



MOTIVATIONS AND FUTURE PERSPECTIVE OF PROFESSIONAL CAREER AMONG DENTAL INTERNS AFTER BACHELOR OF DENTAL SURGERY- A QUESTIONNAIRE STUDY

Dental Science

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ABSTRACT

AIM: The aim of this study is to determine the motivations and future perspective of professional career among dental interns after bachelor of dental surgery.

OBJECTIVES: The main objective of this study is,

- Students motive in the field of dentistry
- To analyse the student's perspective towards future career after bachelor of dental surgery

MATERIALS AND METHODS: A structured, self administered validated questionnaire is distributed to 100 dental interns pursuing bachelor of dental surgery in saveetha dental college, Chennai. The data from the questionnaire were analysed and results were calculated.

RESULTS: The response rate was 100%. Of 100 respondents, 41% have plans for preparing for the Post-Graduate entrance exam after their Bachelor degree. Around 44% stated future earnings as the most important factor that influences the career choice after BDS. About 62% emphasize that the hands-on experience and overall training provided in the curriculum is not sufficient.

KEYWORDS

Dental Students, Future Career Choice

INTRODUCTION

Career choice plays an important role among student's life. Future perception of dental interns after bachelors degree is quite challenging. Students opting for their professional career after bachelor of dental surgery is truly based on the motivation they acquire from their bachelor life. Large differences may exist in attitudes about educational issues and career choice among dental students who live in diverse societies¹.

Numerous studies investigates why students choose a particular health career reveal three primary themes: Profession-related factors or characteristics of the profession, personal factors, and program-related factors^{2,3}. Many issues may be considered when choosing a career, including one's own strengths and weaknesses, interests, desires, 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 attractiveness of alternative careers.

Moreover, the relative importance of these factors may differ between men and women^{4,5}. 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 training⁵.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

STUDY DESIGN

A questionnaire based survey was conducted among 100 dental students pursuing bachelor of dental surgery in saveetha dental college and hospital. This study was conducted for a period of six months and prior informed consent was obtained from the dental students.

INCLUSION CRITERIA

- Dental students pursuing only in saveetha dental college were included in the study
- Students who were willing to participate

EXCLUSION CRITERIA

- Students who were not interested in the study
- Other dental college students were not included in the study

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. So far how do you feel dentistry is?
Good/boring/interesting
2. How do you find the duration of dental curriculum?
Too long/short/ reasonable
3. Do you think the overall training and hands on experience was

adequate?

Yes/no

4. Have you ever planned of anything after bds?

Yes/no

5. What are your immediate plans after bds?

own Clinic/post graduation/abroad

6. What do you think the most important factor that influences your career choice after bds?

Earnings/settlement/expenditure/interest towards a speciality

7. What kind of a dentist would you like to be in future?

General dentist/researcher/specialist/others

8. If given an opportunity,would work in a country other than your country?

Yes/no

9. Do you know about career avenues in army dental corps?

Yes/no

10. Do you know hospital firms, software companies employ bds graduates?

Yes/no

11. Do you know about career avenues in public sector?

Yes/no

12. Do you think higher education is necessary to be a good dentist?

Yes/no

13. which among these, would be the best option after bds?

Higher studies/govt job/clinic/others

METHODOLOGY

- A self administered questionnaire written in English consisting of 13 questions were distributed to 100 dental students.
- This questionnaire completely dealt with the curriculum, experience in the dental profession, future plan after completing BDS, students perspective about dentistry were addressed.
- Suggestions from various dentists, regarding the content of questionnaires were obtained.
- All the participants were given adequate time to complete the questionnaire and encouraged to submit it at the earliest after completion.
- To maintain confidentiality, the study was conducted in a single-blind manner.
- The questionnaire was distributed and collected by a fellow student, and the datas were evaluated and results were obtained.

RESULTS

A total of 100 questionnaire was distributed to interns pursuing dentistry at saveetha dental college. Response rate of 100% was received. Around 43% of the interns stated that the course was good while contradicting this almost an equal population considered the

course to be boring which makes about 42% of them and a very small number of remaining 15 interns found the course interesting. A majority of 68% interns felt that the curriculum was very long and 28% thought that the duration was reasonable. Only a handpicked number of interns found the course duration to be short. When queried about their confidence level in the training and hands on experience received, a majority 62% responded indifferently while only 38% were confident. To a question about their immediate plan after graduation, 41% of them wanted to pursue post-graduation, 26% wanted to own a clinic, 32% were looking for a job and 10% interns had plans for abroad. Earning was found to be the key factor influencing 44% intern's career choice after BDS. 24% of the intern's interest towards a specialty made them choose their career further. Settlement and expenditure made the remaining interns choose their future career which is 18 and 14 percent of them respectively. 54% of them wanted to be general dentist, 36% wanted to be specialists and only 10% of them wanted to be a researcher. Almost half the population was not aware about career avenues in army dental corps and only 49% were aware. 53% knew that hospital firm and software companies employed BDS graduates, 47% of them had no idea about the same. 55% interns were aware of job opportunities in public sector and the remaining 45% had no clues. A majority of 39% believe that higher studies would be the best preference after BDS, 33% thought owning a clinic to be the best choice, and 24% of the preferred a government job. Remaining 4% had different opinion.

