

Gender Differences in Motivational Factors towards Medical Career Choice

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Abstract: *The present study aims to study motivations of students in choosing the medical profession and whether these motivations are different, gender wise along with their demographic features. The study was conducted on 150 students of MIMER Medical College, Pune. Demographic result of the study indicated that enrolment in medical faculty was more by girls (83) than by boys (67) and majority of students came from medical family. A primary motivation factor in girls was patient care, interest in science, career opportunity and personal skills. While in boys it was patient care, interest in science, status –security, self-employment. To pursue the medical profession other motivating factors was number of attempts in medical entrance exam held, there was no difference found in both gender statistically. But statistically significance was found gender wise, in getting encouragement from family, in girls it was more encouragement. Also statistic significance was found in girls for deciding the career choice before X classes compare to boy students, indicating girls are early decider.*

Keywords: *motivation, gender, medical students, patient care.*

I. Introduction

In the last few decades, worldwide, there has been decrease in health care professionals (1,2) . Due to lack of health care professionals, all are paying attention to this particular group of qualified people. Poor working conditions, underpayment, dramatic loss of prestige, causing many difficulties in health care professionals (3) .To choose a particular career the decision process involves a number of factors that include personal interest (4) ,self motivation, financial reasons, family pressure, family status etc.

Survey of medical students in different countries showed both intrinsic and extrinsic motives drive students to become a doctor (5) .It has been observed that amount of study in medicine is significantly higher than any other profession, physically and psychologically it is very demanding. Thus strong motivation is needed to pursue a medical career and to continue it lifelong.

The objective of present study is to explore ‘What are the motivating factors to study medicine?’ We hypothesized the gender influence on motivation type. We expect that main motivation reasons for girl students and for boy students are different.

II. Materials And Methods

Students from MIMER Medical College, Talegaon (D), Pune were involved in the study. The study was carried out in students of first year M.B.B.S. During the introductory talk, students in the classroom were informed about the purpose of study, assured confidentiality, was anonymous. Students were asked to respond to all questions honestly and truthfully. All students were informed about the possibility to refuse participation in this study and all students took part in it on voluntary basis.

Participants were given roughly 30 minute to fill the questionnaire that gave their motivation factors and other information.

Total 150 students participated in this study. The questionnaire based on previous studies (6) was developed for this study.

The questionnaire was based on number of attempts taken for admission in medical college, when they decided to choose a health related career, reason to choose medical career etc. The questionnaire also contained the questions regarding demographic and socioeconomic parameters (age, sex, support from family, parent education, social status etc.)

Chi-square tests were applied to detect gender wise differences in motivation factors in medical student.

III. Results

Demographic

There were 55.3% girl students (83) and 44.7% were boy students (67). The mean age of girl students was 17.48 (range 17-20yrs.) for boys it was 17.77 (range 17-20yrs.) In our study 4.7% of the student's parent were both doctors, 9.3% of students reported that one of their parent was a doctor, 60.7% students had some close family member working in a medical field, 25.3% of medical students were entirely from a non-medical family who doesn't have any medical personnel in their family.

The socio-demographic characteristics are listed in table-I

	Girls	Boys	
1.Number(sample size)	83 (55.3%)	67 (44.7%)	
2.Age(in years)	17.48 (17-20)	17.77 (17-20)	
3.Both parent doctors	5	2	4.7%
4.Single parent doctor	9	5	9.3%
5.Near relative is in medical field	44	47	60.7%
6.Nobody in medical field	25	13	25.3%

