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**INDO AMERICAN JOURNAL OF
PHARMACEUTICAL SCIENCE**<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.819543>Available online at: <http://www.iajps.com>**Research Article****A STUDY OF AHVAZ JUNDISHAPUR UNIVERSITY OF
MEDICAL SCIENCES DENTAL STUDENTS' INTEREST
TO PURSUING A SPECIALTY ACCORDING TO THEIR
DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION****Abdolreza Gilavand***Employed Expert on Faculty Appointments, Department of Education Development
Center, Ahvaz Jundishapur University of Medical Sciences, Ahvaz, Iran**Abstract:**

Today, the changes in the expectations of the society from the dentists and the need for higher quality dental services have renewed the interests of people to pursue their education in the field of dental sciences. This study has tried to examine the degree of the students' interest at Jundishapur University of Medical Sciences (AJUMS) to Pursuing a Specialty in the field of dental sciences according to their demographic data. This study is descriptive-analytical and has used a cross-sectional method of analysis during March 2015. The research population includes 484 of Professional Doctorate\ (General) of dentistry students in the field of dental sciences at the university. Sampling was done by survey and questionnaire. Among all the students, 118 from the Faculty of Dental Sciences (tuition-free) and 58 from the Campus Unit (tuition-based) completed the questionnaire. To analyze the data descriptive statistics, frequency, frequency percentage, Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, and nonparametric mean comparison of Matt-Whitney U test in the SPSS software, version.21 were used. This study showed that 59% of the students are interested to continue their education (2.36±1.08). No significant difference between the students of the Faculty of Dental Sciences and Campus Unit (P=0.870) and between female and male students (P=0.291) was seen. The most important reasons include, achieving a better economic position, finding a better job, and having a better social status. The reasons for the lack of interest to pursue education include boredom and exhaustion, problems caused by the comprehensive exam, and employment immediately after graduation.

Keywords: Dental Sciences, Pursuing a Specialty, University, Students, AJUMS**Corresponding author:****Abdolreza Gilavand,***Employed Expert on Faculty Appointments,
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INTRODUCTION:

Certain reasons have made Dental Sciences a highly attractive field of studies for the applicants in Iran (1). Notwithstanding its attractions, Dental Sciences is one of the majors which may expose its practitioners to such diseases as HIV and hepatics in the clinical environment (2). The changes in the expectations of the society and the need for higher quality dental services have encouraged more people to choose this field of study. A study of the degree of the interest of university students to pursue their education in Dental Sciences along with an examination of the need for more dentistry centers can be greatly helpful in future educational programs. Technological and scientific advancements in the last three decades have significantly influenced all areas of dental sciences (3). Studies have shown that most Professional Doctorate| (General) not skilled in doing certain complex dental operations. However, this is usually solved as the practitioners become more experienced (4). Some of the factors, which affect the motivation, and interest of dentists as those who play a significant role in the general health of a society are social, economic, and cultural changes, which exert an indirect impact on the health system and the field of Dental Sciences (5). Many changes have occurred in the field of Dental Sciences in the last couple of years, including, the improvement in the science of dentistry (graduate and postgraduate), the increase in the number of female dentists (5-7), and the enthusiasm of the dentists to work in private organizations (8-10) in comparison to other fields of medical sciences. A study in America has shown that 76% of the dentists would prefer to work in private organizations; only 28% of the dentists work freelance (6). Studies have shown that students of Dental Sciences have a better psychological state because of the confidence that after graduation they would be able to find a job (11, 12). There is little research about the interest and motivation of Dental Sciences students to continue their Pursuing a Specialty (PhD) programs. Given the need in Iran for experts in this field, it is important to carry out a thorough research about the topic so that the Ministry of Health and Medical Education can use the results for designing new comprehensive programs. The assumption was that factors like gender, age, marital status, and semester do not play any role in the degree of motivation and interest of the students to pursue their education. Also, it was assumed that a high percentage of the students would like to continue their education. The results of this study can be greatly helpful in

