

**UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA**

**RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN  
STUDENTS' ACADEMIC  
PERFORMANCE AND THEIR  
PERCEPTION ON ACADEMIC  
ENVIRONMENT, PREPAREDNESS  
AND COMPETENCY IN WORK  
SETTING**

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## ABSTRACT

**Objectives:** This study aimed to (i) evaluate UiTM dental graduates' level of competency as rated by employers in real life setting, (ii) determine self-perceived preparedness of graduates upon graduation, (iii) evaluate graduates' perception of their education environment, (iv) associate the relationships between graduates' academic performance, education environment, perceived preparedness upon graduation and their competency in work settings (v) determine graduates' self-perceived confidence upon graduation, cases that they felt were least prepared to do and areas that need improvement in their curriculum and teaching qualitatively

**Research Methodology:** Self-administered questionnaires were sent to 178 graduates of BDS, UiTM to evaluate their self-perceived preparedness using a survey adapted from Yiu et al., 2010 which contained 9 domains covering major aspects of dentistry and the Dundee Ready Educational Environment Measure (DREEM) inventory to measure their perceptions on educational environment. The same instrument to measure graduates' preparedness was used to assess their competency level rated by their superiors. Focus group discussions were done to ascertain graduates' opinion on their preparedness level and educational environment. Graduates' past academic performance data was collected to assess the relationship between academic performance to educational environment, preparedness and competency.

**Results:** One hundred and ten (n=110) dental graduates of UiTM responded to the questionnaires (60% response rate). Majority of the items in perceived preparedness and graduates' competency level are rated as average by the graduates and their superiors respectively. Global DREEM score was 148.99/200 denoting graduates' positive academic environment. Moderate associations were found between academic performance and competency and between DREEM score and preparedness. Graduates were most confident to do the 'bread and butter' of dentistry upon graduation and least prepared in carrying out on-call duties.

**Conclusions:** Majority of the graduates were reported to have good preparedness and competency level. Perception of the education environment was associated with perceived preparedness, while academic performance was associated with on-the-job competency.

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