



Interest of Students in Pursuing Dentistry After BDS

Dr. Rohan Gaba¹, Dr. Harsukhman Kaur²

¹Principal Investigator, ²Co-Investigator

Institute- BJS Dental College & Hospital and Research Institute Ludhiana

ABSTRACT

Introduction: One of the most important decisions one will ever make is choosing a career option. The willingness to choose dentistry as a career option provides respect, relative liberation, above average pay, assistant opportunities, and artistic challenges. The work that we do can also influence the choices we make in other spheres of life.

AIM: - The aim of this study was to investigate the interest of interns of BJS dental college of Ludhiana in pursuing dentistry after BDS.

Materials and Methods: - A structured questionnaire- based analysis was performed among internship students of BJS dental college of Ludhiana. The questions were based on the interest of interns of BDS in pursuing dentistry after BDS.

Key words: Career, Dental Profession, Interns, Interest, scope, career motivations.

Introduction

As licensed healthcare professionals, dentists occupy a pivotal role in society. It was however only in 1920 that a course in Dentistry was introduced for the first time as one of the subjects of study for medical students at the Calcutta Medical College. There are over 300 dental colleges in India [1]. There have been several studies by dental educators and researchers concerning the motives for entering the dental profession. The motivating factors for selecting any career are complex, and dentistry is no exception. Many issues may be considered when choosing a career, including one's own strengths and weaknesses, interests and desires and willingness and financial ability to complete a possibly lengthy period of training as well as the type of work involved in a particular career, work environment, financial rewards and availability and attractiveness of alternative careers. Moreover, the relative importance of these factors may differ between men and women [2].

In particular, it is essential to understand the motivating factors, priorities, perceptions of the profession and sociodemographic backgrounds of students who choose to study dentistry [3]. Many individuals find themselves in occupations without truly understanding the reasons for their attraction to their career. Others make career decisions and pursue an occupation supported by their parents or following the footsteps of an older sibling [4]. High social status and income, helping people [1, 5] and self-employment opportunities [2, 5] are some of the most important factors reported to have influenced dental students' motivation to pursue a career in dentistry. The choice of career is a critical decision with a strong influence on one's future. Research into the motivations and expectations of dental students is especially important due to the duration and cost of training.

Materials and Methodology

The subjects of this study were students enrolled in Baba Jaswant Singh Dental College and Research Institute and the study was approved by the ethical committee. At the time of this study 100 interns were pursuing dentistry in the college. The questionnaire was concocted in such a way to maximize student response thus it was kept short as possible. There were 10 multiple choice questions along with 4 sub-questions, which were also multiple choice.

During the years 2021-22, the interns of the BJS institute were handed out questionnaire forms and were asked to fill them with pure honesty and all 100 interns gave a positive response by filling them. Confidentiality was assured as only age and gender were the demographic details which were asked to mention, and not the name.

In the questionnaire, the interns were asked about their 1) "interest in pursuing dentistry after BDS?", 2) whether they considered "the scope of dentistry as positive in India?", 3) whether "your experience in your dental school made an impact on your decision of choosing dentistry?", 4) if they considered "dentistry as respectable profession?", 5) according to them "is getting a government job difficult after bds?", 6) "Is setting up a private clinic demanding/difficult?", 7) according to them is "doing MDS necessary to become an established dentist?", 8) "Is MDS an expensive course" for them, 9) whether "COVID-19 made an impact on your decision of choosing dentistry as a profession?" 10) if they decide not to pursue dentistry in India, "what other career options are you seeking?".

Results

A total of 100 students participated in the research. The anonymity was promised to all the interns, only the age and the gender were asked to fill in the questionnaire. Out of 100, there were 67 female intern and 33 male interns who participated in the quiz. The mean age of the average male interns was 23 ± 1.5 years and the mean age of female interns was 23 ± 1.5 years. The individuals with the greatest influence on the choice to pursue dentistry are shown in **Pie Chart 1**. A total of 61% interns were interested in pursuing dentistry after BDS, while 39% of them were not. Students were questioned that whether they considered the scope of dentistry as positive in India, the results are mentioned in the **Pie chart 2**. According to the poll, a bare 27% deemed the scope to be positive in India, while the rest 73% didn't. Interns were asked if their time and experience in dental school made an influence on choosing their future career paths.

