

OP-38: Awareness of physiotherapy specialties among bank employees in the Dehiwala- Mount-Lavinia suburb in Colombo District

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Introduction: The working environment of the bankers may cause physical health issues such as back pain, neck pain, etc. The general public frequently confuses the functions of different healthcare professionals including physiotherapists, which makes it difficult in selecting the best specialist to consult for their health problems. Thus, public awareness on physiotherapy may lead to early diagnosis, better management and prevention of several common health conditions. Accordingly, this study aimed at investigating the awareness of different physiotherapy specialties among bank employees and determining the association between the level of awareness and the socio-economic characteristics of bank employees.

Methods: A cross-sectional survey was conducted using a self-administered questionnaire on 124 bank employees at their workplaces. Data were analysed using standard descriptive statistics. Inferential statistics was used to assess the relationship between education level, gender and age groups and awareness of physiotherapy.

Results: The response rate was 67.03%. There were 61 males and 63 females. Among them, 92% were aged between 23-52 years. G.C.E. Advanced Level and diploma were the highest educational levels with 63.7%. Only 20.2% had a bachelor's degree. Awareness of physiotherapy was 93.5%. Television and internet led with 52.4% as sources of information. Well-known specialties were geriatrics (79%) and musculoskeletal physiotherapy (77.4%). Most of the fields in physiotherapy were known by 40-70% respondents. There was no statistically significant difference between the level of awareness and age, gender or level of education of bank employees in this population.

Conclusions: Physiotherapy awareness among bank employees is high. Mass media plays a major role in information. Majority of this population is aware of geriatric and musculoskeletal specialties. Physiotherapy in head injuries is the least known field. However, knowledge on treatment options was inadequate.

Keywords: physiotherapy, awareness, bank employees