

Influence of Occupational Factors on the Job Satisfaction Among Licensed Periodontist in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Journal of Advanced Oral Research

1–7

© 2020 Academy of Advanced Dental Research

Reprints and permissions:

in.sagepub.com/journals-permissions-india

DOI: 10.1177/2320206819890453

journals.sagepub.com/home/aad



Nouf Al-Shibani^{1*}, Nawaf Labban^{2*}, Fahad Ali Alshehri¹,
Reem Al-Kattan¹, Hanan Al-Otaibi², Sara Alfadda² and
Sahar Faisal Albarakati³

Abstract

Aim: To evaluate the overall job satisfaction among periodontists, highlighting the significance of intrinsic and extrinsic factors and their satisfaction level with patients, facilities, and workplace when working in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Materials and Methods: An interview-type questionnaire-based cross-sectional study was formulated and consisted of total 38 questions in 8 domains. Contact details of registered periodontists were taken and a weblink containing details of the questionnaire using the tool SurveyMonkey was sent to periodontist from the office of Saudi Dental Society. A single investigator was done to minimize bias evaluated with all the responses. Statistical Package for the Social Sciences software version 21 (SPSS Inc., Chicago, IL, USA) was used for tabulation of descriptive analysis. Standard deviation, percentages and means were calculated.

Results: Out of the total 75 emails sent to the periodontists, 65 (86%) responses were received. 63 (96.9%) of the respondents were Saudi nationals, whereas the rest 2 (3.1%) were non-Saudis. 40 (61.5%) respondents were males, whereas 25 (38.5%) were females. Majority of the respondents were dentists 43 (66.2%). 32.3% reported better professional growth as the main reason for choosing periodontal profession. However, a vast majority of the respondents, 56.9% stated that working as a periodontist was their first choice. 49.3% of the respondents affirmed that they were pleased with the working environment as it was conducive and professional. Approximately, 73.9% of the periodontist were of the view that they had good relations with their patients.

Conclusion: Job satisfaction among periodontists working in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was adequate as majority of them displayed a positive attitude toward working environment, their profession, peers, and intrinsic and extrinsic factors related to periodontal profession.

Clinical Significance: Job satisfaction plays a vital role in delivering standard quality health care. Dissatisfaction in job may lead to stress, anxiety, and/or depression leading to compromised health care facilities and patient satisfaction.

Keywords

Occupational stress, periodontists, job satisfaction, Saudi populace, intrinsic factors

Introduction

A variety of occupational factors including income, untrained staff, difficult bosses, and poor facilities influence dentist's quality of life (QoL) and wellbeing.¹ Many studies have already addressed that harmful consequences to dentists at work provoke physical and mental disorder, which results in burnout syndrome.^{1,2} This is the reason dentistry is classified as one of the hazardous professions; low job satisfaction among dentist has an enorous effect on their performance, objectives, and professional growth.³

* These authors contributed equally to this work.

¹ Department of Periodontics and Community Dentistry, College of Dentistry, King Saud University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

² Department of Prosthetic Dental Science, College of Dentistry, King Saud University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

³ Division of Orthodontics, Department of Pediatric Dentistry and Orthodontics, College of Dentistry, King Saud University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

Correspondence author:

Nawaf Labban, Department of Prosthetic Dental Science, College of Dentistry, King Saud University, Riyadh 12372, Saudi Arabia.

E-mail: nalabban@ksu.edu.sa

It is of utmost importance to study job satisfaction as it has an inevitable influence both physically and mentally.⁴ Factors influencing job satisfaction may range from social recognition, availability of equipment, continuous professional development opportunities, self-realization, and satisfaction of patients.^{5,6} Job satisfaction among dentists and health care professionals may guarantee loyalty and ensure commitment which in the long run lead to better care services and organizational excellence.⁶

Already, studies have been done to measure job satisfaction among dentists.^{5,7} The evidence available regarding job satisfaction among periodontists is limited. A recent study by Reyes et al claimed that Spanish periodontists have high incidence of depression, and burnout symptoms along with poor job satisfaction.³ Similarly, a study by Humphris et al indicated that restorative dentists display least job satisfaction.⁸ Moreover, a study by Alqahtani et al proclaimed that orthodontists working in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) have overall good satisfaction with their jobs.⁶

Therefore, the aim of the present study was to evaluate the overall job satisfaction among periodontists, highlighting the significance of intrinsic and extrinsic factors and their satisfaction level with patients, facilities, and workplaces when working in the KSA. The data gathered can give a glimpse of the QoL of periodontists working in KSA and may help in refining their performances.

