



Awareness about Government Welfare Schemes for Persons with Disability among Occupational Therapist in Tamil Nadu

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KEYWORDS

Awareness, knowledge, questionnaire, occupational therapist, government welfare schemes, persons with disability, Benefits

ABSTRACT:

Introduction: Occupational therapists play an important role in the lives of people with disabilities, so it is important to know who can benefit and what programs are available for people with disabilities. This study focuses on occupational therapists' perceptions of the various welfare schemes available to persons with disabilities in Tamil Nadu.

Objectives:

- To assess the knowledge of occupational therapist about government welfare schemes for persons with disability and to create awareness using the same questionnaire used for the assessment.
- To find the overall awareness level in occupational therapist regarding different government welfare schemes.
- To find the difference in awareness among under graduate and post graduate occupational therapists.
- To find how the work experience influence the awareness regarding different government welfare schemes.

Methods: This study was conducted as an online survey using questionnaire. A self-assessment questionnaire was formed. Totally 100 occupational therapists were selected according to the inclusion criteria. The study was conducted as an online survey and the participants were asked to access the online survey through a unique google form link. Questionnaire consists of fifteen closed ended 'YES' or 'NO' questions. The google form link was electronically mailed to each of the 100 occupational therapists.

Results: Based on collected data or response, the number of participants of this study was 100 occupational therapist (i.e., Males - 31; Females - 69) and with age group of 21 to 42 years of age (mean age ~ 24.41) and with their work experience of 0 to 16 years. The statistical analysis showed that 65% of occupational therapist had adequate awareness, 28% of occupational therapist had moderate awareness and 7% of occupational therapist has inadequate awareness about government welfare schemes for persons with disability.

Conclusions: This study concluded that majority of occupational therapist in Tamil Nadu have adequate awareness about government welfare schemes for persons with disability.



1. Introduction

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), people with disabilities are deprived of opportunities for social and beneficial development. About 400 million people with disabilities live in developing countries. This vulnerable population is denied basic services such as health care, education and employment. About 70% of people with disabilities are unemployed. According to the 2011 census, India's total population is 1.23 billion, of which about 2.1% (more than 21 million) have some form of disability. Among those with disabilities, 56% (1.5%) are male and 44% (1.18%) are female. In the total population, males and females each independently account for 51% and 49%. Of the total population, 69% are from rural areas and the remaining 31% live in urban areas.

A disability certificate or a physical disability certificate is very important for people with disabilities. It enables people with different disabilities to take advantage of the benefits, facilities and perks offered through various government programs. This document is usually issued by medical authorities and confirms the nature and extent of a person's disability. Similarly, the Ministry of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Government of India, has introduced the use of Unique Disability Identification (UDID) cards for persons with disabilities, enabling them to keep only this one document for identification and verification of persons with disabilities. With a disability card, people with disabilities can receive various services according to the type and degree of their disability. Both the central and state governments have introduced a number of programs for persons with disabilities that are only available if the candidate has a disability card. Below is a list of benefits that people with a disability certificate can receive:

- Scholarship program for students with disabilities
- Income tax reduction
- Discount on train fares
- Reservations by Government Agencies
- Credit system for starting a new business
- Free travel on local public transport
- Access to subsidized prices for assistive and prosthetic devices
- Unemployment benefits (applicable to educated disabled persons)

- Group insurance (applies to officers with disabilities)
- Subsidies for the purchase of modified vehicles, etc.;

An individual with a disability of 40% or more may apply for a disability card only if her disability falls into a category set out in the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016. According to this law, a PwD (person with a disability) is a person who has a disability certificate or who has a disability that falls into the following categories:

1. Disability –
 - Visual impairment – blindness, visual impairment
 - Movement disorders – people cured from leprosy, cerebral palsy, dwarfism, muscular dystrophy, acid attack victims.
 - Hearing Impairment – deafness, deafness, speech impediment, language impediment
2. Intellectual disabilities - specific learning disabilities, autism spectrum disorders
3. Mental Behaviour – mental illness
4. Disability due to cause -
 - Chronic neurological diseases – Parkinson's disease, multiple sclerosis
 - Blood disorders - haemophilia, sickle cell anaemia, thalassemia
5. Combined disability - two or more of the above disabilities
6. Other Category - As notified by the Central Government

(Disability Certificate – What is a Unique Disability ID, Application Process and Required Documents – 17 March 2023 by Shruti Pandey)

Occupational therapy is a client-centered medical profession that promotes health and well-being through occupation. By working with people, communicating, and changing environments, therapists improve their ability to participate and engage in activities of daily living. Occupational therapy is part of the overall advances in treatment that people with disabilities receive.

