

A CROSS-SECTIONAL STUDY TO ASSESS DENTAL APPOINTMENT ATTENDANCE, REFLECTING THE EXPERIENCES, ANTICIPATIONS AND BEHAVIOURAL INTENTIONS AMONG 18-25 YEAR-OLDS.

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Introduction

- Missed healthcare appointments are costly and are only partially remedied by reminders. An improved understanding of how dental patients' cognitions and feelings influence attendance should help to identify behavioural management techniques to improve dental attendance and, with that, oral health outcomes.

Materials & Methods

Convenience sampling

Sample size=300

Calculated using Nomogram
90% Power and 35%
Standard Difference

Inclusion criteria:

**Past dental
experience, Age 18-25
years**

A self-administered questionnaire was given; responses were collected, and results were analysed using Sequential Logistic Regression

**3 Domains of the
questionnaire**

- Experience
- Anticipation
- Behaviour

Discussion

- 50% of the subjects suffering from high dental anxiety were likely to postpone their dental appointments. (Armfield et al. *Community Dent Oral Epidemiol* 2013)
- Sequential logistic regression showed that students with a negative past dental experience were 1.15 times more likely to miss their next appointment than those who had a pleasant experience (Berggren et al., *J Am Dent Assoc* 1984)
- Evaluation of past appointments and anticipation of pain and uneasiness in the future appointments are significant predictors of appointment-keeping behaviours. (Devo et al. *Medical care*. 1980)

AIM

To evaluate dental appointment attendance by using the psychological dental cycle given by Schneider A et al., that includes experiences, anticipations, and behaviours in 18-25 year-olds in Bangalore city.

Results

STAGES	B	SE B	p-value	EXP(B)
GENERAL FACTORS				
Dental Anxiety (MDAS)	0.594	0.174	0.001*	1.812
Self-rated oral health	-0.014	0.055	0.797	0.986
DASS 21-Stress	0.007	0.187	0.970	1.007
DASS 21-Anxiety	0.021	0.118	0.862	1.021
DASS21-Depression	0.200	0.159	0.208	1.221
GENERAL FACTORS+EXPERIENCE STAGE				
General Factors (Dental Anxiety)*	0.507	0.179	0.005*	1.660
Negative past experience	0.140	0.047	0.003*	1.150
GENERAL FACTORS+ EXPERIENCE+ ANTICIPATION				
General factors (Dental Anxiety)	0.231	0.251	0.357	1.260
Negative past experience	0.138	0.066	0.038*	1.147
-Past experience evaluation-				
Attention from the dental team	0.254	0.095	0.007*	1.289
Trust towards the dental team	-0.345	0.103	0.001*	0.708
-Future anticipation-				
Expectation of uneasiness	0.424	0.065	0.0001*	1.527
Expectation of pain	0.127	0.062	0.042*	1.135

Conclusion

- Negative past experiences lead to negative evaluations of previous dental visits, which affects the anticipation of future appointments and thus influences the intention to attend future dental appointments.

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Abbreviations-

MDAS- Modified Dental Anxiety Scale

DASS- Depression, Anxiety, Stress Scale

Public Health Significance

The knowledge and understanding of the relationship between these contributory factors and their influence on dental appointment attendance behaviour can help find ways to motivate patients and foster better dental service use.

References

- Schneider A, Andrade J, Tanja-Dijkstra K, White M, Moles DR. The psychological cycle behind dental appointment attendance: a cross-sectional study of experiences, anticipations, and behavioral intentions. *Community Dent Oral Epidemiol* 2016; 44: 364-370
- Armfield JM. What goes around comes around: revisiting the hypothesized vicious cycle of dental fear and avoidance. *Community Dent Oral Epidemiol* 2013;41:279-87

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