

The Dental Workforce in Malaysia

Career Motivation and Expectations Amongst
Senior Dental Students

Muhd Firdaus Che Musa



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Contents

<i>Preface</i>	vii
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	ix
<i>List of Tables</i>	xi
<i>List of Figures</i>	xiii
<i>Abbreviations</i>	xv
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
Chapter 2: Research Background	13
Chapter 3: Aims and Objectives	30
Chapter 4: Methods and Methodology	31
Chapter 5: Findings	42
Chapter 6: Discussions	71
Chapter 7: Conclusions and Recommendations	83
<i>References</i>	87
<i>Appendices</i>	103
<i>Appendix 1:</i> Top five 'very important' motivations in multiple response items, based on the students' characteristics	103
<i>Appendix 2:</i> Top five 'very important' motivations in multiple response items based on schools' characteristics	104
<i>Index</i>	105

Index

3D imaging 4

A

academic literature 79
admission committees 22
Affinity models 25
ageing 2, 5, 77, 84
A Level 21
altruism 19, 72
aptitude tests 21
attractive salary 14

B

balanced distribution across the
sectors 84
Bandura's theory 18
biomaterials 4
Bonferroni correction 40-41, 56

C

Canada 3-4, 24, 87, 93-95
career development 11, 18, 24
career goals 57, 61-62
career pathway 57, 73
cognitive 21-22, 75
cohorts of graduates 81
comparative fit index 38
compulsory dental services 59
Confirmatory factor analysis 37
consent forms 35
consumerism 5

D

Dawis and Lofquist's Work
Adjustment theory 17
decayed and filled teeth (dft) 3
decayed, missing and filled teeth
(DMFT) 3
Dental Act 6, 8, 89, 96
dental admissions test 21
dental auxiliaries 5
Dental Care Professionals 5, 89
Dental Corps 7, 11
dental education 9, 11, 16-17, 21-22,
71-72, 83
dental moratorium 84
dental schools 1, 4, 7, 9, 15, 17, 20,
22, 28, 34-36, 39, 42-43, 46,
54, 69, 72-73, 80-81, 83, 85
dental surgery assistants 6
dental technicians 5
dental therapists 5-6, 8
dental workforce
globally 13
in Malaysia 5
production of 15
retention of 23
dexterity 21
direct access 8, 16
Division 1 Dental Practitioners 7

E

Economic incentive models 25
Emigrating 60

epidemiological surveys 3
 Exploratory factor analysis 37

G

Gallagher Motivation Instrument 33
 geriatric module 84
 goodness-of-fit 38-39, 48, 50

H

health outcomes 23, 27
 health services research 1
 Health workforce planning 27
 Higher School Certificate 21
 Holland's Theory of Personality 17
 human resources for health 13, 27
 human rights 76

I

Indenture models 25
 independence 6
 India 10, 15, 87, 95, 99, 101-102
 Indices of Fit 50, 52
 individualism 5
 Indonesia 10, 16, 101
 Information sheets 35
 internal consistency 34, 44, 80
 International Recruitment of Health
 Personnel 26

K

King's College London 31
 Krumboltz Social Learning theory 18

M

matriculation programme 21
 maximum likelihood estimation 38,
 48

Middle East 10, 15, 35, 74
 models of care 13
 mode of entry 19
 monetary benefit 24

N

nanotechnology 4
 National Household Income Survey
 34
 needs/demand 84
 non-cognitive 22

O

odonotological 17
 oral cancer 3
 overseas trained 24, 84
 overseas training 11
 oversupply 84-85

P

Parson's Formula 17
 pension 14
 periodontal pockets 3
 person-environment 17-18, 79
 policies 1, 26-28
 post-graduate plans 57
 postgraduate training 8, 10-11, 14, 77
 practice 8, 14, 25, 27-28, 61, 63, 76,
 78, 85
 Practice characteristics models 25
 privatisation 84
 professional career 17-19, 30, 33, 42,
 44, 46, 75, 83
 professional development 13, 17, 20,
 23, 67, 70, 79, 84
 professional training 24
 psychological contract 79

Public Service Department 8

R

recruitment 10, 13, 17, 21-22, 24-27,
75, 79

retention 4, 13, 17, 23-27, 79

root mean square error of
approximation 38

S

sabbatical leave 11

sample size 38

scheme and incentives 14

secondary/tertiary dental care 84

Second Order of Five-factors Model
49

small practice 78

socio-economic backgrounds 43

South China Sea 2

specialisation 10, 16, 61-63, 70, 75,
76-79, 83-84

specialising 76-77

specialist training 57, 75, 77, 84

Statistical Package for Social
Sciences 36

stomatological 16

sub-specialities 11

Super's Development theory 17

T

team setting 78

tooth loss 4

travelling plans 60

treatment-based approach 77

tuition fees 10

U

undersupply 85

United Nations Sustainable
Development Goals 13

university admission test 21

University of Malaya 9, 11, 34, 36

V

validated instrument 80

Vision 2020 72, 93

W

workforce governance 23

workforce maldistribution 15

working conditions 24

Working session 64

The Dental Workforce in Malaysia

Career Motivation and Expectations Amongst Senior Dental Students

The aim of this book is to present findings on motivation and short- and long-term career expectations of dental students in the selection of dentistry as a professional career in relation to individual (demographic and socio-economic factors) and school characteristics and make recommendations for the future in relation to serving the population. Three hundred and fifty six final year dental students (83%) across eight schools (73%) responded, comprising 66% of final years in Malaysia in 2013. There were five motivational factors reported with 'academic' factors emerging as students' main motivation to study dentistry. There were some differences in motivation by school sector; either public or private and ethnicity. There is however no variations by sex, family income, age or the school type (established or new). Career expectations focused on specialisation in the short- (46%) and long-term (59%) for students, with a desire to achieve financial stability and work/life balance. The majority of all respondents (64%) reported a desire to work in the private sector. Only 66.9% of respondents considered working full-time in the long-term with significant difference by sex [male (77.7%) and female (62.5%); ($p=0.036$)].

MUHD FIRDAUS CHE MUSA is a lecturer at the Dental Public Health (DPH) Unit in the Department of Dental Public Health and Pediatric, Kulliyah of Dentistry. His research interests focus on shaping the healthcare workforce to meet the needs of the population, with a strong emphasis on promoting oral health and preventing disease, particularly amongst vulnerable groups. He is currently exploring the motivation and career expectations of the dental team in a range of different types of workforce cadre in the country, skill mix, work delegation of public-private sectors, district registration and planning human resources for oral health.

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