



Assessment of Mental Wellness Amongst the Faculty and Students of an Educational Institute in the State of Himachal Pradesh, India – Post Lockdown during COVID-19

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Abstract

Background: The COVID-19 pandemic had a significant effect on the mental health of human beings worldwide. There is a lack of information pertaining to the mental wellness of students and faculty in dental institutions in India. This study aimed to assess the overall mental well being of students and faculty of dental institution after return to normalcy post-lockdown period during COVID-19.

Material & Methods: A self reporting online questionnaire was designed by the authors after speaking with various therapists and mental health coaches. This questionnaire was anonymously filled out by 492 participants which included under graduate students, post graduate students, academic staff, paramedical and clerical staff in a dental institution. **Results:** Majority of the subjects felt the need for counseling in their work place (53.4%). A greater number felt they were getting insufficient sleep (48.3%) and (31.5%) of the participants experienced depression and anxiety which further affected their emotional well being and their day to day activities.

One-fifth (16.8%) of the participants perceived that mental health affected their relationships and 20.1% observed that physical health restricted their day to day activities. Mental wellness of females was significantly more affected than males. Additionally marital status also influenced the mental wellness of the subjects. **Conclusion:** Literary evidence suggests that mental wellness is not given enough importance in our country in general. This study only proved the ramifications of COVID-19 on mental wellness and suggested the provision of counselling which could've protected the participants from slipping into a negative frame of mind.

Keywords:-COVID-19 Pandemic, Anxiety, Depression and Counselling.

INTRODUCTION

Historically and in the current times, pandemics have created a havoc causing significant mortality and impeding

economically and socially. Flaring up of communicable infections impacted emotionally and psychologically.^[1]The constant viewing of pandemic news from media exacerbates depression, anxiety and fear. COVID-19 tested



the general public when quarantine laws were passed by several countries to safeguard the lives of people which further ignited fear, loneliness and frustration among general public.^[2]

Earlier studies corroborate that both medical and dental professionals have strong likelihood of getting affected emotionally and mentally due to COVID because of being at forefront and recognized as front-line workers.^[3] The magnitude of burnout and mental wellness perceived by those at frontline treating people has worsened.^[3] Even medical and dental students have faced the wrath of pandemic by experiencing slow pace of work post-pandemic and difficulty in interpersonal relationships.^[4] Students are feeling boredom, and frustration during COVID-19 which could be associated with transition from physical learning to online-learning and they perhaps have low-threshold in dealing with traumatic events such as COVID-19.^[4,5,6,7] To contain the spread of pandemic enforcement of lockdown, isolation and physical distancing affected behavior of populations all across the world resulting in panic attacks, hysterical behavior, obsessive compulsive disorder and post-traumatic stress syndrome which had long-lasting impact.^[8,9]

Students and the faculty reported mental instability during COVID-19 because of several factors for instance lack of motivation, stress, boredom proneness, emotional imbalance and the imprint of unpleasant experiences observed during initial phase of COVID-19.^[9,10]

There is sufficient literature pertaining to impact of COVID-19 on general population during initial lockdown phase but there is

limited research describing in-depth the impact of COVID-19 on mental wellness of dental students and faculty.^[1,11]

Thus we decided to conduct this research to investigate the mental wellness amongst the faculty and students of an educational institute in the state of Himachal Pradesh, India.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

This was a cross-sectional, observational study carried out at Bhojia Dental College and Hospital, Baddi, Himachal Pradesh. An online structured questionnaire was conceived and developed, with a consent form attached to it. It started from August-1-2022 at 12:00hrs, and ended on August-31-2022 at 12:00 hrs. At this point the institution had been functioning for almost a year after the lockdown during COVID. Then an online link of the questionnaire was sent through E-mails, WhatsApp, and other social media tools to the participants. The online link was also posted in social media group comprising of only the college students and academic staff. On receiving and clicking the link, the participants got auto directed to the information about the study and informed consent. Once they accepted to take the survey, they filled up the demographic details. Then, a set of several questions appeared sequentially, to which the participants responded.

