

**PERCEPTION OF III SEMESTER MEDICAL STUDENTS REGARDING THEIR INTEREST
IN THE SUBJECT OF OBSTETRICS AND GYNAECOLOGY IN A PRIVATE MEDICAL
COLLEGE**

Dr. Veena Vidyasagar*

1. Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, East Point College of Medical Sciences and Research, Bidarhalli, Bangalore, India

*Corresponding author - **Dr. Veena Vidyasagar**

Email id – vinav2002@yahoo.co.in

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ABSTRACT

Background: Interest in a particular medical subject during MBBS depends on various factors. Medical students are first exposed to para-clinical and clinical subjects in III semester and that's when inclination towards a particular specialty subject is likely to occur. **Materials and methods:** A survey of III semester medical students was conducted at SMSR, Sharda University, Greater Noida. Students were divided into two groups viz. Pre-exposure group and Post exposure group (those who had attended practical classes in Obst & Gynae). Questionnaire forms were distributed to each group. **Results:** The questionnaire was submitted by 68% students in the pre exposure group and 64% students in the post exposure group. Proportionately, more number of boys submitted the filled up questionnaire forms as compared to girls (68.57% vs 64.62%). In the pre exposure group, 64.70% students were aware about the subject of obstetrics and gynaecology and in post exposure group the figure was 90.62%. In pre-exposure group, 57.14% gave good rating for Obstetrics and Gynaecology and in the post-exposure group the figure was 52.38%. The expectation of teaching of the subject was high among 78.26% students in the pre exposure group as compared to 65.21% in the post exposure group. **Conclusion:** A survey regarding interest in the subject of Obstetrics and Gynaecology among III semester medical students was carried out in a private medical college. Percentage of boys participating in the survey was more. However, proportionately, awareness and interest in Obstetrics and Gynaecology was more among girls. **Keywords:** Subject of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, pre exposure group, post exposure group.

INTRODUCTION

Admission to a particular speciality subject for post-graduation in medical field depends on the student's interest, effort, family background and how that subject has been taught by teachers in the college at the undergraduate level. Those students whose parents are doctors (especially those who have their own nursing homes) choose the same subject or complementary subject to their parents' specializations. Students without family medical

background are attracted towards their medical idol or good practitioners. Some students can be attracted by physical presence of their idol doctors and facilities they see around them. Besides these, economic returns from a particular subject may play a key role for choosing subject for specialization. In one of the surveys conducted to assess the motivation and readiness of the medical students, it has been mentioned that as per the general observation, many

students in India prefer a career in medicine because of self-interest. (1) A research article mentions that students who choose medicine are usually expected to be interested in helping patients but unfortunately, a considerable number of medical students were reported to enter the medical field just because they had high grades or to satisfy their parents. (2)

Impressive teaching is a key factor to ignite interest of students in specific subjects. In the current study, survey was conducted to understand views about interest in the subject of Obstetrics and Gynaecology among III semester medical students.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Medical students are exposed to practical classes of clinical subjects in 3rd semester. The survey was targeted towards these students. It was conducted at School of Medical Sciences and Research, Sharda University, Greater Noida, UP. The students were divided into two groups viz. half were those who had not attended practical classes in Obstetrics and Gynaecology i.e. Pre-exposure group. Other half, were those who had completed or going to complete practical tenure in Obstetrics and Gynaecology i.e. Post exposure group. There were 100 students in 3rd semester at the time of survey. 50 Questionnaire forms were distributed to each group. There were 65 girls and 35 boys in the study batch.

Questionnaires were distributed to the students in the classroom and during their practical sessions in the department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology. The questionnaire form included parameters like personal particulars, occupation of parents, the reason behind their admission to medical college, hobbies, knowledge about what is gynaecology and obstetrics, source of information about latter, their expectations about teaching of the subject of Obstetrics and Gynaecology and other relevant remarks about medical field. The filled up questionnaire forms were collected and the data was transferred to MS excel sheet. Descriptive statistics was used for analysis of data.

