

## REVIEWER'S REPORT

Manuscript No.: IJAR-53432

Date: 20-08-2025

**Title: Bridging The Gap -A Focus Group Study On Need For Transformation In Dental Amalgam Usage As A Part Of Dental Curriculum**

### Recommendation:

**Accept as it is .....YES.....**

Accept after minor revision.....

Accept after major revision .....

Do not accept (*Reasons below*) .....

Rating	Excel.	Good	Fair	Poor
Originality			✓	
Techn. Quality		✓		
Clarity			✓	
Significance			✓	

Reviewer Name: Dr Aamina

### Reviewer's Comment for Publication.

The **abstract** provides a clear and structured overview of the study. It introduces the context by situating dental caries as a prevalent non-communicable disease and framing amalgam use as both historically significant and contemporarily problematic due to its mercury content and associated health and environmental hazards. The rationale for examining dental curricula is effectively justified, establishing the foundation for the study.

The **methods** section demonstrates rigor through the use of qualitative focus group discussions, incorporating a diverse range of participants including academic staff, clinical practitioners, students, management, non-teaching staff, and patients. This inclusivity strengthens the study by providing multiple perspectives. The choice of mixed purposeful sampling and thematic analysis is well suited to exploring perceptions and challenges surrounding amalgam usage. Validation of data by participants further enhances the credibility of the findings.

The **results** are presented in a clear thematic framework. Six key themes—knowledge gaps, environmental impact, teaching challenges, clinical use, disposal strategies, and curriculum reform—capture the breadth of issues surrounding amalgam usage. The balanced reporting of both supportive and critical perspectives on amalgam is noteworthy. Participants recognized

# International Journal of Advanced Research

Publisher's Name: Jana Publication and Research LLP

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amalgam's durability and cost-effectiveness while also acknowledging the disadvantages such as mercury toxicity, extensive cavity preparation, and aesthetic limitations. The highlighting of insufficient training in amalgam handling and disposal is particularly significant in demonstrating the gap between education and practice.

The **conclusion** draws together these themes to emphasize the necessity of curriculum transformation. The link to regulatory oversight by the Dental Council of India reinforces the practical importance of the findings. The argument for aligning dental curricula with contemporary practices and environmental safety standards is both logical and compelling.

The **key findings** section effectively summarizes the study's contributions. The recognition of a disjunction between theoretical knowledge and clinical practice is a critical insight, particularly in light of students' observations of increasing reliance on composites. The concerns about mercury toxicity and environmental hazards are consistent with international efforts to phase down amalgam use, situating the study within a broader global discourse.

Overall, this manuscript provides a well-structured, methodologically sound, and contextually significant contribution to the discussion of dental education and restorative material usage. It highlights the multifaceted considerations—health, environmental, clinical, and educational—that are central to ongoing debates about amalgam in dentistry.