Medical specialty choice related factors in Mexican residents

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BEME Guide (33): Medical Career Decision Making

- Process not fully understood
  - Dynamic, complex, multifactorial
- The process is modified during medical studies
- Future research
  - Determinants on the decision-making process
  - Detecting interrelations and predictors
  - More qualitative or mixed method studies
Medical specialty choice in Mexican residents

• Mixed method design
  ➢ Qualitative phase
    » Four focus groups
    » 32 first-year residents
    » General Surgery, Gynecology, Internal Medicine & Pediatrics
  ➢ Quantitative phase
    » Web based cross-sectional questionnaire
    » 157 items
    » Factors related to the choice, personality, demography
## Population (quantitative phase)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specialty</th>
<th>R1 PUEM UNAM (March, 2015)</th>
<th>Complete responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Surgery</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>35 (18%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gynecology</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>28 (15%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal Medicine</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>62 (22%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pediatrics</td>
<td>289</td>
<td>63 (22%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>951</strong></td>
<td><strong>188 (20%)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PUEM: Plan of Medical Specializations, UNAM
Questionnaire

• Main question: at the moment of the choice, what was the specialty selected or not selected?
  ➢ 10 determinant factors (+, -)

• Responded by 188 (20%) of 951 enrolled in residents

• Age: 27 years
• Sex: 56% ♂ 44% ♀
• Selection: last years of medical studies (65%)
Personality traits

• Extraversion:
  ➔ Surgeons > Internists

• Responsibility
  ➔ Surgeons > Pediatrics
Conclusions

• Specialty selected: type of patient (PED) and a good academic programme (IM).

• Specialty not selected: bullying (QX), negative role models (QX), little free time, a not well-known hospital.

• Extraversion and responsibility were more frequent among surgeons.

• This information is important for:
  ▶ The knowledge of the determinants of decision
  ▶ Encourage the selection of other specialties
  ▶ Make a better life decision
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