

## **Collaborative Learning within Clinical Pairing of Dental Students in University of Malaya**

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**Objectives:** This study was conducted to assess the students' understanding of collaborative learning and its relation to clinical pairing, to identify the perceptions and process of which collaborative learning takes place and to investigate the impact of collaborative learning within clinical pairing.

**Methods:** This cross-sectional study using a modified and validated questionnaire adopted from Ahmad et al (2012) involved 151 University of Malaya clinical year dental students. A self-administered questionnaire comprised of 5 sections with 57 questions were sent via Google form to all subjects. Data was collected and tabulated using (SPSS) Statistics software version 25.

**Results:** All 151 subjects (100%) responded. Most students (94%-97%) understood the definition of collaborative learning, clinical pairing and their relation as 92% agreed that clinical pairing is an example of collaborative learning. Almost all students (96%) perceived collaborative learning can increase the effectiveness of clinical pairing while effective communication skills and self-reflection were identified as basic elements of collaborative learning. Collaborative learning process were found to occur throughout the whole implementation of clinical pairing. For the impact, majority of the students agreed that infection control was improved however some reported conflicts between the clinical partners.

**Conclusion:** Collaborative learning and its relation to clinical pairing was well understood and perceived to have increased the effectiveness of clinical pairing by almost all the students. It was identified to occur throughout the whole clinical pairing setting and had both positive and negative impact on clinical pairing.

**Keywords:** Collaborative learning; Clinical pairing; Perceptions; Learning; Teamwork; Clinical environment