

The Learning Environment as Perceived by Undergraduate Dental Students

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Abstract

Introduction: Dental schools today are challenged by the rising expectations of students for quality education and the need of building modern educational system. The purpose of this investigation was to study the students' opinion about the learning environment.

Methods: A self-administered questionnaire was distributed to 250 dental students from the Faculty of Dental Medicine of the Medical University of Sofia, Bulgaria. The respondents were men and women, from 1st to 5th year, between 19 and 25 years of age. The students were asked to evaluate the teaching methods, the social presence of their professors, their aspiration for studying, including lecture courses' attendance, self-directed learning methods. The profile of the respondents was expected to detect certain interdependence between age, year of education, background education and professional continuity in the family and the opinions on learning environment. Data were treated statistically using SPSS 19. Statistical significance was proven using cross-tabulation with respect to sex and year of study and Chi-square independence test at 95% confidence interval (95% CI) with standard normal distribution approximation. Only statistically significant differences ($p < 0.05$) had been discussed.

Results: Response rate was at 64%. 1. Most of the students accept the lectures as a necessary form of teaching (45%) when being able to choose the lecturer (33.0%). They consider the seminars as a quite effective form of control (87.5%) if applied in coordination between departments (61.25%); Students find that examinations criteria need improvement (56.25%). 2. The technical conditions for practical training are perceived as good enough by 58.0% of students, but the conditions for relax, self-directed studies, sports, art, as very insufficient (64.6%). 3. Only 18% of students report that they feel respected by the teachers as equal and 58.75% felt at least once disregarded by a teacher. About 69% report to have got answers from teachers upon having asked them, but few find the interaction satisfactory. The professional attitude of 40% of the teachers according to the students' opinion is closer to the definition of "craftsmanship" rather than "professionalism". 4. Students consider the attitude of the students' office secretaries as very friendly but inefficient because of the lack of timely information by the deanery.

Conclusion: 1. Contrary to the expectations, students were willing to attend regularly the lecture courses and appreciated high quality of lecturing. 2. They demonstrated a mature critical attitude towards the teaching process, the teachers, and the institution. 3. The close cooperation with teachers was valued while the lack of consideration was not tolerated. 4. Dental students' expectations for facilities for self-directed studies, practical training and rest are not yet met. 5. Their criticism has to be taken into consideration in order to achieve improvement of the learning environment and excellence of dental education.

Keywords: Learning Environment; Dental Studies; Students/Teachers Interaction

Introduction

Dental and medical schools today are facing the challenge of ever changing equipment and advanced technology market, as well as the raising expectations of students, profession and society for quality education. In some cases technical improvements are perceived as the unique way of modernization and reforms of medical and dental education [1]. New multimedia application facilitates students to easily visualize difficult concepts, development of processing power and storage capacity assist them to find diverse sources of information.

Numerous applications synthesize the new material and thus boost memory efficiency in information storage [2]. Recent research has discussed the opportunities associated with the use of social media tools in the classroom but has not examined the students' perceptions of its usefulness in enhancing their educational experience [3].

The role of the curriculum and the teachers is to transform the multilevel and multisource information into sustainable relevant professional knowledge and abilities. Therefore, the learning environment comprises not only technical devices but also other elements, such as adequate programs and systems of knowledge assessment and efficient communication, stimulating the achievement both of the organization and its members [4].

In addition, the human touch (only available in face to face communication) is still important for medical/dental education. Both the practice of dentistry and the dental education are closely related with people interaction.

Last but not least, dental education includes theoretical and practical subjects, which have to provide the students with the necessary preparation for an autonomous dental practice [5].

The new educational philosophy enhances the active participation of students in the teaching-learning process [6]. Institutions of higher education recognized the value and the importance of collecting information about their development and the satisfaction of students, teachers and staff with the work conditions and the feeling of support and recognition [7].

Apart the provision with adequate conditions, giving multiple sources, tools and methodologies for learning, the active participation of dental students have to be assured rather than a passive transfer of knowledge [1,10,11].

