

Perception of medical students on their future career: a cross sectional study

Kasim Obaid Hussein

Abstract

Recruitment of graduated young physicians has different barriers in Iraq. Consequently, valuation of the attitudes of medical students on the way to their future career is essential for development purpose. A cross-sectional study was designed to evaluate the viewpoints of 150 medical students through a class distributed questionnaires, then the collected data were analyzed. Totally, 104 out of 150 students (69.33%) had responded to the questionnaires with variation in the percentages of responded students 74.28%, 64%, 70.76% for year 4th, 5th and 6th respectively. Variations were seen between student's answers within the same year and different years. The principle factors for selecting to study medicine were as follow: student high grades of matriculation (53.84%, 68.75% and 71.73%), their satisfaction 76.92 %, 68.75 %, 50 % and to meet parents desires 30.76%, 50%, 65.21 % for year 4th, 5th and 6th respectively. However, the percentages of students that forced to study medicine ascendingly were 3.84, 15.62 and 30.43 for 4th, 5th and 6th years respectively. Moreover, there were relatively a good percentage descending 32.6%, 31.25 %, 23.07 % for year 6th, 5th and 4th years respectively of student that feel sorrow and disappointed because they decided to be at college of medicine. Meanwhile, high percentages of students had negative viewpoint towards their medical career and lost their acumen and intelligence were 34.61%, 28.12%, 32.6 % for 4th, 5th and 6th years. In conclusion, this study approved the variation in presence of negative and positive attitude between medical students toward their future career.

Keywords: Attitude; Career; Matriculation; Medicine; Parent's desires


*Corresponding author email: kas702002@yahoo.com

Surgical Department, College of Medicine, Al-Hussein Teaching Hospital

Received February 24, 2019; accepted June 17, 2019; published July 22, 2019

Copyright © 2019 KOH. This is article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License

(<http://creativecommons.org>), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided

the original work is properly cited. 

Introduction

The numbers of medical colleges have been increased during last decays in Iraq. The total number of colleges were increased from 4 [Baghdad College of Medicine (Iraqi Royal medical College founded in 1927), Mosel College of Medicine, Basra College of Medicine and Mustansiriya College of Medicine] to 25 College of Medicine in Iraq 4 after 2003, and accordingly the numbers of newly graduated doctors have increased every year without considering the balance for the public needs (Table.1). Graduated doctors have raised several

problems in recruitment and training services in the country. Moreover, the difficult political situation, sectarian violence, kidnapping and threats were causing emigration of large number of medical professional competencies outside Iraq from 2003 till now. Consequently, adverse effect has raised on the leadership, training and medical education in Iraq 4, 2. In contrast, the increased number of medical colleges and medical students occupied the shortage of physician in Iraq and all villages benefited from a health care system. However, those young physicians faced another frequent problem like weakness of the learning environment, evidence based medical skill constraint, low income and reduce in the interest to work in health system in the villages. The physicians join a year of clinical clerkship after graduation, in the major divisions of medicine. Meanwhile, all physician must serve in the rural areas during the second year, and upon completion they are permitted to attend a medical specialization. The medical job and duties constitute the most stressful and distressing conditions on the doctor's lifestyle that deal directly with the survival and fatality of human beings and general community health status management. Although the strategy of ministry of higher education and scientific research in collaboration with ministry of health intended to increase the number of medical students to compensate the deficiency of general practitioners. However, the enrollment strategy has not been successful. Many of medical students are accepted in the college of medicine because of their high scores of matriculations. Moreover, the parent is forcing their daughter and sons to study hard to meet their desires and enroll specifically in the college of medicine as they consider it as the best respectful standard of study among other college studies in the communities. Review of literature relating to the attitude of medical students in colleges of medicine are unclear; therefore, this pilot study was designed to explore the attitudes of 4th, 5th and 6th year's medical students/Al Muthanna University toward their future careers.

