



Attitude of Adolescents entering into Medical College towards some life Influencing Factors

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Abstract

Adolescence, between the ages of 10 to 19 years, is the time of changes in the body and mind. In this phase, development of new ideas, abstract thinking and reasoning starts which makes them more vulnerable to be influenced by surrounding factors. In this cross-sectional study, 150 medical students of Government Medical College, Amritsar of the same academic year, who had recently joined MBBS course were studied. Demographic history and their view regarding various life influencing factors were assessed. The relevant data were collected and analyzed. Majority of the students (96%) entering to medical college were from urban background and were motivated by their parents (64.7%) to join this medical profession. However, more than 2/3rd (74%) students were interested to change their profession to civil services if opportunity is given to them including self-motivated students. Out of total, 140 (93.3%) students were interested even at the start of their career to do super-specialization after MBBS. 72 (48%) students were having their parents as their ideal with preferring qualities like dedication, kindness, honesty and intelligence in their ideal which they would like pass on to the next generation also. 140 (93.3%) students got frustrated and being angry in their life with most of the time reason being not to be understood by their parents and others. In view of these points, it is important to understand the psychological needs of adolescents and streamline their potential in right direction.

Keywords: Attitude, Adolescents, medical college, life, influencing, factors.

Introduction

Adolescent is the second decade of life, between the ages of 10 to 19 years as defined by the WHO. Adolescent is a phase during which tremendous physical and psychological changes occur along with the changes in social perception and expectations. Adolescents are distinct from children or adults, comprising nearly 1/5th of the total population (21.5%) of India¹.

Adolescent is the time of changes in the body and mind. Every expert considers it as a changeover and transforming phase or as the formative period of life since the intellectual, sexual, mental development is taking shape towards its maturity².

Adolescents are better able to deal with problems on an abstract level, to form hypothesis and to reason from proposition that are contrary to fact i.e. now they can think logically. During the developmental period when the child starts speaking, he/she interested in surroundings and starts asking questions like 'what is this and what is that?' 'and at the adolescent phase, child develops a critical faculty and starts asking 'Why to do or follow this?' Adolescent is the phase of development when analysis of an event starts working along with the adaptation or accommodation of knowledge compatibility. This helps the adolescent to manifest in the realm of scientific problem.

During the adolescence, individual is in a perplex stage³. The

new ideas are developing and these are yet to get a crystal clear form. Education is one factor, which helps people overcome the confusion they face in the life. However, today youth is puzzled to so much extent that he/she has forgotten for what he/she is acquiring education. It results in choosing wrong profession and ultimately dissatisfaction in the rest of life. Now there is race of success, which is measured by a creative job in multinational companies or big corporate houses, which suppresses the individual's own interest in the particular subject and forces them to be involved in a profession that does not suit their nature. The situation is worse when the desire of the parents compels them to opt for the carrier that they feel, is better for social status point of view or which suit them.

According to Erickson, adolescent is the stage of development of identity⁴. It has to be perceived, continued over the time and sense of mutuality between one's self and perception is there. Most of the time, this identity is separate from one's parents. In fact, many teenagers do not like to think that they are similar to their parents in any way. Yet it is established that the identity of a person is influenced in many ways by the parents.

In the absence of proper guidance, according to their mental and physical development stage and misunderstanding their own view towards life, frustrate them and aggression is an outcome of that. This behavior again makes them more a mess than resolving the problem.

Medical profession has remained an attractive profession since long time due to its social status in the society. The high standards of living, respect and well recognized status is always a charm. Now, there is a wide range of new jobs opportunities and varied interest of youth. The wrong choice in carrier can impose dissatisfaction and failure at both the ends i.e. here at parent and physician level.

Material and Methods

This was a cross-sectional study conducted among 150 medical students of Government Medical College, Amritsar of the same academic class, who had recently joined MBBS course. The purpose of the study was explained to the participants and consent was obtained from each. A predesigned and pretested questionnaire was given to evaluate their attitude towards medical profession and about some life influencing factors. The data was compiled and analyzed statistically.

Results and Discussion

Adolescent period, out of its many developmental processes, makes them career conscious too. Most of the time, adolescents have conflicts between the expectation of the parents and their own interests and ambitions. In addition they face the pressure from the society. Nevertheless, most of the time, elders want to impose their own ideology and try to fit youngsters in their own old frame of society. Even in our study, out of 150 participants, nearly 2/3rd (64.7%) were motivated by their parents to join medical profession and less than 1/3rd (22.7%) were self-motivated. Only 14 (9.3%) of the 150 participants were motivated by brothers/ sisters and other persons while 5 (3.3%) were not motivated at all to join this medical profession (table-1).

