

Original Research Article

Study to find out reasons for opting medical profession and regret after joining MBBS course among first year students of a medical college in Telangana

Kishore Y. Jothula, Praveena Ganapa*, Sreeharshika D., Navya K. Naidu, Abhishek P.

Department of Community Medicine, Kamineni Institute of Medical Sciences, Narketpally, Telangana, India

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***Correspondence:**

Dr. Praveena Ganapa,

E-mail: kishoreyadav2021@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

Background: Medical profession is one of the most highly rated professions among the students due to the fact that it offers prospects of a financially as well as a socially satisfying career. It was observed that many students in India prefer a career in medicine because of parental pressure. It has been consistently reported that a considerable proportion of medical students regret their career choice. Considering all these aspects the current study aimed at knowing the factors influencing to take up medical profession, interest towards different modes of teaching, reasons for least attention during the class and regret after choosing medicine as career.

Methods: A cross-sectional study was conducted among 150 first year medical students with a pre-tested, semi structured questionnaire. Data collected was analysed using SPSS software.

Results: The mean age of the subjects was 17.94 ± 0.82 and majority were females (72%). Majority (82.6%) students opted MBBS out of self-interest. To earn respect in the society (83.87%) was the most common motivational factor to opt MBBS. 39.33% of the subjects was having regret feeling for choosing medical profession.

Conclusions: Self-interest was the major reason for opting MBBS. Parent's pressure was also observed as one of the reasons for opting MBBS. Almost one third of the students were having the feeling of regret for opting medical profession. Special attention should be paid towards these students.

Keywords: Motivation, Regret, Parents pressure, Demonstration, Attention, MBBS

INTRODUCTION

The doctors are considered as the cream of the society and this inclines most of the students to choose medical education as their career of choice after completion of secondary schooling.¹ Medical profession is one of the most highly rated professions among the students mainly due to the fact that it offers prospects of a financially as well as a socially satisfying career. To enter into this profession, a student is required to clear a tough competitive examination. Those who clear the entrance exam are then required to undergo a rigorous five years training in a medical school followed by a year of

internship before they earn their degree. The recent trend towards specialization has made the study period even longer. The decision to choose medicine as a career is therefore not easy one and not all students who are academically excellent may seek entry into medicine. These students have a wide range of family background.² It has also been observed that many students in India prefer a career in medicine because of parental pressure and therefore lack motivation of their own.³

Students also have certain apprehensions in their mind when they join medical school. An increasing lack of attention among the medical students after getting into

the college has become a matter of grave concern for the medical education system. Lack of interest in the class deprives a student of any motivation to study and to apply this knowledge in the practical field.⁴ According to Gorham the behaviours that promote student learning are use of humour, praising student performance, encouraging students to talk, etc.⁵ To achieve these objectives, 'Active learning' approach has been used. Use of teaching aids in medical education technology is swiftly changing from blackboard to virtual simulations and teaching methods range from lectures to integrated teaching.⁶

It has been consistently reported that a considerable proportion of medical professionals and medical students regret their career choice or are dissatisfied with their studies. Medical education is demanding and is associated with high levels of stress having negative effects on health of the students.⁷ It is needed to prepare doctors to fulfil the expectations of society, to cope with the exponential growth of medical and scientific knowledge, to inculcate physicians ability for lifelong learning.⁸ Considering all these aspects the current study aimed at knowing the factors influencing to take up medical profession, interest towards different modes of teaching, reasons for least attention during the class and regret after choosing medicine as career.

METHODS

Study design

Institution based cross sectional study

Study setting

Kamineni Institute of Medical Sciences, Narketpally

Study population

First year medical students of Kamineni Institute of Medical Sciences, Narketpally.

Sample size

Out of 200 first year students, 20 had participated in the pilot study and 30 students were absent on the day of data collection. Hence a total of 150 first year students were included after taking consent, hence sample size was 150.

Study period

This study was carried out for 2 months from November 2017 to December 2017.

Study tool

Pretested Semi structured questionnaire. Pilot study was conducted on 20 students initially for standardization of the questionnaire. Questionnaire consists of: socio

demographic information, reasons, motivating for the opting MBBS, reasons for least attention and regrets for opting MBBS

Method of data collection

Questionnaire was administered to the students after explaining them the importance of study and each question in the questionnaire. Confidentiality regarding the participant response for the questions was ensured.

