

# **Social Media Usage And Perception By Patients' Of Dental Aesthetics In Aurangabad**

## **ABSTRACT:-**

**Aims:** Social media is defined as the 'software that enables individuals and communities to gather, communicate, share & in some cases collaborate or play'. Objective of this study is to analyse the impact of social media on patient's perception for seeking Dental Aesthetic treatments in Aurangabad.

**Material And Methods:** A cross-sectional analytical study employed online survey of 145 randomly selected patients. The targeted age of participants ranged from 18 years and above. The study data were collected using a two-part questionnaire.

**Results:** One hundred forty five participants responded to this study through google forms. Most of the participants belonged to the age group of 26-35 years (n=87), followed by 18-25 years(n=53), 36-45years and >45years (n=3 & 0 respectively). When compared to males(45.5%) the response of females was high(54.5%). Most of patients think that dentist should communicate with people through social media rather than traditional(89.7%)

**Conclusion:** The effect of social media on patients in Aurangabad region can be considered as high. Patients are influenced by social media usage and are seeking aesthetic treatment as an outcome. It is the responsibility of dentists to educate patients about the best treatment options.

*Keywords: Social Media, Aesthetic Dental Treatment, Dentistry*

## **INTRODUCTION:**

"Social media is a powerful tool that affects communication and relationships amongst people. Social media nowadays is called a socio-cultural agent of change that uses information and affects the provider-patient interaction. Social media has begun to spread across the medical field, and nowadays, patients take it as a source of information. It is considered a useful tool for the dentist and the patient" [1].

"The widespread availability of information online, and our easy ability to access and share this information through various mobile devices means that social media is changing how we communicate with each other. Social media is defined as the 'software that enables individuals and communities to gather, communicate, share and in some cases collaborate or play'[2]. "These include Social Media Sites like Facebook and micro-blogging platforms such as Twitter, Snapchat and Instagram"[3].

According to Burns, "social media refers to interactive technologies that enable humans to interact, collaborate, and connect"[4,5]. "Hence, the power of social media and its impact on the aesthetic dental treatment choices should not be underestimated. Many dentists neglect the use of social media in their practice. They may neglect the thought of using social media to add a value to their dental marketing or it has an effect on patient's feedback, after the aesthetic dental treatment"[6].

Aim is to study the impact of social media on patient's perception for seeking Dental Aesthetic treatments in Aurangabad.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS:**

A cross-sectional analytical study was conducted with the help of online electronic questionnaires from July 2022 to September 2022 among patients seeking dental treatments in Aurangabad region. The questionnaire was distributed to patients seeking aesthetic dental treatment. The study sample consisted of 145 randomly selected patients. The inclusion criteria were patients who ranged from 18 to older than 45 years. Geriatric patients (over 60 years old) and paediatric patients (below 18 years old) were excluded. Human subject protection was taken into consideration by explaining the purpose and the procedure of the current study to participating patients.

The first part of the questionnaire was about the demographics of participants that is age, gender and occupation of the participants and in the second part was about questions associated with social media.

The questionnaire was framed on Google Forms ([www.docs.google.com](http://www.docs.google.com)). The link of the questionnaire was posted and shared on social media sites including WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram etc. The study was started after the approval was obtained by the Institutional ethical committee. The questionnaire used was framed for the purpose of the study, and content validation was done by peer review. The questionnaire had 15 closed ended questions on Google forms were circulated on social media platforms among the patients. Participant's privacy and confidentiality were assured. The responses were compiled, computed and analysed. Microsoft excel was used for the same. Statistical analysis of the data was done using frequency and percentages.

## RESULTS:

**Table 1. Baseline characteristics of the study participant**

|            |             | n  | %      |
|------------|-------------|----|--------|
| Gender     | Male        | 66 | 45.5%  |
|            | Female      | 79 | 54.5%  |
| Age        | 18-25       | 53 | 37.06% |
|            | 26-35       | 87 | 60.83% |
|            | 36-45       | 3  | 2.09%  |
|            | >45         | 0  | 0%     |
| Occupation | Working     | 89 | 61.37% |
|            | Non-Working | 13 | 8.96%  |
|            | Students    | 43 | 29.65% |

Table 2 showed the responses of the participants when they were asked different questions about social media. 101 participants (69.7%) agreed that they followed the dentist on social media and 44 participants i.e, (30.3%) of them opined that they did not follow.

