Re: Current status of post-graduate physical therapy curriculum in India: articulated or disarticulated? an issue paper.

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Dear Chief editor,

This is with reference to the Dr. S. Ramachandran’s paper ‘Current status of Post graduate Physical therapy curriculum in India: Articulated or disarticulated? An Issue paper.’ I wish to congratulate the author on successfully highlighting the current problems faced by the physical therapists in India with regards to their post graduate education and continuing professional development. The author has explained the issues starting from the admission process, curriculum development, course duration and content, facilities and continuing professional development. I feel that such a review of the prevalent education system of physiotherapists has been long overdue considering the low morale of newly qualified physiotherapists both at graduate and post graduate levels.

Though the author has drawn attention to the role of Indian Association of Physiotherapists (IAP) in relaxing the accreditation norms and thus being responsible for the dipping standards in education, the article has unfortunately ignored the role of Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MHFW) of India, Department of Health in not recognizing the important role of physiotherapists as a vital part of the multidisciplinary team. It has been unfortunate that Health Education in India has been dominated by the erstwhile Medical Council of India, thereby taking no notice of the allied health professions.

While elsewhere in the world, physiotherapists are seen as an important part of the multidisciplinary team, in India, there is an unhealthy competition between the medical fraternity and physiotherapists. This is largely due to lack of understanding of the part a physiotherapist plays in rehabilitation of a patient and lack of professional barriers. This can be attributed both to IAP and to the MHFW as they have failed to raise awareness in medical professionals as well as general public. The focus of awareness drives needs to be on the roles and limits of a physiotherapist. This would encourage greater trust and empathy between the medical fraternity and physiotherapists, which would be beneficial for general public as well as professionals.

Another important point regarding the post graduate education, which seems to have gone amiss in the paper, is the examination system at post graduate levels. The emphasis still seems to be memorizing the theoretical aspects and writing them in the exams, while not much effort is spent in developing the presentation and teaching skills which would be invaluable to the post graduates as academicians. The post graduate education system doesn’t allow students to develop reflective thinking skills to continuously monitor their progress and learn from their previous experiences.

Pre-publication history of this article is available at the end of the paper.
through organized brainstorming. Neither does it focus on developing the reviewing skills in line with the current research trends. These are some of the other issues which I feel are important in developing the Indian post graduate education system to international standards.

The suggestions of the author for a national governing body for physiotherapists and the need to develop the skills of post graduates as researchers, academicians and reflective practitioners deserve special mention. It would be interesting to note the reactions of IAP and MHFW to the suggestions by Dr Ramachandran.

REFERENCES


ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

None.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

None identified.