

# Attitude Of Physical Therapist Towards Disable People In Faisalabad

Zarnab Seher<sup>1</sup>, Uswah Mubeen<sup>2</sup>, Maryam Saleem<sup>2</sup>, Rida Mustafa Awan<sup>3</sup>, Hiba Zahid<sup>4</sup>, Rabia Saeed<sup>3</sup>, Sumbal Sohail<sup>3</sup>, Muhammad Farhan Tabassum<sup>5,6\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Physiotherapist in Allied Hospital, Faisalabad, Pakistan

<sup>2</sup> Clinical Physiotherapist, University of Sargodha, Sargodha, Pakistan

<sup>3</sup> Department of Allied Health Sciences, The Superior University Lahore, Faisalabad Campus, Pakistan

<sup>4</sup> Clinical Physiotherapist, SS Poly clinic, Sahiwal, Pakistan

<sup>5</sup> Department of Sport Sciences & Physical Education, Faculty of Allied Sciences, University of Lahore, Lahore, Pakistan.

<sup>6</sup> Department of Mathematics, University of Management and Technology, Lahore, Pakistan.

\*Corresponding Author: Muhammad Farhan Tabassum, [farhanuet12@gmail.com](mailto:farhanuet12@gmail.com)

DOI: 10.47750/pnr.2022.13.04.294

## Abstract

**Background:** Disability is a global health concern and there is no exceptional in Pakistan for disable people. So, being a physical therapist assessment of physical therapies attitude towards disable people is important for which reason we considered Attitude Toward Disabled Persons (ATDP) scale it is based on agreement and disagreement questionnaire from physical therapists of Faisalabad. **Objective:** The current study objective was to investigate the level of attitude toward disabled person among physical therapists. **Methods:** This cross-sectional survey-based study was conducted to examined the attitude of physical therapists towards disabilities using ATDP scale consisting of 20 items based on scoring (+3+2+1-1-2-3) and data was collected from 50 physical therapists of different organization private hospitals, public sectors and physical therapy clinics of Faisalabad. Statistically analysis was done by using SPSS version 23. **Results:** From Population of 50 physiotherapists 25.11% of physiotherapists scored agree very much (+3), 20.12% of them scored agree pretty much (+2), 22.33% of them scored agree to Little (+1), 15.92% of them scored disagree a little (-1), 6.5% of them scored disagree pretty much (-2) 10% off them scored disagree very much (-3). Hence positive attitude is higher than negative attitude. Physical therapists overall have more positive attitude on ATDP questionnaire consist of 20 questions based on attitude options (agree considered positive attitude and disagree considered negative attitude) according to questions the more positive attitude was toward person with disability the more likely they are to be comfortable with challenging rehabilitation. Chi square test shows a significant result of positive attitude of physiotherapist towards disability. **Conclusion:** The study conclude that physical therapists hold moderately positive attitude towards disabled persons and perceived disabled persons as quite similar to non-disabled persons.

**Keywords:** Attitude, disabled persons, physical therapists.

## Introduction:

Health professional provide standard of care towards the person with disability. They provide additional intervention for disable person<sup>1</sup>. Physiotherapist are primary healthcare practitioner who use approaches and are ideally positioned to promote, maintain and re-establish physical activity as a health care provider<sup>2</sup>. The role of physiotherapist in disability is very challenging and aim is to restore, maintain and promote not only optimal physical function but also optional wellness and fitness<sup>3</sup>. The role of physiotherapist is to improve quality of life with disability and play an effective role in multidisciplinary team<sup>4,5</sup>.

A survey of physiotherapist in the Unites States of America indicated that physical activity was the most frequent area of focus for health promotion behavior<sup>6</sup>. Physiotherapist faculty is responsible for assessing persons attitude, capability and knowledge. The quantity of disables person increasing day by day due to social economic and cultural problems<sup>7</sup>. According to the medical model of disability "Society is main factor in disable person leads to functional limitation and impairments which reduces the person quality of life. Measurement or investigation of attitude toward person with disability require innovation experimental methods and psychologically sound instruments that are reliable, valid and multi-dimensional<sup>8</sup>.

Negative attitude toward persons with disabilities are common in our society they are expressed in variety of ways and serve as barriers to full realization health care professionals holds attitudes towards person with disabilities that are similar to those of society as whole<sup>9</sup>. Negative attitude and lack of knowledge on the part of health professionals there is need to ensure better training and education disabilities<sup>10</sup>.

