

Awareness, need and demand for replacement of missing teeth among partially dentate patients attending a university dental hospital

E.J.C.Perera¹, R.M. Jayasinghe^{1*}, J.A.V.P. Jayasinghe¹, I.P. Thilakumara¹, R.M.S.G.K. Rasnayaka¹, M.H.M. Shiraz¹, R.R.I.K. Ranabahu¹ and S. Kularatna²

¹ *Department of Prosthetic Dentistry, Faculty of Dental Sciences, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka,* ²*Griffith University, Australia*
**manoripathiraja@yahoo.com*

Different authors have suggested different methods to evaluate the need for prosthetic management of partially dentate patients. One of the methods for evaluating such includes assessing patients' demand for treatment and objective oral status of patients.

Therefore, our objective was to assess the awareness, need and demand for replacement of missing teeth according to age, gender, ethnicity, educational level, socio-economic status and edentulous space of the patient.

This cross-sectional study (420 patients) was carried out using an interviewer administered questionnaire which assessed the awareness about partially dentate status, attitude and awareness about treatment options available for tooth replacement and the reason for selecting a particular option.

According to the findings that 76.2% of the study group was of the opinion that missing teeth should be replaced by prosthetic means. However, there were no differences with respect to age, gender, ethnicity and educational level.

Although 77.9% and 32.9% were aware of removable prostheses and implants respectively, only 25.2%% knew about tooth supported bridges as an option for replacement of missing teeth. The opinion of patients regarding the need for regular dental visits was statistically significant according to gender and education level. Demand and need for prosthetic management were similar with Kennedy class III.

In conclusion, awareness about reasons for replacement of missing teeth was low in the study group. The awareness about tooth supported bridges and dental implants were low among partially dentate individuals.

The significant association between awareness about treatment options and demand highlights the need for improving public education programmes. Both the demand and need for replacement of missing teeth were high in Kennedy class III partially dentate individuals.