

Practice management in undergraduate dental program: The need among dental students

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this study is to assess the opinion of dental students regarding the necessity for a practice management (PM) course in their curriculum. To determine the necessity of a PM course in dental programs, a series of questions was developed and given to 100 dental students. Dental students were asked a series of questions about the necessity of this course, and responses were gathered. The questionnaire included time management, patient management, teamwork, leadership quality, and other requirements of the course. According to the results, dentistry students desired that the PM curriculum cover subjects such as teamwork, confidence, the value of the PM course, time management, patient management abilities, leadership qualities, and others. Most of the responses obtained from the students agreed that the PM curriculum must be taught with the course for better management. The development of any course should be based on the need and opinion of the students who pursue the course of dentistry. Thus, this study evaluates the need for a PM course in an undergraduate (UG) dental program.

Key words: Dentist, innovative technique, patient management, practice management curriculum, teamwork, UG dental student

INTRODUCTION

Acquiring practical knowledge skills through hands-on management would help dental students to succeed as leaders in the dental team.^[1,2] The dental curriculum lacks a sequence which shows the principles of practice and the management of the patient,^[3] and a high amount of evidence says the students were not confident to start or pursue

private practice, especially at the start of their careers. In the data obtained due to the emerging needs of the community, the dental practice also needs to change constantly.^[4]

The changes, in turn, change the patient's expectations of the dentist. To contribute efficiently and successfully to the community as a health-care professional, the dentist should be efficient not only in their clinical practice but also in the nonclinical aspects of the practice.^[5] The previous study conducted in the US, the Netherlands, Mexico, and France had a lack of nonclinical discrepancies including their financial status, time and their management, and their practice health and effective management among dental students.^[6,7] The team formed by us has very high apprehension and experimentation experience that made it into the finest publications^[8-27] The following study evaluates opinions from dental students on the requirement

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of practice management (PM) in the undergraduate (UG) dental program.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The current study, which was carried out among dentistry students, was planned as a cross-sectional survey. To gauge the dental students' opinions on the value of the PM course, a survey with 10 questions was created and sent through Google Forms.^[28] All those questions prepared in Google Forms were evaluated by the authority in the field of dentistry for quality and validity. Then, it is estimated by a survey in a small sample size. The valid points covered in the questionnaire included the need for the course, leadership skills, etc., Research participants were provided with an overview of the study, including the purpose, and were informed of their voluntary participation in the study. Informed consent was obtained before the start of the study and ethical approval was obtained (IHEC/SDC/PEDO/21/004).

RESULTS

About 31.43% of UG males, 34.29% of postgraduate (PG) males, 25.71% of UG females, and 8.57% of PG females were included in the study [Graph 1]. Sixty percent of males had confidence level and leadership skills, 5.71% of males had less confidence level and leadership skills, and 34.29% of females had confidence level and leadership skills. The $P = 0.17$ [$P = 0.05$, Graph 2] indicates that the result is statistically significant. The relationship between participant gender and the effectiveness of the subject matter that survey respondents learned is seen in Graph 3. The Association between the confidence level and leadership skills of the

participants and the effectiveness of the subject learned by the participants who participated in the survey is depicted in Graph 4 and the Association between the graduates and the effectiveness of the subject learned by the participants who participated in the survey is depicted in Graph 5.

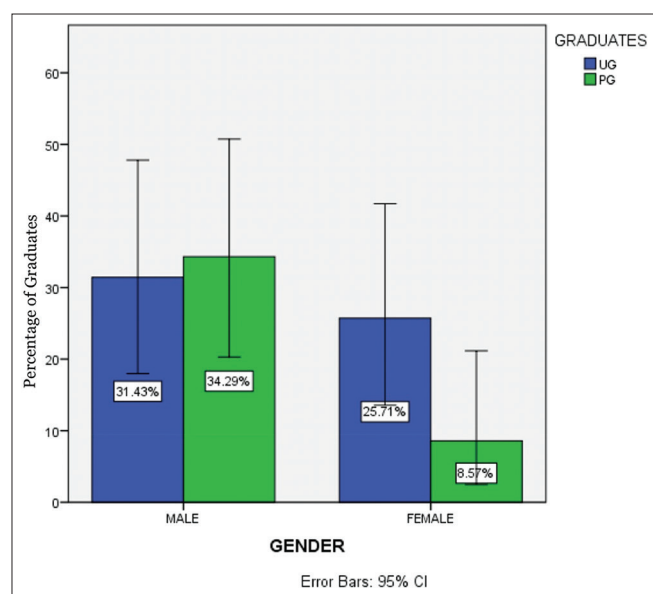
DISCUSSION

In this cross-sectional study, 90% and above of the participants agree that the PM course has a very essential role in the UG dental curriculum.^[29]

