

## Awareness About Mood Changes in Dental Students

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### KEYWORDS

Stress, Anxiety,  
Dental, Depression,  
Students

### ABSTRACT

*Introduction: Increased level of psychological disturbances such as depression, anxiety, and stress among dental students, affect the way these students take care of patients.*

*Aim: To analyse the awareness about mood swings in dental students.*

*Materials and Methods: A self structured questionnaire was created to analyse the awareness about mood swing in dental students, this study is performed to make the students cope up with their mood changes.*

*Results: Based on the study we could analyse the students who are susceptible to these higher level of psychological problems like stress, anxiety, and depression, we can provide them supportive programs and make them cope up with these conditions..*

### 1. Introduction:

Mood swings can happen to the students during their dental career, because of various situations it can be positive as well as negative. WHO have regarded anxiety and depression as one of the main causes for mental health disorders. Depression has been considered as a common health disorder with changes in mood, loss of pleasure with friends and family, disturbed sleep, loss of appetite, guilt and decrease in concentration.<sup>1</sup> Students in professional courses can get depressed easily due to excess academic pressure, where some students cannot cope up with these changes in their academics which differ a lot from their schooling days. Stress has been considered as one of the factors which can affect both your physical as well as your mental health stated by Sumaya Basudan, Najla Binanzan, and Aseel Alhassan<sup>2</sup>. The authors like Sanja Mancevska, Filip Koneski had mentioned in their study that the students of undergraduate mainly the first and fourth year, face more depression due to the academic as well as clinical pressure exerted in their course<sup>3</sup>

The studies conducted by various authors resulted in preclinical students 1st and 2nd year facing academic pressure and in 3rd year clinical pressure in managing patients like, poor patient cooperation, demanding nature of training, full working day, dealing with faculty<sup>4</sup>. This is the main root cause of stress, pressure and depression among undergraduate students. Many researchers have conducted various surveys and studies on this topic and have collected various data. When compared to other researchers that were conducted, this survey has shown similar responses but in our data we have shown various pictograms and bar graphs for better understanding of the present conditions of the mood swings.

So the aim of our study is to analyse the percentage of students who have mood swings through their dental professions. Previously our department has published extensive research on various aspects of prosthetic dentistry<sup>5-15</sup>, this vast research experience has inspired us to research about the awareness of mood changes among dental students. The aim of my research is to analyse the awareness of mood changes among dental students.

### 2. Materials and Methods:

A questionnaire based survey was conducted among dental students of Saveetha Dental College, Chennai. There were about 100 participants participated, both from UG as well as PG, it had various questions related to the research, it was an online based survey. The study participants voluntarily completed the questionnaire consisting of 12 close-ended questions.

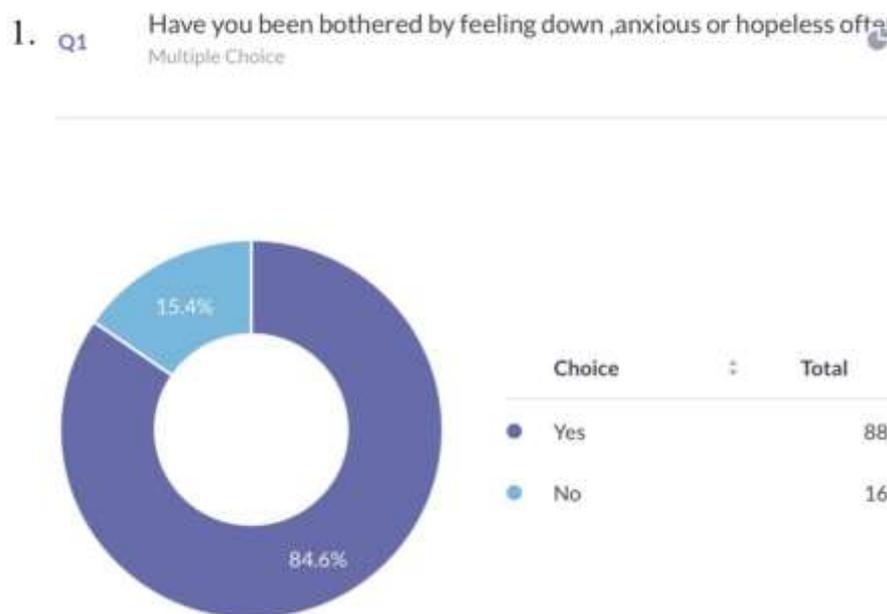
The questionnaire included knowledge, awareness about mood changes in dental students, 2 questions were not evaluated since it was not answered completely. So totally 10 questions were selected, and out of it 3 questions with results were reported in this article.

