

Access this article online



URL:<https://www.ijptrs.com/view-issue/86/Fulltext>  
DOI:<https://www.ijptrs.com/public/images/content/869VOL2ISSUE1MANU4.pdf>

<sup>1</sup>BPT Student, School of Physiotherapy, Delhi Pharmaceutical Science and Research University (DPSRU), New Delhi, India

<sup>2</sup>Professor, (MPT Cardio Respiratory), PhD, School of Physiotherapy, Delhi Pharmaceutical Sciences and Research University (DPSRU), New Delhi, India

<sup>3</sup>Associate Professor, (MPT Sports), PhD, School of Physiotherapy, Delhi Pharmaceutical Sciences and Research University (DPSRU), New Delhi, India

Corresponding Author:

Richa Hirendra Rai,  
[richarai@dpsru.edu.in](mailto:richarai@dpsru.edu.in)

Submission: 1-03-2023

Revised: 07-03-2023

Publish: 15-03-2023

©2023 Association of Health and Wellness

Table of Contents

Introduction  
Methodology  
Result  
Discussion  
Conclusion  
References

## AWARENESS TOWARDS PHYSIOTHERAPY AMONG GENERAL PUBLIC IN RURAL AREAS

Aarti<sup>1</sup>, Richa Hirendra Rai<sup>2</sup> , Sheetal Kalra<sup>3</sup> 

### ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** The World Confederation of Physiotherapy policy statement states that “Physical therapy is services provided by physical therapists to individuals and populations to develop, maintain and restore maximum movement and functional ability throughout the lifespan.” It has been more than seven decades since inception of physiotherapy in India. Despite of its commendable results in prevention as well as treatment, awareness of physiotherapy still remains a big question in India.

**Aim and Objective:** To study the awareness about physiotherapy among general public in rural areas.

**Material and Method:** A survey was conducted using a questionnaire. A sample of 200 individuals drawn from the general public from villages around Delhi. They completed a structured questionnaire designed to test the knowledge of physiotherapy profession and services provided by physiotherapist. The obtained data was analyzed by using excel version 2301 and depicting the percentage of data.

**Result:** A total of 200 respondents comprising 104 (52%) men and 96(48%) women participated in the study. Majority of respondents never heard about physiotherapy and knew only of physiotherapy services in Bone, joint and nerve related dysfunction but were least aware of its results in other community services and medical conditions. The main source of information was newspaper and relatives.

**Conclusion:** The awareness is not satisfactory in rural area. The awareness about physiotherapy must be enhanced among rural population.

**Key Words:** Physiotherapy, Rural population, India, public awareness.

## INRODUCTION

The policy statement of the World Confederation of Physiotherapy defines physical therapy as services provided by physical therapists to individuals and populations to develop, maintain and restore maximum movement and functional ability throughout the lifespan. This service is provided in circumstances where movement and function are threatened by ageing, injury, pain, diseases, disorders, conditions and/or environmental factors, with the understanding that functional movement is central to what it means to be healthy. Physiotherapy has been providing commendable results in delivering community and health promoting rehabilitation in a variety of conditions, including medical disorders inside and outside of the ICU, primary and secondary prevention of non-communicable disorders, pain management, and sports-related services. However, awareness of physiotherapy remains a big question in India despite its more than seven decades of inception. Physiotherapists are involved in promoting, preventing, and treating disease to ensure optimal functioning and better quality of life for the overall population of the world. In the 1920s, Sister Kinney used exercise, massage, and traction to treat polio patients, which marked the turning point for the physiotherapy profession. The advent of physiotherapy in India was in 1952, due to an outbreak of Poliomyelitis in Mumbai. In 1953, the first Physiotherapy School and Centre was established in Seth G. S Medical college and K.E.M hospital by the Government of India and Mumbai municipal corporation (MMC) with the support of the World Health Organization (WHO). Despite having varied roles, the extent of awareness about physiotherapy in rural areas remains doubtful, not only in India but also all over the world. One probable reason may be a lack

of knowledge about physiotherapy among them.<sup>[1-3]</sup>

### Methodology:

A survey was conducted in the villages around Delhi in 2021 and 2022 to assess the level of awareness of physiotherapy. 200 subjects aged 20-50 years who could communicate in Hindi and were willing to participate were included in the study. A self-administered questionnaire was used to collect the data, and participants were informed that their information would be kept confidential. The questionnaire was divided into three parts: personal information, knowledge about physiotherapy, and sources of information. The researcher went person to person and asked them to fill the questionnaire. The questionnaire was prepared in Hindi to overcome the language barrier. The obtained data was analyzed using Excel and presented in tables and pie charts.

