

# Perspective of Clinical Teaching: A Gift or Skill to be Learnt, Saudi Arabia

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**Abstract:** ***Background:** Clinical teaching in dentistry is one of the most important components of dental education, and, therefore, sufficient consideration should be given to improve the approach to instruction; this will affect both students' results and clinical teachers. Clinical teaching has many advantages, as it focuses on contextual professional practice. Healthcare students are motivated by its relevance to their future jobs. It also helps students to think professionally, improves their clinical reasoning and skills and educates them on how to make decisions. **Objectives:** The current research study aimed at provides a good reason to focus more on dental teachers' training and support them to cope with the challenges and difficulties they face within their teaching arena within the study setting. **Method:** Descriptive research design utilized in the current research. It aims to provide a good reason to focus more on dental teachers' training and support them to cope with the challenges and difficulties they face within their teaching arena within the study setting. **Results:** the current research in relation to the providing a good reason to focus more on dental teachers' training and support them to cope with the challenges and difficulties they face within their teaching arena within the study setting. **Conclusions:** The researcher believe that identifying clinical teachers' learning and teaching needs is highly important when it comes to providing the appropriate support. This situation is not unique to a particular health college; rather, it is an issue at most health colleges in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.*

**Keywords:** Perspective of Clinical Teaching & Clinical teachers

## 1. Introduction

Despite these strengths, many problems can arise in the implementation of clinical teaching. For instance, clinical teachers' lack of experience and training can result in a host of challenges during their teaching. This provides a good reason to focus more on dental teachers' training and support them to cope with the challenges and difficulties they face. In contrast, a lack of interventions from health educators and academics interested in medical and dental education will lead to many challenges affecting both teachers and students.

Colleges of dentistry in Saudi Arabia have many clinical teachers; moreover, they recruit newly graduated general practitioners each year to serve as teaching assistants helping lecturers and professors in their teaching. Teaching assistants' duties include teaching, assessing students' work and giving feedback in simulation laboratories and clinics; however, they enter their jobs with little support. Specifically, these recent graduates of dentistry colleges generally have a paucity of experience in both working as dentists and teaching as academics. Meanwhile, although lecturers and professors may be good clinicians and experts in their specialties, most have no formal training in clinical teaching. This situation leads to difficulties in teaching and learning, especially for recent graduates who have teaching and assessment roles.

By considering the situation at healthcare colleges in Saudi Arabia in general and dental colleges in particular, it became clear that most teaching staff members start their jobs without any foundational training or courses on learning and teaching. Clinical teaching is extremely important for dental students, as it exposes them to the real dental practice that they will encounter after graduation. While good clinical teaching practice is multi-factorial, clinical teachers play a central role in the clinical teaching process. Thus, it is

critical to focus on the development of such teachers' teaching skills and to support them in developing the competencies and knowledge required for effective clinical teaching. (Sutkin et al., 2008).

In recent years, the Ministry of Higher Education has increased the number of dental colleges in Saudi Arabia. Currently, there are 27 dental colleges that offer a bachelor of dental surgery (B.D.S) degree, and multiple centres train postgraduate dentists in different dental specialities. As a result, the number of dental students has increased, which means that more dental teachers are needed. However, as a result, the dental colleges have started to fill teaching positions by recruiting clinical teachers with no teaching experience. In addition, the colleges have begun accepting applicants who have just graduated for dental schools as teaching assistants for laboratory and clinical courses. Such teaching assistants face many challenges and difficulties as they begin their teaching journey. Such rapid growth in both the size of dental colleges and the number of teaching assistants has placed more emphasis on the training in teaching and learning skills, especially for teaching assistants who have just graduated. The teaching assistants have just graduated from the college of dentistry and have been recruited into these positions. While they are not permitted to give lectures, they do teach in clinics and laboratory and engage in student assessment and the provision of feedback.

