

Course and Curriculum Feedback From Graduating BDS Students

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Abstract

The curriculum is usually planned by the universities; the students and faculty may have to accept it passively despite having strong and novel views. Different opinions regarding the existing curriculum and required changes are discussed amongst the students, mostly informally. Obtaining feedback from the staff and the students could be possible by establishing a feedback process that is structured, regular and confidential. This study is an attempt to obtain such feedback in our dental institution. A questionnaire type of cross- sectional pilot study was carried out involving the students nearing the completion of internship the course of BDS (Bachelor of Dental Surgery) in our institution. All the students nearing completion of B.D.S. course were invited to participate in the questionnaire study and all consented to participate (n= 25) with 100 per cent response rates. The results were compiled and number and percentage of responses in each category was noted. The open ended questions were analysed by categorising the responses under different

sections. Opinions about the components of learning experience in undergraduate curriculum showed that only 40% of students said that they were satisfied about their BDS training with only about 40% of them agreeing that they received adequate clinical training under personal guidance. Majority of them agreed that internship is required (64%) though about 20% felt that internship is an additional burden.

Keywords: BDS curriculum, feedback, change.

Introduction

Curriculum of a course is the single most important factor constantly influencing minds of the students and the faculty. The curriculum is usually planned by the universities; the students and faculty may have to accept it passively despite having strong and novel views about the necessary changes in its structure, process and outcome.

Different opinions regarding the existing curriculum and required changes are discussed amongst the students, mostly informally. Often students find a friendly faculty

to reveal the problems faced by the students and the changes required in curriculum. However, such discussions are informal and hence may not necessarily be known to rest of the staff, principal and management. At times the students are not comfortable telling the staff about the difficulties and problems.

Obtaining feedback from the staff and the students could be possible by establishing a feedback process that is structured, regular and confidential. This may help in providing better facilities to the members of the institution, help in smoother running of the college and ultimately bring out the changes in curriculum that could help the students to learn better and perform better. Feedback can be taken in the form of questionnaires, Discussions with the management, or via voting system from all the stakeholders. This study is an attempt to obtain such feedback in our dental institution.

Methodology

A questionnaire type of cross- sectional pilot study was carried out involving the students nearing the completion of internship the course of BDS (Bachelor of Dental Surgery) in our institution. All the students nearing completion of B.D.S. course were invited to participate in the questionnaire study and all consented to participate (n= 25) with 100 per cent response rates.

The consenting students received an anonymous questionnaire to be filled and returned in about 30 minutes. The format was self- administered and Principal investigator was personally present and clarified any doubts or clarifications regarding the questions. The signed consent forms for voluntary participation were also obtained just before the administration of the questionnaire. The questionnaire (Annexure I) consisted about the following aspects. Curriculum, motivation and support from the staff, the institutional infrastructure, the teaching learning

programmes, clinical experiences, administrative services.

The results were compiled and number and percentage of responses in each category was noted. The open ended questions were analysed by categorising the responses under different sections.

Results

The questionnaire was administered to 25 graduating interns and responses were compiled. Response rate was 100% with all 25 invited to participate completed the questionnaire. Opinions about the components of learning experience in undergraduate curriculum (Table 1) showed that only 40% of students said that they were satisfied about their BDS training with only about 40% of them agreeing that they received adequate clinical training under personal guidance. Majority of them agreed that internship is required (64%) though about 20% felt that internship is an additional burden.

The questioner was under these titles:

1. Opinion about the components of learning experience in undergraduate curriculum show that 64% of the students agreed with the thought of rotator internship and were over all satisfied with the curriculum (Table 1).
2. Opinion about the student's motivation and support services.

According to the data obtained 84% students found a faculty who they could consider as an ideal teacher and agreed to the thought that they could be ideal dentist too (table 2).

3. Opinion about the infrastructure administration and other services

According to the results the 60% of students agree to the fact that the non-teaching staff was more supportive and cooperative then the office staff and helped them during the college hours. Whereas it was very sad to note that only 20% of the students were satisfied with the facilities

like library and were not happy with the administration and infrastructure of the college (Table 3).