Table-1

Distribution of medical students in relation to the motivator to get admission

Motivator	No. of students (n=150) Frequency (%)
Parents	97(64.7)
Self- motivated	34(22.7)
Brother/Sister/ other persons	14(9.3)
Not motivated	5(3.3)

The other face of the motivational force is well reflected in the view that when the students were asked about their opinion to change the profession from medical to civil services (IAS/PCS), 111(74%) of the students were interested to change their stream (table-2). Their perplex attitude towards choosing the career can be viewed in the fact that even out of the 34 (22.7%) students who were self- motivated to join the medical profession, 24(70.6%) were too interested to join civil services if given a chance to do so (table-3).

Table-2

Distribution of medical students on the basis of their opinion to join Administrative Civil Services if given an opportunity (n=150)

Opinion	No. of students (n=150) Frequency (%)
Yes	111(74)
No	34(22.7)
Not sure	5(3.3)

Table-3

Students interested to join Civil services if given a chance in relation to motivators to join medical profession

Opinion	Motivated by parents (n=97) Frequency (%)	Self-motivated (n=34) Frequency (%)	Chi-square value
Yes	85(87.6)	24(70.6)	341.09***
No	12(12.4)	10(29.4)	

***p<0.001

The studied subjects were divided into two groups, one who were self-motivated (n=34) and other who were motivated by their parents (n=97). It has been observed that students who were motivated by their parents were significantly more interested to change their stream i.e. medical profession and go for civil services (table-4). The urban elite are now seeking advice from super specialists and are ready to pay for it as well. This awareness towards career options can be seen among these adolescent medical students even at their start of career that 140(93.4%) students were interested either in medical super-specialty (cardiology, neurology etc) or surgical super specialty (Neuro-surgery, Plastic surgery, Cosmetic surgery etc), 5(3.3%) were determined to go for civil services and only 5(3.3%) were not interested in super- specialization (table-4).

Table-4

Distribution of students on the basis of specialty interested after MBBS

Specialty	No. of students (n=150) Frequency (%)
Medical fields	77(51.3)
Super-specialty	39(26)
Pediatrics	19(12.7)
General Medicine	14(9.3)
Dermatology	5(3.3)
Surgical fields	63(42)
Super-specialty	24(16)
Orthopedics	19(12.7)
ObsandGynae	15(10)
General Surgery	5(3.3)
Other field(IAS/PCS)	5(3.3)
Do not want to be specialist	5(3.3)

During the adolescent time, various changes that occur challenge their ideals which their mind has constructed. During the childhood, when parents answer all the queries of their children, they feel mother and father are the ideal who know each and everything and provide everything they require. When children enter the school, knowledge of the teacher dominates, and then they shift their ideal from parents to teacher. Under the critical faculty development and logical thinking process, now they analyze the behavior and working style of their ideal. Their own moral reasoning or values system questions these ideals and then a new ideal is needed. Now it can be from historical personalities like Shaheed Bhagat Singh or social icon like Mother Teresa or religious ideal like Guru Nanak. In today's glamorous world, cricketer and film stars are also becoming the ideal of youth. Adolescents tend to get carried away by the overweight money earning as seen on television programmes and thus such media agencies corrupt their minds. In our study, 72 (48%) participants found their parents as ideal whereas 24(16%) have renowned personalities (Religious, historical, film stars and celebrities) as their ideal. In 15 (7%), brothers/sisters were their ideal whereas 39(26%) had no ideal in their life (table-5). The reason they narrated for having no ideal was that they believe in self (51.3%) or feel none as perfect (48.7%) (table-6).

Table-5

Distribution of medical students on the basis of their ideal in life

Ideal	No. of students(n=150) Frequency (%)
Parents	72(48)
Brother/Sister	15(10)
Renowned personalities (Religious/Historical/ Film star)	24(16)
Teacher	Nil
None	39(26)

Table-6

Distribution of medical students on the basis of reason for not having an ideal in life

Reason	No. of Students(n=39) Frequency (%)
Belief in self	20(51.3)
No one is perfect	19(48.7)

About the qualities of the ideal, which these students perceive among their ideal, 52 (34.7%) said hard work and dedication, 32 (21.4%) were in favor of kindness and patience while 26 (17.3%), 20 (13.3%) said honesty and intelligence as qualities they want to see among their ideal respectively (table-7). The changing or shifting of ideal is always there and it is the analytic way of doing the work. But that stage is certainly a danger signal, when ideal is broken and there is no ideal in life. When an ideal forms, it becomes part of personality of individual. When that ideal is not coming up to expectations then it hurts the personality. It leaves a scar on the mind and can

result in deviant behavior like drug abuse, depression, suicide and other anti-social behavior.