RESULTS

Thirty-four (68%) filled forms were returned by the students of pre- exposure group and 32 (64%) filled forms were returned by students of post exposure group. (Chart1) Most of the students were from well to do families

Students in Pre-exposure group were between 18 and 21 years of age and amongst this group, 10 were male and 24 were females. Range of age in Post-exposure group was 19 to 21 years and amongst this group, 14 were male and 18 were female candidates. More female candidates responded in each group. As such also, there were more female candidates than males in the study group. (Chart 2)

In the pre-exposure group, 24 students (17 girls and 7 boys) had mentioned their roll numbers and 24 students (16 girls and 8 boys) had mentioned their names on the form. 5 students had not mentioned either roll number or name. Fathers of students in this group were from different backgrounds which is as follows: fathers of 5 students were doctors, 16 had business, 6 were engineers, 2 were government servants and rest of them were in different sectors. Mothers of 5 students had following occupations: 1 was working as a doctor, 1 as a pharmacist, 1 as a teacher and two were in business.

In the post-exposure group, 19 students (8 girls and 11 boys) had mentioned their roll numbers and 19 students (7 girls and 12 boys) had mentioned their names on the form. 8 students had mentioned both their name as well as roll number whereas 11 students had not mentioned either of them. Fathers of 6 students were doctors, 4 were in banking sector, 8 were businessmen, 2 were politicians, 3 were in service sector, 4 were in banking sector and fathers of the rest of the students had different occupation. Mothers of 2 students were bankers, 3 were doctors, 1 was teacher and 1 had agriculture business.

Students were enquired regarding the reason for joining medical college. In the pre exposure group, 22 students replied that they wanted to become doctors, one student wanted to become Neurosurgeon, 3 students mentioned that they wanted to help people, 3

students joined because they wanted to follow their or their parents' dreams. In the post exposure group, 12 students mentioned that they wanted to become doctors, one wanted to become cosmetic surgeon, 6 students mentioned that they had interest in medical studies, 4 joined since they wanted to help people, 3 students thought it to be a respectable profession and 2 students joined because of parents' choice.

The most favourite subject of students in the pre exposure group was Anatomy (**19**) followed by Physiology (**10**). In the post exposure group, the most favourite subjects were Anatomy (**8**), Surgery (**4**), Physiology (**3**), Biochemistry (**3**), Forensic Medicine (**3**), Obstetrics and Gynaecology (3, one along with Forensic medicine) followed by Pathology, Pharmacology and Community medicine. The subject of Obstetrics and Gynaecology was mentioned by three girls as their most favourite subject. Most of the students in the pre exposure group were those who were yet to clear their I MBBS examination and in the post exposure group majority had cleared it. That may be the likely reason for different preferences.

The questionnaire also required to rate the students' favourite subject on a scale of 1-10. In the pre exposure group, 16 students did not mention the score. Among the remaining, score of 10 was given by 3 students, 9 by 5 students, 8 by 7 students and 7 by 2 students. In the post exposure group also, majority of students (**19**) did not mention scoring for their favourite subject. Those who had mentioned, the scoring given was 10 by 3 students, 9 by 3 students, 8 by 6 students and one student gave a scoring of 7. Most of the students did not give reason for choosing and giving scoring for their favourite subject; those who gave mentioned that they found the subject interesting.

The students were asked regarding their knowledge about Obstetrics and Gynaecology and their expectation about its teaching. The sources from which students came to know about Obstetrics and Gynaecology included seniors, books, internet, media etc.

In pre-exposure population, 64.70% of students were aware about obstetrics and gynaecology and in post

exposure population 90.62% students were aware about the subject (Chart 3). The significant increase in the awareness about Obstetrics and Gynaecology is self-explanatory. It should rather have been 100%.

Number of students giving rating (scoring on a scale of 1-10) for their favourite subject was 18 (52.94%) in the pre exposure group and 13 (40.63%) in the post exposure group. Fourteen students (41.18%) in the pre exposure group and 21 (65.63%) in the post exposure group rated the subject of Obstetrics and Gynaecology on a scale of 1-10 (Table 1). There were more number of students in the pre exposure group who gave rating for their favourite subject and the number of students rating for Obstetrics and Gynaecology was more in the post exposure group. This is likely due to the fact that the post exposure group had been exposed to the subject of Obstetrics and Gynaecology and not the students of pre exposure group. In the pre exposure group, 3 boys and 11 girls rated for Obstetrics and Gynaecology, whereas in the post exposure group, the figures were 8 boys and 13 girls. In pre-exposure group, 8 students (57.14%) gave a good rating (Score of 8-10) for Obstetrics and Gynaecology. Gender division was six girls and two boys in the pre exposure group. In the post-exposure group, 11 students (52.38%) gave good rating; the gender division being 7 girls and 4 boys. Number of girls giving good scoring for Obstetrics and Gynaecology was higher in both the groups. The reason provided by few students for the good rating for Obstetrics and Gynaecology included; interesting subject, deals with motherhood, women's health is important, good teachers etc.