89.7% participants agreed that dentists should communicate with people through social media rather than traditional media such as TV, newspapers, magazine etc. whereas 10.3% gave a negative response.

About the validity of the information on social media, 67.6% of response of participants showed that they trusted it, but 32.4% of them did not.

78.6% participants responded positively to the choice of dental clinic was influenced by their social media representation and 21.4% did not agree.

When asked would they choose a dental clinic or a dentist for treatment based on an advertisement by a celebrity or influencer on social media, (53.1%) of participants agreed and (46.9%) of them opined that they did not.

When we asked about the satisfaction regarding the shape and colour of their natural teeth, only 20.7% reported that they did not like them.

When asked are they confident about their the appearance of their smile in photos , videos and public speaking (82.1%) were confident and 17.9% said they are not.

101(69.7%) participants wish to have teeth like celebrities/ influencers on social media.

Among 145 participants 76(52.4%) would like to change the appearance/colour/placement of their teeth.

Majority (79.3%) of the participants were affected by their family or friend's dental treatment.

When they were asked if social media was their first choice for information regarding an aesthetic dental treatment or clinic, 68.3% of participants responded positively, not withstanding 31.7% who felt otherwise.

71.7% of the participants was influential regarding before and after pictures of dental treatments on social media platforms but did not matter to 28.3% of respondents.

The findings revealed that more than half of the participants (63.4%) narrated their dental experiences as a feedback on social media while 36.6% did not feel it was important.

78.6% participants said that they think aesthetic dental treatment is expensive and 21.4% think it is not.

## **Table2. Responses to the questions by the study participants**

| Questions                                                                                                                                   | Responses(%)<br>(n=155) |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1.Do you have an account on any social media platforms like Facebook ,Instagram, twitter?                                                   |                         |
| Yes                                                                                                                                         | 140(96.6%)              |
| No                                                                                                                                          | 5(3.4%)                 |
| 2.Do you follow any dentist/dental clinic or pages related to dental treatments on social media?                                            |                         |
| Yes                                                                                                                                         | 101(69.7%)              |
| No                                                                                                                                          | 44(30.3%)               |
| 3.Do you think that dentists should communicate with people through social media platforms rather than traditional media such as newspaper? |                         |
| Yes                                                                                                                                         | 130(89.7%)              |
| No                                                                                                                                          | 15(10.3%)               |
| 4.Do you trust the information you get from social media about dentistry?                                                                   |                         |
| Yes                                                                                                                                         | 98(67.6%)               |
| No                                                                                                                                          | 47(32.4%)               |
| 5.Would you visit a dental clinic because you visited their page or read blog on social media sites?                                        |                         |
| Yes                                                                                                                                         | 114(78.6%)              |
| No                                                                                                                                          | 31(21.4%)               |
| 6.Would you choose a dental clinic or dentist based on an advertisement by a celebrity/ influencer on social media?                         |                         |
| Yes                                                                                                                                         | 77(53.1%)               |
| No                                                                                                                                          | 68(46.9%)               |
| 7.Do you like the shape / colour of your teeth?                                                                                             |                         |
| Yes                                                                                                                                         | 115(79.3%)              |
| No                                                                                                                                          | 30(20.7%)               |
| 8.Are you confident about your smile in photos or videos?                                                                                   |                         |
| Yes                                                                                                                                         | 119(82.1%)              |
| No                                                                                                                                          | 26(17.9%)               |
| 9.Do wish to have teeth like celebrities/influencers on social media?                                                                       |                         |
| Yes                                                                                                                                         | 101(69.7%)              |
| No                                                                                                                                          | 44(30.3%)               |
| 10.Do you like to change the appearance/colour/placement of your teeth?                                                                     |                         |
| Yes                                                                                                                                         | 76(52.4%)               |
| No                                                                                                                                          | 69(47.6%)               |
| 11.If you saw a friend or family member with a new smile, would you ask about the aesthetic dentist or dental clinic they were treated in?  |                         |
| Yes                                                                                                                                         | 115(79.3%)              |
| No                                                                                                                                          | 30(20.7%)               |
| 12. Is social media your first choice for information if you want to get any information about aesthetic dental ?                           |                         |
| Yes                                                                                                                                         | 99(68.3%)               |
| No                                                                                                                                          | 46(31.7%)               |
| 13.Would you go to a dentist because you saw a before and after pictures in social media?                                                   |                         |
| Yes                                                                                                                                         | 104(71.7%)              |
| No                                                                                                                                          | 41(28.3%)               |
| 14.Do you write your feedback to the dentist or dental clinic in social media?                                                              |                         |
| Yes                                                                                                                                         | 92(63.4%)               |
| No                                                                                                                                          | 53(36.6%)               |
| 15.Do you think aesthetic dental treatment is expensive?                                                                                    |                         |
| Yes                                                                                                                                         | 114(78.6%)              |
| No                                                                                                                                          | 31(21.4%)               |