Table-7

Distribution of students on the basis of qualities for an ideal

Qualities	No. of students(n=150) Frequency (%)
Hardworking/Dedication	52(34.7)
Kindness/ Patience	32(21.4)
Honesty/Attitude towards life	26(17.3)
Intelligence	20(13.3)
Good motivator	12(8)
Don't know	8(5.3)

The new dimensions of adolescent development, which has been explored by the sociologists and psychologists, can be discussed in schools by parents and teachers during parents' teacher meetings. However, schools have not remained a place of overall development of students due to undue pressure on students about career and on other hand teachers also exploiting the situation by opening coaching centres and demanding such a high fee for coaching classes and crash courses. The student teacher relationship was also reflected in the fact that out of 150 students, the teacher was neither an ideal nor a motivator in choosing a career (table-5).

The lack of understanding the psychological changes and transformations occurring in their immature, unstable and wavering minds while transferring from childhood to adulthood is experienced in their irritation and aggression (table-8). 140 (93.3%) students admitted their ever being angry in life and majority (45.7%) had reason for being angry was that they were not understood properly (table-9).

Table-8

Distribution of medical students on the basis of their ever being angry in life

Ever being angry	No. of students (n=150) Frequency (%)
Yes	140(93.3)
No	10(6.7)

Table-9

Distribution of students on the basis of their reason for being angry

Reason	No. of students (n=140) Frequency (%)
Misunderstanding	64(45.7)
Short-temper	9(6.4)
Ego problem	5(3.6)
Non- specific/ minute problems	62(44.3)

Aggression is an outcome of hormonal as well as social system of interaction with the individual. It is an instinctive way of survival. But in human beings it can be well managed. Of

course, it can be observed even during childhood, but here again this is reflection of discomfort of child. But consciously, it is seen during adolescent where an individual is angry to an unacceptable behavior of a person. The ideal thinking of the adolescent conflict with social behavior that is prevalent all around as a dual personality. That is why ideal is not static. In other observation, on one side 64.6% parents were motivator for choosing the career but as an ideal in life, only 48% had parents as their ideal. This conflicting behavior is the reflection of their critical understanding towards parents at this point of life.

Table-10

Distribution of students on the basis of their response after being angry

Response	No. of students (n=140) Frequency (%)
Ignoring/ try not to speak	96(68.6)
Try to resolve conflicts	15(10.7)
Aggression/Flight	15(10.7)
Others/ non-specific	14(10)

The intelligence and psychological development help them to understand their surroundings. When asked about the qualities of medical profession, they expressed their opinion that care, hard work, punctuality, honesty and scientific attitude are the qualities that motivated them to join this profession (table-11). They love and respect honesty, open family and school environment. They inculcate these values while observing and learning from adults. They want to be free in decision regarding these values. They expressed their views about the characteristics which they would like to pass over next generation. 39.3% said dedication and hard work, 27% wanted future generation to have patience and be humanitarian, while 18% and 16% were in favour of honesty and respect for elders respectively (table-12).

Table-11

Distribution of students on the basis of quality of medical profession that impressed them

Quality	No. of students(n=150) Frequency (%)
Intelligence/scientific attitude	19(12.7)
Social Status	14(9.3)
care	59(39.3)
Punctuality/ Hard work	35(23.3)
Honesty	16(10.7)
Adventure	7(4.7)

Conclusion

The students entering in medical profession were almost all (96%) from urban background. Either their parents motivated them or they were self-motivated to join this profession. Contrary to it majority of the students, even the self-motivated students also wanted to join civil services. However, the students

who were motivated by their parents were significantly more interested to join IAS/PCS, if given a chance. Becoming super specialist was their first priority which is in demand by the urban elites. The qualities which they want to see in their ideal are hard work, dedication, honesty and intelligence. Similarly, the qualities they would like to pass to the next generation are similar to that they want in their ideal along with respect to elders, humanity and responsibility. They have experienced anger when they are misunderstood and mostly resolved it by ignoring.

Table-12

Distribution of students on the basis of qualities they want to pass on to future generation

Qualities	No. of students(n=150) Frequency (%)
Dedication/Hard work/responsibility	59(39.4)
Patience/ Humanity	27(18)
Honesty	27(18)
Respect to elders	24(16)
All rounder personality	8(5.3)
Not responded	5(3.3)

Recommendations: Adolescents are full of energy, rather energy is overflowing from all sources and dimensions. However, this flow is turbulent and role of elderly in society is to make it streamlined in the right direction (creative and constructive) by recognizing, appreciating and motivating the hidden potentials and skills, by helping them to explore their potentials up to maximum. This is only possible if parents and teachers spend their time specifically in this direction apart from their academic excellence. It is observed that if the psychological needs are properly managed, then they excel in other fields automatically. The confidence, vitality and aspiration need proper direction and management, which can be provided at school itself. The education should be such that it would make sensible, responsible, mature and successful adults who can be asset for themselves as well to society and country at large. Tender and gentle care, understanding and adequate amount of consideration can do miracle with the youth.

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