

A Study of Taboos among General Population before and after Tooth Extraction

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Abstract:- In day to day life, every dental care professional faces taboos among different population. Myths and taboos play an important role in everyone's life. Even though, India is a country where it is said to be developing year by year, still there are some population who believes certain taboos, the belief of such taboos has made a great impact in their lifestyle as well as in the maintenance of oral hygiene. This study was conducted among the general population as well as the patients attending the OPD in dental college, set of 15 closed questionnaires were given to them as a survey. The purpose of this study was to evaluate the percentage of people who still believe the taboos regarding dental extraction and their willingness towards dental treatment as well as tooth extraction.

I. INTRODUCTION

The concept of health is revolutionized from the basic definition of "mere absence of disease" to the "state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely absence of disease or infirmity so as to lead a socially and economically productive life" as given by W.H.O (1948)(1). This social world of an individual is influenced by "culture" has been a difficult concept to explain. It is an important sector of social and human development, which contributes to identify-building and self-esteem, fosters economic growth and social cohesion, and helps to promote political participation and ownership. Every culture has its own rules and customs which significantly influence the health and oral health (2). Over the years, dentistry has evolved from an indefinite practice based on folk medicines to structured medical discipline that relies on science. Although modern dentistry has come a long way, there are still many taboos related to dentistry which comes across in the day to day practices (5)(2).

The taboos are the strong social prohibition (or ban) against words, objects, actions or discussion that are considered undesirable or offensive by a group, culture, society or community, Whereas culture is defined as "the habit, customs, idea and social behavior or of a particular people or the society"(6)(7). Myth is wrong belief, a misconception, or a fictitious or imaginary understating of a thing or a person which has no relevance with reality (6). Myth and taboos has a huge influence among the general population which lead them to a poor oral hygiene such as dental caries, periodontitis, oral cancer and global health problems. India is a developing country which faces many challenges in rendering health needs to its countrymen,

since gradually with the development of education, these taboos and myths are disappearing, but still they persist and are commonly encountered. In order to identify and resolve taboos believed among general population before and after dental extraction, this study was conducted(8)(2).

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

A cross sectional study was conducted among the general population in Chennai,India. 200 participants were enrolled in this study. Prior to the inception of the study an informed written consent was obtained from every participant. Initially, the questionnaire was distributed to a group of ten patients as a pilot study to validate the questionnaire, some modifications have been done for the feasibility, the questionnaires were also put up in the regional language (Tamil) for more convenience of the participants. All patients in the study completed a paper based questionnaire consists of 15 closed questions. First part of questionnaire consists of demography details of the subject such as age, gender. The information obtained during the data collection was strictly kept classified and restricted. The questions in the questionnaire were designed to access the taboos believed among the general population before and after dental extraction.

III. RESULTS

A. Do you believe your eye sight will be affected due to extraction of your upper front teeth? (1)

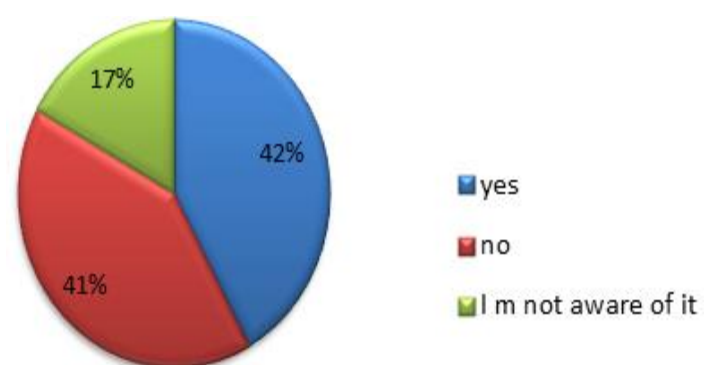


Fig 1

42% of patients still believe that extraction of upper teeth will lead them to have eye sight problems whereas 41% of patients says "no" and the rest of 17% says that they were not aware of such taboos.

B. Do you believe that dental extraction is the most painful procedure?

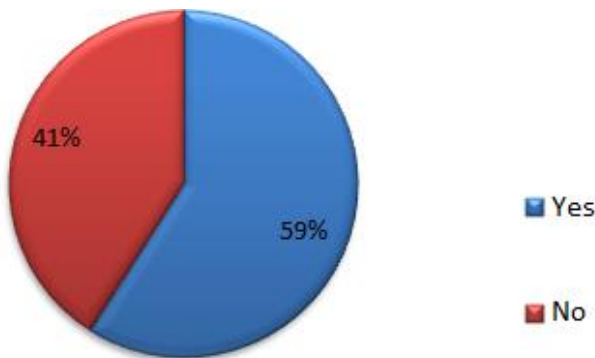


Fig 2

59% of patients believe that dental extraction is not a painful procedure and the rest 41% still believes that it is the painful procedure.

