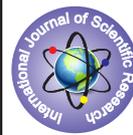


A Survey to Assess the Implant Experience of the Dentist in South coastal area of Karnataka



Dental Science

KEYWORDS: Implant dentistry, private dental practitioner, survey

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this survey was to determine the attitude of private dental practitioners toward implant dentistry and how they were acquiring and integrating the knowledge of implant dentistry into their everyday practice. The survey concluded that as the number of private dental practitioners doing implants is increasing, there is a parallel need to organize continuing dental education programs to create awareness related to various aspects of implant dentistry.

INTRODUCTION

The use of dental implants in the treatment of the edentulous arches has proved effective in long term. Branemark and co-workers at the University of Goteborg, Sweden, developed the initial protocol for implant placement and subsequent restoration. Increasing awareness about dental implants among patients has seen a parallel increase in the private dental practitioners (PDP's) interest of learning Implant dentistry. The purpose of the survey is to determine the experiences, practices and current trends and opinions in terms of surgical placement of implants among the general dental practitioner in the south coastal area of Karnataka. To improve patient's awareness and to impart further knowledge among the patients, we need to know the current status.

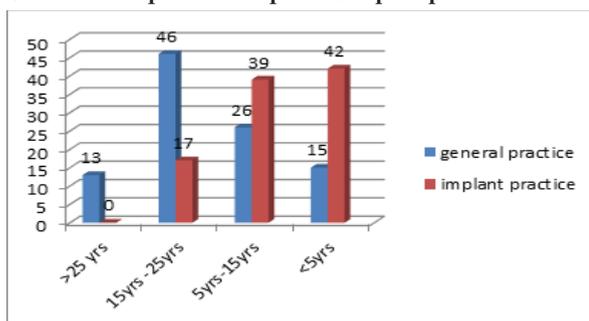
MATERIALS AND METHODS:

Sample selection: 100 general dental practitioners in the south coastal area of Karnataka were selected for the study. A written informed consent was obtained from doctors prior to starting the survey. The information was collected and evaluated with the help of a questionnaire, which consisted of 10 questions based on the personal experience of the general practitioner in the field of implant dentistry. Questions covered general information such as duration of dental practice, duration of implant practice. Questions went on to assess private practitioners willingness to offer implant as a treatment option to their patients, whether they do implant dentistry themselves. Questions also investigated the source from which private practitioners gained the knowledge and skill of Implant dentistry. Questions also sought to elicit the average number of implants placed in a year.

RESULTS:

The final sample analyzed comprised of replies from 100 private dental practitioners. Respondents had working experience over a wide range of years from 0- >25years in general dental practice.

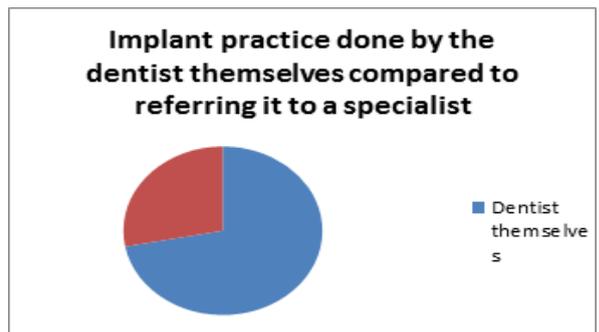
General dental practice compared to Implant practice



(figure:-1)

Figure-1 shows that among the total sample size of 100 dentists 13 of them were practicing dentistry more than 25years, 46 of them 15-25 years, 26 of them 5-15 years and 15 of them less than 5years. While nobody was having more than 25 years of implant practice, 17 of them were having 15-25 years' experience, 39 of them 5-15 years and 42 of them less than 5 years.

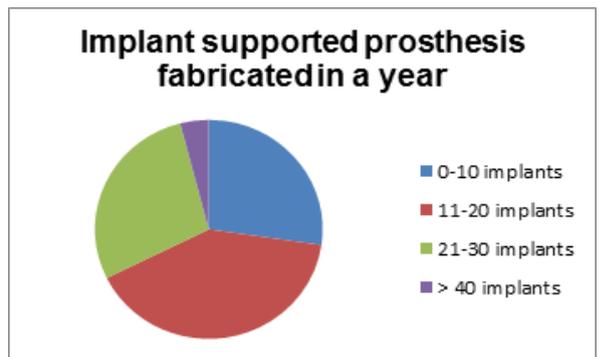
Implant practice done by the dentist themselves compared to referring it to a specialist



(figure:-2)

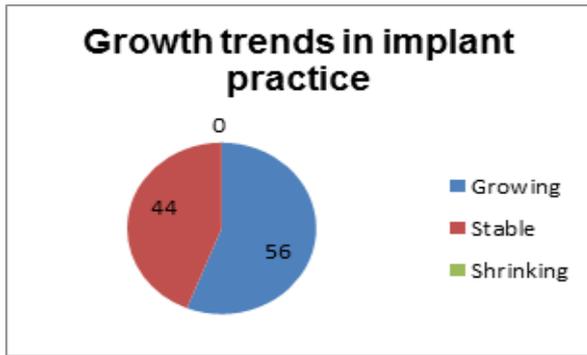
Figure-2 shows that out of the dentists who were practicing implant dentistry, 72% of them were placing dental implants by themselves in their clinic and 28% of them were referring the patient to the specialist.