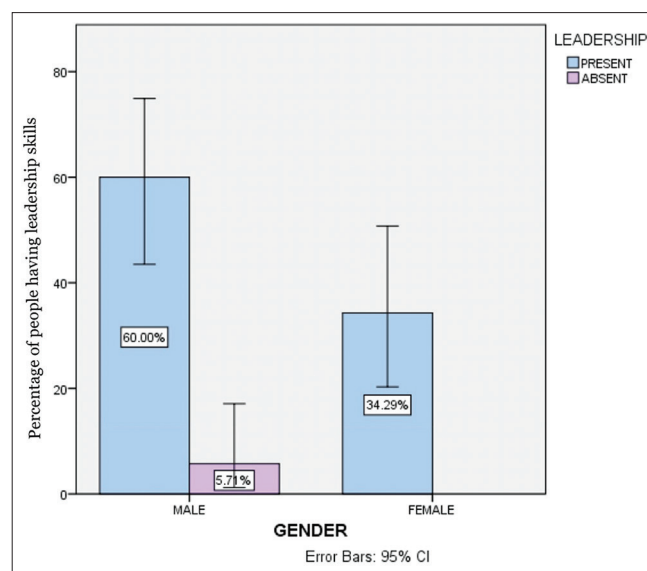
There are various reasons that support the implementation of leadership skills in the dental practice management course. The students should understand their leadership skills, which define their value in the field of dentistry, and to improve those leadership skills, such as the technical skills of a clinician, need to be developed over a lifetime.^[30]

In the present study also it is found that most UGs and PGs feel the full effectiveness of learning PM course. Evidence in the present study reveals that UG students do not regard the development of management skills to be as important as the attainment of clinical skills.^[4] The participants in the present study feel that the learning PM course provides a good confidence level and leadership skills.

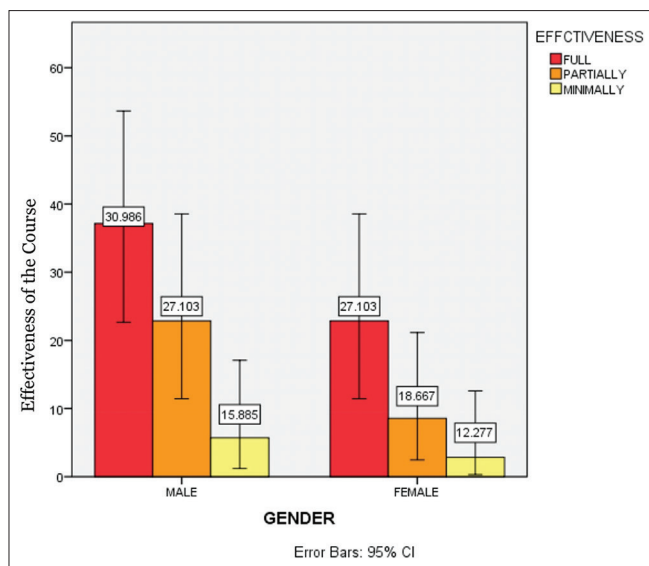
In another study, the future of education has underlined the importance of deliberate recruiting and ongoing development of students and staff as critical to future educational improvements. In many countries, a student must finish 5 years of academic and clinical training in a recognized educational environment to qualify as a dental practitioner.



Graph 1: Association between the gender of the participants and the graduates who participated in the survey



Graph 2: Association of the gender of participants with the confidence level and the leadership skills obtained from the practice management course



Graph 3: Association between the gender of the participants and the effectiveness of the subject learned by the participants who participated in the survey

