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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

GENERAL INFORMATION	1C
INFORMATION FOR AUTHORS	1F
EDITORIAL NOTES – <b>Diagnosis of Invasive Aspergillus Infections, Challenges of Neurocritical Care and Increased Risk of Hearing Loss in Diabetic Patients</b> .....	571
G. E. Erhabor	
– <b>Malaria: Burden and Challenges of Eradication</b> .....	572
I. S. Bello, A. A. Ahmed	
<b>ORIGINAL ARTICLES</b>	
<b>An Evaluation of the Knowledge and Utilization of the Essential Medicines List among Health Professionals in Six Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria</b> .....	575
S. A. Ayinbuomwan, A. O. Opadeyi, J. O. Ohaju-Obodo, P. E. Akhidenso, S. O. Oghuvwu, P. O. Nwani, B. O. James, A. O. Isah	
<b>Socio-economic and Lifestyle Determinants of Functional Capacity of the Senior Attendees of an Outpatient Clinic in Northern Nigeria: A Cross-Sectional Study</b> .....	581
A. L. Olawumi, B. A. Grema, A. K. Suleiman, G. C. Michael, Z. A. Umar, F. M. Damagum, A. I. Haruna, Z. Abdulkadir, A. Kwaku	
<b>Hormonal Profile of Women Attending Fertility Clinic in Zaria, North-west, Nigeria</b> .....	590
I. A. Isah, A. A. Akande, I. S. Aliyu, A. G. Adesuyin	
<b>Determinants of Choice of Facility-Based Delivery among Mothers in Kwara State, Nigeria</b> .....	594
M. A. Ijaiya, M. J. Saka, S. A. Aderibigbe, H. O. Raji, A. S. Adeniran, Z. B. Ijaiya, H. A. Ameen, M. M. B. Uthman, B. Kayode, I. Abdulraheem, O. A. Bolarinwa, R. Saidu	
<b>Family Circle and Willingness to Subscribe to Community-based Health Insurance (CBHI) for the Elderly in a Rural Community in South-South Nigeria</b> .....	601
F. Archibong, U. E. Asibong, A. E. Ayuk, A. Atangwho, S. S. Uria	
<b>Determinants of Choice of Specialty by Resident Doctors: A Multi-Center Based Study in South-West Nigeria</b> .....	607
O. O. Ojewuyi, O. A. Kolawole, A. R. Ojewuyi, A. K. Alao	
<b>Invasive Aspergillosis among Haematological Malignancy Patients in Ghana: A Pilot Study on Prevalence and Antifungal Prophylaxis at the National Referral Hospital</b> .....	613
B. K. Ocansey, B. Otoo, H. Gbadamosi, J. A. Opintan, Y. Dei-Adomakoh, C. Kosmidis, D. W. Denning	
<b>Nasopharyngeal Carcinoma in Childhood: Evidence of a Malfunctioning Oncology Ecosystem: A Case Series from a Low Resource Setting</b> .....	619
U. O. Fakile, A.M. Akinsete, A. O. Joseph, T. O. Fashola, T. A. Oladipo, A. Akinsulie	
<b>Pure Tone Audiometry and Otoacoustic Emission Evaluation of Hearing Loss in Diabetic Patients in a Selected Urban Population of South-West Nigeria</b> .....	623
S. K. Aremu, G. O. Ajani, S. A. Atolani, O. B. Fawole	
<b>Neurocritical Care in Nigeria</b> .....	630
M. A. Komolafe, A. O. Idowu, M. E. Peter, H. W. Oyinlola, A. A. Sanusi, S. A. Balogun, S. O. Olateju, A. A. Adebowale, M. B. Fawale, E. O. Komolafe	
<b>Clinical Profile and Determinants of Loss to Follow-Up in Patients Enrolled in an Urban Antiretroviral Treatment Programme in Northwestern Nigeria</b> .....	634
H. M. Liman, S. H. Tambuwal, A. Abbas, K. J. Awosan, C. E. Udegbonam	
<b>Assessing the Burden of Kidney Disease among Type 2 Diabetic Subjects attending a Semi-Urban Tertiary Health Facility in South-West Nigeria</b> .....	640
R. T. Ikem, A. T. Lawal-Bello, D. O. Soyoye, A. N. Fasanu, B. A. Kolawole	
<b>Assessment of Perceived and Objective Quality of Care received by Insured versus Uninsured Adult Patients Attending a Tertiary Hospital in Nigeria</b> .....	646
O. C. Ekwueme, L. A. Moses, O. G. Ogunfowokan	
<b>Intimate Partner Violence and Risk Factors among Women during the COVID-19 Movement Restriction in Nigeria: An Online Survey</b> .....	654
O.C. Ezechi, G.A. Ohihoin, D.A. Oladele, T.A. Bamidele, T. A. Gbajabiamila, A.O. Salako, Z.A. Musa, E. Ohihoin, O.O. Odubela, C. V. Gab-Okafor, P. M. Ezeobi, A. N. David, N. N. Odunukwe, B. L. Salako	
<b>CASE REPORT</b>	
<b>Penile Fracture following Penile Manipulation during Nocturnal Penile Tumescence – A Case Report</b> .....	663
T. O. Adeleke, A. O. Durodola, M. O. Oyelami, I. A. Okunade, S. I. Oloruntoba	
<b>INDEX TO VOLUME 40, NO. 6, 2023</b>	
<b>Author Index</b> .....	666
<b>Subject Index</b> .....	667



