



Survey on General Health and Wellness of Dental Practitioners in Chennai

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ABSTRACT

Background: Health can be defined as "an absence from illness or disease" of physical, mental, and social well-being. Wellness is the daily practice of healthy habits in order to achieve better physical and mental health results. Evidence suggests that dental work can harm an individual's long-term health and general well-being because the profession is physically and mentally challenging.

Aim: The aim of this study is to assess the knowledge and awareness on general health and wellness of dental practitioners in Chennai.

Materials and methods: A survey based questionnaire was done to provide knowledge about the general health and wellness of dental practitioners. A self-designed 12 questions were collected through google form. The data collected and statistically analysed by SPSS software.

Results: Results are collected in the form of pie charts and bar diagrams. 71% of the respondents had regular sleep patterns and 73% of students had the habit of doing physical exercises daily.

Conclusion: The present study concluded that dental practitioners moderately had the knowledge about maintaining general health and wellness but there needed to create awareness about general health and wellness among dental practitioners.

Key words: General health, Wellness, Dental practitioners, Chennai

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INTRODUCTION

Dentistry is a demanding profession involving a high degree of concentration and precision. Dentists require good visual acuity, hearing, depth perception, psychomotor skills, manual dexterity, and ability to maintain occupational postures over long periods [1]. Diminution of any of these abilities affects the practitioner's performance and productivity. Despite numerous advances in dentistry many occupational health problems still persist in modern dentistry [2]. Previous studies have shown that dental practitioners are subject to a wide variety of physical ailments that are induced or aggravated by the work environment. It may well be that impaired mental health prevails over general

diseases [3]. Dental work is a unique social interaction influenced by specific demands of the clinical practice, exposure to an intimate and very sensitive area of the human body, personal characteristics and emotions of a health care provider and its recipient [4].

There is insufficient knowledge, few traditions or structures and many barriers to the early recognition, successful diagnosis, treatment and prevention of mental problems in dentists [5,6]. It is likely that dentists undergo a powerful process of socialization into their professional role that makes it difficult for them to seek help [7]. Previous studies have analyzed job satisfaction, job-related stress, tension, depression, emotional exhaustion and depersonalization [8]. A review of the literature on musculoskeletal disorders among dental workers revealed that investigative designs such as questionnaires and direct observations have been effective in evaluating potential risks [9].

Dentists recognized that dentistry was always a difficult task. However, many would not see their work as dangerous until lately. This work is the social contact in its restricted working conditions and personal characteristics between the assistant and the receiver.

One of the most important elements of a successful dental practice is a healthy dentist [9]. When discussing physical illnesses, we must consider musculoskeletal issues, dermatological conditions, allergies, and the possibility of cross-infection. Dentists who practice in a sitting posture experience more severe low back discomfort than those who operate in a standing position [10]. Dental professionals should be aware of common chemical allergens, symptoms of allergic contact dermatitis and the appropriate treatment of occupational skin disease. Allergic dentists must learn to avoid the products that contain the allergen and eliminate or minimize the potential routes of exposure [11].

The aim of this study is to assess the knowledge and awareness on general health and wellness of dental practitioners in Chennai.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

An online survey consisting of 100 subjects on a random basis was carried out to investigate the knowledge about the general health and wellness of dental practitioners. Prior to the survey, an ethical approval was obtained from the esteemed institutional research department via SRB, The study was approved by the institutional review board of Saveetha dental college.

A set of 12 questions were framed and distributed among the dental practitioners in Chennai through online google forms link. The questions assess the knowledge, attitude and awareness about the general health and wellness of dental practitioners in Chennai. Dependent variables of this study are knowledge and awareness and independent variables are gender, age, background, caste. The responses were collected and entered in google sheets and then the data were statistically analysed by using SPSS software version 22. The results were represented in pie charts.

