

## Attitude of dental interns with malocclusion towards seeking orthodontic treatment

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### Abstract

**Aim:** To determine the attitude of dental interns with malocclusion towards seeking orthodontic treatment.

**Materials and Methods:** 50 dental interns with malocclusion in seek of orthodontic treatment participated in the study. They were given 10 polar questions relating to their concern about seeking orthodontic treatment, answers were recorded and statistical analysis was carried out.

**Results:** Overall the percentage of positive responses from the dental interns with malocclusion towards seeking orthodontic treatment is 61% and the percentage of negative responses is 39%. The negative responses are due to two reasons. One is 58% feared about the quality of the treatment and the other is 60% concerned about the long treatment durations.

**Conclusion:** It is obvious from the study that most of the dental interns are completely aware about orthodontic treatment and their outcomes. Also, most of the dental students besides knowing the demerits of the orthodontic treatment are not found to be apprehensive to undertake the treatment and showed a positive approach towards it.

**Keywords:** Malocclusion, Orthodontic treatment, Dental students, Anxiety.

### Introduction

Malocclusion is defined as any deviation from the norm of the arrangement of the teeth and occurs commonly among various populations.<sup>1,2</sup> While considered non-life threatening, malocclusion may cause altered functions (mastication, speech) and poor dentofacial-esthetics that reduce the quality of life of affected subjects including social and functional limitations.<sup>3</sup> Malocclusion has also been associated with the development of periodontal disease, although not a direct aetiology.<sup>4</sup> As malocclusion is highly affects the aesthetics and oral health, treatment for such problem is needed. The awareness about orthodontic treatment is highly spread to the public and the field of orthodontics is growing greatly with various advancements in treatment options.

Orthodontic treatment has its own pros and cons. Though the orthodontic treatment ends up creating beautiful smiles and immense satisfaction to the patient by changing their aesthetics, psychological status of social wellbeing and their lifestyle, it has few disadvantages too. Pain, root resorption, weight loss, periodontal disease, proneness for dental caries, high

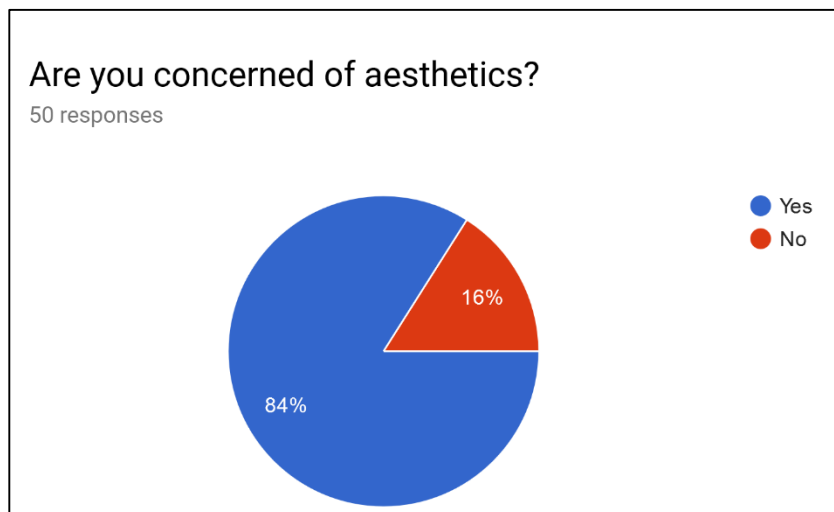
cost, temperomandibular joint dysfunction, relapse tendency, compromised aesthetics during the treatment, long time treatment procedures are few drawbacks of orthodontic treatment<sup>5</sup>. As dental interns are well aware of the orthodontic treatment benefits and adverse effects, this study is done to determine their attitude towards seeking orthodontic treatment.