Therefore, a broader and deeper vision on the learning environment elements is needed and a focused discussion on these issues including dental school's leadership and the professor/ student interaction is to be studied. The advantages and disadvantages of traditional and new educational methods will be detected [8].

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the learning environment effects on the teaching/learning process and how it is perceived by the undergraduate dental students. In addition, this article hopes to clearly identify major types of problems that could occur in the university and/or compromise the efficiency of the educational process.

Materials and Methods

A self-administered questionnaire was distributed to 250 dental students from 1st to 5th course. The questionnaire includes 39 closed and semi-closed questions to collect information about the opinions of dental students on the forms of teaching, forms of learning, perceived strength and weakness of teaching environment with stress on the interaction between teachers and students, organized as 4 topics of interest (1. Students' involvement in traditional form of teaching/learning; 2. Technical premises for the teaching/learning process; 3. Student-teacher communication; 4. Interaction between the students and the institution) and personal information (1. Socio-demographic data; 2. Individual development and achievements of students). Data were treated statistically using SPSS 19. Data were treated as multinomial distributions depending on the number of possible answers for each question: $CI_{95\%} = r \pm z_{0.025} (s. e.)$ $CI_{95\%} = r \pm z_{0.025} (s. e.)$. The chi-square independence test was performed on the whole data as well as on the different subgroups according to sex and year of study. The structure of the sample follows the structure of the general population of students: men: women ratio 42.5%:57.5%. For all the tests for statistically significant results, we fixed the alpha risk at 5% with a bilateral hypothesis. Only statistically significant differences ($p < 0.05$) had been discussed.

Results and Discussion

Response rate was at 64% (Table 1).

The first set of items evaluated the students' involvement in traditional form of teaching/learning (questions 1, 2, 3 and 4). There was no statistically considerable difference in the distribution of answers by sex, either by years of study (Table 2).

Responses of the Questionnaire			Undergraduate Students of FUNS Sofia		
	Men	Women	Sum	Year	Number of students
I Year	11	11	22	I year	181
II Year	16	27	43	II year	176
III Year	13	26	39	III year	160
IV Year	7	16	23	IV year	148
V Year	15	18	33	V year	140
Total	62	98	160	VI year	149
				Total	954
				Response rate: 64%	

Table 1: Response rate and distributions.

Q1	Do you regularly attend lectures?	p > 0,134268224
Q2	Do you agree that the lectures' attendance should be mandatory?	p > 0,94459407
Q3	Why do you attend the lectures?	p > 0,9305309
Q	Do you consider the lectures useful?	p > 0,0730559

Table 2: Students' involvement in traditional teaching/learning.

Both men and women reported to be equally interested in attending lectures and equally find them useful depending on the subject. Most of students consider that attending lectures make sense depending on the lecturer (67.5%) - 60.2% for women and 74.80% for men. Without statistical difference by sex (Q3) 74.00% of the respondents (67.00% men and 81% women) reported they would attend lectures if they found them interesting and engaging, and only 13% would attend to obey the rules.

Most of students share the opinion that lectures' attendance should not be obligatory (55%) with some statistically significant difference according to the year of study, demonstrated by p-values as follows: for 2nd year p < 0.05, for 3rd year p < 0.001 and for 4th year p < 0.0003. This difference may result from the fact that the student schedule in 2nd, 3rd and 4th year is significantly more crowded compared to the first and the final years' schedule.

Most of the students accept the lectures as a necessary form of teaching (45%) when being able to choose the lecturer (33.0%). The majority of students think that the benefits of attending lectures depend on the specific teacher. According to 54.3% of the respondents the didactic ability of certain lecturers does not correspond to their expectations. This affects their interest and the attendance rate. However, only 1.8% responded that the lecture courses are a waste of time (Figure 1).

