

## Original Research Article

# Pedodontics and preventive dentistry as career option: post graduate student's perspective

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### ABSTRACT

**Background:** In dentistry choosing a postgraduate branch after bachelor's degree is quite complex and difficult, as all specialties have their own significance and application. In such situation dental graduate should evaluate his own capability and interest rather than any pressure or persuasion from his friends or parents and hence accordingly make his selection for post-graduation specialization. The ambitions of an aspiring candidate in a particular specialty in turn contribute a lot for the future of that specialty especially in pedodontics which has the responsibility of detecting and early intervention regarding dental caries and other oral health related problem. The aim and objective of this study was to evaluate the reasons of post graduate students in private and government dental colleges in India for selection pedodontics and preventive dentistry as career after completing graduation.

**Methods:** A questionnaire-based study was conducted among 100 students pursuing post-graduation in pedodontics and preventive dentistry. The questionnaire consisted of eight close ended and one open ended items which included career choice-related questions and demographic (age and gender) data. Finally, data was collected and presented as frequency distribution.

**Results:** Overall majority of students choose pedodontics as choice about 65% (65/100) and 35% (35/100) were those who got in pedodontics field by chance. 15% (15/100) students had family role in getting MDS admission in pedodontics.

**Conclusions:** Post graduate pedodontics students mostly have chosen pedodontics as a professional career due to their personal interest and influence of family and those who by chance opted pedodontics developed interest in the subject with time.

**Keywords:** Pedodontics, Preventive dentistry

### INTRODUCTION

Everything is ordained, and nothing can be changed. There isn't a particle of uncertainty in it. All things considered, God has talented us with mind and intelligence to think and choose in the matter of what is correct and what isn't right. One such circumstance emerges when we as under graduates (BDS) need to pick post graduate profession in the wake of after finishing graduation in dental surgery (BDS). This frequently ends

up noticeably troublesome because of many reasons, for example, family impact, less seats in interested branches, high expense fee structure and so forth.<sup>1</sup>

Undergraduate student's inspirations for picking post-graduation in the dental college are of extraordinary enthusiasm for teachers and entrance advisory boards. Additionally, guardians, relatives, companions and instructors influence the decision. The problem becomes even more intense particularly when one is choosing a

career in a specialty, which is growing such as Pedodontics and Preventive Dentistry. It is a subject in which the student usually develops a little interest during graduation perhaps due to reasons such as the subject is taught more theoretically and less practically during BDS.<sup>3</sup>

Pedodontics and preventive dentistry is defined by "an age-defined specialty that provides both primary and comprehensive preventive and therapeutic oral health care for infants and children through adolescence, including those with special health care needs".<sup>3</sup>

Students entering in the field of pedodontics can be separated into two classes. One who picked pedodontics by decision because of their advantage and the other who picked pedodontics by chance because of reasons other than their advantage. There are many elements which are thought about before choosing any college, for example, money related, status in future thereof, quiet life and other premium factor.<sup>1</sup>

Different studies have been subjected to overview, led for contemplating the thought processes in picking dentistry as career and different specialities after finishing graduation. These investigations incorporate those done at University of Toronto and Israel etc.<sup>4,5</sup> The prime intention in choosing among dental undergraduates as found in different investigations ranges from money related security, work fulfillment, status and enthusiasm.<sup>6</sup> But no study has been done beforehand to know the purposes behind choosing pedodontics as a profession among the postgraduates in India.

Thus, the aim of the present study was to find out reasons for choosing pedodontics and preventive dentistry as a career option among postgraduate students in India.

## METHODS

A questionnaire-based study was conducted among 100 student delegates registered for 10<sup>th</sup> PG Convention, ISPPD 13<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> March 2013 New Delhi. National conferences and emails were also sent to those unregistered students pursuing post-graduation in pedodontics and preventive dentistry. Questionnaire adapted from Gowhar, et al.<sup>1</sup>

Questionnaire was distributed among 250 postgraduate students. Out of 250 only 100 reported back with questionnaire. All the students were informed about nitty-gritty of the study. The questionnaire consisted of eight close ended and one open ended items which included career choice-related questions and demographic (age and gender) data. Finally, data was collected and presented as frequency distribution.

To check the reliability and internal consistency of the questionnaire, Cronbach's alpha was used and it was found satisfactory.

## RESULTS

A total of 100 students with mean age 28 years comprised the study group, which constituted 35% (35/100) males and 65% (65/100) females.

In response to question why student had chosen Pedodontics as a career option in M.D.S. 20% males and 15% females responded the reason as chance and 15% males and 40% females as interest in subject. Overall majority (65/100) of students choose pedodontics as choice and (35/100) were those who got in pedodontics field by chance. About 45% were those who were interested in pedodontics, 30% were those who were not able to get admission in other branches and 15% students had family role in getting MDS admission in pedodontics.

