PHYSIOTHERAPY STUDENTS’ PERCEPTION AND ATTITUDE ON EDUCATION CURRICULUM AND SYSTEM IN A REHABILITATION TRAINING CENTRE OF EASTERN INDIA.

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ABSTRACT:

Purpose - In this study, we aimed to provide an overview of Physiotherapy student’s determination towards the academic curriculum, interest and career outlook.

Methods

Data collection - From the previous studies the survey questions are collected basing on the physiotherapy students attitudes and there interest towards course curriculum.

Questionnaire Preparation - An information mail was forwarded along with attached to a Google Form formatted link questionnaire, with a short description of the aim of the study and instructions on how to complete the questionnaire.

Statistical analysis - For statistical analysis Social Science (SPSS) program, Statistical Package version 16 was used for data analysis.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria - The individual student were 18 years or older and were included in the study after an informed consent was obtained.

Results - A total of 263 students participated from a tertiary care rehabilitation centre of eastern India in this study, which consists of BPT and MPT excluding the students under internship. Out of the total participants 43.73 percent (115) was females and 56.27 percent (148) were males. Maximum number of the students i.e. 34.99% preferred to join hospital as physiotherapist where as 16.73 percent preferred for a private practice.

Conclusion - It can be concluded from the study that the students of different years are indecisive with the course and their profession. The students also provided suggestions to improve the field. This proves that the students of different years of BPT and MPT are concerned with development of the profession.

Keywords: Physiotherapy; BPT (Bachelor in Physiotherapy); MPT (Master in Physiotherapy); SPSS (statistical analysis social science) program; Education Curriculum

I. INTRODUCTION

A determinant of success in medical education, is defined as everything that develops within an educational environment that may be a university or a department or a class room.(1) Among the medical instructors, it is an
universal tradition that the clinical and academic surrounding has a high impact on students' behaviours, attitudes, skills, knowledge and progression. (1-2) Intellectual climate, physical climate and emotional climate: are the three crucial conditions for an educational environment. These, along with learning and teaching activities, are interrelated to positive outcome, effective learning, promote satisfaction, and progress among physiotherapy students. (3)

Physiotherapists are concerned with using their knowledge and clinical skills to eliminate functional limitations and disability, thus enabling the individuals to achieve the most optimal quality of life possible. A proper education, hard work, optimal exposure to cases during the learning years and proper guidance are a few stepping stones to the success of the therapist as well as to the profession. (4)

In the current days physiotherapy education in India is just like other health care professions. Now they have courses from diploma to PhD degree. The profession is governed by Indian Association of Physiotherapists. The 2-year diploma program progressed to a degree program; which extended the program from 2 years to 3 1/2 years and finally to the current 4 1/2-year program. The Bachelor of Physiotherapy (BPT) is a four-and-a-half-year undergraduate program in physiotherapy with 6 months of mandatory clinical internship where as the MPT is a two years program. (5) On completion of the course the student is expected to be familiar with a thorough idea of the condition, proper evaluation techniques and reasoning for the management, goal setting and treatment of the patient and there is growing demand of Physiotherapists in the country as well as worldwide. (6-7)

Physiotherapy students experience diverse learning activities within the environs of the physiotherapy college. Physiotherapy education is currently undergoing a transformation from a teacher-centered approach, where the teacher helps to facilitate learning by providing a healthy and positive learning environment. Students’ perceptions about the educational climate play a crucial role in planning and implementing a curriculum. It also helps the stakeholders and the teaching faculty to reflect, reform, and remediate to make the curriculum student-friendly without compromising the standards and the quality of learning in the institute. Hence, systematic feedback and assessment are vital for successful management of the curriculum. (8) The environment has an impact on students’ learning experience, achievements, satisfaction, and success, which will help them to progress and achieve their goals. (9) Assessment of educational environment will help to solve educational issues and improve the efficacy of education. Therefore, it is important to gather feedback from students regarding their experience in the learning environment. In this study, we aimed to provide an overview of Physiotherapy student’s determination towards the academic curriculum, interest and career outlook.

II. MATERIALS AND METHOD:
A cross-sectional survey conducted on both male and female of BPT (first, second, third and fourth year) and MPT (first and second year) excluding the internship students at the Department of Physiotherapy of a tertiary care rehabilitation centre of eastern India, from 9th to 25th October 2020. During the data collection time, India was partial unlocked but all institutions, schools and universities were closed for students. So, our only option was to use students official records and contacted them over telephone and collected there mail id for potential participants enrolment. By employing a convenience sampling method, we identified all the batches of BPT and MPT students in the Institutes. The soft copy of the questionnaire link was in Google Form format, which was sent to the enrolled participants via their mail id and identified with approximately 263 students.

III. DATA COLLECTION
From the previous studies the survey questions are collected basing on the physiotherapy students attitudes and there interest towards course curriculum. In a Google Form version the questions were developed and modified to complete the study. 50 numbers of students were surveyed for a pilot test before forwarding the questionnaire through mail, in order to determine the required time to complete the questionnaire and to estimate the comprehension of the questions by the participants so that it could be refined accordingly. Pilot questionnaires were excluded from the final analysis. The final self-administered questionnaire consisted of 16 questions, which required approximately 5 min to answer.
IV. QUESTIONNAIRE PREPARATION

An information mail was forwarded along with attached to a Google Form formatted link questionnaire, with a short description of the aim of the study and instructions on how to complete the questionnaire. The questionnaire was subdivided into categories in which the first part included the perceptions of BPT and MPT students of the importance of the course and its impact on their career. The second part highlighted the important reason or for joining the course, future career in the course and major steps that should to be taken for promoting the Physiotherapy field. Finally, socio-demographic information of the participating students including age, gender, BPT and MPT year program was collected.

V. STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

For statistical analysis Social Science (SPSS) program, Statistically Package version 16 was used for data analysis. Mean± standard deviation was used to report numerical variables. The association among the different categorical variables were assessed by Chi-square test where p-value <0.05 and considered as the statistical significance.

VI. INCLUSION AND EXCLUSION CRITERIA

The individual student were 18 years or older and were included in the study after an informed consent was obtained. All the students willing joined and cooperated in the survey.

VII. RESULT:

A total of 263 students participated in this study, which consist of BPT and MPT excluding the students under internship. All the students were from the Department of Physiotherapy, of a tertiary care rehabilitation centre of eastern India. The background characteristics were found that, out of the total participants 43.73 percent (115) was females and 56.27 percent (148) were males. Among the participants those included in the study 23.57 percent (62) were from 1st year, 22 percent (58) were from 2nd year, 22.8 percent (60) were from 3rd year, 20.9 percent (55) from 4th year and 5.79(15) , 4.94(13) percent were under MPT 1st and 2nd year respectively. It was observed that only 33 students were of 18 years of age and all of them were ≤ 27 years or less. (Table 1and 2)

The data was collected whether the participants had their own interest to join the course or they were influenced by others to check whether they have knowledge and interest towards the course. A total of 39.54 percent (104) had to join the course as a 2nd option as they didn’t get a chance for the interested course. 14.06 percent (37) join the course due to parental influence where as friends, advertisement and other source of influence were 6.08(16), 38.02 (100), 2.3 (6) percents respectively. Maximum number of the students i.e. 34.99% preferred to join hospital as physiotherapist where as 16.73 percent preferred for a private practice. 15.2 and 11.03 percent chose a career as teacher and researcher respectively. 7.6 percent of the student opted to peruse a career abroad and 7.22 percentage interested to work at fitness centre as a physiotherapist, a minimum number of students that is 3.8 percentage preferred to peruse a career provided by institute through campus selection. For professional improvement in the field of Physiotherapy 41.82 percent of the students suggested to create mass awareness about the subject, where as 23.5 percent preferred for better job opportunity, 15.61 percent suggested about better pay scale . It was found that 7.22 percent suggest a modification in the education pattern but 5.7 percent suggested for proper up gradation about the clinical based knowledge and 6.08 percent suggested for regular conferences and workshops.

VIII. DISCUSSION:

Our study was conducted for getting a view towards their education and profession. Table 2 compares the mean values of attitude scores among different years of MPT and BPT students and also between the genders. It was evident that there was no significant difference between the groups. The male and female students showed no significant difference in the scores. Similar results reported by Tedla et al. 2009. There was an above average score available for the happiness. The main reasons for an above average response could be figured out with help of figure 1 and 2. Figure 2 explains that many students joined physiotherapy as they couldn’t get into other disciplines (38.02%), due to parents’ wish (14.06%), friends influence (6.08%), or due to some other unspecified reasons(39.54%), only (2.3%) claimed to have joined after reading the advertisement. This clearly shows that for most of the students, physiotherapy was not the first choice of profession. We think the lack of awareness among the public is a leading factor causing dissatisfaction towards the profession.
In our study the students’ attitudes towards good future were average. There was no significant difference between different years of the students. Gender wise comparison was also not significantly different. Tedla et al. 2009 described main reasons for average results might be the job arena is getting saturated as days pass by.(6)

Maximum number of the students preferred to join hospital as physiotherapist (34.99%) followed by private practice (16.73%), 15.2 and 11.03 percent as teacher and researcher, 7.6 percent to peruse a career abroad and 7.22 percentage interested to work at fitness centre as a physiotherapist and 3.8 percentage preferred to peruse a career provided by institute through campus selection (Figure 3).

Finally the students were asked for their suggestions to improve the profession/discipline (Figure 4). 6 most important points provided by them are

- Upgrade Clinical Knowledge (5.7%)
- Creating Mass Awareness (41.82%)
- Conducting Conference and Trainings (6.08%)
- Modification in Education Pattern (7.22%)
- Providing Job opportunity (23.57%)
- Upgrading the Pay Scale (15.61%)

It can be concluded from the study that the students of different years are indecisive with the course and their profession. However there are many untouched long standing problem areas which need to be modified. We think mentorship programs and student support should be implemented to strengthen the discipline and regular teaching learning workshop for the educators will help to enhance the profession. The students also provided suggestions to improve the field. This proves that the students of different years of BPT and MPT are concerned with development of the profession.

REFERENCES

Table 1: Socio Demographic Data of BPT Students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year of BPT</th>
<th>No. of Students</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Male Percentage</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Female Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st yr BPT</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>59.68%</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>40.32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd yr BPT</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>51.72%</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>48.28%</td>
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<tr>
<td>3rd yr BPT</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th yr BPT</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>61.8%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Table 2: Socio Demographic Data of MPT Students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year of MPT</th>
<th>No. of Students</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Male Percentage</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Female Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; yr MPT</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; yr MPT</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>61.54%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>38.46%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>28</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

38.18%
Total
235
128
54.46%
107
45.54%
71.43%
8
28.57%

Figure 1

Figure 2

Figure 3

Figure 4

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