

## POST-GRADUATE EDUCATION IN OBSTETRICS & GYNAECOLOGY AS STUDENTS VIEW IT

by

MAHENDRA N. PARIKH\*

and

ADI E. DASTUR\*\*

Postgraduate education in Obstetrics and Gynaecology is far from satisfactory, there being flaws in every aspect of it. Radical changes in it are long overdue. Although students are most directly affected and vitally concerned with the ills of education it is anomalous that whenever reforms in education are contemplated, no one bothers to know their views about the existing shortcomings and the proposed remedies. We firmly believe that students are the best judges of any educational system and it is high time that their opinions and suggestions are given due consideration when any changes in the system of education are discussed. We wish to place before you the views of the postgraduate students in Obstetrics and Gynaecology at the Bombay University regarding the educational system they are subjected to.

A questionnaire containing 42 questions covering the various facets of postgraduate education was sent to the students of the Bombay University who are either currently engaged in postgraduate studies in obstetrics and gynaecology or have completed their post-

graduate studies within last five years. Replies were received from 113 of them. These were analysed in detail. The following are the highlights of their views thus obtained.

### *Internship*

This in fact is part of undergraduate training. But it does have a bearing on postgraduate education and hence was included in the questionnaire. The present duration of 8 weeks of internship was approved by 58.4% while the rest wanted it to be reduced. It is however worth noting that 71.7% wanted the internship to be made residential and 79.6% wanted patient responsibility during internship.

### *Admission to Postgraduate Studies*

The present system of admission was considered unsatisfactory by 67.3%. Admissions should be made by the University instead of by the individual colleges and the students allotted to the teachers according to the preferential choice of the students according to 62.8%. According to 82.3%, the criteria for admission should be the marks in obstetrics & gynaecology at the final M.B.,B.S. examination with consideration given to total marks in all the subjects, failure at examinations and prizes and medals in obstetrics & gynaecology. Reservation of seats for schedule class, backward classes and persons in

\*Honorary Obstetrician and Gynaecologist.

\*\*Honorary Assistant Obstetrician and Gynaecologist.

Nowrosjee Wadia Maternity Hospital, Bombay 400 012.

Accepted for publication on 10-10-1978.

government service was disfavoured by 85.9%. We were pleased to observe that 92% agreed that it is better to admit fewer students and give them thorough training than admit a larger number and inevitably leave some of them with incomplete practical training.

#### *Nature and Duration of Studies*

The University should conduct a postgraduate diploma course (say D.G.O.) of 18 months duration (instead of 24 months) in addition to M.D. course according to 91.1%. Since training in family planning forms a part of training in obstetrics and gynaecology 59.3% felt that a separate diploma course in family planning is unnecessary. One year housemanship and at least one year registrarship should be a compulsory part of training for the postgraduate degree according to 96.5% while 67.3% wanted an additional 6 months housemanship in an allied subject like pediatrics or general surgery. According to 98.2% there is no need to raise the present duration of 3 years training to 4 years.

#### *Teaching*

The present teaching was rated poor or very poor by 74.3%. Two or three bedside clinics per week were desired by 79.6%. These are sadly lacking today. Seventy-seven per cent wanted didactic lectures to be arranged by the University so as to cover the entire curriculum over the period of 3 years. At present didactic lectures are haphazardly arranged. Incidentally, 56.6% desired a special course of lectures even on payment of fees, highlighting the inadequacy of present teaching.

#### *Thesis*

The present system of thesis writing

was considered completely unsatisfactory and purposeless by 91.1% who wanted it to be radically improved or replaced by a detailed presentation and thorough discussion of 25 interesting cases personally managed by the candidate.

#### *Examiners*

The present system of four examiners was approved by 71.7% while only 40.7% wanted all of them to be external. Examiners should be appointed from an All India panel or a state panel instead of the University Panel according to 80.5%. An examiner should not examine at more than 2 consecutive examinations, said 70.8%. Separate examiners for theory and practicals with mandatory passing in each of these separately was approved by 68.1%.

#### *Examinations*

Present examinations do not judge the knowledge of the student properly nor are they conducted fairly, stated 80.5%. Naturally 76.1% wanted 50% of the question papers devoted to objective questions. Seventy-three and half per cent wanted the paper on essay to be abolished, the paper on medicine to be converted into a one of medicine and surgery and two papers each in Obstetrics & Gynaecology instead of the present one each. A separate paper on Family Planning and termination of pregnancy was not approved of by 68.1%.

#### *Comments*

Students from all the colleges in Bombay willingly participated in this study. Secondly, the views of 40% of all the postgraduate students are included in this study. We, therefore, feel that the views expressed here are quite representative of those of the postgraduate students in

general. The dissatisfaction of the students with the present teaching is quite obvious. The teachers need to take much greater interest in teaching their students. We very strongly feel that every enrolled student must be given twelve months housemanship and twelve months registrarship even at the cost of reducing the number of students accepted for training. The system of examination

needs to be thoroughly changed as indicated by the students.

*Acknowledgement*

We gratefully thank each and every student who so readily and actively participated in this study. Our special thanks are due to Drs. Faram Irani and Ayesha Hussein for their painstaking help in conducting this study.

*[Faint, illegible text, likely bleed-through from the reverse side of the page.]*

*[Faint, illegible text, likely bleed-through from the reverse side of the page.]*