

Palliative Care In Dentistry In The Indian Scenario

Dharaneesh N¹ , Dr. Sinduja Palati² , Dr Lakshmi.T.A³

¹Saveetha Dental college and Hospitals, Saveetha Institute of Medical and Technical Sciences, Saveetha University, Chennai – 600077 Email id: 152001049.sdc@saveetha.com

²Senior Lecturer, Department of Pathology, Saveetha Dental College and Hospitals, Saveetha Institute of Medical and Technical Sciences, Chennai-600077 Tamil Nadu, India. E-mail id : sindujap.sdc@saveetha.com Phone number :+91-9600141020

³Senior Lecturer, Department of Oral Pathology and Microbiology , Saveetha Dental College and Hospitals, Saveetha Institute of Medical and Technical Sciences, Chennai-600077 Tamil Nadu, India. E-mail id : lakshmita.sdc@saveetha.com

ABSTRACT

Background: Palliative care is mostly needed for elderly people and the children too, oral cavity should be taken proper care of or else it can lead to various number of oral diseases. It is seen that more awareness needs to be spread in order to gain knowledge about palliative care.

Aim: The aim of the study is to analyse the awareness and the use of Palliative Care in the Indian scenario.

Methods and Materials: This questionnaire based survey was conducted among 117 students of Saveetha Dental College. The questionnaire consisted of questions that addressed the knowledge and awareness of Palliative Care. All the responses were received and tabulated and the results were represented graphically. The statistics were done using SPSS software, chi-square test was used to check the association and P value of 0.05 was said to be statistically significant.

Results: The result showed that the people of age upto 20 years around 66 people nearly 56.41% of them were aware of the term Palliative Care in dentistry. 28.21% that 33 weren't aware of palliative care. People of age 20-40 only 1.71% are aware, 40-60 year old 5.98% are aware of Palliative Care.

Conclusion: The findings of the present study show that the young generation is aware of Palliative care in dentistry. In spite of the limitations our study was able to record the amount of data collected now for creating awareness of palliative care.

Keywords : Palliative care, Dental survey, Elderly people, Innovative technique

INTRODUCTION

The oral cavity is the most affected part in palliative care and the elders often have several oral and dental diseases but the treatment that they need for that is reported to be small(1). Oral cavity is the place where we can actually see a huge number of microorganisms which cause the disease. At this point the patient suffering will need the help of a dentist to help him recover from his pain and discomfort and to live a better life that he wants(2). Palliative Care Dentistry was defined by wisemen (3) as the study of patients and management with far advanced disease in whom the oral cavity has been affected by disease or either by its treatment. The amount of importance given to systemic health is high when compared to oral health. Oral health is neglected because they are carefree and the elders are care-dependent. They need proper care for intake of proper and good food, proper medicines and drugs intake, bathing, general health care etc. So as a result of all of this, there is less time reserved for activities that are commonly considered less important that include oral care (4).

There is slow reduction in growth and repair of the epithelium, oral mucosa, susceptibility to mechanical, chemical and microbial irritations which may increase. It is however difficult to determine if the certain disorder is due to creating itself or pathogenic microorganisms or abnormal oral habits or some other irritating factors(5).

Oral dryness and increasing functional limitations make the older person more vulnerable to oral diseases. The previous studies have identified many barriers to providing proper oral care. Our team has extensive knowledge and research experience that has translate into high quality publications (6),(7),(8),(9),(10),(11),(12),(13),(14),(15),(16),(17),(18),(19),(20),(21),(22),(23),(24),(25) This study aims to analyse the awareness of Palliative Care among the dentists in the Indian scenario.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study was done by a questionnaire based survey with demographic and awareness questions included in it. It was done through Google forms and it was circulated among the students of Saveetha Dental College and responses were received and they were tabulated and the results were represented graphically. The pros of the survey is that the adolescents of different lifestyles and cultures were surveyed. Children were excluded from the survey. This study was approved by SRB of saveetha dental college. The statistics were done using SPSS software, chi-square test was used to check the association and P value of 0.05 was said to be statistically significant.

