

MEDICAL PSYCHOLOGICAL MOODS OF THE DOCTORS STARTING THE TRAINING AT THE QUALIFICATION IMPROVEMENT COURSES (BASED ON THE RESULTS OF THE SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY)

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Abstract

The quality of medical care depends on the training of specialists, carried out, in particular, through continuous medical education.

Aim. To form the recommendations for improving the postgraduate medical education system in the context of the overall reform of the health care system.

Materials and methods. The survey involved 823 doctors who were starting the training at the qualification improvement courses (27.40 % – males and 70.60 % – females) aged from 24 to 50+. In order to realize the purpose of the study we used, as the main method of social psychological information collecting, the method of questioning in the form of standardized (formalized) interview.

Results. Doctors of all specialties used knowledge acquired during previous courses, although with certain differences. Significant difference was found in satisfaction with the level of obtained practical skills during previous courses: 81.04 ± 1.66 % of surgeons, therapeutic, pediatric, dental specialists were very satisfied or rather satisfied, when this indicator in case of doctors of the medico-prophylactic and pharmaceutical specialties was only 39.02 ± 3.00 %. Regarding the level of theoretical knowledge, 85.51 ± 1.49 % of surgeons, therapeutic, pediatric and dental specialists were very satisfied or satisfied with the theoretical part of qualification improvement courses and 57.20 ± 3.05 % of doctors of the medico-prophylactic and pharmaceutical specialties were not satisfied or completely dissatisfied. 85.15 ± 1.50 % of doctors of surgical, therapeutic, pediatric and dental specialties completely or partly used the ideas offered during the previous courses, when 31.82 ± 2.87 % of the doctors of the medico-prophylactic and pharmaceutical specialties did not use anything in their practice. 72.42 ± 1.56 % of doctors of all specialties consider that they have not yet reached their own career maximum. Almost half of doctors of all specialties wanted to receive more theoretical and practical knowledge during the courses, although 40.15 ± 3.02 % of doctors of the medico-prophylactic and pharmaceutical specialties were interested in obtaining large volumes of information from their foreign counterparts, while only 4.29 ± 0.86 % of doctors of surgical, therapeutic, pediatric and dental specialties were interested in gaining such information.

Conclusion. The survey indicates the need to change and update the content of the qualification improvement courses work programs, as well as the creation of new ones, which is a prerequisite for the reorganization of the postgraduate medical education system. It is reasonable to create curricula and programs according to the specialties of doctors and basing on the previous survey results concerning queries and expectations.

Keywords: survey, medical postgraduate education, qualification improvement courses.

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1. Introduction

Health care is one of the most important spheres in ensuring the physical and social economic well-being and health of society. The state of this sphere can be assessed by objective indicators, which reflect the health status of the population, accessibility and quality of medical care, and largely depend on the quality of medical education, thus, the medical personnel preparedness [1].

Education is a condition for the society existence, an instrument that allows to move forward, to be updated and to change. The level of educational activity is constantly increasing, the forms and methods of education, the structure and content of educational information are continuously developing, responding to the needs of society. The importance of continuous medical education is emphasized by a number of international forums: WHO, UNESCO, the United Nations, and others [2].

In modern conditions postgraduate training of doctors is carried out according to increasing public health and society demands concerning the quality of personnel training. It is important for the doctor not only to understand his professional tasks, but also to form his orientation in public health problems according to the changing factors of the external environment, adaptation to ongoing events in life. The quality of medical care depends on the training of specialists, carried out, in particular, through continuous medical education [3].

Modern trends in the development of Ukrainian medicine require changes in doctors training and retraining. The introduction of valid technology for determining the quality of education will increase the level of doctors and pharmacists training. Recently many attempts have been made in the directions of objectification, as well as quantitative assessment of the knowledge transfer and learning, especially in health care [4–6]. Nevertheless, problematic issues of ensuring and controlling the quality of postgraduate medical education remain an urgent topic of discussion among high school staff and competent medical community [7, 8].

2. Aim of research

To form the recommendations for improving the postgraduate medical education system in the context of the overall reform of the health care system.

3. Materials and methods

The research was aimed at studying the production and social psychological aspects of the activities of doctors directed to take refresher courses at the Danylo Halytsky Lviv National Medical University. The survey involved 823 doctors starting the training at the qualification improvement courses (27.40 % – males and 70.60 % – females) aged from 24 to 50+.

