

A Comparative Study Regarding Career Perspectives of Intern Doctors in Government & Private Medical College Hospitals of Bangladesh

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Abstract

The medical carrier chosen by intern doctors as their careers is an important determinant of the future supply of doctors in different specialties, and it is important for the planning of workforce in health-care services. The objective of this study was to compare the pattern of career perspective of intern doctors in government and private medical college hospitals of Bangladesh. This was a comparative cross-sectional type of study carried out among 161 intern Doctor of Government Medical college hospital and 152 intern doctors of private medical college hospital from January to December 2018. Majority (83.4%) of the respondents was unmarried and most of them (82.4%) belonged to Islam. Majority (66.9%) of the respondents (government and private medical college) want to join in government services and the association was statistically significant ($p=0.000$). A large number of respondents (77.9%) wanted to practice in Bangladesh. The association between type of medical college and intended practice location was not statistically significant ($p=0.610$). Majority (68.3%) of the respondents want to practice in Dhaka city and the association was statistically significant ($p=0.000$). About 42.8% of the respondents opted for Medicine as their first choice. Most (91.1%) of the respondents did not have any intention of changing profession and very few (8.9%) of them have intention of changing the profession. The study recommends improving the facilities in Basic subjects for attracting intern doctors to develop their career in these fields.

Keywords: Carrier Perspective, Intern Doctor.

Introduction

Helping people, interest in science, and the intellectual challenge of the profession have been reported as important motives for the desire to study medicine. After passing their qualifying examination, medical doctors face a selection and rather unique allocation process to prepare for further specialization in highly professional jobs. These are obtained after further education and practical work. Therefore, medical careers begin undifferentiated, and postgraduate training

ends with most doctors specialized in a specific area of practice. Specialty is the transition from the relatively undifferentiated, “stem doctor”, potentially capable of entering any specialty, to the final, fully-differentiated specialist who is almost entirely restricted to one specialized area of medical work [1].

Health workforce education and training is a complex investment, which align education, finance, labor market and policies. In this regard, however, many low income countries including Bangladesh face significant challenges to train medical doctors.²Few

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medical colleges have limited residency programs to satisfy the postgraduate career preference, limited role on current and future possibilities (enhancing participation for collective and individual learning) including in providing career and social orientations to medical doctors. On the other hand, medical students have misunderstandings about the wider picture of medical profession and their personal learning plans [3].

In recent years, educational institutions around the world have been increasingly faced with the challenge of making their curricula relevant to the needs of the time. Medical education in Bangladesh has also experienced many changes and challenges. Medical education system in Bangladesh inherited the typical features of colonial education, which is very much on the traditional pattern: lecture-based, teacher-centered, discipline-based, examination-driven, and hospital-oriented. The curriculum structure is generally divided into two parts, such as basic sciences and clinical sciences.⁴

Information relating to the career choices of Intern doctors is essential in planning the health care workforce and medical education programs and providing equitable and quality health care services to the community. The identification of career preference and intended practice locations of the medical students also provides a useful contribution to the projections, need, and distribution of doctors across different specialties and regions in the country. Career choice of career is a complex personal decision influenced by a multitude of extrinsic and intrinsic factors. Studies conducted in Asian countries demonstrated that medical students usually choose established hospital-based clinical specialties and want to practice in major cities.⁵

These create acute shortage of medical teachers in medical colleges and doctors in rural areas. Moreover, large number of medical students wants to join in private

medical services.⁶ A recent study conducted among students, interns, and house officers in Nepal found that almost half of them planned to migrate to a developed country. The important reasons for migration among medical final-year students are poor salary structure, poor quality of training, and poor work environment in their home country. Understanding intern doctor's career preference and intentions where to practice just after internship is crucial for designing suitable medical education curricula and responding for the requirements of the medical workforce at different stages of their professional life.⁷

Until now, very few studies were done regarding the career choice among intern doctors in Bangladesh. The main aim of the study is to compare the pattern of career perspective of intern doctors in government and private medical college hospitals of Bangladesh, their preferred permanent location for practicing medicine; nature of jobs; factors affecting their choice; and doctors' willingness to practice medicine in Bangladesh and other countries, urban and rural areas.

General Objective

To determine the pattern of career perspective of intern doctors in government and private medical college hospitals of Bangladesh.

Specific Objectives

1. To find out the career choice of intern doctors.
2. To identify the factors affecting their choices
3. To determine the level of knowledge of intern doctors regarding different specialties.
4. To compare the factors for career choice between government and private medical college hospitals.
5. To determine the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents.

Methodology

Study Population

The study population was Intern Doctor of Government and private medical college hospitals of Bangladesh.

Sample Size

Our calculated sample size was 384. But due to limitation of time & resources 248 respondents were selected purposively. The study was carried out during the period of 1st July to 30th December 2018.

Sampling Technique

Purposive sampling.

Data Collection Technique

First permission from concerned authority of the selected Medical College Hospitals was taken. Then the data from Intern doctors were collected by self-administered questionnaires.

