Original Research Article

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Outlook of first year medical students in a Government Medical College in Mysuru

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ABSTRACT

Background: The medical field has been one of the top choices for students. It is one of the promising career choice but along with it the students have to go through long period of course and hard work. The aspirations and perception of students are important to make necessary changes in curriculum and work settings which in turn leads to quality output.

Methods: The study was conducted among the first year medical students in the government medical college Mysore. The proforma included details about demographic characteristics and influencing factors to choose medical field.

Results: Among 143 students, 97 were males and 46 females. 91 students entered the course in first attempt and 52 students in the subsequent attempts. The most important influencing factors to enter medical field were doing service, passion for the profession and parents wish.

Conclusions: Self interest in medical field was main reason for joining course. Majority of the students were happy, proud but also felt fear and anxiety on joining the course.

Keywords: Medical course, Proforma, Self-interest

INTRODUCTION

Medical profession is one of the top choices for many students. The reason being the nature of the work and the recognition associated with it. Healthcare is a growing entity which needs good human resource in both quantitative and qualitative aspects. In India as the number of medical colleges are increasing the number of students gaining entry to medical colleges are also on the rise. The entry is through competitive examinations and the duration of medical education is also long which requires dedication and hard work.1 The post-graduation also requires students to go through entrance exams and long course duration. Although this requires consistent hard work and commitment many students still aspire this profession.² There are government and private colleges which are offering medical seats and the students come from various socioeconomic and cultural background.

Stress is noted as one of the important factor which is affecting the medical students.³ Since it requires years of hardwork, the coping skills of students becomes an important factor for the successful completion of the course. The reason for choosing the medical field varies which has an impact on the health care provided. The factors which influence the students to take up this profession is important in making decisions about health care settings in which they work. Human resource planning, work compensation, logistic planning, equitable distribution of health facility, need based curriculum are some of the aspects which can be modified accordingly.⁴ The perception of students on joining these courses would shed some light on the support system which needs to be drawn, strenghthened and sustained on need basis for the successful journey of the students in the medical field. The quality of human resource depends on the aspirations and perceptions which needs to be given importance and modified accordingly for the success of any health care setting. Hence this study was conducted to know the reasons for selecting the medical field.

METHODS

This cross sectional study was conducted in the Myosre medical college from the month of September to December 2019. The first year medical students of the academic year 2019 were the study participants. The semi-structured proforma was administered to students after taking their consent. The ethical committee clearance was taken from the institution. The proforma included information regarding demographic details, reasons for joining medical college, number of attempts taken to join the course, perception after joining the course. Total of 143 students proforma was taken up for

analysis. Data was entered in excel. Frequency and mean was calculated for the variables.

RESULTS

The total number of students were 143. Amongst them 68% were males and 32% were females as shown in Table 1. The mean age was 18 years. 92% of the students belonged to hindu religion followed by 7% muslim religion. 56% students were from urban area. 20 students had at least one member of the family in the medical profession. 41% students decided to join the course during their high school education. 48% students had decided during their pre university course and only 11% of the students decided to join medical course after announcement of entrance exam results.

Table 1: Sociodemographic profile of study subjects (n=143).

	Frequency (%)
Gender	
Male	97 (67.8)
Female	46 (32.2)
Residence	
Urban	80 (56)
Rural	63 (44)
Entrance quota	
All India	9 (6.3)
State	134 (93.7)
Socioeconomic status	
1	106 (74)
2	27 (18.9)
3	89 (5.6)
4	2 (1.5)

Table 2: Students preparation to enter the course.

	Frequency (%)
Number of attempts	n=143
1	91 (63.6)
2	49 (34.3)
3	3 (2.1)
Coaching taken	n=52
Yes	44 (84.6)
No	8 (15.4)

Table 3: Reasons for choosing the MBBS course.

Self interest	Frequency (%)
Passion for the profession	88
Work independence	50
Death/disease of dear ones	42
High income	41
To work abroad	22
Interest in medical science	84
For doing service	90

Continued.

Self interest	Frequency (%)
Job security	40
Societal factors	
Social status	65
Influenced by relative/neighbor	32
Peer pressure	10
Influence by role model	25
Influenced by movie	19
Family factors	
Mother's pressure	5
Mother's wish	61
Father's pressure	4
Father's wish	64
Sibling being a doctor	7
Doctor's in the family	11
No Doctor's in the family	86

Table 4: Perceptions of students after entering the course.

Perception	Frequency
Anxiety	30
Fear	27
Apprehension	4
Doubt	9
Insecurity	8
Hesitation	26
Нарру	78
Proud feeling	69
Curiosity	73
Miserable	1
loneliness	19
Confused	23

Table 2 shows 94% of the students had taken seats through state quota and 6% through all India quotas. 64% students joined the course in the first attempt, 34% students joined the course in the second attempt and 2% students joined the course in the third attempt. Majority of the students had taken coaching for subsequent attempts.

Table 3 shows the reason for joining the MBBS course which were doing service, passion for the profession, social status and no doctors in the family. Majority of the students felt happy, proud and also curious on joining the course. Many students mentioned they were anxious on joining the course as shown in Table 4.

DISCUSSION

The process of entering medical field starts at the early phase of education since it requires a lot of effort to clear the entrance exam and also the persistent hard work which is needed for many years to successfully complete the course. In the current study majority of the students had decided in their high school period to join the

medical field. This is similar with the study conducted in Maharashtra where most of the medical students had decided to join medical field in the high school period.³ This is important because students need to decide upon major subjects and also the coaching which they need to take up early and prepare to clear entrance exams. In this study 36% of students entered the course in their second or third attempt. This shows the importance of the medical field where students are ready to wait for years to get into the field. Hence there are many factors which influence the decision of joining medical field. In this study service and passion were mentioned as major factors in choosing medical field. This is similar to findings of the study done in Mangalore, Lahore and Iran.⁵⁻⁷ The other reasons influencing students to take up medical field are social status, parental wish, peer/relatives influence and also if there were no doctors in the family. These findings are similar to study done in Saudi. Puducherry. Delhi, Telangana Maharashtra. 1,4,8-10 Although the reasons for joining medical college were many, the students felt happy, proud and curious about the field which shows that they were eager to pursue course with positive attitude. But the other findings showed that student also felt fear, anxiety,

loneliness and confusion which are similar to study findings conducted in Delhi. Another study conducted in Telangana showed that 40% students regret joining the course and the reasons being stress and duration of course. These negative emotions might influence the quality of life and the choice of continuing the course leading to attrition which results in human and logistic resource wastage. So careful planning is needed to address these issues in the form of student support cell which caters to academic needs and mental health of students. The motivational factors might be helpful in planning the health care settings and the proper utilization of human resource according to changing conditions in which the expectations are considered.

CONCLUSION

In this study majority of students are entering medical field through second or third attempt. The major influencing factors for joining medical field are passion for the profession, interest in medical field, social status, parents wish. Although students felt happy and proud after entering medical field, they also felt anxious, fear and loneliness.

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Institutional Ethics Committee

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