Survey on Readership of Professional Journals among Malaysian Dentists

Part I: Readership of Professional Dental Journals

Ngeow WC. BDS, FFDRCSI, FDSRCS, Lecturer, Department of Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery, Faculty of Dentistry, University of Malaya, 50603 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Mohd Noor NS. Final Year Dental Students 2007. Faculty of Dentistry, University of Malaya, 50603 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Mohd Tahir NN. Final Year Dental Students 2007. Faculty of Dentistry, University of Malaya, 50603 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

ABSTRACT

The objective of this survey was to understand the current trend of readership of professional dental journals among Malaysian dentists. A total of 225 questionnaires were sent out to Malaysian dentists who attended various dental related conferences throughout Peninsular Malaysia from February 2006 to July 2006. Questionnaires comprised of questions relating to dentists' socio-demographic status and a list of journal(s) read by them. Malaysian dentists' view on the content and quality of a particular dental journal, i.e. the Malaysian Dental Journal (MDJ) was also enquired. The details of this finding are highlighted in Part II of this study. A total of 156 questionnaires were returned; the respondents were made up of 61 male and 91 female dentists. Almost 80% of the respondents aged between 20-49 year-old and most respondents (n= 132; 88.62%) only had a basic Bachelor of Dental Surgery or equivalent degree while another 19 (12.18%) had in addition, a post-graduate degree. Almost equal numbers of respondents were working in the Ministry of Health (MOH) or Armed Force (n=73; 46.8%) and private practice (n=74; 47.4%). Also, equal number of respondents (n=67; 42.95%) were found to be working as single-handed practitioner and in a partnership/assistant/working-with-other specialties type of practice Almost two-thirds (n=103; 66%) of the respondents read more than one professional journal, and a majority of them worked in the private sector. The percentage of readers reading more than one journal from the private practice (n=67, 60.0%) was close to twice of that from the MOH (n=36, 35.0%). No specific age-group pattern was present but the least number of subscribers were from those 60 year-old and above (n=3), whereby none of them subscribed to any professional dental journal/magazine. The highest percentage of subscribers were from those in the age group of 40-49 year-old, whereby 86.49% (n=32) of dentists in this age-group subscribed to at least one professional dental journal/magazine. Out of the list of journals/magazines provided, it was found that the MDJ has the most number of readers. The MDJ was most read by dentists in the private practice while the Annals of Dentistry of the University of Malaya was most read by dentists in the MOH. In conclusion, it was found that almost two-third of the respondents read more than one professional journal, with the MDJ receiving the most number of readers. More dentists in the private practice read professional dental journals than dentists in the MOH.

Keywords:
dental journal, readership, survey, continuing professional development