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ORIGINAL RESEARCH

A questionnaire instrument to assess clinical decision-making in prosthodontics on choice between Removable Partial Denture and Fixed Partial Denture

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ABSTRACT:

Traditionally the determination of prosthodontic treatment options and selection of treatment have been considered part of the practitioner's professional responsibility. There are various factors that affects the decision making of the prosthodontist and varies from one prosthodontists to other. In this research, 60 questionnaires were sent to different prosthodontists and their replies were studied to evaluate the factors that were given the maximum importance and the ones with least importance.

Key words: RPD, FPD, Replacement

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INTRODUCTION

Prosthodontic rehabilitation of partially or completely edentulous patients is of prime importance in clinical practice, since the definitive treatment can improve oral function, esthetics and quality of life of most patients.⁽¹⁾

Although prosthetic replacement of any missing tooth seems unequivocal from the dentist's point of view in deciding a patient's prosthetic needs is definitely not a simple task. There are great variations in dentist's treatment choice, specially in prosthodontists.⁽³⁾

For fabricating dental prostheses that meet patients' demands and have good longevity and function, appropriate treatment planning and decision-making are required. Therefore, not only technical skills and clinical judgment of the dentist are needed, but also patients' attitude toward treatment plays a critical role in post treatment satisfaction.

Traditionally, determination of prosthodontic treatment options and selection of treatment have been considered part of the practitioner's professional responsibility. Though in contemporary clinical practice, patients are increasingly

assuming an active role in determining their actual treatment needs, by stating their expectations and desires.

Inconsistencies among clinician's treatment decisions are due to factors like financial discrepancies, age, overall health of patient which ultimately can affect clinical viability of the treatment outcome.⁽⁴⁾

AIM AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of this review is to discuss a set of social and individual factors that influence determination of treatment needs in order to substantiate a sociodental approach and evidence-based decision making process in prosthetic dentistry.

MATERIALS AND METHOD

A total of 60 questionnaires were sent out to different prosthodontists. The clinicians were requested to rank the options according to their level of importance as per their discretion with 1 being the least important and 13 having the utmost importance. The number of respondents were 48, yielding an overall response rate of 80%

QUESTIONNAIRE

NAME:

Kindly rank the below given options from 1 to 13 with 1 being the least important and 13 being of utmost importance

1. Patient's age
2. Patient's preferences
3. Patient's general health
4. Impact of intervention on quality of life
5. Likelihood of favourable prognosis
6. Patient's ability to maintain oral health
7. Cost factor
8. Technical support
9. Number of visits
10. Esthetics
11. Abutment condition
12. Comfort of the patient
13. Marginal bone loss

The questionnaire was evaluated by giving a score equivalent to the ranking of that option in each questionnaire and the total was done for every factor.

FACTORS	No. of times each factor got a particular score													Total score
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
1. Patient's age	1	2	4	8	4	4	3	4	-	-	6	4	-	260
2. Patient's preferences	1	6	1	4	4	-	9	6	1	3	4	5	5	371
3. Patient's general health	2	3	2	6	2	-	5	2	3	5	4	7	3	343
4. Impact of intervention on quality of life	1	1	4	2	10	12	4	4	3	-	6	4	4	398
5. Likelihood of favourable prognosis	2	4	5	1	8	-	3	7	10	4	2	-	4	310
6. Patient's ability to maintain oral health	3	1	4	3	4	8	4	4	7	8	2	2	3	405
7. Cost factor	4	11	4	4	2	3	3	1	4	3	-	1	1	202
8. Technical support	6	4	12	5	1	5	1	1	8	1	4	1	-	258
9. Number of visits	21	7	4	3	1	-	1	-	3	-	-	-	4	150
10. Esthetics	2	2	2	2	11	1	11	4	1	9	4	1	-	345
11. Abutment condition	3	4	2	2	1	3	2	2	3	7	12	7	12	547
12. Comfort of the patient	3	2	3	7	-	10	2	4	-	1	-	3	4	253
13. Marginal bone loss	1	1	1	1	-	2	-	9	5	7	4	9	8	465

