

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Awareness of Physical Therapy among Different Medical Professionals

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*Farooq Clinic Khushab*Correspondence to Sabahat Ali, Email: sabahatali777@yahoo.com, Tel: 03157209474**ABSTRACT****Aim:** To put efforts into promoting awareness about physical therapy in the specified population.**Study design:** It was an observational study.**Place and duration:** The duration of study was 6 months and was carried out at Farooq Clinic Khushab.**Methodology:** An observational study was conducted among medical professionals and was based on a cross-sectional study that was carried out with the help of self-structured questionnaire.**Results:** 63% of the house officers are well-aware of physical therapy and have sufficient knowledge about it. Some medical professionals including cardiologists and orthopedic surgeons said that physical therapy has now become a very important part of the quality health and well-being of patients.**Conclusion:** Physical therapy plays a very essential role in enhancing and improving the standards of health. All medical professionals of different fields should have knowledge and awareness about physical therapy for helping people to manage and improve their problems with the help of different therapies.**Keywords:** Physical Therapy, Medical Officers, Awareness, Knowledge**INTRODUCTION**

Physiotherapy includes health promotion, enhancing quality of life, identification of potentials, and intervention for rehabilitation and relief of pain and other health disorders. Physical therapy helps in reducing hospital stays and is very useful for rehabilitation. Health care professionals must be well aware of physical therapy and its impacts on treatment. Recent studies verify that all health care professionals are aware of physiotherapy but it is very essential that patients should visit physiotherapists on proper advice from their concerned medical specialists^{1,2}. Physical therapy has been regarded as allied health care and is very useful for the maintenance of physical functions and movements. Nowadays, many new techniques and exercise modalities have been developed for providing quality treatment to patients. Hence, effective awareness is highly needed among medical professionals and people for smooth rehabilitation and fast recovery³.

The main advantages of physical therapy include reduction or elimination of pain, avoiding surgeries, improve mobility, easy and quick recovery from stroke, helping to recover from a sports injury, and being very helpful for improving balance^{4,5}. Physiotherapy is a very vast field and all the related people including medical interns, residents, professionals, and also the university staff should be well aware of the importance of physiotherapy. The conception of people related to physiotherapy should be corrected as it is not masseurs but there are many sub-fields and specialties of this medical treatment. People are aware of musculoskeletal, neurological, and cardio-respiratory physiotherapy but still the specialties of pediatric and women's health physical therapy need attention and awareness⁶.

Physical exercises and services have now evolved from general to special clinical services across the globe. Hence, awareness about physical therapy is very important. The survey result shows that physiotherapy has been considered a crucial tool in health care and thus the need for awareness of physical therapy is highly recommended in past studies⁷. Physiotherapists are struggling for their medical identity like other medical professionals over the past few years. The rehabilitation center of Turkey also offered many physiotherapy subjects for creating awareness for students and enhancing clinical services. Data was collected from students of 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th years with the help of a professional awareness questionnaire. The results of this study show that professional awareness can be enhanced by the implementation of professional awareness⁸. Physiotherapy plays an important role during all stages of life and is very helpful to cure diseases based on physical exercises. The proper awareness and knowledge

among the students of this profession and other medical staff are very essential nowadays. Many research had been held in the near past to know about people's awareness especially the students and professionals of this profession and enhance its strategies for providing more and more adequate information to the patients. With the help of surveys and online awareness, it was suggested that awareness about physical therapy is unsatisfactory and appropriate measures should be taken to get people aware of it properly⁹. Despite the advances in the field of physical therapy, there is still awareness needed in this profession. It is very essential to interlink all the fields of medical sciences for providing quality treatment to patients. It was very important to know the importance and awareness of physical therapy among medical professionals. The results being deduced with the help of questionnaires depicted that only 45% of the medical interns had awareness of physical therapy. Hence it was highly recommended to educate medical professionals regarding physiotherapy for providing better care to patients¹⁰. Many surveys and questionnaires were prepared with the help of Google forms based on open and closed-ended questions. The results expressed that 103 medical professionals had knowledge about physical therapy and 153 general populations also had awareness about it. It is highly needed to create awareness among people about the uses of physical therapy. Different programs and training sessions should be arranged so that people get benefits from the utilities of different modalities of physical therapy¹¹. The conceptual framework of physical therapy has been executed in the 20th century and the major issue in the present century is to identify its intellectual parameters. With the help of large and emerging databases, the evolution of physical therapy has been analyzed based on scientific models and literature for further future studies¹².

The objectives of the study were to know about the importance and awareness of physical therapy among different medical professionals and to analyze and evaluate specific areas those are not well-aware of the importance of physical therapy and different interventional strategies.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The design of the study was an observational study and 200 individuals from different medical professions were taken as a sample population. A convenient study technique was used as the sampling model. The study lasted for 6 months from May 2021 to Feb 2022 and was carried out at Farooq Clinic Khushab. The sample size was calculated using the Raosoft.