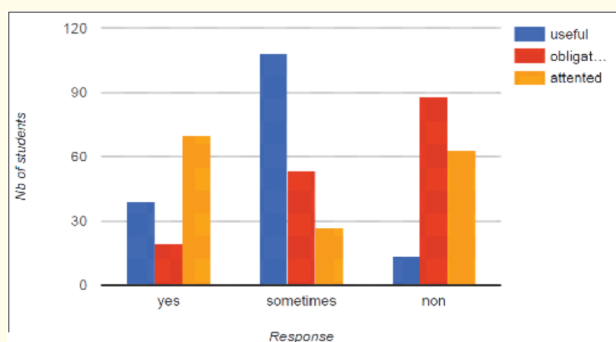


Figure 1: The role of the lectures as a traditional form of teaching (positive answers to Q1, Q2 and Q3).

Questions (Q5, Q6, Q7, Q8, Q11, Q12) evaluated professors' methods of teaching and communication as a vector of promoting and applying traditional and/or digital learning approaches. Most of students (65.00%) reported they are encouraged to consult supplemental materials ($p < 0.016$) relevant to the formal course in Bulgarian and in English. However, some students think that the material base of the university and in particular the number of available textbooks in the library is insufficient to promote supplemental learning [9].

Highly disturbing is the fact that less than a third of respondents found the knowledge they receive at the university applicable in the further professional practice. This could be interpreted as inadequate organization of curriculum and material content. But given the consistency of the material taught with the other European universities curricula, this is more likely to be an indication of a significant problem in students' priorities. Students fail to associate the acquired knowledge with real situations and have just faint traces of abstract knowledge in their minds that they could not implement in reality [10]. The most satisfied with the practical education are students in second year, and less satisfied are students from fifth year.

Questions (Q15, Q16, Q17, Q18) consider the assessment of knowledge. Most of students (87.50%) perceive seminars as a quite effective form of control if applied in coordination between departments (61.25%). Their criticism is focused on the lack of clearly defined model of grading and the lack of consideration of the systematic efforts during the semester as current assessment does not impact on the final grading. Students find that examinations' criteria need improvement (56.25%). It is observed that in general there is no difference in evaluation methods application from teacher to teacher [9,10].

Regarding technical premises for the teaching/learning process the students find the technical conditions in the Faculty of Dental Medicine satisfactory for completion of study assignments (58.00%). However the students are not satisfied with the conditions for creative work, self-directed studies, sports and relax (64.6%) (Figure 2). The highest rate of dissatisfaction is expressed by 2nd year students, probably because they face for first time the need to deal with the material base to complete their practical assignment in limited time letting access to classrooms and laboratory with a presence of a teacher.

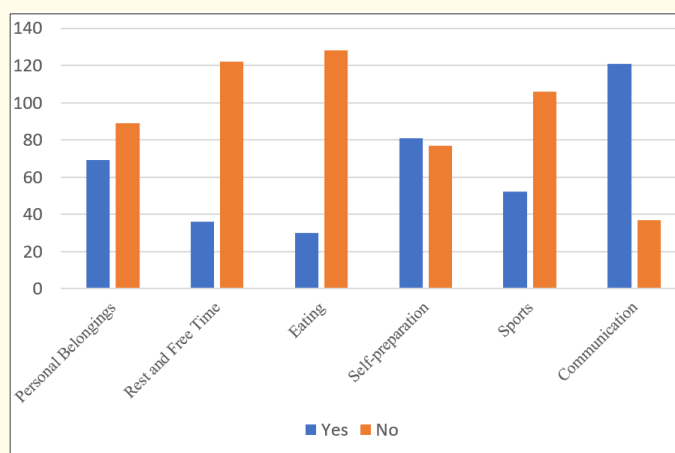


Figure 2: Students' perception of the space available for extracurricular activities.