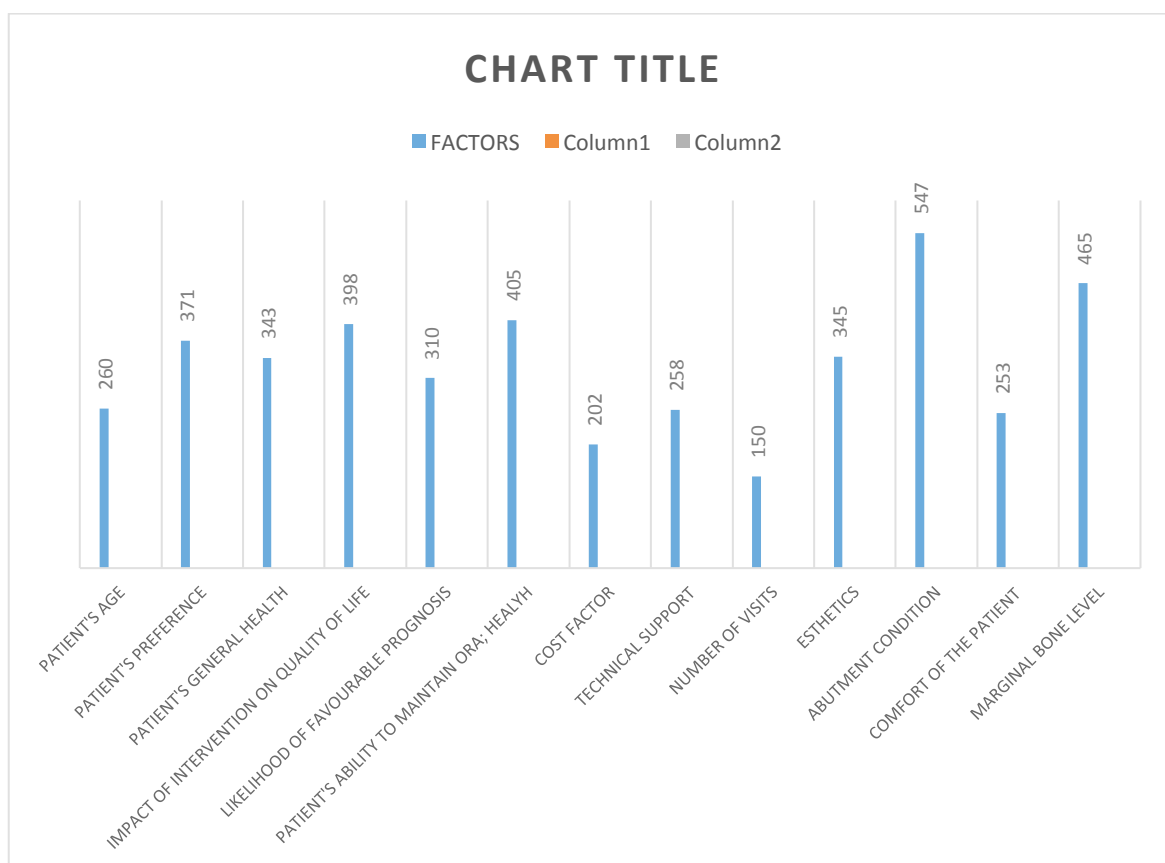
RESULTS:

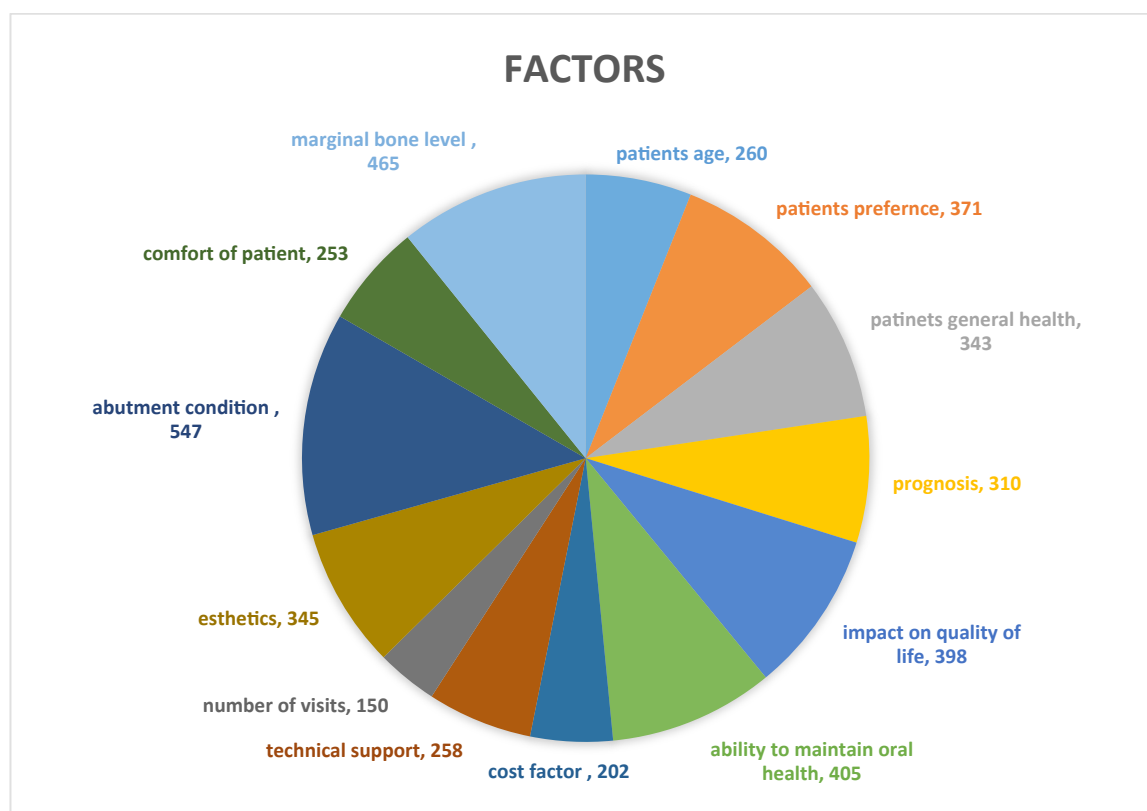
Data from the questionnaire were used to assess the factors that a clinician keeps in mind while making a decision regarding the treatment plan for an edentulous area.

The assessment of the factors concluded that the most pivotal factor of all according to 12.7% of the clinicians was the condition of the abutment. And the factor that was given the least importance according to the clinicians was the number of visits the patient had to make for the treatment.

FACTORS	RANK	PERCENTAGE
Abutment Condition	1	12.7%
Marginal bone level	2	10.7%
Cost factor	3	9.6%

Ability to maintain oral health	4	9.4%
Impact of intervention on quality of life	5	9.2%
Patient's preference	6	8.6%
Esthetics	7	8%
Patient's general health	8	7.9%
Likelihood of favourable prognosis	9	7.19%
Patient's age	10	6.03%
Technical support	11	5.9%
Comfort of the patient	12	5.8%
Number of visits	13	3.4%





DISCUSSION

The results of this research suggests that within the limited scrutiny received by the phenomenon, variation in dentist's clinical decisions is ubiquitous. Such variation might be taken as a definitive signal of the potential for serious problems with the appropriateness of dental care.

Research indicated that the condition of the abutment profoundly influenced the decision making in treatment planning. Whereas the number of visits for the patient was given the least priority. A link between decision making and the patient's treatment need has also been established by including the cost considerations.

Marginal bone level was 2nd in the ranking of importance as it can also affect the final outcome and prognosis of the prosthesis.

The ability to maintain the oral health is of substantial importance as it directly affects the prognosis.

Cost was yet again an important factor as some individuals may not be able to afford treatment in private clinics as the cost difference between a removal partial denture and a fixed partial denture is quite evident.

Satisfaction of patients and patients preferences are also strong determinant of success with respect to prosthodontic treatment. This fact has been reinforced in a study.

A factor that may be of high importance for one dentist may not be so important for the other, although eventually they all come to the same decisions.

CONCLUSION

The study provided us a common model on which the decision making in dentistry is based. The goal was to have an evaluation without any intention to evaluate what should be a good practice. Appropriate treatment would satisfy the requirement that "the expected health benefit exceeded the expected negative consequences by a sufficiently wide margin that the procedure was worth doing" (2)

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