Reviewer's report

Title: Student apathy for classroom learning and need of repositioning in present andragogy in Indian dental schools

Version: 3 Date: 15 June 2012

Reviewer: Priya Khanna

Reviewer's report:

Major Compulsory Revisions

1. Although the study explores contemporary pedagogical issues, the research questions need to be justified with respect to literature evidence and gaps within medical education esp. Dentistry. The 'background/introduction' is very lengthy and should be limited to addressing what is already known about the issue; what are the gaps in the relevant literature; what is the significance of this study, and what were the objectives of this study.

2. Methodology needs further clarification such as how were the instruments constructed? How was the sample size determined (why only 10 senior faculty?). It is not clear why students were selected from colleges from one particular geographic state of India whereas teachers were randomly selected from top colleges from all over India. Response rate for student population should also be given.

3. Data analysis needs to be revised. Blending of qualitative data (interviews) and quantitative data (surveys) should be done while interpreting the data and not during the analysis. It should be explained how the quantification of qualitative responses based on the 10 interviews was done. Furthermore, it is not clear why Z test of difference has been used for comparing perceptions of senior faculty with the other two groups when the data (n=10) clearly does not follow a normal distribution. It should also be explained how the dichotomous data from students’ responses was compared with Likert-scale responses by the teachers.

4. One of the key findings of the study was that students as well as teachers felt that classroom teaching is better pedagogical method than online/distance learning and yet a vast majority of students did not enjoy present classroom teaching. These findings should be compared or contrasted with similar studies. Also the findings should be described in context of the field of study (Dentistry) and other similar procedural specialties. The discussion should also highlight implications of the findings and should acknowledge the limitations and biases of the study. Suggestions for future studies should also be given.

Minor Essential Revisions

1. Grammatical errors need to be corrected (e.g not to begin a sentence with numerals).
2. Results section, Page 9, says that ‘as per the data, it has been seen that the teachers all over India consider classroom teaching the best pedagogical source...’

It is not clear how the authors arrived at this conclusion- was the data from different geographic states compared?

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**Statistical review:** Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.