



THE MOST FREQUENT COPING METHOD USED FOR RELIEVING STRESS DUE TO PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC AMONG DENTAL FRATERNITY; A CROSS-SECTIONAL STUDY.

Epidemiology

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ABSTRACT

Aim and Objective: Analysis of the psychological impact of Covid 19 Pandemic among dental fraternity; To assess the frequent coping method used for relieving stress. **Methods and Findings:** Due to stress among the dental professionals during the pandemic lockdown, a cross sectional study was conducted in the month of May 2020. Health care workers, the dental professionals from Bihar state, were invited to participate with a self-administered questionnaire. The prevalence of stress was slightly higher among males in comparison to females. The most frequent coping method used for relieving stress were 61.9% using various modes of entertainment, 59.5% household work. Hence therefore Prevention of mental health services, should be priority during routine clinical services for dental professionals going through such psychological impact of Covid 19.

KEYWORDS

INTRODUCTION

The most popular disease prevailing worldwide, the Novel Corona Virus is commonly associated with cough, fever, respiratory disorders etc. It has been declared pandemic in early 2020 by WHO. The Chinese authorities identified a new strain of Coronavirus On 7th January 2020. WHO named the virus as SARS-CoV-2. The outbreak of COVID-19 around the world is a major concern for all the people¹. As per WHO till 19th August 2020 there has been confirmed across worldwide approximately 2,23,97,721 and in India 28,36,925 cases. 1,43,19,936 has been recovered and death is approx. 7,87,280. The recovery rate has been enhanced and death rate reduced. In India maximum number of cases has been reported from Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Uttar Pradesh. Like the world, India is also facing this difficult task for controlling the virus outbreak and tying hard to manage its growth rate through various methods. Studies suggest that about 81% of the cases are mild, 14% require hospitalization and 5% require ventilator and critical care management^{2,3}.

Since Dental practice is perceived as being stressful job during this pandemic, as it causes many psychological impacts. Here we have conducted a questionnaire based cross-sectional study among dental practitioners. This is a cross-sectional study which answers various research questions. The purpose of the present study was to investigate the stress load among dental professionals and frequent coping method used to relieve stress.

AIM AND OBJECTIVES

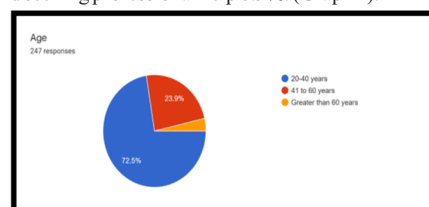
1. Analysis of the psychological impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic among dental fraternity;
2. To assess the frequent coping method used for relieving stress..

METHODS AND FINDINGS

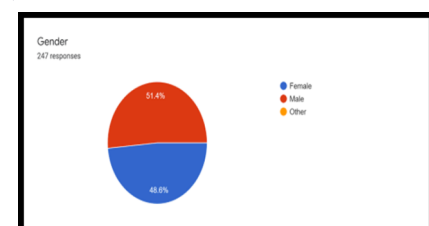
Considering the facts of stress among the dental professionals during the pandemic, a cross sectional study was conducted among the dental practitioners belonging to the age groups of 20- 60 years (approx.). A survey form was created using Google Forms and distributed through media to be filled. The subjects were informed about the anonymous nature of the study being conducted and one week time was provided to the participants. 247 responses were collected within the given duration of time after which statistical analysis of the collected data was done.

The analysis showed the following findings. Total of 246 responses

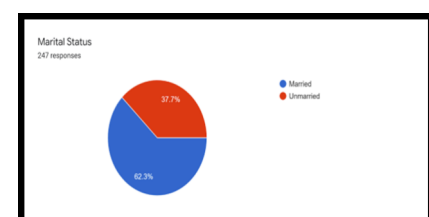
were received from subjects. Among the total the age range of the enrolled subjects was from 20 to 60 years and above. Maximum number of subjects belonged to 20-40 years of age group, i.e. 72.5%, 23.9% belonged to 41-60 years of age and rest of them were greater to 60 years of age. (Graph 1). Out of this subject range, 51.4% were males and 48.6% were females (Graph 2). Result of Marital status showed that 62.3% were married and 37.7% were unmarried. (Graph 3). The most frequent coping method used for relieving stress during lockdown among the dental practitioners were exercise 57.1%, household work 59.5%, using various modes of entertainment 61.9%, religious practice 27.1%, emotional support from friends and family 40.5% and seeking professional help 8.9%. (Graph 4).



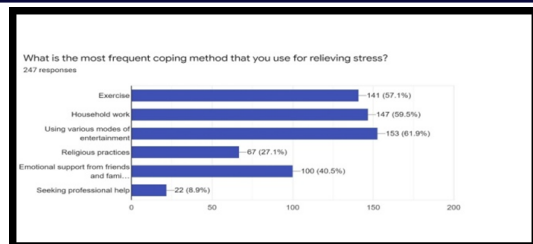
(Graph 1).



(Graph 2).



(Graph 3)



(Graph 4)

DISCUSSION

Stress and Anxiety is a negative emotional state perceived by individual subjectively and one of the most common psychological obstacles. This cross-sectional study was conducted to determine the most prevalent age and gender associated with stress among the dental professionals and to observe the frequent coping method used to relieve stress during lockdown, including their marital status. Understanding the psychological impact of the Covid-19 outbreak among such health care workers is necessary to maintain their psychological well being.

Overall, in our present study males showed slightly higher prevalence of stress when compared to female. Our study was similar to Benjamin Y.Q and Hamza M et al^{4,5}. Since in new generation female have almost equal social and professional responsibilities, whether they are health worker or working in any other field. Moreover 62.3% female professionals were married, proving that other than their family stress they have to go through the professional stress too.

Huge financial losses due to risky practicing during Covid-19 pandemic are among the major stressors that undoubtedly contribute to emotional distress and increased risk of stress among such dental practitioners. Many of them are suffering from stress due to inadequate and deficient resources, sense of insecurity. Health care providers are also particularly vulnerable to emotional distress in the current pandemic, their risk of exposure to the virus, concern about infectivity to the virus during dental practice, As dental practice are said to be highly infective of Corona virus. Opportunities to monitor psychosocial needs and deliver support during direct patient encounters in clinical practice are greatly curtailed in this crisis.⁶ The most frequent coping method used for relieving stress during lockdown among the dental practitioners were exercise 57.1%, household work 59.5%, using various modes of entertainment 61.9%, followed by religious practice, emotional support from friends and family and seeking professional help. COVID-19 is highly infectious and spread rapidly, with suspected and confirmed patients increasing daily. The COVID-19 epidemic has posed a remarkable threat to public health. When dental doctors are exposed to working environments with high job demands and low resources, higher job stress and greater physical and psychological stress symptoms may adversely affect health and well-being.⁷

CONCLUSION

Dentist can also use the various other means of stress management like, relaxation, meditations, listening to audio and tapes. Professional help and counseling could be helpful in coping with stress. Furthermore, the stress level of the dental professionals should be relieved. At the same time, the support of medical protective equipment and other related materials should be provided. In public health emergencies, the psychological stress of the doctors should be focused.

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Conflicts of interest- There are no conflicts of interest.

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