The questions mentioned in the survey conducted

1. Do you know what palliative care is?
2. Are you aware of the term xerostomia?
3. Do you think Indian dentists practise palliative care?
4. Are you aware of mucositis?
5. Are you aware of candidiasis?
6. Do you think the government should create more awareness among people about palliative care?
7. Do you think dentists should be given special training for palliative care?
8. Are you aware of any courses available on palliative care for cancer patients?

RESULT

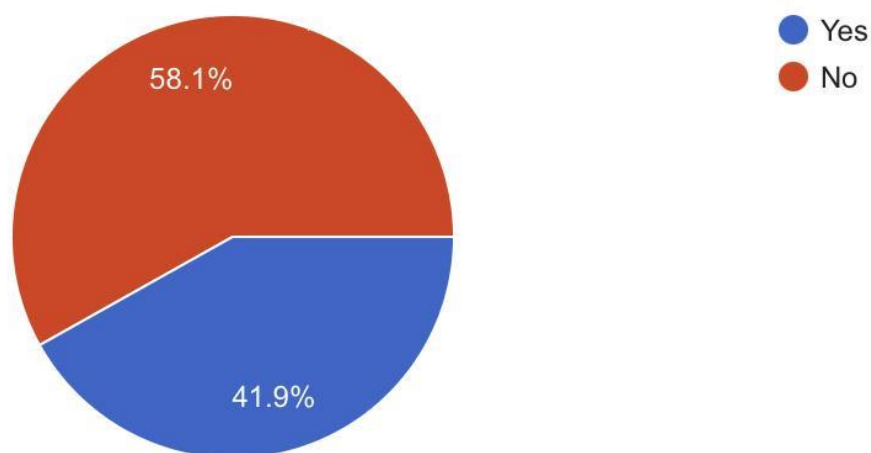


Figure 1 : Pie chart representing how much students are aware of palliative care. Blue colour indicates that 41.9% of the students were aware of palliative care and red colour indicates that 58.1% students weren't aware of the term palliative care. Majority of the participants are not aware of the term palliative care.

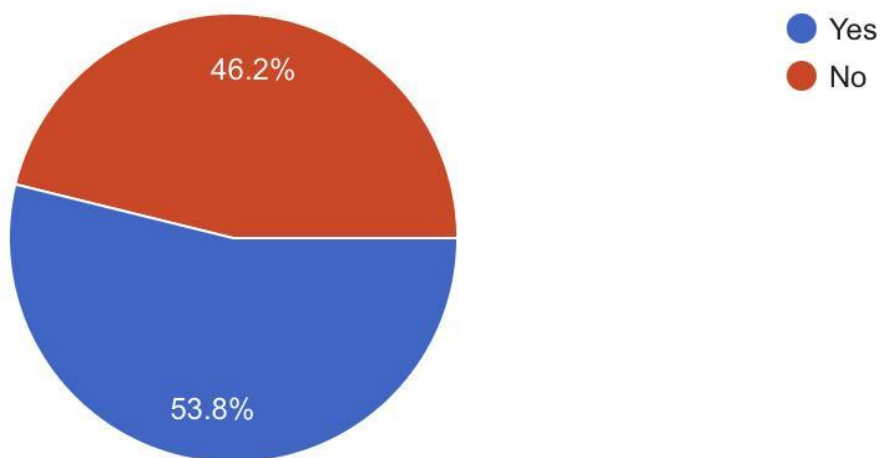


Figure 2 : Pie chart representing how much students are aware of the term Xerostomia. Blue colour indicates that 53.8% students are aware of the term xerostomia and red colour indicates that 46.2% students weren't aware of the term xerostomia. Majority of the participants are aware of the term xerostomia.

