

Table 2: Attitudes of medical students towards general practice:

	Erlangen m (sd) n	LMU m (sd) n	TU m (sd) n	p-value
Appreciation of general practice				
1. General practice is a valid discipline like internal medicine or paediatrics.	3,91 (1,20) 212	3,82 (1,25) 385	4,12 (1,17) 333	0,002
2. Doing a complete medical history and physical examination is of high importance to practice good medicine.	4,93 (0,27) 215	4,85 (0,49) 384	4,90 (0,42) 332	0,036
3. Experiences in general practice are valuable to future physicians regardless of their eventual speciality choice.	3,95 (0,98) 211	3,80 (1,14) 383	3,99 (1,04) 331	0,084
4. GPs are particularly capable of providing comprehensive care.	3,59 (1,07) 214	3,61 (1,06) 383	3,82 (1,09) 332	0,006
5. GPs should have more time per patient.	4,58 (0,74) 210	4,59 (0,67) 380	4,62 (0,68) 326	0,779
Comparison with specialists				
6. The work of a hospital specialist is intellectually more stimulating than that of the GP.	3,15 (1,25) 209	3,24 (1,25) 384	3,08 (1,25) 331	0,236
7. The work of a specialist working in ambulant care is intellectually more stimulating than that of the GP.	2,84 (1,17) 206	2,87 (1,15) 382	2,71 (1,23) 328	0,167
8. A specialist (e.g. cardiologist) should earn more money than a GP.	2,18 (1,25) 208	2,33 (1,31) 378	2,15 (1,29) 326	0,099
9. I would feel somehow frustrated if I could not obtain one of the specialisations other than general practice.	2,64 (1,36) 206	2,66 (1,35) 381	2,52 (1,40) 330	0,253
General practitioners' tasks				
10. Treating acute diseases is more interesting than counselling/caring for chronically ill patients.	3,22 (1,17) 210	3,34 (1,15) 382	3,26 (1,15) 333	0,423
11. Health maintenance (prevention/rehabilitation) is not as interesting to me as curative medicine.	3,06 (1,22) 209	3,18 (1,24) 383	3,11 (1,18) 332	0,422
12. I prefer to spend time dealing with patients medical problems rather than their psychosocial problems.	3,14 (1,30) 211	3,17 (1,32) 383	3,12 (1,39) 329	0,920
13. In terms of working as a doctor, I take most pleasure in talking to patients.	3,61 (0,99) 203	3,56 (1,07) 380	3,63 (1,01) 328	0,756
Broad interest				
14. If I were asked to include the three most fascinating medical specialities I'd include general practice.	2,47 (1,45) 208	2,44 (1,47) 382	2,61 (1,50) 329	0,258
15. The future as specialist is more attractive than that of the GP.	3,66 (1,15) 209	3,84 (1,18) 380	3,67 (1,22) 328	0,049
16. A wide variety of problems encompassing all age groups is interesting to me.	3,92 (1,08) 211	3,79 (1,00) 380	3,97 (1,01) 331	0,027

17. I feel well prepared for the daily routine as a doctor.	2,18 (1,03) 191	2,67 (1,01) 377	2,18 (0,95) 332	0,000
Competence of general practitioners				
18. The quality of the medical care provided by GPs is not good	2,77 (1,06) 206	2,78 (0,99) 368	2,63 (0,94) 323	0,106
19. In case of uncertainty, GPs should not hesitate to consult a specialist.	3,59 (0,84) 207	3,56 (0,96) 379	3,56 (0,95) 326	0,994
20. The GP is not as competent as the internist.	2,36 (1,15) 198	2,31 (1,18) 376	2,10 (1,06) 325	0,018
Vocational training in general practice				
21. Complex vocational training in general practice at many places and including different specialities is a reason for not choosing it as career option.	2,26 (1,25) 188	2,34 (1,24) 356	2,05 (1,12) 321	0,008
22. Low profit of general practice is an important reason for not choosing general practice as career option.	3,45 (1,38) 205	3,75 (1,27) 375	3,46 (1,30) 328	0,003
Teamwork				
23. A GP should not assume long-term responsibility for patients with chronic illnesses alone.	3,67 (0,97) 205	3,30 (1,12) 374	3,38 (1,13) 325	0,001
24. A GP should always consult specialists for managing critically ill patients.	3,16 (1,19) 209	2,87 (1,15) 374	2,72 (1,15) 325	0,000
Organisation				
25. Physician's assistants should be integrated more than before in the care of patients.	3,10 (1,06) 197	3,06 (1,14) 363	3,24 (1,13) 311	0,065
26. The provision of services by speciality-oriented physicians should be coordinated and controlled by GP's.	3,48 (1,15) 209	3,43 (1,20) 369	3,29 (1,23) 329	0,153
Science				
27. Epidemiological and preventive medicine research is interesting to me.	3,08 (1,21) 209	2,79 (1,27) 380	3,02 (1,27) 328	0,007
28. General practice is based upon sound scientific principles.	3,07 (1,05) 182	3,29 (0,95) 356	3,42 (1,01) 315	0,001
Time for patients				
29. A doctor should perform as many direct patient-contact services as possible.	3,79 (0,96) 207	3,85 (0,99) 374	3,92 (0,95) 3,18	0,273
30. Patients with emotional disorders cannot be helped without spending a lot of the doctor's time.	4,17 (1,00) 212	4,28 (0,94) 376	4,13 (0,98) 327	0,098
Electronic patient record				
31. The introduction of electronic patient record is problematic.	2,64 (1,24) 204	2,25 (1,18) 366	2,33 (1,28) 320	0,001
Economic efficiency and ethics				
32. Controlling the cost of care is equally important as letting people and doctors have free choice over their healthcare plans.	3,23 (1,21) 206	3,30 (1,23) 364	3,35 (1,26) 324	0,406

