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## Research Article

### KNOWLEDGE AND AWARENESS OF PARTIAL EDENTULISM IN RURAL POPULATION (KANCHEEPURAM) - A SURVEY

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#### ABSTRACT

**Background and reasons:** Edentulousness falls in a special category among the various conditions of dental origin. People living in rural areas may follow a form of healthcare based on ancient traditions, beliefs and cultural habits. A major challenge for the dentist will be to plan oral healthcare for this group of patients, and their acceptance of treatment for their welfare. Partial edentulism is an indication of unhealthy dental practices in the society and attitude towards dental and oral care. This study is done to create awareness of partial edentulism and the need for tooth replacements among people.

**Objective:** To conduct a survey to assess the awareness of partial edentulism and tooth replacements in rural population in Kancheepuram.

**Methodology:** A cross sectional study was done by conducting a survey consisting of 10 questions were asked among 100 people aged between 18-65 in rural districts of Kancheepuram.

**Results:** It was seen that 64% of the participants were aware of tooth replacements and 36 % were not aware of them. Though 81% are ready to accept prosthodontic treatment, 19% declined prosthodontic treatment stating unawareness, cost factor, lack of facilities as the reasons, of which unawareness (55%) was the major reason stated by the participants.

**Conclusion:** This study showed the inadequate awareness of prosthodontic rehabilitation among the people and people should be educated about the need for prosthodontic treatment.

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#### INTRODUCTION

Partial edentulism is a dental arch in which one or more but not all natural teeth are missing. Generally, caries, periodontal problems, traumatic injuries etc. Are some of the causes responsible for partial edentulism [1,2,3,4]. Some studies have reported caries as the main causative agent for tooth loss [5,6,7]. Also, studies have documented that age correlates positively with partial edentulism [8].

Partial edentulism affects the life style of individual. It's effects include difficulty in mastication of hard foods, altered speech, change in face appearance, tilting of adjacent teeth [9]. Also, the degradation of alveolar bone in the dentition arch makes it difficult for performing restoration in a partially edentulous patient [9,10]. On basis of lifestyle, partial edentulism restricts dietary options, which leads to weight loss. It also affects the aesthetics of the individual, affecting their self esteem and confidence.[10],[11].

Partial edentulism is one of the widely studied topics in dentistry[11] The pattern of partial edentulism has been

evaluated in many selected populations in different countries[13]. Several studies have analysed the correlation between partial edentulism and its influencing factors like socio-economic parameters, age, gender, etc, [14],[15]. Few studies have analysed the awareness among the subjects to replace the missing teeth.

The aim of this survey is to assess the awareness of treatment options for partial edentulism among the rural population in Kancheepuram district and to educate them about the need for accepting prosthodontic treatment for partial edentulism.

#### METHODOLOGIES

A questionnaire was prepared comprising of 10 questions and survey was conducted among 100 people aged between 18 to 65 in rural districts of Kancheepuram., of which 75 were prone to be affected by partial edentulism. The following questions were included in the questionnaire:

1. what is your age?
2. What is your gender?
3. What is your educational status?

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4. How would you describe your socio economic status?
5. What do you think will be the cause of partial edentulism?
6. How do you consider partial edentulism as a problem?
7. Do you think partial edentulism can be treated?
8. Do you know that there are remedial treatments for partial edentulism?
9. Will you agree to undergo prosthodontic treatment?
10. If no, what is the reason for declining prosthodontic treatment?

## RESULTS

The statistically analysed data are given below:

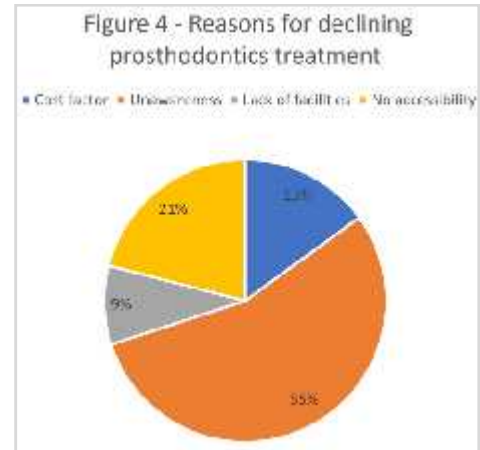
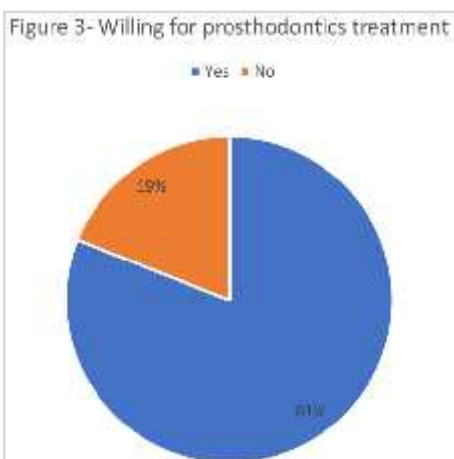
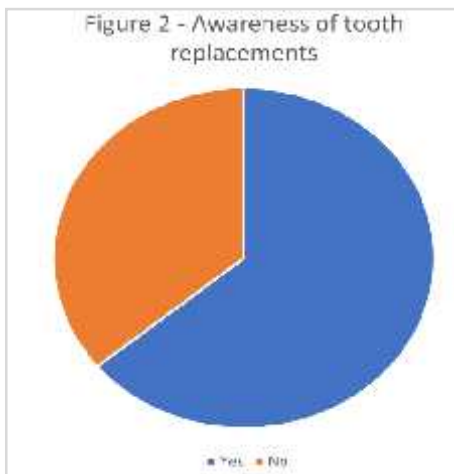
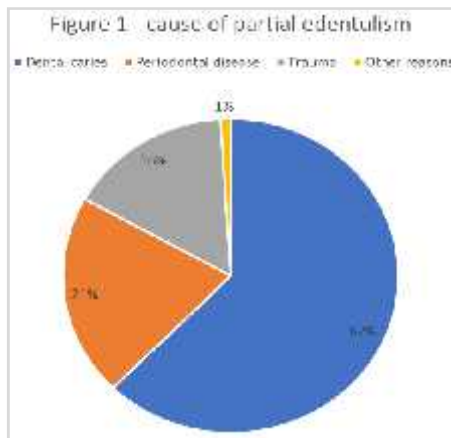


Figure 1 depicts the reasons believed by participants is the cause of partial edentulism and figure 2 depicts the knowledge of tooth replacements required for partial edentulism among the participants.

Figure 3 shows the percentage of people willing for prosthodontics treatment and figure 4 shows the reasons believed by the participants behind partial edentulism.

## DISCUSSION

Edetulis is the state of haig lost all of one's natural teeth. the occurrence of an oral "end state" such as edentulism is important because it is an indicator of both population health and the functioning and adequacy of a country's oral health care system.

In this study, It is seen that 64% of the participants were aware of teeth replacements and 36% were not aware of prosthodontic options. In this survey, participants believed dental caries (63%) was the major cause of partial edentulism, followed by periodontal disease (21%) and trauma (16%). 81% of participants were willing to undergo prosthodontic treatment to rehabilitate their partial edentulous state and 19% were not willing to take treatment and the participants stated unawareness (55%), no accessibility(21%) and lack of facilities(9%) as the major causes for declining prosthodontic rehabilitation.

The number of female participants is larger than that of males in this survey. Though most of the people are aware of existence of prosthodontic treatment, there are some people who, though aware of prosthodontic treatment options are not willing to take up prosthodontics treatment. The reasons stated by the people were unawareness, lack of facilities in hospital, non accessibility, of which unawareness of the existence of prosthodontic treatment is the major reason stated by people.

According to a study done by Judy *et al.*, it was seen that women has more awareness than men. This was because it was believed that women are more health and beauty conscious than males [16]. Some studies have analysed the correlation between partial edentulism and factors like education status, socioeconomic statuses.[17]. This included study conducted by D'Souza KM *et al.*, in which the partial edentulism was correlated with various socio- demographic factors [18]. The study conducted by Sapkota B *et al.*, correlated employment status, and studied

the prevalence and awareness of tooth replacements among people [19].

## CONCLUSION

From this survey, it is seen that unawareness is the mostly stated reason behind declining the prosthodontic treatment. This study showed the inadequate awareness of prosthodontic rehabilitation among the people and people should be educated about the need for prosthodontic treatment.

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