Statistical analysis

Data was entered in Microsoft excel and analysis was done using SPSS statistical package version 22.

RESULTS

Out of 150 participants, 42 (28%) were boys and 108 (72%) were girls, with a mean age of 17.94±0.82. Majority (62.6%) of the participants were city residents (Table 1).

Table 1: Socio demographic profile of the study subjects (n=150).

	Frequency (%)
Age distribution	
17-18 yrs	117 (78)
19-20 yrs	33 (22)
Mean age±SD	17.94±0.82
Sex	
Males	42 (28)
Females	108 (72)
Residence	
Rural	21 (14)
Town	35 (23.4)
City	94 (62.6)

Table 2: Reasons for opting MBBS (n=150).

Reasons	Frequency (%)
Self interest	124 (82.6)
Fulfill parents wish	40 (26.6)
Parent's pressure	01 (0.66)

* Total percentage exceeds 100 because of multiple responses.

Majority (82.6%) students opted MBBS out of self-interest (Table 2).

The most common motivational factors to take up medical profession were to earn respect in the society (83.87%) followed by to make family members happy and proud (77.41%). Money was the main motivation for 35.4% of the subjects (Table 3).

Majority (90%) of the subjects felt that demonstration was the best method of teaching followed by interactive lectures (39.33%) (Table 4).

Table 3: Motivation to take up medical profession among students with self-interest (n=124).

Motivating factors	Frequency (%)
Respect in the society	104 (83.87)
To make family members happy and proud	96 (77.41)
To provide health care at low cost	46 (37.09)
To make more money	44 (35.4)
Saving life gives immense happiness	26 (20.96)
To involve in health research	05 (4.03)
Family members are doctors	03 (2.41)
Morbid condition of family members	03 (2.41)
Job security, to work in WHO	03 (2.41)
No doctors in family	01 (0.8)

* Total percentage exceeds 100 because of multiple responses.

Table 4: Perception of medical students towards different teaching methods of faculty (n=150).

Best teaching method as perceived by medical students	Frequency (%)
Demonstration	135 (90)
Interactive lectures	59 (39.33)
Video lecture	06 (4)

* Total percentage exceeds 100 because of multiple responses

The most common reason for least attentiveness of the subjects was found to be tiredness after continuous classes (58%) followed by faculty factors (46.66%) like teaching fast, less interaction, poor presentation of topic, lengthy class (Table 5).

Table 5: Reasons for least attention of medical students during class (n=150).

Reasons for	Frequency (%)
Tiredness after continuous classes	87 (58)
Faculty factors**	70 (46.66)
Hunger	41 (27.33)
Too early for the class	21 (14)
Post lunch effect	19 (12.66)
Sleepiness	17 (11.33)
Next person talking	05 (3.33)

*Total percentage exceeds 100 because of multiple responses;

**Faculty factors: Teaching fast, less interaction, poor presentation of topic, lengthy class.

Table 6: Distribution of study subjects according to having regret feeling for choosing medical profession (n=150).

Regret feeling for opting MBBS	Frequency (%)
Yes	59 (39.33)
No	91 (60.67)

59 (39.33%) out of 150 subjects were having regret feeling for choosing medical profession (Table 6).

Table 7: Reasons for regret feeling for choosing medicine as career (n=59).

Reasons for regret feeling	Frequency (%)
Lifelong reading	36 (61.01)
Feeling stress	19 (32.20)
Frequent exams	19 (32.20)
Not at all interested in MBBS	01 (1.69)

*Total percentage exceeds 100 because of multiple responses.

Out of 59 students who regret for joining in MBBS, 36 (61.01%) reported lifelong reading was the main reason for having regrets (Table 7).

Table 8: Association between sex of the subjects and having regret feeling for joining in MBBS (n=150).

Sex	Regrets for joining in MBBS		Total
	Yes	No	
Males	24 (57.15)	18 (42.85)	42 (100)
Females	35 (32.41)	73 (67.59)	108 (100)
Total	59 (39.33)	91 (60.67)	150 (100)

$\chi^2 = 7.75$; $df=1$; $p=0.005$.

The proportion of students having regrets for taking medical profession was significantly higher among males ($p=0.005$) (Table 8).

Table 9: Association between feeling difficulty with medical subjects and having regret feeling for joining in MBBS (n=150).