With the help of therapists and mental health coaches, an anonymous questionnaire was designed comprising of 41 parameters, keeping in mind the various aspects which could affect a persons' mental well being generally. The questionnaire was subjected to a pilot testing on a small sample of 20 subjects and the reliability obtained had an acceptable validity



and consistency with a Cronbach's alpha (~0.87). During the pilot study it took somewhere between 60-90 seconds to fill out the questionnaire. Before proceeding the study, institutional ethical clearance was obtained, with protocol no. BDC/BHUD/EC/12147-B dated 28th July 2022.

The online link was shared to 500 subjects out of which 13 subjects refrained in responding to all questions. Thus the overall response rate was 97.4%. The participants comprised of dental undergraduate students, post graduate students, the teaching faculty of a dental college and the paramedical staff in the dental college and hospital. The questionnaire started with demographic data which included age, gender, marital status, accommodation and family related information. Thereafter questions about both physical and mental wellness were compiled. After which, more personal questions were formulated to get an insight into the subjects personal life, relationship with themselves and other around them, in order to gain perspective in regards to their mental wellness. Towards the end of the questionnaire, questions regarding mental wellness status, mental disease, medications in regards to the same, sleep patterns, self harming habits, deleterious habits and medical help options were asked in order to judge the status of mental wellness and to establish the provision for therapy in the institute, if necessary.

It was assured that the interpretation of this study will not be utilized for commercial purposes. The Collected data was checked for completeness and consistency. Complete case analysis was considered. Data was entered in the computer on Excel data sheets (Microsoft Excel, 2013). The data underwent analysis

using Statistical Package for Social Sciences SPSS Version 21.0 Armonk,NY:IBM Corp. Descriptive statistics were performed for all variables. Group comparisons were performed using Chi-Square test. P value below 0.05 was considered statistically significant.

RESULTS

From the responses of the participants it was observed following the aftermath of COVID-19 had a negative impact on the mental wellness of a significant number of participants, which further hampered their ability to work to their full potential and impacted their emotional well being largely. Approximately half of the subjects 48.3% noticed insufficient sleep and 40.6% had reduced sleep lasting for 4-6 hours. More than one-third 37.6% are not satisfied with the way they are leading their life and half of respondents demand the need for counseling in their workplace due to multifactorial reasons such as lack of motivation towards their work and observance of depression, anxiety and stress. Notably 22.9% have observed deterioration in their mental health in past 4 weeks and 23.7% have noticed reduced physical activity since past 4 weeks. Further 26.8% observed that mental health affects their emotional wellbeing. An astonishing thing is 8.5% are taking anti-anxiety drugs to get relief from COVID-19 and 53.4% are urging to receive counseling at their workplace. [Table 1]. Mental wellbeing comparison has also been explored in relation gender [Table2] and marital status [Table3]. Greater than two-third of females felt that their mental health was average and could make out that they were feeling very low significantly in comparison to males. Females had earlier tried



an attempt to harm themselves physically nonetheless they sounded optimistic for positive things in the future and were willing to seek help from a counsellor in relation to their mental wellbeing in contrast to males

[Table2]. In terms of marital status married individuals had less impact on mental wellness in relation to those who were unmarried, widowed or divorced [Table3].