The overall goal is to improve an individual's ability to perform daily activities in a way that improves quality of



life and enables independent living. The program is designed to help participants promote independence, productivity and self-care both at home, at work, at school and in the community. (How can people with disabilities benefit from occupational therapy? –Rikke Damkjaer Hoen (2017))

Occupational therapists play an important role in the lives of people with disabilities, so it is important to know who can benefit and what programs are available for people with disabilities. This study focuses on occupational therapists' perceptions of the various welfare schemes available to persons with disabilities in Tamil Nadu.

The Government of Tamil Nadu has implemented social assistance programs for persons with disabilities in different areas depending on the degree and type of disability. Here is a list of programs established by the Government of Tamil Nadu for people with disabilities.

1. Identification

- Scheme.no 1- National identity card document for the Disabled with Disability certificate
- Scheme.no 2- Unique identity card for the differently abled persons
- Scheme.no 3- Types of differently abled persons

2. Early intervention Centre

- Scheme.no 1- Early intervention Centre for infants and young children with hearing impairment
- Scheme.no 2- Early intervention Centre for the intellectual differently abled children
- Scheme.no 3- Early intervention Centre for children with visually impairment
- Scheme.no 4- Early intervention Centre for infants and young children with hearing impaired, cochlear implant, autism, and cerebral palsy at state resource training Centre

3. Special education

- Scheme.no 1- Scholarship (1st std to 8th std students) from Rs.1000 to Rs.3000
- Scheme.no 2- Scholarship (9th std to 12th std students) Rs.4000
- Scheme.no 3- Scholarship (Graduation and Post-Graduation students) Rs. 6000 to Rs.7000

- Scheme.no 4- Readers allowance to visually impaired persons (9th std to postgraduation) Rs.3000 to Rs.6000

4. Self-employment loan and schemes for differently abled

- Scheme.no 1- Unemployment allowance to the differently persons Rs.600 to Rs.1000 per month 18 years and after 1-year completion registration will be given
- Scheme.no 2- Self-employment with three fourth subsidy and maximum of Rs.25000 recommended to nationalized banks up to 45 years.
- Scheme.no 3- Motorized sewing machines to locomotor differently abled, hearing impaired, mild intellectual disabled and parents of 75% severely affected intellectually disabled persons.
- Scheme.no 4- Without interest loan assistance from national handicapped finance and development corporation (NHFDC) through district central co-operative bank, Chennai, urban and rural cooperative banks.
- Scheme.no 5- Unemployed youth employment generation program (UYEGP) through district industrial Centre. 30% subsidy given to the differently abled
- Scheme.no 6- The Prime Minister's Employment Creation Program (PMEGP) through District Industrial Centres in Chennai provides 30% to 40% subsidies for people with disabilities.
- Scheme.no 7- Rs.50000 subsidy and deposit for starting of Aavin milk outlets for the persons with disability.

5. Educational and employment reservation

- Scheme.no 1- 5% reservation in educational institutions and in employment
- Scheme.no 2- Financial assistance to persons with disabilities participating in main examination conducted by UPSC/TNPSC Group 1
- Scheme.no 3- 4% reservation in government, government under taking and government aided institutions

6. Aids and appliances for persons with disability

- Scheme.no 1- Tricycle
- Scheme.no 2- Wheel chairs



- Scheme.no 3- Callipers and crutches
- Scheme.no 4- Artificial limbs
- Scheme.no 5- Modular artificial limbs
- Scheme.no 6- Special wheel chairs for Cerebral palsied persons
- Scheme.no 7- Goggles
- Scheme.no 8- Retrofitted petrol scooter
- Scheme.no 9- Battery operated wheel chairs
- Scheme.no 10- Special spectacles in black colour
- Scheme.no 11- Braille watches
- Scheme.no 12- Magnifier for visually impaired students
- Scheme.no 13- Reflecting folding sticks/smart cane
- Scheme.no 14- Special hearing aids
- Scheme.no 15- Mobile therapy units