Data Processing and Analysis

The collected data was checked and verified, and a master table was prepared. The data was then compiled and tabulated according to Key variables. The data was then analyzed by a computer through SPSS program to fulfill the objectives of the study.

Results

Male represented 50.2% of the respondents, while female represented 49.8% of the respondents. The age of the study population ranged from 23-29 years. Among 161 respondents in government medical college hospital majority (87.6%) of the respondents were unmarried and among 152 respondents in private medical college doctors 78.9 % were married. There is significant association between type of medical college and monthly family income ($p=0.000$). About 30.4% of respondents belonging to government medical college hail from village and only 11.8% of the respondents of private medical college hail from village. There is significant association between type of medical college and area where they came from ($p=0.001$).

In table 1 about 49.6% (121) of the respondents want to take post-graduation from home because it is easy to get, 32.4% (79) said it is safe for future career and 18.0% (44) of the respondents said that it is valuable to take post-graduation from home. Majority of the respondents 61.2% (74) belong to government medical college thought it is easy to get post graduate degree from home but only 38.2% (47) belong to private medical college thought it is easy for them to get a post graduate degree. There is significant association between type of medical college and reason for desiring their post graduate degree ($p=0.000$).

Table 1. Comparison of Cause Of Desire to Take Pg Degree From Home Between Government and Private Medical College Intern Doctors

Reason of desire to take PG degree from home	Type of Medical College		Total	P value
	Government	Private		
Easy to get	74	47	121	0.000*
	61.2%	38.2%	49.6%	
Valuable	9	35	44	
	7.4%	28.5%	18.0%	
Safe for future career	38	41	79	
	31.4%	33.3%	32.4%	
Total	121	123	244	
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

According to Table 2 approximately 42.8% of the respondents opted Medicine as their first choice. A few of them (5.1%) chose Public Health as their first choice and only 1.9% of the respondents want to build their career in Basic Subjects. Out of 161 respondents of government medical college hospital about 76

respondents choose medicine as their first choice, on the other hand from 152 doctors of private medical college group about 58 doctors choose medicine as their first future carrier choice. The association between type of medical college and future career first choice was not statistically significant ($p=0.282$).

Table 2. Comparison of Respondents by Future Career First Choice Between Government and Private Medical College Intern Doctors

Future career First choice	Type of Medical College		Total	P value
	Government	Private		
Cardiology	12	16	28	0.282*
	7.5%	10.5%	8.9%	
Medicine	76	58	134	
	47.2%	38.2%	42.8%	
Surgery	28	30	58	
	17.4%	19.7%	18.5%	
Gynecology& Obstetrics	9	9	18	
	5.6%	5.9%	5.8%	
Orthopedic Surgery	3	8	11	
	1.9%	5.3%	3.5%	
Public Health	8	8	16	
	5.0%	5.3%	5.1%	
Basic Subjects	1	5	6	
	0.6%	3.3%	1.9%	
Sub Specialty	24	18	42	
	14.9%	11.8%	13.4%	
Total	161	152	313	
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

In table 3 about 65.8% of the respondents wanted to join government services and 20.1% of them wanted to join a private hospital. Among 161 Doctors of Government Medical college hospital 118 (73.3%) wanted to join government service and on the other hand out

of 152 doctors of private medical college hospital about 88 (57.9%) doctors wanted to join in government service. The association between type of medical college and intended sector of practice was statistically significant ($p=0.000$).

Table 3. Comparison of Respondents by Intended Section of Practice Between Government and Private Medical College Intern Doctors

Intended sector of practice	Type of Medical College		Total	P value
	Government	Private		
Government	118	88	206	0.000*
	73.3%	57.9%	65.8%	
Private	15	48	63	
	9.3%	31.6%	20.1%	

Armed Forces	9	3	12
	5.6%	2.0%	3.8%
Abroad	19	13	32
	11.8%	8.6%	10.2%
Total	161	152	313
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

In table 4 majority of the respondents (77.9%) want to practice in Bangladesh, 15.1% of them want to practice in UK. There

is no significant association between type of medical college and location of future practice (p=0.061).

Table 4. Comparison of Respondents by Location of Future Practice Between Government and Private Medical College Intern Doctors

Location of Future Practice	Type of Medical College		Total	P value
	Government	Private		
Bangladesh	134	109	243	0.061*
	83.2%	72.2%	77.9%	
USA	3	7	10	
	1.9%	4.6%	3.2%	
UK	22	26	48	
	13.7%	16.6%	15.1%	
Australia	2	2	4	
	1.2%	1.3%	1.3%	
India	0	3	3	
	0.0%	2.0%	1.0%	
Singapore	0	3	3	
	0.0%	2.0%	1.0%	
Others	0	2	2	
	0.0%	1.3%	0.6%	
Total	161	152	313	
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

In table 5 about 68.3% of the respondents want to practice in Dhaka city, 11.9% of them practice in rural area and 19.8% of them want to do practice in another city. Among 134 respondent of government medical college hospital about 70 doctors want to practice in

Dhaka city and on the other hand among 109 respondent of private medical college hospital about 96 respondents want to practice in Dhaka city. There is significant association between type of medical college and intended practice location in Bangladesh (p=0.000).