Table 1. The total number of Colleges of Medicine in Iraq

Number	Name of medicine college	Location
1	Al Muthanna University College of Medicine	Samawah
2	Al-Iraqia University College of Medicine	Baghdad
3	Al-Kindy College of Medicine	Baghdad
4	Al-Nahrain University College of Medicine	Baghdad
5	Al-Qadisiya University College of Medicine	Diwaniya
6	Babylon University College of Medicine	Babylon
7	Hawler Medical University College of Medicine	Erbil
8	Jabir ibn Hayyan Medical University	Kufa
9	Kufa University College of Medicine	Kufa
10	Ninevah College of Medicine	Mosul
11	Sulaimani College of Medicine	Sulaimani City
12	Thi-Qar University College of Medicine	Nasiriyah City
13	University of Al-Mustansiriyah College of Medicine	Baghdad
14	University of Anbar College of Medicine	Baghdad
15	University of Baghdad College of Medicine	Baghdad
16	University of Basrah College of Medicine	Basrah
17	University of Diyala College of Medicine	Baquba
18	University of Dohuk College of Medicine	Dohuk
19	University of Fallujah College of Medicine	Fallujah
20	University of Kerbala College of Medicine	Karbala
21	University of Kirkuk College of Medicine	Kirkuk
22	University of Misan Faculty of Medicine	Amarah
23	University of Mosul College of Medicine	Mosul
24	University of Tikrit College of Medicine	Tikrit
25	University of Wasit College of Medicine	Wasit

Methods

This survey was enrolled in 2017-2018 to collect the viewpoints of the students of College of medicine \ Al Muthanna University. A questionnaire form was designed by the researchers and validated by a medical education professional to avoid the confusing questions and included only the student's viewpoints of various features of medicine and their future career was required. One hundred fifty medical students studying at 4th, 5th and 6th year Al-Muthanna/College of medicine were nominated as a participant (Optional). The questionnaire forms were distributed to the students through classes and the data were analyzed. The questionnaire form was included eight questions with definite answers Yes, or No (Table.2).

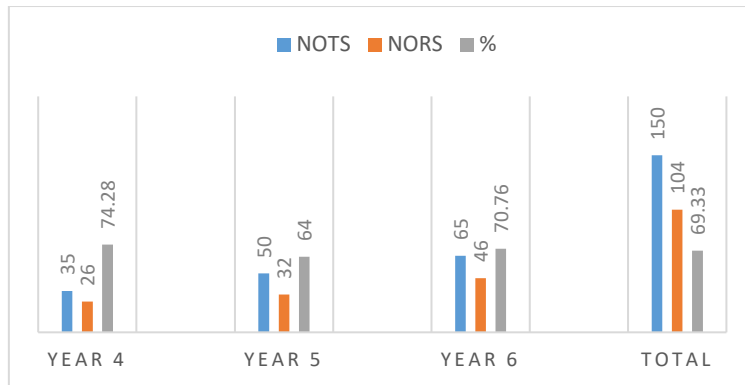
Table 2.

Questionnaires design with 8 questions with one answer Yes, or No

Questions	Yes	No
1. Is your high grades of matriculation was the reason for your acceptance to being in medical college or not?		
2. Are you convinced to be a student studying a medicine in medical college?		
3. Are you studying in medical college to meet your parents' desires or not?		
4. Is your acumen and intelligence continuous as before or not?		
5. After four, five or six years of studying medicine, is your interest to being a doctor is the same as before or not?		
6. Are you forced to be a student at college of medicine or not?		
7. Did you have a dream, what are you want to be in future, before you are being in medical college or not?		
8. At this time, are you feeling sorrow and disappointed because you decided to be at medical college or not?		

Results

Totally, 104 out of 150 students (69.33%) had responded to the questionnaires with variation in the percentages of responded students 74.28%, 64%, 70.76% for year 4th, 5th and 6th respectively (Figure.1).