Student-teacher communication

Students do not always feel treated with respect by the professors in their classes. Only 18% of students report that they feel considered as equal by the teachers and 58.75% felt ignored by a teacher at least once, 11.3% declared to had experienced bitter attitude. About 69% reported to had got answers from teachers upon having asked them, but only few found the interaction satisfactory. A strong statistical significance is observe with the answers to question 6th ($p < 0,0003$). This suggests that some professors do not set apart enough time to answer students questions, even though according to question seven, if asked, professors answer students' questions. This tendency is

conserved among students from different years study and we could not affirm a particular pattern in students' responses ($p < 0,585$). 87% of the respondents affirm that professors answer questions if asked, and only 13% are not satisfied with the attitude of teachers when they are asked to give a clarification on the material covered in lectures [7]. This obvious discordance in students' opinion may come from the fact that professors are willing to answer questions only during classes, and do not have the time to provide explications to not always relevant questions all the time (Figure 3).

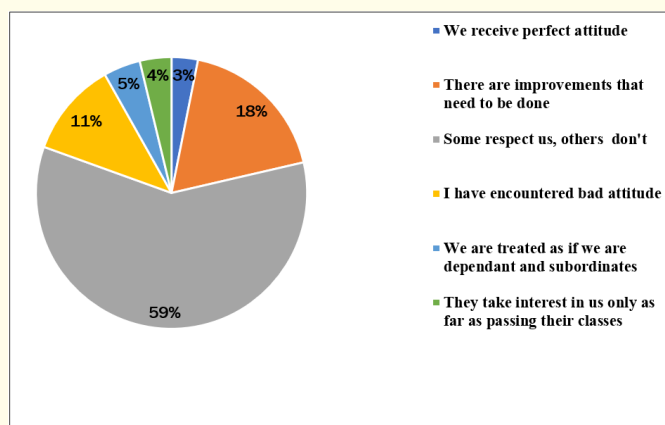


Figure 3: How do you perceive the attitude of teachers with you in school?

However, there are students who feel that they cannot get an adequate response, as teachers find answering questions time consuming and annoying and do barely agree to be involved in discussions beyond the usual time of the office hours. Some of students don't even ask questions by fear of rejection. On the other hand, there are students who think that they wouldn't get a proper answer because asking a tutor for his/her assistance could irritate him/her. The majority of respondents said that whenever they ask a specific question, professors give thoughtful and precise answer, though often students admit that they do not dare to ask questions because they feel intimidated and feel that their questions would unnecessarily waste the teacher's time. A small portion of students do not ask questions as they consider the responses received to be unsatisfactory and unable to meet their expectations.

Considerable part of respondents expressed the opinion that professors would not accept critique and/or recommendations from students (81% said no). It is disputable if this answer could be interpreted otherwise as conformity to the social hierarchy or the intimidating attitude of professors. Recent studies have shown that due to societal organization and the principles of hierarchy, humans do not permit themselves to criticize superiors [5]. Few teachers in the faculty would accept criticism as constructive as most students do not even dare to criticize because of the social distance between professor and student. While 35% claim that they would not criticize out of respect, this is not beneficial for the learning process and there is an evident need of necessary modification in the communication (Figure 4).

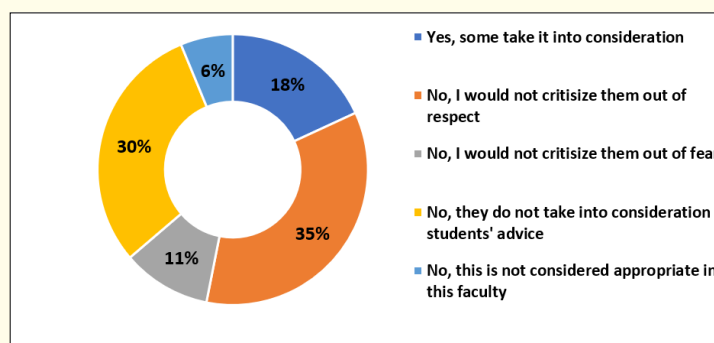


Figure 4: Do you believe that your recommendations or critiques would be taken into consideration by the teachers?

