

**Awareness of Prosthodontic Treatment in the General Population of the East-Godavari District**

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**Abstract**

**Aim:** To assess the awareness of prosthodontic treatment in the general population of East-Godavari district.

**Objective:** To assess the awareness of prosthodontic treatment in the general population of the East-Godavari district.

**Material and methodology:** A cross-sectional survey was carried out among general population (public) of the East-Godavari district with a sample size of 300. A self-designed questionnaire form was made to fill to assess the awareness on Prosthodontic treatments. Data was analyzed using the software SPSS version 23.0. Descriptive statistics were generated. Chi square test was applied for age and gender response comparison. A p-value of <0.05 was kept as statistically significant.

**Results:** Only 46% of the subjects were aware of dental implant treatment. 34% were aware of replacement of lost part by a prosthodontist; and 30% were aware that cleft palate treatment could be performed by a prosthodontist. When results were compared between different age groups, subjects between the age group of 25-35 years showed more awareness among prosthodontic treatments compared to other age groups. There is significantly less awareness of prosthodontic treatments in the general population of the East-Godavari district.

**Conclusion:** Even though with the increase in the number of dental clinics and dentists, there is still a lack of complete awareness about the various kinds of treatments a prosthodontist can perform.

**Keywords:** Awareness, Prosthodontic treatment, Knowledge, Fixed prosthesis, Removable prosthesis, Implants, Maxillofacial prosthesis.

### **Introduction**

The facial skeleton is made up of teeth and their supporting structures. They have a biological mechanism for chewing, speaking, and communicating emotions by helping and engaging with other parts of the skull. Oral functions and masticatory efficiency are significantly harmed when teeth are lost.<sup>1</sup> In a survey conducted in 2007 and 2013, it was discovered that the mean score of tooth loss increased in all age groups, with the most significant increase occurring in the above 65 age group, which increased from 16.99 to 17.05.<sup>2</sup>

When a masticatory function is impaired due to missing teeth, oral health-related and quality of life suffers. Prosthodontic treatment includes esthetic, functional, and reconstructive dentistry.

Fixed prosthodontics is the branch of prosthodontics that deals with the restoration of teeth with implants, crowns, bridges, inlays, onlays, and veneers. A fixed partial denture is an art to restore single or multiple teeth, as well as to bridge gaps where teeth have been lost. Fixed partial dentures have been the treatment of choice for the replacement of missing teeth for years. The key benefits of fixed prosthodontics are superior strength, retainability, and aesthetics.<sup>3</sup> Dental implants are surgically placed in our jaw bone. People who have lost a tooth or teeth due to periodontal disease, an accident, or any other cause may be the candidates for dental implants.<sup>4</sup> Owing to the recent growth of the global market for dental implants and the increasing demand for cosmetic dentistry, research on dental implant designs, materials, and techniques has increased in recent years and is expected to increase in the future.<sup>5</sup> Dental implants have numerous advantages,

including improved esthetics, speech, comfort, oral health, durability, and convenience.<sup>6</sup>

Maxillofacial Prosthetics is a specialty of Prosthodontics that focuses on the rehabilitation of patients who have defects or disabilities that are present during birth or developed as a result of illness or trauma. Prostheses are frequently required to replace missing bone or tissue and to restore oral functions such as swallowing, speaking, and chewing. In other cases, a prosthesis of a face or body may be required for esthetic or psychological or for social demands. Although much difficult but excellent work has been performed to correct these conditions in recent years, it is still a regrettable fact that many people are still unaware that much can be done for them either surgically, by prosthetic means, or by a combination of these methods. There are conditions, however, which would contraindicate plastic surgery, such as the age of the patient. The general health of the patient, the size and extent of the deformity, and the condition of the tissues because of the poor blood supply following radiation. Furthermore, many of these patients, because of their recent illness and the expenses which they have incurred, may not be in a position to afford the time or the cost of plastic surgery. Therefore, the only treatment left for these patients is a maxillofacial prosthetic appliance.<sup>7</sup>