NOTS: Number of total students. NORS: Number of responded students

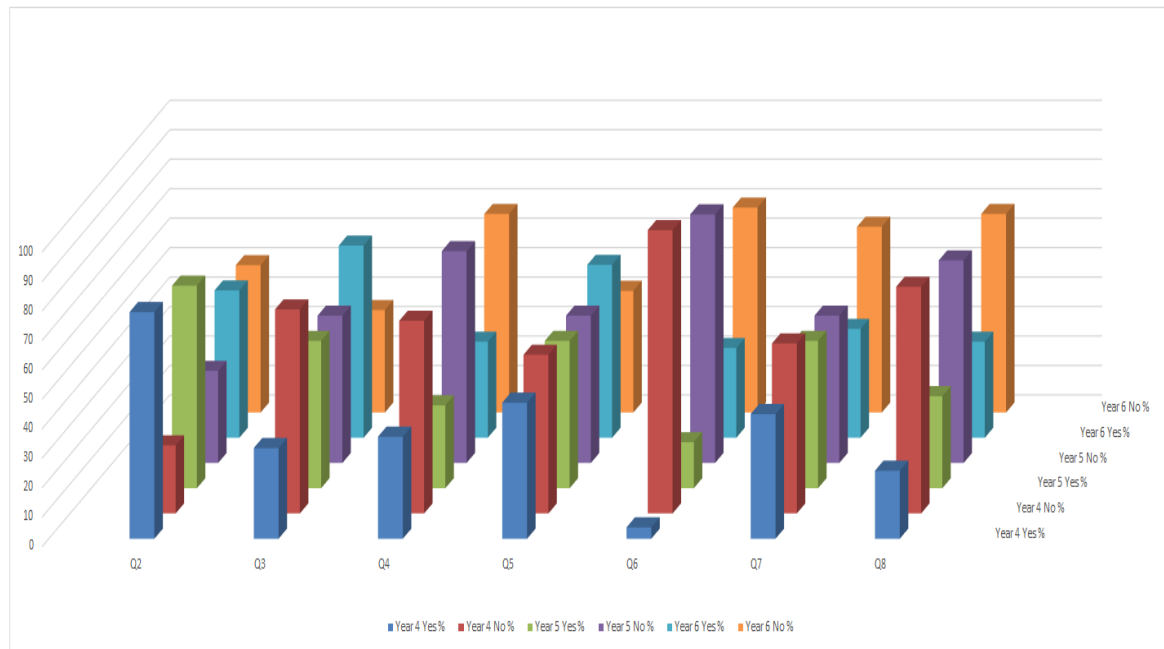
Figure.1

Shows number of total students and the number and percentages of responded students for each year

A variation was seen between student's answers within the same year and between different years (Table. 3). The percentages of answers "Yes " are; student high grades of matriculation 53.84%, 68.75%, 71.73%, convinced to being a student studying a medicine in medical college 76.92%, 68.75%, 50% studying in medical college to meet their parents desires 30.76 %, 50%, 65.21%, continuity of acumen and intelligence after attending college of medicine 34.61%, 28.12%, 32.6% your interest to being a doctor is the same after four, five or six years of studying medicine 46.15%, 50%, 58.69%, forced to be a student at college of medicine 3.84%, 15.62%, 30.43%, have a dream in another career before they are being in medical college 42.3%, 50%, 36.95% and feeling sorrow and disappointed because they are decided to be at medical college 23.07%, 31.25%, 32.6 % % for year 4th, 5th and 6th respectively (Figure.2). There was relatively significant descending 32.6%, 31.25 %, 23.07 % for year 6th, 5th and 4th years respectively of responded student that feel sorrow and disappointed because they decided to be at medical student. Meanwhile, high percentages of students had negative viewpoint towards their medical career and lost their acumen and intelligence were 34.61%, 28.12%, 32.6 % for 4th, 5th and 6th years.

Table 3.