The students' expectation with regards to teaching in the department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology was high with views from seniors/teachers, reputation of the college/hospital and also exposure to practical sessions. The expectation was high among 18 (78.26%) students in the pre exposure group and 15 (65.21%) students in the post exposure group among those who gave their opinion in this regard. Eleven (32.35%) students in the pre exposure group and 8 (25%) students in the post exposure group did not express their opinion.

Few students put comments under 'Remarks' column. In the pre exposure group 9 students put their comments. The remarks were; medical profession is the best, improve teaching skills and make it more interesting, teaching should be more interactive and practically oriented, tests should be minimised, use white board rather than power point. In the post exposure group, 10 students had put remarks. The remarks were almost the same as by students in the pre exposure group. The emphasis was on more interactive and practical oriented teaching approach.

DISCUSSION

Survey of third semester medical students was carried out taking into consideration criteria pertaining to family background, age groups, interest in subjects and awareness about the subject of Gynaecology and Obstetrics etc. Response rate of pre-exposure group (students who had not attended practical classes in Obstetrics and Gynaecology) was 68% and that of post exposure group (students who had finished or going to finish posting in Obstetrics and Gynaecology) was 64%.

64.70% students in the pre-exposure group were aware about the subject of Obstetrics and Gynaecology and in post exposure student population the figure was 90.62%. When compared to pre-subject exposed population, the awareness about the subject Obstetrics and Gynaecology was higher in post-subject exposed population. Majority of students in the pre exposure group preferred anatomy (61.29%) and physiology (32.26%) as their favourite subjects. In post exposure group favourite subjects were Anatomy (25.81%) and Surgery (12.9%). In a study by Kumar et al, the most favourite basic subject was Anatomy (49.3%) followed by biochemistry (26.7%). (3) The most preferred future specialties to be considered for were surgery, internal medicine and paediatrics with gender variations. In a study carried out by Chan et al in Taiwan that focused on improving the quality of medical education, genetics (47.4%) and biochemistry (44.1%) were found to be the key subjects. (4) In our study, most of the students mentioned Anatomy as the most favourite subject. In the post exposure group Anatomy was followed by Surgery as the most

preferred subject. The preference for Obstetrics and Gynaecology was given only by 6.45% female students in the post exposure group.

In another study conducted using a questionnaire that focussed on socio-demographic information and existing academic system, students expressed satisfaction about some academic aspects, but suggested improvement in other areas such as career counselling, digital library, etc. (5) In the present study also, some of the students suggested about practical sessions, interactive teaching, changes in teaching methodology, etc. to make the subject more interesting. A cross-sectional multicentric study conducted in Latin American countries assessed two different but complementary components of Social/altruistic factors and Economic/ social status in motivating students to choose medical career. (6) A similar study was conducted by Nilima Shankar et al, wherein survey was done to understand the students' opinion about the medical field. Based on the responses obtained from the students, it was observed that family being a strong motivating factor should encourage students, while still in school, to take up career preparation activities to prepare them better for a career in medicine and thus, perhaps, to reduce subsequent occupational burnout. (7)

The motivation as a key factor in medical education was analysed in a review of literature study by Kusurkar et al. (8) wherein 56 articles were included with well-designed methodologies. In the review of findings from articles included, it was found that motivation appears to affect learning, study behaviour, academic performance, choice of medicine, intention to continue medical study and choice of specialty within medicine.

Career counselling seminars and educational policies should be formulated to guide and encourage medical students to pursue career fields in medicine as per the study by Asha Rani et al. (9) Research studies conducted in India observed that educational loans, income, life style factors and career prospects may be the determining factors for the choice of specialty by the students.

CONCLUSION

Preliminary overview of students' attitude towards medical subjects was studied in the current study. It can be inferred that socioeconomic status of the parents; family background all play a key role as a motivational factor to take admission in medical college. Most of the students in the survey were from well to do families. The choice of a career in medical field is influenced by many factors. The way the subjects are taught to the students contributes towards their interest in a particular medical subject. It is therefore important for medical educators to create more awareness among students and gain their confidence which mainly depends on the teaching methodology. The teaching sessions should be more interactive and should aim at identifying the students' skills towards various medical subjects.