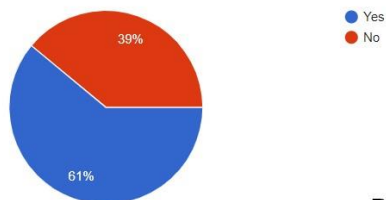
The results mentioned in **Pie chart 3** illustrated that it did for 63% of the interns. One of the most important questions was whether the students acknowledged dentistry to be a respectable profession. 81% of the interns opted 'yes' while 19% opted 'no', as seen from the results in **Pie chart 4**. The interns were also asked for the reason if they opted 'no' as their answer, the results of which are shown in **Pie chart 5**. 86% of the interns contemplated that getting government jobs is difficult after BDS as shown in **Pie chart 6**, and 94% considered setting up a private clinic as a demanding task (**Pie chart 7**), for which they were provided with valid options, the results of which can be seen in **Pie chart 8**.

Interns were queried about the necessity of seeking MDS, that whether it was crucial for becoming an established dentist and if yes, the reasons for it, as seen in **Pie chart 9 & 10**. 70% opted for 'yes' out of which 72.4% interns favored the opinion that people want to get treated from a specialist, while the rest 27.6% thought that it was due to lack of respect towards general dentist.

Out of the participants, for 86% interns, doing MDS was an expensive course, while for the 14% it was supposedly not, as clearly observed from **Pie chart 11**. Since the research was being completed in the COVID time frame, interns were also enquired about whether COVID-19 made an impact on them in terms of choosing dentistry as a future potential profession, and if 'yes', the valid reasons for it, the results of which are illustrated in **Pie chart 12 & 13**. At last, the interns were asked that if they decided not to continue dentistry, what other career paths would they be seeking? The results of which are portrayed in **Pie Chart 14**.

Are you interested in pursuing dentistry after BDS?

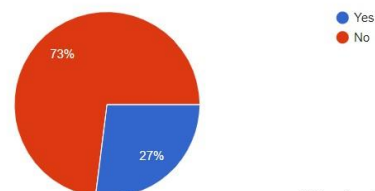
100 responses



Pie chart 1

Do you consider the scope of dentistry as positive in India?

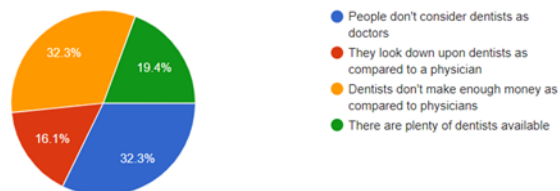
100 responses



Pie chart 2

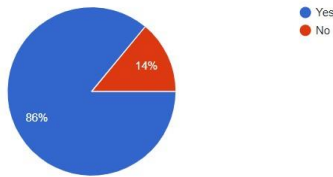
If no, why?

31 responses



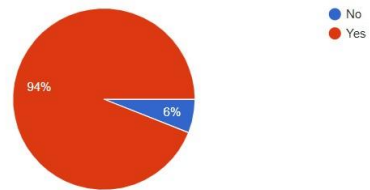
Pie chart 5

According to you, is getting a government job difficult after BDS?
100 responses



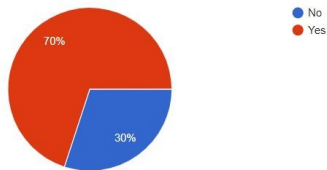
Pie chart 6

Is setting up a private clinic demanding/difficult?
100 responses



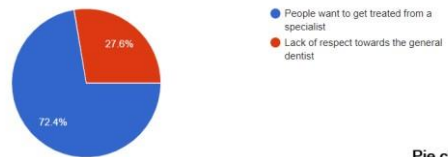
Pie chart 7

Do you believe that doing MDS is necessary to become an established dentist?
100 responses



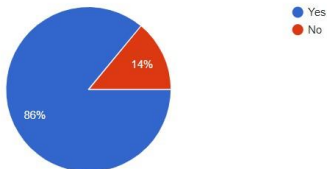
Pie chart 9

If yes, why?
76 responses



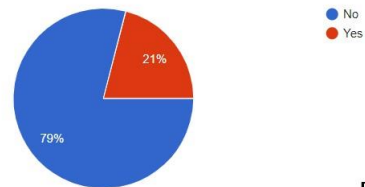
Pie chart 10

Is MDS an expensive course for you?
100 responses



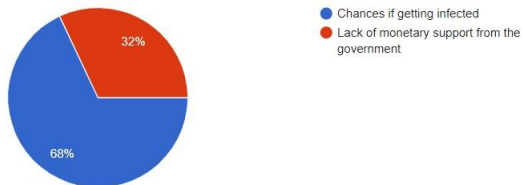
Pie chart 11

Has COVID-19 made an impact on your decision of choosing dentistry as a profession?
100 responses