### Determinants of Choice of Specialty by Resident Doctors: A Multi-Center Based Study in South-West Nigeria

*Déterminants du Choix de la Spécialité par les Médecins Résidents : Une Etude Multicentrique dans le Sud-Ouest du Nigeria*

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#### ABSTRACT

**BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES:** An appropriately balanced specialty distribution in residency training will ensure adequate coverage and delivery of essential health needs to the people. An understanding of the factors which influence doctors' career choices is important for all those involved in the training of Resident doctors. The aim of this study is to examine the factors influencing the Resident Doctors' choice of specialty.

**METHODS:** This was a cross-sectional study. A well-structured questionnaire was used as the instrument for data collection.

**RESULTS:** A total of 110 Resident Doctors participated in the study with 74.5% falling within the age group 31–40 years, and 87 (79.1%) were males. A natural love for a specialty (66.4%), personal experience during medical school (47.3%) and the influence of mentors (30%), love for a particular class of patients (26.4%) and presumed higher income (17.3%) were reasons for initial choices of specialties. The most stated reasons for the change of specialty were because of the acquisition of more information (39.0%), the influence of mentors (26.8%), a change in perspective (24.4%), availability of vacancies (24.4%) and the influence of senior colleagues (17.1%). About 80% had no career guidance prior to the initial choice of specialty; likewise, 92% had no guidance prior to current program. However, 89% were happy with their final choices while only 21% would still consider a change of specialty.

**CONCLUSION:** In our study, we found that personal interest in a specialty, previous experiences and mentorship were key to most individuals' choice or change in choice of specialties.

**WAJM 2023; 40(6): 607–612.**

**Keywords:** Medical school, Patients, Career guidance, Specialty.

#### RÉSUMÉ

**CONTEXTE ET OBJECTIFS:** Une répartition équilibrée des spécialités dans le cadre de la formation des médecins résidents garantira une couverture adéquate et la satisfaction des besoins essentiels en matière de santé de la population. La compréhension des facteurs qui influencent les choix de carrière des médecins est importante pour tous ceux qui sont impliqués dans la formation des médecins résidents. L'objectif de cette étude est d'examiner les facteurs qui influencent le choix de la spécialité par les médecins résidents.

**MÉTHODES:** Il s'agit d'une étude transversale. Un questionnaire bien structuré a été utilisé comme instrument de collecte des données.

**RÉSULTATS:** Au total, 110 médecins résidents ont participé à l'étude, 74,5 % d'entre eux se situant dans la tranche d'âge 31–40 ans, et 87 (79,1 %) étaient des hommes. L'amour naturel pour une spécialité (66,4 %), l'expérience personnelle pendant les études de médecine (47,3 %) et l'influence des mentors (30 %), l'amour pour une catégorie particulière de patients (26,4 %) et un revenu présumé plus élevé (17,3 %) ont été les raisons des choix initiaux de spécialités. Les raisons les plus citées pour le changement de spécialité étaient l'acquisition de plus d'informations (39 %), l'influence des mentors (26,8 %), un changement de perspective (24,4 %), la disponibilité de postes vacants (24,4 %) et l'influence de collègues plus expérimentés (17,1 %). Environ 80 % n'ont bénéficié d'aucune orientation professionnelle avant le choix initial de la spécialité ; de même, 92 % n'ont bénéficié d'aucune orientation avant le programme actuel. Cependant, 89% sont satisfaits de leur choix final, tandis que seulement 21% envisageraient encore un changement de spécialité.

**CONCLUSION:** Notre étude a révélé que l'intérêt personnel pour une spécialité, les expériences antérieures et le mentorat étaient des éléments clés dans le choix ou le changement de spécialité de la plupart des individus. **WAJM 2023; 40(6): 607–612.**

**Mots-clés:** Faculté de médecine, Patients, Orientation professionnelle, Spécialité.

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Abbreviations: IBM SPSS, IBM Statistical Product and Service Solutions (IBM®SPSS®Statistics); WHO, World Health Organization.