

DENTAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND RESEARCH

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India is credited with the creation of the largest pool of dental manpower in the entire world with over 309 recognized dental institutions with over 27,000 BDS and 6,200 MDS seats alone. The capacity build has however, not created any perceptible impact on research or effectual improvement in oral health of the 1.3 billion citizens. The contribution of the dental profession to both national as well as international pool of literature is negligible. India's performance based on its publication output in dental sciences, which is based on several parameters; including the country annual growth rate, global publication share, national publication output, average citations per paper, international collaboration output and share, and contribution of major collaborative partners, leaves a lot to be desired.

In July 1999, the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research (NIDCR) convened a Blue-Ribbon Panel that recommended, management skills, entrepreneurship, and technology transfer to be included in dental education curriculum (National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research, 2000), however, nothing much has been achieved in this regard. This lacuna in the dental education system has resulted in inadequate scientific contributions from the country and thus little advancement in the area of dental research.

Clove Dental, India's Largest chain of dental health entrepreneurship is essentially a venture where someone is willing to risk finances and understand the dental health care market inside out to develop a clear vision about the future business and work hard for a lengthy amount of time to succeed. If we are interested in entrepreneurship in dental health, we also need to understand and appreciate the role and limitations of new and developing technologies, on-going regulatory issues

and identify the skill sets required to build a great team of workers.

In Clove Dental where more than 350 state of the art dental clinics are working 24x7 pan India providing employment to more than 900 BDS/MDS professionals (higher than any state or private dental service providers, including the Indian Armed Forces). The experience and evidence gained after treating a vast clientele in a comparatively short span, in which are included about 23,000 dental implants, 12000 orthodontic cases and 1.3lack of root canal treatments to mention a few; Clove Dental is now venturing in the field of dental research, and sharing its experience through publication of their own scientific journal. This is very credible for a private company in dental field with zero government support.

The idea to conduct evidence-based innovations and research making dental treatment more scientific based, affordable and patient specific is laudable and praiseworthy.

About the Author

Prof. (Maj Gen) Awasthi, VSM, FICD (Hony.) is a renowned Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeon who started his professional career by obtaining the degree of MDS from Bombay University in 1976 and is a highly acclaimed scholar who has authored several scientific papers as well as books. He has held prestigious positions like Secretary, DCI; Director General of Dental Services, Army Dental Corps; and Professor & Head, Department of Dental Surgery, AFMC, Pune, before his retirement.

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