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Public awareness and knowledge of aphasia in Malaysia: a cross-sectional survey

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Abstract

Background: A growing body of research highlights a persistent gap in public awareness and knowledge regarding aphasia. This lack of understanding presents a significant barrier to improving quality of life for individuals living with aphasia and hinders crucial research investment in the field. Surprisingly, despite the increasing incidence of aphasia in Malaysia, limited published studies have investigated public awareness and knowledge within this population. This study aims to investigate the awareness and knowledge of aphasia among the Malaysian public. Methods: Data collection employed a modified online survey distributed to adult residents of Malaysia via a telecommunication application. Two hundred thirteen individuals completed the questionnaire, which assessed demographic characteristics, aphasia awareness levels, knowledge of the condition, and preferred sources of information about aphasia. Results: Out of 213 participants (female: n = 168, male: n = 45), 77 (36.2%) were aware of aphasia, whereas only 19 (8.9%) had knowledge about it. There was a significant association between occupation and knowledge of aphasia. Gender, age, and educational level had no significant relationship with either awareness or knowledge. The main sources of information were the internet/social media, friends/relatives, and the workplace. Conclusions: This study revealed a lack of awareness of aphasia among the Malaysian public. Low levels of awareness and knowledge highlight the need for awareness-raising programs throughout the country. Efforts should focus on improving public understanding of aphasia through targeted campaigns and the use of various media platforms. © The Author(s) 2025.

Author keywords

Aphasia; Awareness; Knowledge; Malaysia; Public

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