There are comparative studies in literature which shows the difference in attitude of different health professionals. Confounding includes clinical setting, culture system and experience which have greatest effect on attitude. There is difference of perceptions of attitudes in different culture system and multimodal societies<sup>11</sup>. Health care professionals can be facilitators of acceptance and understanding that fosters personal dignity. By raising awareness of disability may lead to change in attitude toward disability<sup>12</sup>.

Physiotherapists play an important role in providing information, support and rehabilitation to person with disabilities. As disable people are being ignored in every field of life. These people have a strong relation with physiotherapist as they spend much of their time with them for rehabilitation purpose. Attitude of these physiotherapist have greater impact on their overall health. So being a physiotherapist we study the attitude of physiotherapist toward disable person. Attitude of physical therapists toward disable persons must be positive for better treatment and fast recovery.

## Methodology

This survey-based cross-sectional study was conducted from 50 practicing physiotherapist aged 25 and above participated in this study. The physiotherapists were selected from various physiotherapist clinics, public and private hospitals of Faisalabad. The physiotherapist who had experience of at least 1 year to 20 years after the completion of degree was selected by convenient sampling technique. Students' pf physical therapy, internes and the non-practicing physiotherapist were excluded from this current study. Ethical approval was obtained from the Shifa college for Girls, Jaranwala Faisalabad.

An informed consent was taken from all the physiotherapist who were the part of this study. Researcher contacts with each respondent personally. The objective of the study was narrated and they asked to voluntarily participate in this research. A valid tool ATDP scale was used to measure the attitude of physical therapists towards disabilities using ATDP scale which measures the degree of positives and negatives stereotypy in non-disabled persons towards the disabled person. This questionnaire has total 20 items with 6-point Likert scale ranging from agree very much (+3) to disagree very much (-3). This questionnaire measures two type of attitude i.e., negative attitude and positive attitude. Negative attitude is indicated by low score on the questionnaire which shows that the subjects perceive disable person as attitude different from physically normal person. Positive attitude is indicated through high scores on the questionnaire which shows that the subject perceives disable person not very different from non-disabled as person.

Hypothesis of this current study was analyzed by using SPSS-23. Descriptive statistics and frequency tables was used to evaluate the results.

## Data Analysis and Results

Among 50 physical therapists, 76% (n= 38) were female and 24% (n= 12) were male. The sample had 8% (n=46) of middle adulthood age physical therapists and 92 % (n=4) belongs to young adulthood. Among 50 physical therapists, 96% (n= 48) had experience of 1-10 years, 2% (n=1) had experience ranging from 11-20 years and 2 % (n=1) had experience of 21-30 years. 76% (n=38) works in hospital setting, 10%(n=5) works in clinics, 8% (n=4) works in other institutes and 6% (n=3) works in rehabilitation centers reported in Tables 1.

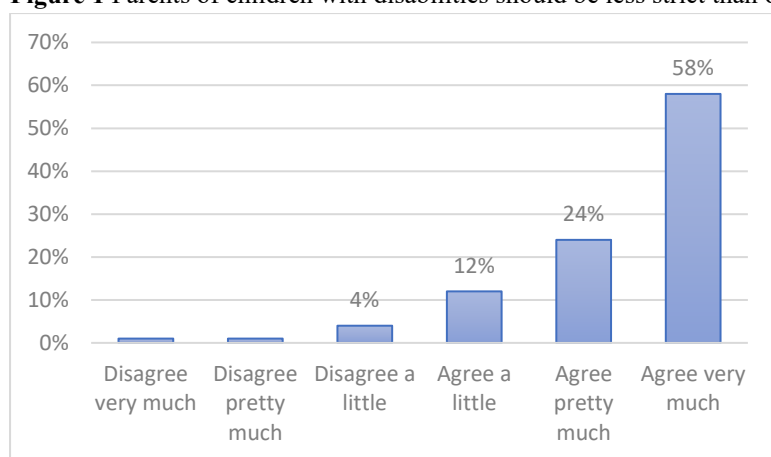
**Table 1** Demographic variables of the respondents (n=50)