### Materials and Methods

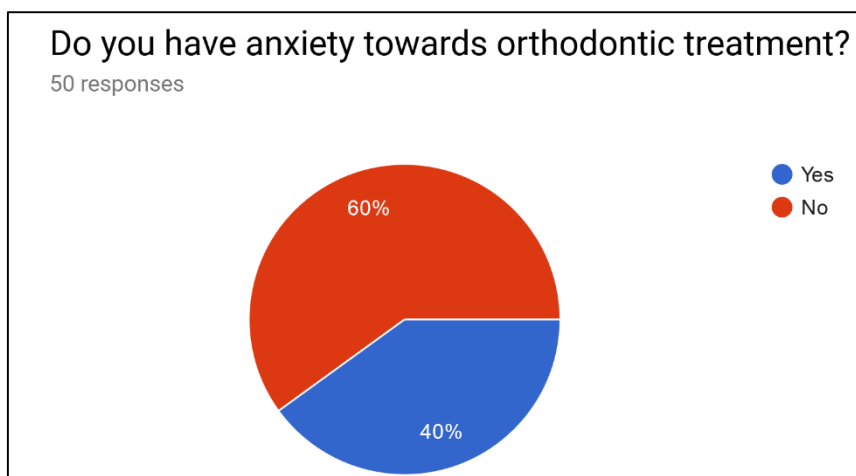
The study included 50 dental interns with malocclusions who approached for orthodontic treatment. A questionnaire was prepared containing 10 polar questions relating to their concern about seeking orthodontic treatment despite of knowing the drawbacks of the treatment. This questionnaire was given to those 50 dental interns and recorded the answers.

### Results

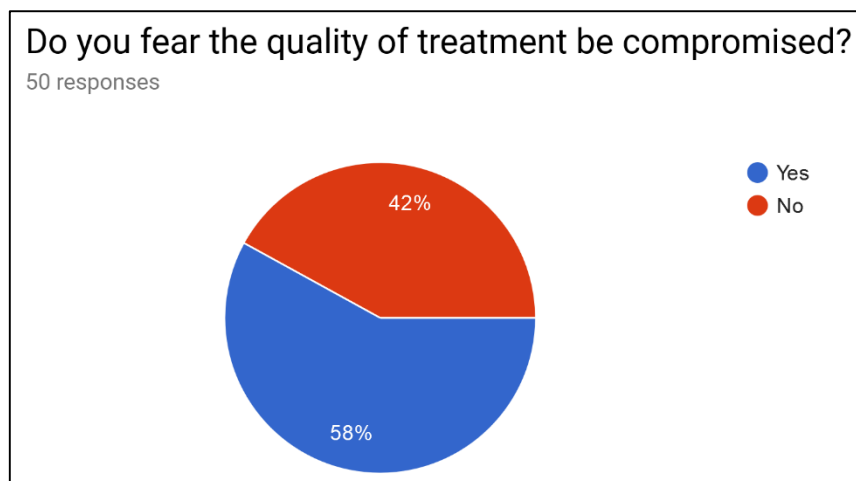
The questionnaire and the statistical data obtained are as follows



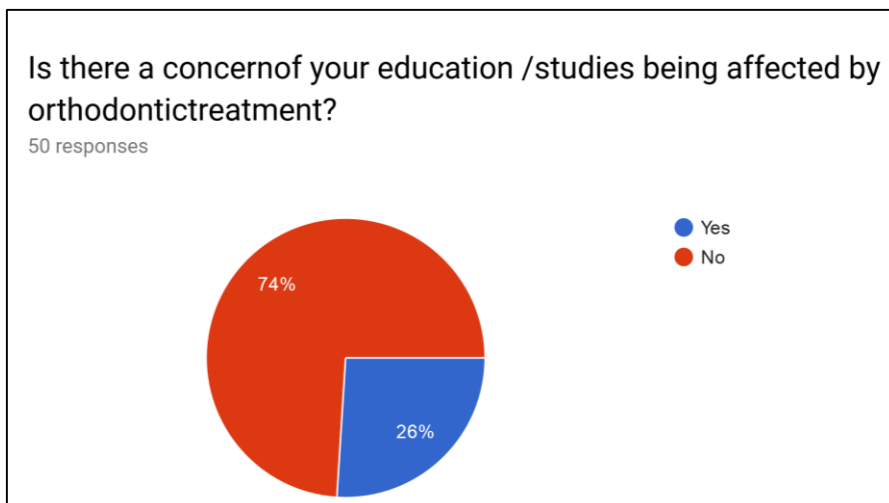
Out of 50 responses about concerning aesthetics, 84% are concerned about their esthetics and 16% are not.