Materials and Methods

The presented cross-sectional study was conducted from April 2019 to July 2019. A literature review was performed to validate the present cross-sectional survey, which revealed that there were no available data on assessment of job satisfaction amongst dental practitioners particularly periodontists. An interview-type questionnaire was formulated which consisted of total 38 questions in 8 domains. The research team of statistician along with authors reviewed the content of each question to make sure that the survey reflected appropriate phrasing and understanding.

A total sample size of 50 periodontists was well thought of, but because dropouts and invalid responses were anticipated a sample size of 75 periodontists was considered acceptable. Contact details of registered periodontists were taken and a weblink containing details of the questionnaire using SurveyMonkey was sent to periodontist from the office of Saudi Dental Society. Respondents meeting the following inclusion criteria were subsequently included: (a) must be practicing periodontists, (b) must be working in KSA, and (c) must be registered with Saudi Dental Society. The exclusion criteria defined to filter out the subjects were: (a) must not be working as periodontists and (b) must not be registered with Saudi Dental Society.

The eight domains of the cross-sectional survey consisted of questions related to sociodemographic characteristics, academic, professional qualifications, motivation behind the choice of periodontist as a specialty, satisfaction as a periodontist, satisfaction with the workplace environment facilities and staff, and their satisfaction with their relationship with patients. The responses were measured using a 5-point Likert scale coded as 1 for strongly disagree; 2, disagree; 3, fair; 4, agree; and 5, strongly agree.

Statistical Analysis

Out of the total 75 emails sent to the periodontists, 65 (86%) responses were received. 96.9% (63) of the respondents were Saudi nationals, whereas 3.1% (2) were non-Saudis. A single investigator evaluated all the responses to minimize bias. Statistical Package for the Social Sciences software version 21 was used for tabulation of descriptive analysis. Standard deviation, percentages, and means were calculated.

Results

The results of 65 respondents revealed highly significant differences among responses to different questions ($P \leq .05$).

Sociodemographic Characteristics, Academic, and Professional Qualifications

Demographic factors showed that 96.9% (63) of the respondents were Saudi nationals, whereas 3.1% (2) were non-Saudis. Gender analysis specified that 40 respondents (61.5%) were males, whereas 25 (38.5%) were females. Regarding age, 40 respondents (61.5%) had age between 31 and 40 years (Table 1).

Table 1. Sociodemographic Characteristics of Respondents

	Frequency		Cumulative	
Characteristics	N = 65	Percent %	Percent	Significance
Age				
< 30 years	7	10.8	10.8	<i>P</i> < .01
31–40 years	40	61.5	72.3	
41–50 years	12	18.5	90.8	
51–60 years	5	7.7	98.5	
> 60 years	1	1.5	100.0	
Gender				
Male	40	61.5	61.5	
Female	25	38.5	100.0	
Nationality				
Non-Saudi	2	3.1	3.1	
Saudi	63	96.9	100.0	

Table 2 highlights the academic qualifications of the respondents. 43 (66.2%) dentists had Saudi board qualification from the Saudi Commission of Health Specialties. Whereas 34 (52.3%) had a masters and a certificate in periodontics, and approximately 9 (13.8%) subjects had a doctorate degree. Amongst, the total respondents, 24 (36.9%) completed their residency program within the KSA, whereas 27 (41.5%) accomplished their residency program in the USA and Canada.

Details regarding the length of work experience and the place of work are provided in Table 3. A majority (52.3%) of the participants had 3-8 years of professional experience. A group of 8 dentists had 9-15 years and the other group of 8 had 16–25 years of professional experience. It is evident that amongst the total 65 respondents, 24 (36.9%) participants were engaged in university-based practice, followed by 19 respondents (29.2%) hired by the Ministry of Health and 16 (24.6%) were employed in private practice.

Motivation Behind the Choice of Periodontists as a Specialty

Majority of the dentists (32.3%) reported “professional growth” as the main reason for choosing periodontist as their profession. This was followed by “challenging profession,” “financial gains,” “prestigious specialty,” and “family influence” (Table 4).

