

Relationship Between Student Stress and INBDE Pass Rates: A Study Among Three Dental Schools

Rates: A Study Among Three Dental Schools

Teresa Vu BSA; Nam Nguyen BS; Danielle De La Paz BSA; Rachel Novak PhD, MS

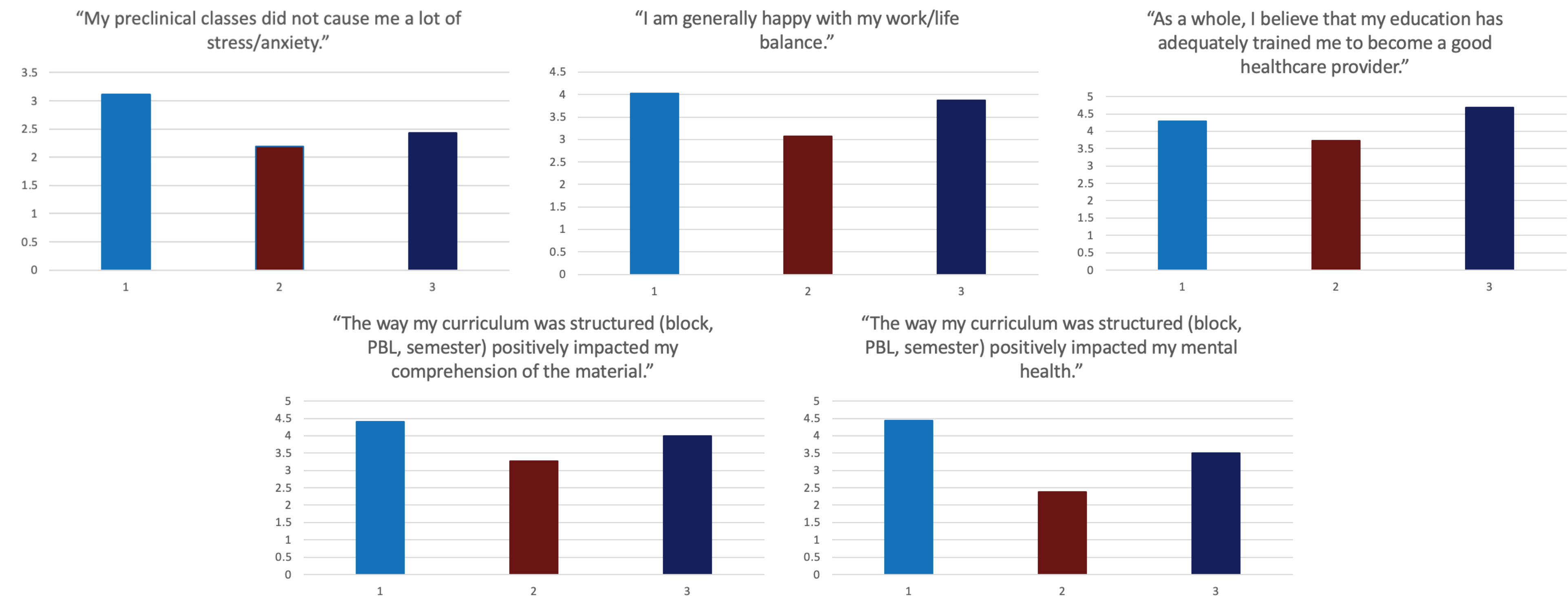
Purpose

Dental education has a reputation for being stressful and demanding. Many people believe that professional school programs must be filled with excessive levels of adversity. Using the Dental Environment Stress Questionnaire as the framework, this study will examine the relationship between the stress levels students experience during their preclinical education and pass rates on the Integrated National Board Dental Examination (INBDE).

Methods

Upperclassmen dental students at Roseman University (n=100), Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine, School of Dental Medicine (n=105), and University of New England, College of Dental Medicine (n=64) were invited to take an anonymous survey based on the Dental Environment Stress Questionnaire to examine the relationship between student stress during their predoctoral education and pass rates on the INBDE. The study was approved by the institutional review board of each school. The survey started by asking students to input their affiliated college, gender, age, race/ethnicity, marital status, the year of dental school in which the student passed the INBDE, the amount of time the student utilized to study for the INBDE, and after how many attempts did it take for the student to pass the INBDE. Participants in the survey were then asked whether they strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed, or strongly disagreed with statements regarding stress levels during preclinical education. Then, the students were asked to rate items on the Dental Environment Stress Questionnaire on a scale of 0 to 4. Finally, the students were able to answer an open-ended question in which they could describe how their experiences in the predoctoral program related to stress levels during preclinical education, stress levels during INBDE preparations, and INBDE performance.

Results



Conclusion

Our research indicates that the dental program curricular design did not lead to differences in INBDE pass rates. However, it does appear that curricular design may lead to significant differences in the levels of stress experienced by students during their preclinical education.

References

Dental Environment Stress Questionnaire: (38-item questionnaire that assesses stress specific to dental school: Garbee W.H. Jr, Zucker S.B., Selby G.R. Perceived sources of stress among dental students. J Am Dent Assoc 1980; 100: 853– 7. Modified by: Silverstein and Kritz-Silverstein. A Longitudinal Study of Stress in First-Year Dental Students. Journal of Dental Education 2010; 74-8: 836-848).

Future Research

Further research might include additional classes and universities and compare how a three-year curriculum could impact student stress versus a four-year curriculum.