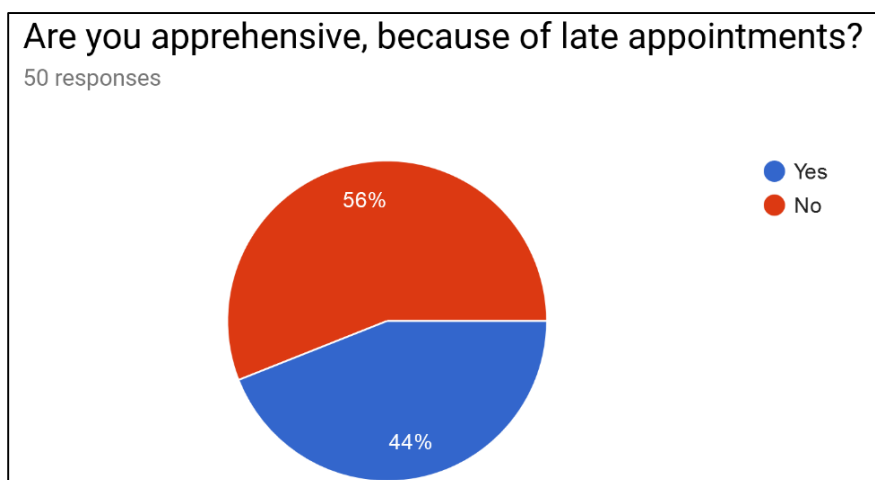
Out of 50 responses to anxiety towards the treatment, 60% of were anxious towards the treatment and 40% were interested for the treatment.



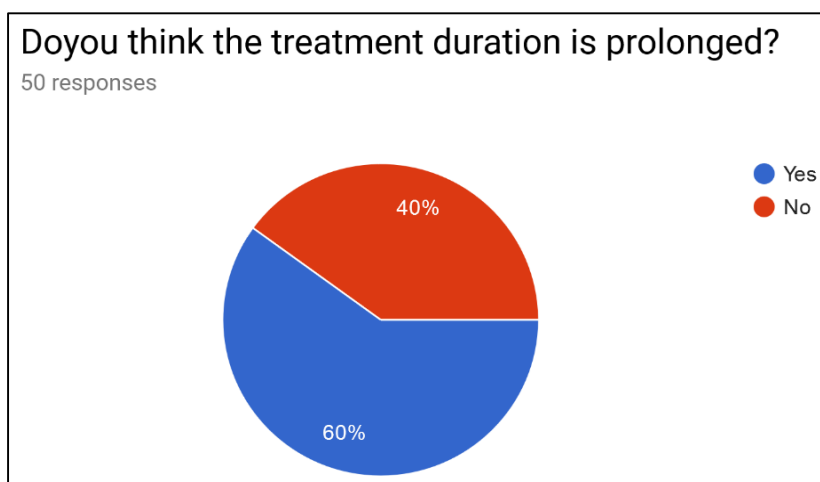
Out of 50 responses regarding fear on quality of treatment, 58% of students were scared to take up the treatment and 42% have trust towards the orthodontic procedure.



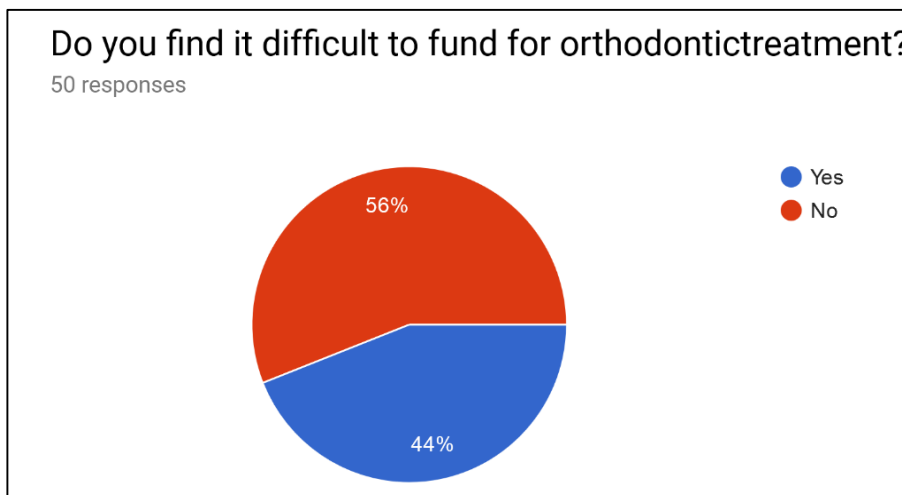
Out of 50 responses regarding the concern on education, 74% feel their studies will not be affected due to the orthodontic treatment and 26% were not comfortable to take up treatment.