Table 1: Descriptive result of Mental Wellness Amongst Faculty and Students

CHARACTERISTICS	(N=492)	%
Gender — Female	398	80.9 %
Gender — Male	94	19.1 %
Undergraduate students	395	80.2 %
Have you had any issues with physical health in past 4 weeks	117	23.7 %
Did you undergo any treatment for your physical issues	57	11.6 %
Did your Physical health hamper your day to day activities	99	20.1 %
Have you had issues with your mental health in the past 4 weeks	113	22.9 %
Does your Mental health limit your day to day activities?	107	21.7 %
Has Mental health affected your emotional well being	132	26.8 %
Have you Felt lack of motivation towards their work and studies	181	36.7 %
Have you Felt any depression, anxiety, stress or any other emotional outburst in the past 4 weeks	155	31.5 %
Have you felt low for more than 2 weeks in a row somewhat often	96	19.5 %
During past 4 weeks has your mental health affected your relationships	83	16.8 %
Have been ever been diagnosed with a mental disorder before?	18	3.7 %
Did you ever undergo mental health examination before	386	78.4 %
Is there History of mental disorder in your family?	20	4.0 %
Does your Physical health limit you in doing daily activities	88	17.8 %
Have you seen a psychologist/therapist in the recent past?	453	92.0 %
Have you taken medication for mental health such as anti anxiety drugs etc.	42	8.5 %
Do you sleep for 4-6 hours per day	200	40.6 %
Do you Feel like your sleep is insufficient	238	48.3 %
Do you suffer from insomnia/inability to sleep	80	16.2 %
Do you find it difficult to get out of bed every morning?	151	30.6 %
How Is your quality of sleep?	36	7.3 %
Do you have a disturbed sleep?	162	32.9 %
Do you suffer from nightmares?	249	51.7 %
Do you smoke few times a week	9	1.8 %
Do you consume alcohol few times a week	34	7 %
Do you suffer from eating disorders — starving, overeating or bulimia	56	11.3 %
Do you have self harming habits? (Have you ever tried to hurt yourself or actually hurt yourself physically in the past	31	6.3 %
Do you feel positive about their life?	16	3.3 %



Are you happy in your job/ profession?	80	16.2 %
Have you ever felt suicidal in your life?	77	15.6 %
Does your institution/ work place offer counselling	239	48.5 %
Are you satisfied with the way you're leading their life?	185	37.6 %
If you got the chance to receive counselling from a professional would you be willing to do so?	263	53.4 %

Table 2: Gender association with Mental Health using Chi-square Test of Association.

Sr. No	Mental Health Parameters	Gender	I don't know	No	Yes	Total	P Value	
	During Past 4 Weeks Have You Had Any Issues with Physical Health	Male (N=94)	4(4.3%)	71(75.5%)	19(20.2%)	94	0.82	
		Female (N=398)	14(3.5%)	286(71.8%)	98(24.7%)	398		
	If Yes Did You Undergo any Treatment for Your Physical Health Issue	Gender	No	Yes			Total	0.70
		Male	76 (80.9%)	18 (19.1%)			94	
		Female	317 (79.6%)	81 (20.4%)			398	
	Did Your Physical Activity hamper your day to day activities like going to work, studying, house chores, social interaction etc.?	Gender	I don't know	Maybe	No	Yes	Total	0.03
		Male	4(4.3%)	10(10.6%)	64(68.1%)	16(17%)	94	
		Female	9(2.3%)	54(13.6%)	249(62.6%)	86(21.5%)	398	
		Gender	I don't know	Maybe	No	Yes	Total	0.00
4.	Have you had issues with your mental health in the past 4 weeks	Male	4 (4.3%)	4 (4.3%)	69 (73.4%)	17(18%)	94	
		Female	8 (2%)	55 (13.8%)	239 (60%)	96 (24.2%)	398	
		Gender	I don't know	Maybe	No	Yes	Total	0.06
5.	If yes has it affected your day to day activities like going to work, studying, house chores, social interaction etc	Male	13(13.8%)	11(11.7%)	54(57.4%)	16(17.1%)	94	
		Female	27(6.7%)	66(16.5%)	198(49.7%)	107(27.1%)	398	
		Gender	I don't know	Maybe	No	Yes	Total	0.24
6.	If yes has it affected your emotional well being?	Male	7(7.4%)	9(9.6%)	53 (56.4%)	25 (26.6%)	94	
		Female	16(4%)	32 (8.1%)	188 (47.2%)	162 (40.7%)	398	
		Gender	Always	Maybe	No	Sometimes	Yes	0.06
7.	In the past 4 weeks, have you felt a lack	Male	2(2.1%)	13(13.8%)	36(38.3%)	18(19.1%)	25(26.7%)	