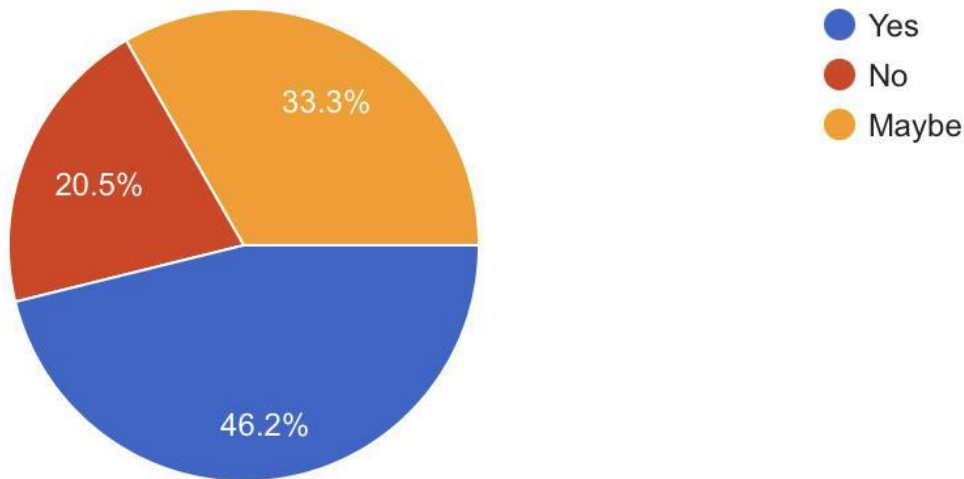


Figure 3 : Pie chart representing whether the Indian dentist practise palliative care. Blue colour indicates that 46.2% of them do practise palliative care in dentistry and red colour indicates that 20.5% do not practise palliative care in dentistry and yellow colour indicates that 33.3% may or may not practise palliative care in dentistry. Majority of the participants agree that Indian dentists practice palliative care.

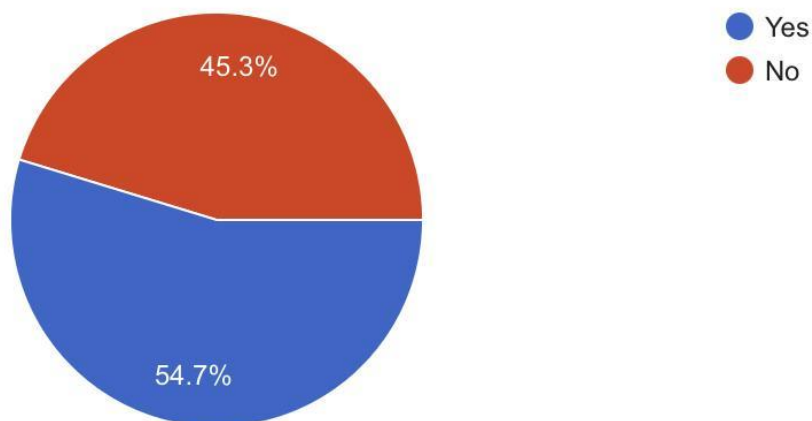


Figure 4 : Pie chart representing whether the dental students are aware of mucositis. Blue colour indicates that 54.7% dental students are aware of mucositis and red colour represents that 45.3% are not aware of Mucositis. Majority of the participants are aware of mucositis.

