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A questionnaire based survey to know the attitude of patients in replacing missing teeth at prosthodontics department of Nair hospital dental college, Mumbai

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Abstract

Introduction: Teeth are crucial for maintaining a healthy personality and positive self-image, as they contribute to our overall appearance and well-being. This study addresses the psychological and social implications of teeth loss, emphasizing the importance of replacing missing teeth promptly due to their impact on oral and general health. The aim is to assess patient's perceptions, preferences, and reasons for accepting or refusing treatment. The purpose of this study was to assess the attitude of patients in replacing missing teeth who reported to Department of Prosthodontics at Nair Hospital Dental College, Mumbai.

Materials and Methods: A cross-sectional survey to determine patient's attitude towards replacement of teeth was conducted among 384 patients. Individuals older than 19 years and with at least one missing teeth (except third molars) were eligible to take part. A questionnaire of 10 questions covering broad perceptions and understandings of various prosthodontic treatment techniques were created, and the likely reasons for not accepting or refusing treatment were measured.

Results: The total number of participants was 386. Of them 191 were male (49.5%) and 195 female (50.5%). When questioned about the number of missing teeth 67.6% had more than one missing teeth, 25.1% had single missing tooth and 7.3% were completely edentulous. When asked further 60.9% stated that teeth loss was due to caries, 19.2% were unaware, 14.8% had gum disease and 5.2% of the participants lost their teeth due to trauma. Most of the participants lost their teeth 2-5 years ago. When asked further 65.3% of participants wanted to get their missing teeth replaced. When asked about reason for replacement of teeth, 40.7% wanted to replace due to difficulty in chewing, 37.8% for appearance. When asked about reason for not replacing the teeth 30.6% stated financial problem, 23.3% stated lack of time and 20.2% stated that they do not need. Maximum participants 78.5% desired fixed prosthesis.

Keywords: Attitude, missing teeth, replacement, desired fixed prosthesis, teeth

Introduction

Teeth loss has psychological and social implications [1]. It impairs oral function and masticatory efficiency too. By reducing dietary intake and jeopardising nutritional status, missing teeth can have an effect on the patient's oral health as well as on general health [2]. Therefore, it is imperative to get the missing teeth replaced as soon as possible.

The primary focus of the prosthodontist mainly concentrates on replacing missing teeth. However, there are no generally accepted rules about how to estimate need, demand or utilization of prosthodontic services in most situations, since individual preferences play a very important role [3]. Several factors influence the need or choice of prosthodontic treatment modalities such as age, gender, socioeconomic status, educational level and appearance etc [4]. Most patients delay seeking treatment after tooth loss due to a lack of understanding regarding significance of prosthodontic replacement, even though replacing lost teeth is strongly indicated [5]. Hence there is a need to improve patient awareness regarding various available treatment modalities, pros and cons of each option, so that they can choose accordingly. Patients have a few choices for replacing lost teeth. Broadly, there are two categories of treatment modalities: removable (RPD) and fixed prosthesis. Among fixed prosthesis, conventional fixed partial dentures (FPD) and implants are the available options [6]. Hence, this study was planned to assess the attitudes of patients towards replacing missing teeth.

Materials and Methods

A cross-sectional survey to determine patient’s attitude towards replacement of teeth was conducted among 384 patients (Male=191 Female=195) who visited Prosthodontics department of Nair Hospital Dental College, Mumbai. For better understanding the validated questionnaire was translated in Hindi and Marathi also. Individuals older than 19 years and with at least one missing teeth (except third molars) were eligible to take part. The purpose of the survey was explained to the participant and consent was obtained. A questionnaire of 10 questions covering broad perceptions and understandings of various prosthodontic treatment techniques were created, and the likely reasons for not accepting or refusing treatment were measured. The questionnaire also included other characteristics about the subjects, such as their name, age and gender. A 10 item closed-ended questionnaire was used to record the responses. A single investigator recorded all the responses followed by clinical responses. Data was collected and descriptive analysis was done using frequency distribution.

