

ENLIGHTENING DENTAL WORLD



Dentistry has endured a sea of profound changes since the aeon mankind realized the importance of teeth. The changes are not just cherished in education, techniques, materials and armamentarium but also in the attitude of students, teachers along with patients. Reminiscent to other branches of medical education, dental education in India has also acknowledged amazing recognition and acclamation over the years. Thanks to the vehemence and enthusiasm of the pioneers who have worked hard for the upliftment of this noble profession. Today we are ranked to be number one as far as escalation of dental colleges is concerned, but the scenario is not gratifying. In spite of outsized number of dental colleges in the country, the oral health of our citizens does not appraise up to the mark, especially among those residing in rural areas. This has resulted into serious imbalance and disparity between urban and rural population as well as rich and poor.

The pervasiveness of dental diseases such as dental caries, periodontal disease and oral cancer is escalating in Indian population with a analogous increase in the number of dental surgeons over the years. It is a pitiable scenario that the dental graduates joining the dental fraternity these days are not capable and competent to handle any emergency situation and clinical training is far from satisfactory. With a hasty change in technology in dentistry, the fresh dental graduates and young teachers are far from keeping pace with these changes.

The custodians of dental profession are striving hard to implement value based curriculum of dental education by introducing innovative concepts and ideas to make the dental education realistic, practical and student friendly and to make dental graduates, improved oral health care professionals. The aim of dental education is to produce dental surgeon capable of promoting oral health of the masses at large.

The dental faculty should also dwell into exploring ways and means of incorporating clinical training and amalgamation of dental education and research so that our young graduates can become self-sufficient, self reliant and confident in discharging their moral duties to the nation.

I plead and appeal to the State Governments to incorporate dental health planning in their agenda as a matter of prime concern and create infrastructure for dental clinics at Civil Hospitals, Primary Health Centres, sub-centres as well as at referral Hospitals in rural areas, so as to endow with oral health care to our rural population. It shall have two fold beneficial effects. Firstly, it will greatly enhance good oral health practices, create awareness, alienate pain and suffering from dental diseases and secondly it would provide job opportunities,

to young dental professionals. In my opinion the imperative aspect is the training of trainers.

The faculty should devote time to students and the institutes need to understand the importance of dedicated and full time faculty.

Innovation is the key of success and therefore boosting research culture among students is important. Invention and creativity are the basic elements of fundamental research. This is fundamentally required to be pursued by the educational institutions. Series of publications are impending up divulging novelties in dental education. It's my appeal to the dental fraternity that the faculty must publish the original and genuine research and refrain from plagiarism as it leads to criticism maligning the profession and the country. Continuous updating and revision of curricula is something which must be intensely ingrained in the academic culture of a teaching temple.

At the end I would like to stress that the faculty should make it a point, to encourage perfectionist attitude among students while treating patients. Dental colleges must spread out their services to the rural areas so that deprived population is also benefited and a humane approach with the right diagnosis and correct treatment should be the norm. Dental students must know challenges ahead and there should be proper motivation and inculcation of new ideas in them so that proper dental care can be provided to the needy. Dear Fellow Colleagues, your dedication, sincerity, honesty, enthusiasm, devotion and punctuality will definitely count and lead this profession to the zenith of glory.

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