

Some problems which need our attention

It is with a great deal of pride that I have been serving as the editor in chief for the journal since the past few years. We have managed to improve the regularity, quality and its indexation with PM&DC. Apart from personal effort I must thank the entire orthodontic community in helping the journal in every way they could.

We have never been in better time for orthodontics than we are today. We have more opportunities to do things for our patients with new materials and techniques than ever before. Our residents now have more training centers and more parallel programs in orthodontics, depending upon how they want to frame their future career. This has made orthodontics a most desired field of dentistry in Pakistan especially amongst female dentists which interestingly went through my eyes by reading a survey on resident's perception published in the current issue.

All this being said, the profession currently faces a number of problems and we must attend to it. It has been said that change is not optional, rather it's inevitable. Change is now rapid in our field both at the treatment level and at the education level. The system from the past has improved but now it needs to evolve. There is experimentation with new educational models without continuous evaluation of the programs. The system depends on individuals rather than a process. Government regulations and institutional restrictions place barriers between patients and those seeking to serve them. Orthodontic training at the undergraduate level as well as the postgraduate level needs to be well structured with an evaluation process. The ongoing talk of BDS being a five year program needs to be well thought of and we need to focus how to structure orthodontics for our potential general practitioners and consultants. I appreciate work of our colleagues who have proposed a structured model of postgraduate training which we have published as a special article.

I strongly believe that all these issues or problems are fixable or at least can be managed. But there is one factor that can sink us as a profession and cause administrative problems. I am referring to the public's changing perception of the dental profession at large, indirectly affecting orthodontics as well. In the recent years I see a majority of female dental undergraduate and postgraduate students. This shift of gender dentist demographics, social issues and drifting social values will affect us in the future.

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