



AWARENESS AND KNOWLEDGE OF PHYSIOTHERAPY AS A CAREER OPTION AMONG HIGHER SECONDARY STUDENTS IN JALGAON CITY: A CROSS-SECTIONAL STUDY

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ABSTRACT :

BACKGROUND : Physiotherapy is a rapidly evolving profession with a strong theoretical and scientific base and widespread clinical applications. Physiotherapists are health care professionals who help people to maintain, restore, and recover from injuries, and also enhance movement, activity, and functioning, allowing for optimal performance, and quality of life. The higher secondary science background students are the potential candidates to pursue bachelor of physiotherapy in India.

AIM : To find out the awareness and knowledge of physiotherapy as a career option among higher secondary students.

MATERIALS AND METHODS : The cross-sectional study was undertaken with the help of a self-made questionnaire which was distributed to 96 higher secondary students with biology as elective subject. Data was collected and statistically analyzed.

RESULT : 84% of students were aware of the physiotherapy course. It was found that 46% students were aware of physiotherapy from hospital sources, 32% students were aware from school, and 25% of students were aware from family and relatives. 73% students did know about eligibility for bachelor of physiotherapy, 66% knew about NEET, which is required for admission in bachelor of physiotherapy, 67% did 76% knew that BPTH is the minimum criteria, 54% knew about specialization in musculoskeletal physiotherapy, 36% knew about specialization in neuro physiotherapy, 80% of students were aware of their future career options after completing their physiotherapy programme. And 67% students wanted to pursue physiotherapy as their career.

CONCLUSION : The study concluded that 84% of the Higher Secondary students are aware about physiotherapy, but there is still a lack of complete awareness and knowledge of physiotherapy among higher secondary science students (biology students) in Jalgaon city. Appropriate measures have to be taken to create a good attitude towards the profession through these influential sources.

KEYWORDS : Awareness, BPTH, Higher Secondary students, Jalgaon city.

INTRODUCTION

Physiotherapy is a rapidly evolving profession with a strong theoretical and scientific base and widespread clinical applications in the restoration, maintenance, and promotion of optimal physical function¹. Physiotherapists are health care professionals who help people to maintain, restore, and recover from injuries, and also enhance movement, activity, and functioning, allowing for optimal performance, and quality of life. Their services help to reduce, or prevent impairments in body functions and structures, as well as activity limitations and participation restrictions¹.

Physiotherapy can be used to treat various conditions from paediatrics age group to geriatric age group².

Physiotherapy professionals concerned with the assessment, diagnosis, treatment and prevention of dysfunction and impairment of movement in people of all ages. The physiotherapist facilitates optimal functional independence, health and well-being of the community³. This is achieved by specialized manual techniques, electrotherapeutic modalities, exercises, advice and counselling to patients, provision of adaptive devices and mobility aids, education and training^{2,3}. Physiotherapists offer comprehensive care for the patients with diverse medical and surgical conditions like arthritis, burns, pain disorders, pediatric disorders, pulmonary disorders, neurological disorders, cardiac disorders, trauma and sports injuries³.

Physiotherapy management techniques can be used in all specialities include: Orthopaedics, Neurology, Cardio-Respiratory, Obstetrics & Gynaecology².

When planning one's future career, it is important to have information about various occupation and professions that are related to his/her interest⁵. The choice of a career is an important decision for every Higher secondary student, their career choices depend on various factors such as fees, type of college, personal factors, prestige, lifestyle preference, personality type⁵. In recent days, though the awareness about the Physiotherapy profession is increasing, still the complete awareness is not achieved⁶. The common myths prevailing among the people are Physiotherapy treatment is commonly used in musculoskeletal conditions⁶. Physiotherapist uses mainly electro modalities, and these myths may underestimate the scope of the profession and practice⁶.

The availability of factual information about the profession is an influential factor in making career decisions. It is mandatory for the counsellors to give appropriate information about the various professions to the higher secondary students so that it would be useful in choosing their career pathway². We hope this study will provide an insight about the awareness and attitude towards the Physiotherapy profession that in turn helps the education policy makers to consider the means to increase the awareness of the profession².

NEED OF STUDY.

Many high school students still lack appropriate information and are therefore unaware of the vast career opportunities open to them, so it is essential to expand their view on the profession. This study could provide an insight about the awareness of Physiotherapy profession as a career option and to find common source of information about the profession among the Higher Secondary students and help them in choosing their career pathway.

METHODOLOGY

A cross-sectional study was conducted by convenient sampling in Jalgaon city among 96 higher secondary students. Self-made questionnaire was used as outcome measured. The study included male and female higher secondary students studying biology subject. And the students from mathematics and the arts were excluded.

