

Practice of Professional Core Values among Physical Therapists in Public Hospitals: A Cross Sectional Survey from Lahore

Namra Liaquat¹, Hufsa Tariq², Zeeshan Saeed³, Asifa Javaid⁴, Maleeha Fwad⁵, Hafiz Muhammad Asim⁶

¹ Student, Lahore College of Physical Therapy, Lahore Medical & Dental College, Lahore, Pakistan

^{2,3,5} Senior Lecturer, Lahore College of Physical Therapy, Lahore Medical & Dental College, Lahore, Pakistan

³ Demonstrator, Lahore College of Physical Therapy, Lahore Medical & Dental College, Lahore, Pakistan

⁶ Professor, Lahore College of Physical Therapy, Lahore Medical & Dental College, Lahore, Pakistan

Author's Contribution

¹ Conception and design, Collection and assembly of data, ² Analysis and interpretation of the data, ³⁻⁶ Critical revision of the article for important intellectual content, Statistical expertise ¹⁻⁶ Final approval and guarantor of the article.

Article Info.

Received: July 20, 2022

Acceptance: March 04, 2023

Conflict of Interest: None

Funding Sources: None

Address of Correspondence

Hufsa Tariq

Email: hufsatariq5@gmail.com

ORCID: 0000-0002-3407-1304

Cite this article as: Liaquat N, Tariq H, Saeed Z, Javaid A, Fwad M, Asim HM. Practice of Professional Core Values among Physical Therapists in Public Hospitals: A Cross Sectional Survey from Lahore. JRCRS. 2023; 11(3):146-149.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.53389/JRCRS.2023110303>

A B S T R A C T

Background: In an era when moral paradoxes are becoming more common, it is critical for a health professional to comprehend professional values in order to establish and maintain a professional authenticity.

Objective: We aim to determine core values which shape the patient centered care between patient and physical therapist and how these behaviors can be directed towards a better approach to positive growth and current healthcare needs in public hospitals regarding physiotherapy profession. This study aims to learn more about how physical therapists develop professional core values and how they integrate those values into clinical practice.

Methodology: A descriptive cross-sectional study was carried out. Non-probability convenience sampling technique was used. The research study involved 65 physiotherapists from multiple public hospitals in Lahore (Ganga Ram, Services, Mayo, Jinnah, General, and Children Hospital). In this research study during data collection Private hospitals and clinical settings were not included. A self-assessment questionnaire "Professionalism in Physical Therapy Core Values" (PTCVSA) was used to assess physical therapists' professional standards. Data was analyzed by using SPSS 21 version. Data statistics or variables were calculated in the form of a frequency and a percentage.

Results: Data collection and analysis revealed that social accountability (54%) was followed by accountability (57%), altruism (41%), compassion/caring (62%), integrity (51%), and excellence. professional obligation 60% were all important traits.

Conclusion: In comparison to altruism and excellence, compassion/caring and professional responsibility were the most visible and prevalent standards in therapists. They should be strengthened even further. Personal accountability and social responsibility were also mentioned by a few therapists.

Key words: Physical Therapist, Public Hospitals, Professional Core Values, Professional Behavior, Professionalism

Introduction

Professional conduct is predicted by core values, which are the focal points of professionalism. These core values are therefore accepted as the most important and fundamental elements on which a profession is based.¹ Throughout modern times, the concept value has been defined in numerous ways resulting in vagueness and misrepresentation about what a value is and what the term means. A value is "an operational presumption that one accepts

as one's own and that defines behavior and attitude^[2]. Because values are the precepts and predictors of behavior so it is vital to comprehend and articulate the core values of a profession. Regardless of the norms the physiotherapy (PT) sector in Pakistan has a long history of adhering to ethical principles, there is no adequately informed set of professional core values.³ With the profession's notable adaptation to independent and self-regulated practice comes the role and responsibility to emphasize the importance of having a set of

shared, precise core values to guide daily practice and encourage the best care for patients.⁴

The American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) aimed to express the values of the profession. The board of directors of the American Physical Therapy Association endorsed the professional fundamental principles of physical therapists in 2003. In 2009 the House of Delegates of APTA modified the Code of Ethics in order to implement the seven values. These are accountability, altruism, compassion or caring, excellence, integrity, professional duty and social accountability.⁵ These professional values assist us in recognizing professional behavior and conduct. They are the foundation of a profession. These values direct our daily practice as physical therapists based on professional behaviors⁶. It is critical to assess professional attitudes in order to build a well-developed health-care system. A well-defined peer reviewed questionnaire Professionalism in Physical Therapy Core Values was accepted by the APTA Board members in 2011. It's a self-assessment tool based on the APTA's core values that has a big impact on how physical therapists provide better care and rehab.⁷ The APTA's Vision 2020 included promoting professionalism and personal accountability as a crucial component. The PTCVSA questionnaire is used for both evaluation and interpretation. The questionnaire is also being used as a research tool with physical therapists for the first time in Pakistan.⁸

Professional attitudes, standards, patient care, and quality of service are all being called into question more and more. Physical therapy professionalism has recently become a top priority for the advancement and excellence of the health care system.⁹ Physiotherapy is used in public and government hospitals to treat a wide range of people of all ages and health conditions.