The professional attitude of 40.00% of the teachers according to the students' opinion is closer to the definition of "craftsmanship" rather than "professionalism" (Q8). There is a need of emphasis on the intellectual component of this profession. Although students clearly fail to appreciate the intellectual component of the work of dentists and 48% stand behind the statement that every decision is accompanied by a preliminary reflection (Q9).

Despite the problems identified in the communication between students and teachers, it appears that dental students highly value their profession, and according to 45%, it appears that some of their peers are even over self-confident. The most common manifestation of pride is among students from the third and fifth year, and those with the lowest self-confidence are second year students (Q9, Q10).

Almost 50.00% of the respondent expressed the opinion that the student-teacher communication is asymmetrical, predominantly defined by the teacher and the role of the student is passive (Q11). This affirms the need to modernize the teaching model. To a lesser extent, show the students satisfaction with equivalent relationships.

We asked students to define a "good teacher" (Q13). Most of them thoroughly defined him/her as accurate, competent, impartial professional who is open minded and precise in his work, one who shows empathy, even if he/she demands a lot of efforts from his/her students. They ranked like least professional (Q14) the teachers who show no interest in the learning courses and the students. The most negative trait of teachers is not paying attention to their students even they could let students easily pass the examinations [12].

Interaction between the students and the institution

Students consider the attitude of the students' office secretaries as very friendly but inefficient because of the lack of timely information by the deanery. They are usually polite, but the answers often delayed because of the faculty's board decision delay [6].

Highly disturbing is the fact that less than a third of respondents found the knowledge they receive at the university practical. This could be interpreted as inadequate organization of curriculum and material content. But given the consistency of the material taught in other European universities this is more likely to be an indication of a significant problem in students' priorities [8]. Students fail to associate the acquired knowledge with real situations and have just faint traces of abstract knowledge in their minds that they could not implement in reality. The most satisfied with the practical education are students in second year, and less satisfied are students from fifth year of education [9-11].

There is no detectable relation between the success of students and the profession of their parents. Students with one or two parents that are dentists do not show dramatically higher success or initiative with respect to others in matters of class attendance, participation in extracurricular activities or interests and creative arts [12,13]. High interest and knowledge of foreign languages are demonstrated by all the students. Most of students achieved language performance skills during their secondary education (about 40%), the rest are currently studying of (53.3%) or are intending to study in the future (14%). These statistics would be admirable if 62.6% of the respondents did not intend to apply this knowledge of foreign languages for jobs outside Bulgaria or for specialization abroad. This high percentage indicates high ambition and desire for self-development and successful career, but also appeals to improving conditions for the development of student of dental medicine and dental profession at home institution [6,12].

Based on the conducted statistical analysis we showed that regular in lectures and seminars is not necessarily related to higher achievements/grades. This could signal a disorientation and passive attitude that is reflected in a waste of time. It can be questioned the quality of their stay in class and its purpose. Students affirm the need to choose their sources of information and trainers. The possibility of organization of their own time and study program would increase the percentage of attendance of lectures and contentment from the time organization of seminars and practical activities. This would optimize the communication between students and faculty and professors, which will reflect overall satisfaction of students [10,11].

Conclusions

We conducted this study to give evidences about the relative impacts of traditional (face to face) and modern (digital) learning approaches as perceived by the students, in order to achieve a balanced learning environment. This work, based on the study of students' view on the important aspects of the learning environment, aimed to improve students/teachers communication in the learning process and to stimulate the active student participation in the teaching/learning process. Students demonstrated a critical attitude towards the

surrounding educational environment. They were actively assessing the methods of the teaching-learning process and the quality of their relations with the institution of the university and the teachers.

Contrary to the expectations, students were willing to attend regularly the lecture courses and appreciate high quality of lecturing. They demonstrated a mature critical attitude towards the teaching process, the teachers and the institution. The close cooperation with teachers was valued while the lack of consideration was not tolerated. Dental students' expectations were oriented toward the provision of facilities for self-directed studying or practical training, more space for relax and extracurricular activities. Their criticism has to be taken into consideration in order to achieve improvement of the learning environment and excellence of dental education based on a flexible high tech high touch approach.