Variables	Ranges	Frequency (%)
Age	Young adulthood	46 (92%)
	Middle adulthood	4 (8%)
Gender	Male	12 (24%)
	Female	38(76%)
Work Experiences	1-10 years	48 (96%)
	11-20 years	1 (2%)
	21-30 years	1(2%)

Setup	Clinics	5(10%)
	Rehabilitation center	3(6%)
	Hospitals	38(76%)
	Other institutes	4(8%)

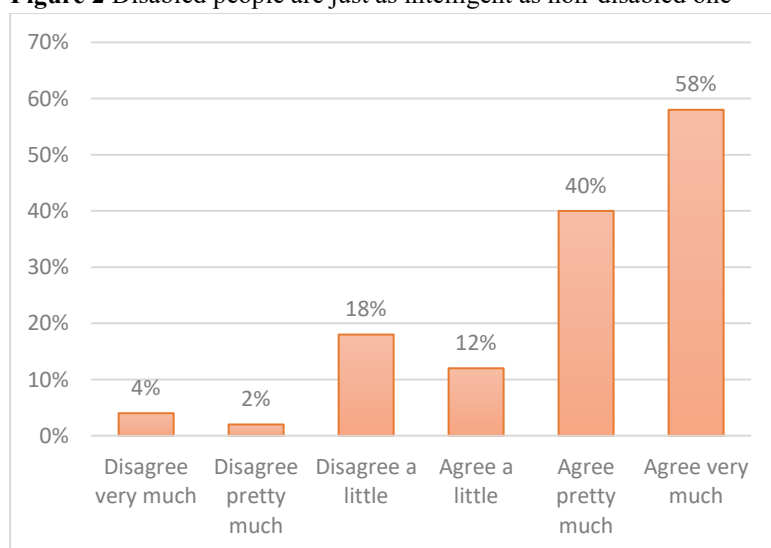
The attitude of physical therapists towards disabled children regarding the idea that their parents should be less inflexible to the disabled children as compared to normal children. Positive attitudes were higher than negative attitude. Among 50 respondents (58% agree a very much, 24% agree pretty much, and 12% agree a little) of physical therapists had positive attitude toward disabled people and (4% disagree a little, 1% disagree pretty much and 1% disagree very much) of them have negative attitude toward disabled people presented in Figure 1.

**Figure 1** Parents of children with disabilities should be less strict than other parents



The positive and negative attitude of Physical therapists toward disabled people that disabled people are just as intelligent as non-disabled one. Positive attitude was higher than negative attitude. Among 50 practices physiotherapist (30% agree a very much, 40% agree pretty much, and 12% agree a little) of physical therapists had positive attitude toward disabled people and 18% (12% disagree a little, and 2% disagree pretty much 4% disagree very much) of them have negative attitude toward disabled people presented in Figure 2.

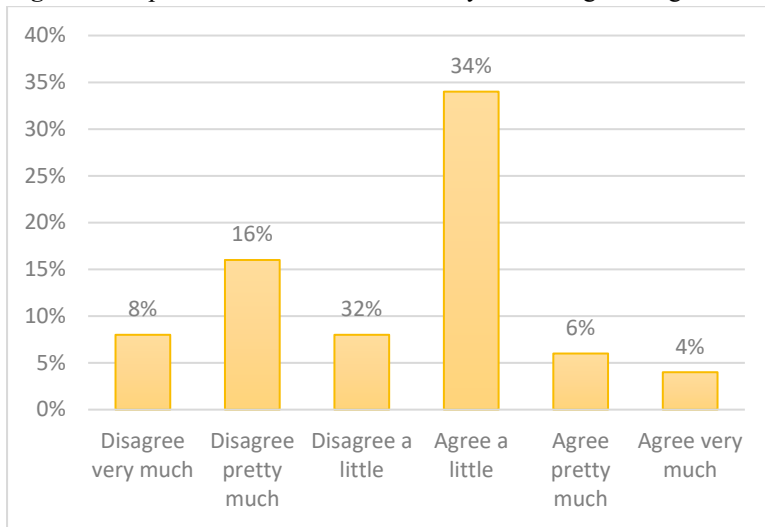
**Figure 2** Disabled people are just as intelligent as non-disabled one



The physical therapist's behavior towards the easy-going disabled persons. Negative attitude was higher as compared to positive attitude toward disabled people. Among 50 participants (34% agree a little, 6% agree pretty much, and 4% agree very much) of physical therapists have positive attitude toward disabled people and (32%

