

LETTER TO EDITOR

Oral Microbiology—A Need of Time

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Dear Editor,

Dentistry is a specialized field of healthcare that is concerned with recognizing, preventing, and treating conditions that affect the teeth, gums, oral cavity, and tissues that support them¹.

It has many subdivisions like Orthodontics, Oral Maxillofacial Surgery, Oral Pathology, Oral Medicine, Prosthodontics, etc. The domain of oral Pathology, often known as oral and maxillofacial pathology or head and neck pathology, is to focus on illnesses of the mouth and the tissues that are connected with it². Therefore, it is the branch of Dentistry linked with Pathology .

Oral Microbiology, which comes under the domain of Oral Pathology, deals with the identification of microbiota causing oral illness and their interaction with normal flora of the mouth. As many oral diseases are the outcome of the interplay between complex microbes, knowledge and expertise in oral microbiology will facilitate the process of diagnosis and treatment so the importance of the subject cannot be neglected. Worldwide, many countries are offering postgraduate programmes like MDS, MSc, and PhDs for students interested to continue their studies in this field. The advancements in oral microbiology helps to enable a deeper comprehension of the ecological struggle between the local microbial flora and the periodontal, cariogenic and other infections of the oral cavity. In addition, it will serve as a springboard for the development of more focused and effective therapy strategies for treating dental and periodontal disease³. Unfortunately, in Pakistan, some subjects of dentistry are neglected like gerodontology, forensic odontology, pediatric dentistry, including oral microbiology. It is still a rudimentary subspecialty in Pakistan and is not being taught at undergraduate and postgraduate levels. Owing to the present dull situation regarding this

subject in Pakistan, there is a lack of opportunities for further studies in oral microbiology.

Therefore, it is recommended that Pakistan Medical and Dental Council and Higher Education Commission should focus on the incorporation of Oral Microbiology and other subspecialties in the curriculum and postgraduate programmes should be launched to broaden the horizon of this specialty.

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