	of motivation towards your work/ studies or towards life in general	Female	12(3%)	47(11.8%)	126(31.7%)	57(14.3%)	156(39.2%)	
8.	In the Past 4 Weeks Have You felt Negative emotions that you didn't feel before such as depression, anxiety, stress or any other emotional outburst (Extreme happiness/ Extreme sadness)	Gender	I Dont Know	Maybe	No	Yes	Total	0.17
		Male	2(2.2%)	17(18.1%)	51(54.2%)	24(25.5%)	94	
		Female	9(2.3%)	76(19.1%)	175(44%)	138(34.6%)	398	
9.	Overall how would you rate your mental health	Gender	Average	Excellent	Not Sure	Somewhat Good	Somewhat Poor	<0.00
		Male	25 (26.7%)	28 (29.7%)	3(3.2%)	33(35.1%)	5(5.3%)	
		Female	155(39%)	47(11.9%)	18(4.5%)	136(34%)	42(10.5%)	
10.	Have you felt particularly low or down for more than 2 weeks in a row	Gender	Not at all	Not So Often	Somewhat Often	Very Often	Total	<0.01
		Male	45(47.9%)	34(36.2%)	10(10.6%)	5(5.3%)	94	
		Female	140(35.1%)	136(34.2%)	86(21.6%)	36(9.1%)	398	
11.	During the Past 4 Weeks, has your mental health affected your relationships?	Gender	Not at all	Not So Often	Somewhat Often	Very Often	Total	0.83
		Male	47(50%)	27(28.7%)	13(13.8%)	7(7.5%)	94	
		Female	198(49.7%)	98(24.6%)	70(17.7%)	32(8%)	398	
12.	Have you ever been diagnosed with a mental disorder before?	Gender	I Dont Know	No	Yes		Total	0.46
		Male	6(6.4%)	86 (91.5%)	2 (2.1%)		94	
		Female	16(4%)	366 (92%)	16 (4%)		398	
13.	Does your Physical health limit you in doing daily activities?	Gender	Maybe	No	Yes		Total	0.13
		Male	11(11.7%)	68(72.3%)	15(16%)		94	
		Female	74(18.6%)	251(63%)	73(18.4%)		398	
14.	Does your mental/psychological health limit you in doing daily activities?	Gender	Maybe	No	Yes		Total	0.12
		Male	16(17%)	63(67)	15(16%)		94	
		Female	65(16.3)	238(59.7%)	95(24%)		398	
15.	Have you seen a psychologist/therapist in the recent past?	Gender		No	Yes		Total	≤0.05
		Male		87(92.5)	7(7.5%)		94	
		Female		377(94.7%)	21(5.3%)		398	
	Have you taken	Gender		No	Yes		Total	