Health care system				
33. The German health care system can only work well with GPs as an integral part of the system.	4,34 (0,86) 202	4,32 (0,93) 370	4,39 (0,90) 321	0,465
Items without significant factor loadings				
34. A GP should enjoy as much prestige as does the specialist, e.g. a neurosurgeon.	4,15 (1,13) 210	4,23 (1,01) 376	4,35 (0,94) 324	0,140
35. Germany requires more specialists than GPs.	2,29 (1,00) 194	2,14 (0,96) 360	2,09 (1,02) 303	0,028
36. GPs have a deeper relationship with their patients than specialists.	4,36 (0,83) 209	4,37 (0,83) 381	4,32 (0,98) 331	0,943
37. Working as a GP in Germany is not very attractive.	3,99 (0,96) 206	4,08 (1,03) 378	3,92 (1,03) 323	0,046
38. GPs are among the most respected members of their communities.	2,04 (0,93) 209	1,97 (0,92) 375	2,05 (0,96) 324	0,432
39. Being in general practice provides a physician with an excellent opportunity to make a good living.	3,74 (1,01) 206	3,86 (0,98) 380	4,15 (0,87) 331	0,000
40. The care of geriatric patients is less interesting to me.	3,47 (1,26) 211	3,58 (1,24) 385	3,54 (1,23) 331	0,602
Other				
41. I'd rather prefer a medical specialist training (e.g. abdominal surgery).	3,88 (1,22) 209	3,87 (1,23) 370	3,76 (1,32) 323	0,612
42. I'd rather prefer a medical training as GPs.	2,35 (1,28) 207	2,20 (1,23) 374)	2,36 (1,26) 322	0,138
43. I think it makes more sense to go through the training as an internist and then perhaps defect to GP care.	3,40 (1,13) 201	3,43 (1,29) 373	3,46 (1,27) 318	0,606
44. I could imagine myself to train general practitioner because I can combine work and family easier in practice than in hospital.	2,91 (1,38) 201	2,89 (1,42) 378	2,99 (1,43) 327	0,601
45. My studies do not adequately prepare me for the economic aspects of self-employment in an own practice.	3,93 (1,53) 190	3,48 (1,67) 373	3,59 (1,69) 328	0,006
46. Institutionalisation of general practice at my university can help to make GP more present.	3,71 (1,27) 194	3,56 (1,27) 361	4,05 (1,15) 323	0,000
47. The profession of a family doctor is not very interesting to me because of bureaucracy (e.g. accounting, administrative tasks).	3,48 (1,20) 203	3,46 (1,22) 375	3,22 (1,27) 328	0,019
48. I believe that on average, a resident specialist earns more than a GP.	4,29 (0,83) 203	4,47 (0,77) 371	4,27 (0,90) 323	0,002
49. a) I think the prestige of a specialist is higher than that of a GP.	4,07 (0,96) 208	4,06 (1,01) 381	3,98 (1,10) 328	0,799
b) this is a reason for me rather not to become a GP.	2,08 (1,17) 204	2,34 (1,27) 377	2,07 (1,19) 328	0,007

Scaling of questionnaire: 1 strongly disagree, 2 disagree, 3 undecided, 4 agree, 5 strongly agree