(TABLE-I, GRAPH-I)

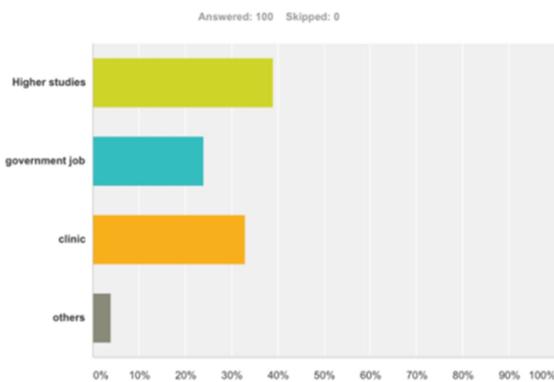
So far how do you feel dentistry is?



Answer Choices	Responses
Good	43.00%
boring	42.00%
interesting	15.00%
Total	100

(TABLE-II, GRAPH-II)

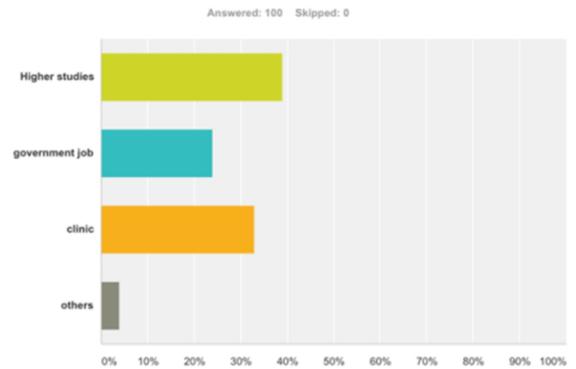
which among these, would be the best option after bds?



Answer Choices	Responses
Higher studies	39.00%
government job	24.00%
clinic	33.00%
others	4.00%
Total	100

(TABLE-III, GRAPH-III)

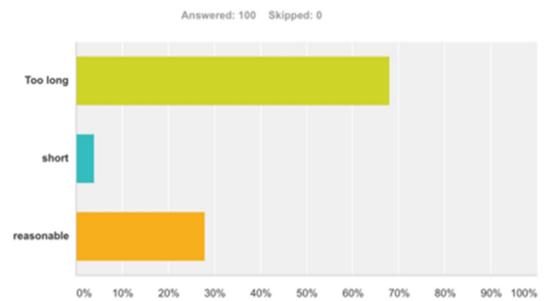
which among these, would be the best option after bds?



Answer Choices	Responses
Higher studies	39.00%
government job	24.00%
clinic	33.00%
others	4.00%
Total	100

(TABLE-IV, GRAPH-IV)

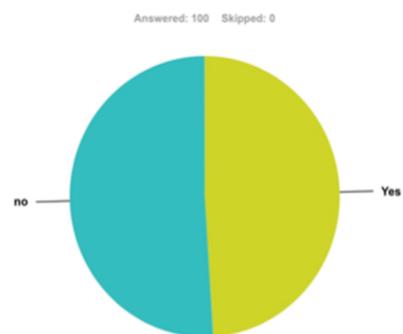
How do you find the duration of dental curriculum?



Answer Choices	Responses
Too long	68.00%
short	4.00%
reasonable	28.00%
Total	100

(TABLE-V, GRAPH-V)

Do you know about career avenues in army dental corps?

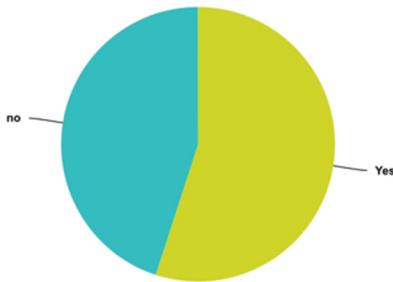


Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	49.00%
no	51.00%
Total	100

(TABLE- VI, GRAPH- VI)

Do you know about career avenues in public sector?

Answered: 100 Skipped: 0

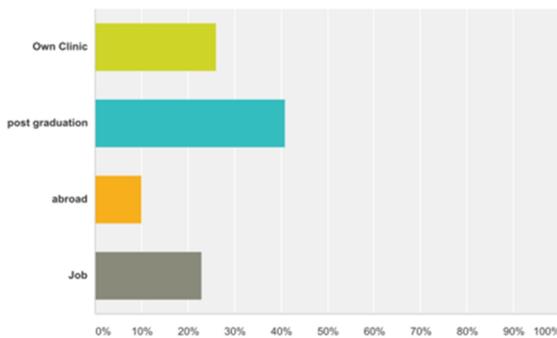


Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	55.00%	55
no	45.00%	45
Total		100

(TABLE- VII, GRAPH- VII)

What are your immediate plans after bds?