C. Do you believe that homemade remedies are the best than extracting the tooth?

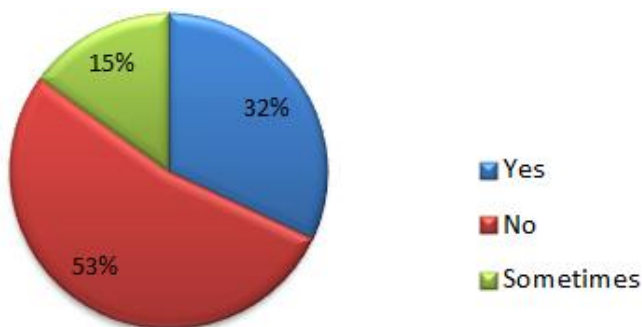


Fig 3

53% of patients has said that home remedies are not that good , whereas 32% says home remedies are still the best than compare to the extraction and on the other side rest of the patients, the 15% believes that “ sometimes” home remedies are more effective then the extraction.

D. Do you believe that extraction of tooth will lead you to dental problems again and again to extract the other remaining teeth also?

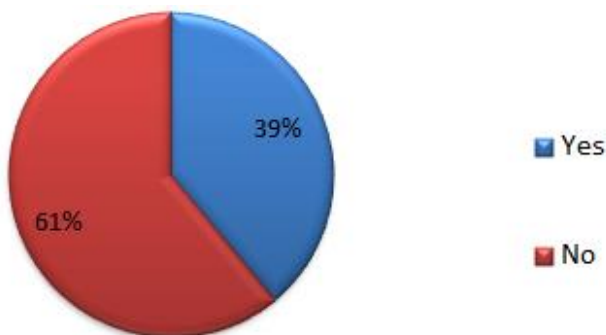


Fig 4

Most of the patients ,61% has said that extraction of tooth will not lead to other dental problems which leads to extract other remaining teeth , on the other side 39% of patients believe that extraction of tooth will lead them to dental problems again and again, leading to extract the other remaining teeth.

E. Do you believe that extraction of upper back teeth will lead you to headache?

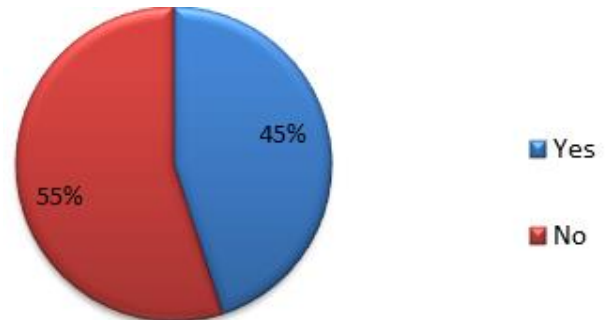


Fig 5

55% of patients believe that extraction of upper teeth will not cause headache, and 45% believes that extraction of upper teeth will lead them to headache.

F. Do you think that extraction of root stumps is not necessary?

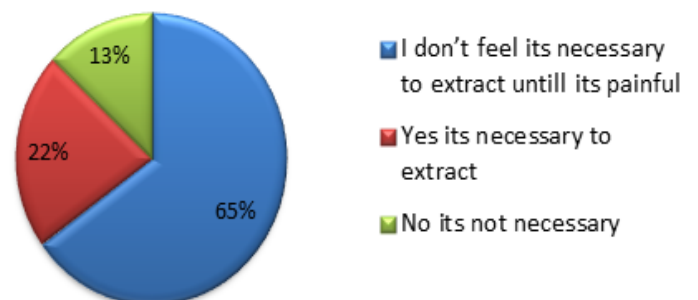


Fig 6

Most of the patients about 65% believes that it is not necessary to extract the teeth until unless it is painful, whereas 22% believes that its necessary to extract the root stumps , and the rest 13% feels that it is not necessary to extract the root stumps.