The respondents had following specialties: 36.33±1.68 % – therapeutic, 18.83±1.36 % – surgical, 5.10±0.77 % – pediatric, 7.65±0.93 % – dental, 21.51±1.43 % – pharmaceutical, 10.57±1.07 % – medico-prophylactic.

Among the categories of the respondents, 12.15±1.14 % work in the village/settlement, 32.32±1.63 % – in the district center, town, 19.56±1.38 % – in the city of regional submission, 35.97±1.67 % – in the regional center.

The experience of the doctors in the specialty was: up to 5 years – 25.39±1.52 %, 5–10 years – 21.39±1.43 %, 11–15 years – 11.79±1.12 %, 16–20 years – 9.96±1.04 %, 21–30 years – 16.89±1.31 %, over 30 years – 14.58±1.23 %.

In order to realize the purpose of the study we used, as the main method of social psychological information collecting, the method of questioning in the form of standardized (formalized) interview.

In the statistical processing of the obtained data the analysis of relative and average values was carried out.

4. Results of research

First of all, we analyzed the doctors' assessment of previously completed qualification improvement courses. 74.42±1.85 % of the doctors of surgical, therapeutic, pediatric and dental specialties stated that it was possible to apply the obtained knowledge in their practice more widely.

As for doctors of medico-prophylactic and pharmaceutical specialties, knowledge gained during previous qualification improvement courses was used in their practice by 50.76±3.08 % of the respondents.

It should also be noted, that 81.04±1.66 % of surgeons, therapeutic, pediatric, dental specialists were very satisfied or rather satisfied with the practical skills acquired during the previous courses (**Fig. 1**).

In contrast, the percentage of satisfied or rather satisfied with the practical skills gained during previous qualification improvement courses among doctors of the medico-prophylactic and pharmaceutical specialties was only 39.02±3.00 % (**Fig. 2**).

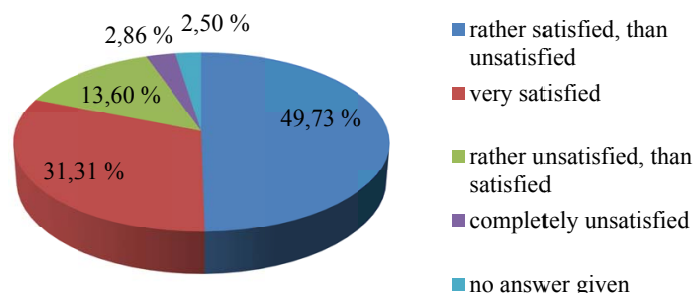


Fig. 1. Satisfaction (%) with the level of obtained practical skills during previous courses (doctors of surgical, therapeutic, pediatric and dental specialties)

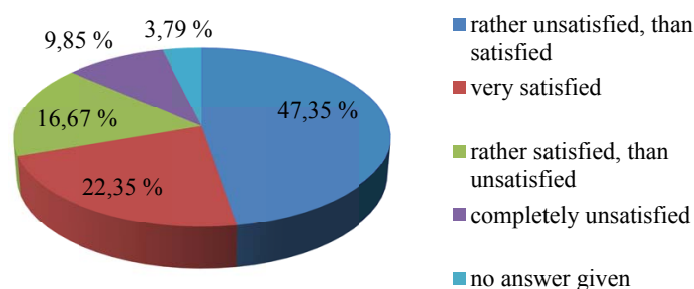


Fig. 2. Satisfaction (%) with the level of obtained practical skills during previous courses (doctors of the medico-prophylactic and pharmaceutical specialties)

Regarding the level of theoretical knowledge, 85.51 ± 1.49 % of surgeons, therapeutic, pediatric and dental specialists were very satisfied or satisfied with the theoretical part of qualification improvement courses.

Yet among doctors of the medico-prophylactic and pharmaceutical specialty 40.91 ± 3.03 % of respondents were very satisfied or satisfied and 57.20 ± 3.05 % were not satisfied or completely dissatisfied.

85.15 ± 1.50 % of doctors of surgical, therapeutic, pediatric and dental specialties completely or partly used the ideas offered during the previous courses (**Fig. 3**).