Difficulty with any one or more 1 st year subjects	Regrets		Total
	Yes (%)	No (%)	
Yes	55 (40.75)	80 (59.25)	135(100)
No	04 (26.66)	11 (73.34)	15(100)
Total	59(39.33)	91(60.67)	150 (100)

$\chi^2 = 0.60$; $df=1$; $p=0.43$ with Yates correction.

135 out of 150 students were feeling difficulty with one or more 1st year subjects. Regret for opting MBBS is not significantly associated with having difficulties with medical subjects (Table 9).

Table 10: Distribution of students with regrets according to their feeling of quitting MBBS (n=59).

Want to quit MBBS	Frequency (%)
Yes	7 (11.86)
No	51 (86.44)
Can't say	1 (1.69)

Only 11.86% of students with regrets felt like quitting MBBS (Table 10).

DISCUSSION

In the present study, 28% were boys and 72% were girls, with a mean age of 17.94 ± 0.82 . Majority (62.6%) of the participants were city residents. Similar findings were observed in the study done by Padmanabhan et al in which majority (51.64%) of the subjects were girl students and belongs to 17 years age category.⁹ In contrast, Tiwari et al in their study done among first year medicos in Gwalior observed that majority of students were males (65.39%) and majority were in the age group of 20 years (25%).¹⁰

The present study found that majority (82.6%) of the students opted MBBS out of self-interest which goes with the findings of Radhika et al in which 87.8% of the students opted medicine as their career on their own.¹¹ In the current study 1(0.66%) student had opted MBBS because of parents pressure. Ayuob et al reported that parents pressure was the reason for opting medical profession among 5.9% of students and Wouters et al study conducted in Netherlands also reported parents pressure was one of the reasons for pursuing a medical career.^{1,12}

The present study found that earning respect in the society (83.87%) followed by making family members happy and proud (77.41%) were the most common motivational factors to take up medical profession. Tiwari et al and Gyorffy et al stated that to help the poor was the most common motive to take up medical profession.^{10,13} The major reason for choosing medical profession among students was to serve the community according to Giri et al passion (41.26%) was the major motivational factor according to Rani et al.^{14,15} Scope of gaining good finance was listed among the top five reasons for selecting the medical profession which is in line with the finding of Ayuob et al.¹

When enquired about different teaching methods, Majority (90%) of the subjects felt that demonstration was the best method which is similar to the findings of Das et al study conducted in Tripura.¹⁶ This reflects the need to take more number of demonstration classes where students can learn the subject by doing but not by memorizing. The importance of learning by doing was also illustrated by a famous Chinese proverb: if I hear, I forget; if I see, I remember; if I do, I know.¹⁷ The present study highlighted that majority of the students did not pay attention in the class because of tiredness after continuous classes (58%) followed by poor teaching method by faculty (46.66%). These findings suggest that there is a need to reduce the number of classes taken at a stretch and to encourage faculty to undergo basic medical

education technology training in order to improve their teaching skills.

It was shocking to see almost 40% of the students were having regret feeling for choosing medical profession. The most common reasons were lifelong reading (61.01%) followed by stress. In a study done in Kazakhstan by Faizullina et al, it was found that 30.5% of the 1st year medical students were having regret for opting medical profession.⁷ In the present study the proportion of students having regrets for taking medical profession was significantly higher among males ($p=0.005$) which is in contrast with findings of Faizullina et al in which the proportion is significantly higher in females.⁷ 135 out of 150 students were feeling difficulty with one or more 1st year subjects. Regret for opting MBBS is not significantly associated with having difficulties with medical subjects. It's pathetic to find that, 7 (11.86%) out of 59 students with regrets felt like quitting MBBS if given a chance. These students may not excel in the academics and are at risk of developing stress or suicidal tendency. Though the proportion is small, this issue should not be neglected and It's the need of the hour to address these students by providing special attention and counselling.

CONCLUSION

The present study found that self-interest was the major reason for opting MBBS. Parent's pressure was also observed as one of the reasons for opting MBBS. Earning respect in the society and for making the family members proud were important motivational factors for opting medical profession. Demonstration was perceived as best method of teaching which emphasizes importance of active learning methods. Tiredness due to continuous classes was the main reason for lack of attention. Almost one third of the students were having the feeling of regret for opting medical profession and this feeling was significantly higher among females. Out of these students 11.8% of students want to quit the course. Special attention should be paid towards these students.

Limitations

The study population represents only a small fraction of the medical community. So, the results available from this cannot be generalized for the whole community.

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