



# Orthodontics in Nepal

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## Introduction

- No long history.
- Before 1990:<sup>1</sup>
  - Limited to removable and functional appliances.
  - Indian orthodontist used to visit Kathmandu regularly.
  - Few Nepalese used orthodontic services from nearby Indian cities.
- Specialised orthodontic services by Nepalese orthodontists started in 1990.<sup>1</sup>
- With time,
  - The number of orthodontists and the services provided by them are increasing.
  - Orthodontic treatment is popular among the general public.

Aim: To find out the state of orthodontics in Nepal.

### Objectives:

- To find out the prevalence of malocclusions and the need for orthodontic treatment in Nepal.
- To find out the number of orthodontists in Nepal and their service area.
- To compare the cost of orthodontic treatment with the living standard of Nepalese people.

## Materials and Methods

- Malocclusion prevalence and the need for orthodontic treatment was assessed from past studies.
- Information regarding Nepalese orthodontists was obtained from the Nepal Medical Council (NMC), the Orthodontic and Dentofacial Orthopedic Association of Nepal (ODOAN) and through personal contacts.
- Information on the Nepalese living standard was obtained from World Bank data.
- Cost of orthodontic treatment was obtained from price chart of various hospitals/clinics.

## Results

- Malocclusion prevalence (73% - 90.4%).<sup>2-4</sup>
- Among those with malocclusions, 46% have an extreme or severe need of orthodontic treatment.<sup>4</sup>
- Number of orthodontists<sup>5,6</sup> - NMC registered = 74
  - ODOAN registered = 40
- Orthodontists are centred in capital and major cities. (Fig 1)

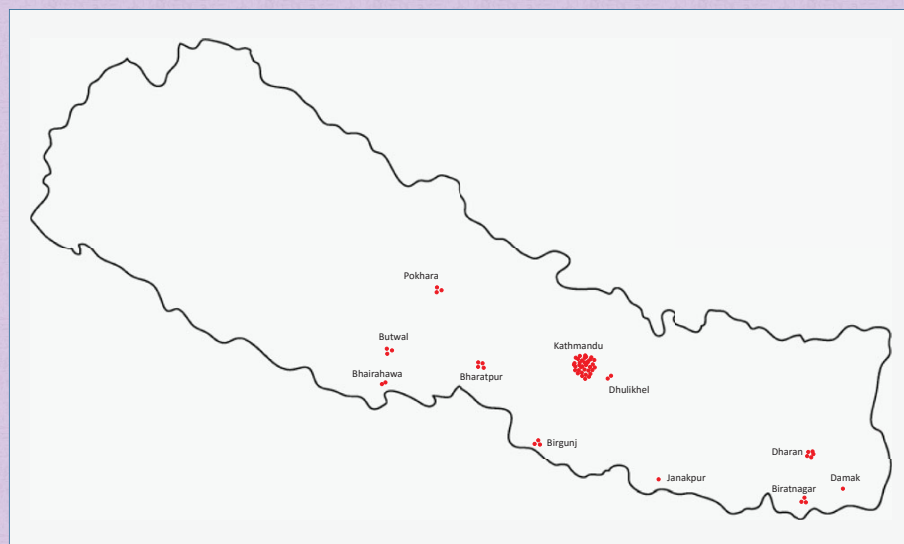


Fig.1. Distribution of orthodontists in Nepal

- The cost of orthodontic treatment is \$220 - \$1000
- Per capita income of Nepalese is \$698.30.<sup>7</sup>

## Discussion

- Population of Nepal is 26,494,504.<sup>8</sup>
- In absolute numbers, nearly 10 million Nepalese have an extreme or severe need of orthodontic treatment.
- The optimum number of patients an orthodontist can treat at a time is 100.<sup>9</sup>
- 74 orthodontist can treat only 7400 patients at a time.
- The minimum cost of orthodontic treatment is nearly one third of the per capita income of Nepalese, whereas the maximum charge even exceeds it.
- Orthodontic treatment requires frequent follow-ups and long treatment time, making it difficult for patients from rural areas.

## Conclusion

- Although orthodontic services are urgently required, people are unable to afford them due to low socioeconomic status as compared to treatment costs.
- Most of the orthodontists are concentrated in the major cities, with difficult access for people residing in rural areas.

## References

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