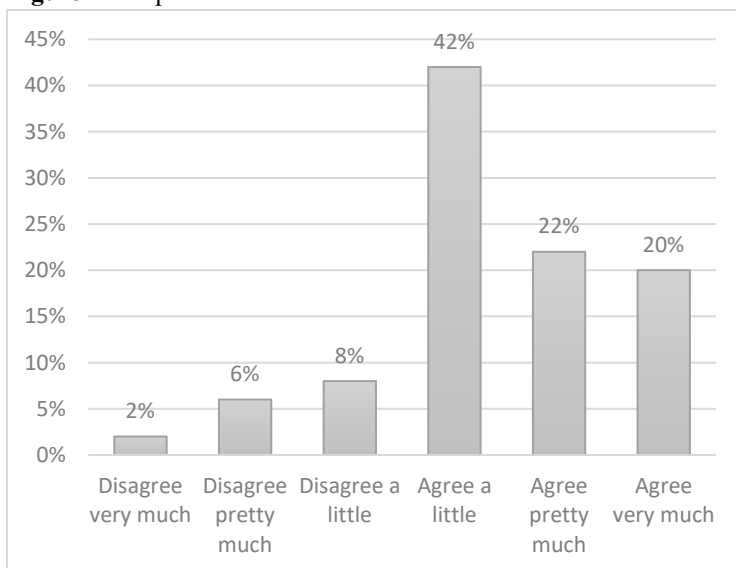
disagree a little, 16% disagree pretty much, and 8% disagree very much) of them have negative attitude toward disable people presented in Figure 3.

**Figure 3** People with disabilities are usually easier to get along with other people



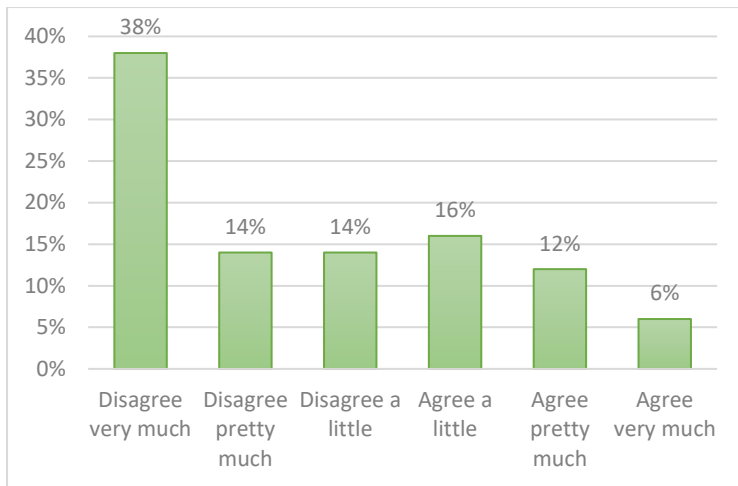
The attitudes of the physical therapists towards people with disabilities who feel that are lower than others. (42% agree a little, 22% agree pretty much, and 20% agree very much) of physical therapists had positive attitude toward disables people and (8% disagree a little, 6% disagree pretty much, and 2% disagree very much) of them have negative attitude toward disable people presented in Figure 4.

**Figure 4** People with disabilities feel inferior for themselves



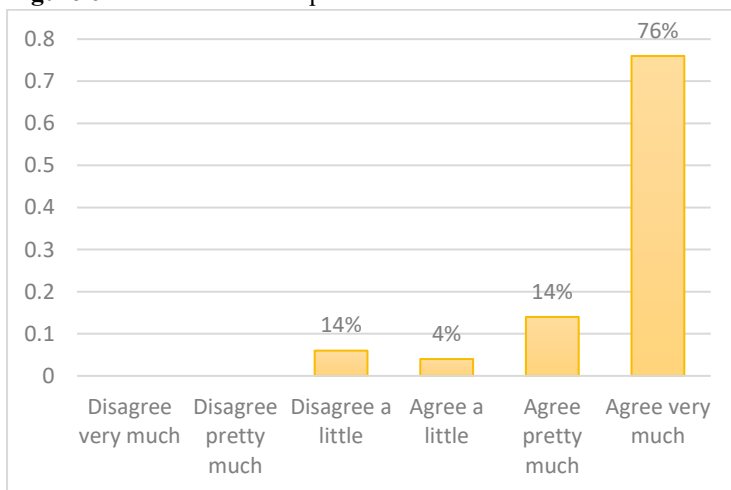
The positive and negative attitude of Physical therapists toward disable people problem with disabilities are often the same as anyone else. Among 50 physiotherapist response (6% agree a very much, 12% agree pretty much, and 16% agree a little) of physical therapists had positive attitude toward disables people and (14% disagree a little, and 14% disagree pretty much 38% disagree very much) of them have negative attitude toward disable people presented in Figure 5.