7. *Maintenance allowance*

- Scheme.no 1- Maintenance allowance to 40% and above disability intellectual differently abled persons Rs.500/-
- Scheme.no 2- Living allowance for severely disabled persons with more than 75% Rs.1500/-
- Scheme.no 3- Maintenance allowance for persons affected 40% and above with muscular dystrophy Rs.1500/-
- Scheme.no 4- Maintenance allowance for persons affected 40% and above leprosy cured persons Rs.1500/-
- Scheme.no 5- Maintenance allowance for persons affected 40% and above with spinal cord injury persons, multiple sclerosis, Parkinson's disease Rs.1500/-
- Scheme.no 6- Rs.1000/- allowance to guardians for severely affected high support need person.
- Scheme.no 7- Life certificate for all maintenance grants scheme to produce in every year month of April

8. *Marriage assistance*

- Scheme.no 1- Marriage assistance to normal persons marrying a visually impaired.
- Scheme.no 2- Marriage assistance to normal persons marrying locomotor differently abled persons
- Scheme.no 3- Marriage assistance to normal persons marrying speech and hearing-impaired persons

- Scheme.no 4- Marriage assistance to differently abled persons marrying differently abled persons

9. *Homes*

- Scheme.no 1- Homes for the female intellectual persons above the age of 14 years
- Scheme.no 2- Home for mentally ill persons

10. *Travel concession to the persons with disability*

- Scheme.no 1- Free travel concession for visually impaired persons within the district
- Scheme.no 2- Free travel concession to differently abled persons from residence to schools, colleges and hospital
- Scheme.no 3- 75% travel concession in state owned transport corporation, mofussil buses
- Scheme.no 4- Severely disabled passengers receive a 75% travel discount by presenting a copy of their ID and accompanying medical certificate to the conductor at the time of travel.

11. *Other schemes*

- Scheme.no 1- Registration of complaints under persons with disabilities act, 2016
- Scheme.no 2- Rs.31250 subsidy for purchase of petrol scooters by the differently abled working women

12. *Tamil Nadu differently abled welfare board schemes*

- Scheme.no 1- Accident death relief for differently abled up to Rs.100000
- Scheme.no 2- Accident relief causing disabilities up to Rs.25000
- Scheme.no 3- Financial assistance to meet the funeral expenses of a differently abled persons up to Rs.17000
- Scheme.no 4- Scholarship to son and daughter of differently abled persons up to Rs.1000 to Rs.6000
- Scheme.no 5- Marriage assistance Rs.2000
- Scheme.no 6- Maternity, miscarriage and abortion benefits for disabled women (up to Rs.6,000)
- Scheme.no 7- Refund Rs.500 for the purchase of eyeglasses for the visually impaired

13. *Guardianship certificate*



- Scheme.no 1- Appointment of legal guardians for special categories of persons with disability under national trust act, 1999
- Scheme.no 2- Appointment of limited guardians for severely affected persons with disability categories is not covered under the national trust act, 1999

14. State award and national awards

- Scheme.no 1- State awards by government of Tamil Nadu on international differently abled day for the service of differently abled persons
- Scheme.no 2- Government of India national award on international differently abled day for the service of differently abled persons guidelines and applications
- Scheme.no 3- State awards on Independence Day for the service of differently abled persons guidelines and applications

15. Chief minister's comprehensive health insurance scheme

16. Self-employment training for differently abled

- Scheme.no 1- Training on multimedia, photography and editing at national film development corporation
- Scheme.no 2- Fitter training to speech and hearing-impaired persons will be given in government industrial training Institute
- Scheme.no 3- Skill training for differently abled
- Scheme.no 4- Training on book binding to visually impaired at government school for visually challenge

2. Objectives

- To assess the knowledge of occupational therapist about government welfare schemes for persons with disability and to create awareness using the same questionnaire used for the assessment.
- To find the overall awareness level in occupational therapist regarding different government welfare schemes.
- To find the difference in awareness among under graduate and post graduate occupational therapists.