Appendix 1: Questionnaire

Medical University of Sofia - Faculty of Dental Medicine

Student Research Society "Knowledge and aptitude"

Dear colleague,

The aim of this survey is to collect information about the students' opinion regarding the learning environment in the FDM of the MU-Sofia. Please choose the answer that fits best to your opinion and circle it. Some of questions may be answered using more than one possible option. Feel free to share your opinion or recommendations in the form of a short text.

The data will be processed and presented at the forthcoming International Congress of Students and Young Doctors of MU Sofia in May 2016.

Hopefully, the analysis will serve as guidance for teachers and students to improve the teaching-learning process and communication.

Your privacy is protected.

Thank you for your participation.

1. Do you regularly attend lectures?

- a/ Yes
- b/ No
- c/ I will, under certain conditions

2. Do you agree that the lectures' attendance should be mandatory?

- a/ Yes
- b/ Yes, if we have the option to choose the lecturer
- c/ No

3. Why do you attend the lectures?

- a/ Because they are useful and interesting
- b/ Because they are mandatory
- c/ Because I rely on the lecturer to help me with passing the final exam
- d/ Because I don't have anything better to do during the lectures' classes
- e/ I don't attend lectures
- f/ Other.....

4. Do you consider the lectures useful?

- a/ Yes, I find listening the lectures a very efficient way to memorize the material
- b/ Yes, it is easier to receive great volume of knowledge in a compact form
- c/ It depends on the lecturer
- d/ It depends on the subject
- e/ No, I acquire the knowledge I need on my own
- f/ No, it is primarily a waste of time

5. **Do your teachers encourage you to look for sources of knowledge different than their lectures?**
 - a/ Yes, but access to such sources is limited
 - b/ Yes, but I will look for if I find it necessary
 - c/ I do not need alternative sources for studying
 - d/ No. We are limited to rely only on the sources granted by the program
6. **Are your teachers treating you with empathy?**
 - a/ Yes, they are all treating us in an appropriate manner
 - b/ Yes, they are correct, but keep distance
 - c/ Some of them do, other do not
 - d/ No, most of them keep the distance
 - e/ No, they don't consider us as equals and treat us as subordinate
 - f/ They are interested only in ending the class
7. **When you have troubles in solving some problem do you expect your teacher will listen to you and will give you a comprehensive answer?**
 - a/ Yes, they are always open for cooperation and act beyond my expectations
 - b/ Yes, they answer to me but not every time in a clear and comprehensive way
 - c/ Yes, but usually I notice they are unconvinced and look bothered
 - d/ No, they let me solve the problems on my own
8. **Do you have the impression some teachers consider dentistry as being foremost craftsmanship rather than intellectual professional work?**
 - a/ Yes
 - b/ No
9. **To what extent do you consider dentistry as intellectual professional work?**
 - a/ In this occupation a lot of thinking is required before any decision is made
 - b/ In this occupation practical aptitude is more important than intellectual one
 - c/ In this occupation intellectual and practical aptitudes are equally important
 - d/ I can not decide
10. **Do you think students demonstrate yet professional self-importance**
 - a/ Some are even unreasonably self-important
 - b/ Students need to work a lot before meriting professional respect
 - c/ Yes, they are all proud to be doctors of dental medicine
 - d/ I think, we students, have to wait the patients to judge our merit
11. **Who is playing upon you more active role in the communication between teachers and students?**
 - a/ The teacher
 - b/ The student
 - c/ Both sides are equally active
 - d/ They have to have different importance in the communication
12. **To what extent is your opinion on the teachers' image influenced by the opinion of your colleagues?**
 - a/ I always share my colleagues' opinion
 - b/ I can form my opinion on my own
 - c/ I consider their opinion, but I make my conclusions on my own
 - d/ I try to be objective, but I am easily influenced by the others' opinion
 - e/ Sometimes the teachers are the source of common "legends"