Received on 14-08-2022

Accepted on 27-12-2022

The results obtained are:

What margin of error can you accept? %
 5% is a common choice

What confidence level do you need? %
 Typical choices are 90%, 95%, or 99%

What is the population size?
 If you don't know, use 20000

What is the response distribution? %
 Leave this as 50%

Your recommended sample size is **200**

All the males and females with age between 25 and 40 of medical professionals were part of this research. The paramedical staff and medical students were excluded from this research.

Data Collection Procedure: The data collection was done by handing over the questionnaire to the participants and they filled them out according to their level of knowledge and information. 200 individuals participated in this research study and they belong to the medical profession. The individuals who participated in this study were house officers, post-graduate medical officers, orthopaedic surgeons, and cardiologists.

Statistical Analysis: The age and gender distribution were clearly shown with the help of pie charts being analyzed by the SPSS. Random sampling was employed as the sampling technique for addressing the other questions. The data were analysed using the SPSS software and all the statistical results were carried out.

Questionnaire: The self-structured questionnaire was used and the questionnaire was designed and the validity was checked by concerning an expert. The independent variables: age and gender and the dependent variables include: awareness among various medical professionals regarding physical therapy. All the data was collected by taking all the ethical limits and consent forms were signed before the collection of data

RESULTS

Table 1 presents the responses collected from surveys. As all the participants belonged to the medical profession so, all of them responded positively and accurately. The data being collected illustrated that out of 200, 46 were males and 154 were female participants. SPSS validated the results in the form of frequency, percent, a valid percent, and cumulative percentage.

Table 1 Response collected from Surveys

Medical Professionals	Total Participants	Knowledge about Physical Therapy	Don't have Knowledge about Physical Therapy
House Officers	87	72	15
Post Graduates	59	54	5
Orthopedic Surgeons	42	30	12
Cardiologists	12	7	5

The mean age of the participants lie between 25 and 40 years. The age of all the participants lied between 25-50 years. After data collection, it was analyzed that 87 were house officers, 59 were post-graduate medical officers, 42 were orthopedic surgeons, and 12 were cardiologists. The careful analysis depicted that out of 87 house officers, 72(82%) knew about physical therapy and 15(20.83%) do not know about it. Similarly, 54 out of 59(91.52%) know about physical therapy. 30(71%) orthopedic surgeons out of 42 participants said that they have awareness of physical therapy. Only 5(41.66%) cardiologists were well aware of its importance and its utilization in the cardiac field. SPSS analysis based on designed questions showed the responses of overall 200 participants. People responded differently to different questions

being asked in the questionnaire. 191(95.5%) out of 200 students knew about physical therapy, 6(3%) of them didn't know about it, and 3(1.5 %) had some basic knowledge about it. Similarly, it was also asked how people came to know about physical therapy. It was mentioned that 109(54.5%) participants came to know about it through various research studies, 42(21%) knew about it from their colleagues and 49(24.5%) from their concerned hospitals. Physical therapy has now become a very vast field and it was important to know how many medical professionals know its various branches. 153(76.5%) out of 200 participating individuals knew about neurological physical therapy, 127 (63.5%) about MSK, and only 19(9.5%) knew about cardiopulmonary physical therapy.

Likewise, we also asked medical professionals to tell us whether they knew of any facilities available for physical therapy. 144 knew about it and 42 didn't have any knowledge about it. 14 medical professionals might know about it. Hence physical therapy is playing a very major role nowadays. 117 people responded positively that they had knowledge about its importance and considered it very essential for patients. 80 marked it important and 3 didn't answer positively (Table 1).

Figure 1 depicts the gender distribution of the participants. The blue color represents that 76% of female participants and the 24% male participation.

Figure 2 is representing the percentage of participants who knew physiotherapy. The blue color is presenting that the 94% has awareness of it, and the green is showing that 4% haven't much awareness about it and similarly only 2% have no knowledge about it.