Removable prosthodontics is concerned with the replacement of teeth and soft tissues with a removable prosthesis. One of the most critical treatment choices for patients in their functional and aesthetic recovery is removable prosthodontics. Based on a thorough understanding of the patient's condition and diagnosis, it is possible to help them understand the limitations of their expectations. With removable prostheses, patients may be happy and learn to monitor their results with proper understanding. Age, gender, socioeconomic status, educational level, and appearance are all factors that

influence the need or demand for prosthodontic replacement of missing natural teeth.<sup>8</sup> Most patients do not seek care immediately after tooth loss due to a lack of knowledge about the value of prosthodontic replacement, even though replacement of missing teeth is highly recommended. Financial restrictions play an important role in determining whether or not to pursue treatment and which prosthodontic treatment choice to choose. Since the loss of teeth happens gradually over time, some people become used to losing teeth and do not see the need for replacement. Patients from various educational and socioeconomic backgrounds can have a variety of reasons for not replacing teeth after extraction, including financial constraints, a lack of time, and a lack of motivation. There are fewer studies available on the awareness of the general population in relation to knowledge on different prosthodontic treatment options. To our knowledge, there are no studies of this kind conducted in the state of Andhra Pradesh. Hence this study intends to explore the awareness level of prosthodontic treatment in the general population of East-Godavari district. This will aid in the education of the prosthodontic community and the dental community, allowing for more educated counseling and promotion of prosthodontic services to help patients with missing teeth improve their oral health.

### Materials and Methodology

A cross-sectional survey was carried out among the general population of East-Godavari district and spanned over six months from 07/09/2019 to 11/03/2020. Non-probability convenience sampling technique was employed for data collection. A self-designed questionnaire was prepared (Annexure – 1). It was tested for content validity by three subject matter experts. Based on the inputs given, the questionnaire was modified and finalized. The questionnaire was distributed to the study subjects. A total of 417 study subjects were selected, out

of which 300 responded positively and filled the questionnaire form. Male and female patients in the age bracket of 25 to 65 years were included in the study. Mentally and physically challenged patients were excluded. After taking informed consent, all the subjects were made to fill the form and submit it. The questions focused on the willingness to replace the missing teeth, the preferred methods of choice for replacement, and the various types of treatment a prosthodontist can perform. Data were analyzed using SPSS version 23.0 software. Descriptive statistics were generated. A Chi-square test was applied for age and gender response comparison. A p-value of <0.05 was kept as statistically significant.

### Results

A total of 300 people were included in the study to determine the level of awareness about prosthodontic treatment among the general population in the East-Godavari district. In the present study, there were 150 males and 150 females.

**Table 1** depicts the information about questions with various options and responses of the subjects. 42% of the study subjects belong to the 25-35 years age group; 29% belong to the 36-45 years age group; 16% belong to the 46-55 years age group, and 13% belong to the 56-65 years age group. A maximum of 51% of the subjects responded visiting a dentist only when a problem arises. 72% of the subjects came to know that missing teeth can be replaced by others. 47% of the subjects responded Chewing was their major problem with missing teeth. 77% of people opted for fixed teeth when asked about which type of teeth they want among removable and fixed.

Question	Options	Number (%)
Gender	Male	150(50%)
	female	150(50%)
Age	25-35 years	126(42%)
	36-45 years	87(29%)
	46-55 years	48(16%)
	56-65 years	39(13%)
How often do you visit a dentist?	Once in 3 months	3(1.0%)
	Once in 6 months	81(27.0%)
	Once in a year	63(21.0%)
	When problem arises	153(51.0%)
How did you came to know that your missing teeth can be replaced?	From others	216(72%)
	From advertisements	84(28%)
What is the major problem you faced with missing teeth?	chewing	141(47%)
	aesthetics	81(27%)
	speaking	78(26%)
Which type of treatment do you prefer among these?	removable teeth	69(23%)
	fixed teeth	231(77%)

Table 1 reveals questions with various options and responses of the subjects.

Table 2 depicts questions with options "yes" or "no" and responses of the subjects. Among the study subjects, 99% of the patients had missing teeth. 95% of the people were aware of missing teeth replacement. Only 37% of the study subjects were knowledgeable about the problems associated with not replacing missing teeth. 79% of the study subjects underwent treatment for missing teeth. 81% of the study subjects know that a bridge can be an option

for replacement of missing teeth. 61% of the study subjects know that a root canal treated tooth should be restored with a crown. Only 46% of the subjects were aware of dental implant treatment. Among the subjects, 34% were aware of replacement of lost part by dentists; only 42% had an idea of cleft palate, and 30% were aware that cleft palate treatment could be performed by a prosthodontist.