Though only three girls mentioned the subject of Obstetrics and Gynaecology as their most favourite subject in the present study, the overall rating given by the students to the subject was good. There is need to find out about the motivating factors of the students to take up certain speciality so that the balance in medical doctors among various specialties is maintained.

In the present survey, though every information required was clearly mentioned in the form, many points in the questionnaire were not filled up by considerable number of students. The success of survey is dependent on active participation of students, which was not observed in the current study. The success of the survey needs to be measured with respect to the objective fulfilled. More data is needed to be drawn to accurately fulfil the objective.

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Chart-1 Response rate for study from students

In Pre-exposure population response rate was 68% and in Post exposure population response rate was 64%.

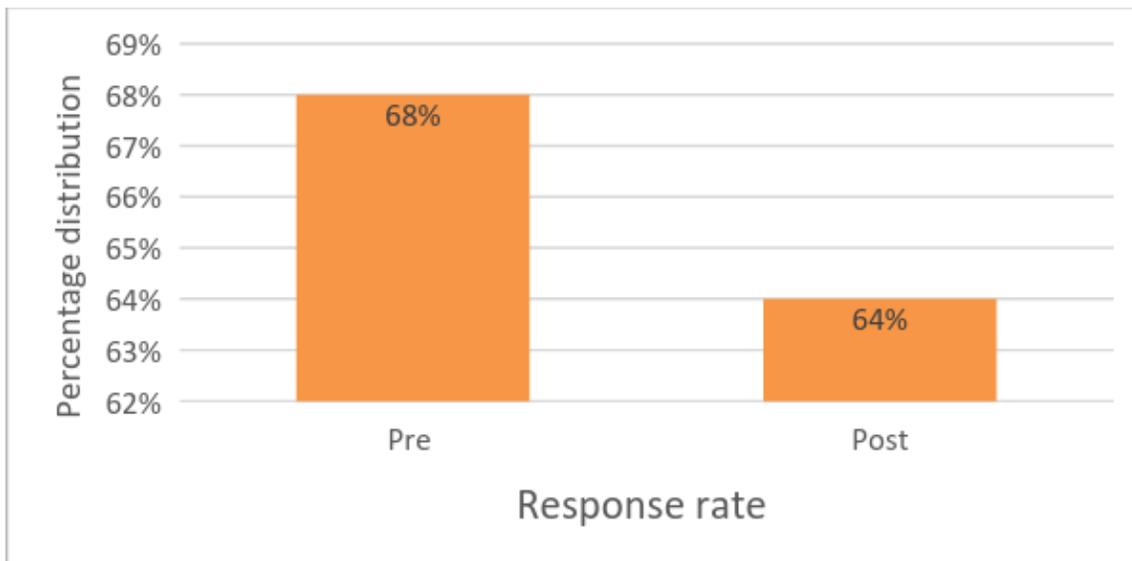


Chart-2 Gender segregation