4. Opinion about teaching learning programme.

According to the results 84% of the students were happy and felt that there were enough classes conducted with appropriate time duration. Most of them felt that they treated enough number of patients but almost 84% of them felt that the materials provided were inadequate (Table 4).

5. Opinion about confidence in carrying out specific clinical procedures.

According to the results obtained 80% of the students were confident in patient education & could educate and motivate patients to stop tobacco habit while it was sad to know that 80% of the students were not confident in carrying out root canal treatment (Table 5).

6. Carrier choices and preferences in speciality.

According to the data obtained the students preferred oral surgery as their first preference. 40% of them preferred conservative n operative dentistry as their second choice the least preferred department was oral medicine and radiology (Table 6).

counselling from faculty when sought								0	0%		
I received adequate encouragement when my performance was not up to the mark	10	40%	6	24%	9	36%		0	0%	25	100%
I found here a faculty whom I consider as an 'Ideal dentist'	16	64%	5	20%	2	8%	2	8%		25	100%
I enjoyed the theory lectures and the method of teaching (overall for all faculty)	12	48%	9	36%	3	12%	1	4%		25	100%
I found here a faculty whom I consider as an 'Ideal Teacher'	21	84%	3	12%	1	4%	0	0%		25	100%
At least one faculty highly motivated me for pursuing my future aspirations in dentistry	16	64%	6	24%	2	8%	1	4%		25	100%

Table 3: Opinions about infrastructure, administration and other services.

	Agree		Neutral		Disagree		No response		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
I was satisfied with the College library	5	20%	4	16%	14	56%	2	8%	25	100%
I received adequate support and help from administrative office	2	8%	2	8%	17	84%	0	0%	25	100%

I received adequate support and help from non-teaching faculty	15	60%	7	28%	3	12%	0	0%	25	100%
I was satisfied with facilities in hostel	3	12%	6	24%	14	56%	2	8%	25	100%
I was satisfied with the availability of food in the campus (mess and others)	5	20%	9	36%	10	40%	1	4%	25	100%

Table 4: Opinions about the components of teaching learning programs

	Inadequate		Appropriate		Excessive		No response		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
The number of theory classes	1	4%	21	84%	2	8%	1	4%	25	100%
The duration of theory classes (one hour)			21	84%	4	16%			25	100%
The number of patients to whom I provided treatment	11	44%	13	52%	0	0%	1	4%	25	100%
The number of patients I got to examine	5	20%	20	80%	0	0%	0	0%	25	100%
The number of Clinical sessions	8	32%	16	56%	0	0%	1	4%	25	100%
The duration of Clinical sessions	2	8%	22	88%	1	4%	0	0%	25	100%
The number of theory classes			20	80%	3	12%	2	8%	25	100%
Amount of Clinical materials provided	21	84%	3	12%	0	0%	1	4%	25	100%

Table 1: Opinions about the components of learning experience in undergraduate curriculum

	Agree		Neutral		Disagree		No response		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
I received adequate Basic sciences training that prepared me for clinical practice	14	56%	6	24%	4	16%	1	4%	25	100%
I had adequate Clinical training under personal supervision of faculty	10	40%	11	44%	4	16%	0	0%	25	100%
I enjoyed the theory lectures and the method of teaching (overall for all faculty)	12	48%	9	36%	3	12%	1	4%	25	100%
Internship is a necessary part of the BDS curriculum for consolidating learning	16	64%	3	12%	6	24%	0	0%	25	100%
Internship is an additional burden and is not needed	5	20%	7	28%	1	4%	3	12%	25	100%
I am satisfied overall about my BDS training	10	40%	9	30%	6	24%	0	0%	25	100%

Table 2: Opinions about the student motivation and support services

	Agree		Neutral		Disagree		No response		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
I received adequate personal	10	40%	8	32%	7	28%			25	100%

