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# WEST AFRICAN JOURNAL OF MEDICINE

## ORIGINAL ARTICLE



### Evaluating Postgraduate Surgical Education Experience, Professional Satisfaction and Personal Well-Being: A Cross-Sectional Survey of Trainees in A Low-Middle Income Country in Sub-Saharan Africa

*Évaluation de l'Expérience de l'Enseignement Supérieur en Chirurgie, de la Satisfaction Professionnelle et du Bien-Être Personnel: Une Enquête Transversale sur les Stagiaires dans un Pays à Revenu Faible ou Moyen en Afrique Subsaharienne*

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#### ABSTRACT

**BACKGROUND:** Education at the postgraduate level is important in grooming competent specialists in different fields of surgical care. This study aimed to evaluate the training experience, professional satisfaction, and personal well-being of postgraduate surgical residents in northern Nigeria.

**SUBJECTS, MATERIALS AND METHODS:** It was a cross-sectional survey of 157 medical doctors enrolled for a minimum of 6 months in surgical residency training in tertiary hospitals in the northern zone of the country. All participants filled a pre-tested questionnaire and their responses were analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences version 20. **RESULTS:** The respondents had a mean age of 34.4 ± 4.8 years. Thirty-two (20.5%) agreed that there was a balance between their training needs and rotation for clinical services. There was a marked disparity between the median time allocated for non-ward-based training activities (4.0 hours each per week) and the average time allocated for research activities (1.0 hours per week). Although 89 (57.4%) and 82 (53.3%) reported fair satisfaction in their professional role and private life respectively, a larger proportion expressed poor satisfaction with their participation in recreational (107 [68.6%]) and social activities (90 [58.4%]). One hundred and seventeen (74.5%) stated that a high level of stress was associated with their training.

**CONCLUSIONS:** The surgical residents experienced relatively more training on patient management than on research work. Although their educational experience was associated with a high level of stress in majority of them, most of the trainees expressed fair satisfaction with activities in their professional role and private life. *WAJM 2021; 38(1): 75–79.*

**Keywords:** Surgical, residency, training, satisfaction, tertiary healthcare, workload, clinical competence, mentoring, developing countries.

#### RÉSUMÉ

**CONTEXTE:** L'éducation au niveau du troisième cycle est importante pour former des spécialistes compétents dans différents domaines des soins chirurgicaux. Cette étude visait à évaluer l'expérience de formation, la satisfaction professionnelle et le bien-être personnel des résidents de troisième cycle en chirurgie dans le nord du Nigeria.

**SUJETS, MATERIAUX ET METHODES:** Il s'agissait d'une enquête transversale menée auprès de 157 médecins inscrits pour un minimum de 6 mois en formation de résidence en chirurgie dans des hôpitaux tertiaires de la zone nord du pays. Tous les participants ont rempli un questionnaire pré-testé et leurs réponses ont été analysées à l'aide de la version 20 du Statistical Package for the Social Sciences.

**RÉSULTATS:** Les répondants avaient un âge moyen de 34,4 ± 4,8 ans. Trente-deux (20,5 %) ont convenu qu'il y avait un équilibre entre leurs besoins de formation et la rotation pour les services cliniques. Il y avait une disparité marquée entre le temps médian alloué pour les activités de formation non liées au service (4,0 heures chacune par semaine) et le temps moyen alloué pour les activités de recherche (1,0 heure par semaine). Bien que 89 (57,4%) et 82 (53,3%) se déclarent assez satisfaits de leur rôle professionnel et de leur vie privée respectivement, une plus grande proportion se déclare peu satisfaite de leur participation à des activités récréatives (107 [68,6%]) et sociales (90 [58,4%]). Cent dix-sept (74,5 %) ont déclaré qu'un niveau de stress élevé était associé à leur formation.

**CONCLUSIONS:** Les résidents en chirurgie ont reçu relativement plus de formation sur la prise en charge des patients que sur le travail de recherche. Bien que leur expérience éducative ait été associée à un niveau de stress élevé chez la majorité d'entre eux, la plupart des stagiaires ont exprimé une satisfaction assez élevée quant aux activités de leur rôle professionnel et de leur vie privée. *WAJM 2021; 38(1) : 75–79.*

**Mots clés:** Chirurgie, résidence, formation, satisfaction, soins de santé tertiaires, charge de travail, compétence clinique, mentorat, pays en développement.

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