13. **How do you define the teacher of your preference?**
- a/ Punctual, competent, objective, understanding
 - b/ Not that competent but hardworking and honest
 - c/ One that is not rushing us even though he might not be that competent
 - d/ One that is not so demanding and does not put poor scores
 - e/ Demanding, authoritarian, decent, good professional and understanding
 - f/ No such a teacher exists in our faculty
 - g/ other.....
14. **How do you describe the teacher that disappointed you the most?**
- a/ Always coming late and rushing to finish the class earlier
 - b/ Not involved in the work with us
 - c/ Teacher who puts poor scores
 - d/ Let poorly prepared people to pass the exams
 - e/ Boring
 - f/ His/her teaching is outdated, although he makes funny remarks here and there
 - g/ Other.....
15. **Do you think that the teachers are being impartial and righteous in examining the students?**
- a/ I hope so, after all they are professionals
 - b/ Not all of them, some are violating the standards
 - c/ Sometimes they are not fair
 - d/ No, most of them are not impartial at all
 - e/ This is not of their significance
 - f/ I am not sure
 - g/ I have never been treated unfairly but I have heard from my colleagues that some of them have been treated unfairly
 - h/ I have been treated unfairly
16. **Do you think that the teachers consent on the same material and are impartial in assessing the knowledge of students?**
- a/ Yes, most of them rely on the same textbooks and their criteria are equal
 - b/ No, usually they publish their own textbooks and they insist on their personal requirements
 - c/ It depends on the teacher, although they have their personal requirements, they usually appreciate knowledge and assess it fairly
17. **Do you consider the seminar control useful?**
- a/ Yes, it is a stimulus to study systematically
 - b/ No, it is unnecessary and unproductive labor
 - c/ Yes, but it depends on its planning
18. **Do you think that the seminar control take any part in forming the final grade of the course?**
- a/ Yes, it is a fair indicator for students' work throughout the semester
 - b/ It depends on the teacher, some of them do not consider them when forming the final grade
 - c/ No, nobody takes interest in them
19. **Are you satisfied with the material environment in the university? (mark each aspect with the preferred answer)**
- a/ For the proper execution of the study program: yes/no
 - b/ For self-tuition and self-preparation: yes/no
 - c/ For creativity and art and sports practicing: yes/no
 - d/ For excellence in dental services provision: yes/no

20. You are? (mark each aspect with the preferred answer or fill in the missing spaces)

- a/ Man/ Woman
- b/ Student in Course
- c/ Age.....
- d/ Graduated from high school, techniques related school, etc.
- e/ Parents involved in dentistry *(1, *2, *none)
- f/ Parents involved in medicine *(1, *2, *none)
- g/ Parents dental technicians, dental nurse *(1,*2,*none)

21. Your average grades from the last semester are.....

22. Do you find interest in any form of art?

- a/ Yes: drawing, painting, photography, poetry, dancing, knitting, etc.....
- b/ Yes: gigs, concerts, cinema, theater, opera, ballet, art exhibitions, etc.....
- c/ I rarely do this when I have someone to go with, when it is worth going, when I have the time
- d/ No, I don't have time
- e/ No, I am not interested in arts

23. Do you speak foreign languages and which ones? (2 answers maximum)

- a/ Yes, I learned in high school (French, English, Spanish, Russian, other.....)
- b/ I am studying now (French, English, Spanish, Russian, other.....)
- c/ I am planning to study (French, English, Spanish, Russian, other.....)
- d/ I do not find it necessary

24. Where would you apply your foreign languages proficiency?

- a/ If I am working abroad
- b/ If I am going abroad for a specialization
- c/ To communicate within multicultural environment
- d/ Using foreign literature
- e/ My work would require it
- f/ Communicating with foreign patients
- g/ Other.....

