



Pre-Medicine Program as a Factor Influencing Residency Specialization Options of Pre-Medicine Students of University of Perpetual Help System Delta – Las Piñas Campus

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Abstract: Pre-medicine program is the first step on one’s medical journey. Choosing the best pre-medicine program may give one prerequisite skill that are likely needed during medical school as well as in residency training. Different programs offer different subjects and competencies to meet, so it gives several advantages and disadvantages for the student with respect to their performance in medical school and residency training. This leads researchers to think that choosing the right pre-medicine program is crucial to be competent enough in the professional field. The study is conducted to know if there is a significant relationship between the chosen pre-medicine program and residency specialization options of pre-medicine students of University of Perpetual Help System DALTA - Las Piñas Campus. In order to find answers to this, the researchers conducted a semi-structured interview on 10 pre-medicine students of UPHSD that are categorized into two categories: 5 for BS Nursing and 5 for BS Medical Technology, via MS Teams or Messenger call. The results showed that respondent’s current pre-medicine program does not affect their specialization options. Most of them did not have a hard time choosing their current pre-medicine program since it is their already their top choice without considering specialty. They reasoned out that pre-medicine program is independent from the residency training itself. The researchers concluded that there is no significant relationship between pre-medicine program and residency specialization options of pre-medicine students of UPHSD – Las Piñas Campus.

Key Words: pre-medicine program; residency specialization; medical school; nursing; medical technology

1. INTRODUCTION

The field of medicine requires adequate competencies in order to rightfully serve the duty it partakes, given the fact that medical professionals basically hold a patient’s life on a daily basis. Along with this is the time it consumes to finally enter the field, as well as the several choices that one can encounter throughout its medical journey. This will all begin on choosing the most suitable pre-medicine program in order to earn an undergraduate degree that is required upon entering a medical school.

“There is not actually a major called ‘pre-med’; pre-med is just a term to let people know you have plans to be a doctor” (Sakiras, 2020). While it is actually true, it is important to have a clear goal in mind because “It is a vocation as much as it is a learning experience” (Mapa, 2018). Without entering medical school, a pre-medicine program is a career by itself which opens work opportunities if by any chance that one will not proceed to get a medical degree.

Weighing specialization options is one of the major decisions that a medicine student should look

thoroughly before coming to the professional field. Pre-medicine program greatly sets medicine student’s future in that field of specialization as their knowledge and several skills acquired upon taking this will determine how well they can perform as a resident and eventually, as a doctor (Pan Afr Med J. et al, 2014).

Various pre-medicine program gives upcoming medicine students prerequisite skills in preparation for their medical journey. According to Mappa (2020), skills like scientific processing, analytical thinking, problem solving, and memorizing well is vital for a medicine student. Since different program have different sets of subjects to take as well as competencies to meet, they all have their edge over one another. Thus, choosing the right pre-medicine program help students to perform better upon choosing specialization in residency training that may affect their future, especially into that profession in which they wish to be proficient in.

This study may benefit aspiring doctors who are still in high school, pre-medicine students and, mostly, medical students, since they are already one



step away in taking their residency. Moreover, this study can generate information and recommendations that can be used to respond to the challenges of choosing the most suitable pre-medicine program which would ideally help them excel in residency training as well as in the actual professional field.

This aims to know if there is a significant relationship between the chosen pre-medicine program of pre-medicine students of University of Perpetual Help System DALTA – Las Piñas Campus and their residency specialization options. It also aims to give high school students an idea on what pre-medicine program suits them best based on their residency preference, if they already have one in mind. Ultimately, to produce medicine students that can excel in their residency training as well as medical professional who have the competencies to better serve the nation.

2. METHODOLOGY

The researchers decided to do a survey-interview as their data gathering tool, specifically a semi structured type of interview, that refers to an interview concept that does not strictly follow a formalized list of questions. With this the researchers have prepared at least 7 questions to be given to the interviewee. As it allows for a discussion with the interviewee rather a straightforward question and answer format.