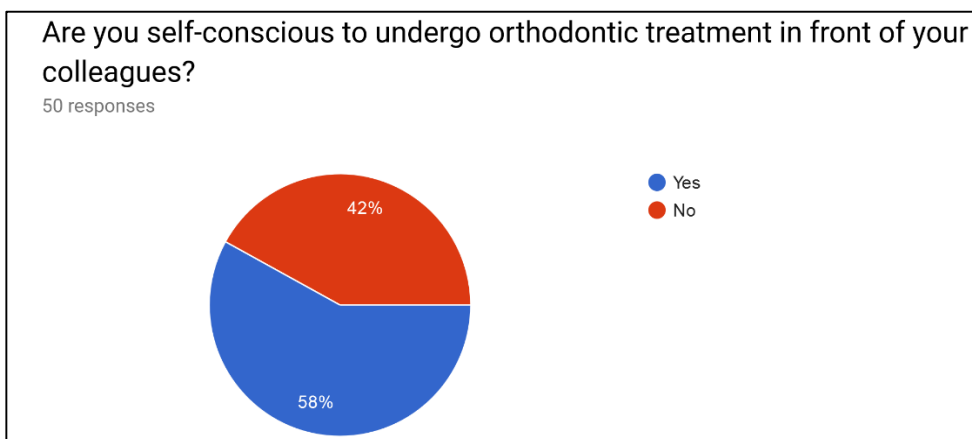
Out of 50 response regarding late appointments 44% of students were apprehensive and 56% of students were confident to take up the treatment.



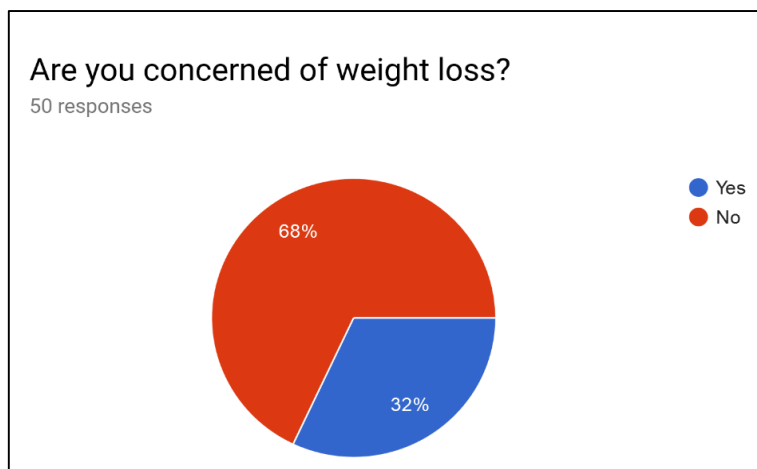
Out of 50 responses pertaining to the duration of treatment, 60% found it to be long and 40% are not concerned about the long term procedures.



