

BREAKING THROUGH BARRIERS: THE POTENTIAL OF DENTAL STUDENTS IN MULTICENTER STUDIES

Rompiendo barreras: el potencial de los estudiantes de odontología en estudios multicéntricos

Giancarlo Pares-Ballasco,¹Hilda Ramírez-Castellares.^{2,3}

1. Asociación Nacional Científica de Estudiantes de Odontología del Perú.
2. Facultad de Odontología, Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos, Lima, Perú.
3. Sociedad Científica de Estudiantes de Odontología, Lima, Perú.

Is it possible for dental students to carry out multicenter studies? Before the formation of the Sociedades Científicas de Estudiantes de Odontología (SCEO) and their integration into the Asociación Nacional Científica de Estudiantes de Odontología del Perú (ANACEOP), the viability of such a feat could be considered unlikely.¹ Currently, eight SCEO have been reported in the country, some with up to 10 years of activity.^{2,3} Furthermore, belonging to a SCEO increases the student's probability of publishing in scientific journals.⁴ Globally, the International Association of Dental Students (IADS), with 72 years of existence, has student membership in 60 countries and its headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland.⁵ Although the Latin American headquarters is in the process of development according to the experience of a former member (Pares-Ballasco).

To identify multicenter studies with authors who belong to these associations, two search strategies were carried out in Scopus:

1. ALL ("Asociación Nacional Científica de Estudiantes de Odontología" OR "National Scientific Association of Dental Students") AND (LIMIT-TO (AFFILCOUNTRY, "Peru")) y
2. AF-ID ("International Association of Dental Students" 60276344). Six multicenter studies were found, of which three were affiliated with IADS, three were published in 2021, three in Q1 journals, and all were available in English, with the study with the largest sample size being the one that included 6639 students (Table 1).

In this regard, the SCEO, ANACEOP and IADS are emerging as potential key centers for the development of multicenter studies, taking advantage of their access to dental schools and local populations. Their role is crucial as collaborators and support for the execution of this research, facilitating diversity and geographic representativeness in dental studies.

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Corresponding Author: Giancarlos Pares-Ballasco. Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos (UNMSM), Lima 15081, Perú. **Phone:** (+51-9) 8974 3135 **E-mail:** jesus.pares@unmsm.edu.pe

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Additionally, based on our experience in conducting multicenter studies, the members (Pares-Ballasco and Ramírez-Castellares) of ANACEOP have identified benefits and challenges for students, new advisors, and external researchers who wish to lead future research projects of this type (Table 2).

Table 1.

Multicenter Studies with ANACEOP Affiliation and IADS Published in Scopus

Scientific Student Association	Year	Study title	Journal name Quartile	Study units/ Population
ANACEOP	2022	Factors associated with knowledge of sci-hub in peruvian dental students	Journal of Oral Research Q4	263/ students from 15 Peruvian dental schools
	2023	Characteristics of undergraduate dental theses defended in Peruvian licensed universities and factors associated with their publication	Frontiers in Education Q2	2267/ theses from 28 Peruvian dental schools
	2024	Scientific production and perception of research among students from seven Dentistry faculties in Peru	Latreia Q4	468/ students from seven Peruvian dental schools
IADS	2021	Predictors of Willingness to Receive COVID-19 Vaccine: Cross-Sectional Study of Palestinian Dental Students	Vaccines Q1	417/ students from four Palestinian dental schools
	2021	Universal predictors of dental students' attitudes towards COVID-19 vaccination: machine learning-based approach	Vaccines Q1	6639/ dental students from 22 countries
	2021	Global prevalence and drivers of dental students' COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy	Vaccines Q1	6639/ dental students from 22 countries

Table 2.

Benefits and challenges for students, new advisors, and external researchers for the development of multicenter studies

	Undergraduate student	New advisors and external researchers
Benefits	<p>Continuous training in multicenter research.</p> <p>Active participation in all stages of the study.</p> <p>Access to scientific networks of national and international collaboration.</p> <p>Development of competencies and investigative skills.</p> <p>Training in authorship criteria and research ethics.</p>	<p>Active collaboration with emerging student talent.</p> <p>Experience in multicenter studies and various research methodologies.</p> <p>Facilitated access to dental schools and local communities.</p> <p>Engagement in debates about authorship and academic contribution.</p> <p>Potential collaboration on future projects.</p>

→ **Continuation of Table 2.**

Benefits and challenges for students, new advisors, and external researchers for the development of multicenter studies

	Undergraduate student	New advisors and external researchers
Benefits	<p>Contribution to dental scientific literature.</p> <p>Participation in studies with national and international impact.</p> <p>Potential collaboration on future projects.</p>	<p>Development of strategies for the prevention of authorship conflicts.</p> <p>Collaboration with student teams and teachers from different places in the country.</p> <p>Coordination with different research centers</p>
Challenges	<p>Prevent authorship conflicts</p> <p>Responsibility in meeting deadlines.</p> <p>Management of advanced methodologies (Example: instrument validation, factorial in variance, translation and cultural adaptation).</p> <p>Management of large databases.</p> <p>Substantial participation in the writing of the manuscript.</p> <p>Articulated coordination with members of other institutions.</p>	<p>Challenges</p> <p>Efficient coordination with multiple student teams.</p> <p>Identification and mitigation of possible biases in the design and execution of the study to ensure the validity and reliability of the results.</p> <p>Guarantee integrity and anonymity of the data collected.</p> <p>Support in data management and organization</p> <p>Evaluation and coordination of different research methods</p> <p>Adaptation to the specific deadlines and requirements of student associations, which may differ from usual academic standards.</p>

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The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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Giancarlo Pares-Ballasco: Conception and compilation of literature, writing of the article.

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ORCID

Giancarlo Pares Ballasco

 0000-0001-9589-8033

Hilda Ramírez-Castellares

 0000-0002-5172-9550

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