Question	Yes (%)	No (%)
Do you have any missing teeth?	297(99%)	3(1%)
Are you aware that missing teeth can be replaced?	285(95%)	15(5%)
Do you know the problems associated with not replacing your lost teeth?	111(37%)	189(63%)
Have you underwent any treatment for missing teeth replacement?	237(79%)	63(21%)
Do you know that a bridge can be an option for replacement of missing teeth?	243(81%)	57(19%)
Do you know that a root canal treated tooth should be restored with a crown?	183(61%)	117(39%)
Do you know about a dental implant treatment?	138(46%)	162(54%)

Do you know that a lost part of our face or a finger can be replaced by a dentist?	102(34%)	198(66%)
Do you have an idea of cleft palate?	126(42%)	174(58%)
Do you know that a cleft palate can be treated by a prosthodontist?	90(30%)	210(70%)

Table 2 reveals questions with options "yes" or "no" and responses of the subjects.

**Table 3** shows the comparison of the responses among male and female subjects for the given questions. When responses for males and females were compared for various questions, a significant difference was observed. For the questions, how often do you visit a dentist (0.048), How did you come to know that your missing teeth can be replaced (0.026), Do you know that a root canal treated tooth should be restored with a crown (0.024), Do you know that a lost part of our face or a finger can be replaced by a dentist (0.011), Do you have an idea of cleft

palate (0.015), Do you know that a cleft palate can be treated by a prosthodontist (0.022). A highly significant difference was observed (0.002) for the questions, What is the major problem you faced with missing teeth, and Which type of treatment do you prefer among removable and fixed teeth. 68.1% of male subjects choose chewing as their major problem whereas 70.4% female subjects choose esthetics as their major concern. 58.4% of females opted for fixed teeth, and 78.3% of males opted for removable teeth.

Questions	Options	Gender		Total	Chi square	P value
		Male	Female			
How often do you visit a dentist?	once in 3 months	0	3	3	7.902	0.048 S
		0.0%	100.0%	100.0%		
	once in 6 months	24	57	81		
		29.6%	70.4%	100.0%		
	once in a year	33	30	63		
		52.4%	47.6%	100.0%		
if any problem arise	93	60	153			
	60.8%	39.2%	100.0%			
Do you have any missing teeth?	yes	147	150	297	1.010	0.315
		49.5%	50.5%	100.0%		
	no	3	0	3		
		100.0%	0.0%	100.0%		
Are you aware that missing teeth can be replaced?	yes	144	141	285	0.211	0.646
		50.5%	49.5%	100.0%		
	no	6	9	15		
		40.0%	60.0%	100.0%		
How did you came to know that your missing teeth can be replaced?	from others	93	123	216	4.960	0.026 S
		43.1%	56.9%	100.0%		
	from advertisements	57	27	84		
		67.9%	32.1%	100.0%		
Do you know the problems associated with not replacing your lost teeth?	yes	42	69	111	3.475	0.062
		37.8%	62.2%	100.0%		
	no	108	81	189		
		57.1%	42.9%	100.0%		
What is the major problem you faced with missing teeth?	chewing	96	45	141	12.015	0.002 HS
		68.1%	31.9%	100.0%		
	aesthetics	24	57	81		
		29.6%	70.4%	100.0%		
	speaking	30	48	78		
		38.5%	61.5%	100.0%		

Have you underwent any treatment for missing teeth replacement?	yes	117	120	237	0.060	0.806
		49.4%	50.6%	100.0%		
	no	33	30	63		
		52.4%	47.6%	100.0%		
Which type of treatment do you prefer among these?	removable teeth	54	15	69	9.543	0.002 HS
		78.3%	21.7%	100.0%		
	fixed teeth	96	135	231		
		41.6%	58.4%	100.0%		
Do you know that a bridge can be an option for replacement of missing teeth?	yes	114	129	243	1.624	0.202
		46.9%	53.1%	100.0%		
	no	36	21	57		
		63.2%	36.8%	100.0%		
Do you know that a root canal treated tooth should be restored with a crown?	yes	75	108	183	5.086	0.024 S
		41.0%	59.0%	100.0%		
	no	75	42	117		
		64.1%	35.9%	100.0%		
Do you know about a dental implant treatment?	yes	60	78	138	1.449	0.229
		43.5%	56.5%	100.0%		
	no	90	72	162		
		55.6%	44.4%	100.0%		
Do you know that a lost part of our face or a finger can be replaced by a dentist?	yes	33	69	102	6.417	0.011 S
		32.4%	67.6%	100.0%		
	no	117	81	198		
		59.1%	40.9%	100.0%		
Do you have an idea of cleft palate?	yes	45	81	126	5.911	0.015 S
		35.7%	64.3%	100.0%		
	no	105	69	174		
		60.3%	39.7%	100.0%		
Do you know that a cleft palate can be treated by a prosthodontist?	yes	24	66	90	9.333	0.022 S
		26.7%	73.3%	100.0%		
	no	126	84	210		
		60.0%	40.0%	100.0%		