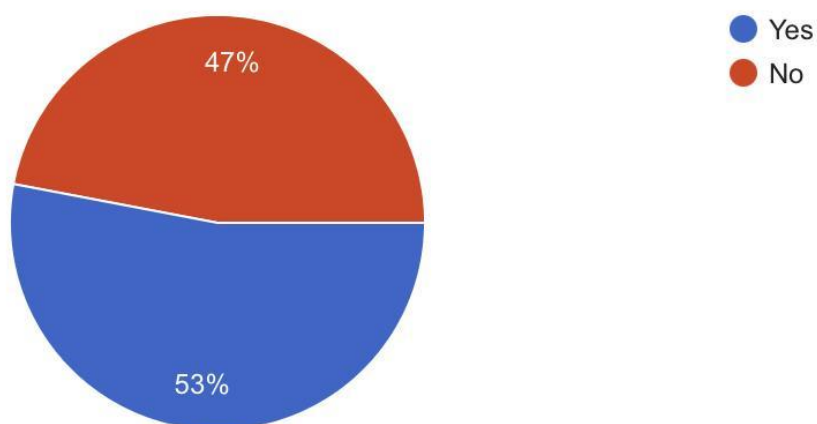


Figure 5 : Pie chart representing whether the dental students are aware of the term candidiasis. Blue colour indicates that 53% of the dental students are aware of the term candidiasis and red colour indicates that 47% of dental students aren't aware of the term candidiasis. Majority of the participants are aware of the term candidiasis.

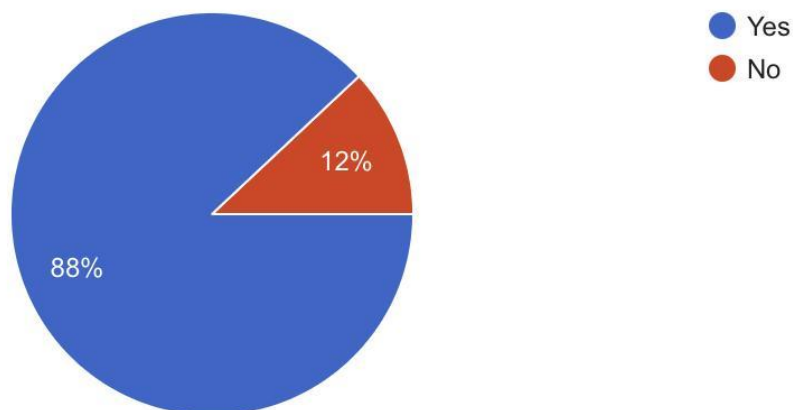


Figure 6 : Pie chart representing whether the government should create more awareness about palliative care among people. Blue colour shows the 88% responses for yes and red colour shows 12% responses for no. Majority of the participants agree that government should create more awareness about palliative care among people

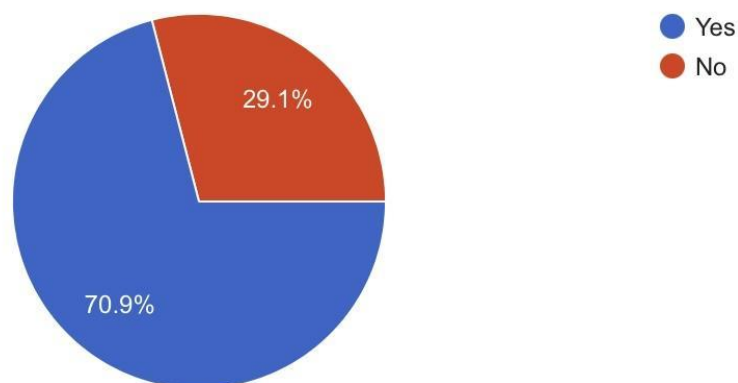


Figure 7 : Pie charts showing whether the dentist should be given special training for palliative care. Blue colour indicates that 70.9% said yes that the dentist should be given special training for palliative care, red colour indicates that 29.1% said no that the dentist should be given special training for palliative care. Majority of the participants agree that the dentist should be given special training for palliative care.

