PP-23: Ideal educational model for the clinical education component of B.Sc. Honours in the Physiotherapy degree programme at University of Colombo, Sri Lanka

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Introduction: Clinical education is a crucial component of an entry level physiotherapy education programme. This study aims to identify ideal educational strategies to improve the clinical education component of the B.Sc. Honours in Physiotherapy degree programme at the University of Colombo in order to produce more competent physiotherapists in future.

Methods: A qualitative phenomenological study will be conducted at the Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo and relevant clinical training stations. Second to fourth year physiotherapy undergraduates who have commenced their clinical training, academic staff members who have actively participated in clinical teaching during the past four years, clinical educators with at least two years of experience in training physiotherapy undergraduates, internal and external examiners participating for clinical examinations of the degree programme, physiotherapy graduates with more than one year of experience in clinical practice and other health professionals who have worked with physiotherapy graduates for more than one year will be recruited as study participants using maximum variation sampling method. Selection and recruitment of participants will be terminated upon data saturation. Focus group discussions will be conducted with physiotherapy undergraduates and individual semi-structured interviews will be conducted with other categories of participants. Interviews will be audiotaped and transcribed. Document analysis will be conducted to evaluate the existing curriculum. In addition, a literature review will be conducted on the best educational strategies for physiotherapy clinical education. Framework analysis methods will be used to analyse data.

Conclusions: This study will explore the clinical education component of the B.Sc. Honours in Physiotherapy degree programme at University of Colombo more descriptively using the qualitative phenomenological approach which is frequently used to assess educational interventions in health professions' education. The investigators expect to enhance the credibility of the study through triangulation of data collection methods.

Keywords: clinical education, physiotherapy, entry-level education programmes