PROCEDURE

The permission was taken from the institutional ethical committee. Further subjects were selected on the basis of inclusion and exclusion criteria, then written and informed consent was taken and nature of study was explained to the participants, then the self-made questionnaire were distributed to the 96 higher secondary students any doubts about questions was clarified. Completed consent forms and questionnaire was received on same day.

OUTCOME MEASURE

A self-rated survey questionnaire was developed based on possible items from previously developed surveys that applied to the target population. The questionnaire contain physiotherapy as an option within health sciences domain in mind, various types of questions specific to physiotherapy department, its practice areas, and the course study were put forth to this students through the questionnaire. Each closed ended questions contain three options (Yes, No, Don't know) and the open ended questions contain multiple options to identify the source of information regarding the physiotherapy profession. The face validation of the tool was obtained with the assistance of senior academicians and final revisions were made. A questionnaire was distributed to five senior academicians from which 4 were from Physiotherapy Department and 1 was from Other Department for their comments on its content, and the survey tool was then subsequently edited and validated according to their feedback.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

The collected data was managed & subjected to basic descriptive statistics in MS-Excel. A total number of 96 higher secondary students were filled the questionnaire the response frequencies to the survey questions were determined and presented in tabular and graphic formats.

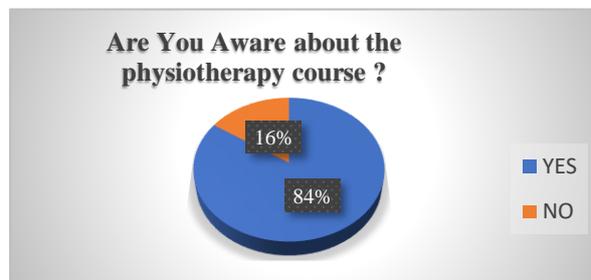
RESULTS

The present study included 96 participants who met the inclusion criteria. There was 41 male participants and 55 female participants included in the study. The tables and observation are as below;

1] Are you aware about the physiotherapy course ?

Table .1

Option Responce	No. of participants	Percentage
Yes	81	84%
No	15	16%



Pie chart. 1

Interpretation: In the above pie chart and table, 84% of students were aware of the physiotherapy course, while 16% were not aware.

2] What is source of information about Physiotherapy ?

Table no. 2

Option Responce	No.of participants	Percentage
Hospital	45	46%
School	31	32%
Family	24	25%
Relatives	24	25%
Media	13	13%
Other	20	20%
Don't know	16	16%



Pie chart. 2

Interpretation: In the above table and pie chart, 46% of students were aware of physiotherapy from hospital sources, 32% of students were aware from school, 25% of students were aware from family , other 25% of students were aware from relatives, 13% of students were aware from media sources, 20% of student were aware from other sources, and 16% of students were unaware of physiotherapy.

3] Are you aware about eligibility for bachelor of physiotherapy ?

Table no. 3

Option Responce	No.of participants	Percentage
Yes	70	73%
No	26	27%



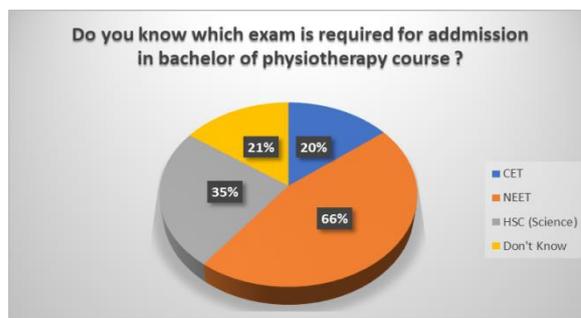
Pie chart. 3

Interpretation: In the above table and pie chart, 73% students were aware about eligibility for bachelor of physiotherapy, while 27% students were unaware about it.

4] Do you know which the exam is required for admission in bachelor of physiotherapy course?

Table no.4

Option Response	No.of participant	Percentage
CET	20	20%
NEET	64	66%
HSC [Science]	34	35%
Don't know	21	21%



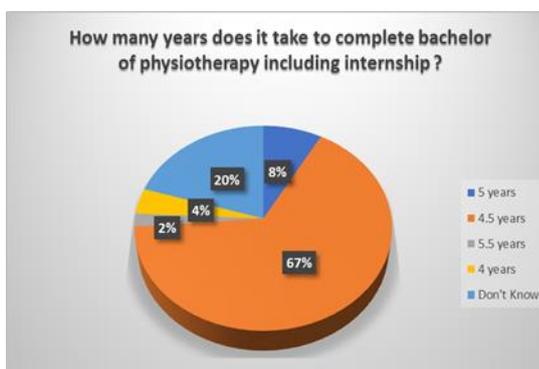
Pie chart. 4

Interpretation : The above table and pie chart shows that 66% students were aware about NEET which is required for admission in bachelor of physiotherapy, while 35% students were aware about HSC is required for admission in bachelor of physiotherapy course, according to 20% students CET is required for admission and 21% students are unaware of it.

