

Factors related to Family Medicine and specialties choice in graduate training in Argentina

Marcelo García-Diéguez*¹, Cintia Martínez², Maria Celeste Chaz-Sardi², Isabel Dure³, Cintia L'hospital³, Amparo González del Prot³, Verónica Gonzalez³; Clayton Dyck⁴

Context:

The Unique Exam for Admission to Medical Residency Programs in Argentina allows access to graduate health professions training positions all over the country. Vacancies were grouped by province. In the context of increasing medical accessibility to the population Family Medicine and primary healthcare-related specialties acquire special importance for the design of public policies and health management.

Objective:

To compare the choice of the Family and General Medicine specialty in relation to other specialties in the entrance exam to residencies in Argentina for 2022 according to sex and country of training.

Methods:

A descriptive study of 2022 applicants to the Unique Exam from the Capital City and Buenos Aires Province (convenience sample). Family and General Medicine were compared with General Internal Medicine, Pediatrics, Obstetrics and Gynecology, and the rest of the specialties not related to primary health care. The relationship between sex and the country of the training institution with the choice of specialty is explored. Significance is evaluated using the Chi-square test. Standardized residuals were taken as a measure of the local association.

Results:

There were 4,514 applicants for basic medical residency programs. The average age is 29.27 years old, 62.8% were female. Only 68.1% were graduated from Argentine universities. Those who came from abroad, were mainly from Bolivia, Colombia, and Ecuador (81.4%).

Sex influences the choice of specialty ($p=0.00$). In Family and General Medicine, Pediatrics, and Obstetrics and Gynecology, the proportion of women is significantly higher. In General Internal Medicine, the difference between sexes is not significant. In the rest of the specialties not related to primary health care, there is a predominance of men.

The country of undergraduate training influences the choice of specialty ($p=0.00$). Family and General Medicine, Internal Medicine, Obstetrics and Gynecology, and Pediatrics were chosen by those who were trained in Argentinian universities.

Conclusion:

The country of undergraduate training and gender were associated with the specialty choice. These results should be considered when designing incentive policies related to healthcare professionals.

¹ Centre for the Study of Health Professions Education, Universidad Nacional del Sur, Bahia Blanca, Argentina.

² Economics Department, Universidad Nacional del Sur, Bahia Blanca, Argentina

³ Government Health School Floreal Ferrara, Ministry of Health Buenos Aires Province, La Plata, Argentina

⁴ Besroux Centre for Global Family Medicine, Canada