About 16% male students and 23% females thought that pedodontics as a profession can help them in making money for future as well as settled life; 19% males and 21% females thought that it can give reputation in society; 07% males and 08% females thought that getting into this specialty, they can help patients. Surprising it was observed that regarding awareness about career and future prospectus of MDS in Pedodontics during BDS, only 48% (48/100) students had awareness about pedodontics as a career and 52% (52/100) students were unaware about pedodontics being future career. 25% of the postgraduate students were planning to join academics after completion while as (55%) were planning to go for private general dental practice whereas 20% might pursue only pedodontics practice. No student was planning for further research projects. 55% students found pedodontics as very interesting subject after getting admission in pedodontics, 35% found the subject as good and only 10% students found pedodontics as boring subject.

One open ended question was also included in the questionnaire. Regarding the decreasing admissions in pedodontics in dental colleges in India, most of the students relied that nowadays instead of post-graduation students prefer short term individual courses in dentistry and students from private dental colleges also mentioned no-stipend being given as the main reason for decreasing admissions.

## DISCUSSION

The age of the participants ranged from 25-35 years with mean age of 28 years. Among 100 participants 35 were males and 65 females. Considering the response to question as to why pedodontics was chosen as a career option in M.D.S., there seems to be an encouraging trend in having interest, as maximum number of students have the prior interest in the subject, among which majority are females. This demonstrates the pattern of a female ruled proficient factor in post-graduation in pedodontics these days. The explanation behind the less number of males in

post graduate course in pedodontics might be in charge of the way that males are occupied with surgery situated subjects since start of their dental career. Mentally, males

experience the ill effects of predominance complex while they pick surgical clinical subjects in post-graduation.

**Table 1: Response to the questions.**

Questions	Males	Females	Total
<b>Q1. Pedodontics as a career in MDS was by</b>			
Chance	20	15	35
Choice	25	40	65
<b>Q2. What were the reasons for choosing pedodontics as your career</b>			
Unable to get admission in other branches	25	05	30
Family role/influence	10	05	15
Interested in pedodontics	17	28	45
Other reasons	02	08	10
<b>Q3. Pedodontics as a profession can</b>			
Help me in making money & well settled life.	16	23	39
Reputation in society	19	21	40
Help people/patients	07	08	15
Others	03	03	06
<b>Q4. Pedodontics suits me because</b>			
I can manage child patients	20	24	44
It includes every dental procedure	16	17	33
Both	12	11	23
None	0	0	00
<b>Q5. Were you aware about career and future prospectus of Pedodontics during BDS</b>			
Yes	20	28	48
No	33	19	52
<b>Q6. After completing your PG would you like to</b>			
Join academics	08	17	25
Private general dental practice	30	25	55
Pursue only pedo practice	08	12	20
Joining a research institute	00	00	00
<b>Q7. If again you are given option would you like to join MDS in Pedodontics?</b>			
Yes	28	32	60
No	25	15	40
<b>Q8. How are you finding the subject right now?</b>			
It is good	15	20	35
It is very interesting	22	33	55
It is boring	07	03	10
Any other	0	0	0
<b>Q9. What is your opinion about decreasing admissions in Pedodontics?</b>			
After UG students prefer short term individual courses.			
Less Jobs			
No Stipend in private dental colleges			

Interest in the pedodontics stands as the second reason for choosing the subject. most of them highlighted the fact that pedodontics subject is liked by most of the students. This trend is good in the perception of there being still a shortage of pedodontist and preventive dentist across nation in professional dental colleges due to increasing oral health menace in children day by day.

In regard to knowledge of future prospects of the pedodontics, during their graduation time most of them

didn't knew about the future prospects of the subject featuring the reason that amid graduation (BDS) students are not given the chance to do diverse sort of treatment in children while in pedodontics department. Though if given chance maximum students during their graduation might develop interest in the said subject.

Private practice remains on the priority and future plans as most of students are interested in private general dental practice alongside pedodontic practice. This was

overwhelmed by females. The reason might be that these days there are mushroom growth in dental centers and just depending on pedodontic practice won't help.