Results

The total number of participants was 386. Of them 191 were male (49.5%) and 195 females (50.5%). Of these it was observed that 91(23.6%) were 10th passed, 164 (42.5%) were 12th passed, 90 (23.3%) were Graduate, 24(6.2%) were Post Graduates and 17(4.4%) were Professional. When

Distribution of Participants was done according to Martial Status it was observed that 197 (51.0%) were Married, 180 (46.6%) were Unmarried and 9 (2.3%) were Divorced. When participants were distributed according to annual income it was observed that 46 (11.9%) had annual income 50,000-1 Lakhs, 176(45.6%) had income between 1 Lakh to 2 Lakhs, 146 (37.8%) had income between 2-5 lakhs, 14(3.6%) had income between 5-10 lakhs, 4(1.0%) had income between 10 lakhs. When questioned about the number of missing teeth 67.6% had more than one missing teeth, 25.1% had single missing tooth and 7.3% were completely edentulous. When asked further 60.9% stated that teeth loss was due to caries, 19.2% were unaware, 14.8% had gum disease and 5.2% of the participants lost their teeth due to trauma. Most of the participants lost their teeth 2-5 years ago. When asked further 65.3% of participants wanted to get their missing teeth replaced. When asked about reason for replacement of teeth, 40.7% wanted to replace due to difficulty in chewing, 37.8% for appearance. When asked about reason for not replacing the teeth 30.6% stated financial problem, 23.3% stated lack of time and 20.2% stated that they do not need. Maximum participants 78.5% desired fixed prosthesis. Of which 69.4% wanted Tooth supported prosthesis over implants. When enquired about their expectations from replacement 36.3% stated there should not be any problem during chewing, 33.2% wanted it to be economical and 14.2% wanted it to be esthetically pleasing.

