



Student Perception About Dental Education in Color Science/Color Determination—3 Institutions

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1 = University of Minnesota; 2 = University of Illinois Chicago; 3 = Southern Illinois University;; 4 = Creighton University.

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Background

Restorative dentistry has evolved its focus from functional aspects to esthetic considerations due to the decline in caries prevalence^{1,2,3}. In response to the growing esthetic demand, color education in dentistry has progressed immensely. In 1968 the consideration for color in dental school curriculum was given 2.7 %⁴. In a more recent worldwide study, instruction on color in dental education was included in 80% of the curriculum⁵.

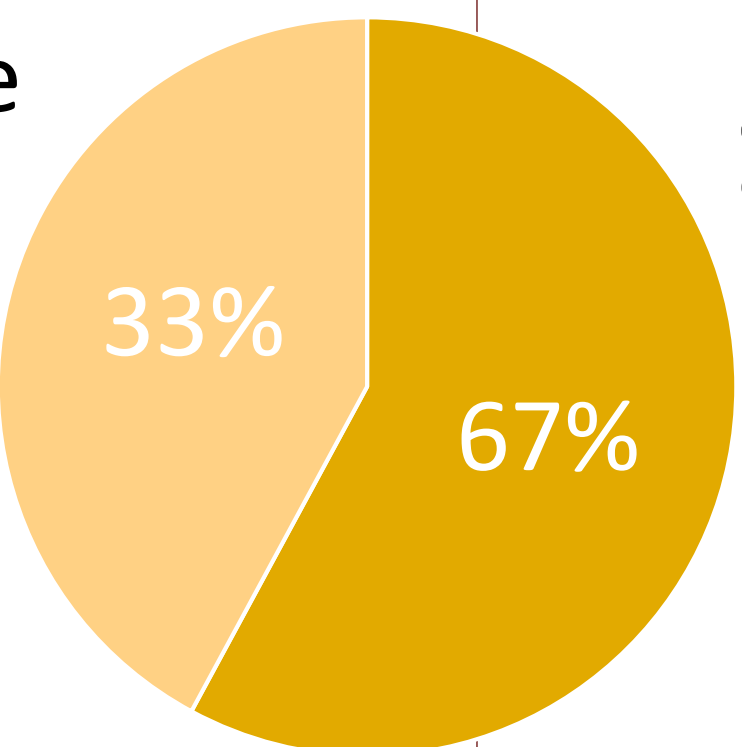
The purpose of this study was to investigate student opinion at three representative dental schools in the USA regarding the teaching and practice of color science at the predoctoral level, as well as the comfort level of the students in utilizing the information provided.

Study Design

3 dental institutions, 243 dental students:
University of Illinois Chicago, College of Dentistry;
Southern Illinois University School of Dental Medicine;
Creighton University School of Dentistry

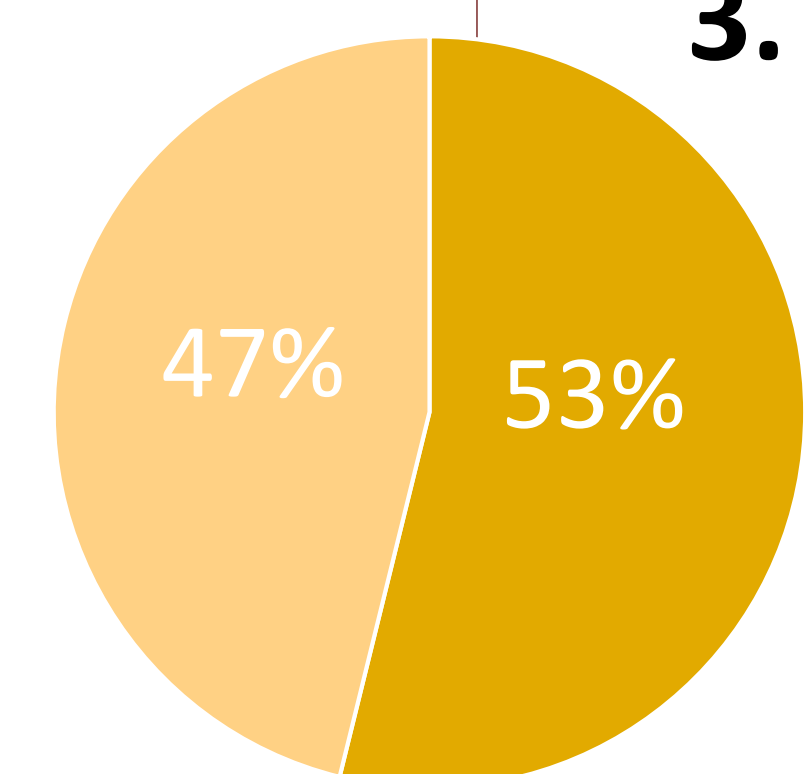
18 question, 5 topic dental survey
243 surveys, 196 received = 80% response rate

Completed surveys used to calculate frequency, percentage, average, and standard deviation for each category.