Respondents' Satisfaction as a Periodontist

Table 5 reveals that a vast majority of the respondents, 56.9%, stated that working as a periodontist was their first choice. This was followed by their satisfaction with the work quality of auxiliary staff and dental assistants (33.9%). In addition, 32.3% of the participants were not pleased with the working quality of the technicians. Moreover, 36.9% of the dentists were satisfied with their

Table 2. Academic Qualifications and Training of Respondents

Education and Training	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent	Significance
Other qualifications of the respondents				
Cert. periodontics	7	10.8	100.0	<i>P</i> < .01
MSc & cert. periodontics	34	52.3	100.0	
PhD	9	13.8	100.0	
Board	43	66.2	100.0	
Where did you attend a residency program?				
Saudi Arabia	24	36.9	100.0	<i>P</i> < .01
Europe	6	9.2	20.0	
North America (USA & Canada)	27	41.5	61.5	
Other	1	1.5	63.1	

Table 3. Respondents Work Experience and Related Information

Work Experience	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent	Significance
Total experience				
< 3 years	6	9.2	20.0	P < .01
3-8 years	34	52.3	87.7	
9-15 years	8	12.3	100.0	
16-25 years	8	12.3	35.4	
> 25 years	2	3.1	23.1	
Where do you work?				
Academic (university based)	24	36.9	100.0	P < .01
Private practice	16	24.6	100.0	
Ministry of Health	19	29.2	100.0	
University Clinics	12	18.5	100.0	
King Fahad Medical City	1	1.5	100.0	

Table 4. Respondents Motivation for Choosing Periodontics

Reason for Choosing Periodontics	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent	Significance
Motivational factors				
Professional growth	21.0	32.3	100.0	$P < .01$
Prestigious specially	13.0	20.0	100.0	
Challenging profession	34.0	52.3	100.0	
Family influence	3.0	4.6	100.0	
Financial gains	2.0	3.1	100.0	

Table 5. Satisfaction Factors Related to Periodontal Profession

Satisfaction Factor	Strongly Agree + Agree	Fair	Strongly Disagree + Disagree	Significance
Periodontics specialty was my first choice	56.9	13.8	9.2	$P < .01$
My job description and responsibilities at the institution that I work at are well- defined and clear	50.8	12.3	16.9	
I am satisfied with working quality of my auxiliary staff, eg, dental assistants, etc.	33.9	24.6	21.5	
I am satisfied with working quality of my technicians	17.0	30.8	32.3	
Facilities and resources in the clinics are adequate for delivery of dental care to patients	30.8	29.2	20.0	
My current practice situation is what I envisioned when I chose to become a periodontist	36.9	26.2	16.9	
I am generally satisfied with the salary/wages and other financial benefits	32.3	23.1	24.7	
I am generally satisfied with the medical and dental treatment services provided to me as job benefits	27.7	12.3	40.0	
Overall, I am satisfied with quality of life as a periodontist	46.2	23.1	10.8	

current job as a periodontist. 30.8% of the participants were gratified with the adequacy of the resources and facilities provided to them for the delivery of periodontal treatment to their patients. 24.7% of the respondents were not satisfied with the income, and 40% of dentists were not content with the medical and dental treatment services provided to them as job benefits.

Respondent Satisfaction With the Workplace Environment

Regarding the satisfaction of the respondents about practice and workplace environment, 39.9% of the participants stated that their responsibilities are well defined. 49.3% of the respondents affirmed that they were pleased with the working environment as it was conducive and professional. Likewise, 64.6% of the participants agreed that their professional senior colleagues were kind and they enjoyed working as a team. Moreover, 44.6% of the participants stated that their organization supports professional development for improvement of their efficiency and quality of work (Table 6). Finally, 30.8% of the

respondents were satisfied with practice management and care delivery system (Table 7).

Respondents' Satisfaction in the Relationship With Their Patients

Analysis of the results presented in Table 8 indicated that 73.9% of the periodontists were of the view that they had good relations with their patients. Although 23.1% stated that the workload was too much for them. Moreover, 33.8% of the respondents agreed that their patients were never on time and did not adhere to the appointment schedule. Likewise, 64.6% of the respondents agreed that overall they are satisfied with their job as a periodontist. By contrast, a significant percentage (27.7%) of their patients had unrealistic expectations regarding the outcome of orthodontic treatment.

Discussion

This study aimed at assessing the various factors influencing job satisfaction of periodontists working in the KSA. The

Table 6. Respondents Satisfaction With the Workplace Environment

Satisfaction Factor	Strongly Agree + Agree	Fair	Strongly Disagree + Disagree	Significance
I am treated respectfully by the Head of my department	58.5	13.8	7.7	$P < .01$
Support from administrative offices, secretaries and clerical staff is adequate	39.9	29.2	10.8	
In general, I am treated respectfully by my senior colleagues	64.6	12.3	3	
My organization supports professional development for improvement of their efficiency and quality of work	44.6	23.1	12.3	
I am satisfied with working environment within the practice team because it is conducive and professional	49.3	18.5	12.3	