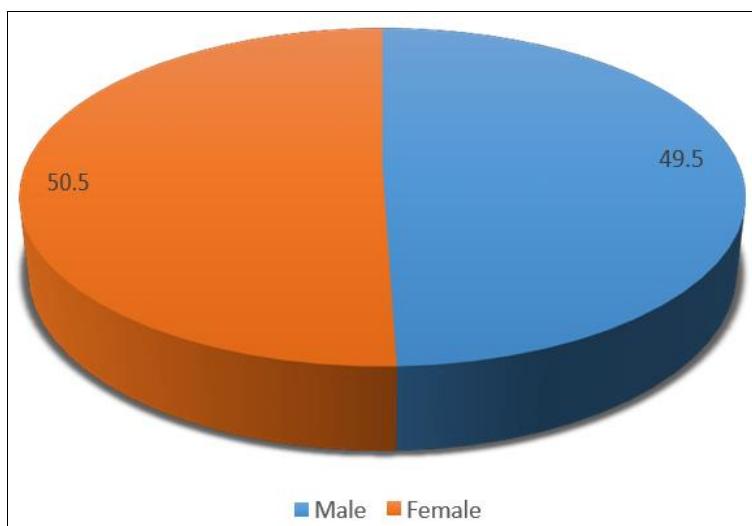


Fig 1: Distribution of participants according to gender

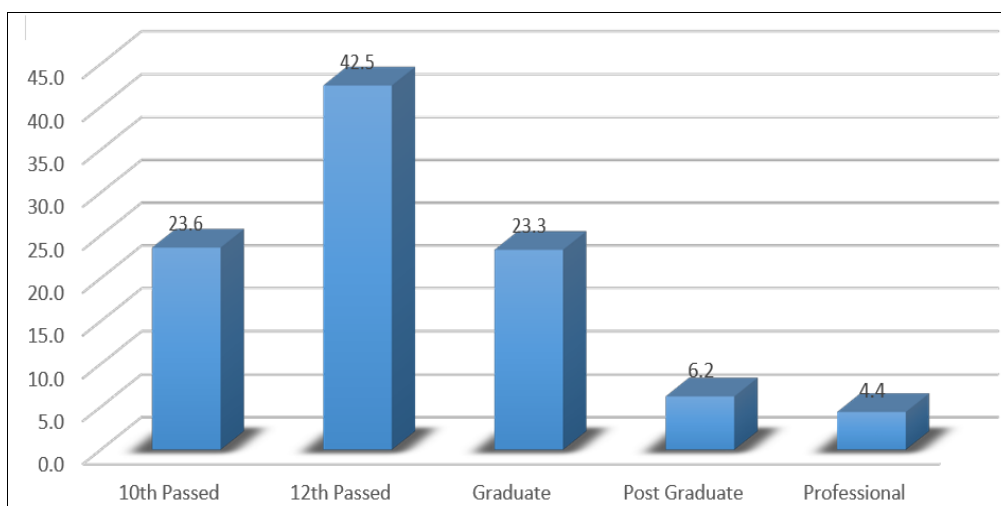


Fig 2: Distribution of participants according to education

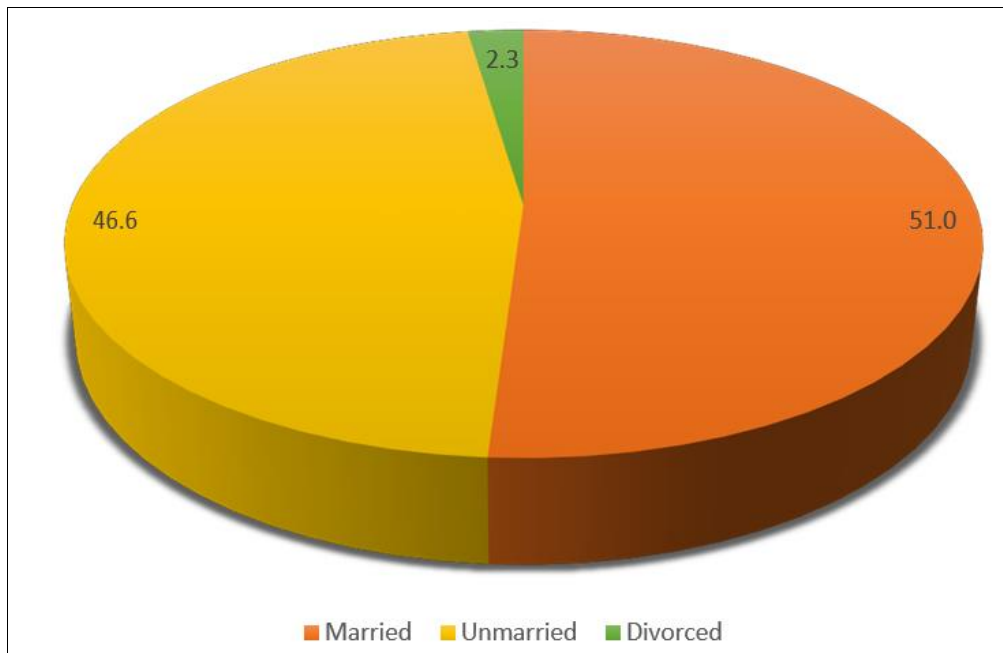


Fig 3: Distribution of participants according to marital status

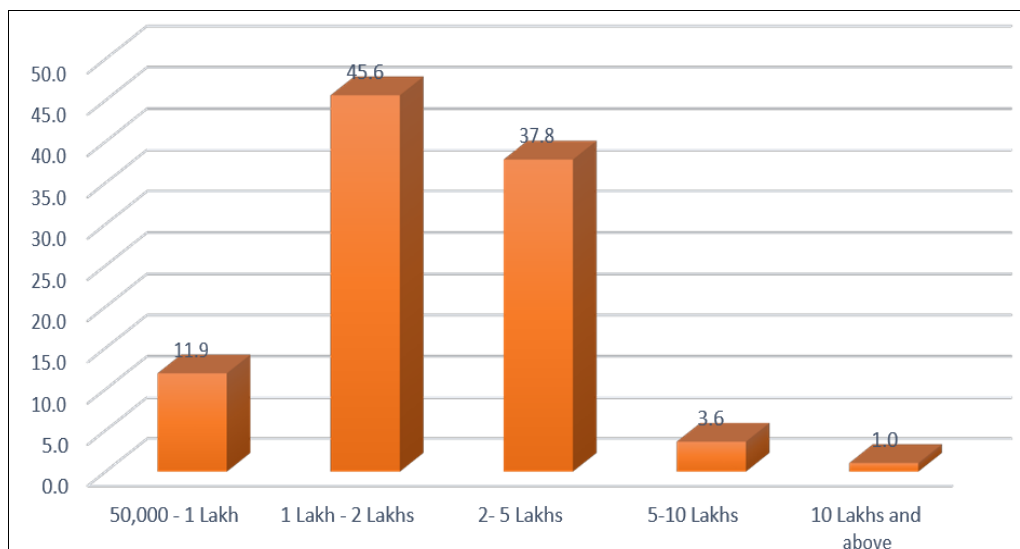


Fig 4: Distribution of participants according to annual income

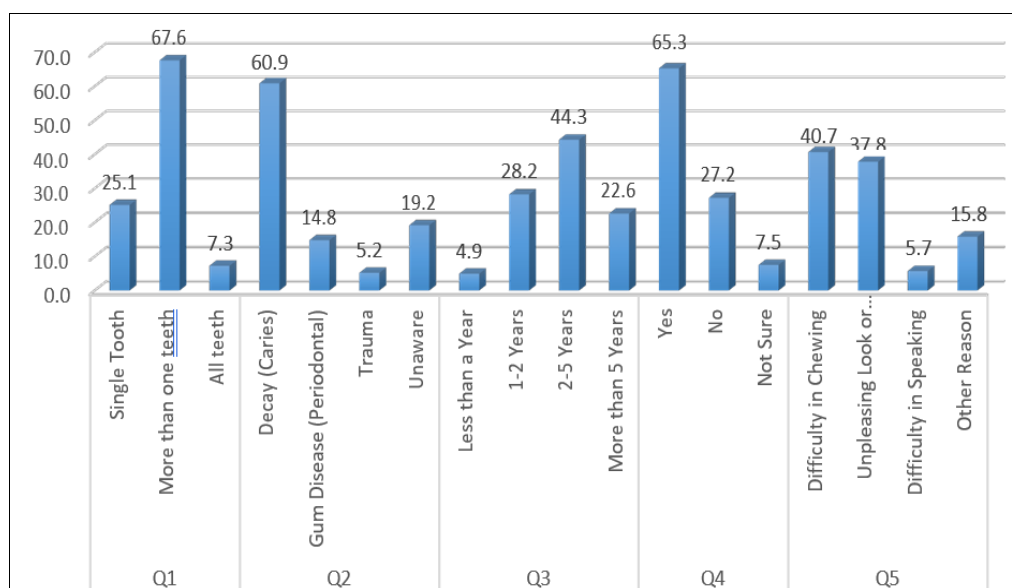


Fig 5: Distribution of responses of participants

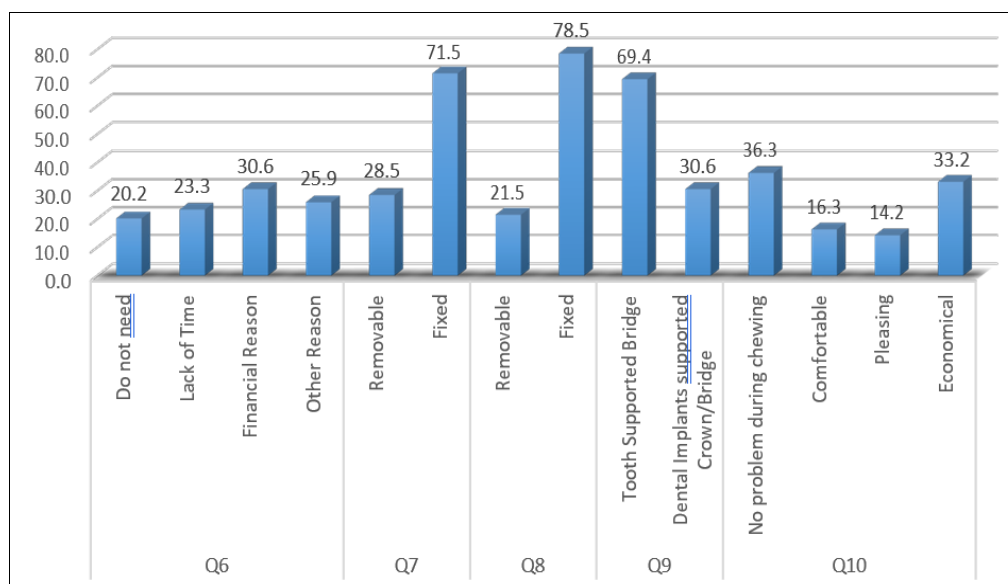


Fig 6: Distribution of responses of participants

Discussion

The significance of dental health extends far beyond the mere existence of sound teeth. Loss of teeth affects social as well as psychological well-being of an individual [1]. The purpose of this study was to gather the information regarding patient preferences and understanding regarding prosthetic dental treatment.

In this study, a total of 386 individuals (191 males and 195 females) were asked about reasons for teeth loss, time and their treatment choices. Most of the individuals in this study belonged to the age group of 30-50 years. 67.6% of participants had more one missing teeth from 2-5 years. This indicates lack of urgency or negligence towards replacement of teeth after extraction. Therefore, it is evident that there was an inadequate understanding of the long-term consequences of edentulism. In maximum participant's caries and periodontal disease was common cause for loss