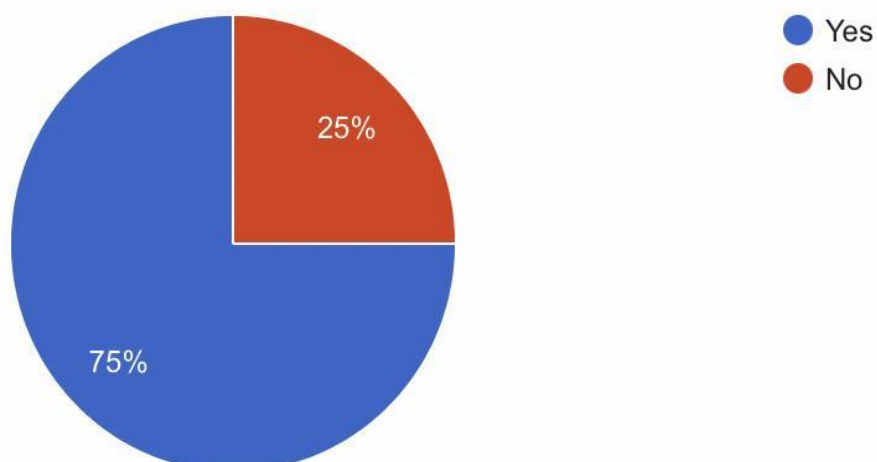


Figure 8 : Pie chart representing the awareness of the students about the courses available for palliative care for cancer patients. Blue colour indicates that 75% said yes that they are aware and red colour indicates that 25% said no they aren't aware of it. Majority of the participants are aware of the courses available for palliative care for cancer patients.