**Figure 5** Problems with disabilities are often same as anyone else



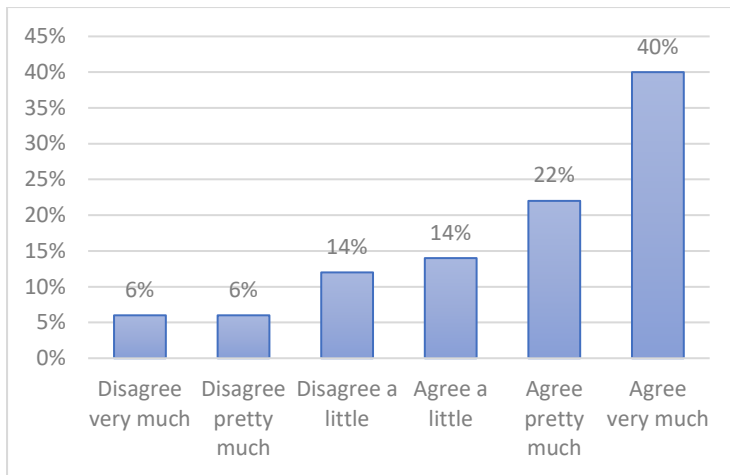
94% (76% agree a very much, 14% agree pretty much, and 4 % agree a little) of physical therapists had positive attitude toward disables people and 06 % (6% disagree a little) of them have negative attitude toward disable people regarding the idea that there should be schools with special facilities for disabled kids presented in Figure 6.

**Figure 6** There should be separate school for children with disabilities



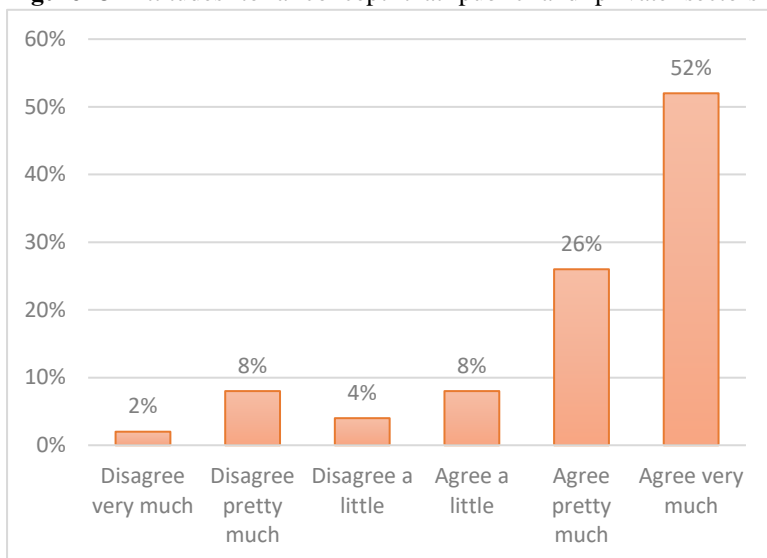
76 % (40% agree a very much, 22% agree pretty much, and 14 % agree a little) of physical therapists had positive attitude toward disables people and 24 % (12% disagree a little, 6% disagree pretty much, 6% disagree very much) of them have negative attitude toward disable people presented in Figure 7.