of teeth, which is in agreement with factsheet provided by the World Health Organization (WHO). [7] Also it was found that maximum participants (65.3%) were interested in getting their teeth replaced which was going in line with a study conducted by Akeel *et al.* wherein he concluded that 82% of the study population wanted to replace their lost teeth [8].

When questioned about reason for replacement of teeth maximum participants 40.7% said they are having chewing difficulties while some of them 37.8% said they wanted to replace teeth for esthetic purpose. Hence, inferred that patients are strongly influenced by location of the missing teeth for replacement [9]. Which were similar to the results of a study conducted in 2004 by Shah N *et al.*, who discovered that 60% of the people in his study had low quality of life due to their inability to chew food since they were missing teeth. [10]. 30.6% of the participants stated financial difficulties for not replacing the missing teeth. This can be because oral health is not as prioritized as general health in developing nations. Also, this was in line with Pallegedara (2005) who observed that cost being the main reason for not replacing the missing teeth [11].

Most of the participants were aware of both fixed and removable denture as option for replacement. However, when asked about their preference many of them 71.5% preferred fixed prosthesis as replacement, because patients feel fixed prosthesis is far more comfortable for chewing and gave better aesthetic results as compared to other means of replacement. Also, only 30.6% participants wanted implant

supported prosthesis. This may be due to cost hindrance and reluctance to undergoing surgery. All these findings was confirmed by study done by Al-Quran, *et al.* (2011) [12]. When asked about expectations of participants from prosthesis most of them 36.3% stated efficient mastication and 33.2% stated that it should be cost effective. This was in line with study conducted by Grey *et al.* who found mastication was the main concern of the patients followed by cost factor [13].

There are few limitations of the study as this was conducted in institutional set up as the treatment charges here are different from private set ups.

Conclusion

It is evident that there was an inadequate understanding of the long-term consequences of edentulism. It was found that maximum participants were interested in getting their teeth replaced. Also, this study highlights the lack of awareness regarding dental implants among patients, indicating a need for further investigation and outreach programs.

Conflict of Interest

Not available

Financial Support

Not available

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