25. As a student in dental medicine, do you find your talents could be developed in the university?

- a/ Yes, there are a number of different activities
- b/ Yes, there are many opportunities, but I do not take advantage of them
- c/ No, I do not find it appealing and productive
- d/ No, there are no premises for

26. In what kind of extracurricular activities do you take part?

- a/ Module
- b/ Students research society
- c/ Students' council
- d/ Sports
- e/ Others.....
- f/ I do not participate in any extracurricular activities

27. What is your motivation for taking part in extracurricular activities?

- a/ I find it interesting
- b / Personal development
- c/ I need credits
- d/ Everybody does it
- e/ I am not interested but I am obliged to
- f/ I would rather take part in.....
- g/ I do not take part in any activities

28. Do you manage to work and study during the semester?

- a/ Yes, after classes
- b/ Yes, by skipping some lectures
- c/ It was very hard to coordinate both and I stop working
- d/ I do not have to work
- e/ I think it is enough that I am studying

29. Where do you work?

- a/ In the dental office of my parents'
- b/ In a dental office of a tutor of mine
- c/ In other dental practice
- d/ Other.....
- e/ I do not work

30. Do you do sports?

- a/ Yes, on a regular base
- b/ Yes, when I have enough time
- c/ No

31. Do you think that in the university you are granted with the facilities for sports?

- a/ Yes
- b/ Fairly
- c/ No

32. Do you manage to eat to your necessities at university?

- a/ Yes, the food is various and affordable in the school
- b/ No, I bring food from home
- c/ There is variety of food, but there is no place to consume it
- d/ Fairly, there is good food, but it is too expensive
- e/ No, it takes a lot of time to wait and I usually skip the lunch

33. What way of eating habits do you have?

- a/ Rational
- b/ Balanced
- c/ Prophylactic (diet)
- d/ Vegetarian: lacto/lacto-ovo/ lacto-ovo-vegetarian
- e/ Vegan
- f/ Raw
- g/ Imbalanced
- h/ According to my financial resources

34. Is there available space in FDM MU Sofia for:

- a/ Personal belongings: yes/no
- b/ Rest: yes/no
- c/ Healthy food: yes/no
- d/ Self-tuition: yes/no
- e/ Sports: yes/no
- f/ Communication: yes/no

35. What do you think about the available summer practice in FDM?

- a/ Useful and necessary
- b/ Necessary, but poorly organized
- c/ Waste of time
- d/ Depends on the occasion
- e/ Depends on the tutor
- f/ I can't decide

36. Do you find it easy to get information on different activities in FDM?

- a/ Yes, you can access this type of information from numerous sources
- b/ Yes, on the internet
- c/ Yes, from the students' council
- d/ No
- e/ I am not interested
- f/ I get information mainly from my colleagues

37. Do you agree that the administrative services in the FDM MU Sofia are organized in a manner to solve students' problems?

- a/ Yes, I instantly receive the needed help on every topic
- b/ Yes, being a bit insisting and demanding I get what I want
- c/ Yes, if it depends only on secretaries.
- d/ No, the administrative steps are poorly coordinated, I rarely receive the needed information on time
- e/ No, there is no officially declared reception time of the Dean's office for students
- f/ No, information about contest and other opportunities is usually poorly distributed and has bad-timing
- g/ I do not have a rules book and I am not sure whether the Board of FDM is completely righteous about it
- i/ information on the internet is poorly organized and out-dated

38. What are your immediate plans after graduation?

- a/ I plan to start my specialization as soon as I graduate in this same faculty
- b/ I plan to start my specialization as soon as I graduate in another faculty
- c/ I will start working and continue my professional development through short postgraduate trainings
- d/ At first I will open my practice, and after I will plan my further development
- e/ I will go abroad for work or studies
- f/ other.....

39. In which area of dental medicine do you plan to specialize?

- a/ General dentistry
 - b/ Conservative dentistry and endodontics
 - c/ Maxillofacial surgery
 - d/ Orthodontics
 - e/ Implantology
 - f/ Prosthodontics
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