Physical therapists help patients keep and rebuild their functional abilities in a variety of medical and related setups. Pakistan has a disability proportion of 2.65 percent and a total population of approximately 5.035 million people with disabilities.¹⁰ There is a great deal of development being done in this field, and it has expanded rapidly in the last ten years in comparison to the previous 50 years.¹¹ Physical therapists persistently exemplify core values by professing to and skillfully implementing professional core values of altruism, accountability, excellence, caring and social responsibility, as well as by collaborating with other practitioners to ensure optimum health and wellbeing in individuals and society. Professionalism is the bedrock upon which all healthcare practitioners should build their careers and personal integrity.¹²

In all departments of physiotherapy is performed as part of a multidisciplinary treatment plan that focuses on preventing complications and improving the patient's condition, as well as rehabilitation and functional mobility. So work ethics and professional conduct must be considered in order to promote the health-care system.¹³ Unfortunately budget deficits and inadequately established setups in public hospitals have resulted in a shortage of trained physiotherapists and quality services.¹⁴ As a result, the significance of this profession is yet to be acknowledged. Currently, this profession requires an independent regulatory framework in order to excel, develop, and protect its interests.¹⁵

The goal of this study is to gain insight into the development and execution of professional core values in daily practice, with a focus on providing better physical rehabilitation and aiming to continuously improve quality of care. Maintaining knowledge and skill standards, as well as establishing programs that encourage physical therapists' ongoing evaluation, competence, and improvement.

Methodology

A total of 65 practicing physical therapists were chosen to investigate the role of different professional and ongoing clinical experiences and practice in relation to professional core values. The sample size comprised all therapists serving in public hospitals in Lahore. The research strategy was reviewed and authorized by the Lahore College of Physical Therapy's research department. The study's conduct was approved by the Lahore College of Physical Therapy's research committee. (**Ref No. LCPT/2410**) All participants signed an informed consent form.

A descriptive cross sectional survey was carried out over the course of six months during August 2019 and January. As study locations, all public hospitals having physical therapists in Lahore were chosen, including Jinnah Hospital, Children Hospital, Ganga ram Hospital, Mayo Hospital, and General Hospital. Private hospitals and clinical settings were not included for data collection of study. Non-probability convenient sampling approach was used.

A self-administered questionnaire titled "Professionalism in Physical Therapy Core Values" was used to collect the data. Among the 68 total sample predictors described in the questionnaire are accountability, altruism, integrity, caring, excellence, professional duty, and social responsibility. Subjects were asked to read each behavioral indicator and rate how frequently they performed each marker on a 5-point Likert scale. The accountability factor is made of 10 scale elements, and the standard core value scores are

different constructs with a variation and distribution. The altruism component is made up of five assessed elements with a score grading value of 5–25. The compassion/caring and excellence elements are made up of 11 components. The integrity variable is made up of 12 components with a possible average score of 12–60. The professional obligation factor consists of seven observed elements with a possible overall score of seven to thirty-five. The social responsibility factor is made up of 12 items that can be scored anywhere between 12 and 60. The overall questionnaire consists of 68 observed variables with a possible score ranging from 68 to 340.

Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21 was used to enter data, and the same software was utilized to analyze data. Data statistics or variables were calculated using frequency and percentage.

Results

Data was collected from 65 Physiotherapists of different Public hospitals in Lahore using a self-assessment questionnaire “Professionalism in physical therapy: core values”. Data analysis indicated that compassion/caring and professional duty were the most apparent and prevalent values in therapists as compared to altruism and excellence. Providing enhanced services and care to underserved communities and vulnerable areas was identified as a need that was not being met by respondents. They need to be strengthen further. As mentioned in table I social accountability 36 (54%), accountability 37 (57%), altruism 27 (41%), compassion/caring 40 (62%), integrity 33 (51%), and excellence 30(46%), professional obligation 39(60%) were all important traits.

Table I: Total percentages of professional core values in physical therapists.		
Core Value	Percentages	Frequencies
Accountability	57%	37
Altruism	41%	27
Compassion/caring	62%	40
Excellence	46%	30
Integrity	51%	33
Professional duty	60%	39
Social responsibility	55%	36

Discussion

The most common values observed in therapists, according to the current study, were compassion/caring (62%) and professional duty (60%). These include a focus on the patient's overall well-being while maintaining safety and confidentiality. In the current study, these aspects were found to be excellent, Accountability (57%) and integrity (51%) were

found to be good. Participating in community activism for excellence and awareness of physiotherapy profession did not appear to be a factor in social responsibility (55%), but many participants mentioned actively promoting for society's health and wellness needs briefly.