Answered: 100 Skipped: 0

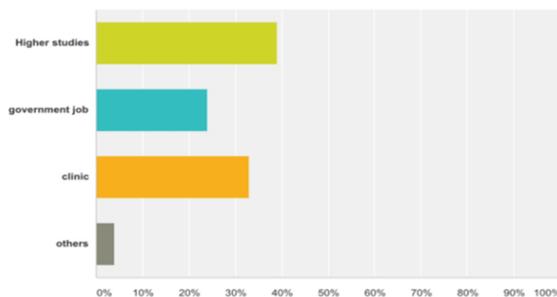


Answer Choices	Responses	
Own Clinic	26.00%	26
post graduation	41.00%	41
abroad	10.00%	10
Job	23.00%	23
Total		100

(TABLE- VIII, GRAPH- VIII)

which among these, would be the best option after bds?

Answered: 100 Skipped: 0

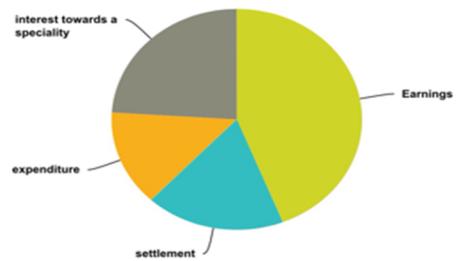


Answer Choices	Responses	
Higher studies	39.00%	39
government job	24.00%	24
clinic	33.00%	33
others	4.00%	4
Total		100

(TABLE- IX, GRAPH- IX)

What do you think is the most important factor that influences your career choice after bds?

Answered: 100 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices	Responses	
Earnings	44.00%	44
settlement	18.00%	18
expenditure	14.00%	14
interest towards a speciality	24.00%	24
Total		100

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study is to investigate the motivation of dental students in the field of dentistry and their future perspective after completion of bachelor of dental surgery.

The choice of career is a critical decision as it creates an obvious impact on the individuals' future life. From our study 42% of our participants found dentistry to be boring and this outcome of results may be due to the influence by their family and friends for choosing dentistry as a career. Ramesh et al¹⁵ studied, high level of involvement of parents would be mainly to facilitate a better quality of life for their children. On the other side, high level of involvement could easily lead to stress as the students are forced to choose such a profession.

More than half of the respondents (62%) felt that the hands-on experience and overall training provided in the curriculum was inadequate. This number was particularly high among fresh graduates. It was reported that dental students are trained to excel theoretically, but there seems to be a problem between what is learned and what is applied in the clinics. This could prevent a majority of them from practising immediately after graduation. Prevalence of such discontent is threatening for the profession as it can lead to wastage of valuable resources. If the field of dentistry does not meet the expectations of the prospective workforce, they do not practice with optimum enthusiasm and operational efficiency thereby depleting the pool of already scarce health providers. Inadequate orientation and practice based knowledge makes many graduates uncertain and indistinct in the real professional world^{1,10}

On comparison of the duration of dental curriculum (68%) of interns found the course was too long. This implies directly that students experience a stressful profession with tedious working hours and fear of patient's satisfaction. Karibe¹, aditya², bailoor⁴ et al, realizing doctor patient relationship they had high confidence in doing dental treatment. In the present study (41%) opted post graduation as their immediate plan after BDS. Post graduation in stills and increases the level of confidence within oneself by specializing in dentistry. On one perspective manakil³, halawany⁷, Kapoor⁶ et al, stated that post-graduation provides better salary and job opportunities and the proportion of people who wish to pursue post-graduation is less due to minimum number of seats with heavy competition and higher fee status.

Various factors influences ones choice of career, (44%) of respondents suggested earnings will be the first choice after BDS and more than half the participants chosen to be a general dentist (52%). Our study was in line with Kapoor⁶, priya⁵, ramesh¹⁰ et al, emphasized that majority preferred to earn by working in a private practice or in a dental clinic. Probably, because of the heavy workloads and poor pay in the former setup. Some of them also showed inclination toward starting their own clinics as part of their future plans due to the flexible working hours. Making career choices exclusively on monetary perceptions could be detrimental as such professionals tend to work for fringe

financial benefits in the future.

On considering job opportunities, (53%) of participants were aware of job in public sectors. A study by Santos et al³, proved that the main reason for planning to work in public services was job security although they usually pay modest salaries they provide job stability and other benefits in addition to allowing professionals to work in private practices. (53%) of participants were aware of opportunities in software companies. Software companies provide a standard income with promotions and yearly ratings, yielding better benefit. Employment in army dental corps for dental students was found to be merely useful with addition to various benefits and strategies particularly for the dentists. Half of the participants were not aware of job facilities in army corps from our study. Awareness should be instilled within dental students so as to serve a quality treatment for the patients of our nation.

The limitations of this study is it was carried out in single institution with a small sample size. Long term studies across the country is essential for better evaluation and to strengthen the dental work force.

CONCLUSION

This study showed that students were confident in clinical skills developed but were quite sceptic about their knowledge on practice management. There is also a need for improvements in dental curriculum to build an effective and responsive dental workforce to cater the growing public health needs.

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