

Title: CHOICE OF SPECIALISATION FOLLOWING GRADUATION AMONG DENTAL CLINICAL STUDENTS IN CHENNAI

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ABSTRACT

Background: As a rapidly growing field of medicine and science, dentistry is considered one of the major choices of preference after medicine. Nowadays, post graduation is considered essential among all clinical specialities. But there are many factors which influence the career pathway of a dentist to lead and enter a proper professional line. The focus of this study is to find the growing preference of post graduate or speciality among dental students.

Materials and Methods: A cross sectional survey was conducted in a private dental institution in Chennai for a time period of one week. The questionnaires were based on demographic details, knowledge and choice of speciality based questions. All these data were collected and stored privately in the excel sheet from google form. The datas were tabulated using SPSS Version 23 solution to form a logistical representation of collected data.

Results: Out of 120 invites, 111 responded to the survey (92.5%). Among them 50.9% of the population were female and most of them were between the age group of 22 to 23. In this population, around 63.6% chose dentistry

on their own interest and 18.2% were forced by their parents. Around 23.4% wanted to be an oral surgeon, and 17.1% each wanted to be a prosthodontist and periodontist and 16.2% replied they would like to be a conservative dentist and endodontist. They chose this speciality based on self interest (62.2%), wealth (24.3%) and service (8.1%).

Conclusion: Dentistry is a well established field of medicine and science among the public. Hence, young graduates need career guidance and proper knowledge from a university level itself, which can be useful in choosing a postgraduate course after UG to enhance their value and knowledge among others. So this survey found that 23.4% wanted to be an oral surgeon, 18.2% each to be a periodontist and a prosthodontist, 17.1% liked to be a conservative dentist and endodontist. 4.5% pedodontist, 7.2% oral and maxillofacial surgeon and rest had other choices.

Keywords: Dental clinical students, Dentistry, oral surgeon, postgraduate/ speciality, self interest, Innovative analysis.

Running Title: Choice of specialisation following graduation among dental clinical students in chennai

INTRODUCTION

As a rapidly growing field of medical science, dentistry is considered as one of the major choices of preference after medicine, which makes this career much more important(1). Dentistry also holds an important position in case of public service, and health management(2). So having a post graduate for dentistry can enhance the value of this field, even more. There are plenty of factors which can make a student choose his career and his speciality(3)

The UG for dental education lasts for around 4 years with a compulsory 1 year of internship. In these 5 years, dental students are introduced to various specialties which can make their choice even more complex(4). With increased undergraduate seats, there is a great demand for post graduates. Nowadays, post graduates are considered as essential among all clinical specialties (Pushpa N, 2012).

Even though the speciality of dentistry education is well known among clinical dental students, the awareness of speciality is less among public in India, which makes these specialties a bit alien to them as compared to others specialties in medicine(5);(6). Public often chooses a common dentist as compared to a specialist, making this a major choice on whether to do speciality or not. The awareness of the speciality of dentistry is growing among youngsters and middle-aged people in India, which can determine the choice of speciality in future(7).

(6) et al found that personal interest is one of the major factors affecting choice among dental as well as all clinical students (from 3rd years working in dental clinics) followed by personality, workload and work pressure. (8), found that the preference of specialties plays an important role in the future workforce in the health and nutrition care system, during the time of under and over supply of dentists. These studies provide information that can aid in planning educational programmes, counselling and to set a proper and adequate health care centre(9).

There are many factors which influence the career pathway of a dentist to lead and enter a proper professional line. These can be a personal strength, weakness, financial status, scope of field, reward, etc.(10)(Gati I et al, 1995)(11). Exploring the skills and potential of UG students is essential to be a successful dentist in personal as well as social and professional life(12). So this study is presented to recognise the knowledge and awareness and factors that influence the choice of post graduate among clinical dental students.(13–21),(22),(23),(24,25),(26),(27),(28–32)

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study was an online questionnaire based cross-sectional survey that was conducted for a period of one week, among 120 dental students aged between 20-27 years. The survey questions were created using google forms and sent via whatsapp and email. The survey consists of 5 questions in which two were demographic details and the rest were questionnaires. The study used SPSS(statistical package of social science) Version 23 IBM to process and analyse the data collected from the survey. The survey was summarised using a chi-square test in the form of logistic regression analysis.

