

Impact Assessment: Perception of physiotherapy faculty: A pilot study

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Abstract

Introduction: Impact assessment links evidence and decision making according to world health organisation. Moreover Maharashtra University of Health Sciences had recently conducted the impact assessment of physiotherapy colleges and V.S.P.M'S college of physiotherapy was one of the first physiotherapy institute to undergo this process which prompted the idea of undertaking the research with an aim to understand the perceptions of physiotherapy faculty in regards to impact assessment.

Material and Methods: Descriptive questionnaire based study was carried out on physiotherapy faculties of 2 out of the 4 colleges existent in Nagpur which had undergone for impact assessment process. The faculties who volunteered to participate in the study were provided with questionnaires for understanding the perceptions of impact assessments. The questionnaire consisted of 10 closed ended questions which were rated according to 5 point likert scale and 2 open ended questions which were assessed according to specific key themes

Results: 100% of the faculty perceived that impact assessment requires co-ordinated work and 81% felt it created a new learning experience, but variations of perceptions existed in relation to replacement of local inspection with impact assessment. Majority of the faculty were not knowing about impact assessment before 2018.

Conclusions: Impact assessment helps in improving quality of physiotherapy colleges although it is a time consuming process.

Keywords: Impact assessment, Physiotherapy, Perception.

Introduction

Impact Assessments is a type a evaluation which are basically formal in nature and procedurally evidence-based that assess the economic, social, and environmental effects of public policy.¹ This type of assessments have been initially and widely utilized in policy making in the organization for Economic Co-operation and Development countries (OECD) and the European Commission as it helps in improving legislation.² Literatures have also shown that it can focus on specific themes.³ Through the available literatures it is known that impact assessment is pointed towards global assessments, policy impact assessment, strategic environmental assessment, social impact assessments and gender impact assessments.

Impact assessment links evidence and decision making according to world health organization.⁴ In Indian scenario the Maharashtra state government had a project and desire for grading the health science colleges affiliated to Maharashtra university of health science on same lines of national assessment accreditation council (NAAC) so that students can opt for better choices based on grading of colleges. Initially homeopathy and ayurveda colleges underwent for impact assessment inspections and recently inspections was conducted for the impact assessment of physiotherapy colleges⁵ and V.S.P.M'S college of physiotherapy was one of the first physiotherapy institute to undergo this process which prompted the idea of undertaking the research.

Aim and Objective

To understand the perceptions of physiotherapy faculty towards impact assessment. Studying the perceptions of physiotherapy faculty for impact assessment based on the responses obtained from the structured questionnaire.

Material and Methods

Descriptive questionnaire based study was carried out on physiotherapy faculties of 2 out of the 4 colleges existent in Nagpur which had undergone for impact assessment process. Requisite permissions were obtained before commencement of the study. Ethical clearance was obtained from the Institutional Ethical Committee.

In all there were 24 faculties, 17 faculties belonged to V.S.P.M's college and 7 from Datta Meghe College of Physiotherapy. Universal sampling was utilized so that responses could be obtained from all the faculties for understanding the perceptions of impact assessments.

The designations of faculties were principal professors 2, Professor 1, 7 associate professors and 14 assistant professors. The participants who were willing to voluntarily participate were included provided they fulfilled the inclusion criteria formed the source for the data.

Inclusion criteria:

1. Physiotherapy faculty
2. Present on the day of survey

Exclusion criteria: 1. Researcher and co- researcher of the current study

In all 17 faculties formed the sample for the study from among the 24 and they were explained in relation to nature of the study and later on provided with the questionnaire and adequate time was provided for filling up of questionnaires

The questionnaire consisted of 10 closed ended questions which were rated according to 5 point likert scale and 2 open ended questions which were assessed according to specific key themes based on the responses obtained from the participants.

Data analysis

The raw data obtained from the study which was in the form of 5 point likert scale as strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree and strongly disagree for each of the 10 questions. Further analysis

was carried out by collapsing the responses into 3 components as agree (strongly agree & agree), disagree (strongly disagree & disagree) and neither agree nor disagree based on the perceptions of physiotherapy faculty and was entered in the Microsoft Excel sheet 2007. Statistical analysis was carried out by utilizing Epi-Info software. The study being descriptive in nature the responses were expressed in percentages. The two open ended questions were analyzed according to the specific key themes.