Figure1: Gender distribution of participants

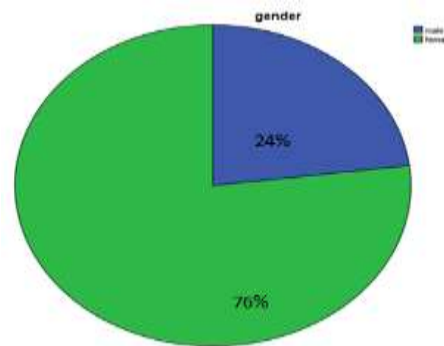


Figure 1: Participants knowing physiotherapy

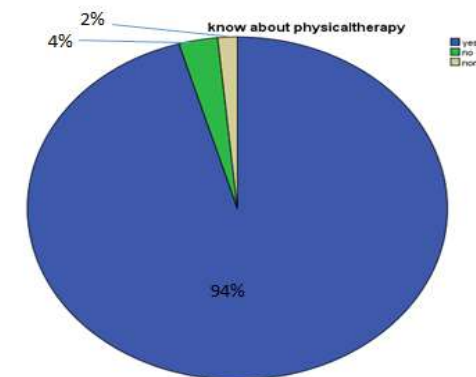


Figure 3 depicts how people came to know about physical therapy. The blue percentage shows that 52 % came to know about it through different literature studies, the green color shows that 23 % came to know it through different colleagues, and the 25 % medical professionals come to know from hospitals.

Figure 4 depicts the blue color showing the percentage of medical professionals having awareness about 16 % neurological therapy, the orange color for MSK that is 26%, and grey shows that 6% of people having awareness about cardiopulmonary physical therapy.

In Figure 5, the blue color is showing that 73% of participants having awareness about the availabilities of physical therapy facilities, 20% not knowing about it, and the grey shade is showing that only 7% having no idea about it.

In Figure 6, the response of participants has been shown for the role of physiotherapy. 53% of medical professionals said that physical therapy is very important, 45% as important and 2% of grey color shows that it is not important.

Figure 2: Sources through which people came to know about physical therapy

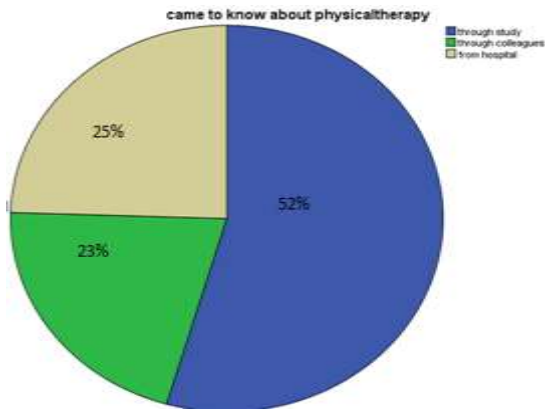


Figure 3: Knowledge about various branches of physiotherapy

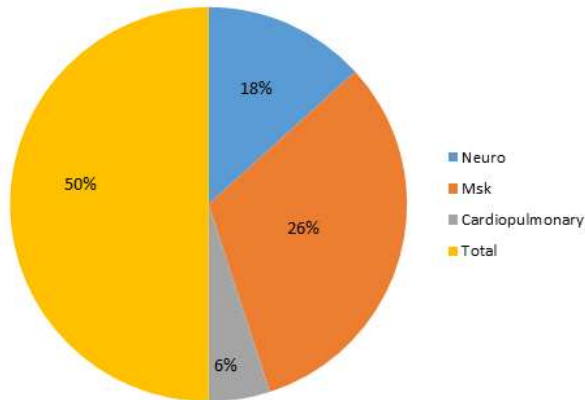
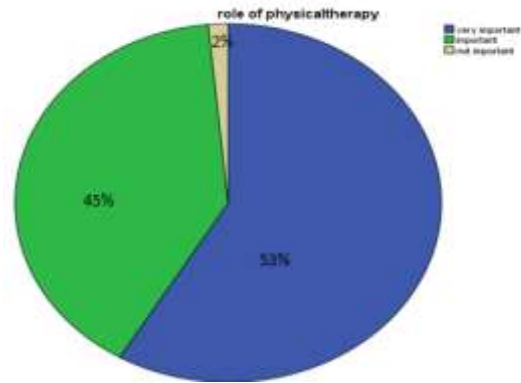


Figure 4: Availability of facilities for physical therapy



Figure 5: Importance of physical therapy



DISCUSSION

Physical therapy has now become the very essential part of the health sciences and its awareness among medical practitioners of burn units is very important. 50 surgeons in the burn unit participated in this survey and the results verified that 92% of surgeons had basic knowledge about physiotherapy with the help of literature studies and they also referred their patients to physical therapy clinics. 78% of surgeons state that physical therapies also gave negative outcomes based on improper and incompetent physical therapists¹⁵. Medical Residents responded differently to the questions being asked in the questionnaire about awareness of various aspects of physiotherapy. 54% said that they knew that physiotherapy was the degree course and 44% said that it was a professional course. The percentage of awareness about different fields was different among the medical residents and maximum of them knew about musculoskeletal¹⁶. Physiotherapy has got importance in almost all the departments of medical sciences and its acceptance towards orthopedic is equally important and necessary. 162 orthopedics participated and out of them 74.5% responded to the questionnaire and treated physiotherapy as the secondary care for patients¹⁷. 100% of the clinical staff was well aware of the role of physiotherapy and 39.4% had good knowledge about physical therapy. There was a clear and significant difference in the knowledge about physiotherapy between the clinical and non-clinical staff [18]. With the help of a cross-sectional study, perceptions of people regarding awareness and knowledge of physical therapy were investigated by medical and health science students. 98.5% of students were aware of physiotherapy, 37.4% had adequate awareness of settings, and 4% knew the sub-specialties of therapies¹⁹.