### RESULT:

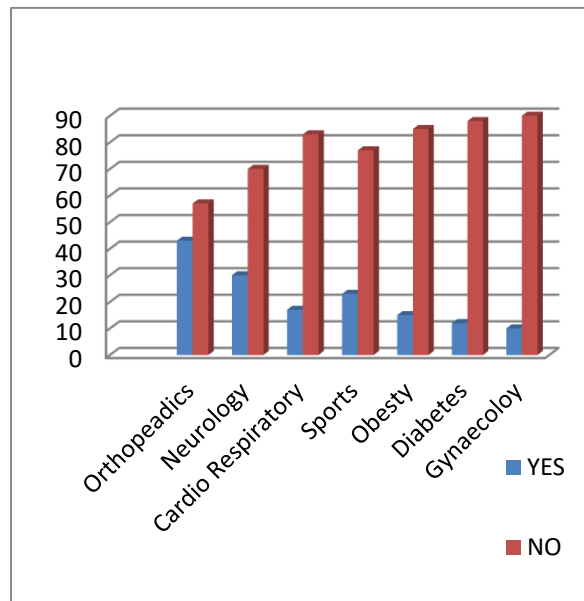
The obtained data was analyzed by using excel version 2301 and depicting the percentage of data. After analyzing the data was presented in tables and pie charts. The result of data showed the level of awareness in percentage form for the year 2021 and 2022. Out of 200 participants 104 (52%) were men and 96 (48%) women. The highest number of participants were in the range of (20- 30) years (45%) and very few participants (29%) were in the age group of 40-50 years.

The obtained data shows that very few participants (44%) have heard and have knowledge about physiotherapy more than a half population (56%) had never heard about physiotherapy. And (60%) population didn't

know about physiotherapist and their work. Only very few participants (37%) had an idea about when to visit a physiotherapist and knowledge about that exercise therapy and modalities are given during physiotherapy treatment. The data indicated that there is a low level of awareness towards physiotherapy in people residing around rural area.

**Awareness about specialties in Physiotherapy:**

There was a varied response showing more awareness about orthopedic and neurological conditions in the rural community. Majority of respondents gave the response that physiotherapy mainly dealt with orthopedic conditions 88 (44%) and neurology conditions 60 (30%) while 46 (23%) expressed that sport injuries are treated by physiotherapy. Only 34 (17%) respondents believed that physiotherapy also deals with cardio –pulmonary conditions. Less than 15% knew physiotherapy helps in managing obesity and diabetic conditions and very few only 10% were aware that physiotherapy also deal with gynecology problems



**TABLE 1.1 SHOWING RESULTS OF PART B QUESTIONNAIRE**

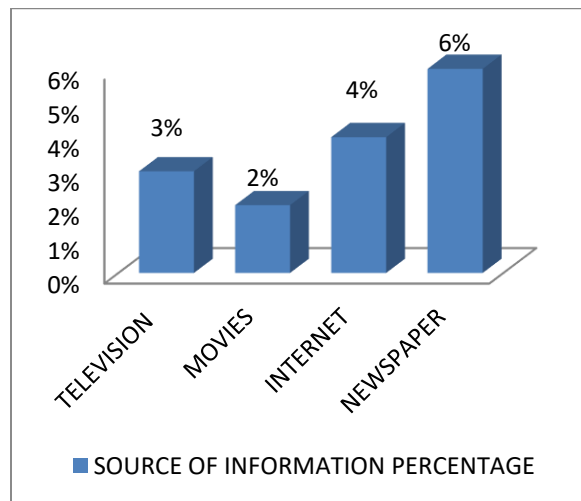
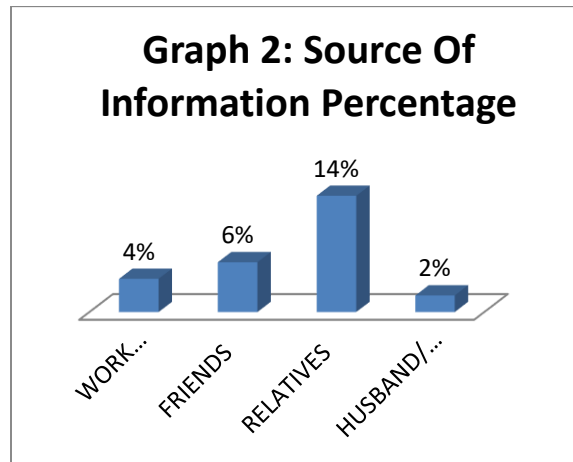
<b>AWARENESS OF PHYSIOTHERAPY</b>			
<b>S.NO</b>	<b>QUESTIONS</b>	<b>YES %</b>	<b>NO %</b>
1	Have you ever heard about physiotherapy?	44%	56%
2	Do you know what is physiotherapy?	44%	56%
3	Have you ever taken physiotherapy?	30%	70%
4	Do you know who is a physiotherapist and what he does it do?	40%	60%
5	Do you know when to visit a physiotherapist?	37%	63%
6	Do you know electrical modalities are given during physiotherapy?	39%	61%
7	Do you know exercise therapy is given during physiotherapy?	35%	65%

**TABLE 1.2 SHOWING RESULTS OF AWARENESS ABOUT SPECIALTIES OF PHYSIOTHERAPY**

<b>CONDITIO NS</b>	<b>(% of subjects answer)YES</b>	<b>(% of subjects answer) NO</b>
ORTHOPE ADICS	44	56
SPORTS	23	77
NEUROLO GY	30	70
CARDIO-PULMONA RY	17	83
GYNECOL OGY	10	90
DIABETES	12	88
OBESITY	15	85

**SOURCE OF INFORMATION IN RURAL AREAS ABOUT PHYSICAL THERAPY:**

The source of information in rural areas around Delhi about physiotherapeutic services is as depicted in the Graph 2 and 3.



