

Canadian High School Students' Attitudes and Perspectives Towards People with Disabilities, Autism and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

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Abstract : Canadian High School Students' Attitudes & Objective: To survey Canadian high school students regarding their attitudes and perspectives towards people with disabilities and explore how age, gender, and personal experience with a disability may impact these views. Methods: A survey was developed using the standardized Attitude Toward Persons With Disability Scale as its base, with the addition of questions specifically about Autism and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). The survey also gathered information about the participant's age and gender and whether or not they, or a close family member, had any disabilities. Participants were recruited at a public Canadian high school by fellow student researchers. Results: A total of 219 (N=219) students ranging from 13 - 19 years old participated in the study (m= 15.9 years of age). Gender was equally split, with 44% male, 42% female and 14% undeclared. Experience with a disability was common amongst participants, with 25% self-identifying as having a personal disability and 48% claiming to have a close family member with a disability. Exploratory trends indicated that females, people with self-identified disabilities, and people with close family members with disabilities trended towards having more positive attitudes toward persons with disabilities.

Keywords : disability, autism, ADHD, high school, adolescence, community research, acceptance

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