

Editorial

Mission statement

The journal believes in upholding the health needs of the mankind as the most important factor while publishing a research communication. TPDI is dedicated to publish articles to improve the knowledge, competencies and attitudes based on professionalism of prosthodontists in general and of the members of the sponsoring organisations in particular.



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Bullet points and standard of education

In one of the late evening discussion held at my department on final examination preparation, I asked my students to make a list of difficulties they would anticipate while writing the theory paper. They could not speak up immediately. I have asked them to close their eyes, think over it and then list the difficulties on a paper. The first difficulty they anticipated was in writing a well formatted essay in the theory paper. I insisted on a precise statement. The first difficulty was to memorise the numerous points to be included in an essay. The second was the difficulty in sequencing the different points. Third one was as usual the time management.

I told them that during my student days also we use to memorise points and these points were prepared after reading a chapter in a standard text book. The points were listed as per the sequence of subheadings that appeared in the text book. And we could elaborate each point into a meaningful paragraph because we never felt difficulty in descriptive writing of the answer. The present day student gets the points from the power point presentations that are available from the net. These points are memorized and listed on the answer book as 'bullet points'. Recently a great teacher Prof.M.S.Valiathan lamented that 'even super speciality answer books are full of bullet points' and it seems that medical professionals have lost the skill of descriptive writing. Present day students do not have the patience to read through the systematically written chapters of text books. Once postgraduate students have taken pride in reading at least three latest editions of text books on a singular subject but presently the students do not attribute much value to the knowledge obtained through text books.

I have discussed this matter with a few senior professors of our speciality. They have unanimously expressed their view that the present day students have lost their motivation to learn the subject because they are assured of a pass in the examination. Even the most brilliant student will not take the pains to read the text book if his mediocre classmate also gets the same mark in the examination. In the training front, teachers too have lost their motivation. There is a systematic destruction of seminars, journal clubs, library dissertation and the so called thesis. Lamenting on erosion of standards has become out of fashion now. Can we ever upgrade the standards of our postgraduate education?

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