



Editorial

Purpose of a curious mind for the growth of a profession

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The Journal of Academy of Dental Education is slowly making its existence known in the dental fraternity. The recent issues have published some manuscripts written by dental undergraduate students assisted by dedicated faculty members which were of commendable quality. The intention with which the Academy of Dental Education was formed and the beginnings of the Journal for the Undergraduate students was a way to bring back the curiosity in the minds of the young ones which seems to have been lost somewhere during the quest for knowledge in schools which seem to have lost sight of its primary purpose.

Over the last two decades, education has turned into a business churning out students who are “achievers” who through rote learning and reproducing answers exacting the blueprint provided to the examiners and evaluators result in centum marks in all subjects which were unheard of in the years when schools were established in our country and the sixties, seventies, eighties and even early nineties! The paradox of these “achievers” is that they are generally unable to communicate vocally or through letters. Framing a sentence seems to be a juggernaut task for the young ones. Holding their attention to a single task for periods longer than ten minutes requires extreme effort. Reading from different reference texts and compiling an answer is close to impossible. Most of the young minds would prefer to refrain from giving an opinion and just go along with the crowd. Self-obsessed individuals gratifying one's egos with imaginary friends on social media who congratulate and share virtually while being so far away from one's own dear ones – that's the generation we have got with us.^[1]

The “generation next” produced by the education system imitating and yet not completely, the ways of the West, could be the reason our young graduates have stopped reasoning out and raising questions. We will be able to gauge the impact of the damage done by our education system when we look at the Institutions of our country.... The Hospitals (Health care system), The Schools and Colleges (Education system), The Police Stations (Security system), The Courts of Justice (Judiciary system), The Assembly and The Parliament (Administrative system).... Do any of these institutions infuse Confidence in us or do these institutions instil Fear in us! This is food for thought as we are the proud citizens of the country of the great poet Rabindranath Tagore who wrote a poem “Where the mind is without Fear”.^[2]

“Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high
Where knowledge is free
Where the world has not been broken up into fragments
By narrow domestic walls
Where words come out from the depth of truth
Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection

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Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way
Into the dreary desert sand of dead habit
Where the mind is led forward by thee
Into ever-widening thought and action
Into that heaven of freedom, my Father,
let my country awake.”^[2]

-Rabindranath Tagore

Fear stems from insecurities which arise from lack of confidence which is due to the fact that our values were not ingrained in us when it should have been done, during the formative years of our childhood! The competitive and selfish spirit imbibed in school years have dealt the lethal blow back to us and its effects have percolated into society resulting in more orphanages, old age homes, and mental illnesses.^[3] This pandemic has taught us a profound lesson on how fragile we humans are - that a miniscule micro-particle as a virus could devastate us and bring us to a standstill. How important it is for us to understand that we are born into this world not to compete with each other but to coexist with each other.

We seem to be at a point of no return and yet a sliver of hope lies in the fact that human beings are natural survivors. However, let us teachers make it our responsibility to dedicate ourselves to try to rectify at least some of the damage done and steer the future in the right direction of compassion and the right attitude. Let us motivate the students who reach us,

even if it is at a later part of their adolescence, to think, to ask, to search, to find - all important ingredients of a Research mind. Research is integral to take the scientific community forward in a responsible and accountable manner.

Looking forward to manuscripts from undergraduate students with good Research questions and structured study design with innovative ideas which will change the way Dentistry will be practiced in future.

Hope is the essence of existence, so let us continue to hope for a better future.

Best wishes

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