### 3. Results and Discussion:

A Similar survey was conducted by Dr Archana Santhanam et al., had a pictorial representation that is pie chart and graphs with close similarity to this study. Which had the similar method of survey conducted online<sup>16</sup>.

My evaluation after collecting the survey from the students, that the mood swings happens to them based on the situation that they are facing, mainly the students of preclinical face academic pressure as the portions are new to them and they compare their skills in school level to that of college which pushes them to the corner to face depression. And second most important was that many parents are unaware of the curriculum in college which they expect their children to shine as earlier entering the college by comparing to their school days, which leads them to a conclusion that they are not fit for studying. But when the situation favours them like they excel in specific branch this boosts up their confidence. The study conducted by Vaidya and Mulgaonkar, also found increased levels of stress and anxiety among first year students and they found academic pressure to be most responsible for this.<sup>17</sup>.

And mainly when students enter third years clinical course it's a very difficult job as the students face pressure due to appointment delay of the patients, to complete their quota that has been suggested by the authorities. And the major pressure the dental students face during their final year as they have to complete all the subjects in the academics, and they think about their future of having clinics, or doing their higher studies or be an researcher. When marital status is considered, married students showed higher symptoms of stress, than their unmarried colleagues, this could be due to increased responsibility where the students have to simultaneously balance their personal and professional life.<sup>18</sup>. These are the various mood swings occurs in dental students but it is handled differently by different students to become a excellent dentist.



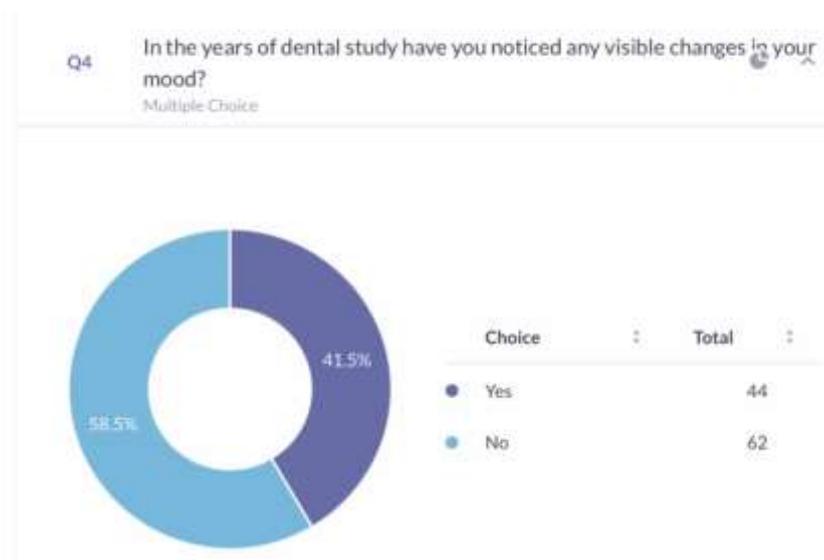
**Figure 1: Pie chart representing a question whether the dental students get anxious during the course of this study: around 88% of the students feeling anxious hopeless whereas around 16 % disagreed with it.**



