

# Assessment of Physical Therapy Students Performance during Clinical Practice

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## ABSTRACT

**Aim:** To assess the clinical performance of (DPT) students in Lahore by using assessment of physical therapist practice questionnaire (APP).

**Methodology:** A descriptive cross sectional survey was conducted by using simple random sampling technique. Total 91 students of final year DPT among Lahore were selected for this study. 60% of the students from each college were enrolled. The data was collected by using the standardized questionnaire named assessment of physical therapy questionnaire (APP). Whole information was kept confidential. The data was analyzed by SPSS 23.

**Results:** Results showed that global rating score at APP questionnaire was 62.4% (57 out of 91) reflecting overall good performance during the clinical rotation, 18.68% (17 out of 91) students present satisfactory results ranges, 14.29% (13 out of 91) present acceptable performance and 4.40 % ( 4 out of 91) students showed inappreciable performance. There mean age of 91 students were 21.25 with standard deviation 0.9236.

The Pearson chi square test  $p=0.948$ ,  $p < 0.005$ . It reveals that there is no significant variation between gender and overall performance of students during clinical rotation

**Conclusion:** This study concluded that maximum final year DPT students showed good performance during clinical practice, indicated that curriculum for DPT students is good enough to make student professionally competent.

**Key words:** Clinical practice, APP questionnaire and DPT students

## INTRODUCTION

Professional competence is summation of knowledge, critical thinking, reflection and experience<sup>1</sup>. In this domain, our main focus on building therapeutic relationship, advancing personal knowledge and maintaining the professional identity<sup>2,3</sup>. Persistent competency expansion along with the fact of autonomous practice, clinical enlightenment execution and effortless practice of intellect for the entry level physiotherapists is necessary<sup>4</sup>.

Different studies conducted to compare different tools of assessment of clinical competency of DPT students and considered APP as a validated and reliable tool.<sup>5</sup> A study conducted by Murphy S et al on "Determine Physical Therapy Student's achievement during Clinical Practice". According to this research two instruments APP and Physical therapy clinical performance instrument (PT-CPI) were used to evaluate the achievement of students. The conclusion determined that APP is more feasible and competent to evaluate the clinical proficiency of DPT students<sup>6</sup>.

There is insufficient data that showed APP implementation on DPT students, in current study, the clinical competency was founded out for the betterment of students.

The objective of the study was to assess the clinical performance of (DPT) students in Lahore by using assessment of physical therapist practice questionnaire.

## METHODOLOGY

A descriptive cross sectional survey was conducted by using convenience sampling technique after approval from LMDC Ethical Committee. Data was collected from 91 students of final year DPT from Lahore by using the standardized questionnaire named APP. APP questionnaire consists of seven domains such as assessment, analysis, planning, intervention, evidence-based practice, risk management, professional behavior with score ranged from 0 to 4. The score 0 or 1 indicates that minimum acceptable has not been accomplished, whereas higher number designates greater apparent competence. Whole information was kept confidential. Data was analyzed by SPSS 23.

## RESULTS

The mean age of 91 students were 21.25 with standard deviation 0.9236, according to gender distribution, only 1 male and 3 females out of 4 showed inappropriate performance, 5 males and 8 females showed acceptable performance, 22 males and 35 females showed good performance while 7 males and 10 females were with excellent performance. The Pearson chi square test  $p=0.948$ ,  $p < 0.005$ . It reveals that there is no significant variation between gender and overall performance of students during clinical rotation. Results showed that global rating score at APP questionnaire was 62.4% (57 out of 91) reflecting excellent performance (41-60) score during the clinical rotation, 18.68% (17 out of 91) students present

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good performance results ranges (61-80), 14.29% (13 out of 91) present acceptable performance (21-40) and 4.40% (4 out of 91) students showed inappreciable performance (0-20).

Clinical Performance	Gender distribution		% age
	Males	Females	
Excellent Performance	Males	7	62.4%
	Females	10	
Good performance	Males	22	18.68%
	Females	35	
Acceptable performance	Males	5	14.29%
	Females	8	
Inappreciable performance	Males	1	4.40 %
	Females	3	
<b>Total</b>		91	100%

## DISCUSSION

The main purpose of this survey was to reveal the clinical expertise of DPT final year students by using the standardized assessment form of APP. Meanwhile the clinical course accomplishments in medical institutes the students enhance their professional knowledge and expertise through clinical education. The clinical expertise of the students enables them to transfer their hypothetical knowledge into professional skilled knowledge. In that way they refine their skills<sup>7</sup>.

Murphy S et al conducted a study and concluded that APP is more practicable and adequate to judge the clinical proficiency of physical therapy students than PT CPI. Another study was conducted by Dalton M et al (2011, 2012) on the validity and reliability of Assessment of Physiotherapy Practice (APP), the results suggested that the APP was the valid and reliable tool for assessment of student's competency in clinical practice<sup>8,9</sup>.

As previous published literature has sufficiently documented the reliability and validity of APP assessment tool but not implemented this tool on DPT students, hence the results of this study cannot be matched with the result of the studies conducted in the past. The APP assessment tool seems to be very beneficial as it tests the multiple aspects to determine the clinical competency of a physical therapy student<sup>10</sup>.

This tool is also very useful for making amendments required in the curriculum in order to progress the field of physical therapy that can help preparing the graduates who are capable of performing assessment of a patient with good communication skills and can deliver physiotherapy treatment effectively in accordance to the best available evidence.

There was less time to conduct this survey. Biasness of the supervisors was a major hindrance.

## CONCLUSION

Maximum final year DPT students showed good performance during clinical practice, indicated that curriculum for DPT students is good enough to make student professionally competent.

**Conflict of interest:** Nil

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