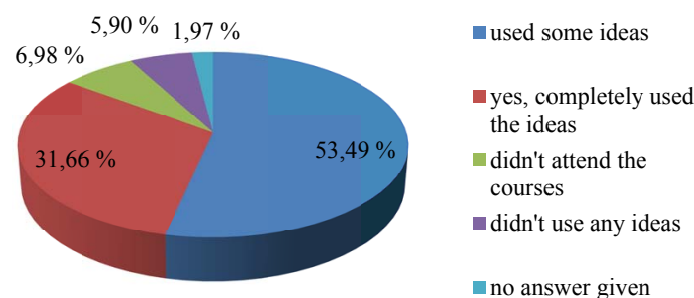


Fig. 3. Use (%) of the ideas, offered during previous courses, by doctors in their practice (doctors of surgical, therapeutic, pediatric and dental specialties)

As for the doctors of the medico-prophylactic and pharmaceutical specialties, 60.61 ± 3.01 % of the respondents completely or partly used the ideas offered during previous courses. 31.82 ± 2.87 % of the doctors of the mentioned specialties did not use anything in their practice (this indicator for doctors of surgical, therapeutic, pediatric and dental specialties was 5.90 ± 1.00 %) (**Fig. 4**).

Regarding the satisfaction of their own professional and career ambitions, 72.42 ± 1.56 % of doctors of all specialties, who began training in qualification improvement courses, stated that they have not yet reached their own career maximum.

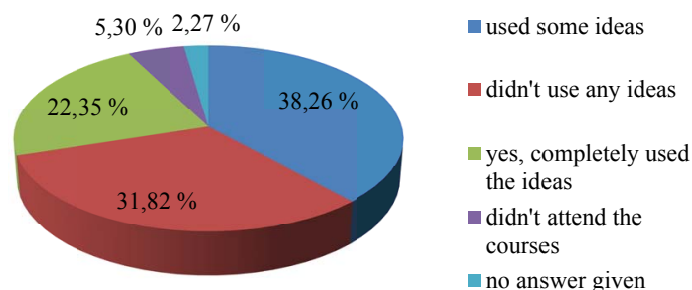


Fig. 4. Use (%) of the ideas, offered during previous courses, by doctors in their practice (doctors of the medico-prophylactic and pharmaceutical specialties)

According to the doctors of surgical, therapeutic, pediatric dental specialties, the main obstacles for their career growth include: lack of practical skills (33.63 ± 2.00 %), personal qualities (22.00 ± 1.75 %), corruption (15.92 ± 1.55 %) and the lack of theoretical knowledge (13.95 ± 1.47 %) (**Fig. 5**).

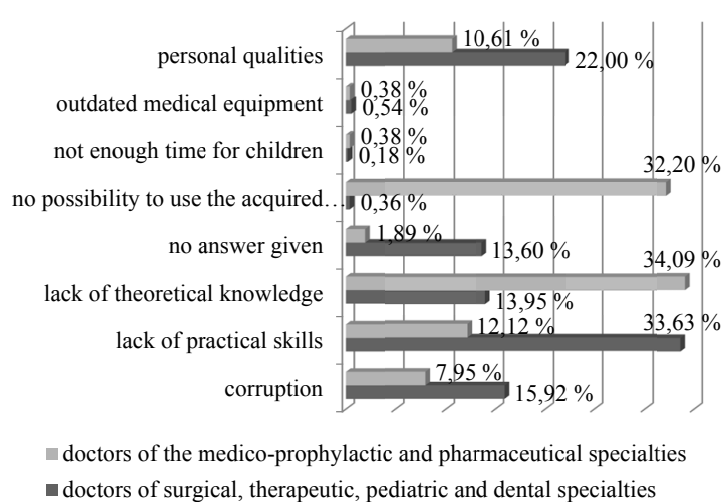


Fig. 5. Obstacles (%) for doctors' career growth (doctors of all specialties)

Doctors of the medico-prophylactic and pharmaceutical specialties placed factors hampering their career growth in the following order: lack of theoretical knowledge – 34.09 ± 2.92 %, lack of ability to use acquired knowledge – 32.20 ± 2.88 %, lack of practical skills – 12.12 ± 2.01 %, personal qualities – 10.61 ± 1.90 % (**Fig. 5**).

As for the respondents' expectations, 42.75 ± 2.09 % of doctors of surgical, therapeutic, pediatric and dental specialties wanted to receive more theoretical and practical knowledge during the courses and no more than 3.22 ± 0.75 % of doctors were interested in the information presented by foreign researchers (**Fig. 6**). Only 4.29 ± 0.86 % of the respondents believed that the subjects presented in previous qualification improvement courses were irrelevant and uninteresting. Unfortunately 46.51 ± 2.11 % of doctors of the above-mentioned specialties have evaded the question.