G. Do you think head bath after dental extraction will increase the pain?

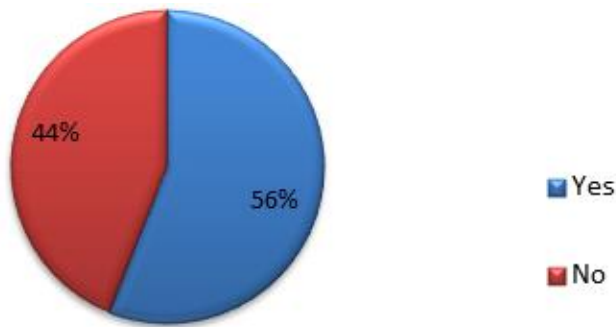


Fig 7

56% of patients still has the believe of the taboo that head bath after dental extraction will increase the pain and the 44% believes that head bath after dental extraction will not lead them to pain.

H. Do you think extraction of upper teeth will lead to sinus problems?

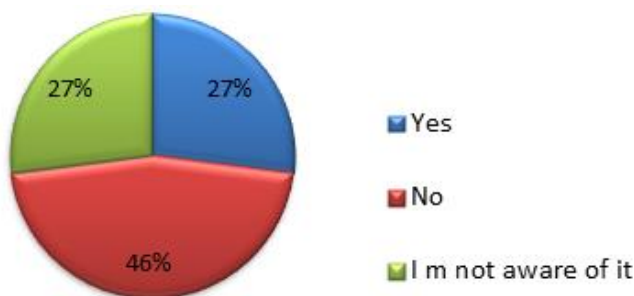


Fig 8

Most of the patients 46% believe that extraction of upper teeth will not lead them to sinus problems whereas equally the 27% feels that extraction of upper teeth will lead them to sinus problems and other 27% says they are not aware of such taboos.

I. Do you think extraction is the only treatment for dental pain?

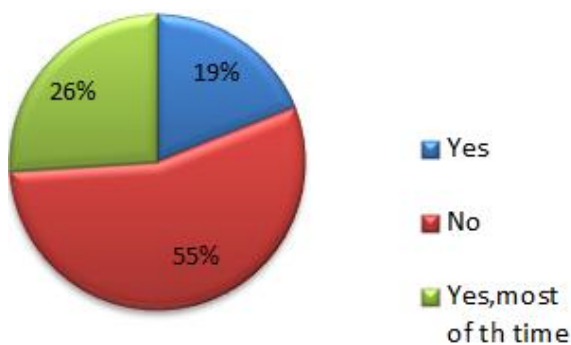


Fig 9

55% says that extraction is not the only treatment for tooth ache , whereas 26% says most of the times the tooth

ache will end up extracting the teeth , and the rest 19% believes that extraction is the only treatment for tooth ache.

J. Do you think extraction of the teeth should be done only when it is shaking?

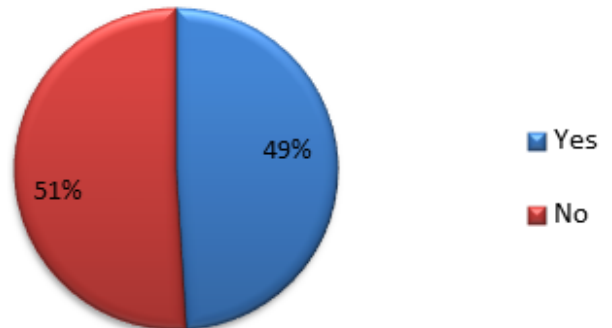


Fig 10

51% of patients do not believe that mobile teeth should only be extracted and the rest of the 49% says yes , that only when the teeth is mobile it should go for extraction.

K. Do you think your cheeks will appear hollow after extraction?

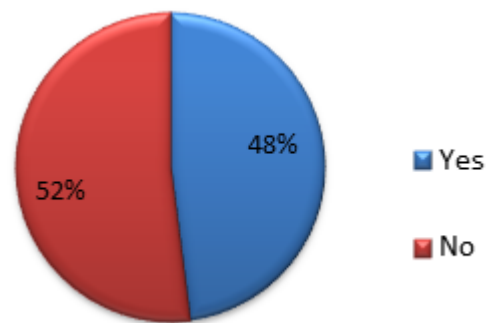


Fig 11

52% of patients has said that extraction of teeth will not lead them appear their cheeks hollow and the rest 48% has said yes the cheeks will appear hollow after extraction of teeth.