Results

The results obtained from the study provides the perceptions of the physiotherapy faculty aged between 26-50 years with a mean age of 35.25 ± 5.98 for 10 open ended questions which is represented in bar diagram as shown below:

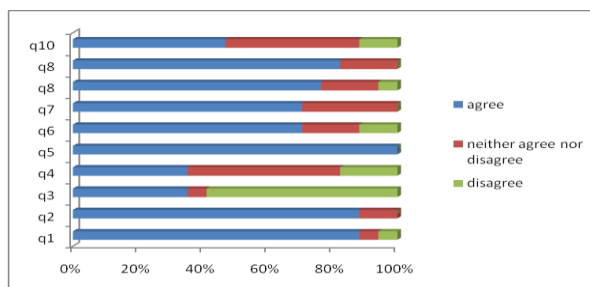


Fig. 1: Bar diagram representing the perceptions of physiotherapy faculty

88.23 % agreed that impact assessment is an effective way for inspecting physiotherapy colleges and it helps to improve the quality of physiotherapy colleges. Majority of the faculty did not know about impact assessment before 2018 as only 35.29% knew impact assessment before 2018. 47.05 % neither agreed nor disagreed that impact assessment reflects true assessment of physiotherapy colleges. 100% of the faculty perceived that impact assessment requires coordinated work from all faculties .70.58% perceived that impact assessment is a time consuming process but agreed that the impact assessment scores should be used to rank physiotherapy colleges. 82.35% felt it created a new learning experience, but variations of perceptions existed in relation to replacement of local inspection with impact assessment with 47.05% agreeing and 41.17% neither agreeing nor disagreeing and 11.76% disagreeing.

The pie chart below indicates things liked and disliked about impact assessments.

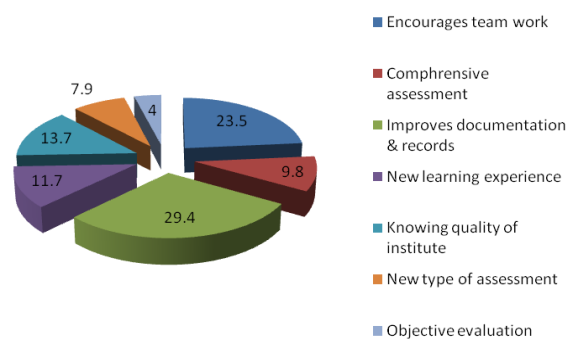


Fig. 2: Pie diagram representing the things liked about impact assessment

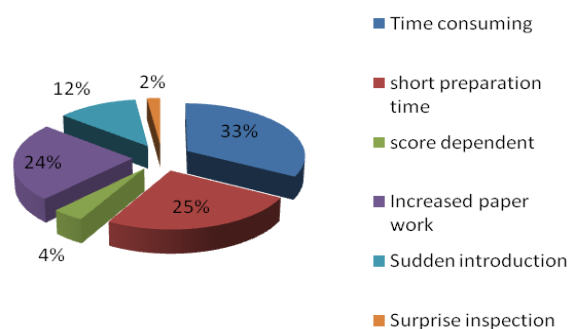


Fig. 3: Pie diagram representing the things disliked about impact assessment

Discussion

The results of the study clearly indicate that the objective of the study “understanding the perceptions of physiotherapy faculty by responses obtained from the questionnaire” was achieved. Although the responses were obtained from faculties belonging to two different physiotherapy colleges but this would not have impacted the study as both the colleges underwent for same type of inspection in the form of impact assessment and it was a structured format .

70.83 % (n=17) of the available 24 staff participated in the study and all the 17 staff who participated in the study promptly handed over the questionnaires back after completely filling it up. 100% response rate of the participating staff was obtained which is much higher than the acceptable response rates for questionnaires which is 80%.^{6,7} Nigel Lendemann in 2018⁷ has written that a high response rate (>80%) from a small sample is preferable to a low response rate from a large sample and further wrote that survey’s response rate is seen as an important indicator of survey quality.

The reason for the high response rates could be attributed to the fact that the questionnaire was a short questionnaire with only 12 questions with 10 closed ended and two open ended questions. It has been observed that on an average a 17% drop in response rate when survey has more than 12 questions⁷ and hence in the current study 12 questions were used to understand the perceptions .Moreover as it was an internal survey it usually receives 20% higher response rates.

It is also to note that the perceptions of the faculties were varying emphasizing the fact that individual variations are bound to be there and therefore should adhere to the principle of majority when implementing policy decisions in the interest of the profession. Although the impact assessment is time consuming process but still then it helps in providing grades to colleges and institutions which further promotes the institutions and colleges to strive for better quality thereby enhancing the quantification on quality institutes.

Conclusion

It can thus be concluded from the perceptions of physiotherapy faculty that impact assessment helps in improving quality of physiotherapy colleges although it is a time consuming process .Thereby emphasizing the fact that impact assessments could be a part and parcel of future inspections for grading of institutions and a step forward to replace the traditional local inspections in years to come.

Impact

The study is indicating that impact assessments have been well accepted and this type of assessments facilitates for newer methods towards improving the

quality of physiotherapy colleges in a structured fashion. More over it has created a new learning phenomenon in the area of grading of physiotherapy colleges.

Limitations

The limitation of the study was that it did not include the faculties from all physiotherapy colleges affiliated to Maharashtra University of health sciences so as to further generalize the findings.

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