41.67 ± 3.03 % of doctors of the medico-prophylactic and pharmaceutical specialties were also willing to obtain more theoretical and practical knowledge. At the same time, 40.15 ± 3.02 % of respondents were interested in obtaining large volumes of information from their foreign counterparts. It should also be noted, that 12.50 ± 2.04 % of surveyed consider the topics of previous courses irrelevant and uninteresting (**Fig. 6**).

While analyzing the doctors' attitude to the prospect of changing the place of their own professional qualities realization in future, we found that 59.90 ± 1.71 % of respondents of all specialties seek to be implemented in the next 2 years in the same medical institution, where they are currently

working. However, there is a certain proportion of doctors, who seek to realize their professional qualities abroad – 17.86 ± 1.34 % of respondents.

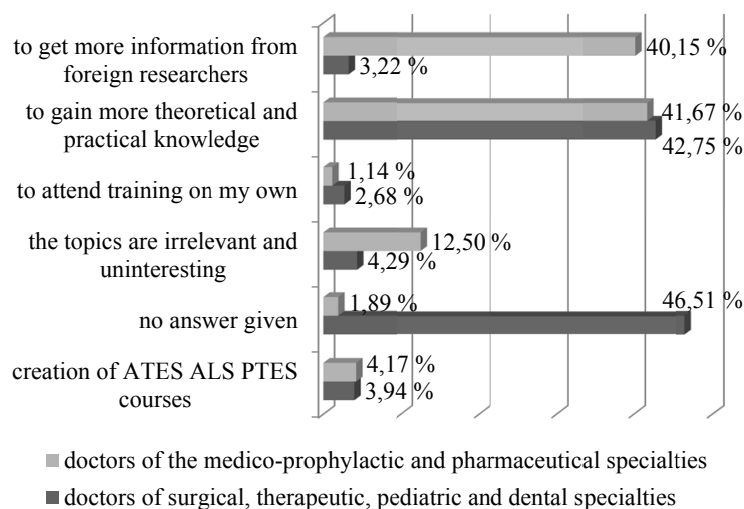


Fig. 6. Expectations (%) of doctors concerning courses (doctors of all specialties)

5. Discussion

The issue of doctors' postgraduate training effectiveness improvement and the ways of its implementation is actively discussed in modern scientific literature.

Cookson J. [9] gives 2 different points of view on how postgraduate learning process should be conducted in order to become as much effective as possible. The author presents the opinion of Dennick R. [10], who considers that a learner-centered approach is of particular importance, while identifying and building upon previous knowledge, of relating learning to context and of reflecting upon experience. Kirkham D. and Baker P. [11] come from a different perspective. Based on a requirement for a formal generic teaching program their proposals are for teaching sessions, which should be in protected time and compulsory. They outline a model syllabus around a number of common patient presentations and some more general topics.

Ali I. S. et al. [12] conducted a research, similar to ours, aiming to determine the feedback of postgraduate trainees on their current teaching methods, their level of satisfaction and preferences. The research showed that the most commonly used method of teaching was lecture, while task oriented assessment of clinical skills was the most preferred method amongst trainees, but the least practiced.

In our opinion, the realization of the postgraduate education system optimization is the most effective in terms of taking into account the needs, remarks and suggestions of practicing physicians taking the training courses.

Researchers emphasize the importance of qualification improvement courses listeners questioning, as this practice ensures the monitoring of the educational services quality and the responsiveness to the demands of the listeners [13].

It should be noted that $\frac{3}{4}$ of the respondents had more than 5 years of work experience in their specialty, reflecting the professional status of the formed specialist. This established fact becomes important in context of the professional experience continuous improvement in the chosen specialty [14].

It is assumed that the system of attestation stimulates the growth of specialists' skills, increases personal responsibility in the performance of their functional duties [15, 16].

As the results of our research showed, doctors of all specialties used knowledge acquired during previous courses, although with certain differences.

More significant differences were observed in the assessment of acquired practical skills. Doctors of surgical, therapeutic, pediatric and dental specialties appreciated the practical component of previous qualification improvement courses. Another opinion was given by

doctors of the medico-prophylactic and pharmaceutical specialties – the percentage of satisfied or rather satisfied with the practical skills gained during previous courses were almost two times less.

A similar situation can be noted in the case of obtained theoretical knowledge. Doctors, who work directly with patients, valued higher the level of gained theoretical knowledge. On the other hand, more than half of the doctors of the medico-prophylactic and pharmaceutical specialties were not satisfied or completely unsatisfied with the theoretical component of previous qualification improvement courses.