There were some differences among the identified values, for example, core value altruism (41%), which entails providing professional services to undeserved and underrepresented communities, was not well marked in this study. Data collection identified only (46%) of excellence as using evidence persistently to reinforce professional decisions and advancing new evidence to expand knowledge. These two values, altruism and excellence, were identified as areas that needed to be strengthened. Professionalism in Physical Therapy: Core Values Self-Assessment tool will facilitate practicing therapists to integrate core values into clinical care. Therefore, practitioners might advance in incorporating societal individuality as part of competent values and standards.

The analysis of the data showed that the path to professional development and role fulfilment requires not only the acquisition of clinical and theoretical knowledge, but also the innovation of professional attributes, the application of core values in the affective domain, and the practice of core values. This self-assessment survey can help a person build capacity and develop throughout their career by highlighting areas for professional growth.

Limitations and Recommendations:

Due to the sensitive nature of the study, it was challenging to determine the extent to which therapists adhered to professional values in practice. More research is required, along with collaboration with other settings like private hospitals and clinics, to enhance inter-professional collaboration. A longitudinal study should be conducted to enhance the validity and reliability of assessment techniques. Further research is required for the implementation, evaluation and reassessment of professional core values and tools. The core professional values stated here can help to unify the field and highlight the significance of physiotherapy to the general public.

Conclusion

According to the findings, APTA values such as accountability, compassion/caring, and professional duty are the most common values followed by therapists. However, altruism and excellence were the least valued values among therapists, and they need to be improved further.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: The authors would like to express their gratitude to all members of the physiotherapy team for their dedication and support.

Conflict of interest: None

Funding Source: None

References

1. Abbott, A., The system of professions: An essay on the division of expert labor. 2014: University of Chicago press.
2. Dige, M., Occupational therapy, professional development, and ethics. *Scandinavian Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 2009. **16**(2): p. 88-98.
3. Eisele, D.W., Professionalism: why it should matter to us: Presidential address at 2011 American Head and Neck Society Annual Meeting. *Archives of Otolaryngology-Head & Neck Surgery*, 2011. **137**(11): p. 1071-1077.
4. Aguilar, A., et al., Exploring the professional values of Australian physiotherapists. *Physiotherapy research international*, 2013. **18**(1): p. 27-36.
5. Bellamy, J., Professionalism & Core Values. 2012.
6. Van De Camp, K., et al., How to conceptualize professionalism: a qualitative study. *Medical teacher*, 2004. **26**(8): p. 696-702.
7. Swisher, L.L., P. Hiller, and A.T.F.t.R.t.C.E. Documents, The revised APTA code of ethics for the physical therapist and standards of ethical conduct for the physical therapist assistant: Theory, purpose, process, and significance. *Physical therapy*, 2010. **90**(5): p. 803-824.
8. Denton, J., et al., Test-Retest Reliability of the APTA Professionalism in Physical Therapy: Core Values Self-Assessment Tool in DPT Students. *Journal of Physical Therapy Education*, 2017. **31**(4): p. 2-7.
9. Goldie, J., Assessment of professionalism: a consolidation of current thinking. *Medical teacher*, 2013. **35**(2): p. e952-e956.
10. Memon, A.R., et al., Physical therapy as a profession and its educational development in Pakistan. *JPMA. The Journal of the Pakistan Medical Association*, 2016. **66**(11): p. 1472-1474.
11. Prasad, V., Are we treating professionalism professionally? Medical school behavior as predictors of future outcomes. *Teaching and learning in medicine*, 2011. **23**(4): p. 337-341.
12. Wainwright, S.F. and P.Q. McGinnis, Factors that influence the clinical decision-making of rehabilitation professionals in long-term care settings. *Journal of Allied Health*, 2009. **38**(3): p. 143-151.
13. Grammatopoulou, E., et al., The scope of physiotherapy services provided in public ICUs in Greece: A pilot study. *Physiotherapy theory and practice*, 2017. **33**(2): p. 138-146.
14. Flory, S., The prospects and challenges of bringing physical therapy to the physically disabled population in developing countries. 2009.
15. Hoecht, A., Quality assurance in UK higher education: Issues of trust, control, professional autonomy and accountability. *Higher education*, 2006. **51**(4): p. 541-563.

Copyright Policy

All Articles are made available under a Creative Commons "**Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International**" license. (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>). Copyrights on any open access article published by *Journal Riphah college of Rehabilitation Science (JRCRS)* are retained by the author(s). Authors retain the rights of free downloading/unlimited e-print of full text and sharing/disseminating the article without any restriction, by any means; provided the article is correctly cited. JRCRS does not allow commercial use of the articles published. All articles published represent the view of the authors and do not reflect the official policy of JRCRS.