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An Evaluation of the Dentistry Internship Program at Lúrio University: Lessons Learned and the Way Forward

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Summary

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Background

- Dentists trained at the Lúrio University, Faculty of Health Sciences should be equipped with competences and ethical values that allow them to act at the highest quality and standards;
- The final year of the **5 year training program** is an internship which aims to consolidate student gaps in knowledge and practical skills;
- The internship is understood as a process of practical experience, which brings the student closer to the reality of his field of training and helps to perceive several theories conducive to the exercise of the profession.

OBJECTIVES

In this session, we aim to present the effect of the dental internship program at Lúrio University, including lessons learned, challenges and the way forward.

The specific objectives of our work were to:

- Determine the activities developed by the students during the completion of the integral and vocational training;
- Evaluate the quantity and quality of endodontic treatments and resin restorations made by students;
- Compare the skills developed by the students before and after the Internship.

Methods

- We conducted a cross sectional study with a quantitative-qualitative approach involving 24 former dental students;
- Two questionnaires were administered to each student, one prior and another after finishing the internship program, addressing questions such as the number of restorations and treatments of radicular pulp;
- We also evaluated the students' logbooks to access tasks performed by them.



Methods

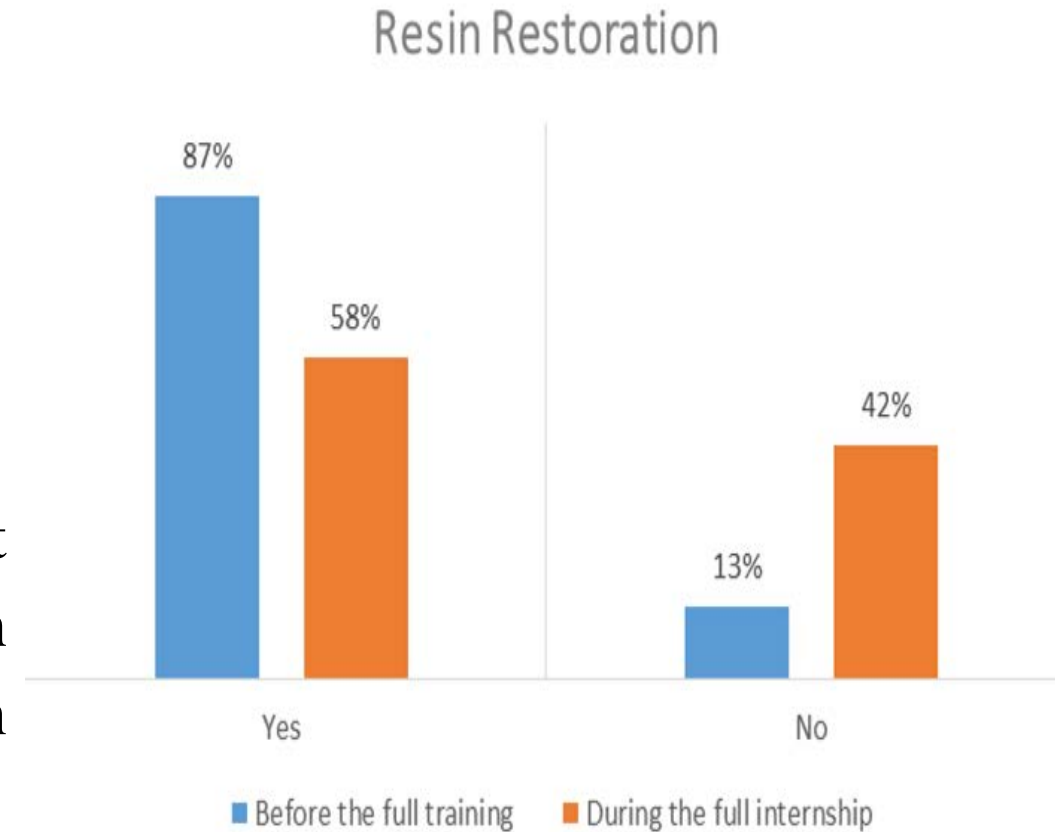
- Finally, a group of three core faculty members directly observed students performing endodontic treatments and resin restorations to evaluate their skills;
- The data analysis was done through the use of the SPSS 21 Program, for easy manipulation;
- The results were submitted to descriptive analysis and expressed in percentages.