**Table 3** compares the responses among male and female subjects for the given questions.

Statistical test applied: Chi-square test

HS – Highly significant at  $p < 0.01$

S – Statistical significant at  $p < 0.05$

**Table 4** shows a comparison of the responses among different age groups for the given questions. When responses were compared between other age groups, highly significant differences were observed for the

questions - How often do you visit a dentist, What is the major problem you faced with missing teeth, Which type of treatment do you prefer among removable and fixed teeth, Do you know that a root canal treated tooth should be restored with a crown, Do you know about a dental implant treatment, Do you know that a lost part of our face

or a finger can be replaced by a dentist, Do you have an idea of cleft palate, Do you know that a cleft palate can be treated by a prosthodontist (0.000). A significant difference in responses between age groups was observed for the question - Do you know the problems associated with not replacing your lost teeth (0.02).

Questions	Options	25-35 years	36-45 years	46-55 years	56-65 years	Total	Chi square	P value
How often do you visit a dentist?	once in 3 months	3	0	0	0	3	31.277	0.000 HS
		100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%		
	once in 6 months	51	24	3	3	81		
		63.0%	29.6%	3.7%	3.7%	100.0%		
	once in a year	45	9	9	0	63		
		71.4%	14.3%	14.3%	0.0%	100.0%		
if any problem arise	27	54	36	36	153			
	17.6%	35.3%	23.5%	23.5%	100.0%			
Do you have any missing teeth?	yes	126	87	48	36	297	6.760	0.080
		42.4%	29.3%	16.2%	12.1%	100.0%		
	no	0	0	0	3	3		
		0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%		
Are you aware that missing teeth can be replaced?	yes	126	78	45	36	285	4.206	0.240
		44.2%	27.4%	15.8%	12.6%	100.0%		
	No	0	9	3	3	15		
		0.0%	60.0%	20.0%	20.0%	100.0%		
How did you came to know that your missing teeth can be replaced?	From others	99	57	36	24	216	2.281	0.516
		45.8%	26.4%	16.7%	11.1%	100.0%		
	From advertisements	27	30	12	15	84		
		32.1%	35.7%	14.3%	17.9%	100.0%		
Do you know the problems associated with not replacing your lost teeth?	yes	69	21	12	9	111	9.812	0.020 S
		62.2%	18.9%	10.8%	8.1%	100.0%		
	No	57	66	36	30	189		
		30.2%	34.9%	19.0%	15.9%	100.0%		
What is the major problem you faced with missing teeth?	chewing	21	54	27	39	141	46.697	0.000 HS
		14.9%	38.3%	19.1%	27.7%	100.0%		
	aesthetics	72	6	3	0	81		
		88.9%	7.4%	3.7%	0.0%	100.0%		
	speaking	33	27	18	0	78		
		42.3%	34.6%	23.1%	0.0%	100.0%		



Have you underwent any treatment for missing teeth replacement?	yes	111	60	42	24	237	6.940	0.074
		46.8%	25.3%	17.7%	10.1%	100.0%		
	No	15	27	6	15	63		
		23.8%	42.9%	9.5%	23.8%	100.0%		
Which type of treatment do you prefer among these?	removable	6	18	15	30	69	29.935	0.000 HS
		8.7%	26.1%	21.7%	43.5%	100.0%		
	fixed	120	69	33	9	231		
		51.9%	29.9%	14.3%	3.9%	100.0%		
Do you know that a bridge can be an option for replacement of missing teeth?	yes	117	60	39	27	243	7.735	0.052
		48.1%	24.7%	16.0%	11.1%	100.0%		
	No	9	27	9	12	57		
		15.8%	47.4%	15.8%	21.1%	100.0%		
Do you know that a root canal treated tooth should be restored with a crown?	yes	108	42	21	12	183	19.752	0.000 HS
		59.0%	23.0%	11.5%	6.6%	100.0%		
	No	18	45	27	27	117		
		15.4%	38.5%	23.1%	23.1%	100.0%		
Do you know about a dental implant treatment?	Yes	87	30	18	3	138	18.676	0.000 HS
		63.0%	21.7%	13.0%	2.2%	100.0%		
	No	39	57	30	36	162		
		24.1%	35.2%	18.5%	22.2%	100.0%		
Do you know that a lost part of our face or a finger can be replaced by a dentist?	yes	72	21	9	0	102	19.637	0.000 HS
		70.6%	20.6%	8.8%	0.0%	100.0%		
	No	54	66	39	39	198		
		27.3%	33.3%	19.7%	19.7%	100.0%		
Do you have an idea of cleft palate?	yes	87	30	3	6	126	25.461	0.000 HS
		69.0%	23.8%	2.4%	4.8%	100.0%		
	No	39	57	45	33	174		
		22.4%	32.8%	25.9%	19.0%	100.0%		
Do you know that a cleft palate can be treated by a prosthodontist?	yes	69	21	0	0	90	25.166	0.000 HS
		76.7%	23.3%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%		
	No	57	66	48	39	210		
		27.1%	31.4%	22.9%	18.6%	100.0%		