Graph 3: Source of information in mass media

**Discussion:**

The objective of this study was to assess the level of awareness about physiotherapy

among individuals residing in rural areas. Due to the vast geographical and cultural diversity in India, there are significant differences in the knowledge levels of people in urban and rural areas. This has also been observed in other countries where a considerable percentage of participants were not familiar with physiotherapy in rural areas.

The findings of this study indicate that the awareness of physiotherapy among the rural population is low, with only 44% of individuals being aware of it. Out of the 200 participants, 70% had never received any physiotherapy treatment before, which may be attributed to the lack of exposure to physiotherapy management and services. The graphs in the study demonstrate a low level of awareness about physiotherapy among individuals residing in rural areas around Delhi.

A study by Paul et al. reviewed the awareness of physiotherapy across the globe within countries having High Development Index (HDI) and Low Development Index (LDI). The study found a lack of awareness about physiotherapy even in countries with High Development Index (HDI). However, significant changes have been observed in the urban areas of India since 2015, as reported by various authors from different locations.

The majority of individuals in rural areas believed that physiotherapy mainly dealt with orthopedic conditions (44%) and neurological dysfunctions (30%). The study suggests that the rural population around Delhi is least aware of the various services that physiotherapy can offer in the field of cardiorespiratory, obstetrics and gynecology, metabolic disorders, and many others. Only a

select number of participants knew that physical therapy services can deal with other systems of the human body.

The findings of this study indicate the need for educational programs to improve public awareness and knowledge levels, particularly among less-educated individuals in rural areas. The low level of education and unavailability of physiotherapy services in rural areas may be the main reasons behind the lack of knowledge. Physiotherapists and the government should take measures to increase awareness and provide physiotherapy services among the rural population and Mohalla clinics in villages around Delhi. Regular physiotherapy health camps and treatment camps should be conducted at regular intervals in rural areas to improve awareness about physiotherapy among people.

#### Conclusion:

The study reveals that most individuals in rural areas around Delhi are unaware of physiotherapy and have minimal knowledge about the specialized services offered by physiotherapy professionals. Therefore, public awareness about physiotherapy and the conditions that a physiotherapist can deal with needs to be improved.

#### REFERENCES:

1. Doshi, D., Jiandani, M., Gadgil, R., & Shetty, N. (2017). PHYSIOTHERAPY AWARENESS IN MEDICAL AND NON MEDICAL POPULATION: A SOCIAL MEDIA SURVEY. *International Journal of Physiotherapy and Research*, 5(2), 1971–1975.
2. Policy statement: Description of physical therapy | World Physiotherapy. (2019). World Confederation for Physical Therapy (WCPT). <https://world.physio/policy/ps-descriptionPT>
3. Shimpi, A., Hutoxi, W., Shyam, A., & Dabadghav, R. (2015). Role of Physiotherapy in India. -Across-sectional survey to study awareness and perspective among Referring Doctors. *Journal of Medical Thesis*, 02(02), 11–15. <http://journalmedicalthesis.com/2014/08>
4. Igwesi-Chidobe, C. (2012). Obstacles to Obtaining Optimal Physiotherapy Services in a Rural Community in Southeastern Nigeria. *Rehabilitation Research and Practice*, 2012, 1–8.
5. Muniandy, Y., wong, lydia, Labao, H., & Clements, J. B. (2020). Awareness and Perception of the Roles and Services of Physiotherapy among Private Healthcare Practitioners in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah. 2600–7320
6. R, h., & h, k. (2017). Awareness and attitude towards physiotherapy among higher secondary students: a pilot survey study. *International journal of physiotherapy and research*, 5(1), 1846–1851.
7. Paul, A., & Mullerpatan, R. (2015). Review of Physiotherapy Awareness across the Globe. *International Journal of Health Sciences and Research*, 5, 294–301
8. Alkesh Shah, D., Champak Mahyavanshi, H., & Author, C. (2022). Prevalence of Awareness of Physiotherapy Amongst Health Care Professionals in Surat City.

International Journal of Health Sciences and Research (Www.Ijhsr.Org), 12(6), 21. <https://doi.org/10.52403/ijhsr.202206041>

9. Ramanandi, V. H., Panchal, D. N., Prabhakar, M. M., Shah, D., & Mavani, J. (2019). Awareness, attitude, belief, and utilization of physiotherapy services among the general public in major cities of Gujarat state. *Physiotherapy - The Journal of Indian Association of Physiotherapists*, 13,95–101.