**Group Assignment Considerations of Dental vs. Dental Hygiene Students before and during COVID-19**

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**Objectives:** In times of COVID-19, group projects often take place in a virtual world. The objectives were to explore how much dental and dental hygiene students liked group projects, which group members they would want, which group processes they considered important, and how they would like to have assignments organized.

**Methods:** Methods: 592 dental and 152 dental hygiene students responded to a survey..

**Results:** More students agreed/strongly agreed in 2021 that they liked working in groups than in 2020 and the lowest percentage was found in 2018/19 (5-point scale with 5=agree strongly: 49.3%/40.8%/34.7%;p<0.001). This trend was also found in response to the statement “I enjoy working in groups” (34.5%/38.4%/48.7%;p<0.001). When compared to responses before COVID, responses during COVID changed to being more concerned about active involvement and contributions. The percentages of agreement with the statements “It is important that group members work well with others” (88.7%/95.1%/97.3%; p<0.001) and “…are open-minded” (84.4%/93.1%/96.4%; p<0.001) show this trend. This trend was also found in responses related to statements concerning how important different group characteristics are such as that the group gives good feedback (82.8%/97.6%/91.8%; p<0.001). More students agreed that it was important to have explicit details of projects during COVID than before (85.3%/97.1%/94.7%; p<0.001) and have resources such as references (73.6%/82.6%/80.1%; p=0.016). Responses concerning where group work can be done also changed. Responses to the statement “It is important that group work can be done outside of the classroom” showed this trend (54.7%/72.6%/65.1%; p<0.001)

**Conclusions:** Given that healthcare professionals' collaborations with others are crucial for assuring the best possible patient care, future research should focus on gaining a better understanding of how to best educate future providers about working with others under different environmental conditions.