



## EVALUATION OF INDIAN DOCTOR'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS FOREIGN MEDICAL LICENSE EXAMINATIONS

**Dr.Gayathiri Dilliraj\*** General Practitioner, Chennai. \*Corresponding Author

**Dr.S.Kirubakaran** Assistant Professor, Department of Community Medicine, Aarupadai Veedu Medical College and Hospital, Pondicherry

**Dr. Malini Dilliraj** Medical Officer, CGHS, Chennai.

### ABSTRACT

**Background:** In a 2004 survey of 166 final year students of Indian medical schools, 59% thought of leaving India for further training abroad. The top two destinations were the US (42%) and the UK (43%).

**Methodology:** It's Descriptive observational study design conducted using pretested and predesigned questionnaire. Software package EPI\_INFO was used to perform statistical analysis.

**Results:** Out of 56 participants 41% were male and 59% were female. The mean average years of the participants are 31.8years of age. Around 6 (10.7%) were in Post graduation entrance exam Preparation, only one is interested to appear for foreign medical license exam, 18(32.1%) were in Government service, 19 (33.9%) were doing post graduation degree and 12 (21.4%) were consultant or in Private clinic practice. Participants have expressed their attitude on the foreign medical license examinations as their own opinion.

**Conclusion:** Only few young Indian doctors are aspiring to migrate foreign countries for their career and studies, especially those who have decent family and financial support. Lack of awareness and the high standard of the examination limits Indian doctors to enter into other countries.

**KEYWORDS :** Indian doctors, foreign countries, license examination, Attitude.

### Introduction:-

The demands on human resources have been rapidly growing worldwide for a number of demographic and epidemiological conditions<sup>1</sup>. The most important consequence has been an accelerated international migration of health care professionals, mainly from developing countries like India to more developed countries such as United Kingdom, United States of America and Australia. The so called phenomenon known as "brain drain".<sup>2,3</sup>

The medical education system in India is currently one of the largest in the world.<sup>4</sup> Public and private medical schools now produce equal numbers of medical graduates in the country. As per the Medical Council of India, there are now 194 private medical colleges as against 161 government medical colleges.<sup>5</sup> In a 2004 survey of 166 final year students of Indian medical schools, 59% thought of leaving India for further training abroad. The top two destinations were the US (42%) and the UK (43%).<sup>6</sup>

We were interested in further exploring the dynamics of Indian physicians Knowledge, Attitude and Practice towards appearing for the foreign medical license exams such as Professional and Linguistic Assessments Board (PLAB) test, Australian Medical Council Exam (AMC) and United States Medical Licensing Exam (USMLE).

### Materials and Methods:-

#### Study Design and setting:-

It's Descriptive observational study design conducted among 56 participants (Doctors) for the duration of 3months. All the participants were randomly selected from different states of south India and different work setting.

#### Data collection:-

We developed the pretested and predesigned questionnaire containing demographic characteristics and Physician's attitude towards the Foreign Medical License exams as qualitative component. After obtaining informed consent from the participants, the questionnaires were administered to the participants through whatsapp, email, postal and as direct interviews. The survey was anonymous and confidential.

#### Statistical Analysis:-

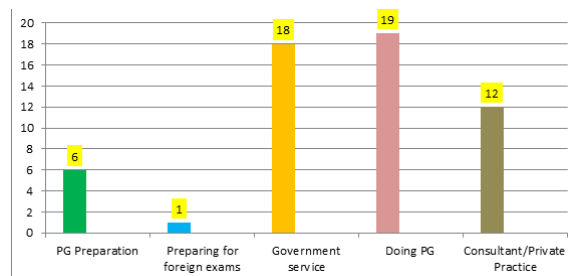
Data entry was done in MS excel sheet. Software package EPI\_INFO

was used to perform statistical analysis. We conducted a descriptive analysis of physician's demographic characteristics using simple percentages for categorical variables and mean averages for continuous variable.