16.	medication for mental health such as anti anxiety drugs etc.	Male		84(89.4%)	10(10.6%)		94	0.23
		Female		366(92%)	32(8%)		398	
17.	Do you Feel like your sleep is insufficient	Gender		No	Yes		Total	0.90
		Male		47(50%)	47(50%)		94	
		Female		207(52%)	191(48%)		398	
18.	Do you suffer from insomnia/inability to sleep	Gender	Maybe	No	Yes		Total	0.54
		Male	20(21.3%)	61(64.9%)	13(13.8%)		94	
		Female	61(15.4%)	270(67.8%)	67(16.8%)		398	
19.	Do you find it difficult to get out of bed every morning?	Gender	All the time	No	Sometimes	Yes	Total	0.02
		Male	8(8.5%)	36(38.3%)	27(28.7%)	23(24.5%)	94	
		Female	18(5%)	102(26%)	150(37%)	128(32%)	398	
20.	How Is your quality of sleep?	Gender	Bad	Very Bad	Good	Very Good	Total	0.07
		Male	6(6.4%)	2(2.2%)	74(78.7)	12(12.7)	94	
		Female	38(9.6%)	7(1.8%)	310(77.8%)	43(10.8%)	398	
21.	Do you have a disturbed sleep?	Gender		No	Yes		Total	0.32
		Male		69(73.4%)	25(26.6%)		94	
		Female		261(65.6%)	137(34.4%)		398	
22.	Do you suffer from nightmares?	Gender	Everyday	Once a week	Once a month	Rarely	Total	0.73
		Male	4(4.2%)	17(18.1%)	6(6.4%)	67(71.3%)	94	
		Female	23(5.8%)	88(22.1%)	22(5.5%)	265(66.6%)	398	
23.	Do you Smoke	Gender	Once a Day	More than Once a Day	Few Times a Week	Not at All	Total	0.00
		Male	7(7.5%)	5(5.3%)	4(4.2%)	78 (83%)	94	
		Female	6(1.5%)	1(0.2%)	4(1%)	386(97.3%)	398	
24.	Do you consume alcohol few times a week	Gender	Once a Day	Few Times a Week	Not at All		Total	0.00
		Male	23(24.5%)	2(2.1%)	69(73.4%)		94	
		Female	1(0.2%)	20(5.1%)	377(94.7%)		398	
25.	Do you suffer from eating disorders — starving, overeating or bulimia	Gender		No	Yes		Total	0.29
		Male		87(92.5%)	7(7.5%)		94	
		Female		349(87.7%)	49(12.3%)		398	
26.	Do you have self harming habits? (Have you ever tried to hurt yourself or actually hurt yourself physically in the past	Gender		No	Yes		Total	0.04
		Male		88(93.6%)	6(6.4%)		94	
		Female		373(93.7%)	25(6.3%)		398	
27.	Do you feel positive about your life?	Gender	Once in a while	Most of the Time	Always	Never	Total	
		Male	16(17%)	60(63.8%)	15(16%)	3(3.2%)	94	



		Female	80(20.1%)	260(65.3%)	46(11.5%)	12(3.1%)	398	0.01
28.	Have you ever felt suicidal in your life?	Gender		No	Yes		Total	0.12
		Male		81(86.2%)	13(13.8%)		94	
		Female		321(80.6%)	77(19.4%)		398	
29.	Does your institution/work place offer counselling/help to those in need	Gender	I don't know	Maybe	No	Yes	Total	0.25
		Male	19(20.2%)	16(17%)	35(37.3%)	24(25.5%)	94	
		Female	94(23.6%)	58(14.5%)	171(42.9%)	75(18.9%)	398	
30.	Are you satisfied with the way you're leading their life?	Gender		No	Yes		Total	0.42
		Male		38(40.4%)	56(59.6%)		94	
		Female		163(41%)	235(59%)		398	
31.	If you got the chance to receive counselling from a professional would you be willing to do so?	Gender	Maybe	No	Yes		Total	0.00
		Male	33(35.1%)	27(28.7%)	34(36.2%)		94	
		Female	119(30%)	50(12.5%)	229(57.5%)		398	

Table 3: Marital Association with Mental Wellness using Chi-square test of Association

Sr. No	Parameters of Mental Status	Marital Status	I don't know	No	Yes		P Value
1	During Past 4 Weeks Have You Had Any Issues with Physical Health	Married (n=41)	1(2.4%)	30(73.2%)	10(24.4%)		0.00
		Unmarried(n=45)	17(3.8%)	327(72.5%)	107(23.7%)		
		Married	12(30%)	2(4.8%)	21(51.2%)	6(14%)	
		Unmarried	66(14.6%)	29(6.4%)	288(63%)	68(16%)	
2	If Yes Did You Undergo any Treatment for Your Physical Health Issue	Marital Status		No	Yes		<0.01
		Married		36(87.8%)	5(12.2%)		
		Unmarried		328(72.8%)	123(27.2%)		
3	Did Your Physical Activity hamper your day to day activities like going to work, studying, house chores, social interaction etc.?	Marital Status	I don't know	Maybe	No	Yes	<0.00
		Married	10(24.3%)	2(5%)	23(56.1%)	6(14.6%)	
		Unmarried	27(6.1%)	62(13.7%)	269(59.6%)	93(20.6%)	
4	During Past 4 Weeks Have You Had Any Issues with your Mental/Psychologic	Marital Status	I don't know	Maybe	No	Yes	0.00
		Married	0(0%)	6(14.6%)	29(70.8%)	6(14.6%)	
		Unmarried	10(2.2%)	56(12.4%)	279(61.9%)	106(23.5%)	