**Table 4** compares the responses among different age groups for the given questions.

Statistical test applied: Chi-square test , HS – Highly significant at  $p < 0.01$ , S – Statistically significant at  $p < 0.05$

Mean years of patients without prosthesis

N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
300	.08	15.00	4.5685	4.01872

## Discussion

Patient's perceptions of the need for prosthodontic care vary depending on their age, gender, and educational background. Treatment expectations can influence treatment planning and perceived value by the patient, as well as the outcome, so it's critical to assess knowledge and preference of need before beginning treatment.<sup>1</sup>

Dilipkumar M et al.,<sup>9</sup> in their research on knowledge and attitude of patients regarding the choice of selecting of fixed partial dentures and implant, stated that majority of patients choose implant as a treatment of choice.

Celebic A et al.,<sup>10</sup> made a comparison between patient's satisfaction among complete and partial removable denture wearers and concluded that Complete Denture wearers were more satisfied with speech, chewing, and retention of the maxillary denture, while Removable Partial Denture wearers were more satisfied with the retention and the comfort of wearing the mandibular denture.

Sanketh AK et al.,<sup>11</sup> conducted research on prosthetic status and post treatment satisfaction of patients among a South Indian population and stated that patients with a higher educational level are more satisfied with the treatment. The highest prosthetic treatment need was for complete dentures in both genders.

Gopal KC et al.,<sup>12</sup> did research on Prosthetic Status and Prosthetic Needs of Patients and concluded that a high unmet need for prosthetic care among the population.

In a developing country like India, the literacy rate is poor, and most people have low socioeconomic status. Patients rarely visit dental offices to replace a few missing teeth unless and until they face chewing difficulties or have esthetic concerns. An attempt was made to determine the general public's knowledge of prosthodontic treatment for missing natural teeth in the East-Godavari district. A total of 300 people participated in the study. A maximum of

51% of the subjects responded visiting a dentist only when a problem arises. Only 37% of the study subjects were aware of the problems associated with not replacing missing teeth. 72% of the subjects came to know that missing teeth can be replaced by others. 77% of people opted for fixed teeth when asked about which type of teeth they want among removable and fixed. 95% of the people were aware of missing teeth replacement. Only 46% of the subjects were aware of dental implant treatment. Among the subjects, 34% were aware of replacement of lost part by dentists; only 42% had an idea of cleft palate, and 30% were aware that cleft palate treatment could be performed by a prosthodontist. When results were compared among male and female subjects, 68.1% of male subjects choose chewing as their major problem, whereas 70.4% of female subjects choose esthetics as their major concern with missing teeth. 58.4% of females opted for fixed teeth, and 78.3% of males opted for removable teeth. When awareness of missing teeth replacement was assessed among female and male subjects, there was no significant difference between male and female subjects. When results were considered between fixed and removable treatments among male and female subjects, females showed more interest towards fixed treatment, whereas males showed interest towards removable treatment. When awareness was assessed for maxillofacial treatment between male and female subjects, female subjects had a better knowledge of maxillofacial treatment compared to male subjects. When results were compared between different age groups, subjects between the age group of 25-35 years showed more awareness among prosthodontic treatments compared to other age groups. Within the limitations of this study, we can conclude that there is significantly less awareness of prosthodontic treatments in the general population of the East-Godavari district. The limitation of this study is that it was conducted only on the

general population in the East-Godavari district, and hence the results cannot be generalized to the whole population.

### Conclusion

Initiatives should focus not only on prevention but also on the therapeutic aspects of oral health. Prosthodontic outreach programs, Mobile dental clinics, Dental camps are possible solutions to change attitudes, spread awareness, and extend treatment.<sup>13</sup> Lack of prosthodontic treatment awareness among people prevents them from availing of the benefits from the treatment.

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