Results and lessons learned

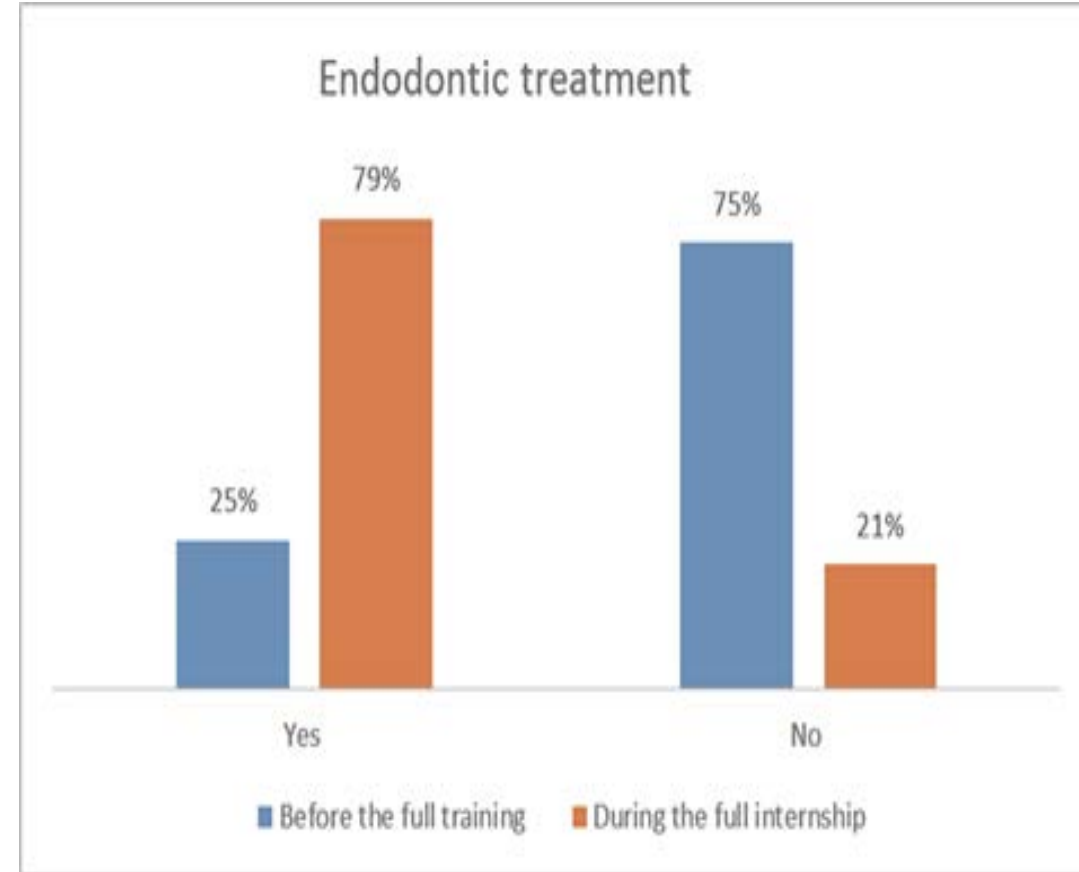
We found that there was a reduction of the number of students who did resin restorations and endodontic treatment during the internship from 21 (87.7%) to 13 (58.3%) and 5 (21%) to 3 (12.5%), respectively.

Among 21(87.7%) of students who performed at least one restoration during the training program with resin, 13(58.3%) had the opportunity to do it again during the internship.



Results and lessons learned

- Regarding endodontic treatments, only 5 (21%) students did endodontic treatments during their training and 3(12.5%) had the opportunity to do it again during the internship;
- Overall, among students who completed their training in 2015, 5(25%) went to the labor market after having performed at least one endodontic treatment, representing a drop in 21% for the period of internship.



Results and Lessons Learned

- The logbook does not indicate the objectives of the internship, no quantify the activities to be carried out by students in the different areas of the dental medicine.
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- While, some students attended more than 20 patients with diagnosis that allowed them to perform resin restoration, others didn't perform any restoration.

Conclusions and the way forward

- Although the internship program is meant to fill in gaps of the graduates before they go to practice, it fails to address its aims, as the students have less opportunity to practice during internship compared with previous training years.
- This in part is due to the shortage of faculties, simulation laboratory tools, and a lack of criteria regarding the number of procedures to be done by each student in each phase of training.
- Thus, it is urgent to invest more in the infrastructure so that the training programs run in parallel, thus ensuring the quality of dental graduates at Lúrio University.

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