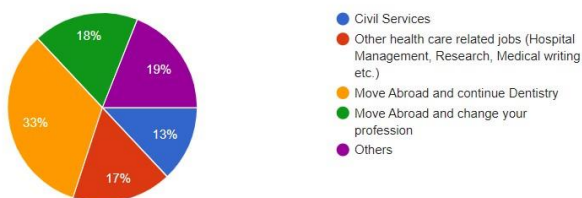
Pie chart 12

If yes, why?
25 responses



Pie chart 13

If you decide not to pursue dentistry in India, what other career options are you seeking?
100 responses



Pie chart 14

Discussion

This report describes career choices, attitudes of interns towards the scope of dentistry and levels of interest in various other fields except dentistry. The result showed that 61% were interested in pursuing dentistry after BDS. For precisely 86% people, the major drawback was difficulty in getting a government job. Lack of monetary support from the government, difficulty to get an MDS seat etc were the other reasons for people included in the research to not pursue dentistry after BDS. The results presented here are reported for the students of Baba Jaswant Singh Dental College & Research Institute, Ludhiana.

A larger number of dental schools will produce a larger number of graduating dentists each year, and these qualified graduates may decide to pursue the postgraduate specialty of their choice, to work in public (government-run) or private dental facilities or to enter private practice depending on their academic and clinical achievements, financial resources and career interests. The graduate-to postgraduate dentist ratio will be affected by the relative proportions of students who choose to remain as graduate dentists or continue with postgraduate work. Because the number of postgraduate positions available in each specialty is limited, an increase in the number of graduate level general dentists may lead to an unbalanced graduate to postgraduate dentist ratio. Graduates who had wished to pursue postgraduate studies but chose not to base their decision on the limited number of postgraduate positions may decide to work in public or private dental facilities or to establish private practices. Because the employment opportunities in public and private dental facilities are limited, establishing a private practice may be the only choice for some graduates.

Some surveys of dental students have revealed that professional status, financial rewards, security and stable work are the major factors involved in choosing dentistry as a profession [5, 6, 7]. The Indian study reported a decrease in the number of students admitted to dental schools, and the authors attributed this decrease to a rapid increase in the number of dentists in India, which may have discouraged some prospective students who would have considered that the increased competition would limit their future earnings [8], as compared to this research which illustrates that 32.3% didn't consider dentistry as a respectable profession because dentists don't earn as much as physicians.

As compared to a Saudi Arabian research, the results of that survey showed that more than 54% and 59% of the respondents agreed to a considerable or great extent with all of the statements concerning their career choice and the future of dentistry, respectively, while in this research 27% people considered scope of dentistry as positive in India [9].

CONCLUSION

Within the limitations of this study, it can be concluded that majority of the students who took part in filling the questionnaire were interested in continuing dentistry after BDS, and the career motivations of the students were coupled with getting a government job and holding a postgraduate degree to achieve success as a dentist in India. And the students who filled the questionnaire expressed that pursuing MDS is an expensive task, and setting up a private clinic too. To date, researchers have not examined the perceptions of dental students about the future of their profession. According to this study, students were more inclined towards moving abroad and consider dentistry as a difficult profession to be successful only in India. Additional cross-cultural studies, both cross-sectional and longitudinal, using validated questionnaires will provide us with a broader perspective on this issue.

References

- 1]Vigild M, Schwarz E. Characteristics and study motivation of Danish dental students in a longitudinal perspective. *Eur J Dent Educ* 2001; 5: 127-33.
- 2]Scarbecz M, Ross JA. Gender differences in first-year dental students' motivation to attend dental school. *J Dent Educ* 2002; 66: 952-61.
- 3]Orenuga OO, da Costa OO. Characteristics and study motivation of clinical dental students in Nigerian universities. *J Dent Educ* 2006; 70: 996-1003.
- 4]Gietzelt D. Social profile of first-year dentistry students at the University of Sydney. *Aust Dent J* 1997; 42: 259-66.
- 5]Hallissey J, Hannigan A, Ray N. Reasons for choosing dentistry as a career: a survey of dental students attending a dental school in Ireland during 1998-99. *Eur J Dent Educ* 2000; 4: 77-81.
- 6]Aguiar CM, Pessoa MA, Camara AC, Perrier RA, de Figueiredo JA. Factors involved in the choice of dentistry as an occupation by pernambuco dental students in Brazil. *J Dent Educ* 2009; 73: 1401-7
- 7]Crossley ML, Mubarik A. A comparative investigation of dental and medical student's motivation towards career choice. *Br Dent J* 2002; 193: 471-3.
- 8]Aggarwal A, Mehta S, Gupta D, et al. Dental students' motivations and perceptions of dental professional career in India. *J Dent Educ* 2012; 76: 1532-9.
- 9]Hassan S. Halawany, Career Motivations, Perceptions of the Future of Dentistry and Preferred Dental Specialties Among Saudi Dental Students. *The Open Dentistry Journal*, 2014, 8, 129-135