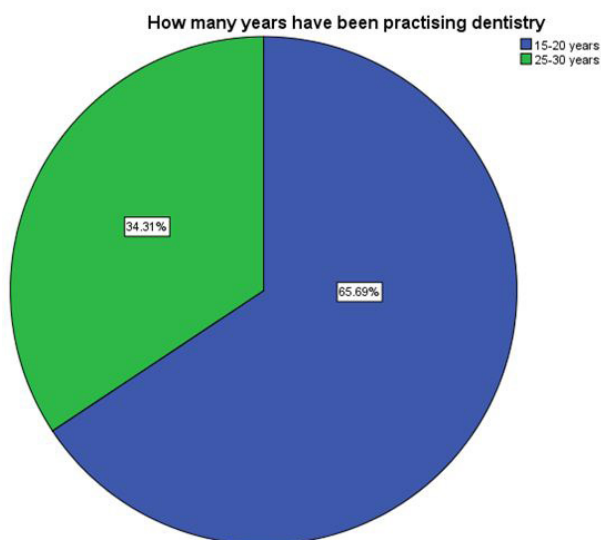


Figure 1: Represents the percentage of working experience of the participants, in which 65.6% of individuals answered as 15-20 years (blue) and 34% of individuals answered as 25-30 years (green).

RESULTS

A total of 100 participants in the study and the results were positive reports, and then results were represented in the form of pie charts and bar diagrams. This figure shows that 66% of the participants had been practicing dentistry for 15-20 years and 34% of the participants had been practicing dentistry for 25-30 years (Figure 1). 34% of the respondents were urban, 33% of the participants were semi-urban and 32% of the participants belonged to rural (Figure 2). This figure shows that of regular sleep patterns of the dental practitioners, 71% of the participants had a regular sleep pattern and 29% of the participants did not have a regular sleep pattern (Figure 3). 73% of the participants had the habit of doing

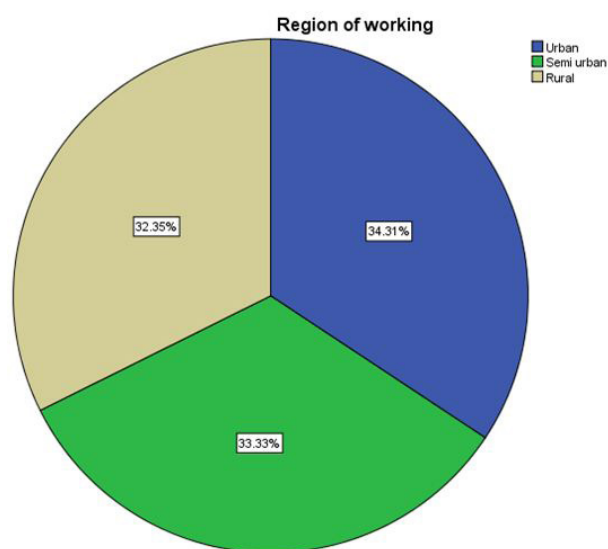


Figure 2: Represents the percentage of working area of the participants, in which 34% of individuals answered as urban (blue), 33% of individuals answered as semi urban (green) and 32% of individuals answered as rural (brown).

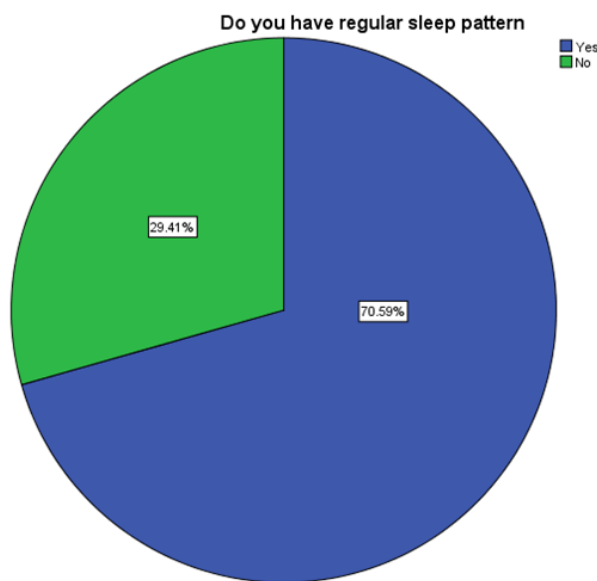


Figure 3: Represents the percentage of participants who have a regular sleep pattern, in which 70.59% of individuals answered as yes (blue) and 29% of individuals answered as no (green).

