

## Choosing, Regretting and Learning in Medical Education

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### ABSTRACT

**Aim:** To assess reasons for choosing medical profession, regrets and preferred method of learning by students

**Study Design:** Cross sectional

**Place & duration of study:** KMS medical college Sialkot Pakistan during May 2019.

**Methods:** Adult consenting medical students of first and second year were included. Students who had serious illnesses were excluded. Non-probability convenience sampling technique was used to get a sample size of 171 students. A questionnaire was filled by students, containing demographic information, reason for choosing medical, any regrets and preferred method of learning. The data was collected on a sheet and analyzed by SPSS.

**Results:** Of the 171 students most common reason for choosing the medical profession was parents wish 45(26.32%). The 2<sup>nd</sup> reason was for better carrier 35(20.47%). The 3<sup>rd</sup> reason was personal wish 31(18.13%). 23(13.45%) males while 42(24.56%) male regretted their decision that is a total of 65 (38.01%) students. Preference of students to different teaching methods used in medical teaching was demonstration 105 (61.40%), interactive lectures 36(21.05%) and video lectures 30(17.54%) respectively.

**Conclusion:** Three most common reasons for choosing the medical profession were parents wish, for better carrier and personal wish. 23(13.45%) males while 42(24.56%) male regretted their decision. Preference of students to different learning methods used in medical teaching was demonstration 105(61.40%), interactive lectures 36(21.05%) and video lectures 30 (17.54%) respectively.

**Keywords:** Medical education, student choice, learning method, medical students,

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### INTRODUCTION

The doctors are considered assets of nation and this urges most of the students to select medical profession as their career after completion of secondary education.<sup>1</sup> Students might ruminate,<sup>2</sup> obsess<sup>3</sup> and get depressed.<sup>4</sup> The study period of medical field has become even longer as the recent trend towards specialization has changed. Therefore the decision to choose the medical study is not easy and not all students who are good in academics may get admission in medical field. It has also been noted that many students in Pakistan choose the medical profession because of parental pressure,<sup>5</sup> they do not have personal wish to choose this field and lack of interest among these students in medical profession is the major problem for medical system because they are unable to apply their knowledge in practical field.<sup>6</sup> Students after admission in medical field may not get proper attention and leads to wastage of their skills during five years of schooling. According to Gorham the behavior that promotes students learning are use of humor, praising students performance, encouraging students to talk, etc.<sup>7</sup> To enhance their learning skills 'Active learning' approaches should be used. Their performances should be appreciated. They should be encouraged to talk. Interactive group discussion should be held to enhance their learning skills. Use of teaching aids in medical education technology is swiftly changing from blackboard to virtual stimulations and teaching methods range from lectures to integrated teaching<sup>8</sup>.

Students also have to bear a lot of stress during medical course that's why many students don't able to pay proper attention to their studies. Steps should be taken at this level to develop their interest in their studies, because they have to treat the human beings and they will do it in better way if they have done their course by heart. It is noted that many students in medical colleges may get depressed because they don't have proper counseling or guidance during course of medical schooling, and this leads to depression of medical students. It has been observed that many medical regret after choosing the medical field or dissatisfied because medical study is associated with high level stress and have many bad effects on health.<sup>9</sup> Considering all these aspects the current study aimed at knowing the factors influencing to take up medical profession, interest towards different modes of teaching, reason for least attention during class and regret after choosing medicine as career.

### MATERIAL AND METHOD

This study was done at KMS medical college Sialkot during the month of May 2019. The study includes students from 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year medical. It is govt. medical college and it strictly follows the open merit policy. The study follows all the ethical guidelines in the declaration of Helsinki. Ethics committee approved the study. Non-probability convenience sampling technique was used. Inclusion criteria were medical students irrespective of gender and aged above 18 years. The exclusion criteria were students having severe physical illness, mental illness, psychotic illness or any co-morbid conditions. The students who

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refused to participate in the study were excluded. 185 was the total number of students who were approached in the study. The students suffering from severe medical illness were 5 in number, so they don't fulfill study criteria and were excluded from the study and advised to get medical treatment. Students suffering from psychotic illness were 3 in number, so they don't fulfill the study criteria and were excluded and referred to psychiatry department for treatment. Students who refused to give written informed consent were 6 in number and were excluded from the study. 171 students were included in the final analysis. All the students who gave written informed consent were included in the study. Detailed explanation was given to all the students who were included about the main purpose of the study. The study strictly follows the confidentially procedure of students. Any students having severe medical or any other illness were provided with treatment.

A data sheet was designed. It contained details about the demographic details of the students. Consent was also taken on this data sheet. Then a questionnaire was added on this data sheet. It contained simple question reason for choosing the medical profession. A list of options was given to students after the question to mark their main reason for choosing the medical. If a student did not choose from the list of options he was given the chance to freely write in his own words why he chose or opted for medical profession or any other reason. It also asked about regrets after choosing medical and student's preferred method for instruction. The data was collected from all the 171 students and analyzed by SPSS 23.