2.1 Data Gathering tool

The researchers decided to do a survey-interview as their data gathering tool, specifically a semi structured type of interview, that refers to an interview concept that does not strictly follow a formalized list of questions. With this the researchers have prepared at least 7 questions to be given to the interviewee. As it allows for a discussion with the interviewee rather a straightforward question and answer format.

2.2 Sampling Design/Respondents

The sampling that will be used in the study is stratified random sampling. Respondents will be categorized based on the pre-medicine program that they took mainly BS Nursing, BS Medical Technology. From a population of 10 students, the researchers will only get 5 respondents per category which will sum up to 10 respondents as the sample.

2.3 Data Gathering Procedure

The researchers will be using a one-on-one interview for collecting the data from respondents. One researcher will be assigned per correspondent. The researcher will be recording the phone call to document the interview process. The length of the

interview process that has taken place was around 8 minutes at max.

2.4 Data analysis Plan

The researcher will be using descriptive statistical tools, specifically the measures of central tendency to analyze the data that was gathered. It enables the researchers to summarize the statistic that quantitatively describes or summarizes features from a collection of the said information and enables to evaluate, and interpret how the respondents will answer the asked questions. Therefore, through the evaluated data the researchers will be able to generate conclusions that will answer the research questions from the overall topic. With this method, it will show the average based on the questions asked during the interview. It allows the researchers to describe the response of the respondents if their chosen pre-medicine program will affect their specialization.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 What general and specific skills would you hope an ideal pre-medicine course experience would give you?

Figure 1. Did you have a hard time choosing your pre-medicine program?

	BSN	BSMT	f	%
Yes				
Considering what is the easiest program	1	1	2	20%
Too many pre-medicine program choices	0	1	1	10%
Program choice/s shifted due to pandemic	1	0	1	10%
No				
Interest and Top Choice	3	3	6	60%
TOTAL:	5	5	10	100%

Most of the respondents answered no with a frequency of 6 or 60%. While 4 or 40% of the respondents answered yes to the question. most of the respondent's reason for answering no is because a certain pre-medicine program is their interest and top choice, with a frequency of 6 or 60%. While 2 or 20% of the respondent's reason for answering yes is because they are considering the easiest program to take, whether as for pre-medicine or not. One of the respondents had a hard time choosing his pre-medicine since she originally planned that she would take pre-law program be lawyer. But then, after the declaration of COVID-19 pandemic, she decided that she now wanted to pursue BS Nursing. "It is one of the most needed here," she reasoned out.

Most of the respondents answered no with a frequency of 8 or 80% while 2 or 20% of the



Figure 2. Did your choice of pre-medicine program affect your specialization you plan to take?

	BSN	BSMT	f	%
Yes				
Skills and Subjects offered by pre-medicine program	0	2	2	20%
No				
Pre-medicine program is independent from residency specialization	5	0	5	50%
Already have specialization interest	0	3	3	30%
TOTAL:	5	5	10	100%

respondents answered yes. most of the respondent's reason for answering no is because they believed that a pre-medicine program is independent from residency specialization that they want to take, with a frequency of 5 or 50%. While the remaining 2 or 20% who answered yes reasoned out that a pre-medicine program has a set of skills and subjects to offer that can be useful in medical school or upon taking specialization. One of the respondents think that every pre-medicine program that everyone takes can have an effect in choosing a specialization in the future because before someone can have a final choice, he/ she must have gone to a medical school first. She said that some courses are being tackled already, especially in BS Medical Technology that will be taught again in medical school. Example for this is the subject bacteriology.

3.2 What pre-medicine program corresponds to a certain residency specialization?

Table 1. What general and specific skills would you hope an ideal pre-medicine course experience would give you?