Table 7. Respondents Satisfaction With Staff and Facilities

Satisfaction Factor	Strongly Agree + Agree	Fair	Strongly Disagree + Disagree	Significance
I have adequate time for my professional development activities	30.8	21.5	27.7	$P < .01$
I have adequate time for my personal and family life	38.4	18.5	23.1	
I am satisfied with the practice management and care delivery system	30.8	24.6	24.6	

Table 8. Respondents Satisfaction About Their Relationship With Patients

Satisfaction Factor	Strongly Agree + Agree	Fair	Strongly Disagree + Disagree	Significance
I have good relations with my patients	73.9	6.2	0.0	$P < .01$
My colleagues are courteous, and we enjoy working in a team	63.1	15.4	1.5	
My work is recognized and appreciated by my colleagues and seniors	60	13.8	6.2	
Patients are always on time and adhere to the appointment schedule	33.8	27.7	18.5	
I feel no problem while communicating with staff	60	13.8	6.2	
I feel no problem while communicating with my patients	63.1	12.3	4.6	
The load of paperwork and administrative duties affect my professional capabilities	49.3	13.8	16.9	
Patients' unrealistic expectations burn me out	27.7	32.3	15.2	
Amount of workload is too much and killing	23.1	27.7	29.2	
I face too much pressure from my seniors	9.2	27.7	43.0	
I can freely utilize my potentials and capabilities	36.9	26.2	16.9	
I have a liberty to choose appropriate working methods and materials	35.4	24.6	20.0	
Overall, I am satisfied with my job as a Periodontist	64.6	15.4	0.0	

questionnaire used in the study measured various dimensions, ie, sociodemographic characteristics, academic and professional qualifications, and satisfaction with workplace environment facilities, staff, and patients. The sample consisted of 65 periodontists, of which 40 respondents (61.5%) were males and 25 (38.5%) females. The overall response rate was 86%. However, a recent study by Alkahtani et al revealed a low response rate in orthodontists, when inquiring about job satisfaction.⁶ A better response rate in the present study can be attributed to the follow-up reminders sent at different intervals through emails, and the short duration of study type.

In previous studies, periodontists in Spanish population have shown high incidence of depression, burnout, and poor job satisfaction.³ Therefore, it is critical to assess the job satisfaction in a population of Saudi periodontists. The present survey consisted of 8 domains with 38 item questions. A cross-sectional type study design was used as it was easy, simple, and cheap to undergo; it may also aid in generating a hypothesis for a more complex investigation and reduce the chances of loss to follow up.⁹ Moreover, SurveyMonkey was employed to produce more accurate, less bias, and convenient results compared to a manual survey.¹⁰ When asked about qualifications, a majority of

the respondents completed their residency programs in periodontics from the KSA and qualified through the Saudi Board. This finding was in concurrence with the results of Dlaigan et al, indicating Saudi dentists were motivated, eager, and enthusiastic in obtaining lifelong education.¹¹ Moreover, a similar study by Ireland et al¹² inferred that more than 90% of Saudis preferred Saudi board and qualification followed by a master's program.

When respondents were questioned about the place of work, 34 (26.9%) were employed by an academic university and only 19 (29.2%) were working at the Ministry of Health Clinics. The following trend was also observed in a study by Halawany et al:¹³ a possible explanation to this finding is that university-based jobs are more secure and stable with fixed income on retirement. Moreover, because males are the bread-earners in Arabic society, they prefer nonclinical duties to excel their careers. Furthermore, 52.3% (34) of the respondents opted for periodontics specialty as they believed it was challenging. These results indicate a positive strong and mature mindset of the periodontists working in the country. However, these results were not in harmony with other studies by Al-Hamlan et al¹⁴ and Bruner et al.¹⁵

Nearly 65% of the respondents were overall satisfied with their job as a periodontist. Professional activity gives rise to the feeling of satisfaction, therefore, enhancing the success and progress of an organization and dental practice. Almost 57% of the respondents claimed that to become a periodontist was their prime choice. In the society, being a dentist is linked with better financial, social, and vocational factors. Moreover, dentists who chose their career by choice, and not by chance, are more stress free, enjoy work, and experience better professional growth.¹⁶ Most sources of stress and depression arise in a dentist's life when they come in engagement with strong bosses and administrative staff.¹⁷ In the present study 58.5% agreed to the fact that their superiors treated them respectfully. This act energizes an oral health team and their empathy with the increases in the number of institutions. This indirectly provides better health and care services to the patients.¹⁸

The present study presented outcomes showing adequate job satisfaction (two-thirds of population), outcomes for periodontist in the KSA, and the causes of dissatisfaction including low income or inadequate benefits attached. Based on these findings, management programs should incorporate adequate modifications in future policies in dental hospitals and institutes. This study included a small sample size of periodontists from the region of Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, which may not represent a balanced cohort of specialists in the KSA. However, the outcomes may have been different if a wider population size was included and a comparison among different specialties of dentistry

was done. Therefore, further studies comparing the job satisfaction of dental specialists with a more representative sample size and improved study designs are recommended to validate the outcomes of the present study.

