

Occupational Therapy Awareness and Knowledge of Medical and Health Sciences Undergraduates

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Abstract

An essential part of the multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary healthcare service team is occupational therapy (OT). The OT method is based on the understanding that engaging in meaningful activity can improve one's health and well-being in all facets of daily life. The main objective of OT is to enable every person to engage in regular daily activities. By "working with people and communities to strengthen their ability to engage in the occupations they want to, need to, or are expected to do, or by adjusting the occupation or the environment to better support their occupational engagement," occupational therapists are able to accomplish this goal. Despite the vital role that occupational therapists play on the medical team, there seems to be little understanding of their purpose. The general public and therapists are both members of the healthcare community.

Keywords: Awareness; Knowledge; Medical; Undergraduate; Occupational Therapy

Introduction

Lack of access to occupational therapists in most settings, as well as the small number of OT training facilities, the lack of exposure of other health professionals to the role of OT during their academic training, and the lack of advocacy and public education on the role of OT by the professional bodies regulating the profession, have all been linked to inadequate knowledge of or misconceptions about OT in previous studies. Studies on OT knowledge among medical professionals and the general public seem to be lacking in the Nigerian context. By two British chartered occupational therapists working at the University College Hospital in Ibadan, Nigeria, in the early 1950s, and by the Nigerian Association of Occupational Therapists (NAOT), in 1965, OT was introduced into the Nigerian healthcare system. Following that, the Nigerian civil war between 1967 and 1970 led to an upsurge in occupational therapy practise and an influx of occupational therapists from all over the world into Nigeria to provide services housed in largely military and a few civilian hospitals throughout the nation. Unlike their physiotherapy counterparts, the British occupational therapists did not launch a training course in OT, thereby resulting in a shortage of OT professionals who are qualified and certified. Consequently, there was a large disparity in the advances and milestones in OT practise obtained in the developed countries compared to Nigeria. Few Nigerians who studied occupational therapy abroad started practicing in Nigeria before there were training programmes for occupational therapists there, improving the NAOT's reputation as a professional organisation. Additionally, they made sure that the NAOT was a member of the World Federation of Occupational Therapy in 1992 and the Occupational Therapy African Regional Group in 2001, respectively.

Methods

In light of the aforementioned, NAOT has made a concerted effort and advocated strongly for a clearly defined professional image and role, as well as practise autonomy and an increase in professionalism. The establishment of the Bachelor of Medical Rehabilitation (BMR) Degree Programme in OT and the Diploma Training Programme in OT at the Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU), Ile-Ife in 2002 and the Federal School of Occupational Therapy, Oshodi, Lagos in 2003, respectively, marked significant educational milestones for occupational therapy

in Nigeria over the past ten years. In Nigeria, occupational therapy education began 12 years ago, and in that time, 109 OT assistants and 20 occupational therapist assistant registrars have graduated. The number of registered occupational therapy assistants and registrars has also increased. The Medical Rehabilitation Therapy Board of Nigeria reports a rise in the number of professionals who have received local and international training. Currently, sub-Saharan Africa's only degree programme is the OAU BMR OT programme (excluding South Africa). The goal of this study was to evaluate the knowledge and awareness of Nigerian medical undergrads regarding occupational therapy (OT) in light of the recent introduction of OT training programmes in the Nigerian educational system.

This cross sectional survey was conducted by inviting undergraduate students from the colleges of health sciences' departments of medicine, nursing science, dentistry, and/or medical rehabilitation to take part. OT students were not allowed to take part in this study. Each participant was a full-time student. The survey tool for this study was a modified version of a questionnaire developed by Akinlade (2001) on knowledge and awareness of physiotherapy. In a pilot research with 20 medical undergraduates who were not involved in the main investigation, the questionnaire was validated. Consequently, redundant and unclear material were deleted or reframed appropriately. The questionnaire was found to have a test-retest reliability score of .66 and to be reliable, with a Cronbach's alpha value of .72. In order to learn more about the respondents' awareness and understanding of OT, the three sections of the questionnaire included both open-ended and closed-ended questions.

