

Ethnic Differences in Hispanic Young Adults' Attitudes toward Disability

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As the nation's largest ethnic minority, the attitudes of people of Hispanic origin are critical in disability studies research. Few studies have focused on how younger generations of Hispanic individuals today perceive disability in a broad sense. Yet, the attitudes of millennial adults may be distinctive demographically, having been raised in an era of legislated inclusion for persons with disability. This study examined whether there are nuances in the perception of disability among young Hispanic adults and others based upon cultural identity and ethnic background. The study was conducted at a mid-sized, Hispanic-serving public university located in south Texas. It examined differences in perceptions of ten specific disability types, including whether respondents considered that disability type to be a disability, attitudes toward social interactions with persons with disability, the personal relationships in which the respondents would engage, and expectations about outcomes for persons with a disability. Statistically significant differences by ethnic group were found in conceptualization of what disability types were considered a disability, willingness to engage in personal relationships with persons with disability, and perceptions of outcomes for persons with disability. Results are interpreted within cultural and generational frameworks.

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