Table 5: Confidence in carrying out specific clinical procedures

	Not Confident + No response		Neutral		Confident		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Dental extractions	0	0%	12	48%	13	52%	25	100%
Restorative care	1	4%	8	32%	16	64%	25	100%
Oral diagnosis	4	16%	12	48%	9	36%	25	100%
Oral radiography	7	28%	8	32%	10	40%	25	100%
Basic periodontal care	1	4%	8	32%	16	64%	25	100%
Fabrication of removable partial denture (acrylic)	3	12%	11	44%	11	44%	25	100%
Fabrication of removable complete denture (acrylic)	1	4%	11	44%	13	52%	25	100%
Fabrication of single unit fixed prosthesis (crown)	17	68%	8	32%	0	0%	25	100%
Fabrication of multiple unit fixed prosthesis (Bridge)	17	68%	7	28%	1	4%	25	100%
Root canal treatment of anterior teeth	18	72%	7	28%	0	0%	25	100%
Root canal treatment of posterior teeth	20	80%	5	20%	0	0%	25	100%
Basic management of a child patient	7	28%	10	40%	8	32%	25	100%
Educating a patient for good oral health	0	0%	5	20%	20	80%	25	100%
Method of taking informed consent	0	0%	11	44%	14	56%	25	100%
Counselling a patient for discontinuation of tobacco habit	0	0%	6	24%	19	76%	25	100%

Table 6: Career choice and preferences of specialties

Branch Name	First preference		Second preference		Third preference		Least preferred	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Public health dentistry	1	4.8%	0	0%			3	12%

					0	0%		
Paediatrics dentistry	1	4.8%	2	9.1%	6	24%	4	16%
Periodontics	1	4.8%	1	4.5%	0	0%	2	8%
Prosthodontics	4	19%	5	22.7%	4	16%	4	16%
Oral medicine and radiology	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	7	28%
Conservative dentistry and Endodontics	4	19%	9	40.9%	2	8%	0	0%
Orthodontics	4	19%	3	13.6%	5	20%	1	4.8%
Oral pathology	0	0%	0	0%	3	12%	3	14.3%
Oral Surgery	5	23.8%	2	9.1%	1	4%	1	4.8%
No Response	5	20%	3	12%	5	20%	5	20%

Discussion

The opinions of the graduating students about the curriculum, motivation and support from the staff, the institutional infrastructure, the teaching learning

programmes, clinical experiences, administrative services, are very important for the progress of the institution. This feedback obtained can be used to improve the conditions of the college, the unfocussed areas could be more focused and thus providing a better and good times at the college.

As per report the students were satisfied with the adequate basic sciences training for clinical practice and clinical training, (56%) and enjoyed the theory lectures and the methods used .In a similar study done by Shetty VB and co-workers 95 percent of the graduates were satisfied with the curriculum and 60 to 95 percent reported that the various components of the teaching-learning process were adequate

There was another study done by Al-Amri in 2012 it was surprising to note that academic advising and the dental curriculum had non-significant effect at 95% level of confidence

While there was another study conducted by Polyzois 2010 and co-workers was found that Undergraduate curriculum type was found to have very little or no effect on the graduate's attitude towards life-long learning or confidence in their ability to practice dentistry.

While another author named Davey and his fellows did a similar study and the results were that 80% of the students wanted changes in provision of further information within lectures, a broader range of lecturers, an increased number of shorter, more organised practical sessions, additional training equipment, greater supervision and online reference guides to root canal treatment.

64% of the students thought that internship was a necessary part of B.D.S curriculum. It was sad to know that 40% of the students were not satisfied with the overall B.D.S training and felt internship as a burden.

These responses get us to the conclusion that the curriculum should be looked upon and the things of interest which could be added to the curriculum should be added to it. The reasons for not feeling satisfied about the B.D.S curriculum should be asked for so that required changes could be made.

The student felt motivation and support by the faculty at least once. Students agreed that they got adequate counselling and support from the faculty when needed. While some of them said they were encouraged when they had not performed well. 64 % of the students said that they found an ideal dentist in the faculty members while most of them (84%) of the students could find an ideal teacher in the faculty. 64% of the students agreed that at least one staff motivated them to pursue further studies in dentistry.

When the students were asked about the infrastructure ,administration and other services provided ,84% of the students said that the administrative staff dint cooperate with them and dint help them when al needed nor the admistrative staff was supportive enough to understand the students' needs .56% of the students were not satisfies with the college library and felt that the collection of books in the library should be updated and improved .60%of the students felt that the non-teaching staff was more supportive and helpful during all this year's.56% of the students staying availing hostel and mess facilities said that they were not satisfied with the services provided .40% students were not at all happy with the availability of food in the campus whether it is mess or the college canteen .