Table 5. Comparison of Respondents by intended practice area in Bangladesh between Government and Private Medical College Intern Doctors

Intended Practice Area In Bangladesh	Type of Medical College		Total	P value
	Government	Private		
Dhaka city	70	96	166	0.000*
	52.2%	88.0%	68.3%	
Other city area	43	05	48	
	32.1%	3.3%	19.8%	

Rural area	21	08	29
	15.7%	7.3%	11.9%
Total	134	109	243
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Discussion

It has been evidenced by much literature that organizing a thoughtful plan for medical specialty choice will help avoiding miss-match of health care services. This comparative cross-sectional type of study was conducted in various government and private medical colleges with a view to compare the pattern of career perspective of intern doctors in government and private medical college hospitals of Bangladesh. This study was conducted among 313 intern Doctor of Government and private medical college of Bangladesh. According to Bittaye *et al.*, mean age was 24.1 years which is similar to this study.⁸ Majority of the doctors (45.0%) are in the age group of 20-24 years. 50.2% of the respondents were male and 49.8% of the respondents were female. Most of the respondents (83.4%) were unmarried and a few of them (16.6%) were married. Majority (82.4%) of them were belongs to Islam and rest of them belongs to other religion. Occupation of the 39.9% of the respondent's father was Government service.

Nearly half (42.2%) of the respondent's hail from city area, 24.3% of the respondent's hail from District area. 21.4% of them hail from village area. 30.4% of respondents belong to government medical hailing from village and only 11.8% belong to private medical hailing from village. The association between type of medical college and respondents' source of origin was statistically significant ($p= 0.001$).

Majority of the respondents (71.6%) desired to take post graduation from home and only 28.4 % of them wants it from abroad. Among the Doctor of Government Medical college hospital about 73.9% want to take post-graduation degree from home and 26.1% of them wants to take degree from abroad The

association between type of medical college and desired to take post graduation degree was not statistically significant ($p= 0.343$). About half (49.6%) of the respondents want to take post-graduation degree from home because it is easy to get, 32.4 % want it for safe future career. Most of the respondents belong to government medical (61.2%) thought it is easy to get post-graduation from home, but only 38.2% of the respondents belong to private medical thought it is easy to get post-graduation from home. Majority of the respondents (61.2%) belong to government medical colleges thought that it is easy to get post graduate degree from home but only 38.2% belong to private medical college thought it is easy for them to get a post graduate degree from home. The association between type of medical college and reason for desire to take post-graduation from home was statistically highly significant ($p= 0.000$).

According to Bittaye *et al.*, about half (53%) of the respondents had received career counseling, but all respondents desired it. 58.1% of the respondents did not receive career counsel and 41.9 of them received career counsel. Most (79.6%) of the respondents are satisfied with their profession and about one fifth (20.4%) of them are not satisfied with their profession. Most (91.1%) of the respondents did not have any intention of changing profession and very few (8.9%) of them have intention of changing the profession. The association between type of medical college and want to change profession after internship was not statistically significant ($p=0.154$).⁸

Majority of the respondents (95.8%) desired to take post-graduation, and a few (4.2%) did not want to get post-graduation degree. Most of the respondents belongs to government medical (95.0%) and private medical (96.7%)

desired to take post graduation degree. The association between type of medical college and desire to take post graduation degree is not statistically significant ($p= 0.457$). Most of the respondents (69.2% of government and 65.3% of private) choose specialty for their personal interest and enjoyable life style and some of them (40.4% of government and 36.1% of private) regard wide job opportunity for choosing specialty. In a study conducted in Dhaka by Ahmed *et al.* had found that a controllable lifestyle has become an increasingly important factor in choosing a specialty by medical doctors which is similar to this study.⁹

Conclusion

Basic subjects in medical education are poorly selected by the intern doctors because these have been considered as an ‘inferior’ career as compared to clinical medicine as well as the remuneration and prestige of this career is often lacking. Most of the intern doctors intend to practice in clinical settings of city than the rural and remote locations. It has been observed from this study that most of the intern doctors want to take post-graduation degree. First choice of intern doctors is mainly medicine, and then surgery. A very small portion of doctors want to build careers in Pediatrics and Gynecology. Therefore, we should give due consideration not only to equip the students with clinical skills but also to influence their attitudes to work in rural and remote locations and specialize in diverse clinical and non-clinical specialties. Healthcare is designed to meet the health needs of the community through the use of available knowledge and resources. The services provided should be comprehensive and community based. The resources must be distributed according to the needs of the community. To ensure equitable healthcare to every residing human in Bangladesh, an extensive network of health services has been

established following the administrative web of Bangladesh.

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Conflict of Interest

The author declares that he has NO affiliations with or involvement in any organization or entity with any financial interest in the subject matter or materials discussed in this manuscript.

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