5] How many years does it take to complete bachelor of physiotherapy including internship?

Table no.5

OPTION RESPONSE	NO OF PARTICIPANT	PERCENTAGE
5 years	8	8%
4.5 years	65	67%
5.5 years	2	2%
4 years	4	4%
Don't know about bachelor of physiotherapy	20	20%



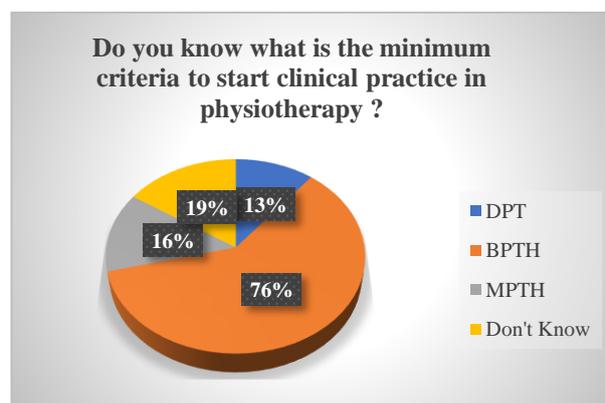
Pie chart. 5

Interpretation : According to the table and pie chart above, 67% students presume that physiotherapy course takes 4.5 years for completion including internship, 8% thinks that it takes 5 years for completion including internship while 4% students thinks that physiotherapy course takes 4 years for completion, 2% presume physiotherapy course takes 5.5 years with internship , and 20% students have no idea about it.

6] Do you know what is the minimum criteria to start clinical practice in physiotherapy?

Table no. 6

Option response	No. of participant	Percentage
DPT	13	13%
BPTH	73	76%
MPTH	16	16%
Don't know	19	19%



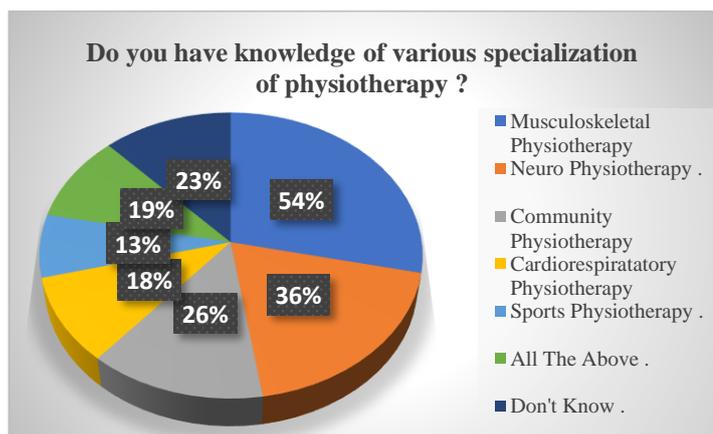
Pie chart. 6

Interpretation : The above table and pie chart shows the awareness about the minimum criteria to start clinical practice 76% students thought that BPTH is the minimum criteria ,13% students thought that DPT is minimum criteria for clinical practice while 16% students thought MPHT is the minimum criteria to start the clinical practice and the 19% students were unaware about it.

7] Do you have knowledge of various specialization of physiotherapy?

Option response	No. of participant	Percentage
Musculoskeletal physiotherapy	52	54%
Neuro physiotherapy	35	36%
Community physiotherapy	25	26%
Cardiorespiratory physiotherapy and icu physiotherapy	18	18%
Sport physiotherapy	13	13%
All of the above	18	19%
Don't know about the speciliaztion of physiotherapy	22	23%

Table no. 7



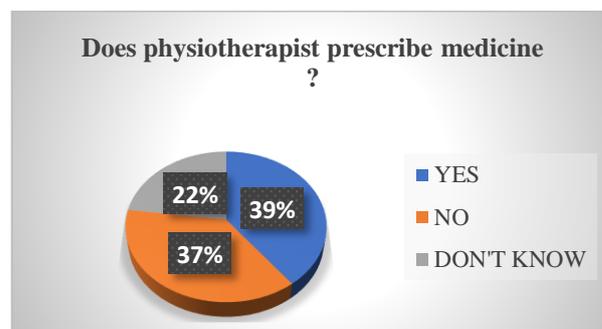
Pie chart. 7

Interpretation : In the above table and pie chart , according to 54% students were aware about specialization in musculoskeletal physiotherapy, 36% students were aware about specialization in neuro physiotherapy ,26% students were aware about specialization in community physiotherapy, 18% students were aware about specialization in cardiorespirstory physiotherapy, and 13% students were aware about specialization in sport physiotherapy while 19% students were aware about all the specializations of physiotherapy field , and 23% students were not aware about any specialization in physiotherapy.