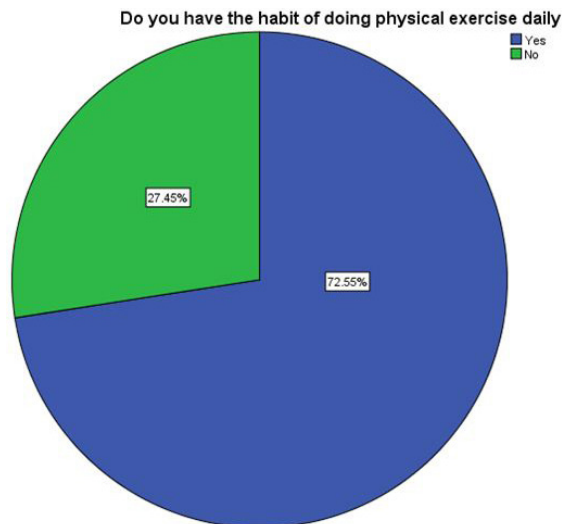


Figure 4: Represents the percentage of participants who are doing physical activity, in which 72.55% of individuals answered as yes (blue) and 27.45% of individuals answered as no (green).

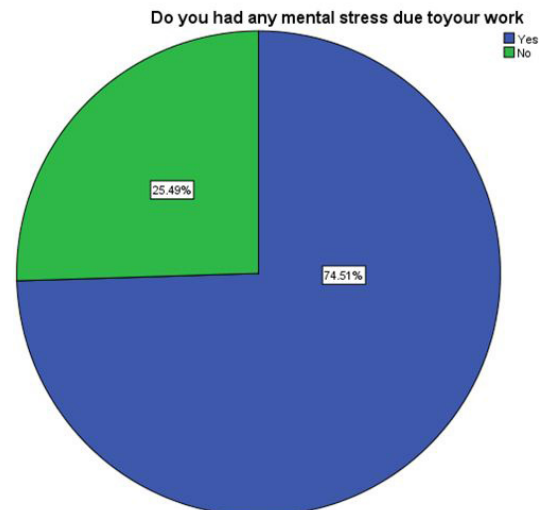


Figure 7: Represents the percentage of mental stress experience of the participants, in which 74.51% of individuals answered as yes (blue) and 25.49% of individuals answered as no (green).

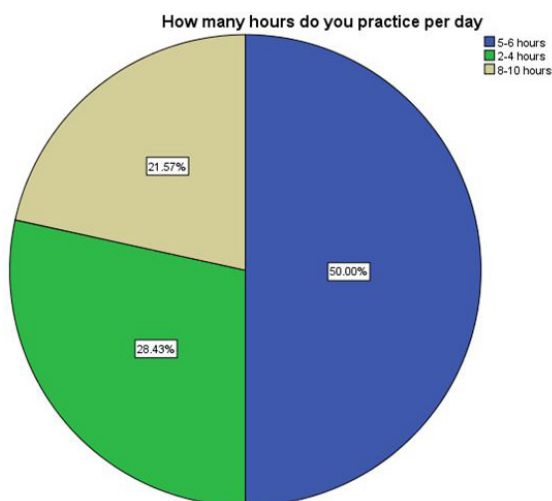


Figure 5: Represents the percentage of working hours of participants, in which 50% of individuals answered as 5-6 hours (blue), 28% of individuals answered as 2-4 hours (green) and 21% of individuals answered as 8-10 hours (brown).

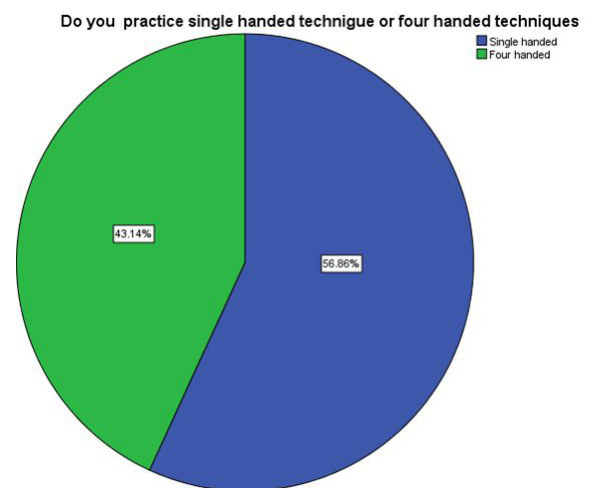


Figure 8: Represents the percentage of participants who use single handed or four handed technique, in which 58% of the participants answered as single handed (blue) and 43.14% of the participants answered as four handed (green).