	al Health							
5	If yes has it affected your day to day activities like going to work, studying, house chores, social interaction etc	Marital Status	I don't know	Maybe	No	Yes		0.06
		Married	17(41.4%)	3(7.3%)	18(44%)	3(7.3%)		
		Unmarried	79(17.5)	53(11.7%)	218(48.3%)	101(22.5%)		
6	If yes has it affected your emotional well being?	Marital Status	I don't know	Maybe	No	Yes		0.06
		Married	14(34.1%)	1(2.4%)	15(36.5%)	11(27%)		
		Unmarried	74(16.5%)	36(7.9%)	221(49%)	120(26.6%)		
7	In the past 4 weeks, have you felt a lack of motivation towards your work/ studies or towards life in general	Marital Status	Always	Maybe	No	Yes	Sometimes	0.00
		Married	4(9.8%)	2(4.8%)	23(56.1%)	9(22%)	3(7.3%)	
		Unmarried	22(5%)	57(12.6%)	133(29.5%)	172(38.1%)	67(14.8%)	
8	In the past 4 weeks, have you felt any negative emotions that you didn't feel before such as depression, anxiety, stress or any other emotional outburst (Extreme happiness/ Extreme sadness)?	Marital Status	I don't know	Maybe	No	Yes		<0.00
		Married	3(7.4%)	4(9.7%)	21(51.1%)	13(31.8%)		
		Unmarried	11(2.4%)	92(20.4%)	205(45.4)	143(31.8%)		
9	Overall how would you rate your mental health	Marital Status	Excellent	Average	Somewhat Good	Not Sure	Somewhat Poor	<0.00
		Married	16(39%)	11(26.9%)	14(34.1)	0(0%)	0(0%)	
		Unmarried	59(13.1%)	168(37.9%)	155(34.4%)	21(4.6%)	48(10%)	
10	Have you ever felt particularly low or down for more than 2 weeks in a row.	Marital Status	Not at All	Not So Often	Somewhat Often	Very Often		<0.00
		Married	22(53.6%)	14(34.2%)	4(9.7)	1(2.5%)		
		Unmarried	163(36.1%)	154(34.1%)	93(21%)	41(9%)		
11	During Past 4 Weeks, has your mental health affected your relationships?	Marital Status	Not at All	Not So Often	Somewhat Often	Very Often		<0.00
		Married	22(53.6%)	14(34.1%)	4(10%)	1(2.3%)		
		Unmarried	211(47.3%)	111(24.6%)	79(17.5%)	48(10.6%)		
12	Have you ever been diagnosed with Mental Disorder	Marital Status	I don't know	No	Yes			<0.00
		Married	0(0%)	41 (100%)	0(0%)			