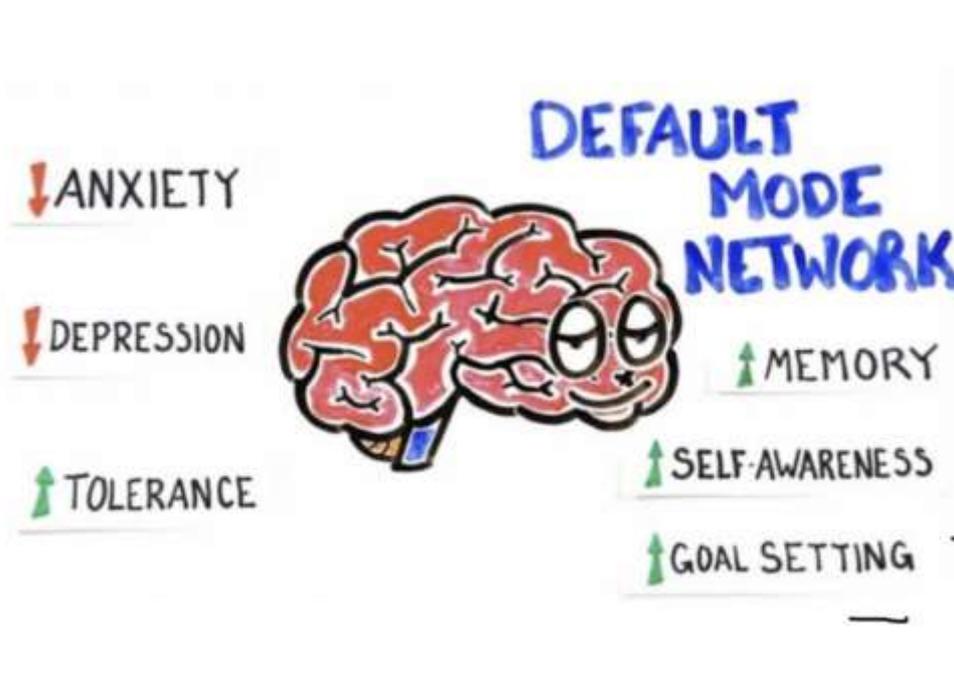
**Figure 2: Pie chart representing whether the students have been losing motivation in the process of study: around 81% agreed whereas 24% disagreed.**



**Figure 3: Pie chart representing changes in sleeping pattern: around 75% students have found changes whereas around 20% don't find any changes.**



**Figure 4: Pie chart representing visible mood changes: around 44% of the students have a visible change in their mood whereas around 62% don't find any changes.**



**Figure 5: it is a cartoon image showing that if we decrease or have techniques to manage our anxiety and depression, it can increase tolerance. And thereby it increases our memory, self awareness, goal settings, and helps us to succeed in our profession.**

The study is basically to analyse the awareness about mood swings among dental students, it is very important to analyse as that it would help us to understand the mental situation among dental students.

As I have mentioned earlier that many other researchers had done their research on our topic but their results were around 38.6% of dental students had problems in their sleeping pattern<sup>19</sup>; whereas in our study we found that were around 80% of the student agreed that they found changes in their sleeping pattern. However, in the study of Bolhari et al. on 400 medical students of Iran and Tehran Universities of Medical Sciences, 24.8% had high levels of stress, which was lower than our findings . In addition, first-year dental students in the United States and United Kingdom tended to demonstrate higher levels

of stress at the end of the year when followed over time.<sup>20</sup> whereas in our study 85% students were anxious, botherless where remaining 15% disagreed with it. Takayama et al.<sup>21</sup> reported that about 30% of dental students showed level 2 (moderate) or level 3 (severe) depressive symptoms. Whereas in our research more than 80% reported feeling hopeless because of anxiety and depression.

In another study that was conducted in Eastern Nepal, there were about 58.34% to 63.34% students have mentioned that they had sleep disturbances along with headache and back pain, whereas 80% of students reported sleep disorder in our study<sup>22</sup>.

The study was conducted in Australia, where 24% of students had moderate levels of stress, remaining 76% had above levels of depression, anxiety and stress.<sup>23</sup>

The limitations in our study when compared to others were they have been analysing the process of mood swings for 3 months whereas in our study the survey was conducted and the results were analysed within 1 month.<sup>24</sup> In another study the results had been found in mean value as well, whereas in our study it was in percentage form.<sup>25</sup> The study conducted by Alzahem A, ET al had mentioned various techniques to cope up with the stress, such as reducing fear of failure, and workload pressure, deep breathing exercise, time management<sup>26</sup>. The future scope for this research is useful for analysing the mood stability of the students and work for their improvement by reducing academics pressure and providing motivational programs to enhance the stress control factor in each and every student.

#### 4. Conclusion:

Within the limitations of the study following conclusions can be drawn, most of the students are aware of the alteration in their mood changes after taking up a professional course which can be attributed for many reasons like change in academic environment, staying away from home, increased academic pressure etc., Providing support programs and implementing preventive measures to help students, particularly those who are most susceptible to higher levels of these psychological conditions.

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