

Dementia Knowledge and Confidence among Occupational Therapy Students in India: A Cross-sectional Study

Monday-1301

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Occupational Therapy (OT) students in India show low dementia knowledge but moderate confidence. Students with greater knowledge did not feel more confident in practice, highlighting an important gap that calls for targeted dementia education in Indian OT curricula.

INTRODUCTION	METHODS	RESULTS	CONCLUSIONS	REFERENCES																									
Dementia is a growing public health concern in India, with a prevalence of 7.43% among adults over 60 (Oberoi et al., 2026). India's rapidly ageing population faces a mounting dementia burden. Occupational therapists are well-positioned to support individuals with dementia and their caregivers across home, community, and institutional settings. Adequate dementia knowledge enables clinicians to reason accurately about assessment and intervention, while confidence determines whether that knowledge is applied in real-world practice (Conway et al., 2025). While studies have examined dementia knowledge and attitudes among OT students in countries like Ireland (Gavin et al., 2023) and among allied health students in India (Chandrashekar & Nagaraj, 2024), OT students in India remain largely unstudied.	This study presents preliminary findings from an ongoing cross-sectional survey of occupational therapy students across India (n = 120; third-year, fourth-year, and interns). Dementia knowledge was assessed using the Dementia Knowledge Assessment Survey (DKAS; 0–50) and confidence using the Confidence in Dementia Scale (CODE; 0–45), with higher scores indicating greater knowledge and confidence, respectively. Perceived knowledge and confidence were measured on a 5-point Likert scale. Data were analysed using Jamovi. Descriptive statistics and Pearson's correlation analysis were conducted."	Students demonstrated low dementia knowledge (DKAS: M = 15.6/50) and moderate confidence (CODE: M = 27.0/45). Perceived knowledge (M = 2.46) and confidence (M = 2.56) were both below the 5-point scale midpoint. No significant relationship was found between actual knowledge and perceived confidence (r = 0.016, p = .863). Pearson correlation matrix — dementia knowledge & confidence (n = 120) <table><tr><th></th><th>Actual confidence (CODE)</th><th>Perceived confidence</th><th>Actual knowledge (DKAS)</th><th>Perceived knowledge</th></tr><tr><th>Actual confidence (CODE)</th><td>—</td><td>0.372 *</td><td>0.291 †</td><td>0.429 *</td></tr><tr><th>Perceived confidence</th><td>0.372 *</td><td>—</td><td>0.016 —</td><td>0.370 *</td></tr><tr><th>Actual knowledge (DKAS)</th><td>0.291 †</td><td>0.016 —</td><td>—</td><td>0.303 *</td></tr><tr><th>Perceived knowledge</th><td>0.429 *</td><td>0.370 *</td><td>0.303 *</td><td>—</td></tr></table> Low r — High r * p < .001 † p = .001 — p = .863 (not significant)		Actual confidence (CODE)	Perceived confidence	Actual knowledge (DKAS)	Perceived knowledge	Actual confidence (CODE)	—	0.372 *	0.291 †	0.429 *	Perceived confidence	0.372 *	—	0.016 —	0.370 *	Actual knowledge (DKAS)	0.291 †	0.016 —	—	0.303 *	Perceived knowledge	0.429 *	0.370 *	0.303 *	—	Occupational therapy students in India demonstrated limited knowledge of dementia and moderate confidence in dementia care. Students with greater actual knowledge did not necessarily feel more confident in practice. This disconnect represents a critical gap with direct implications for patient outcomes. These findings underscore the urgent need for targeted dementia education within Indian occupational therapy curricula to build both knowledge and clinical confidence. Further analysis of the complete dataset (n = 488) is ongoing.	 CONTACT Nilakshi Borkar Department of Occupational Therapy Manipal College of Health Professions Manipal Academy of Higher Education Manipal, Karnataka, India ✉ nilakshi.shirodkar@manipal.edu ORCID: https://orcid.org/0009-0004-0557-3761  ALZHEIMER'S ASSOCIATION AAIC 26
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