The important goal of the postgraduate medical education system is to encourage doctors to professional development, one of the vectors of which is the use and implementation of the ideas offered during courses. The practical orientation of modern postgraduate education provides its orientation to the real, practical daily application of the acquired knowledge and skills [17].

The analysis of the survey results showed that the vast majority of doctors of the surgical, therapeutic, pediatric and dental specialties completely or partly used the ideas offered during previous courses in their practice. As for doctors of the medico-prophylactic and pharmaceutical specialties, about half of the respondents completely or partly used the ideas offered during previous courses. However, one third of doctors of these specialties did not use anything in their practice.

One of the main conditions of the interesting education in the system of post-graduate medical education is the satisfaction of own professional and career ambitions. Satisfaction with work is considered in such studies as a motivation resultant influence of various external factors, which, refracting in the minds of respondents through the motivational core, goals and values, form the attitude to work and its individual parts [18].

Most physicians of all specialties, who have begun training in qualification improvement courses, believed that they have not yet reached their own career maximum. This personal social psychological factor should be used as one of the encouraging motives for raising the level of interest during training.

Comparison of the results presented above showed, that while planning the course for the doctors of surgical, therapeutic, pediatric and dental specialties more attention should be paid to the development of practical skills, and provision of modern theoretical knowledge should be emphasized for the doctors of the medico-prophylactic and pharmaceutical specialties.

Updating existing and creating new programs depends to a great extent on the expectations of the listeners. As the survey showed, doctors of different specialties come to training with different expectations.

About half of the doctors of all specialties wanted to receive more theoretical and practical knowledge during the courses, but the doctors of surgical, therapeutic, pediatric and dental specialties mainly were not very interested in the information of foreign researchers. All topics presented in previous qualification improvement courses were relevant and interesting for doctors of the above-mentioned specialties.

In a similar study [19] among doctors of dental specialty, who started qualification improvement courses, it was discovered that most of them (78 %) tried to use the situation to “learn something new”, “discuss professional issues with colleagues”, “see how others work”, “get acquainted with their colleagues”, “make sure that they work correctly”, “rest from routine work”. 95 % of the listeners preferred practical classes at the bases of the department and didn’t see any benefits from classes in the auditorium, and only 5 % wished to stay at lectures.

About half of doctors of the medico-prophylactic and pharmaceutical specialties were interested in obtaining information from their overseas colleagues in large volumes. Apparently, this fact is related with their assessment of previous qualification improvement courses, because a relatively higher percentage of respondents stated that the subjects of the previous courses were not relevant and not interesting.

Relevant results were also obtained during a study [20] conducted in 2010–2014 among family doctors who were undergoing thematic improvement courses. It was determined that for optimization and professional improvement of family doctors work it is necessary to review the thematic filling of the training cycles. Cycles of thematic and pre-certification education for family physicians should include a large block of information material with practical tasks, in particular, based on the safety of drug therapy.

More than half of all doctors wanted to be implemented in the next 2 years in the same medical institution, where they are working at the moment, yet almost a quarter of the respondents considered a possibility to realize their professional qualities abroad.

6. Conclusion

1. As our research showed, the system of postgraduate medical education forms new skills for the listeners of qualification improvement courses, promotes becoming new theoretical knowledge, encourages the implementation of ideas offered during the courses in practice. However, the results of the survey determine the direction of the postgraduate medical education system reforming.

2. Actual social psychological survey indicates the need to change and update the content of the work programs of the qualification improvement courses, as well as to create new ones, which is a prerequisite for the reorganization of the postgraduate medical education system. In particular, a significant increase is needed in the variational component of the listeners' choice including corresponding relevant content.

3. It is necessary to provide a preliminary study on the inquiries and expectations of doctors directed to qualification improvement courses in order to correct existing curricula and to prepare new ones.

4. We consider differentiation of doctors in specialties as an expedient step. In particular, the doctors of surgical, therapeutic, pediatric and dental specialties, and medico-prophylactic and pharmaceutical should be united into separate groups.

5. It is reasonable to create curricula and programs according to the specialties of doctors and basing on the previous survey results concerning queries and expectations. Moreover, it should be taken into consideration, that doctors of surgical, therapeutic, pediatric and dental specialties require more practical training and doctors of medico-prophylactic and pharmaceutical specialties require more scientific and theoretical one.

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