	before?	Unmarried	23(5.1%)	411(91.2%)	17(3.7%)		
13	Does your physical health limit you in doing daily activities?	Marital Status	Maybe	No	Yes		<0.00
		Married	3(7.4%)	33(80.4%)	5(12.2%)		
		Unmarried	69(15.3%)	286(63.5%)	96(21.2%)		
14	Does your mental/ psychological health limit you in doing daily activities?	Marital Status	Maybe	No	Yes		<0.00
		Married	5(12.1%)	33(80.5%)	3(7.3%)		
		Unmarried	68(15.1%)	268(59.4%)	115(25.5%)		
15	Have you seen a psychologist/ therapist in the recent past	Marital Status		No	Yes		<0.00
		Married		39(95.2%)	2(4.8%)		
		Unmarried		425(94.3%)	26(5.7%)		
16	Have you taken medication for your mental health, such as anti anxiety drugs	Marital Status		No	Yes		<0.03
		Married		12(29.3%)	29(70.7%)		
		Unmarried		112(24.8%)	339(75.2%)		
17	Do you Feel like your sleep is insufficient more than you usually do	Marital Status		No	Yes		<0.00
		Married		26(63.4%)	159(36.6%)		
		Unmarried		221(49%)	230(51%)		
18	Do you suffer from insomnia/ inability to sleep?	Marital Status	Maybe	No	Yes		<0.00
		Married	2(4.8%)	31(75.6%)	8(19.6%)		
		Unmarried	71(15.7%)	299(66.3%)	79(18%)		
19	Do you find it difficult to get out of bed every morning?	Marital Status	All the Time	No	Sometimes	Yes	<0.00
		Married	0(0%)	25(61%)	9(21.9%)	7(17.1%)	
		Unmarried	25(6%)	112(24.8%)	168(37.2%)	144(32%)	
20	How is your quality of sleep?	Marital Status	Bad	Very Bad	Good	Very Good	<0.00
		Married	1(2.4%)	0(0%)	36(87.8%)	4(9.8%)	
		Unmarried	42(9.3%)	11(2.4%)	347(76.9%)	51(11.4%)	
21	Do you have a disturbed sleep?	Marital Status		No	Yes		<0.00
		Married		31(75.6%)	10(24.4%)		
		Unmarried		288(64%)	163(36%)		
22	Do you suffer from nightmares?	Marital Status	Everyday	Once a week	Once a month	Rarely	<0.00
		Married	3(7.3%)	4(9.7%)	14(35%)	20(48%)	
		Unmarried	142(31.5%)	53(11.7%)	27(6%)	229(50.8%)	



23	Do you smoke?	Marital Status	Once a Day	More than Once a Day	Few Times a Week	Not at All		<0.00
		Married	1(2.4%)	3(7.3%)	0(0%)	37(90.3%)		
		Unmarried	3(0.7%)	10(2.2%)	11(2.4%)	427(94.7%)		
24	Do you consume alcohol few times a week	Marital Status	Once a Day	Few Times a Week	Not at All			<0.00
		Married	1(2.4%)	9(21.9%)	31(75.7%)			
		Unmarried	4(0.8%)	415(92.1%)	32(7.1%)			
25	Do you suffer from eating disorders like starving, overeating or bulimia	Marital Status		No	Yes			<0.00
		Married		37(90.3%)	4(9.7%)			
		Unmarried		384(85.2%)	67(14.8%)			
26	Do you have self harming habits (Have you ever tried to hurt yourself or actually hurt yourself physically in the past)	Marital Status		No	Yes			<0.00
		Married		40(97.6%)	1(2.4%)			
		Unmarried		410(90.9%)	41(9.1%)			
27	Do you feel positive about your life?	Marital Status	Once in a while	Most of the Time	Always	Never		<0.00
		Married	4(9.8%)	22(53.6%)	8(19.5%)	7(17.1%)		
		Unmarried	94(20.8%)	144(32%)	197(43.7%)	16(3.5%)		
28	Have you ever felt suicidal in your life?	Marital Status		No	Yes			<0.00
		Married		40(97.6%)	1(2.4%)			
		Unmarried		362(80.3%)	89(19.7%)			
29	Does your institution/workplace offer counselling/help to those in need	Marital Status	I don't know	Maybe	No	Yes		<0.00
		Married	7(17.1%)	4(9.8%)	20(48.7%)	10(24.4%)		
		Unmarried	124(27.5%)	70(15.5%)	185(41.1%)	72(15.9%)		
30	Are you satisfied with the way you're leading your life	Marital Status			No	Yes		0.30
		Married			10(24.4%)	31(75.6%)		
		Unmarried			192(42.6%)	259(57.4%)		
31	If you got the chance to receive counselling from a	Marital Status		Maybe	No	Yes		<0.00
		Married		16(39%)	11(27%)	14(34%)		
		Unmarried		146(32.4%)	57(12.6%)	248(55%)		



professional would you be willing to do so?)					
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* Married (N=40)

