

## Euro Surgery 2020: Public Awareness and Perception of Dental Implants in Randomly Selected Sample in Kuwait

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**Background:** The growing success of dental implants has made this treatment mode increasingly more popular for the replacement of missing teeth. The aim of this study was to assess public awareness and determine patient's expectations concerning dental implants through requisite information on treatment mode, prior to presenting for professional consultation on dental implant, as a treatment option. **Materials and methods:** In a cross-sectional survey, 527 adult participants were interviewed, through random selection from attendance at public places. A structured questionnaire, with multiple-choice questions, was used to obtain the participants' level of knowledge on dental implants, including the source of information on which they based this knowledge, their reasons to accept or reject dental implant treatment, as well as their understanding of the procedures involved. **Results:** In all, (96.4%) of participants had heard of dental implants, and (79.2%) were willing to learn more about dental implants. Almost, two-third (64.9%) of the respondents thought dental implant to be the healthiest treatment mode for missing teeth. Maximum (33.9%) participants gathered dental implants information through media, followed by friends or social gatherings (24%), dental clinics (23.3%), and family (18.8%). Significantly more females than males, and more Kuwaitis than non-Kuwaitis expressed, 'Good looking', the reason for acceptance for dental implants ( $p < 0.05$ ). **Conclusion:** This study revealed a high level of awareness among public, but lack of knowledge on procedural aspects. The study also revealed the need for specialists in this field to spread awareness and relevant information concerning dental implants among the general public.

**Introduction:** Dental implant is increasingly becoming a widely accepted treatment approach in dentistry for the replacement of missing teeth. The success and good prognosis of this treatment has made it very popular among the dentists, offering implant-supported rehabilitation to patients having lost teeth, or those with severely compromised bone structure [1-5]. Though oral reconstruction has been going on since late 1950s with the intra-oral use of titanium implants, the public perception of this mode of treatment has largely remained unmeasured, despite reported improvements in patients treated with implant-supported prosthesis. Several studies from different countries do report the level of patients' understanding and awareness concerning oral implants [6-13]. However, in Kuwait, dental implant treatment is relatively a new field, hence, public perception of this treatment has never been studied. Being a novel approach, and a surgical intervention, public invariably remains apprehensive of the associated complications, despite the potential benefits of this treatment regimen in tooth-restoration, improving patients aesthetics, self-confidence and quality of life.

From clinicians' experiences in Kuwait, the suggested option of dental implant for replacing missing tooth is often met with reluctance among patients, fearful of surgical outcomes. The basis of our study is inherent in this widespread hesitancy and fear syndrome among the public, making it imperative to probe the extent of public perception and awareness concerning the dental implant treatment in Kuwait. The study is first of its kind, and expected to generate baseline

data for mapping a strategy for orienting and educating the public on the positive implications of this field of dentistry in Kuwait, in addition to contributing to existing knowledge in the field from this part of the world.

Vast literature exists in the field of dental implants, covering various aspects of this treatment approach, including treatment planning, surgical placement, survival rate, success rate, patient-satisfaction concerning the treatment outcome, etc. [14-21]. Yet, few studies have reportedly been attempted on the patients' perception of the surgical procedures associated with dental implant placement. The aim of this study was to assess public awareness, determine patients' expectations, and enhance their understanding of procedural implications through requisite information about dental implants, prior to presenting for professional consultation on dental implant as a treatment option [22,23].

### Materials and Methods

A cross-sectional survey, among 527 participants was conducted in the general public through personal interviews utilizing a structured questionnaire with multiple-choice questions, during a period of four months - Oct 2014 to Jan 2015. The targeted subjects were randomly selected from attendance at local malls, supermarket and food convention open for the general public. The questionnaire included personal data, level of education, and a brief dental history. The questions were intended to solicit the level of participants' knowledge concerning dental implants, and the source of information on which they based this knowledge. All the four interviewers in the survey had dental background, and the ques-

tionnaire was both in Arabic and English, used as per the subject language preference.

### Statistical analysis

The data management, analysis and graphical presentation were carried out using the computer software 'Statistical Package for Social Sciences, SPSS version 22.0' (IBM Corp, Armonk, NY, USA). The descriptive statistics has been presented as number and percentage for categorical variables, and mean  $\pm$  standard deviation (SD) for continuous variable, age. Chi-square or normal Z-test, for comparing two proportions, was applied to find any association or significant difference between categorical variables. The two-tailed probability value 'p'

### Acceptance or refusal to dental implant treatment

Of the total respondents, 74.6% enlisted their acceptance of the dental implant treatment, 20.8% were not receptive to this treatment mode, and 4.6% did not respond. More females than males (81% vs. 75%) and more Kuwaitis than non-Kuwaitis (80% vs. 76%), showed their willingness for dental implants.

### Perception towards dental implants

Placement: Almost two-third of the respondents (64.6%) considered implant placement as a difficult procedure, while remaining 35.4% considered it to be a simple procedure (Table 2). As many as 43.3% respondents considered it to be a very painful procedure at the time of placement, compared to 56.7% who thought it to be comfortable with no pain, but on the contrary, a higher percentage (54.1%) of respondents thought the procedure to be more painful after the implant placement, in comparison to 45.9% who found the procedure comfortable with no pain.