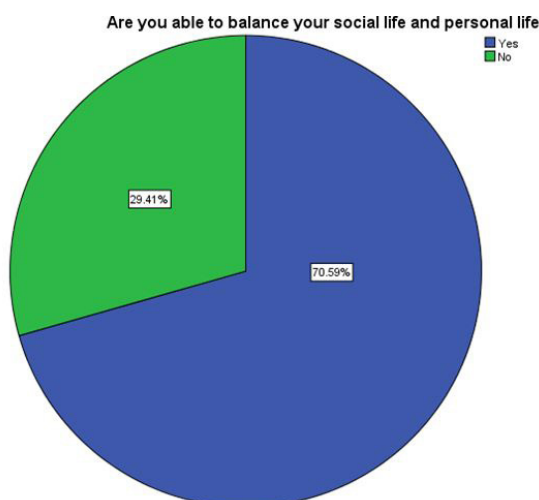


Figure 6: Represents the percentage of individuals who balanced both social life and personal life, in which 70.59% of individuals answered as yes (blue) and 29% of individuals answered as no (green).

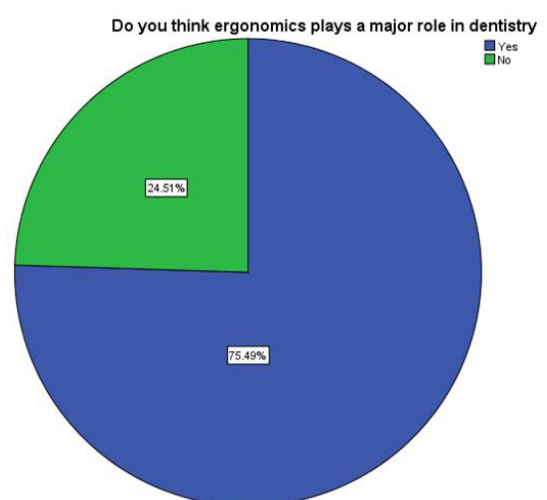


Figure 9: Represents the percentage awareness of ergonomics among dental students, in which 75.49% of the participants answered as yes (blue) and 24.51% of the participants answered as no (green).

physical exercise daily and 27% of the participants did not have the habit of doing physical exercise (Figure 4). 50% of the participants answered that they practice 5-6 hours daily, 28% of the participants answered that they practice 2-4 hours daily and 22% of the participants answered that they practice 8-10 hours daily (Figure 5). 71% of the respondents were able to balance their social life and personal life (Figure 6). 75% of the dental practitioners had mental stress due to their work and 25% had no mental stress (Figure 7). 57% of the dental practitioners used single handed technique for their treatment and 43% of the participants used four handed technique for their treatment (Figure 8). This figure shows knowledge about the ergonomics plays a major role in dentistry, 75% answered yes and 25% of the respondents answered no (Figure 9). 36% of the respondents felt physical wellness is compromised due to their profession, 6% didn't feel like that and 58% of the participants answered maybe (Figure 10). 77% of the dental practitioners were vaccinated with hepatitis B

Do you feel that your physical wellness is compromised due to your profession

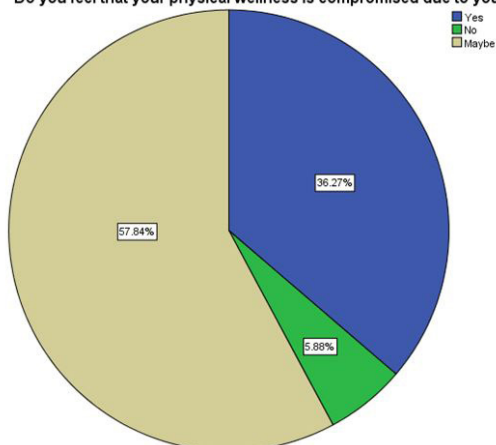


Figure 10: represents the compromised physical wellness due to profession. 36.27% participants answered yes (blue), 5.88% participants answered no (green) and 57.84% participants answered maybe (brown).