**Figure 7** Attitude with respect to special communities for the persons with disabilities



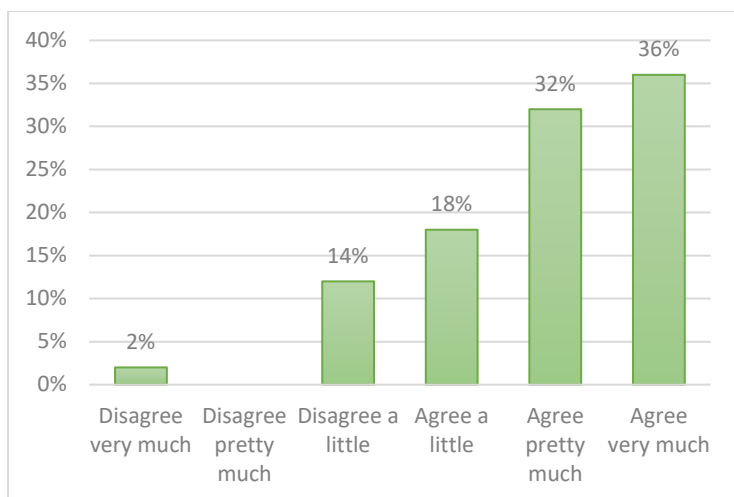
86 % (52% agree a very much, 26% agree pretty much, and 8 % agree a little) of physical therapists had positive attitude toward disabled people and 14 % (4% disagree a little, 8% disagree pretty much, 2% disagree very much) of them have negative attitude toward disabled people with respect to special communities for the persons with disabilities presented in Figure 8.

**Figure 8** Attitudes to a concept that public and private sectors should look after the disabled persons



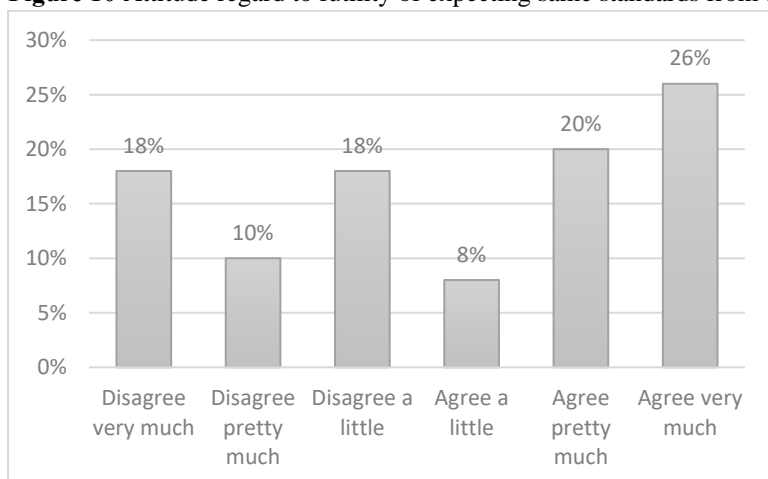
86% of physiotherapists (36% agree a very much, 32% agree pretty much, and 18 % agree a little) of physical therapists had negative attitude toward disabled people and 14 % (12% disagree a little, 2% disagree very much) of them have positive toward disabled people in relation to persons having disabilities and their worries presented in Figure 9.

**Figure 9** Attitudes in relation to persons having disabilities and their worries



54 % of total participants (26% agree avery much, 20% agree pretty much, and 8 % agree a little) of physical therapists had negative attitude toward disables people and 46 % (18% disagree a little, 10% disagree pretty much, 18% disagree verymuch) of them have positive attitude toward disable people regarding the futility of expecting same standards from disabled persons as from the able ones presented in Figure 10.

**Figure 10** Attitude regard to futility of expecting same standards from disabled persons as from the able ones



ATDP questionnaire based on attitude options (Agree considered positive attitude and disagree considered negative attitude) according to questions the more positive attitude is to word person with disability the more likely they are to be comfortable with challenging rehabilitation reported in Table 2.

**Table 2**

Attitude of physiotherapists regarding the quality of life among disabled person

Attitude	Statement of agreement	%age	Attitude	Statement of agreement	%age
Physical therapists' attitude towards grumpy disabled humans					
Positive Attitude	Agree very much	12.24%	Negative Attitude	Disagree very much	2.04%
	Agree pretty much	22.40%		Disagree pretty much	0.00%
	Agree a little	36.73%		Disagree a little	26.53%
Physical therapists' attitude regarding the idea that disable humans are more sensitive than normal ones					
Positive Attitude	Agree very much	50%	Negative Attitude	Disagree very much	6%
	Agree pretty much	24%		Disagree pretty much	4%
	Agree a little	16%		Disagree a little	0%