improving and expanding the field of Dental Sciences. Mahmoud Hashemi (2001) has conducted a research about the motivation and interest of students at dental faculties in Tehran to pursue their education and has found out that 78/5 of the 438 students would prefer to continue their education (13). In a study by Hashemi et al. (2011) about the factors affecting the tendency of students of Dental Sciences at Kerman, Rafsanjan, and Zahedan faculties of dental sciences and have found out that 73% of the 302 students would like to pursue their Pursuing a Specialty (PhD) programs; the female students were more motivated in this regard. Some of the reasons for this include the need for employment at the university, recommendations by the family, and interest in communicating with people. Among the most attractive branches in Dental Sciences are orthodontics, dental restorative, and tooth-pediatrics while oral diseases and social dental sciences are considered less important by the students (14). In a study by Vahid Dastjerdi et al. about the reasons for choosing Dental Sciences by the students at Shahid Beheshti faculty of Dental Sciences during 2009-2010, all the 116 assistant Specialty (PhD) applicants in different fields of Dental Sciences were examined by a survey method. Accordingly, the most important reasons for choosing this field of study were: social status and prestige, income, professional independence in the field, and personal interest in the field. Some of the future professional plans by the assistants included: working in private organizations, being employed as a faculty member, co-founding a dental sciences clinic with the colleagues (especially noted by the married applicants) (15). In a study by Sadeqi et al. (2012) about the motivation of the Dental Sciences students at Rafsanjan University of Medical Sciences to continue their education it was found out that 87/6% of the 137 students would prefer to continue their education in postgraduate levels. Some of the reasons for this were: improving clinical and scientific skills, achieving a better social status, and finding a better job. The most attractive fields of the study for the students included: orthodontics, maxillofacial, and dental restorative (16). Ahvaz Jundishapur University of Medical Sciences and Health Services is the modern institution of a university dating back to 1756 years ago, known as the first university of medical sciences. Currently, the university has 650 faculty members, 7000 students studying at different levels, and 15000 non-faculty member staff. It is one of the most prestigious and level one university according to the Ministry of Health

and Medical Education (1, 17, 18). The Campus Unit (previously known as Arvand International Unit) was founded in 2007 with the aim of giving the opportunity to more students to study via the process of national university entrance exam but based on tuitions which is in accordance with the policies of Ministry of Health and Medical Education and similar to the way other universities work.

Identifying the factors influencing the selection of Dental Sciences as a future profession is one of the necessary steps in designing successful educational programs for training skilled dentists and improve the quality of dentistry to meet the needs of the society. Determining the reasons for choosing this field of study can be helpful for the policy-makers in the area of academic dental sciences and for the health administrators. Given the fact that little research has been done about the interest and motivation of professional doctorate| (General) students of Dental Sciences to pursue their education this study was planned to examine "Ahvaz Jundishapur University of Medical Sciences Dental Students' Interest to Pursuing a Specialty (PhD) according to their Demographic Information."

METHODOLOGY:

This study is a descriptive-analytical one which uses intersectional analysis as its method. It was conducted in March 2015. The research population included 484 professional doctorate| (General) students in the field of Dental Sciences; 220 Dental Sciences students at Campus Unit (tuition-based) and 264 Dental Sciences students at the faculty of Dental Sciences (tuition-free). Sampling was done by means of survey and questionnaire. 118 people (45 male and 73 female) in the faculty of Dental Sciences and 58 people (22 male and 36 female) in the Campus Unit filled in the questionnaires. The validity of this researcher-constructed questionnaire was confirmed by the experts and its reliability was checked by Cronbach's alpha coefficient (0/89). The questions were arranged quantitatively from

1-4. The first section of the questionnaire included personal information, e.g. age, gender, occupation of the parents, type of acceptance in the university, education of the parents, and semester. The second section of the questionnaire included information about the motivations and reasons for continuing education in this field which was based on Likert-scale (1-4). This was designed to examine the motivation of the student at the faculty of Dental Sciences and Campus Unit in Ahvaz Jundishapur University of Medical Sciences to continue their education. The items included highly important (4 points), important (3 points), less important (2 points), unimportant (1 point). Higher points signified the preference to choose this field while lower points meant the lack of interest to pursue education. To analyze the data descriptive statistics, frequency, frequency percentage, Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, and nonparametric mean comparison of Matt-Whitney U test in the SPSS software, version.21 was used. Ethical consideration about the agreement of the participants and the permission from the university was observed.

