

Editorial

DENTAL EDUCATION IN INDIA

The outcome and success of any education system, including dental education is dependent on the role and performance of various components. These include regulatory bodies, students, parents, managements and teachers. Comments are restricted to areas of shortcomings. Exceptions are found in all examples and deserve salutations for their excellence.



1. *Role of Dental Council of India (DCI):* DCI is an apex body constituted under the act of Parliament. It has great role in prescribing the rules and regulations for various dental education programs, their implementation, monitoring and periodical review. DCI has been expanding scope and purview of dental manpower from time to time. It is introducing new subjects in UG and PG studies. There has been change in duration of course to 5 years and reverse back to old duration. The changes whether in curriculum or duration shall be based on facts, needs and realities rather than either to meet somebody's wishes or to equate with MBBS/MD/MS courses.
2. *Role of university:* In normal course, many universities limit their role to approve admissions, conduction of annual examination and award of degree. The university shall be involved more often in reviewing and updating the syllabus instead of just prescribing the minimum as given by DCI. They shall introduce innovative methods of assessment of students throughout the year in addition to annual examination. Internal periodical assessments are usually left to the colleges. Instead the universities shall prescribe a uniform methodology for all the colleges under it. They shall prescribe time bound academic calendar, including examination schedules and implement it effectively. They shall make available to students well in advance the detailed curriculum, course content, methodology of examinations, results and promotions, etc. There is illogical long delay in declaring results resulting in extension of duration of course.
3. *Role of students:* Attitude, career outlook, approach in studies among the students are the factors in influencing the quality of dental manpower. The students shall opt for dentistry by own choice and not by chance or not by somebody's choice. The majority of students have one motto of passing and getting degree in easiest way. Most of them do not realize the importance of studies and learning clinical acumen. They are least interested in quality of infrastructure, training, teaching, etc. They do not protest to get better quality of education, which is their basic right.
4. *Role of parents:* Parents have important role from choosing the professional education and institution. They shall use all the resources to study the pros and cons of the career and attitude and interest of their child in the proposed profession and then finally the institution of study. Once the child is admitted in a college, they shall not limit their role only for getting admission, paying fee regularly and meeting other expenses. They shall not function as financial agencies but shall be involved in all aspects of welfare of child including study. Their role as modulator of the child will help in great extent. They shall not be passive spectator to the happenings in colleges but shall interact with authorities as often as possible to keep themselves updated on progress of child.
5. *Role of managements:* It is competitive era. The managements shall not limit the facilities to the minimum as prescribed by the DCI to get approval or recognition. They shall bear in mind that they are training the students to take care of dental and oral health problems of human beings. They cannot compromise on quality of training. It is their primary responsibility to provide necessary facilities for proper and effective training. Name of the institution remains associated with the alumni throughout life. Performance of alumni in their professional obligations do reflect on the parent institutes. Look beyond to provide excellent infrastructure and learning environment. The colleges shall run not as profit generating but as self-financing. Situation and need is the same in both government and private colleges. Attitude toward providing the infrastructure also is same. Government colleges also do indulge in temporary shifting of staff and equipment at the time of inspections to meet the requirements. Government colleges did get additional funds for infrastructure and additional teachers were recruited, whenever DCI acted tough on these colleges. There are excellent colleges both in government and private sectors.

It is an IT era now. The managements shall provide adequate facilities through IT, to enable the college to communicate with students and parents, monitor the day-to-day activity of students and staff, to enable the parents to

view the performance and progress of their children from their place of working. This becomes an effective tool not only in monitoring but also in e-learning, e-lectures and e-library.

6. *Role of teachers:* Teachers have a greater and vital role among all in shaping the quality of graduates. Shall not be passive to limit their working and thinking as 9 to 4 workers to justify salary. They shall be active, thinking, innovative, work for the betterment of students and patients. Proactive to stimulate and inculcate the learning and thinking power among the students. Teachers shall interact with students very often, identify their weakness and shortcomings, if any in learning and understanding. They must help the student to overcome the shortcoming. The teachers shall stimulate learning process and create interest in the subject, help the students develop clinical and academic acumen. They shall not blame the students and lack of infrastructure to cover up their insufficiency and weakness.

Most of the teachers are very casual in their approach toward their duty, indifferent to timings and responsibilities, do not keep themselves updated in knowledge, do not appreciate if students ask questions, do not explain and clarify the proper procedure to tackle clinical and other problems, do not approve the work in practical and clinical classes without pointing out exact deficiency and method of rectification, pass all the students, including undeserving to cover up their deficient teaching or to make higher ups happy.



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