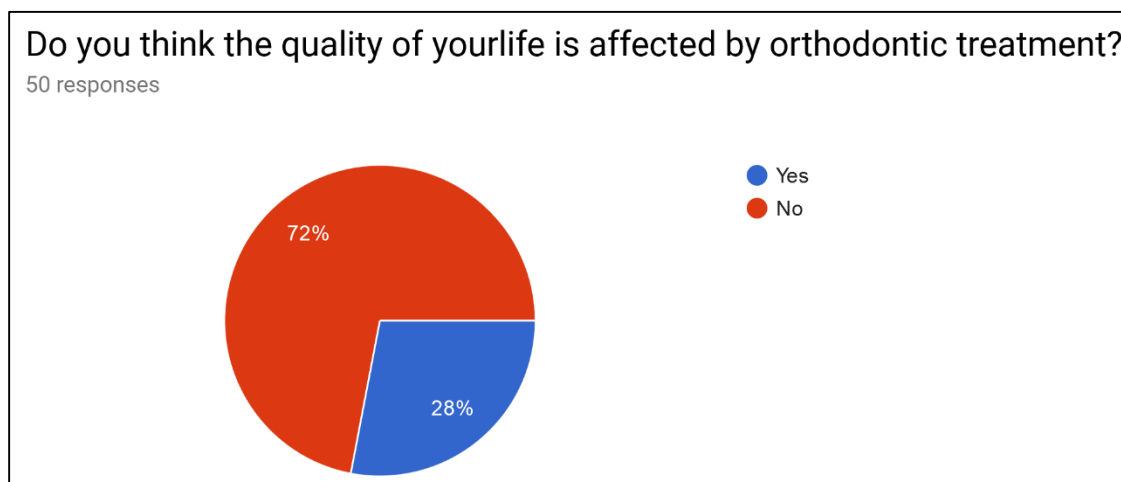
Out of 50 responses regarding funding the treatment, 56% didn't feel any difficulty in funding treatment and 44% felt treatment is quite expensive



Out of 50 responses pertaining to self-consciousness of undergoing treatment in front of their colleague, 58% are more concerned to it and 42% are comfortable to take up the treatment.



Out of 50 responses regarding weight loss, 68% are not concerned about their weight during the treatment and 32% are concerned about reduction in their weight.



Out of 50 response regarding the quality of life, 72% cheerful to seek the orthodontic treatment and 28% feel treatment will have impact on their quality of life.

Overall the percentage of positive responses from the dental interns with malocclusion towards seeking orthodontic treatment is 61% and the percentage of negative responses is 39%.

### Discussion

Malocclusion, a universal dental problem creates not only oral health issues but also affecting the psychological well being of a person. As the esthetic concern of an individual and malocclusion develops during the same ages, the teenagers and young adults more likely seek orthodontic treatment. Dental interns in the same age group, studied orthodontics as a subject and are well aware of the advantages and disadvantages of the treatment. 'Doctors make the worst patients' is a famous quote which means that it is difficult to advise people on subjects that they are experts on. As a result, in order to determine the attitude of dental interns with malocclusion towards seeking orthodontic treatment, this study has been done. The results of the study showed 61% positive response from the dental interns towards seeking orthodontic treatment and 39% negative response for the same.

In Indian context, few authors did similar studies with undergraduate dental students and assessed their attitude towards orthodontic treatment. Baswaraj *et al* conducted a study with 230 undergraduate dental students, to assess dental students' perception of orthodontic treatment and the relationship between physical appearance and the impact of such deviation on self-esteem. They found that 75% of the students were aware of their dental esthetics and 31% had a strong

positive attitude toward it.<sup>6</sup> Riya Agrawal studied the knowledge, attitude and perception of orthodontics treatment among 300 undergraduate dental students and found that 30% had a strong positive attitude towards orthodontic treatment.<sup>7</sup> Disha D Kandi studied 215 dental students with malocclusion and concluded the reasons for their negative response towards orthodontic treatment. Among 215 dental students, 28.17% students believe orthodontic treatment as long duration treatment, 26.23% students have subjective fear about treatment, 21.78% avoid it because of pain during treatment, 13.36% of students neglected orthodontic treatment, 6.43% students feels orthodontic treatment expensive, 3.46% students avoid it because of fear of relapse.<sup>8</sup> In our study, it has been found that, 58% feared about the quality of the treatment and 60% concerned about the long treatment durations. These two factors are considered negative about the orthodontic treatment by the dental interns participated in our study. Otherwise, they showed a overall positive response (61%) towards the orthodontic treatment.

### Conclusion

Our study breaks the stereotype of considering 'doctors make the worst patients' as it concluded an overall positive response from the dental interns, despite of knowing the demerits in orthodontic treatment. However, this study is a pilot effort to know the attitude of the dental interns towards seeking orthodontic treatment. This positive attitude shows that the dental interns consider orthodontic treatment as a boon to make their smiles better and are ready to undertake the treatment without much hesitation.

**Source of funding**

None.

**Conflict of interest**

None.

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