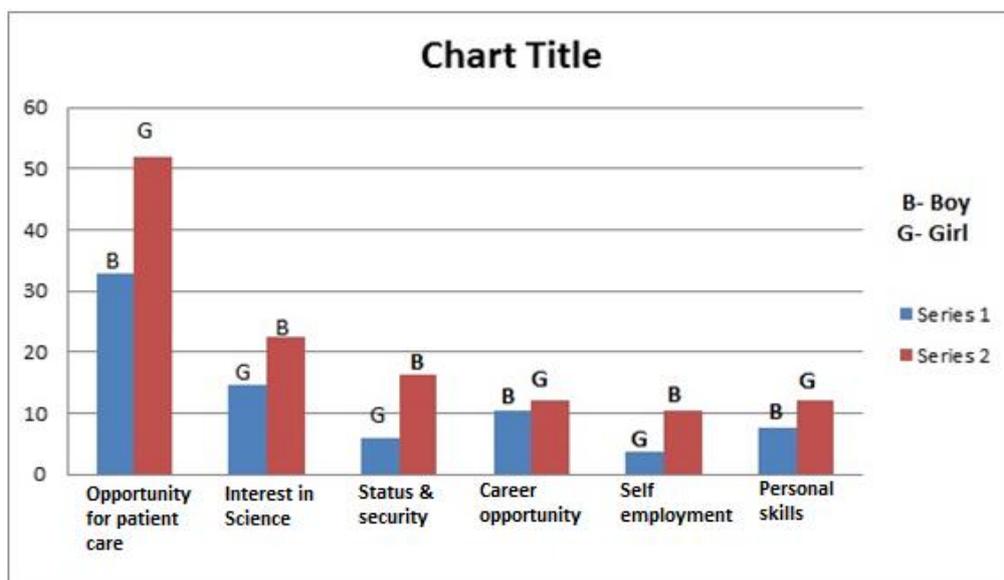
In our study number of girl students was more than boy students.

All in all 74.7% of the students were from medical families. Only 25.3% medical students were from non-medical family. The most important motivation factor for studying medicine is "patient care", true for boy students 32.8% and girl students 51.8%.

This is followed by "interest in science" for boy students 22.4% and girl students 14.5%.

For boy students least motivating factor was "personal skills 7.5% while in girl students it was 12%. Girl students gave self employment 3.6% as the least motivating factor, while in boy students self-employment was 10.4%. Other motivating factors were status and security 16.4% in boy students, 6% in girls. Good career opportunity 10.4% in boy students and 12% in girl students.

Fig.1 Motivation factors to opt for medical career- gender wise



Other determinants which were also related to motivation for pursuing medical career were accounted in this study which includes:

Number of attempts taken in pre-medical entrance exam gender wise is shown in table II

No. of attempts	Girls	Boys
One	37 (55.2%)	47 (56.6%)
Two or more than two	30 (44.8 %)	36 (43.4 %)

There is no significant difference between boy and girl students in number of attempts.

Decision to go for medical career is taken at which level is shown in table III

	Boys	Girls
Before X	31 (46.3 %)	53 (63.8 %)
After X	36 (53.7 %)	30 (36.2 %)

There is a significant difference in boy and girl students for deciding the career before X class; girls are early decision maker as compared to the boy students.

Encouragement from family for medical profession is shown in table IV

	Boys	Girls
Encouragement	57 (85 %)	73 (88 %)
No encouragement	10	5
Discourage	00	5

14.9 %

12 %

There is a significant difference between the boy and girl students in the encouragement they receive from their family.

IV. Discussion

Our primary objective was to determine the motivational factors & differences gender wise.

As the students were highly motivated for medical career they appeared more than once. We observed that girls appeared twice 43.4 % while boys 44.8 %. This is a good sign as motivation is a determining factor for the performance of students (7).

It was interesting to know that 80.5 % boys and 69.9 % girl students reported that they had relatives in medical profession.

We got significant result that girl students received more encouragement than boy students from their family.

One interesting finding we found that girl students had made up their mind on a career decision before X class were 63.8%. While boys were 46.3%. Studies have shown that students who were informed, handled the stress of a curriculum better (8) .It was good to see that the career counselling was done by 59/67 in boys and girls.

The most important motivation factor in our students was people oriented i.e. opportunity for patient care, is true for both girl and boy students.

Girls give least importance to self employment while boys give least importance to personal skills.

Status and security is significantly high in the boys as compared to the girls. The results of different studies reveal that boy students are more motivated by status and income while, girl students have a care oriented motive (8,9). Surveys have also shown the “scientific nature and intellectual challenge of medicine” to be an important motivation for medical students (10, 11).

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