



RESEARCH REPORT

Knowledge, attitudes, and barriers towards evidence-based practice among physiotherapists in Malaysia



Hannah C. Yahui, BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy,
Narasimman Swaminathan, MPT^h*

Faculty of Health and Life Sciences, INTI International University, Nilai, Malaysia

KEYWORDS

evidence-based practice;
physiotherapists

Abstract *Background:* Recently, there has been an increased need for all healthcare disciplines to provide interventions that are effective and evidence based. This has led to more implementation of evidence-based practice (EBP) in clinical settings. Following this, research regarding EBP gained attention to determine its uptake into the physiotherapy profession. Although there are numerous studies to determine the attitudes and barriers of physiotherapists towards EBP, most of them were done in developed nations. As for Malaysia, little research has been carried out, much less among physiotherapists.

Purpose: The purpose of this study was to identify the knowledge, attitude, and barriers towards the implementation of EBP among physiotherapists in Malaysia.

Methods: A survey was conducted among the members of the Malaysian Physiotherapy Association and other practicing therapists in Malaysia. One hundred and two responses were collected throughout a span of 2 months.

Results: Respondents agreed that EBP is necessary to practice and that it helps in decision making as well as improving patient care. Eighty-one percent of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that they had received formal training in EBP. However, 61% of the respondents reported that strong evidence is lacking to support their interventions. Thirty percent of the respondents reported reading <2 articles per month, with 57% stating that they read two to five articles in a typical month. This study also found time constraints, limited access to search engines, and lack of generalizability of research evidence as the top three barriers to implementing EBP.

Conclusion: Physiotherapists in Malaysia had a positive attitude towards EBP and are inclined towards implementing evidence into their clinical practice. They are interested in attending courses to improve their knowledge and skills in EBP.

Copyright © 2017, Hong Kong Physiotherapy Association. Published by Elsevier (Singapore) Pte Ltd. This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC-ND license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>).

* Corresponding author. Faculty of Health and Life Sciences, INTI International University, Persiaran Perdana Nilai, Nilai 71800, Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia.

E-mail address: narasimman.swaminathan@newinti.edu.my (N. Swaminathan).

Introduction

Evidence-based practice (EBP) is considered as a cornerstone in the current era of clinical practice. In line with other healthcare professionals, physiotherapists are also using highest quality of research evidence in their clinical practice. In 2003, the World Confederation of Physical Therapists declared a policy statement on EBP, in which they stated that “physical therapists have a responsibility to use evidence to inform practice and ensure that the management of patients/clients, carers, and communities is based on the best available evidence” [1].

The implementation of EBP in any clinical setup involves five As: (1) ask a clinical question; (2) acquire the best evidence; (3) appraise the evidence for its validity; (4) apply the evidence with clinical expertise and patient values; and (5) assess the effectiveness of the process. Inability to carry out any one of these steps may constitute a barrier to EBP. Several studies conducted among various healthcare professionals have identified lack of time as the greatest barrier to implement EBP [2–7], apart from limited access to information and a lack of good information technology support [8,9]. Other barriers reported include a lack of search skills [2,3,7,9] and difficulty in applying evidence in the patient population [2,6–8].

Besides, the use of evidence in practice also relies on the physiotherapists’ knowledge in searching for and appraising journal articles, and their attitudes regarding EBP. Research regarding the knowledge and attitudes of physiotherapists towards EBP has mostly been done in developed countries. In Malaysia, little research has been done and has focused on healthcare professionals in general, with fewer responses from the perspective of a physiotherapist [4]. The objectives of this study were to: (1) identify the Malaysian physiotherapists’ knowledge and skills in searching for evidence and evaluating available evidence; (2) attitude towards the value of EBP; and (3) perceived barriers towards the implementation of EBP.

Materials and methods

A survey was conducted using a structured questionnaire among the physiotherapists of Malaysia. The survey tool was developed based on published literature, and content of the survey tool was validated by three experts [4] (Appendix). The constructed questionnaire contained two sections. The first section enquired about the sociodemographic data, while the second section consisted of questions related to the knowledge, attitudes and barriers towards EBP. The questionnaire consisted of a four-point Likert scale, dichotomous, and open-ended questions. The final questionnaire consisted of questions to identify knowledge about the EBP process, literature retrieval, and critical appraisal skills, apart from questions to explore the attitudes and beliefs about EBP. Respondents’ perceived barriers on implementing EBP were also questioned. This study was approved by the Institutional Review Board.

In the first phase participants were approached with permission during the Malaysian Physiotherapy Association

annual general meeting. The study was explained to the participants and written informed consent was obtained. Out of 80 distributed questionnaires, 75 were returned. The practicing therapists were approached through the Facebook group, with 274 members yielding 27 responses. A total of 102 participants completed the survey.

Data analysis

Data were analyzed using SPSS version 20.0 (SPSS Inc., Chicago, IL, USA). Response frequencies to the survey questions were determined and presented in tabular and graphic formats. After examining the response frequencies, the variable categories were collapsed, and the Likert scale data were collapsed in to two categories instead of four (agree and strongly agree as one category and disagree and strongly disagree as another category) prior to analysis of the associations between the variables.

Pearson’s χ^2 test for independence was conducted to examine the following associations: (1) responses to items measuring education, knowledge, and skills; attitudes and beliefs; use of literature; and access to and availability of evidence with items measuring age, highest degree attained, and work experience (years); (2) responses to items measuring attitudes and beliefs with items measuring access to information; (3) responses to items measuring use of the literature with items measuring the number of physical therapists in practice settings, number of patients seen in an average day, and the number of hours worked in an average day; and (4) responses to items measuring access to and availability of evidence with items measuring the type of practice facility and the number of physical therapists in the facility. Cramer’s V was then used to determine the strength of correlation where associations were found. The level of significance was set at $p < 0.05$.

Results

The characteristics of the respondents are presented in Table 1. The majority of the respondents were from the age group of 25–34 years (85.3%), and 52.9% had a Bachelor’s degree. A small majority (57.8%) of respondents had 2–5 years of work experience. More than half of the respondents reported that they had undergone formal EBP training (Figure 1); 72.5% of them were confident with search skills; and 57.8% were confident about appraisal. Among the respondents, 66.7% expressed interest in using evidence in practice, whereas 95.1% perceived that EBP is helpful in clinical decision making (Figure 2).

When questioned about accessibility to the evidence, 88.3% of respondents had access to the search engine (Figure 3). There were significant associations between qualifications, specialization, and work experience, and the number of articles read monthly (Table 2). Insufficient time has been identified as the top barrier for implementing EBP by the respondents, followed by limited access to search engines (Figure 4). Inability to apply EBP to the population, and lack of research skills and interest were also perceived as barriers by the respondents (Figure 5).

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/5563834>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/5563834>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)