This opinion concludes that the hostel and mess facilities should be monitored and required changes should be made. The administrative staff should be more supportive and helpful to the students and should be more co-operative when asked for any help.

When the students were asked about the teaching learning programmes 84% of the students felt that they had adequate number of classes that they attended.84% felt that the duration of classes was appropriate.52% of them felt that they provided enough treatment to the patient while 44% felt that the number of patients that they provided treatment was inadequate and felt the need to treat more number of patients.56% felt that they had enough clinical sessions while at the same time 32% felt that the clinical sessions were inadequate. When asked about the clinical materials that were provided 84% felt that the material supplied was not adequate and was limited and was not as per requirement or at times the materials were not there.

When the students were asked about the confidence level while carrying out clinical procedures, 80% of the students were confident in educating the patients to maintain good oral health and 76% of them were confident in counselling patients for discontinuation of tobacco habit. 64% of the students were confident in carrying out minor restorative and basic periodontal care procedures. There was a study done by Kitsako author in March 2011 and his co-authors found that there was a significant difference in the total number of procedures designated as difficult between students who had treated above 15 cases and those who had fewer than 15 cases (Wilcoxon rank-sum test, $p < 0.05$). In the final-year clinical education for operative dentistry, students might need to treat over 15 cases to gain confidence in performing approximal composite restorations independently.

56% of the students were confident in taking informed consent where as 44% of them could not take informed consent .such procedures to take informed consents are very important and should be mastered by all the students

so such procedures should be emphasizes in the curriculum and should be made a part of the curriculum.

About half of the students (52%) were confident in carrying out dental extractions in our study. In a study done by Al-Dajani and co-workers, 90% of the students were confident in giving local anaesthesia, understanding extraction indications and performing simple extractions. However, less confidence was shown with handling difficult extractions (50.0%), extracting molars with separation (50.0%) or extracting third molars (56.3%). If difficult extractions are also considered, the confidence level of our interns is similar to that of the students in Saudi Arabia (Al-Dajani M, 2015).

While 52% of them were able to fabricate removable complete dentures of acrylic .44% of them were able to fabricate removable partial dentures (acrylic).40% were able to take a radiograph and to interpret it .while only 36% were able to diagnose oral pathologies . 32% of the students said that they could manage a child and provide basic treatment to children's. It was very sad and disheartening to know that not a single of the passing out undergraduate was confident to carry out root canal treatment nor anterior nor posterior teeth.

There was a similar study done by , Davey J1, Bryant ST1, Dummer PM in December 2014-15 and 49% (n = 38) of participants did not feel competent performing root canal treatment on anterior, single-rooted teeth, whilst 74% (n = 70) did not feel competent performing root canal treatment on posterior, multi rooted teeth.

While there was a similar type of study done by Lynch CD author and his co-authors in May 2010 and found that60% of Cardiff students (n=24) reported that they feel confident when placing posterior resin composites. One hundred per cent of Malmö students (n=27), 75% of Cardiff students (n=30) and 33% of Dublin students (n=8) would prefer to have a resin composite rather than

amalgam, placed in one of their own posterior teeth. Eighty-five per cent of Malmö students (n=23), 30% of Cardiff students (n=12) and 25% of Dublin students (n=6) perceive amalgam as being harmful to the environment. For the restoration of a posterior tooth in a pregnant female, 44% of students (n=40) would place a resin composite restoration, and 7% (n=6) would place an amalgam restoration, while 32% (n=29) would place a temporary restoration. Students at Malmö report that they place more posterior resin composites and have greater confidence at placing posterior resin composites than students at Cardiff or Dublin

4% said that they could fabricate multiple unit fixed prosthesis (Bridge).while not a single was confident in carrying out fabrication of single unit fixed prosthesis

After this results that we got we felt that the clinical branches should be more focused .more clinical procedures should be made compulsory in the curriculum so that the students also start taking interest in learning this procedures. It can be also done that the internship can be kept for clinical departments for a longer duration or only for the clinical branches so that the students can learn and practice more newer treatments .the students can be given a choice to choose the department and duration .where they would like to work In the same span of internship diploma or fellowship courses can be conducted in the departments of conservative and operative dentistry , prosthodontics ,oral surgery , pedodontics and orthodontics .more awareness should be done amongst the students and the staff where in both will benefit.