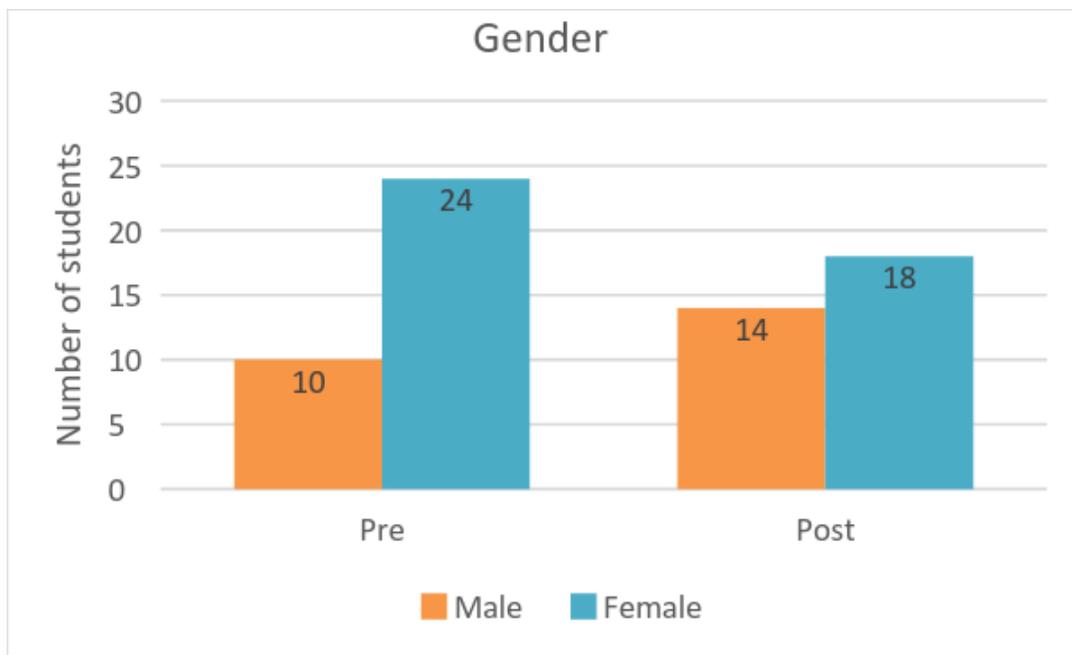


Chart-3 Awareness about the subject of Obstetrics and Gynaecology

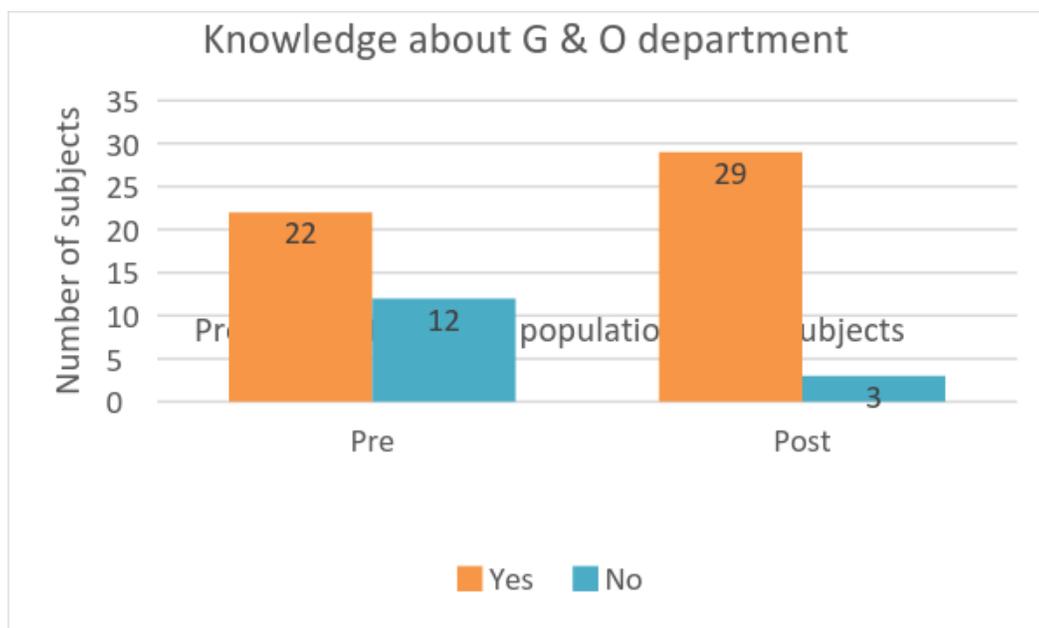


Table -1 Rating for OBG in both groups

Sl. No.	Group	No. of Students	Rating of OBG			Score		
			Yes	No	1-4	5-7	8-10	
1	Pre-Exposure group	34	14	20	1	5	8	
2	Post-Exposure group	32	21	11	1	9	11	

Questionnaire template distributed to students

Name (Optional) _____ Age _____ years Sex _____ (M/F)

Roll No. (Optional) _____ Parents' occupation _____

Hobbies _____

Why did you join Medical College?

What is your most favourite medical subject? (Rate on a scale of 1 to 10)

Give reason (Optional) _____

Have you any idea about the subject of Obstetrics and Gynaecology? Yes/No _____

If Yes, what is it? _____

What is the source of information?

In case you know about the subject, what would be your rating on a scale of 1 to 10? _____ Give reason for the rating (Optional) _____

What is your expectation about the teaching of the subject of Obstetrics and Gynaecology (Theory)?

Any other remarks (related to medical teaching/ profession) you would like to share