The questionnaire comprised a series of questions including the demographic details like age and gender of the participants. The other questions include why did you choose dentistry as a career, what is your choice of specialisation and why did you choose this specialisation.

All statistical analysis was performed using SPSS(statistical package of social science) Version 23 IBM. The information was tabulated and extracted from google in a form of EXCEL sheet. The datas were verified for completeness and entered manually in SPSS software. The information was analysed by comparing demographic details with questionnaires using chi-square test or fisher's extract test in the form of binary logistic regression designed models. P value less than 0.05 is considered significant.

RESULTS

The survey was sent to 120 invites in a private dental institution via WhatsApp and Email, in which 111 responded to our study with a response rate 92.5%. In our study, 50.9% of participants were female and the rest 49.1% were male. All participants were between 20-27 age groups, among them 23-25, 20 and 26 years responded the most. Most of the participants chose dentistry on their own interest (63.6%), 18.2% forced by their parents to choose dentistry, 16.4% didn't get into MBBS and 1.8% chose dentistry. Among them, 23.4% wanted to be an oral surgeon, 18.2% each wanted to be a periodontist and a prosthodontist, 17.1% liked to be a conservative dentist and endodontist. 4.5% pedodontist, 7.2% oral and maxillofacial surgeon and rest had other choices. 62.16% chose the specialist based on their own interest, 24.32% for wealth, 8.11% for service, 1.8% each for parents choice and fame. The P value anything less than 0.05 is considered significant from our chi-square test. The choice of dentistry with gender has a P value of 0.187 (P Value is not significant). The choice of speciality with gender has a P value of 0.048(P Value is significant). The factor affecting choice with gender(figure 2) has a P value of 0.64(P Value is not significant) choice of dentistry with age(figure 4) has a P value of 0.336(P Value is not significant). The choice of speciality with age(figure 3) has a P value of 0.67(P Value is not significant). Factor affecting choice with age(figure 4) has a P value of 0.58(P Value is not significant).

Table 1: Choice of specialization with gender.

Count		What is your choice of specialisation										p
		Con se r v a t i v e d e n t i s t r y a n d e n d o d o n t i c s	O r t h o d o n t i s t	O r a l a n d m a x i l l o f a c i a l s u r g e o n s	O r a l p a t h o l o g y	O r a l s u r g e o n	O r t h o d o n t i s t	O t h e r s	P e d o d o n t i c s	P e r i o d o n t i s t	Pro s t h o d o n t i s t	
G e n d e r	F e m a l e	8	1	7	1	8	3	3	1	9	14	0.0 48
	M a	1 2	1	1	0	1 9	2	1	4	1 0	6	

a g e	1	18	1	6	1	19	3	3	4	11	14	0.677
	2	2	1	2	0	8	2	1	1	8	6	

Table 4: Choice of specialization with age group. 1 represents people with age below 23 and 2 represents people with age above 23.

		Why Did You Choose This Specialization						p
		Count	Fame	Mon ey	Othe r	Parents choice	Self interest	
age	1	2	18	1	2	49	8	0.589
	2	0	9	1	0	20	1	

