

Is India smiling less due to Poor Oral Hygiene?

A nationwide survey by AC Nielsen reveals that India's smiling less; majority of dentists state poor oral hygiene among the reasons

- *A whopping 89% respondents in Delhi, 65% respondents in Bengaluru, 25% respondents in Kolkata and 19% respondents in Mumbai feel that India as a nation smiles less than other countries. 76% of dentists agree with the statement that patients with poor oral hygiene tend to smile less*
- *53% respondents in Delhi and 57% respondents in Bengaluru agreed that if they smile more, it would help them to work better with their colleagues whereas 72% of dentists agree that patients tend to become less productive at work owing to oral problems caused due to negligence of oral hygiene*
- *53% respondents in Bangalore, 36% respondents in Delhi agree that they feel that their spouse / partner smiles less because of poor oral hygiene 77% dentists said that patients look to cure oral hygiene issues only after constant complaints from friends / relatives / colleagues*

The **Oral B Smile Survey** - commissioned by Oral B and conducted independently by third-party research organization AC Nielsen interviewed 823 consumers and 201 dentists across Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata & Bengaluru. Key findings highlight that many Indians feel that India as a nation is smiling less and a majority of surveyed dentists believe that the state of oral hygiene remains poor which might have an impact on healthy confident smiles, thus reducing India's "Smile Quotient" considerably! The findings throw up interesting facts with contradictory views from different cities – while **89% in Delhi and 65% in Bengaluru agreed that India as a nation smiles less, only 25% in Kolkata and 19% in Mumbai agree with the statement.** At the same time, the findings from the survey among dentists suggest that most dentists see a connection between the condition of poor oral hygiene in India and our smiles. The survey findings show that **76% dentists agreed with the statement that patients with poor oral hygiene tend to smile less.**

Is the nation missing out on big and small joys due to smiling less through the various facets of life – whether it's at work, in relationships or in things they care about like getting a spot on college cricket team or school band?

Smile your way through life

The survey asked people what they feel they would have been able to achieve had they smiled more, and a mixed bag of situations emerged. These ranged from getting out of a tricky situation to winning the mother-in-law's affection.

- While the smile quotient in Delhi & Bengaluru seems to be considerable with **93% respondents** in Delhi and **78% respondents** in Bengaluru said that they could've gotten out of a tricky situation if they had smiled more; whereas only **45% respondents** in Mumbai, and **38% respondents** in Kolkata said that they could've gotten out of a tricky situation if they had smiled more
- **54% respondents** in Delhi & **65% respondents** in Bengaluru admitted to having lost friendships in the past due to not smiling and resolving a conflict
- **54%** of the total respondents agreed that they can deal with pressure of studying / performing if they smile more as it brings a positive frame of mind
- **79% respondents** in Bengaluru, **53% respondents** in Mumbai and **44% respondents** in Delhi said that if they smiled more, they would've been able to win the affection of their mother in law

At the same time, the survey amongst dentists highlights interesting situations that many of them noticed amongst patients which clearly highlights the some connection between smiling and oral hygiene.

- **77%** of the dentists agreed that patients look to cure oral hygiene issues only after constant complaints from friends / relatives / colleagues

Smile towards a Better Workplace

People have been equally vocal regarding their connotations of smile at their work place. **76% respondents** in Delhi & **50% respondents** in Bengaluru of the total male respondents and **72% respondents** in Delhi & **67% respondents** in Bengaluru of the total female respondents agreed that they felt less confident amongst colleagues / friends due to smiling less. At the same time, majority of dentists surveyed point out that poor oral hygiene tends to affect the productivity amongst their patients, for example, **72% of dentists agreed to the statement that patients tend to become less productive at work owing to oral problems caused due to negligence of oral hygiene** and **77% of dentists agreed to the statement that patients look to cure oral hygiene issues only after constant complaints from friends / relatives / colleagues**

Some interesting facts when consumers were quizzed relating to their workplace & colleagues:

- **41%** of the total respondents said that work environment turns unfriendly when colleagues / bosses smiled less
- **37%** of the total respondents said that they feel less inclined to work with colleagues who smile less
- **43%** of the total respondents said that if they smiled more, it would help me to work better with my colleagues who also said that they:
 - **78%** of the above respondents said that they wished their colleague would visit a dentist for better oral hygiene

- **68% of the above respondents said that they feel their colleagues smile less because of poor oral hygiene**

Win the Affection of your Spouse with a Smile?

