

Professional Quality of Life among Israeli Civilian Dentists During Recent Military Conflicts: A Survey Study

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Background and aim

Healthcare professionals are frequently at risk for burnout and psychological stress, especially during times of national crisis. Dentists, who often operate in high-pressure environments, are no exception. Since the outbreak of the military conflict on October 7, 2023, Israeli civilian dentists have continued to deliver care under challenging and unpredictable conditions. This study sought to evaluate their psychological well-being and professional quality of life, focusing on compassion satisfaction, burnout, secondary traumatic stress, and anxiety.

Materials and Methods

A cross-sectional online survey was administered to civilian dentists practicing in Israel during the active conflict. The survey, distributed through the Israeli Dental Association and professional networks, included the Professional Quality of Life Scale (ProQOL, v5) and the Generalized Anxiety Disorder 7-item scale (GAD-7), alongside demographic and occupational data.

Results

Among 239 surveyed dentists, 38.9% showed high compassion satisfaction, while 70.3% experienced moderate burnout and 85.4% had low secondary traumatic stress. Over half (54%) reported minimal anxiety. Higher professional satisfaction correlated with reduced anxiety and burnout ($p < 0.001$). Older, more experienced dentists showed significantly less burnout and anxiety. Pre-conflict heavy workloads increased anxiety risk ($p < 0.001$), and health maintenance organizations (HMO) dentists reported higher anxiety levels than non-HMO colleagues, despite similar income losses.

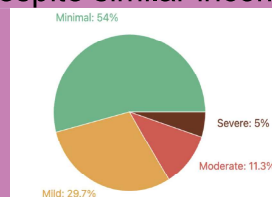


Fig. 1 Distribution of anxiety levels among participants

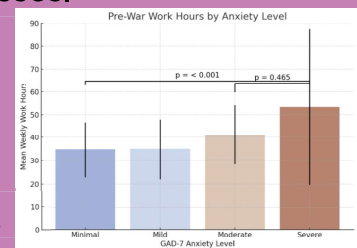


Fig. 2 Higher anxiety correlated with longer pre-war working hours

Conclusions

Israeli dentists showed strong resilience during conflict, maintaining positive professional quality of life. However, public-sector dentists faced greater anxiety, highlighting the need for systemic support—especially in workload, mental health, and resilience training.