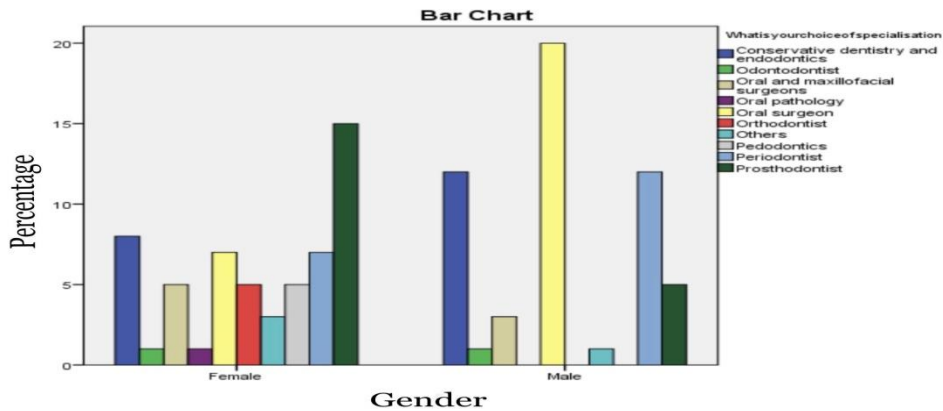


Figure 1: The graph depicts the association between gender and choice of specialisation. X-axis represents gender and Y-axis represents percentage of response. Navy blue bar represents conservative dentistry and endodontics, green bar represents orthodontics, sandal represents oral and maxillofacial surgeon, purple represents oral pathology, yellow represents oral surgeon, red represents orthodontics, grey represents pedodontics, light blue represents periodontics and sky blue represents other reasons. Many chose conservative dentistry and endodontics(18%), oral surgeon(24%) and periodontics(17%) as their speciality. Chi square test was done. P value is 0.048 (P value less than 0.05 is considered significant), showing a statistically significant association between gender and choice of specialisation.

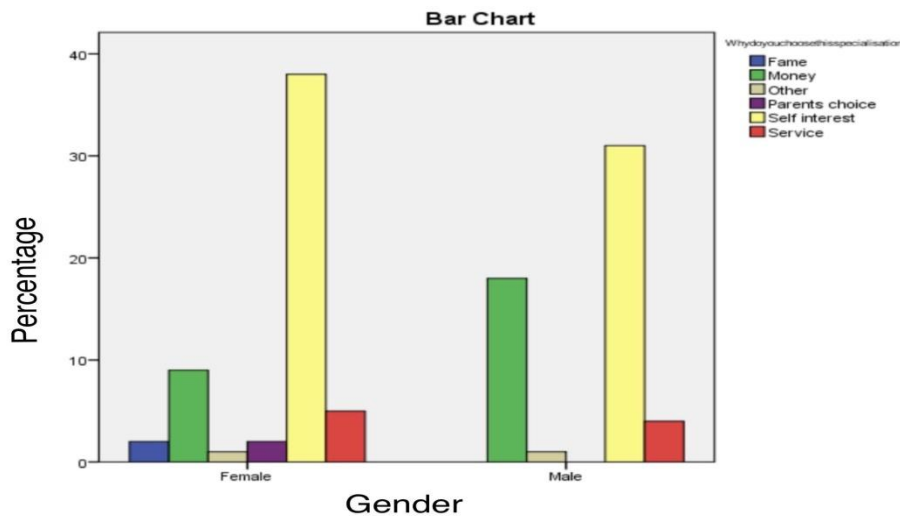


Figure 2: The graph depicts the association between gender and why this choice of specialisation. X-axis represents gender and Y-axis represents percentage of response. Navy blue represents money, purple represents parents choice, yellow represents self interest, red represents service and sandal represents other reasons. Many chose this speciality for self interest(62%) and for wealth (24%). Chi square test was done. P value is 0.640 (P value less than 0.05 is considered significant). No significant association was found between gender and choice of specialization.

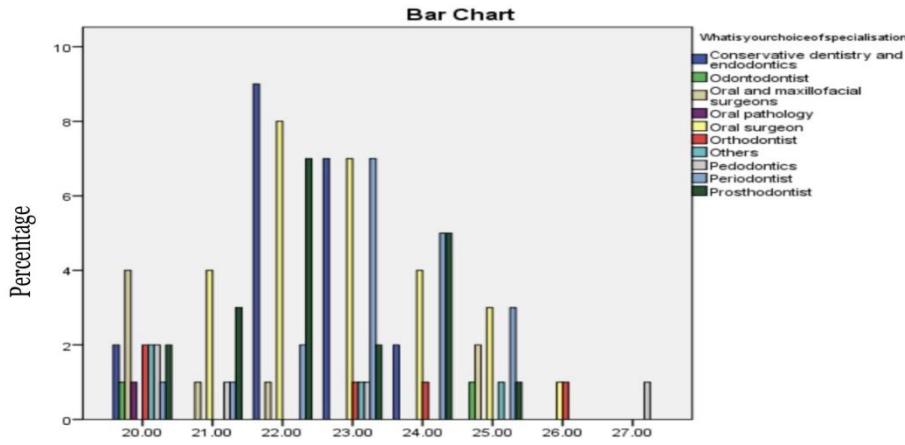


Figure 3: The graph depicts the association between age and choice of specialisation. X-axis represents gender and Y-axis represents percentage of response. Navy blue bar represents conservative dentistry and endodontics, green bar represents orthodontics, sandal represents oral and maxillofacial surgeon, purple represents oral pathology, yellow represents oral surgeon, red represents orthodontics, grey represents pedodontics, light blue represents periodontics and sky blue represents other reasons. Many chose conservative dentistry and endodontics(18%), oral surgeon(24%) and periodontics(17%) as their speciality. Chi square test was done. P value is 0.677 (P value less than 0.05 is considered significant). No significant association between age and choice of specialisation