* Not Married (N=452)

DISCUSSION

One-fifth noticed decrease in physical activity and physical fitness which could be attributed to confinement at home during pandemic which ultimately reduced physical endurance similar to studies assessing impact of COVID-19 on personal health.^[12,13]

The onset of depression anxiety and emotional outburst was found in less than one-third of subjects when compared to symptoms precipitating immediately after pandemic.^[11,14,15] One-third 31.5% reported their mental health to be average which was less owing to less restriction in physical activity in comparison with mental health issues during lockdown.^[16] One-sixth noticed long-term impact of COVID culminating into mental health condition and taking medication which was notably less than similar group of participants seeking medical treatment for mental health problems.^[2,17] Half of the respondents noticed sleep deprivation which triggered anxiety and depression corresponding with other studies.^[3,4,5,18] Insomnia escalated psychological well-being and the effect were manifested with greater than one-third experiencing depression and anxiety which was slightly less in connection with similar research.^[3,18] The addiction to deleterious habits for instance smoking and alcohol amongst the subjects was significantly less and this applied to improvement in lifestyle and adoption of healthy habits

probably because of COVID-19,^[12] however the addiction to substance abuse was significant in a study involving medical grads,^[2] and German University Students during COVID.^[17] The impact on eating habits because of pandemic was considerably less but varied with previous research,^[17] and this could be related to subjection to home-cooked food during pandemic.^[15] Subjection to fear during pandemic resulted in deterioration of sleep in approximately half of the subjects which was slightly more and match able with a study involving similar participants.^[12] Consistent engagement with patients and working environment in dental institution exacerbated mental well being and this observation was analogous to previous research during lockdown phase.^[3,18] Females were more affected psychologically in comparison to males and gender differences exerted significant influence corresponding with earlier research during lockdown phase.^[3,15,18] Thus males had better resilience in dealing with COVID crisis. One-fifth detected strained relationships which was less when compared with students studying in western university and this could be related to cultural differences and societal mindset.^[13] Marital history also displayed the resilience in dealing with pandemic and it was observed that unmarried subjects were profoundly affected emotionally than their ever-married counterpart which could be because of several factors for instance staying away from family, less interaction with



peers and lack of social support.^[3,18] Less than one-fifth noticed uncertainty about their future career with emergence of suicidal ideation and unhappiness in profession which was comparable with a similar study involving university students.^[13] but differed with study involving German university students.^[17]

There were several limitations in our study for instance longitudinal association could have been explored. We could not assess casual inference because of cross-sectional design of the study. and probably repeated cross-sectional study design could have generated more plausible findings. We did not assess the predictors and the reasons responsible for initiation of stress, suicidal thoughts, anxiety and depression amongst the subjects. Clinical diagnosis of mental problems faced by students and faculty was not probed which might have resulted in more validated outcome.

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CONCLUSIONS

It is safe to conclude from the present study that COVID-19 hampered the mental wellness of the respondents. Some form of therapy and emotional support should be promoted to offer and assist help to not only students, and the scope of mental health intervention should be widened to cover the academic staff and health care workers to avert slipping into a negative frame of mind at workplace. Online mental health consultations should be advocated and confidentiality and privacy of students faced with emotional dilemma should also be protected. Furthermore, after assessing the results of this study the institution decided to take steps in order to provide counseling to anyone in need. Lessons learnt from pandemic necessitate induction of mentor-mentee programmes aiming to address the health issues faced by students and faculty in dental institutions. Physical provision of Mental Health counselors in academic institutions should also be endorsed.

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