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Result

The first part of the questionnaire asked questions on the respondents' demographics. Questions about knowledge of OT as a course of study were included in the second section. Study and as a profession, as well as a question relating the place where OT information is found. The following section inquired about the accuracy of the responders' knowledge. There were four OT duties listed, and this treatment for injuries to the bones and joints, Arrangement of a patient's treatment plans and use of Activities as a kind of therapy and their importance in therapy mental illnesses. Added to the list were two distractions: "OT equals recreational therapy," "Occupational therapists operate on patients surgically." five locations where occupational therapists work. Among the stated works were "sport centres" and "research." rare "industrial locations," "city centres," Nigerian occupational therapists' locations of employment; Special schools, schools, and rehabilitation facilities Convalescent homes are frequently used locations where The work of occupational therapists. "Yes" was an option for response. "No". The score for knowledge was established by the total of all of the questions' accurate answers.

Discussion

The OAU Teaching Committee on Ethics and Research Ile-Ife Hospitals Complex in Osun State, Nigeria provided acceptance of the study. The study's goal was to a topic's details are both orally and in writing the respondents' information sheet in their respective lecture classrooms. Eligible volunteers signed a release authorizing take part in the research. 400 copies of the questionnaire. The researchers manually administered questionnaires to students with aspirations to become doctors, nurses, or dentists' degree programmes in physiotherapy offered by the College of OAU, Nigeria, Ile-Ife, and Health Sciences. A total of 381 qualified volunteers participated, resulting in a response rate of 95.25%. The questionnaires were gathered after completion. The researchers' presence on site or the participant's representation of the class. 12 copies of the returned questionnaires because the majority of it was improperly completed or omitted, and seven copies of the No survey responses were received. Mean and percentage descriptive statistics were utilised to analyze the data. Chi-squared inferential statistics were employed. To ascertain the relationship between OT awareness and sociodemographic traits of respondents as well as the Relationship between OT knowledge and sociodemographic characteristics. Knowledge is measured by a total knowledge score. Poor was assigned to edge for a raw score, when the score is 5e6 and excellent when the score is 7e11. Utilizing SPSS version 20.0 (SPSS), data were analysed. In contrast to the majority of jobs in the Nigerian health industry, OT is not as well known among professionals as other disciplines. Despite its lengthy history, population. In the only university in West Africa offering a bachelor degree in occupational therapy, this study examined the awareness and knowledge of OT among students pursuing medical and other healthcare careers. The study's conclusions revealed that the majority of undergraduates were familiar with OT. However, the majority of undergraduates had poor to moderate understanding about occupational therapy, which was mostly made up of false beliefs about the profession's functions. This finding is in line with other research on the inadequate understanding of OT duties among nurses, physician assistants, and nursing students. Most of the pupils in the research were familiar with at least both

interprofessional education and collaboration practise are methods that have been proposed as a remedy for the fragmented healthcare delivery systems seen in several developing nations, including Nigeria. The current study adds more support to the need for the adoption of such approaches in training incoming medical students and other health professionals as well as in collaborative patient management.

Conclusion

According to the study's findings, students were more familiar with occupational therapists' use of activities as therapy modalities than they were with their involvement in treating musculoskeletal disorders dysfunctions. The study's hazy understanding of OT can be attributed to the resource that provided the OT information in this academic setting. This inaccurate information is supported by a higher percentage. Who, as opposed to speaking with an occupational therapist directly, learned about OT from friends, the media, and other sources. It is thought that the knowledge regarding OT that people get from friends and the media may not be true. According to Patel and Shriber, speaking with an occupational therapist directly is the best and most efficient way to learn about OT. This study also revealed that most students knew little about the range of settings outside of rehabilitation facilities and special education facilities in which an occupational therapist might operate. Students from all health disciplines may be reached by rotational clinical postings that share knowledge, which could aid in giving the students accurate information about OT. Rotational clinical posts; a time when medical, dental, and other professionals rotate.

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