

PREFERENCE OF ANAESTHESIA AS A CAREER

Pages with reference to book, From 121 To 122

Dear Sir,

A survey was carried out on two hundred and sixty final year medical students of Sind Medical College (SMC), Dow Medical College (DMC) and Aga Khan Medical University (AKU) with a set questionnaire¹, to see their preference of Anaesthesia as a Career. These students had completed their curriculum of Anaesthesia and were in a position to answer the questions. Currently the medical schools in United Kingdom have an attachment to a department of Anaesthesia for four weeks and ever since Sir Fredrick Silk² introduced this speciality in the curriculum, the picture has not been one of great encouragement. Two hundred and sixty final year medical students participated, of whom 43% were from SMC, 48% from DMC and 9% from AKU. Of these 140 were males. The questionnaire put forward asked as to what they thought of Anaesthesia as a speciality, their views about Anaesthesia teaching and posting and what improvements would they like to see. Also enquired was their preference of the speciality they would like to select as career. Interesting answers were evoked. Fifty (50%) thought it was interesting and important, 29% thought that Anaesthesia teaching was very educative, 47% were of the view that not enough time was allocated to the speciality. Given the choice of their future careers, only 2.3% opted for Anaesthesia a first choice, far behind the specialities like gynaecology and obstetrics, surgery, paediatrics and general practice. Significantly, the majority desired more tutorials and practical demonstrations in Anaesthesia. The present study is comparable with British³ and Nigerian¹ studies where only 3.9% and 0%, respectively, picked out anaesthesia as first choice. This discrepancy in the percentage of students who would choose it as their career, compared to 50% who thought it was interesting, is the direct reflection of the way curriculums are based in those countries⁴. The authors are of the view that this is the main reason for not opting for anaesthesia. Therefore, if more time be devoted with practical demonstrations and incorporation of intensive care, it could change the trend.

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