- To find how the work experience influence the awareness regarding different government welfare schemes To find the overall awareness level in occupational therapist regarding different government welfare schemes

3. Methods

Aim:

To determine the awareness about government welfare schemes for persons with disability among occupational therapist in Tamil Nadu.

Objective:

- To assess the knowledge of occupational therapist about government welfare schemes for persons with disability and to create awareness using the same questionnaire used for the assessment.
- To find the overall awareness level in occupational therapist regarding different government welfare schemes.
- To find the difference in awareness among under graduate and post graduate occupational therapists.
- To find how the work experience influence the awareness regarding different government welfare schemes To find the overall awareness level in occupational therapist regarding different government welfare schemes

Hypothesis

Alternate Hypothesis:

There will be significant awareness or knowledge about government welfare schemes for persons with disability among occupational therapist in Tamil Nadu

Null Hypothesis:

There will be no significant awareness or knowledge about government welfare schemes for persons with disability among occupational therapist in Tamil Nadu

Research design: Cross sectional study design

Sample technique: A Convenient sampling technique was adopted.

Sample size: 100 subjects



Sample setting: There was no need of particular sample setting for this study. As this study was conducted as an online survey using google form.

Variables:

Independent variable - Government welfare schemes for persons with disability.

Dependent variable - Occupational therapists' awareness & knowledge or perception about government welfare schemes for persons with disability.

Selection criteria:

Inclusion criteria-

- Occupational therapist in Tamil Nadu
- Both gender
- Education- UG & PG

Exclusion criteria

- Professions other than occupational therapy.
- Students currently pursuing bachelors in occupational therapy course.

Tools used:

Questionnaire for occupational therapist was a self-assessment questionnaire focused on awareness about government welfare scheme for persons with disability in Tamil Nadu. The questionnaire has consisted 15 closed ended Yes or No type questions.

PROCEDURE

In the present study, the questionnaire was prepared in a google form. This study was conducted as an online survey & the participant were asked to access the online survey through a unique google form link. Questionnaire consists of 15 closed ended 'YES' or 'NO' questions. The Google form link was electronically mailed to each of the 100 Occupational therapists. The response or data collected were statistically tabulated & analyzed. Responses were analyzed using simple scoring method where for each response marked as 'YES' was given a score of '1' and for 'NO' was scored as '0'. The maximum score was 15. 15 points were then divided into three parts to find the level of awareness, any score between 1-5 was considered 'inadequate level of awareness', 6-10 was considered as 'moderate level of awareness', and 11-15 as 'adequate level of awareness'.

4. Results and Conclusion

The present study was aimed to determine the awareness about government welfare schemes for persons with disability among occupational therapists in Tamil Nadu. A questionnaire was prepared on consultation & under the guidance of a senior occupational therapist. The questionnaire consists of 15 closed ended questions. Based on collected data or response, the number of participants of this study was 100 occupational therapists (i.e., Males - 31; Females - 69) & with age group of 21 to 42 years of age (mean age ~ 24.41) and with their work experience of 0 to 16 years.

It can be statistically concluded by this study that 65% of occupational therapists have adequate awareness, 28% of occupational therapists have moderate awareness & 7% of occupational therapists have inadequate awareness about government welfare schemes for persons with disability.

The result indicates that majority of occupational therapists were adequately aware about government welfare schemes for persons with disability in Tamil Nadu. This questionnaire has also helped to find out the perception or knowledge of occupational therapists about government welfare schemes for persons with disabilities. Hence, the present study was supporting the alternate hypothesis.

5. Discussion

Occupational therapy practitioners enable people of all ages to live their life of the fullest by helping the client to promote health, to acquire or regain their skills needed to perform day to day life activities or ADL that was important and meaningful to their health and, well-being through engagement in valued occupations & also helps to prevent or to live better with injury, illness or disability. As occupational therapist has important role in the life of disabled person. It is important for them to know the beneficiaries and available schemes for the person's with disability.