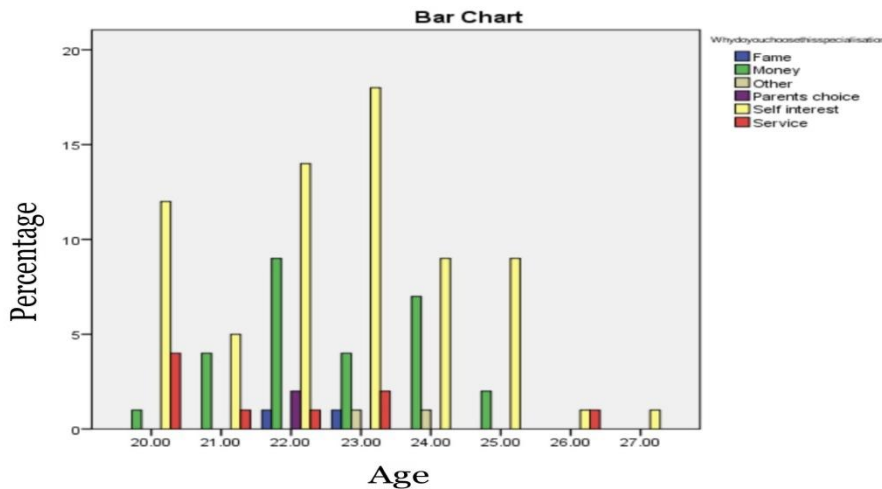


Figure 4: The graph depicts the association between age and why this choice of specialisation. X-axis represents age and Y-axis represents percentage of response. Navy blue represents money, purple represents parents choice, yellow represents self interest, red represents service and sandal represents other reasons. Many chose this speciality for self interest(62%) and for wealth (24%). Chi square test was done. P value is 0.589(P value less than 0.05 is considered significant). Hence it is statistically not significant.

DISCUSSION

This study focuses on the importance and knowledge of post graduate courses among dental students. This is the first type of study to be conducted in Chennai. The study made us enthusiastic about the future speciality choice among dental students. It is one of the hardest decisions to be done after UG.

Dental clinics were the target of the study, as they get exposed to many specialities and they are at a point where they have to choose between work or higher studies. Their choice is affected by many factors like their interest, work pressure, peer pressure, family pressure and economic condition(33). These factors make them feel tense about choosing a speciality. Even the available PG seats are less when compared to UG. These students have to clear another entrance exam for postgraduate studies with a distinct mark to get admission (34). With these factors in mind, the responders have given their view and choice of specialisation.

(35) found 80.6% of the subjects were female which was found in many of the researches which shows the female predominance over the dentistry field ((8)). However, (36); (34) reported male dominance.

In the present situation, the majority preferred to choose an oral surgery(23.4%) which is similar to other findings conducted by (5);(37):(38). Followed by prosthodontics, periodontics and endodontics, around 17-19%, which is similar to other findings. Very least chose MPH, Dietitian and PHD as their career, around 0.5-2%(5)(38).

Most chose this career based on their self interest(63.6%) and rest by their parents and other options which is also similar to other findings. Keeping in mind that this test is not true for all, our study is done in a high social-economic status and highly knowledgeable participant and also done in a small sampling, which is that this study cannot be applicable for all. When the future studies are done it should be done in a large sampling to get a better result.

CONCLUSION

This study has investigated the choice of specialisation among dental students which is mostly due to personal interest, prestige and reputation. Majority preferred oral surgery which is by their own interest. There are many factors that can affect the choice but students are well known and educated about their future. But giving them more flexibility and knowledge they tend to choose a good speciality and become good professional doctors with great interest and knowledge.

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