.2 |
| Working relationship | | |
| Permanent | 94 | 58 |
| Contract worker | 41 | 25.3 |
| Auxiliary worker | 27 | 16.7 |
| Years of professional employment in the health sector overall | | |
| 0-5 | 36 | 22.2 |
| 6-10 | 36 | 22.2 |
| 11-20 | 38 | 23.5 |
| 21-30 | 28 | 17.3 |
| >30 | 24 | 14.8 |
| Monthly income (€) | | |
| <800 | 5 | 3.1 |
| 801-1000 | 37 | 22.8 |
| 1001-1500 | 80 | 49.4 |
| 1501-2000 | 29 | 17.9 |
| 2001-2500 | 9 | 5.6 |
| >2500 | 2 | 1.2 |

Table 3. Main sources of acquiring knowledge about disability

| Sources of acquiring knowledge about disability | N=162 | % |
|---|-------|------|
| Undergraduate education at the University | 27 | 16.7 |
| Personal experience with a person with a disability at work | 69 | 42.6 |
| Member of my family | 33 | 20.4 |
| Friend, neighbor, etc. | 33 | 20.4 |
| Scientific journals and books | 30 | 18.5 |
| Newspapers, magazines, radio, television | 74 | 45.7 |
| Internet | 84 | 51.9 |

Conclusions

The study showed that information and training is needed among Hospital employees in order to increase the percentage of employees presenting positive attitudes towards people with mobility disabilities in order to combat prejudices and improve the quality of health care provision to people with a mobility disability.

References

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