1. Shade Selection

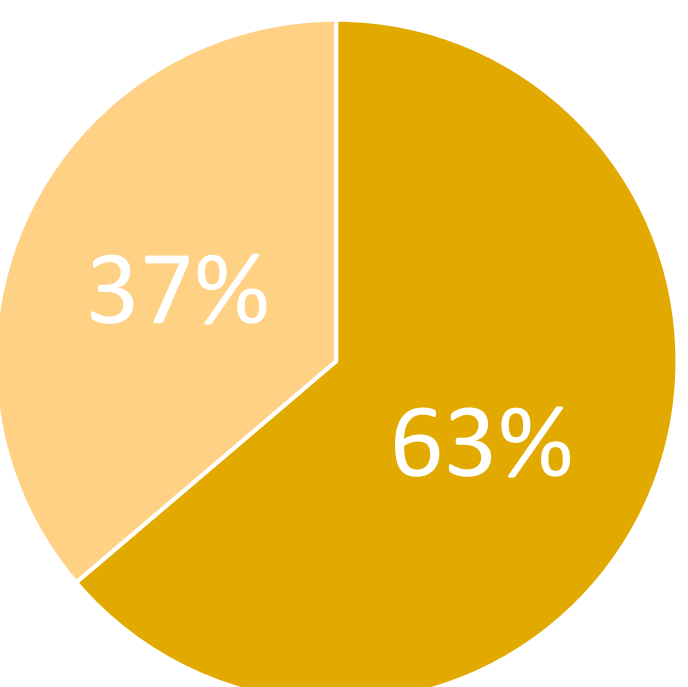
67% (132/196) felt they received adequate instruction
Almost all responders felt more than 50% of their indirect restorations were an excellent shade match quality



3. Custom Staining/Characterization

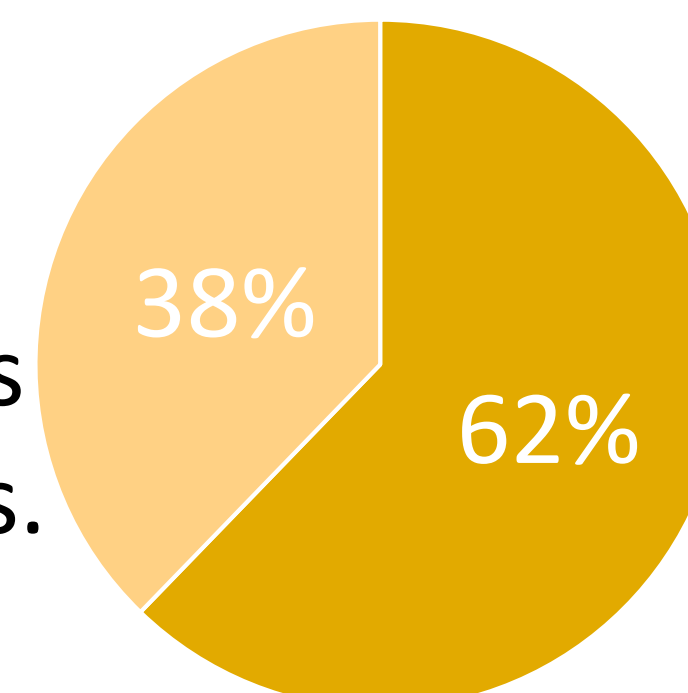
53% (105/196) received instructions but the confidence of in direct restorations was found to be low, with 73% of responders never having applied custom characterization for their patients.

Results



2. Intra-Oral Digital Photography

63% (125/196) felt they received adequate instruction
confidence in taking photos was deemed moderate with almost half the students using cell phone cameras for intraoral photos.



4. Communicating with Laboratory Technician

62% (122/196) received instructions in communicating with the lab with the confidence interval being moderate

5. Continuing Education

Majority of students interested in continuing education through CE courses.

Conclusions

- Most students felt adequately instructed in shade selection but were more confident with visual tools for indirect restorations.
- Intra-oral digital photography instruction was moderate, with many using cell phone cameras.
- Custom staining education was common, but confidence was low.
- Communication with technicians was through written or verbal methods, with moderate confidence.
- Students expressed interest in continuing education, favoring live lectures and demonstrations.

Future directions for study include broader surveys involving more schools and international perspectives.

References:

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