Shows the number and responses percentages



	year 4				Year 5				year 6			
	Yes	%	No	%	Yes	%	No	%	Yes	%	No	%
Q1	14	53.84	12	46.16	22	68.75	10	31.25	33	71.73	13	28.27
Q2	20	76.92	6	23.08	22	68.75	10	31.25	23	50	23	50
Q3	8	30.76	18	69.24	16	50	16	50	30	65.21	16	34.79
Q4	9	34.61	17	65.39	9	28.12	23	71.88	15	32.6	31	67.4
Q5	12	46.15	14	53.85	16	50	16	50	27	58.69	19	41.31
Q6	1	3.84	25	96.16	5	15.62	27	84.38	14	30.43	32	69.57
Q7	11	42.3	15	57.7	16	50	16	50	17	36.95	29	63.05
Q8	6	23.07	20	76.93	10	31.25	22	68.75	15	32.6	31	67.4

Figure. 2.

Shows the percentages of responded participants

Discussion

During the 1980s, the golden period, Iraqi medical education was one of the best educational system that attract under and postgraduate student from different parts of the world. However, this education system was retard and progress due to several factors including the multiple wars, economic sanction and sectarian conflicts that reflect their effect on all Iraqi sectors in general and medical education and training. Currently, and due to war, that exhausted the



economy of Iraq, medical colleges faced multiple obstacles such as a lack of facilities, lack of governmental financial support and emigration of professional doctors due to violence, kidnapping and politic conflict 3. These factors are also affected on the medical student's attitude. The results of this pilot study revealed variances in negative and positive altitude of the questionnaire participant students. Although, there are positive responses of the medical student toward their medical education and future career, however, the worries are coming from the negative responses especially in this study because this resulted data was focused on the 4th, 5th and 6th years' student the advance years. This study showed that the student with high grades of matriculation was the main factor for selecting the student to be in the college of medicine with ignoring their interest and other factors. The student satisfaction and parents' desires were occurred in second and third respectively as factors that effect on enrollment of students in the colleges of medicine. These results are consistent with results reported by other study 1. This analytic result showed that students forced to study medicine ascending were 3.84, 15.62 and 30.43 for 4th, 5th and 6th years respectively. This negative attitude is affecting on the graduated future career and their interest to practice medicine in the future. Meanwhile, there were a relatively percentages descending 32.6%, 31.25 %, 23.07 % for year 6th, 5th and 4th years respectively of student that feel sorrow and disappointed because they decided to be at medical student. This observation expresses that the ignoring of student interest during their application for the University play an important role that should be considered during the admission process. Meanwhile, a high percentage of students had negative viewpoint towards their medical career and lost their acumen and intelligence that also should be consider during the admission procedures. The negative student's attitude might occur due to the stressful, hardness of the educational system and practical sessions of college of medicine. In conclusion, this study approved the presence of the positive and negative attitudes between medical students toward their future career. We recommended that to apply this study for student of medical colleges in Iraq to find new regulations for participation of a student in medical colleges.

Competing interests

The author declare that he has no competing interests.

References

1. Barikani A, Afaghi M, Barikani F, Afaghi A. Perception of the Medical Students on Their Future Career in Qazvin/ University of Medical Sciences. *Global Journal of Health Science* 2012;4(4):176-180.
2. Barnett-Vanes A, Hassounah S, Shawki M, Ismail OA, Fung C, Kedia T, et al. Impact of conflict on medical education: a cross-sectional survey of students and institutions in Iraq. *BMJ Open* 2016;6(2):e010460.
3. Mustafa Al-Shamsi. Medical education in Iraq: issues and challenges. *Int J Med Educ* 2017; 8:88-90.
4. World Directory of Medical Schools Search. [Search.wdoms.org](http://search.wdoms.org). 2017 [cited 11 January 2017]; Available from: <https://search.wdoms.org>



American Journal of BioMedicine

Journal Abbreviation: AJBM
ISSN: 2333-5106 (Online)
DOI: 10.18081/issn.2333-5106
Publisher: BM-Publisher
Email: editor@ajbm.net