## 2. Methodology

The rationale for this paper emerged when I began teaching in a college of dentistry. Clinical teaching in dentistry is one of the most important components of dental education, and, therefore, sufficient consideration should be given to improve the approach to instruction; this will affect both students' results and clinical teachers. Clinical teaching has many advantages, as it focuses on contextual professional

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practice. Healthcare students are motivated by its relevance to their future jobs. It also helps students to think professionally, improves their clinical reasoning and skills and educates them on how to make decisions.

Despite these strengths, many problems can arise in the implementation of clinical teaching. For instance, clinical teachers' lack of experience and training can result in a host of challenges during their teaching. This provides a good reason to focus more on dental teachers' training and support them to cope with the challenges and difficulties they face. In contrast, a lack of interventions from health educators and academics interested in medical and dental education will lead to many challenges affecting both teachers and students.

### 3. Results

The current research in relation to the providing a good reason to focus more on dental teachers' training and support them to cope with the challenges and difficulties they face within their teaching arena within the study setting.

The researcher believe that identifying clinical teachers' learning and teaching needs is highly important when it comes to providing the appropriate support. This situation is not unique to a particular health college; rather, it is an issue at most health colleges in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

The researcher have come to understand that my responsibility as a dental educator at a college of dentistry is to help teaching staff to develop their teaching skills. It is important to acquire knowledge regarding the challenges that teachers face and provide the appropriate support. Novice clinical teachers left without support may feel like failures, and the consequences of this extend beyond the teachers to educational organizations (Fantilli & McDougall, 2009). Darling-Hammond, (2000), found that well-prepared teachers have a significantly positive influence on their students' achievement.

Therefore, the researcher encouraged health profession teachers to identify the learning needs of clinical teachers; to offer clear insight into whether further research needs to be carried out in this area. In addition, the results may be used by the college as a component in guiding staff development and designing training courses for clinical teachers to acquire the necessary skills and knowledge to increase their clinical teaching effectiveness.

### 4. Discussion

The training and support that clinical teachers receive early in their careers should serve as a foundation upon which they can build throughout their working life. In the past, the principles of clinical teaching were learnt through experience; new doctors did not undergo training in teaching and learning. Rather, it was expected that dental teachers already possessed teaching skills. Yet, teaching, like any other skill, must be learnt (Ramani & Leinster 2008), and dental clinical teachers need to be prepared to understand their tasks, duties and responsibilities.

Furthermore, they require support and an environment in which their skills and qualities can be developed. Currently, support for clinical teachers related to learning and teaching is not a particular area of interest in health colleges in Saudi Arabia. Therefore, it has become clear that most staff members lack the fundamental skills and knowledge to maintain the optimum quality of clinical teaching.

Recognizing the abovementioned problem, health colleges have started, in the last five years, to establish medical and dental education departments to improve health education. These departments have focused on improvements in exam questions, assessment methods and curriculum, especially at the clinical level.

However, despite this aim, the department has not provided the teaching staff with a thorough training in clinical teaching or teaching in general. Whilst the department's efforts clearly represent an improvement over the system that was previously in place, it has focused on revising all exam questions and assessment methods.

This researcher perspective was demonstrated in the work of Aldawsari et al., (2015), who conducted the first study on this topic in Saudi Arabia. These researchers sought to explore Saudi teaching staff members' experiences in clinical teaching in the field of nursing, and they found that nursing teachers face many challenges and that they struggle to fulfill their teaching roles and responsibilities.

### 5. Conclusion

The current research study aimed at provides a good reason to focus more on dental teachers' training and support them to cope with the challenges and difficulties they face within their teaching arena within the study setting. The current research in relation to the providing a good reason to focus more on dental teachers' training and support them to cope with the challenges and difficulties they face within their teaching arena within the study setting. The researcher believe that identifying clinical teachers' learning and teaching needs is highly important when it comes to providing the appropriate support. This situation is not unique to a particular health college; rather, it is an issue at most health colleges in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

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