Physical therapists' attitude towards disabled humans who feel inferior					
Positive Attitude	Agree very much	14%	Negative Attitude	Disagree very much	6%
	Agree pretty much	26%		Disagree pretty much	4%
	Agree a little	36%		Disagree a little	14%
Physical therapists' attitude regarding impossibility of disabled persons to spend a normal life					
Positive Attitude	Agree very much	4%	Negative Attitude	Disagree very much	28%
	Agree pretty much	12%		Disagree pretty much	14%
	Agree a little	24%		Disagree a little	18%
Physical therapists' attitude regarding the easiness with which disabled persons are upset as compared to able persons					
Positive Attitude	Agree very much	34%	Negative Attitude	Disagree very much	8%
	Agree pretty much	20%		Disagree pretty much	0%
	Agree a little	26%		Disagree a little	12%
Physical therapists' attitude towards disabled people that disabled people tend to keep themselves much of time					
Positive Attitude	Agree very much	8%	Negative Attitude	Disagree very much	0%
	Agree pretty much	26%		Disagree pretty much	2%
	Agree a little	40%		Disagree a little	24%
Physical therapists' attitude regarding over expectations from disabled persons					
Positive Attitude	Agree very much	10%	Negative Attitude	Disagree very much	14%
	Agree pretty much	18%		Disagree pretty much	12%
	Agree a little	16%		Disagree a little	30%
Physical therapists' attitude regarding impossibility of disabled persons to spend normal lives					
Positive Attitude	Agree very much	10%	Negative Attitude	Disagree very much	20%
	Agree pretty much	10%		Disagree pretty much	12%
	Agree a little	18%		Disagree a little	30%
Physical therapists' attitude towards coping with severely disabled and slightly disabled individuals					
Positive Attitude	Agree very much	4%	Negative Attitude	Disagree very much	12%
	Agree pretty much	16%		Disagree pretty much	10%
	Agree a little	32%		Disagree a little	26%
Attitudes of the physical therapists with respect to state of happiness of disabled and able persons					
Positive Attitude	Agree very much	8%	Negative Attitude	Disagree very much	22%
	Agree pretty much	10%		Disagree pretty much	10%
	Agree a little	34%		Disagree a little	16%

## Discussion

Physiotherapists had significantly positive attitude persons with disability on ATDP questionnaire. As per many American and European studies aged people have more positive attitude than younger generations<sup>13</sup>.

A considerable portion (52%) of our studied sample of physical therapist elaborates that individuals suffering from severe disabilities are easy going as compared to ones (48%) who think otherwise that the disabled humans are grouchy and difficult to deal with. In another study 16% of physiotherapist gave positive response and remaining gave negative response so in present. The 38% of physical therapists were of the view that in no way a disabled individual can have spent a life as comfortable and happy as their normal counterparts<sup>14</sup>.

In this current survey of physical therapists' attitude towards disabled individuals, the feedback from the physical therapists is in general positive as the physical therapists feel that these disabled individuals are very intelligent, sometimes even more intelligent than their normal counterparts. Majority of the Figures of our result shows that physiotherapist attitude was positive as compared to negative attitude. These results were in accordance with which also shows that there was more positive attitude towards disabled people as compared to negative attitude<sup>15</sup>. And other findings that had significantly more positive attitude when responding professionally rather than personally, had important 83 questions for clinical practice. He suggested that therapists' interaction may be positive as long as therapists is acting in professional role<sup>16</sup>.

We gain positive response of physiotherapists by using ATDP questionnaire. One study identified 7:00 validated survey instruments used for measuring attitude of healthcare students and professionals towards patients with physical disability. Less than half were specifically designed for healthcare students and professionals. The most widely validated used tool ATDP was developed and found positive result by used it<sup>17</sup>.

In one study 275 students gave positive response and 133 students gave negative response but in present 76% of physical therapists feel that most people with disabilities felt that they are not as good as other people. Attitude of physical therapists toward disable people<sup>18</sup>. Our study shows that attitude of physical therapist was more positive. Study shows that attitude of physical therapist was negative than speech language pathologist. Attitude of undergraduate physiotherapy students was more positive than post graduate physiotherapy students.

In another study attitude of healthcare professionals was more positive. Positive attitude shows the kindness, helpful and to treat the disable person equally. It is often difficult for people who have disabled friends or relatives, to provide adequate care and support due to the commitments required of their work. This may lead to feelings of frustration and excess burden in relation to persons with disabilities. This study is limited, in that it used a convenience rather than a random sample<sup>7</sup>.