L. Do you think regular intake of food will be affected after extraction?

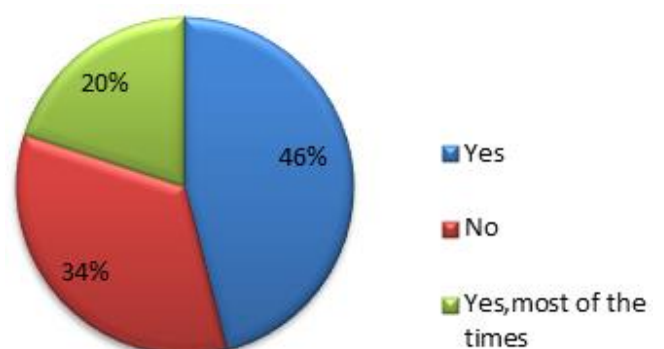


Fig 12

46% of people believe that their normal food intake will be affected after undergoing extraction, the 34% says no, whereas the remaining 20% believes that most of the time their normal diet will be affected after dental extraction.

M. Do you believe that ageing is only reason for extraction of teeth?

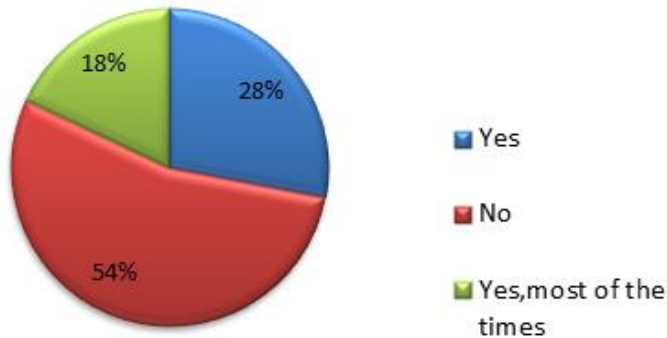


Fig 13

58% of patients do not believe that ageing is the only reason for extraction, 28% says yes that ageing is cause to extract the teeth and rest 18% believes that yes most of time ageing is the only reason to extract the teeth.

N. Do you think most of the time local anesthesia injections will not act in oral cavity?

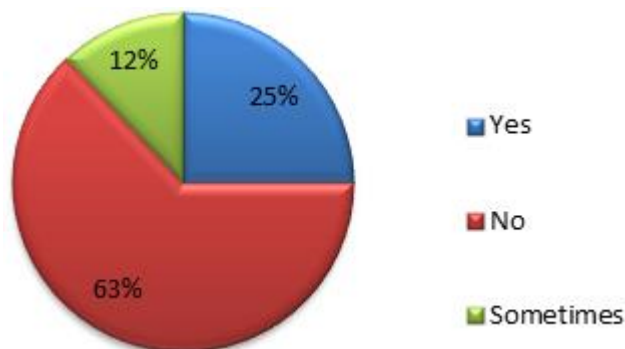


Fig 14

Most of the population, 63% has said no for the question of asking that local anesthesia will not act in oral cavity, and some the 25% still has the believe that yes local anesthesia will not work in oral cavity, the rest 12% has said like sometimes the local anesthesia will not work in oral cavity.

O. Do you think your nerves will be affected due to injections and will mostly lead to paralysis of face?

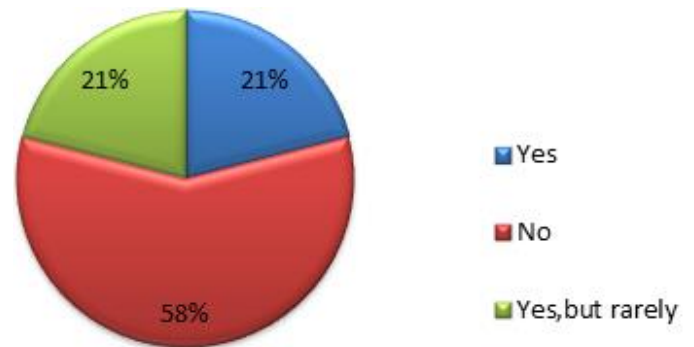


Fig 15

58% of patients has said no for asking, do they believe that their nerves will be affected along with that their face will be paralyzed after injections in oral cavity, and the 21% has said yes while asking his question and the other 21% has said sometimes it may lead to affect their nerves and also causing paralysis of their face.

IV. DISCUSSION

This study was performed to investigate the beliefs in myths and taboos among the general population to assess the variation of these myths across different demographic aspects to co-relate the existence of myths about oral health and dental extraction among the patients. India is a developing country where the literacy rate is been steadily increasing year by year. Even though the literacy rate is has been increased over the past few years, the beliefs of these taboos are still followed by most of the patients which includes both literate and illiterate population (10)(12).

