

Pediatric Dentists' Job Satisfaction: A National Survey

Drew teDuits, DDS, Polly Iben, DDS, Fang Qian, PhD, Karin Weber-Gasparoni, DDS, MS, PhD

Objective

The purpose was to determine pediatric dentists' career satisfaction and to identify factors that influence their satisfaction.

Methods

A survey was sent electronically via REDCap to 6,349 active American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry (AAPD) members. Survey consisted of 29 demographic and 38 career satisfaction questions based on the 5-point Professional Satisfaction and Dentists' Satisfaction Scales. Univariate and bivariate analyses along with Cronbach's alpha and Pearson's contingency coefficient were used to analyze data ($\alpha=0.5$).

Results

A total of 674 surveys were returned (11% response rate). Mean age was 48.9 ± 13.2 years. The majority were males (53%), Caucasian (80%), married (84%), and had children (80%). On average, respondents treated 118.6 ± 76 patients weekly and accepted $37\pm 32\%$ Medicaid patients. Most respondents would choose dentistry (78%) and pediatric dentistry (84%) again and recommend these careers to their children (71% and 73%, respectively). Male respondents were more satisfied with their overall career, staff, income, practice management, professional environment, well-being, and personal time. Older practitioners, practitioners with children, and practitioners who spent more time on clinical practice were more satisfied with their careers. Approximately 61% of respondents felt COVID-19 impacted their professional and personal lives. Referring to specialist was difficult for rural or young providers and those seeing more than 25% Medicaid. Pediatric dentists who were owners or partners, saw more patients and less Medicaid, treated patients under general anesthesia, and had spouses who performed more household tasks were more satisfied with their income.

Conclusions

Overall, pediatric dentists are satisfied with their career and would recommend the profession.