The ATDP appeared to be the most relevant measure and psychometrically sound scale available; it was developed in the United States. Due to the essential role that physiotherapists play in information and rehabilitation services to persons with disabilities and their families. It is essential that they possess positive attitudes, sound knowledge and skill with regard to managing disability<sup>19</sup>.

## Conclusion

Physical therapists overall have more positive attitude on ATDP Questionnaire. It was concluded after this study that physical therapists hold moderately positive attitude towards disabled persons and perceived disabled persons as quite similar to non-disabled persons.

## References

1. Bogart KR. The role of disability self-concept in adaptation to congenital or acquired disability. *Rehabil Psychol.* 2014; 59(1):107–115.
2. Oligbo C.N & Papujowo A.O. Knowledge, attitude and practice of physiotherapist towards promotion of physically active life styles in patient management. *BMC Health Service Research.* 2013; 13(21).
3. Pate RR, Pratt M, Blair SN: Physical activity and public health: a recommendation from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the American College of Sports Medicine. *JAMA.* 2005, 273: 402–407.
4. Shirley D, van der Ploeg HP, Bauman AE: Physical activity promotion in the physical therapy setting: perspectives from practitioners and students. *Ptjournal apta org.* 2010, 9: 1311-1318.
5. Cervasio, K & Fatata-Hall K. Attitudes of nurses towards children with disabilities: the attitude of nursing students towards children with disabilities: an experimental design. *Int J Phy Med Rehab.* 2013; 1: 1-15.
6. Verhagen E, Engbers L: The physical therapist's role in physical activity promotion. *Br J Sports Med.* 2009, 43: 99-101.
7. Al-Abdulwahab, S. S. & Al-gain, S. I. 2013. Attitudes of Saudi Arabian health care professionals towards people with physical disabilities. *Asia Pacific Disability Rehabilitation Journal,* 14, 63-70.
8. Rea BL, Hopp Marshak H, Neish C, Davis N: The role of health promotion in physical therapy in California, New York, and Tennessee. *Phys Ther.* 2014, 84: 510-523.
9. Dorji, s. & Solomon, P. Attitudes of health professionals toward persons with disabilities in Bhutan. *Asia Pacific Disability Rehabilitation Journal.* 2013; 20:32-42.
10. Mulligan H., Fjellman-Wiklund A., Hale L., Thomas D. & Hager-Ross C., 2012, 'Promoting physical activity for people with neurological disability: Perspectives and experiences of physiotherapists', *Physiotherapy Theory and Practice* 27(6), 399–410.
11. Ck Chiu, W., Chan, A. W., Snape, E. & Redman, T. 2017. Age stereotypes and discriminatory attitudes towards older workers: An East-West comparison. *Human relations,* 54, 629-661.
12. Nathan B, Rhiannon T.E, Luke S & Valerie M. Perceptions of the impact of disability and impairment on health, quality of life and capability. *BMC Res Notes.* 2019; 12: 287.
13. Ishpigelman, C. N., Zlotnick, C. & Brand, R. Attitudes toward nursing students with disabilities: Promoting social inclusion. *Journal of Nursing Education.* 2016; 55: 441- 449.
14. Pfeiffer, D, Sam, A, Guinan, M, Ratliffe K., Robinson, N & Stodden, N. Attitudes toward disability in the helping professions. *Disability Studies Quarterly.* 2013: 23.
15. Roush, S. E. Health professionals as contributors to attitudes toward persons with disabilities: a special communication. *Physical Therapy.* 2011; 66, 1551-1554.
16. Vargo, J. W. & Semple, J. E. Professional and personal attitudes of physiotherapy students toward disabled persons. *Australian Journal of Physiotherapy.* 2018; 34, 23-26.
17. Lindsay Gething. Attitudes toward people with disabilities of physiotherapists and members of the general population. *Australian Journal of Physiotherapy.* 2013; 39 (4):291-296.
18. Paris, M. J. Attitudes of medical students and health-care professionals toward people with disabilities. *Archives of physical medicine and rehabilitation.* 2014; 74 818-825.

19. Tervo, R. C. & Palmer, G. Health professional student attitudes towards people with disability. *Clinical rehabilitation*. 2014; 18, 908-915.