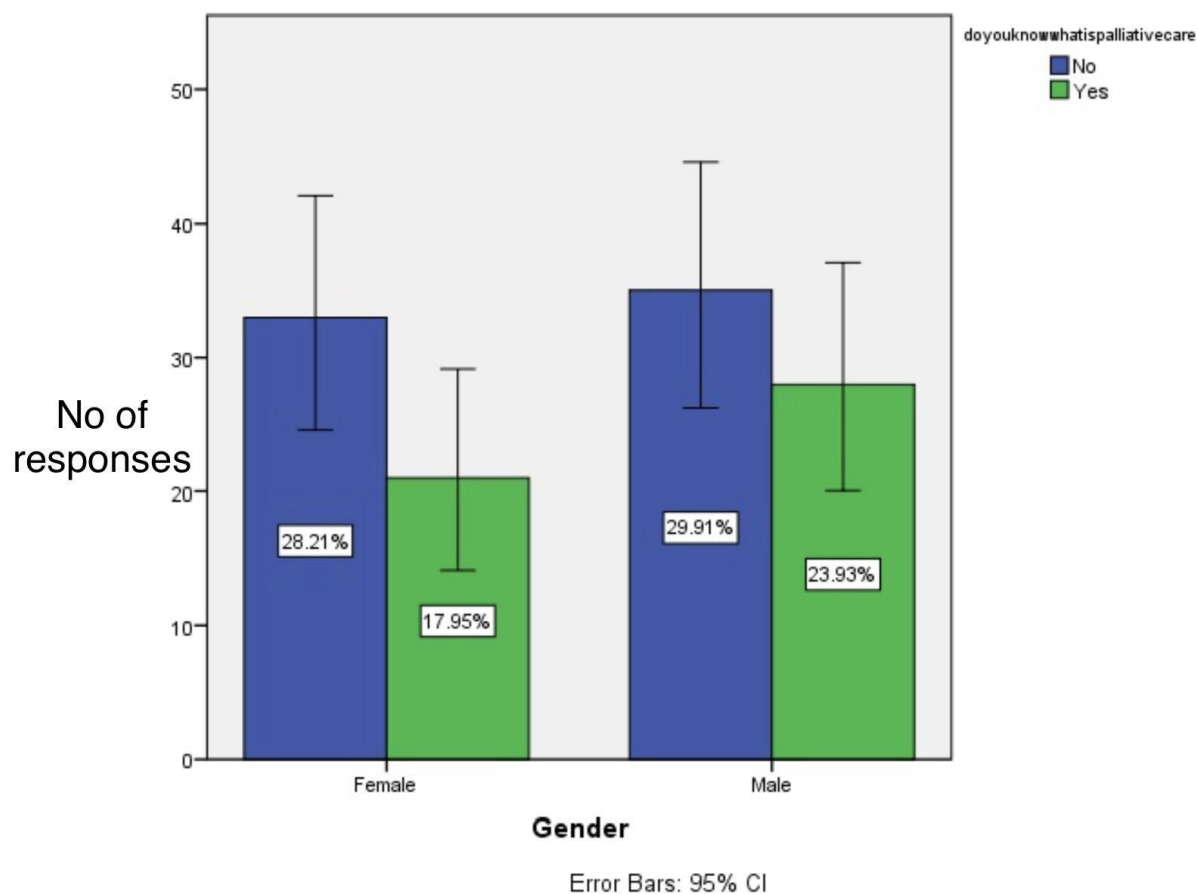


Figure 9 : The bar graph represents the association between the age and awareness of the term palliative care . X axis represents gender and Y axis represents the percentage of responses. Blue represents No (29.91% and 28.21%) and Green represents Yes (23.93% and 17.95%). Pearson chi square value is 0.00, ($P < 0.05$) Hence it is statistically significant. Majority of the males and females were not aware of palliative care.