8] Does physiotherapist prescribe medicine?

Table no.8

Option response	No. of participant	Percentage
Yes	38	39%
No	36	37%
Don't know	22	22%



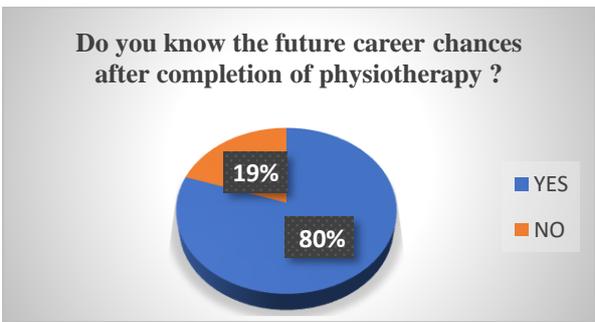
Pie chart. 8

Interpretation : The above table and pie chart shows that , 39% students presumes that physiotherapist can prescribe medicine while 37% students presumes that physiotherapist dose not prescribe medicine, and 22% are unaware about it.

9] Do you know the future career chances after completion of physiotherapy?

Table no. 9

Option response	No. of participant	percentage
Yes	77	80%
No	19	19%

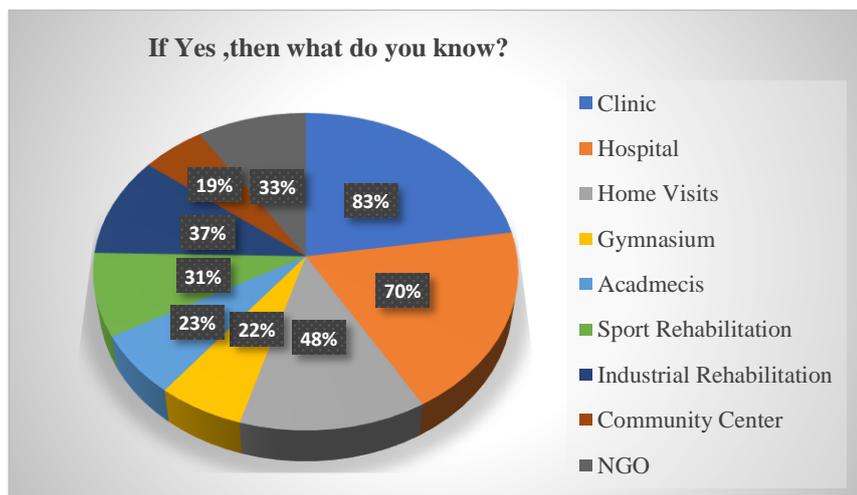


Pie chart. 9

Interpretation : The above table and pie chart shows that 80% students were aware about the future career chances after completion of physiotherapy while 19% students are unaware about it.

If Yes , then what do you know ?

Option response	No.of participant	Percentage
Clinic	64	83%
Hospital	54	70%
Home visits	37	48%
Gymnasium	17	22%
Academics	18	23%
Sport Rehabilitation	24	31%
Industrial Rehabilitation	29	37%
Community centers	15	19%
NGO	26	33%

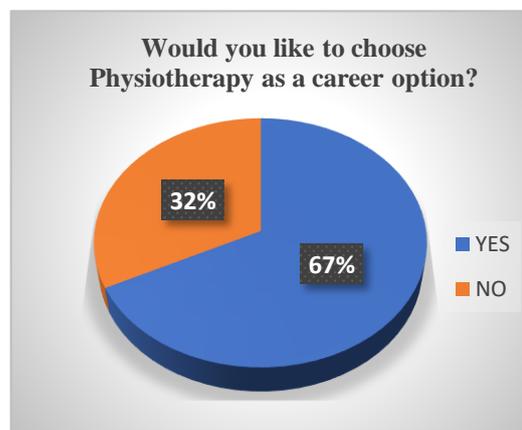


Interpretation : The above table and piechart shows that the awareness about future career chances in physiotherapy, 83% students were aware about clinic, 70% students were aware about hospital,48% students were aware about home visits, 22% students were aware about gymnasium, 23% students were aware about acadmecis ,31% students were aware about sport rehabilitation ,37%students were aware about industrial rehabilitation ,19% students were aware about community centers,and 33% students were aware about NGO'S.

