



Impact of COVID-19 on Stress, Self Esteem, Lifestyle behavior Among Dental Students- A cross sectional Study

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Introduction

In a period of just a few months, the COVID-19 pandemic caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus (a novel coronavirus strain) has radically transformed the lives of billions of people around the globe, including the student population. Apart from the devastating health consequences for those directly affected by the virus, the COVID-19 pandemic holds major implications for the way students live and work, affecting their physical and mental well-being in profound and potentially life-altering ways.

Purpose

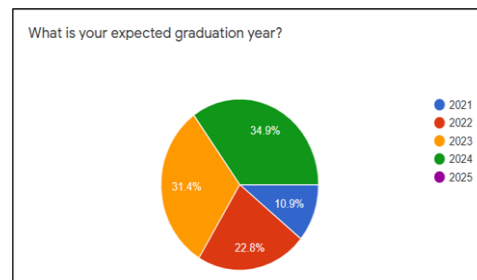
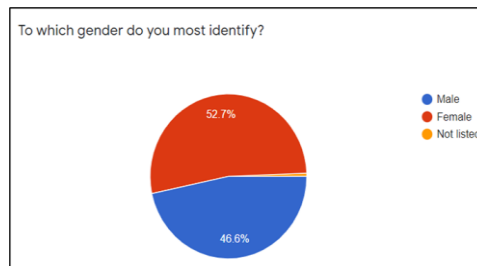
The purpose of this study was to assess the perceived psychological impact of the COVID-19 pandemic among dental students. Students self-analyzed and assessed their perceived changes in stress, self-esteem and lifestyle behavior changes based on the impact of the pandemic.



Methods

An anonymous online questionnaire was administered to students at Roseman College of Dental Medicine. Independent samples t-test and one-way ANOVA were used for comparison of psychological factors towards gender and year of study. The study was approved by the institutional review board.

The questionnaire first required students to input their gender, age, and graduation year. A series of 18 themed questions regarding stress/anxiety, self-esteem and lifestyle behaviors were then presented. The participants answered the questionnaire using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).



Results

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	p-value (95% CI)		
	Stress	Self-esteem	Lifestyle behavior
Gender (t-test)			
Male	0.014* (0.067-0.576)	0.021* (0.046-0.548)	<0.001** (0.221-0.740)
Female			
Years of study (ANOVA)			
	p-value		
2021 (D4)			
2022 (D3)	0.034*	0.644	0.237
2023 (D2)			
2024 (D1)			
Correlation test			
	p-value (correlation coefficient)		
Stress	-	0.001**(0.362)	<0.001**(0.610)

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level * . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

A total of 312 students, with the mean age of 28.82 years (SD ± 3.1 years) participated in the study. There were statistically significant difference between genders with regards to stress (p : 0.014; 95% CI: 0.067-0.576), self-esteem (p : 0.021; 95% CI: 0.046-0.548), and lifestyle behavior changes (p : 0.000; 95% CI: 0.221-0.740). In regards to the year of study, a statistically significant difference was observed for stress/anxiety (p : 0.034), whereas no significant relationship was observed for self-esteem and lifestyle behavior changes. In addition, cross-tabulations of stress with self-esteem and lifestyle behavior changes showed positive relationships, as students with higher levels of stress showed significant self-esteem problems and lifestyle behavior changes.

Conclusion

Our results showed that the COVID-19 pandemic imposes significant psychological impact on dental students especially female students. However, further studies are needed to assess the long-lasting impacts of COVID-19 pandemic on university healthcare students.