Some interesting facts when consumers were quizzed relating to their spouse / partner / relationship:

- **42% of the total respondents said that a fight/conflict with partner could have been avoided if they smiled more**
- **43% of the total respondents said that they wish that their partner / spouse would smile more often**
- **51% of the total respondents feel that their spouse / partner smiles less because of poor oral hygiene, who also said that they**
 - **72% of the above respondents said that they wish that my spouse / partner would visit a dentist for better oral hygiene**

The survey highlights that though the majority of respondents believe that good oral hygiene is important for a good smile, they do very little to protect it. **99% respondents in Delhi, 76% respondents in Mumbai & 85% respondents in Bengaluru of the total respondents agree that a healthy confident smile can be obtained through good oral hygiene**, and ironically, a resounding **87% of the dentists said that oral hygiene problems are common among Indians.**

The survey lists down striking facts that reinforce that India still has a long way to go on the road to good oral hygiene. Some of the findings from the survey amongst dentists state that:

- **87% of the dentists agree that patients have no dental hygiene routine prior to their first visit to a dentist**
- **90% of the dentists agree that patients associate oral care procedures with extreme pain.**
- **83% of the dentists agree that in India, people immediately visit their doctor if affected by cold, fever, body ache / stomach ache but not for tooth ache**

In summary, the survey highlights the opinion among many Indians that the nation is smiling less and majority of the surveyed dentists also believe that poor oral hygiene could be one of the reasons. The **Oral B Smile India Movement 2** thus takes upon a **mission to protect a billion Indian smiles, one at a time**. The brand has joined hands with more than 10,000 dentists across the country to spread awareness about the importance of good oral hygiene that would strengthen both the social and medical well being of the country. The route to oral health is actually simpler than we think – try what the experts'

majority does! **90% dentists said that they religiously follow the 3 step regimen as part of their personal basic oral hygiene routine.**

The 3 step regimen consists of the following:

- Brush twice everyday for 2 mins with the right toothbrush
- Visit a dentist every 6 months

So while you draw up the resolutions in the New Year put the pledge to the Smile India Movement on top of your list – follow the 3 step regimen and unveil a healthy confident uninhibited smile into your life that will help fulfill many other joys and pleasures in life.

APPENDIX I - SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS:

The Oral B Smile Survey claim based on research conducted by Nielsen, in December 2011, amongst 823 Respondents and 201 Dentists conducted in Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata & Bengaluru aged between 18 – 45 years of age.

FINDINGS FROM DENTISTS SURVEY

- 87% of the dentists said that oral hygiene problems are common among Indians
- **83% of the dentists agree that in India, people immediately visit their doctor if affected by cold, fever, body ache / stomach ache but not for tooth ache**
- 87% of the dentists said that patients have no dental hygiene routine prior to their first visit to a dentist
- 90% of the total dentists said that patients associate oral care procedure with extreme pain
- 88% of the dentists said that people do not use the right tooth brush
- 89% of the dentists said that patients are not aware of the importance of using the right toothbrush to maintain good oral hygiene
- **76% of the dentists said that patients with poor oral hygiene tend to smile less**
- **72% of the dentists said that patients tend to become less productive at work owing to oral problems caused due to negligence of oral hygiene**
- 84% of the dentists said that female patients are more conscious about poor oral hygiene / oral problems compared to men
- 77% of the dentists said that patients look to cure oral hygiene issues only after constant complaints from friends / relatives / colleagues
- **72% of the dentists said that people come for a check on oral hygiene after embarrassing gossip by colleagues**
- 64% of the dentist agree that in India, oral hygiene routine is considered to be as important as cholesterol / diabetes check up
- 90% dentists said that they religiously follow the 3 step regimen as part of their personal basic oral hygiene routine
- **92% of the dentists said that it is important to brush for at least 2 minutes twice a day and visit a dentist every 6 months for optimum oral health**

FINDINGS FROM CONSUMER SURVEY

- **89% in Delhi & 65% in Bengaluru of the total respondents believe that India as nation smiles less than other countries**

- 76% of the total respondents in India agreed that a healthy confident smile can be obtained through good oral hygiene
- **87% females of the total respondents in Bengaluru agreed if they had smiled more, they would've been able to win the affection of their mother in law**
- **93% of the total respondents in Delhi & 78% of the total respondents in Bengaluru agreed that they could've gotten out of a tricky situation if I had smiled more then**
- 54% of the total respondents in Delhi and said 65% of the total respondents in Bengaluru that they have lost friendships in the past due to not smiling and resolving a conflict
- **76% in Delhi & 50% in Bengaluru of the total male respondents and 72% in Delhi & 67% in Bengaluru of the total female respondents agreed that they felt less confident amongst colleagues / friends due to smiling less**
- 56% in Delhi, 54% in Bengaluru the total male respondents & 59% of the total female respondents in Bengaluru said they hesitate to consult their boss since they don't smile enough and thus, their work productivity has decreased
- 58% in Delhi, 53% in Bengaluru of the total male respondents and % of the total female respondents in Bengaluru agreed that Work environment turns unfriendly when colleagues / bosses smiled less
- 54% of the total male respondents in Delhi and 51% of the total female respondents in Bengaluru said that they feel less inclined to work with colleagues who smiled less
- **53% in Delhi and 57% in Bengaluru of the total respondents believe that if they smiled more it would help them to work better with their colleagues**
- 53% of the total male respondents and 54% of the total female respondents in Bengaluru felt that their colleagues smiled less due to poor oral hygiene
- 54% in Delhi & 56% in Bengaluru of the total respondents wished that their colleague would visit a dentist for a better oral hygiene
- **60% of the total respondents in Bengaluru wished their partner/ Spouse smiled more often**
- **64% of the total female respondents in Bengaluru agreed that a fight/conflict with partner could have been avoided if they had smiled more**
- 53% of the total male respondents & 65% of the total female respondents in Bengaluru wished that their spouse/ partner would visit a dentist for a better oral hygiene