FINDINGS:

59% of all the students would prefer to continue their education. No significant difference between the students at the faculty of Dental Sciences and Campus Unit ($P=0.870$) and between male and female students ($P=0.291$) were seen. In light of the findings and in general it can be noted that most Dental Sciences students would prefer to continue their education. Some of the most important reasons to continue education in this field include achieving better economic status, finding a better job, and having a better social position. On the other hand, some of the reasons for the lack of interest to pursue education are boredom and exhaustion, problems caused by the comprehensive exam, and employment immediately after graduation. The demographic information of the participants is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: The information of the participants

Variables	Tuition-free students	Tuition-paid students
	Number and percentage of individuals	Number and percentage of
Gender	***	***
Male	(45)-38.1	(22)-37.9
Female	(73)-61.9	(36)-62.1
Total	(118)-100.0	(58)-100.0
Native or non-native	***	***
Native	(76)-64.4	(37)-63.8
Non-native	(4)-35.6	(21)-36.2
Total	(118)-100.0	(58)-100.0
School year	***	***
1	(59)-50.0	(7)-12.1
2	0	0
3	(15)-12.7	(6)-10.3
4	(18)-15.3	(17)-29.3
5	(15)-12.7	(11)-19
6	(8)-6.8	(16)-27.6
No answer	(3)-2.5	0
Total	(118)-100.0	(58)-100.0
Age	***	***
Under 20 years old	(50)-42.4	(4)-6.9
21-25	(61)-51.7	(33)-56.9
26-30	(7)-5.9	(16)-27.6
31-35	0	(2)-3.4
36-40	0	(2)-3.4
41-45	0	(1)-1.7
Total	(118)-100.0	(58)-100.0

Table 2: Comparing the level of interest of the students to Pursuing a Specialty programs according to institute of education and gender

Institute	Male		Female		Mann-Whitney test	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	P	نتیجه
Faculty of Dental Sciences	2.33	1.00	2.33	1.12	0.94	تفاوت وجود ندارد
Campus Unit	2.68	0.99	2.17	1.08	0.07	تفاوت وجود ندارد
Total	2.46	1.00	2.29	1.12	0.291	تفاوت وجود ندارد

Table 3: The level of interest of the students to Pursuing a Specialty programs according to the institute of education

Institute	Mean of score out of 4	SD	Percentage
Faculty of Dental Sciences	2.33	1.07	58
Campus Unit	2.36	1.07	59
Total	2.36	1.08	59

Table 4. Comparing the interests of the students Pursuing a Specialty programs according to the institute of education

Faculty of Dental Sciences		Campus Unit		Result Mann-Whitney test	
Mean	SD	Mean	SD	P	Result
2.33	1.07	2.36	1.07	0.870	No difference

DISCUSSION:

In light of the results of the present study and in general, it can be noted that most Dental Sciences students (59%) tend to continue their education. This is in line with the studies done by Anderson et al. (19), Ireland et al. (20), Aldeligan et al. (21), Huil et al. (22), Mahmoud Hashemi (13), Hashemipour et al. (14), Vahid Dastjerdi et al. (15), and Sadeqi et al. (16). Some of the most important reasons to continue education in this field include achieving better economic status, finding a better job, and having a better social position. On the other hand, some of the reasons for the lack of interest to pursue education are boredom and exhaustion, problems caused by the comprehensive exam, and employment immediately after graduation.

It is necessary to conduct similar studies in professional doctorate| (General) Dental Sciences faculties at other universities to identify the causes behind the motivation of the students in choosing a field of study that best suits their skills and abilities.

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