

# Perceived Daily Difficulties of Dental Students: A Questionnaire-Based Analysis

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## ABSTRACT

The third and final year dentistry represent a significant shift from classroom instruction to practical patient care. While gaining professional competences, students must juggle clinical posts, coursework, and exams. The purpose of this survey-based study is to determine the everyday academic, clinical, and psychological difficulties that third- and final-year dentistry students encounter. 200 participants were given a verified survey. The findings showed that the most commonly cited obstacles were theory-clinic balance difficulty and clinical workload, followed by patient management stress. According to the study's findings, time management seminars, balanced patient allocation, and good mentoring can all greatly boost students' self-esteem and lessen burnout.

**Keywords:** Daily Difficulties, Dental Students, patient management stress

## INTRODUCTION

As students progress from preclinical labs to actual patient care throughout the clinical years, dental education gets more difficult. While the final year necessitates thorough case management and clinical expertise, the third year introduces fundamental clinical courses like conservative dentistry, periodontics, and prosthodontics. It can be very stressful to juggle theory classes, clinical posts, and case submissions. Students also struggle with time limits, faculty monitoring, and patient participation. It is essential to comprehend these difficulties in order to enhance clinical scheduling, teaching strategies, and student mental health support networks.

## AIMS

1. To evaluate third- and final-year dentistry students' everyday clinical, intellectual, and psychological challenges. 2. To compare the two groups' levels of burnout and stress. 3. To offer methods for successfully striking a balance between theoretical and clinical elements.

## MATERIALS AND PROCEDURES

### Population of Study

Through random sampling, a total of 200 participants from our dental institution, 100 of whom were third-year students and 100 of whom were final-year students.

### Data Gathering Instrument

Theoretical preparation and assessment stress  
Faculty interaction & peer support  
Mental and physical fatigue  
Clinical workload & patient management

### Questions

How challenging do you find it to balance theory and clinical work?

How often do you find it hard to complete case requirements or quotas?

Do you get enough clinical exposure to different dental cases?

How often do you feel a lack of confidence before performing clinical procedures?

How satisfied are you with the level of supervision and guidance from faculty during clinics?

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How often do you face difficulty in getting patients for clinical work?

How challenging is it to manage patient cooperation during treatment?

Do you feel confident in managing emergency situations during clinical practice?

How often do you experience difficulty completing record work or documentation?

How do you rate your time management between academics and clinics?

How often do you feel stressed due to academic or clinical workload?

How often do you experience burnout or fatigue from clinical duties?

How often do you feel anxious about your clinical performance or evaluations?

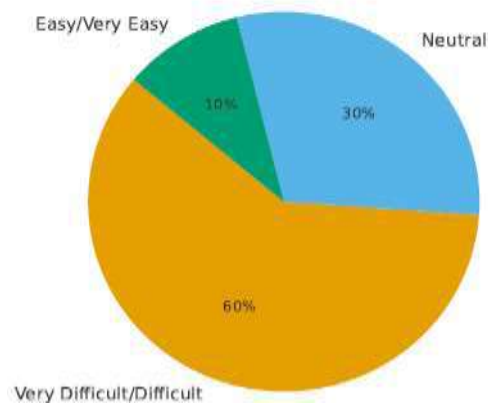
What are your main sources of stress?

How difficult is it for you to maintain a healthy study-life balance during clinical postings?

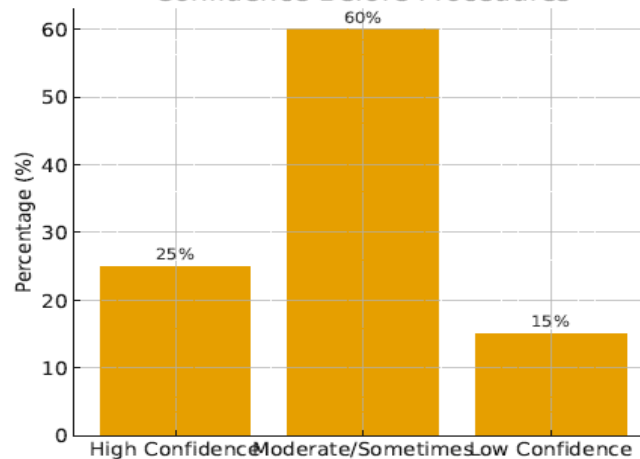
What is the biggest challenge you face in your daily dental student life?

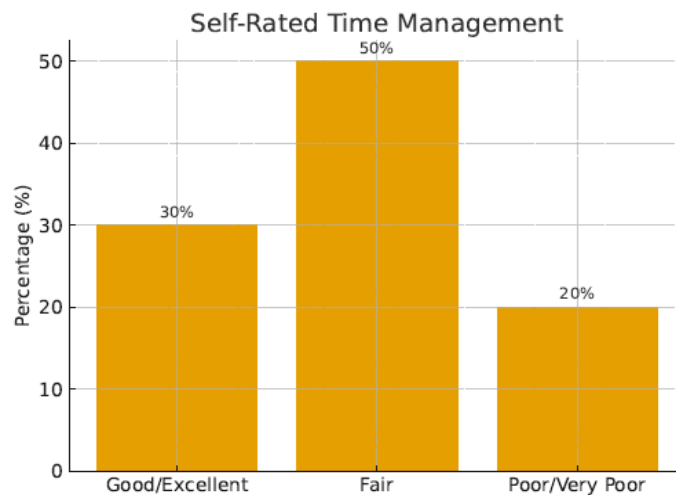
## RESULTS

Difficulty Balancing Theory & Clinical Work



Confidence Before Procedures





Top stressor	Case Completion / Quota
Balancing theory & clinical - Difficult (%)	60%
Case completion often hard (%)	55%
Clinical exposure adequate (%)	58%
Time management fair/poor (%)	70%

Chi square	P value
265.00	.0000
26.20	.0001
265.00	.0000
9.95	.0413
8.47	.0372
118.70	.0000
265.00	.0000
6.67	.0355
18.09	.0012
265.00	.0000
1.41	.8430
47.06	.0000
104.05	.0000
262.04	.0000
247.61	.0000

## DISCUSSION

The findings are consistent with earlier studies that highlight the substantial pressures associated with patient care, faculty assessment, and workload throughout the clinical components of dentistry education. Students frequently find it difficult to retain academic quality while meeting case quotas. Confidence and anxiety levels may be impacted while moving from supervised instruction to semi-independent clinical work. A number of research

support the idea that clinical obligations and impending professional exams cause more stress for dental students in their last year. These problems can be reduced by implementing rotation-based workload management, systematic mentoring, and counseling. Additionally, integrated learning sessions and flexible clinical hours can enhance the harmony between theoretical and practical elements.

## CONCLUSION

According to this study, the biggest daily obstacles experienced by third and final-year dentistry students are clinical workload, patient management stress, and time balancing. Higher levels of total stress were reported by final-year students, suggesting the need for better academic planning and mental health assistance. Better clinical performance and mental stability can be achieved by delivering periodic stress management workshops, mentorship programs, and improved faculty-student communication.

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