Conclusion

Within the limitations of the study, job satisfaction among periodontists working in the KSA was adequate. Further studies should be performed to confirm the results of the present study.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Funding

The authors would like to thank the College of Dentistry Research Center and Deanship of Scientific Research at King Saud University, Saudi Arabia, for funding this research project (#FR 0507).

References

1. Khalighi H, Mortazavi H, Anbari F, Dehghan M. Job satisfaction level among dental faculty members based on their specialty. *J Med Educ*. 2018; 17. doi:10.22037/jme.v17i2.21907.
2. Jeong SH, Chung JK, Choi YH, Sohn W, Song KB. Factors related to job satisfaction among South Korean dentists. *Community Dent Oral Epidemiol*. 2006; 34: 460–466.
3. Reyes-Torres M, Ríos-Santos JV, López-Jiménez A, Herrero-Climent M, Bullón P. Job satisfaction and depression in the Spanish Society of Periodontology and Research (SEPA) members, and their relation to the burnout syndrome. Creation of a structural model. *Med Oral Patol Oral Cir Bucal*. 2012; 17: e821–e824.
4. Heo G, Varnhagen C, Glover KE, Major PW, Roth SF. Job satisfaction among Canadian orthodontists. *Am J Orthod Dentofac Orthop*. 2003; 123: 695–700.
5. Puriene A, Petrauskiene J, Janulyte V, Balciuniene I. Factors related to job satisfaction among Lithuanian dentists. *Stomatologija*. 2007; 9: 109–113.
6. Alqahtani N, Alshehry K, Alateeq S, et al. An assessment of job satisfaction: A cross-sectional study among orthodontists of Saudi Arabia. *J Orthod Sci*. 2018; 7: 4.
7. Cui X, Dunning D, An N. Satisfaction among early and mid-career dentists in a metropolitan dental hospital in China. *J Healthc Leadersh*. 2017; 9: 35–45.
8. Humphris G, Lilley J, Kaney S, Broomfield D. Burnout and stress-related factors among junior staff of three dental hospital specialties. *Br Dent J*. 1997; 183: 15–21.
9. Sedgwick P. Cross-sectional studies: advantages and disadvantages in clinical research. *J Med Stat Med Educ*. 2014; 2276: 1–2.
10. Committee of University Principals. HR. *South African journal of higher education Suid-Afrikaanse tydskrif vir hoer*

- onderwys. Committee of University Principals, 1987. <https://journals.co.za/content/high/27/1/EJC142790> (accessed 10 August 2019).
11. Al-Dlaigan YH, Al-Sadhan R, Al-Ghamdi M, Al-Shahrani A, Al-Shahrani M. Postgraduate specialties interest, career choices and qualifications earned by male dentists graduated from King Saud University. *Saudi Dent J.* 2011; 23: 81–86.
 12. Ireland RS, Palmer NO, Bickley SR. A survey of general dental practitioners' postgraduate education activity and demand for extended modular postgraduate programmes. *Br Dent J.* 1999; 187: 502–506.
 13. Halawany HS, Binassfour AS, AlHassan WK, et al. Dental specialty, career preferences and their influencing factors among final year dental students in Saudi Arabia. *Saudi Dent J.* 2017; 29: 15–23.
 14. Al-Ruwaithi M, Al-Shraim N, El-Metwaaly A, Al-Hamlan N. Motivations and future practice plans of orthodontic residents in Saudi Arabia. *J Orthod Sci.* 2013; 2: 67.
 15. Bruner MK, Hilgers KK, Silveira AM, Butters JM. Graduate orthodontic education: The residents' perspective. *Am J Orthod Dentofac Orthop.* 2005; 128: 277–282.
 16. Al-Hallak KR, Nassani MZ, Heskul MM, Doumani MD, Darwish M. Reasons for choosing dentistry as a career among dental students in Saudi Arabia. *Eur J Dent.* 2018; 12: 275–280.
 17. Rada RE, Johnson-Leong C. Stress, burnout, anxiety and depression among dentists. *J Am Dent Assoc.* 2004; 135: 788–794.
 18. Al-Mudaf BA, Moussa MAA, Al-Terky MA, Al-Dakhil GD, El-Faragy AE, Al-Ouzairi SS. Patient satisfaction with three dental specialty services: a centre-based study. *Med Princ Pract.* 2003; 12: 39–43.