The study population was given a questionnaire, do they believe that their eye sight will be affected after extraction of the upper teeth 42% had said yes whereas 41% still fear the pain during extraction. The next question was, do they think extraction is one of the most painful procedure 59% had answered no, and this shows that the knowledge and attitude towards the dental treatment is increasing. Regarding the homemade remedies 53% had said no and 32% said yes and the rest 15% had said sometimes it is good to go for homemade remedies, situations still prevent where people use home remedies for pain caused by dental origin, it's the responsibility of dental care professions to educate the population about the proper treatment, doing that may reduce the usage of homemade remedies rather to decide the proper treatment. When the study population was asked about if they believe that the extraction of teeth will lead them to do to extraction of other remaining teeth, 61% had said no and the rest 39% had said yes, this shows that, there are patients who still believes that extraction is the cause leading them to other dental problems. These kinds of myths are usually a reason for poor oral hygiene of the patients. The education system should be involved to create the knowledge about dental extractions. Regarding the myths of headache after

extraction 55% had answered no and the rest 45% had said yes, these myths are slowly vanishing. Doctors should always take a step forward to tell the patient about what is right and wrong. When the question was asked about extraction of root stumps, surprisingly 65% of the population has answered that they only go for the extraction when the root stumps starts paining, the 22% said its necessary to extract the root stumps and the remaining 13% has answered that it is not necessary to extract the root stumps. 56% of the participants still believe that head bath after dental extraction will increase the pain and the rest 44% does not believe such, in that 56% most of the female had said yes. The main reason for such taboo is due to the culture and less awareness. The patients were also asked if sinus problems related to dental extraction, 46% had said no and 27% said that they were not aware of such myth but still 27% said that extraction will lead to sinus problems, this shows that this taboos is not completely vanished but comparatively it is diminishing. When the study population was questioned about treatment for pain only 19% had said that extraction is the only treatment for tooth ache, whereas 26% had said most of the time, and 55% had said that extraction is not the only treatment, this reveals that the education and knowledge regarding treatment plan is increasing among the population. People are aware of different modalities of treatment for tooth ache rather than believing such myths. When question regarding the treatment for mobility of teeth, 51% had answered no to extraction and the rest 49% has answered yes. When the question was raised about the appearance of hollow cheeks after dental extraction 52% has said no. When the study population was asked do they believe that after extraction of teeth their regular intake of food will be affected or not, 46% had answered yes, 20% answered most of the times and the rest 34% had told No. There should be more studies and surveys conducted by the dentists and dental students to create awareness among the people, to understand what is right and what is wrong. If that is done these kinds of myths and taboos might be abolished among the population. 56% believes that ageing is not the only reason for extraction and the 28% says no and 18% believes that most of the time ageing is the only reason for extraction. Regarding the local anesthesia, 63% of the patients said that local anesthesia will act in oral cavity, 25% said yes that local anesthesia will not act in the oral cavity and the remaining 12% had said sometimes local anesthesia does not work in the oral cavity. It is the responsibility of the dentist to educate the patient about the anesthesia and its actions in the oral cavity. In the last question when the participants were asked do they think their nerves of oral cavity will be affected during injections, 58% had said no, the 21% said rarely and the rest 21% said yes. The beliefs of taboos regarding the never injuries is been decreasing. It is the responsibility of the government and the dental care professions to create more awareness and educate the patients. Myths are part of everyone's life. As educational systems are becoming more entangled so does the people's expectations of dental-care is increasing with great flare. It is important to know the myths and misconceptions about dental extraction because it plays a prime role to provide excellent care and health education to both patients and

healthy individuals. To overcome this problem, health education should be provided at all age levels. Taboos regarding extraction should be explained by the dental surgeon to the patients and also to the patient attendee before commencing any surgical procedures (example: extraction). Doctors should take this as a duty to educate each and every patient about myths and proper treatments and solutions for health care and dental care problems. Taking a step forward to educate the population about proper treatment and treatment results will surely reduce the beliefs of most of the myths and taboos among the patients and the general population (11).

V. CONCLUSION

Cultural beliefs and taboos are due to illiteracy, lack of knowledge and lack of awareness which act as one of the relative barrier for the utilization of dental treatment. The beliefs regarding the taboos of dental extraction and dental health are not only common in illiterate population but also among the literate population (6). Along with the government ,the health care professionals and dental care professionals should assess this problem and educate the people about the knowledge and awareness of dental health. The basic concepts and principles about oral health should be part of the education system from primary classes to higher studies. If the people are educated on prevention and early diagnosis of the disease, the myths regarding dental extraction will vanish and the overall dental health status of the population will surely improve(8)(6).

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