Have you been vaccinated with hepatitis B

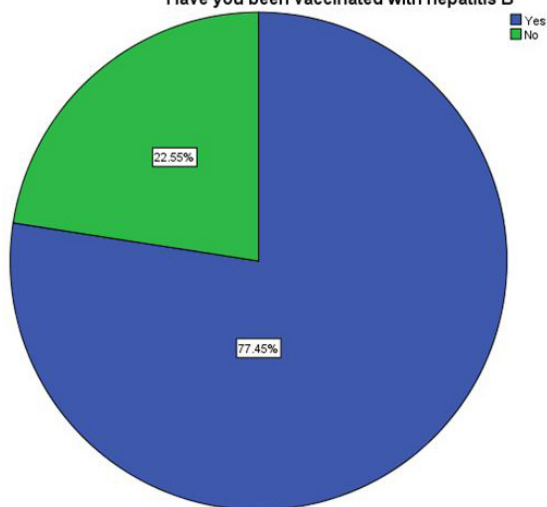


Figure 11: represents the vaccination for hepatitis B. 77.45% participants are vaccinated (blue) and 22.55% participants are not vaccinated (green).

Have you been vaccinated with covid vaccine

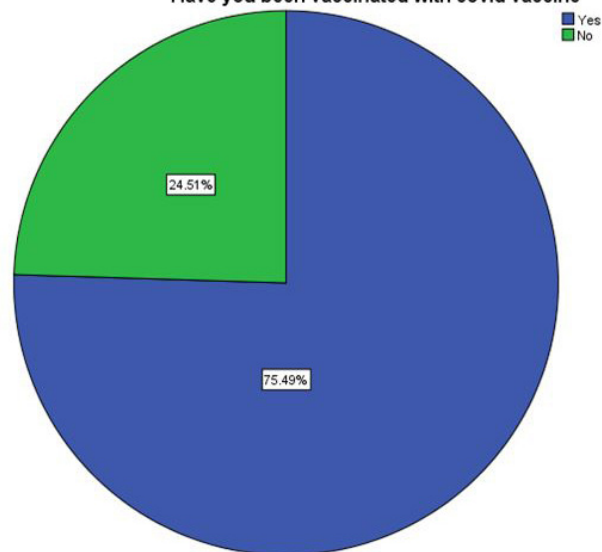


Figure 12: Represents the vaccination for COVID 19. 75.49% participants are vaccinated (blue) and 24.51% participants are not vaccinated (green).

vaccine and 23% were not vaccinated (Figure 11). 75% of the participants were vaccinated with covid vaccine and 25% of the participants were not vaccinated (Figure 12).

DISCUSSION

From the analysed data, Dental practitioners are moderately aware and know about general health and wellness. In a previous study done by Kay et al., concluded that 67% of the participants considered themselves healthy and 53% of the participants thought that they led an interesting lifestyle [12]. Previously the author said that 69% of the participants had back pain and 57% of the respondents practiced physical activity three to four times a week [5]. Followed by the study done by Dhanya et al., 78% of the participants were prevalent about the musculoskeletal problem and 85% of the participants had knowledge about the mental stress caused due to their work pressure [13]. A study carried out in the United States shows that less than half of the dental profession is satisfactory, The fact that the overall majority of dentists reflect anxiety at work as a cause that makes them uncomfortable at home shows that occupational stress and psychological impairments have not only affected dentists but have also affected their families [14]. General dentists were more likely to suffer from anxiety than specialists. One possible account of this finding is that experts are better able to manage their workload than general practitioners because of their higher qualifications and are able to interact with their patients with more trust and less anxiety [15].

According to a previous study, the self-reported anxiety was significantly higher for dentists who remained at home during the outbreak [16]. In the Shacham, et al. investigations of psychological stress factors caused by COVID-19, however, gender did not have a significant impact among Israeli dentists and dental hygienists [17].

Dentists who were alone received less practical support than those with their wives. Dependency on the situation of the family could result in a different need for support. Women are always more prone to family conflicts and take the main responsibility at home and the children [18]. The limitations in this present study is that there is not much quantitative, lesser questionnaire with less sample population and the study conducted through only online surveys and among only undergraduate students.

CONCLUSION

The present study concluded that dental practitioners moderately had the knowledge about maintaining general health and wellness but there needed to create awareness about general health and wellness among dental practitioners. Further studies should aim at identifying occupationally associated factors which are deleterious to mental wellbeing.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors have none to declare.

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