Implant supported prosthesis fabricated in a year



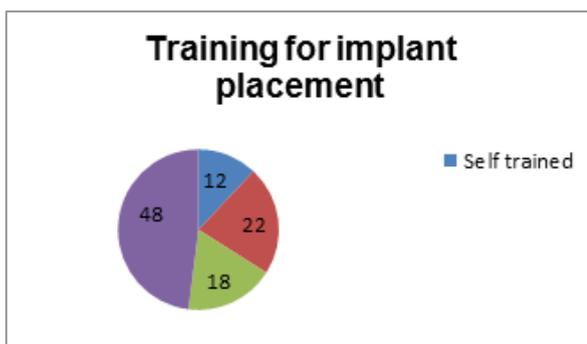
(figure:-3)

Figure-3 shows that from assessing the number of implants fabricated per year, 27 practitioners were placing 0-10 implants yearly, 40 of them were placing 11-20 implants, 29 of them were placing 21-30 implants and only 4 dentists were placing > 40 implants per year.



(figure:-4)

Figure-4 shows that out of 100 general dental practitioners 56 general practitioners replied to the survey that their implant practice was growing. 44 of them were having stable implant practice while none of the practitioners replied that their dental implant practice was shrinking.



(figure:-5)

Figure-5 shows that out of the 100 general dental practitioners who were practicing implant dentistry, 12 of them were trained as a part of specialty training, 22 of them were trained by short term courses, 18 of them were trained by long term courses and 48 of them were self-trained.

DISCUSSION

Various studies have been carried out in various parts of the world to determine the current trends in implant practice, experience, success rate, and attitude of patients towards implant treatment. Oral rehabilitation with an implant-supported prosthesis has been well documented in the dental literature. This therapy is widely used in the dental clinics, and there is a growing demand from clinicians and patients to optimize the treatment protocols.

In this study they surveyed the experiences, practices and current trends and opinions in terms of surgical placement of implants among the general dental practitioner in south coastal region of Karnataka were evaluated using a questionnaire. The population chosen for this questionnaire survey may not be representative of all general dental practitioners however; this survey does give insight into the opinion and experience of a relevant group of general dental practitioners. A large number of private dental practitioners are offering implants to their patients but all of them are not practicing implant dentistry themselves. This shows the need of organizing more continuing educational programs on implant dentistry for private practitioners to update their knowledge and skills in this field. With the increasing interest of private dental practitioners in implant dentistry, most of the practitioners who place implants prefer doing both the surgical and prosthetic phases themselves.

Since most of the responding practitioners treated patients with implants, it can be surmised that this modality has become an

integral and important treatment-strategy in clinical practice. It has been reported that younger practitioners expressed a greater desire to surgically place implants than older ones. However, practitioners who were surgically placing implants were self-trained, had followed short courses, long courses or as a part of specialty training. Those practitioners not placing implants reported satisfaction with the placement of implants by others.

This is contrary to the finding of Klugman et al, who surveyed 312 Israeli dentists and reported that only 97 used implants in their practice. Furthermore, of these 97 dentists, 40% worked on both the surgical and restorative phases. Watson reported 40-60% of general dentists in the USA replace missing teeth with implants but only a few of them use this as a common mode of treatment.

These studies were carried out long time back and the changing scenario in implant dentistry all over the world should be taken into consideration. The sample size of the present study is 100 and a written consent form was obtained from the general dental practitioners before conducting the survey. Imparting knowledge about the implant prosthesis will allow the population to make better judgments and decision regarding their prosthesis. From this survey it was well understood that the implant practice becomes very popular among the general practitioners in the south coastal region of Karnataka and more than 50% of them were agreeing that their implant practice is growing.

It is recommended that similar surveys has to be conducted over a large population to assess the generalized trend in implant practice also surveys among the patients has to be conducted to understand the level of knowledge about implant treatment and increase the awareness and motivate them for this recent treatment option.

CONCLUSION

According to the survey conducted among the general dental practitioners in the south coastal area of Karnataka, it was found that most of the dentists use implant supported prosthesis in their practices and majority of them are professionally trained. The awareness about implant prosthesis among the patients visiting the dental clinics was comparatively less among the conducted sample and requires further reinforcement regarding the same.

Within the limitation of this survey, number of inferences can be drawn. A large number of private dental practitioners are offering implants to their patients and attending various courses on implant dentistry to enhance their knowledge and skill. Many of the practitioners preferred doing both the surgical and prosthetic phases in implant dentistry by themselves. As this survey was conducted in a limited group of people, with limited amount of information extracted, further surveys are needed to know the level of implant dentistry practiced and various problems encountered in implant dentistry by private dental practitioners.

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