

## Lifestyle of Dentists in South India

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The purpose of the present study was to know the job related stressors of dentists in Belgaum, their social life and the job satisfaction associated with dentists working in Belgaum city. The purpose of the study was to find out some of the common health problems frequently encountered by dentists, protective measures taken by dentists while treating patients and measures taken for selfcare.

### MATERIALS AND METHODS

It was a cross-sectional survey which made use of a specially designed questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of 29 questions, it was pilot tested in the Department of Preventive and Community Dentistry for its validity, and the kappa coefficient was found to be 0.8 reflecting a high degree of conformity in the observations. The required modifications were done and the questionnaire was finalized for the survey. All 108 participants (62 males, 46 females) in Belgaum city participated in the present study.

The inclusion criteria were participants should be registered dental surgeons and be actively involved in the dental profession, academics, private practice, government, jobs or dental administration within city limits.

The exclusion criteria were registered dental surgeons who had retired from service, changed their profession or had never been involved in private practice, academics or government jobs and dentists who are pursuing postgraduate studies.

### RESULTS

The salient features seen in this study were as follows. The sample consisted of 108 dentists in Belgaum City, Karnataka,

India. There were 62 male dentists and 46 female dentists. The mean age was 39.47 years (SD 10.62 years). There were 51.85% of dentists with speciality qualifications and 88% of dentists who worked 9 hours or more felt physically exhausted at the end of the day compared to 55.55% of female dentists ( $p = 0.040$ , chi-square with Yates correction = 4.207 degree of freedom = 1). In males, 54.8% had formal exercise compared to 28.2% of the female dentists. Of the male dentists, 53.22% reported consuming alcohol whereas none of the female dentists reported consuming alcohol. Of these male dentists, 87.8% reported consuming alcohol only on an occasional basis. None of the female dentists reported smoking. Almost all male and female dentists were found to be affected by the following prominent job related stressors: time and scheduling pressures and pay related stressors.

Almost all male and female dentists took some form of precautionary measures while treating patients. This was observed during the interview at most places of work.

None of the dentists was obese. Obesity is a good indicator of poor lifestyle. It was seen that most dentists sought oral health checks only when required. It was also seen from this survey that about 50% of male dentists who were involved in academics as well as private practice spent less than three hours with their families per day. Of male dentists 83.87% and 76% of female dentists in the present study reported being satisfied with their jobs as dentists ( $p = 0.294$ , chi-square value = 1.021, degree of freedom = 1).

This short study should help dentists/healthcare professionals reflect on their lives and take measures to improve the same.

Table Distribution based on seeking oral health checks

Dentists	n	3 months	n	6 months	n	1 year	n	If reqd. Only	n	Never
Male	0	0%	8	12.9%	7	11.29%	46	74.19%	1	1.612%
Female	2	4.34%	11	23.91%	5	10.86%	27	58.6%	1	2.17%

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In summary, a large percentage of dentists were affected with some form of job-related stressors and symptoms related to common disease. Almost all dentists took measures for protection while treating patients. A small percentage of dentists underwent regular medical checks. Measures taken for oral healthcare were to a great extent only when required.

Almost all dentists reported being satisfied with their jobs. Dentists who were involved in both academics and private practice were found to be spending less time with their families. In order to remain productive, dentist should place emphasis on a healthy lifestyle which involves physical, mental, social and spiritual health.

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