



Looking at the Brighter Perspective

Rajanikanth*

Professor and Head, Department of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, Sharad Pawar Dental College, Wardha, Maharashtra, India

***Corresponding Author:** Rajanikanth, Professor and Head, Department of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, Sharad Pawar Dental College, Wardha, Maharashtra, India.

Received: September 20, 2018; **Published:** October 23, 2018

"Failures are the stepping stones to success". Thomas Alva Edison was a very great inventor and he tried more than thousand times to make a filament bulb. On knowing this a reporter asked him whether Edison wasted his times in his efforts. Edison said, "No I just found thousand ways in which I could not make the filament bulb."

That should be the attitude of a scientist, researcher or a student...

Come August – September, and we find an array of dental post-graduate students in their prime age beaming with knowledge and with a multitude of certificates in their crisp new file making a bee-line for the colleges to join as an MDS lecturer and start their careers on a fresh note. The weather is awesome; the management of the private colleges is enriched with the new admissions of BDS and MDS (in a few) but still wondering whether to take these fresh passed-outs. Anyway, a lucky few enter into these temples of wisdom to brighten the lives of the students and senior teachers as well. Because it is these fresh lecturers who are an epitome of knowledge and to some extent – skill, eagerly waiting to gain some experience, and also to spread the information that they are completely filled with in their grey cells...! Once this trio – Knowledge, Skill and experience is built, there is no looking back. It may take few years for some and a life time for many.

Looking at the brighter side of things- let us peep into the practical examinations for MDS course that are in vogue at the present time. The current system of dental post graduate examination in the country is something which every Indian dentist and MDS teacher in particular, should be proud of. In medical post graduate

and MCH examinations even, the candidates are asked to describe a procedure and never to perform one. It is not the case with the MDS practical examinations. For example, a Prosthetic Dentistry (Branch I) MDS Practical examination runs for three days at a stretch with at least two patients (Complete Denture and Fixed Partial denture) being operated upon under the watchful eyes of the external and internal examiners. It is supposed to be the most difficult MDS practical examination, running for at least 72 - 76 hours for the appearing student. To nail it, the last few hours are of the Grand Viva (wonder what is so grand about it?!). And if you carefully note the recommended text books for BDS as per the council...mind you, BDS, are all by foreign authors, including the 'Notes on Dental Materials' book by E. C. Combe (1971). I truly speculate how many can really finish these books in their lifetime? – I am proud to say our students (even those who passed from Marathi or Kannada medium) stand the test of time.

Coming to Periodontology (Branch II), the examination involves performing a minor surgery – it may be a flap or gingivectomy – to sinus lift, depigmentation and lip reduction surgeries. Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery (Branch III) practical examination may be a cake walk for students who are skilled enough to perform a mandibular third molar surgery efficiently but again Conservative Dentistry (Branch IV) takes a toll on the post graduate, involving Class 2 and inlay preparations. It is all about presentation of cases in Orthodontics (Branch V) while again it is performance on a pediatric patient in Pedodontia (Branch VI). Oral Medicine, Radiology and Diagnosis (Branch VII) may not pose any particular problems as it is mostly knowledge oriented. However, it might be an eye-opener for the students who are in the dark - (Dark room). Oral Pathology and Microbiology (Branch VIII) examination also involves mostly cognitive domain rather than psychomotor.

I used to wonder why the dental institutions abroad are called as dental schools and not colleges, the way we call them in our motherland. I got a partial answer (at least I think so) when my colleagues from the department of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery went on to do International fellowship courses in Europe, UK, US and elsewhere. As an Oral surgery professor in one of the esteemed institutions of the Central India, we perform Oncosurgery, Maxillofacial trauma, Orthognathic Surgery, and Cleft deformities on a day-to-day basis. My friend wondered to see a surgeon of his age still assisting his senior surgeon who is in his sixth or seventh decade operating on a Le forte II and explaining the details to others. This is the scenario in the so called developed countries, at least in my field. I concluded that we are taught in colleges and them - in dental schools.

So, the future for Indian dentists and post-graduates and not as gloomy as it is often painted. Can I wrap it up saying? Bhārat bhāgya vidhāta” - India is the next world leader.

Volume 2 Issue 11 November 2018

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