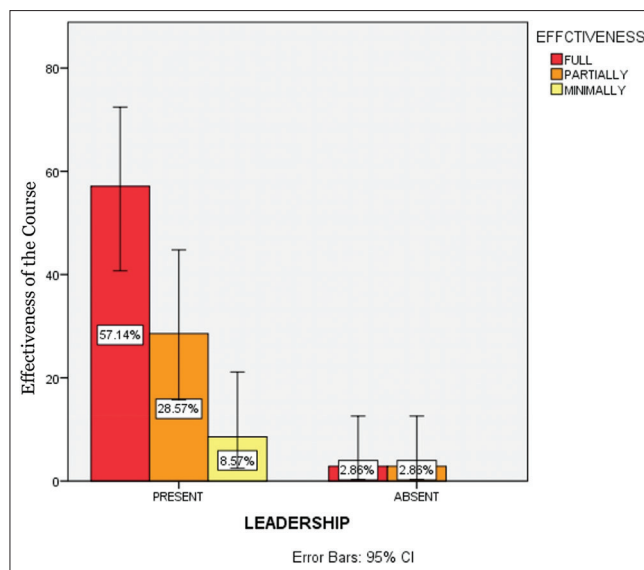
To begin a career as a practitioner, graduate students must be capable of providing high-quality holistic patient care, as well as the ability to adapt to changing societal requirements and manage their practices.

The present study also says the effectiveness of the subject learned by the participants.^[31] Another study emphasized a curriculum that would provide a training environment that would simulate the actual practice environment and offers a start to healthy work-based practices.^[32] Therefore, this study emphasizes the need for PM in the curriculum among UG dental students.

The result revealed that the students had inadequate knowledge of the BLS but had a positive attitude toward it. To improve the quality of the learning experience, a survey was conducted by Moshabab which revealed that dental students prefer the use of multimodal and unimodal learning styles. The results of the study strongly conclude that UG students perceive a need for a more intensive education in medical emergencies and they strongly desire to obtain this knowledge.

Taking into account many requirements of the UG curriculum, the importance of effective UG training in dealing with medical emergencies needs to be emphasized as this seems to bring long-term benefits to the practice of dentists.

The results of the study also says that the students learn leadership skills and confidence level in learning practice management course. Harold et al. Future dentists have found that they are not fully prepared to address the communication and dental care needs of pediatric patients



Graph 4: Association between the confidence level and leadership skills of the participants and the effectiveness of the subject learned by the participants who participated in the survey

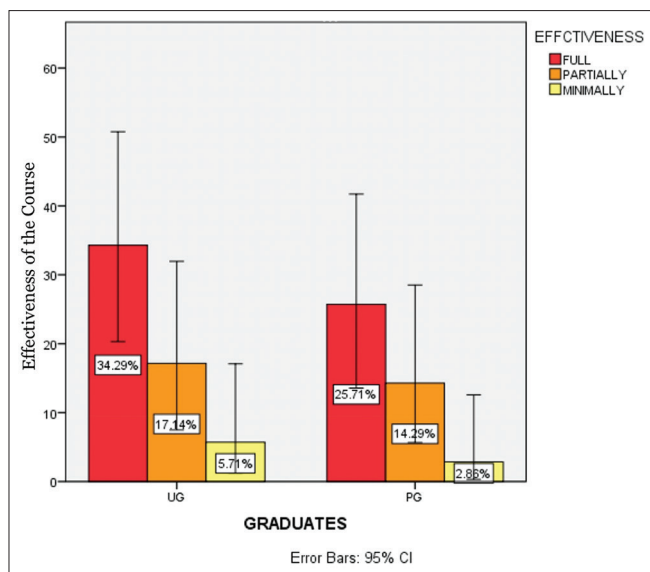
with developmental disabilities. Providing appropriate training in this area to dental students is important, but it is always possible to ensure that students have the clinical experience they need to learn how to effectively address the needs of patients with developmental disabilities. It is not always the case. Graduates are increasingly challenged by the pace of rapid development in the field of dentistry. For this reason, it is important that graduates have sufficient patient and clinical management skills as well as basic knowledge and skills. Well Written procedures, and guidelines that ensures consistency, efficiency, and effective coordination of the activities. The course content, duration, teaching, learning, and evaluation methods that needed to be developed for each of these three activities require active collaboration among stakeholders.^[33]

CONCLUSION

Therefore, this study emphasizes the need for a PM course in the UG dental course. Sixty percent of males and 34.29% of females had the confidence level and leadership skills acquired by the PM course required for a successful practice that shares some great knowledge. About 34.29% of UG and 25.7% of PG feel the full effectiveness of learning PM course. Fifty-seven percent of participants have both leadership skills and feel the full effectiveness of the learning PM course. The improvement and implementation of such a course are obtained on the suggestion of both the dentist and the dental students to ensure evidence-based approaches.

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Graph 5: Association between the graduates and the effectiveness of the subject learned by the participants who participated in the survey

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Conflicts of interest

There are no conflicts of interest.

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