The present study was aimed to determine the awareness about government welfare schemes for persons with disability among occupational therapists in Tamil Nadu & to find out the difference in awareness among undergraduates and postgraduate, and to find out how the



work experience influence the awareness regarding different government schemes. The present study used a questionnaire prepared in a google form. This study was conducted as an online survey & the participant were asked to access the online survey through a unique google form link. Questionnaire consists of twenty-six closed ended 'YES' or 'NO' questions. The Google form link was electronically mailed to each of the Hundred occupational therapists. The response or data collected were statistically tabulated & analyzed.

The data for this research study was collected over a period of 3 months. Based on collected data or response, the number of participants of this study was 100 Occupational therapists (i.e., Males - 31; Females - 69) & with age group of 21 to 42 years of age (mean age ~ 24.41) and with their work experience of 0 to 16 years. The response for the questions from each occupational therapist i.e. YES or No were tabulated & analyzed. The percentage of responses were calculated for each question separately according to the number of 'YES' or 'NO' responses from the questionnaire.

Table & Figure 1: Shows the percentage of responses for each question separately and **Table & Figure 2:** Shows the percentage of level of awareness based on responses; Based on analysis of the responses for the questionnaire to calculate the Level of awareness about government welfare schemes for persons with disability among occupational therapists, the results revealed that 65% of occupational therapists have adequate awareness, 28% of occupational therapists have moderate awareness & 7% of occupational therapists have inadequate awareness about government welfare schemes for persons with disability.

Table & Figure 3: Shows the percentage of the level of awareness based on age group; Based on analysis of the age wise level of awareness, the result shows that occupational therapists; Below 30 years of age: 63.82% have adequate awareness, 29.78% have moderate awareness & 6.3% have inadequate awareness about government welfare schemes for persons with disability. 31 - 40 years of age: 100% have adequate awareness about government welfare schemes for persons with disability. Above 40 years of age: 100% have adequate awareness about government welfare schemes for persons with disability. Since the p value of 0.511 was greater than 0.05, null hypothesis was accepted. Hence, there was a

no statistically significant increase of level of awareness among occupational therapists based on their age group.

Table & Figure 4: Shows the percentage of the level of awareness based on education; Based on analysis of the education wise level of awareness, the results shows that occupational therapist who were completed, UG: 66.26% have adequate awareness, 27.71% have moderate awareness & 6.02% have inadequate awareness about government welfare schemes for persons with disability. PG: 64.7% have adequate Awareness, 29.41% have moderate awareness & 5.88% have inadequate awareness about government welfare schemes for persons with disability. Since the p value of 0.02 was less than 0.05, alternate hypothesis was accepted. Hence, there was a statistically significant increase of level of awareness among occupational therapists as their level of education progresses. Thus, it supports the article of Anjana Hooode on the topic Awareness among Graduate and Post Graduate Speech Language Pathologist Regarding the different government schemes available for persons with disability which says higher the education level, better was the awareness.

Table & Figure 5: Shows the percentage of the level of awareness based on experience; Based on analysis of the experience wise level of awareness, the result shows that occupational therapist; Less than 5 years' experience: 63.04% have adequate awareness, 30.43% have moderate awareness & 6.52% have inadequate awareness about government welfare schemes for persons with disability. 6 - 10 years' experience: 100% have adequate awareness, about Government welfare schemes for persons with disability. More than 10 years' experience: 100% have adequate awareness about government welfare schemes for persons with disability. Since the p value of 0.345 was greater than 0.05, null hypothesis was accepted. Hence, there was no statistically significant increase of level of awareness among occupational therapists as their level of experience progresses. It correlates with the article by Gautham. P about the status of awareness about government schemes among special educators of persons with intellectual disability in Uttar Pradesh which says that working experience does not influence on the level of awareness.

6. LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

AND



LIMITATIONS;

- * The study was done with small sample size (i.e., only 100 occupational therapists).
- * The study was conducted in one particular geographical area, Tamil Nadu.

RECOMMENDATIONS;

- * Large number of samples can be selected for an extensive study.
- * The same study can be replicated & conducted in a large geographical area for larger sample size to generalize results.
- * To create awareness and knowledge about the government schemes and programs, the professional health care course can include a separate topic regarding the national, state and local schemes available for the persons with disability.

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