DO STUDENTS’ PERSONAL AND EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES RESULT IN DIVERSITY-RELATED ADVOCACY?
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INTRODUCTION

The authors present the results of a study aimed at understanding the personal and educational experiences of dental students and how these experiences may influence their future advocacy for diversity in dental professions. The study was designed to explore the role of personal and educational factors in shaping students' attitudes and behaviors related to diversity in the dental field. 

Aims: The objectives of the study were to:
(a) assess current dental students' personal and professional diversity-related experiences,
(b) assess the attitudes and behaviors related to diversity in educational and workplace settings,
(c) assess the willingness to engage in promoting diversity;
(d) analyze the relationships between these constructs and other variables.

METHODS

The study used a survey methodology to collect data from dental students. The survey included questions about personal and educational experiences, attitudes towards diversity, and intentions to engage in diversity-related activities. The data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical methods.

RESULTS

The findings indicated that:
(a) dental students reported a high level of diversity-related experiences, with a significant proportion indicating they had participated in activities promoting diversity.
(b) students' attitudes towards diversity were generally positive, with a strong majority (90%) agreeing that diversity is important.
(c) the majority of students (75%) expressed a strong willingness to engage in diversity-related activities.

DISCUSSION

The results suggest that dental students hold positive attitudes towards diversity and are willing to engage in diversity-related activities. The study highlights the potential for dental education to foster advocacy for diversity in the dental profession.

CONCLUSIONS

The study's findings can serve as a basis for future research and policy development aimed at increasing diversity in the dental profession. The authors recommend further exploration of the factors that influence students' advocacy for diversity and the development of strategies to support student engagement in diversity-related activities.