In integration with the other health care departments, physical therapists collectively can improve the quality of treatment for their patients. With the help of data collected from senior medical practitioners, awareness and promotion of health can be enhanced. From the data of 265 medical practitioners, 95.5 showed that they knew DPT, 59.2% had awareness about their MS and M.Phil programs, and 0% about their Ph.D. level education. Thus these results showed that they had very good perceptions and that therapists had a great role in patient management²⁰. A cross-sectional study was carried out with the help of non-probability convenience sampling. Allied health professionals participated in this survey and the results revealed that 95 % were aware of physical therapy, 85.6% suggested that proper awareness sessions should be conducted for medical professionals, and similarly, 87.3% of people suggested and encouraged their friends and family students to adopt physiotherapy as a profession. The participating individual also said that 83.5% of physiotherapists had a great role in the well-being of society, and 85.6% were interested and willing to adopt physiotherapy as a profession²¹. A pilot was carried out for knowing the awareness and knowledge of physical therapy among

medical interns. Data was collected with the help of a designed questionnaire and was analyzed by SPSS. Results showed that only 45% of medical interns had awareness about physical therapy and only 42% were knowledgeable about it. Hence it is highly recommended to aware medical interns about the importance of physiotherapy²². The results show that out of 234 participating interns, 108 were medical interns, 72 were dental, and 54 were physiotherapists. The overall results show a poor percentage of awareness among these interns²³.

Physiotherapy has been considered an important and developing profession nowadays and is very useful for enhancing the quality of life. A descriptive cross-sectional study was carried out to know the awareness level of physical therapy among medical professionals. Data was collected with the help of a structured questionnaire. 90% of the medical community knew about physical therapy and its different medical specialties²⁴. Medical doctors must have proper awareness and knowledge about physical therapy. A cross-sectional study was carried out based on the self-structured questionnaire. Out of 145 participants, 98 knew the eligibility criteria for physical therapy. 77.9% were aware of different specialized fields of physical therapy, and 90.3% knew about its treatment. Overall 60% of doctors in Swabi were familiar with this field of physiotherapy²⁵.

Physiotherapy services are very important for the emergency department. Hence the results from studies show that there is a need for the integration of emergency teams with physiotherapists experts for quality treatment²⁶. Different systematic reviews were held for finding the reviews on home-based physical therapy (HBPT) which has now emerged as an important element of rehabilitation programs. This review has identified various factors for patients' adherence to HBPTs²⁷.

After so much development and technology, it is still needed to recognize this field among multidisciplinary medical professionals. The patient's load in the hospital can be decreased to a greater extent if the physicians have proper awareness of physiotherapy. Awareness can be created among physicians with the help of seminars, training, lectures, and workshops on physiotherapy²⁸.

Physiotherapy has vast perceptions and beliefs among different professionals as now people and physicians are well aware of its utility and recognition for their patients. Physiotherapy has many other sub-fields of specialization and wound care is one of the most popular sub-specialties. This wound care has a great role in patient management. Hence since 2013, surgeons preferred and encouraged DPT professionals to work as a team of burn units for the rehabilitation of patients²⁹.

Physiotherapy is a health care profession that treats and diagnoses the prevention of diseases and various disabilities using physical exercises and workouts. Therefore, it has become very essential to aware medical residents of various modalities of physiotherapy and their importance for fast recovery from different disabilities. The results from this survey study show that physiotherapists should educate medical residents about the various uses of physiotherapy¹⁹. Awareness about physiotherapy should be created among women so that they can take benefit from it for enhancing the quality of their lives³⁰.

CONCLUSION

It is concluded that physical therapy has now become an essential part of health care. All medical professionals should have proper knowledge and information about physical therapy and its importance in their specialized field. The results show that many medical professionals have awareness of physical therapy but still, it is recommended that more awareness and knowledge should be given to medical professionals for the treatment of patients with the help of physiotherapy. Physical therapy will help people to strengthen their muscles associated with any type of injury, and help to re-establish their movement with the help of exercises. For overcoming all these problems and challenges, well-designed and

holistic approaches are very necessary for physical therapists. All this can be achieved with the help of awareness of physical therapy among medical officers and professionals.

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