	BSN	BSMT	f	%
Through hand-on experiences that the program offers	2	5	7	70%
Through learning adaptability	2	0	2	20%
Through learning communication skills	1	0	1	10%
TOTAL:	5	5	10	100%

Most of the respondents expected several skills that they want to develop including communication skills and critical thinking that will help them provide the right diagnosis with a frequency of 7 or 43.75% and 5 or 31.25% respectively.

Table 2. What qualities do you look for in a pre-medicine course?

	BSN	BSMT	f	%
Yes	4	3	7	70%
No	1	2	3	30%
TOTAL:	5	5	10	100%

Most of the respondents answered adaptability as the quality they look for when they

have chosen their pre-medicine course, given that medicine students can encounter various scenarios in their everyday work, with a frequency of 9 or 60%. While 1 or 6.67% of the respondents answered communication. One on the respondents from BS Medical Technology said that she does not look for the qualities in a pre-medicine program because she wanted pre-medicine that is comfortable and the one that she really likes. "Because regardless of the course, I think that if I really want what I am doing, I can really do something even though it contradicts my attitudes," she added.

3.3 What are the factors being considered by the medicine students in choosing their residency specialization

Table 1. Did you consider Medical School as a factor in your residency specialization?

	BSN	BSMT	f	%
Yes				
Overall quality of the Medical School as means of foundation for future specialization	4	3	7	70%
No				
Not an entire factor for specialization	1	0	1	10%
Multiple factors aside from medical school	0	2	2	20%
TOTAL:	5	5	10	100%

Most of the respondents considered medical school as a factor in their residency specialization with a frequency of 7 or 70% while 3 or 30% of them did not. most of the respondent's reason for answering yes is because they believe that the overall quality of the medical school like reputation and facilities is the foundation of their future specialization, with a frequency of 7 or 70%. While 1 or 10% of the respondents answered that medical school is not a factor in their future specialization. One of the respondents in BS Medical Technology said that at first, she considered medical school as a factor in their residency specialization but after reflecting in our situation we had, she changed her mind.

Table 2. Does your financial status affect your choice of residency specialization?

Factors	BSN	BSMT	f	%
Family	0	3	3	30%
Location of School	0	1	1	10%
Passion	2	1	3	30%
Mental Health	1	0	1	10%
Time	1	0	1	10%
None	1	0	1	10%
TOTAL:	5	5	10	100%



Most of the respondents answered that their choice of residency specialization is affected by their financial status due to it being really expensive to study, with a frequency of 8 or 80%. In contrast to this, 2 or 20% of the respondents answered that their financial status does not affect their choice of residency specialization. One of the respondents think that financial stability will definitely a specialization. She emphasized that, "To be a doctor, it takes many years of education and tuition fees. Other than that, there will be miscellaneous fees and expenses that are included in the tuition." The respondent concluded that if your financial status is not really great, it will definitely have an effect.

Table 3. What other factors did you consider in taking your residency specialization that the researchers did not mention?

	BSN	BSMT	f	%
The Influence of Parental suggestion	0	2	2	23%
Influenced by family background	0	1	1	11%
Location of the said institute	0	1	1	11%
Self interest in the program	3	1	4	33%
The given time of completion for finishing the program	1	0	1	11%
None	1	0	1	11%
TOTAL:	5	5	10	100%

Most of the respondents believed that family and passion is what they consider as a factor in taking their residency specialization, with a frequency of 3 or 30%. By passion and family are the two factors considered by the respondents other than the Medical school and their financial statuses. The respondents considered their passion since self-interest is important for them in choosing their specialization. Also, the family, especially the respondent's parental suggestion to them significantly affect their choices.

With the data collected, analyzed, interpreted and presented, the researchers therefore conclude that most of the respondents did not have a hard time choosing their pre-medicine program as most of the respondents answered positively to the question. The respondents' choice of pre-medicine program is based on their interest and their top choice. This is because they believed that a pre-medicine program is independent from the residency specialization that they plan to take. Therefore, pre-medicine programs do not affect the specialization that they are going to take in the future.

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