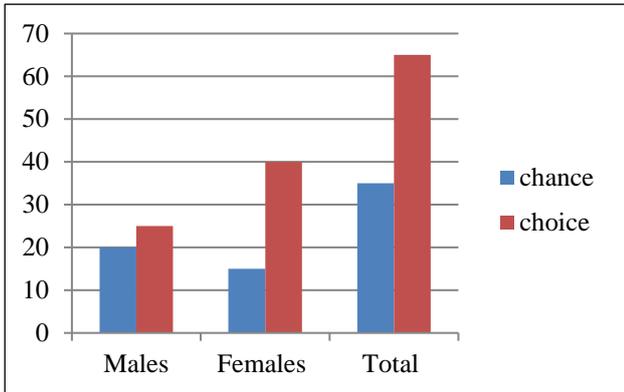


Figure 1: Response to Question 1.

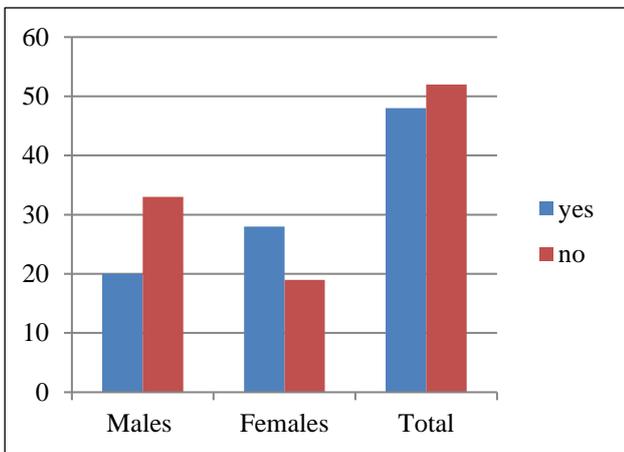


Figure 2: Response to Question 5.

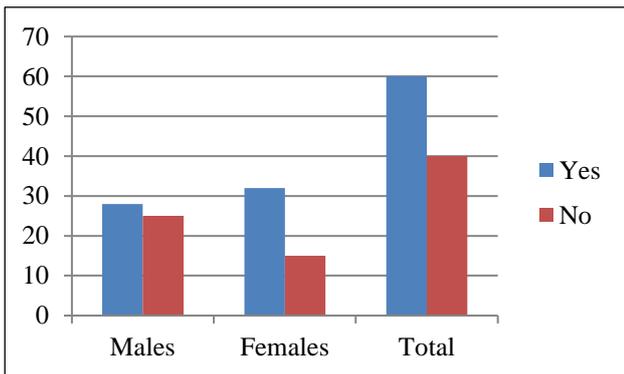


Figure 3: Response to Question 8.

However, the most critical reaction with respect to the inquiry "If again you are given alternative, might you want to join MDS in pedodontics", 60% understudies were discovered willing to join MDS in pedodontics and preventive dentistry, clearly demonstrating the profundity and enthusiasm for the subject created by the postgraduate students.

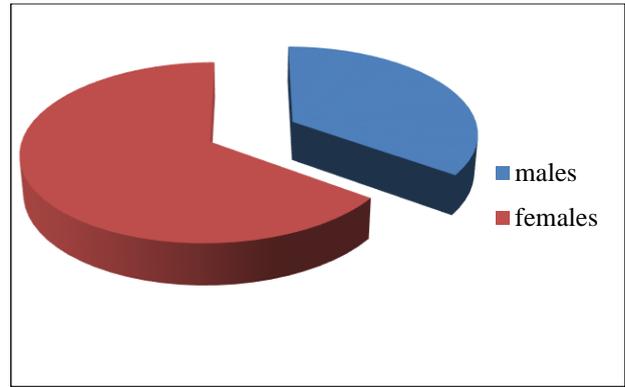


Figure 4: Male (35%) and female (65%) participants.

General demeanour towards the speciality was altogether less among male students when contrasted with females, which might be because males think that pedodontics as a semi clinical branch of dentistry thus "loss of hands" on general dental practice. Different reasons with respect to less enthusiasm towards pedodontics among male understudies might be less salary and more work when contrasted with different branches of dentistry.<sup>7</sup>

The decision of a career obviously affects a future life design. Dentistry is among the sought for after professions in present scenario. Dental specialists occupy an important position in public arena as licensed health care workers.<sup>8</sup>

There are economic factors which may impact a person's level of sense of duty regarding the calling. Likewise of intrigue is the degree to which societal changes influence the decision of claim to fame in dentistry.<sup>9</sup>

It is important to understand the needs and sociodemographic foundations of those choosing Pediatric Dentistry as their post-graduation speciality.<sup>10</sup>

## CONCLUSION

The findings of the present study suggest that most of the students opted pedodontics as choice and those who by chance opted pedodontics by chance as their future career also developed interest in the subject. During initial years (BDS); the student should be given chance to get involved into clinical practice in pedodontics be it the simpler ones; so that students get familiar with different diseases and treatment in pedodontia.

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