Conclusion

The college syllabus is better known by the staff and the students are the one who undergo the changes that take place in the syllabus every year .Changes in the curriculum are necessary for the improvement and for

providing better facilities to the students weather it may be the theory lectures that are taken or the practices that are held .the support and encouragement from the staff is also considered as important as the rest .Most of the times there are different opinions and views of the students about a particular subject which they want to be changed or improved .in order for it to be more beneficial to all students as well as the staff but these opinions are always left unattained . The encouragement that is given when a student has not performed well is of outmost important as its going to make the student overcome the failures that he or she faced and fare well the next tine .The teaching methods should be made more interesting and not just the same age old method of the staff reading out from the presentation that he or she has prepared and the students just seating ,some just about to sleep or some busy doing something else .It should be made more of interactive session where there is conversation on both the sides where the students and teachers interact and share ideas .The students should be motivated to pursue further studies. The college administrative staff should be should be co-operative and should help the students when they need help.

As the teaching staff, non-teaching staff also plays an important role in life of students they are the once who provide required materials to the students making things easy for the staff and the students.

Practical hours should be made a session to learn lots more that is required as this learning is going to build up confidence to do patients and to carry out any procedures without worry or tension .students should be personally asked by the staff about the difficulties while carrying out any treatment and procedures as students are afraid to tell the staff as they are examiners also.

Special care should be taken to see that the students staying in hostel are provided with better hostel and mess

facilities .Food provided in the mess should be monitored and seen to it that the students get all components in food to make a healthy and balanced diet. The food that is stored should be properly stored. The cleanliness in the hostel should be maintained a guest room for parents could be done .The College should be ready to take responsibility of the problems that are faced in hostel. College should not only get involved in asking money from the students but also provide better facilities to the students. In the rooms the lighting and the rest facilities in the hostel should be kept monitored continuous and if there are any problems they should be rectified quickly without any hesitation and just not turning a deaf ear to it. Wi-Fi should be provided in the college

All the books in the library are used by the students so there should be many copies of the books. The latest versions of the books should be kept as they contain the latest aspects in it. There should be books of different authors and most latest journals .some provision should be made for the students who don't want to get distracted by the rest of the crowd .the books issued by a person should be increased. Better facilities should be provided and improvement is needed.

All such small things that go un-noticed by the management and the administration if taken under consideration, the college could be turned a better place to learn and enjoy.

Suggestions

Topic area	Comments
Theory lectures	There should be more improved methods involved in teachings instead of just reading from the presentations there should be discussions interactive sessions held. More attention should be given by the staff on the odd batch.
Clinical training	Many department s provide good clinical exposure for the students to learn .many procedures are not known to the students. The staff should show due interest to what the students want to learn more number of patient should be bought to the o.p.d. more improvements needed in better personal supervision
Internship as a part as curriculum	Some suggested that the duration of internship should be reduced. The stipend that has to be given to the students by the college should be given to the interns .internship should be not a paid internship where students have to pay the college
Library	So many of the students are not satisfied with number of copies of books. There should be latest edition of the books and journals .some space should be made for students who don't want to get distracted from the rest of the crowd.
Suggestions for the faculty	All students should be treated equally. They should show more interest in teaching the students. The students should be motivated to study further .they should guide the students when they do not perform well in their exams.
Non-teaching staff	Good support was present from the non-teaching staff. But at times they act as if they are higher than the staff.
Hostel and mess facilities	Cleanliness should be maintain pest control should be done not only in the mess but also in the rooms .There should be Wi-Fi in the hostel.there should be proper sport and games room, gymkhana should be there .there should be more facilities like 24x7 water and electricity should be provided in the rooms. Parents should be allowed in the hostel. Mess food should be healthier, the mess hygiene should be maintained. the food menu should be changed periodically
Material supply	The college should atleast provide mask, head cap and gloves atleast in internship.
Overall views about the practical	The students wish for more exposure in clinics and want to learn more newer procedures

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