10] Would you like to choose physiotherapy as a career option?

Table no. 10

Option response	No.of participant	Percentage
Yes	65	67%
No	31	32%



Pie chart. 10

Interpretation: According to the above table and pie chart, 67% of students were interested to choose physiotherapy as a career option, while 32% of students were not interested.

DISCUSSION

The survey helped to understand the existing level of awareness about physiotherapy and its scope/areas of intervention amongst higher secondary students in Jalgaon city. The selected population is higher secondary science background students because they are the potential candidates to pursue bachelor of physiotherapy in India.

In a study by Hussein Botchway, et al (2015) on effect of career information on knowledge of physiotherapy among science students in selected senior high schools in greater Accra found that the high school students who participated in this study proved to be more knowledgeable (80%) about physiotherapy⁶. Which is also similar to the present study which has satisfactory result that 84% higher secondary students in Jalgaon city aware about physiotherapy this shows that the high school students are somewhat knowledgeable about physiotherapy admission requirements. Contradicting it, to this a pilot study done by Harikrishnan, et al (2017) showed that the basic awareness about physiotherapy among higher secondary students in Thanjavur city is not satisfactory. Many of them believe physiotherapy is practiced by Doctors, it indirectly depicts majority of the students are not aware that physiotherapy is a unique profession and practiced by physiotherapist².

In the present study the most of students got the information about this field physiotherapy from hospital (46%), school (32%) and their family(25%), relatives(25%) this result was similar to this study by Radha Pachpor (2021) in this study the most of students also got the information about this field physiotherapy from hospital (32%) and relatives(27%)⁷. And contradicting to it the cross-sectional study done by Ashmi Chaudhari (2022) in mehsana district showed that the source of information about physiotherapy was commonly were relatives and mass media⁸.

In this study, 73% of students were aware of the eligibility criteria for bachelor of physiotherapy, and 66% were aware that the NEET exam is required for admission to bachelor of physiotherapy, while 67% were aware that the bachelor of physiotherapy programme lasts 4.5 years, including internship, and 76% were aware that BPTH was the minimum criteria for clinical practise, with 19% of students having no idea. A study conducted by Amandeep singh (2021) et al (Ludhiana district) found that 43.5% of students were aware that physiotherapy takes 4.5 years to complete with internship. Unfortunately, 72.5% of the total population was unaware of the bachelor of physiotherapy eligibility criteria⁹.

This study shows that majority of students were aware of physiotherapy in musculoskeletal (54%), neuro physiotherapy (36%), and community physiotherapy (26%) but knowledge of other specializations like sports physiotherapy (13%), cardiorespiratory physiotherapy (18%) are not satisfactory. 19% of students was aware about the role of physiotherapy in all of the above specializations while 23% students were unaware of it. The study by Dr. Deepa Abhichandani (2015) found that musculoskeletal physiotherapy has highest awareness among people and after this neurophysiotherapy has highest awareness which is similar to our study¹⁰.

According to Anushka Rathi (2020) et al almost half of the participants (47%) thought physiotherapists can prescribe medicines¹¹. But in this study the (39%)students thought that physiotherapist can prescribe medicine while (37%) students thought physiotherapist don't prescribe medicine. And there were still some of students (22%) who are not aware about it. In this study 80% students were aware about the future career chances after completion of physiotherapy which includes clinic(83%), hospital(70%), home visits(48%), gymnasium(22%), academics(23%), sports rehabilitation(31%), and NGO(33%). According to this study only 67% students were interested to choose physiotherapy as a career option.

The results of this study suggest that students are aware about Physiotherapy but there is a lack of complete awareness about the physiotherapy profession. The awareness about the physiotherapy occupation and the scope of physiotherapy among biology students is required to be enhanced. This can be improved by arranging awareness programs, seminars and lectures to different schools and also by using posters, social media and Television, newspaper. This study helped the students to understand the awareness of various aspects of physiotherapy and its awareness as a career option among the higher secondary science students(biology students) in Jalgaon city.

CONCLUSION

The study concluded that 84% of the Higher Secondary students are aware about physiotherapy, but there is still a lack of complete awareness and knowledge of physiotherapy among higher secondary science students (biology students) in Jalgaon city.

LIMITATIONS

- The study included a small sample size.
- Selected samples were from Jalgaon city only.
- The study involved biology students only.

FUTURE SCOPE

- Study can be revised including larger sample size.
- Study can be revised among health care professionals and the general population.
- Sample can be revised from other districts or states.

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