### Results:-

Sex	Male – 23 (41%) Female – 33 (59%)
Age	Youngest is 23 years old Eldest is 63 years old Average 31.8 years of age
Marital Status	Married 35 (62.5%) Unmarried 21 (37.5%)
Period after passing MBBS	Minimum 4 months Maximum 40 years Average years is 8.2

Table 1, explains the Socio Demographic Characteristic details, Out of 56 participants 41% were male and 59% were female. The youngest participant was 27 years old and the eldest participant was 63 years of age. The mean average years of the participants are 31.8years of age. Regarding the marital status 62.5% of the participants were married and remaining 37.5% were unmarried. The period since the participants passed MBBS was minimum of 4 months by one participant and the maximum of 40 years and the mean average years after completion of MBBS is 8.2 years.



**Figure 1: Current status of the participants**

The figure 1, describes the current position of the participants in

their professional status, around 6 (10.7%) were in Post graduation entrance exam Preparation, only one is interested to appear for foreign medical license exam, 18(32.1%) were in Government service, 19 (33.9%) were doing post graduation degree and 12 (21.4%) were consultant or in Private clinic practice.

**Table 2: Participants opinion on Foreign Medical License Exams**

1	Systematic and Analytical Approach towards exam needed
2	Time consumption is high comparing with other Post Graduate exams
3	Financial support
4	Difficult to clear and complex exam procedures
5	Motivation and Hard work required
6	Wanted to serve their nation, preferred to be in India
7	Lack knowledge and awareness
8	Family commitments

#### Discussion:-

Traditionally doctors from India have been going to many developed countries for many years. Most of the doctors commonly go to developed countries like the United States (US), United Kingdom (UK), Canada, and Australia.

In our study, 56 doctors were randomly included who belongs to diverse background such as age, sex, professional experience, medical college, language, marital status, current professional status. Participants 59% were female and rest 41% were male. Regarding age most of them belong to 27 years old of age, the youngest years of age is 23 among the participants and the eldest of the participant is 63 years of age. We calculated the mean average age of the 56 participants in our study and we found it to be 31.8 years of age, most of the participants were less than 35 years of age. Among this 56 study participants, 35 (62.5%) were married and remaining 21 (37.5%) were unmarried; few were ambitious to achieve academically before their marriage.

In the present study, the period after the completion of MBBS degree among the participants were averagely 8.2 years, the lesser period is 4 months by the youngest participant in our study and maximum of 40 years of period by the eldest participant of our study. But in this post completion period of MBBS our study participants were belongs to different status like 10.1% were in Post graduate exam preparation, only 1.7% were aspiring to appear to foreign medical license exams such as USMLE, PLAB and AMC, 32.1% were in government service with intention to serve their nation, 33.9% managed to pursue their post graduation during the period of our study and 12% were involved in their private clinic practices.

As seen in the table 2, the qualitative research methods was applied to extract their opinions as open ended questions in the questionnaire and it was manually analyzed to bring out the statements listed in the table regarding the Indian doctors attitude and intention towards the foreign medical license exam.

#### Conclusion:-

Only few young Indian doctors are aspiring to migrate foreign countries for their career and studies, especially those who have decent family and financial support. Lack of awareness and the high standard of the examination limits Indian doctors to enter into other countries.

#### References:-

- Gupta N, Diallo K, Zurn P, Dal Poz M: Assessing human resources for health: what can be learned from labour force surveys?. *Human Resources for Health*. 2003, 1 (1): 5-10.1186/1478-4491-1-5.
- Mullan F: The Metrics of the Physician Brain Drain. *New England Journal of Medicine*. 2005, 353 (17): 1810-1818. 10.1056/NEJMsa050004
- Akl EA, Mustafa R, Bdair F, Schünemann HJ: The US physician workforce and international medical graduates: Trends and characteristics. *JGIM*. 2007, 22: 264-268. 10.1007/s11606-006-0022-2.
- Supe A, Burdick WP: Challenges and issues in medical education in India. *Acad Med J Assoc Am Med Coll*. 2006;81(12):1076-1080. doi: 10.1097/01.ACM.0000246699.94234.ab.

- Medical Council of India - information desk. <http://www.mciindia.org/InformationDesk/CollegesCoursesSearch.aspx>.
- Rao NR, Rao UK, Cooper RA: Indian medical students' views on immigration for training and practice. *Academic Medicine*. 2006, 81 (2): 185-188. 10.1097/00001888-200602000-00020.