## DISCUSSION:

Social media has become a influential tool that affects our communication and relationships with people and also it has pros and cons. Nowadays social media is known as a “socio-cultural agent of change” which uses data to alter the provider-patient interaction. “The use of social media in the medical field has grown exponentially and now it has become one of the important source of information for the patients. It is considered as a useful tool for dentists and patients” [7]. There are many patients who are already using different social media platforms to connect with their dentists. In our study, younger age groups were more frequent users of social media, age group 26-35 i.e. people born in 1985-2000 responded well to the study and the majority was females.

“The present study was conducted to see the effect of social media on patient’s perception in dental aesthetics in a particular region. A total of 145 subjects participated in this study and amongst them 79(54.5%) were females which is in agreement to the study” conducted by Alnjadat et al[8]. “Also a survey conducted by Hanna Krasnova et al. concluded that females use social media platforms more than males because of their emotional volatility (they like to keep close ties and gain social information)”[9].

“69.7% of participants of our study agreed that they follow a dentist or a dental clinic on social media which is in agreement with a study conducted by Awdah et al in which 53.3% were following a dentist on social media”[10].

“89.7% participants which is significant number , believed that the dentist should communicate with the people or patients through social media which was in accordance to the study conducted by Thackeray et al where the participants appreciated the social media communication” [11]. Because people think that there would be direct communication with the dentist and the information that is passed on is credible without any filtration or manipulation.

“Response of 68% of the participants showed that they trusted the information regarding a dentist or a dental clinic from social media. High percentage of people used internet as a source of information regarding health as mentioned by Hamm et al. and it is the third most common activity on internet”[12]. “Also the study by Pew Research Centre which was conducted in 2013 shows that 72% of adult internet users found online support for medical information”[13]. The main advantages were convenience and coverage.

“This study shows that 78.6% participants visited the dentist’s social media page which is in contrast to a study conducted by Parmar N et al in which a total of 64% participants never searched their medical doctors and dentists on social media”[14]

In this study 79.3% participants like their shape or colour of teeth that is in contrast with the study which showed only 29.8% participants like their natural teeth conducted by Khadijah M. Baik et al[15].

“In the present study majority of the participants i.e, (79.3%) were affected by their family or friend’s dental treatment. This was in accordance with a study conducted by Fox S et al where 68% of all adults request health information from a friend or family member”[13]. “These findings were also in agreement with a study conducted by Parmar N et al. in which, patients appreciated recommendations from friends and family, for dentist or a dental clinic”[14].

In present study most of the participants (71.7%) were affected by before and after treatment pictures and these findings were in agreement with a study which showed almost 58% participants were interested in before-and-after images conducted by Mir H[16].

In our study more than half of the participants (63.4%) write their feedback to the dentist or dental clinic in social media which is in contrast with the study showed only 28.1% people write about their visit by Mir H [16].

Limitations of this study is sample size was not larger & participants were from Aurangabad region only.

## **CONCLUSION:**

According to the study, social media has recently become a priority in the Aurangabad population, and it has grown rapidly. Social media applications have an impact on patients, and as a result, they are seeking aesthetic treatment. Hence, dentists have a duty to inform patients of their best medical options.

## **Consent**

As per international standard or university standard, patient(s) written consent has been collected and preserved by the author(s).

## **Ethical Approval:**

As per international standard or university standard written ethical approval has been collected and preserved by the author(s).

## **COMPETING INTERESTS**

Authors have declared that they have no known competing financial interests OR non-financial interests OR personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

**DATA AVAILABILITY:** The data presented in this study are available within the article.

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST:** There is no conflict of interest.

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