## RESULTS

The results show that there were 122(71.34%) female students and 4(28.66%) male students. Mean age of the male students was 20.11±1.23 years while mean age of female students was 19.21±1.45 years. Economic status of the family shows that 22(12.87%) belonged to lower income status. 104(60.82%) belonged to middle class while 45(26.31%) were from upper economic class. Table 1

Table 1: Demographics of the students(n=171)

Variable	Number	Frequency
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	122	71.34%
Male	49	28.66%
<b>Economic status of the family</b>		
Low	22	12.87%
Middle	104	60.82%
Upper	45	26.31%
<b>Occupation of the parent</b>		
Teacher	61	35.68%
Doctor	42	24.56%
Professionals	33	19.30%
Businessmen	31	18.13%
Others	4	2.34%
<b>Residence</b>		
Urban	87	50.88%
Rural	27	15.79%
Semi-urban	57	33.35%
<b>Head of the family</b>		
Father	145	84.80%
Mother	23	13.45%
Others	3	1.75%

Table 2: Reason for choosing medical (n=171)

Reason	n	Frequency
Parents wish	45	26.32 %
Personal wish	31	18.13 %
Social status	20	11.67%
For better carrier	35	20.47 %
For service of humanity	17	9.94 %
Advice by others	18	10.52%
Any other reason	5	2.92 %

Table 3: Regret after joining the medical profession (n=171)

Gender	Yes	No	Total
Males	23(13.45%)	26 (15.20%)	49 (28.65%)
Females	42(24.56%)	80 (46.78%)	122 (71.35%)
Total	65(38.01%)	106 (61.98%)	171(100.00%)

Table 4: Preference of medical students towards different teaching methods (n=171)

	Frequency
Demonstration	105 (61.40%)
Interactive lectures	36 (21.05%)
Video lecture	30 (17.54%)

Most common reason for choosing the medical profession amongst the students was parents wish 45(26.32%). The 2<sup>nd</sup> most common reason was for better carrier 35(20.47%). The 3<sup>rd</sup> most common reason was personal wish 31(18.13%). 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> reason was social status 20(18.13%) and advice by others 18(10.52%). 17(10.52%) students choose medical profession for the service of humanity. 5(2.92%) students choose medical profession for any other reason (Table 2).

23(13.45%) males while 42 (24.56%) females regretted their decision that is a total of 65(38.01%) students. 26(15.20%) males and 80(46.78%) female that is a total of 106(61.98%) students had no regrets (Table 3). Preference of students to different teaching methods used in medical was demonstration 105 (61.40%), interactive lectures 36 (21.05%) and video lectures 30 (17.54%) respectively (Table 4).

## DISCUSSION

In the present study 71.34% were girls with mean age of 19.21±1.45 and 28.66% were boys with mean age of 20.11±1.23. In a study done by Tiwari et al among first year medicos in Gwalior it was observed that majority of students were males (65.39%) and were in the age group of 20 years (25%)<sup>10</sup>. In contrast in the study done by Padmanabhan et al in which majority (51.64%) were girls students and belong to 17 year age category.<sup>11</sup> The present study found that majority (26.32%) of the students opted medical because of parent's pressure. A study reported that parents pressure was the reason for opting medical profession among 5.9% of students and Wouters et al study conducted in Netherland also reported parents pressure was one of the reasons for pursuing a medical career<sup>1,12</sup>. The present study found that 18.13% students choose medical field for their own interest, in contrast Radhika et al in her study reported that 87.8% students opted medical profession on their own.<sup>13</sup>

The present study found that for better career (20.47%), social status (11.67%) and serve to humanity (9.94%) were the motivational factors for choosing the

medical profession. Two studies stated that to help the poor was the most common motive to take up medical profession<sup>10,14</sup>. The main reason for choosing medical profession among students was to serve the community according to Giri et. al. passion (41.26%) was the main motivational factor according to Rani et.al.<sup>15</sup> 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<sup>1</sup>.

When enquired about different methods the majority of the students (61.40%) said that demonstration was the best method, and it is similar to the study conducted by Das in Tripura. It indicates the importance of demonstration classes by students learn by practicing not by memorizing<sup>16</sup>. The present study found that (10.52%) students choose medical profession by advice of others. The present study found that (38.01%) of the students were having the regret feeling for choosing the medical profession. Faizullina in his study conducted at Kazakhstan reported that 30.5% students having the regret after choosing the medical profession<sup>9</sup>.

The strength of the study is its simple design to analyze the question. The limitations are cross sectional nature and limited number of participants. In future larger studies with better design are needed.

## CONCLUSION

Of the 171 students most common reason for choosing the medical profession was parents wish 45(26.32%). The 2<sup>nd</sup> reason was for better carrier 35(20.47%). The 3<sup>rd</sup> reason was personal wish 31(18.13%). 23(13.45%) males while 42(24.56%) females regretted their decision that is a total of 65(38.01%) students. Preference of students to different teaching methods used in medical teaching was demonstration 105(61.40%), interactive lectures 36 (21.05%) and video lectures 30(17.54%) respectively.

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