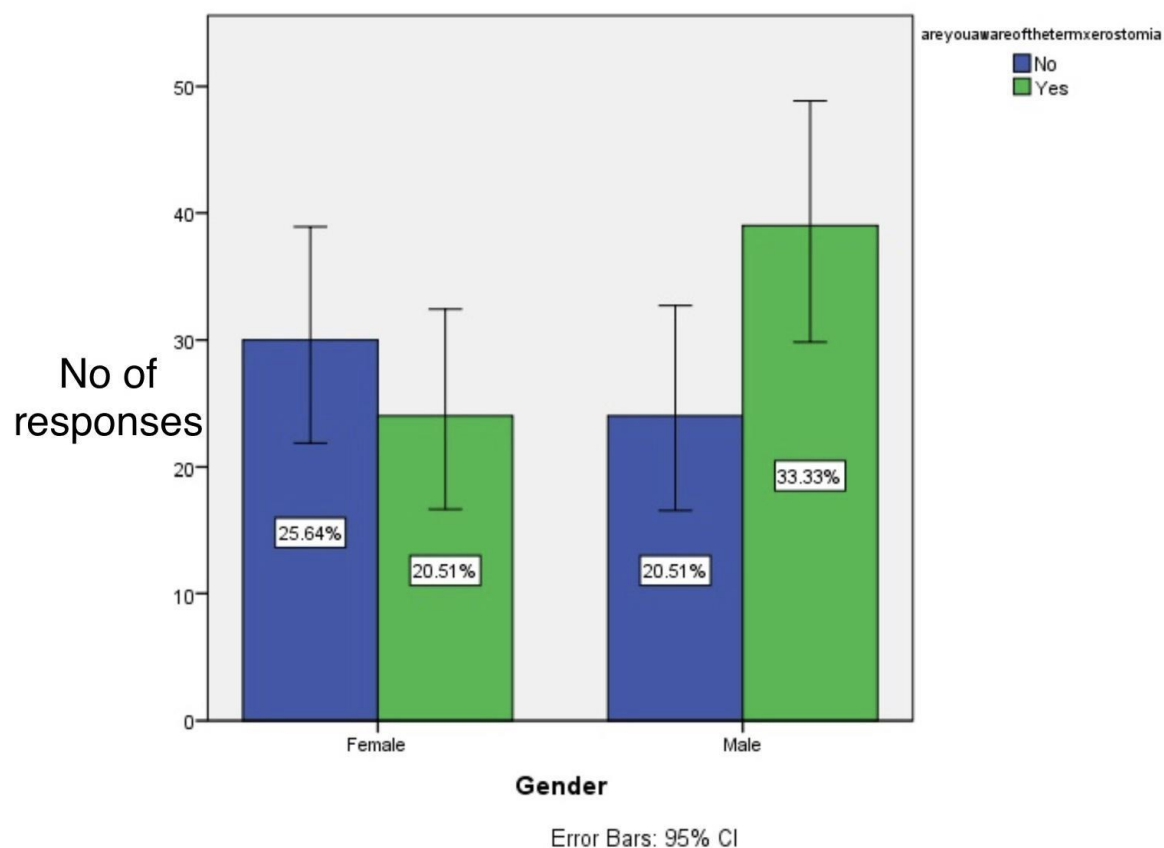


Figure 10 : The bar graph represents the association between the age and awareness of the term xerostomia. X axis represents gender and Y axis represents the percentage. Blue represents No (25.64% and 20.51%) and Green represents Yes (33.33% and 20.51%). Pearson chi square value is 0.23, ($P > 0.05$) Hence it is statistically not significant. Majority of males were more aware of xerostomia than females.

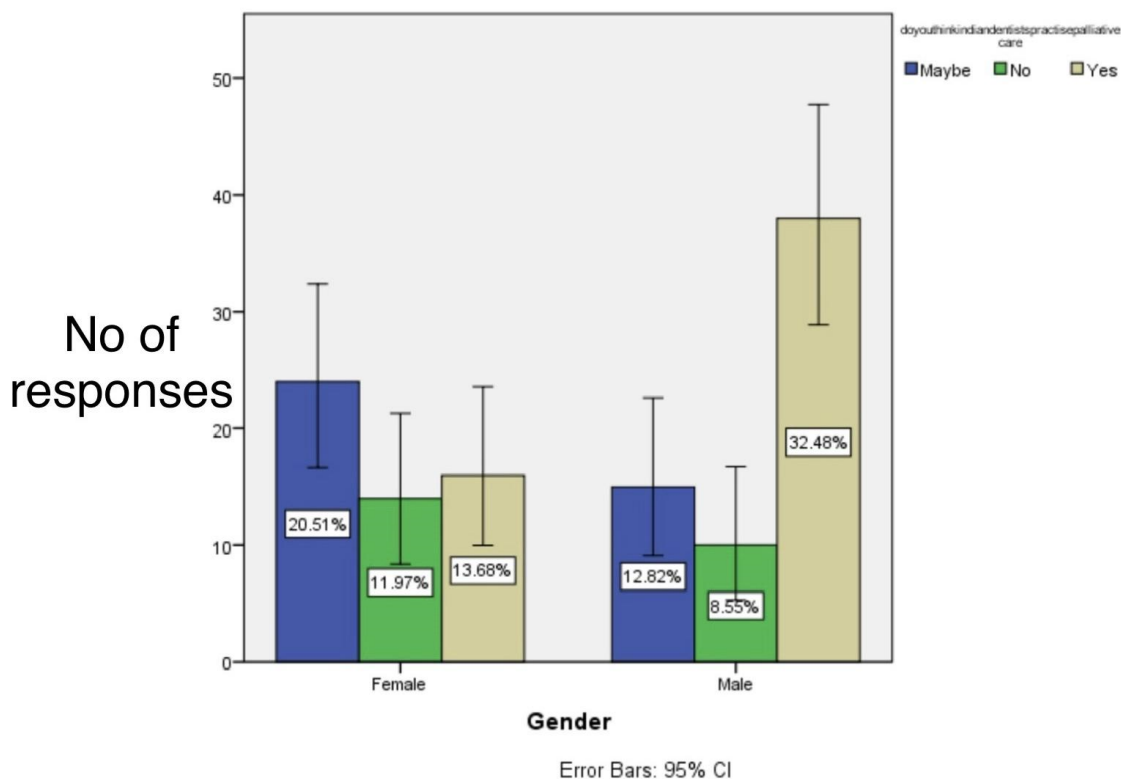


Figure 11 : The bar graph represents the association between the age and do indian dentists practice palliative care. X axis represents gender and Y axis represents the percentage. Blue represents Maybe (20.51% and 12.82%) and Green represents No (11.97% and 8.55%) and beige colour represents Yes(32.48% and 13.68%). Pearson chi square value is 0.04, ($P < 0.05$) Hence it is statistically significant. Majority of males think dentists practice palliative care whereas the majority of females consider they may practice palliative care.

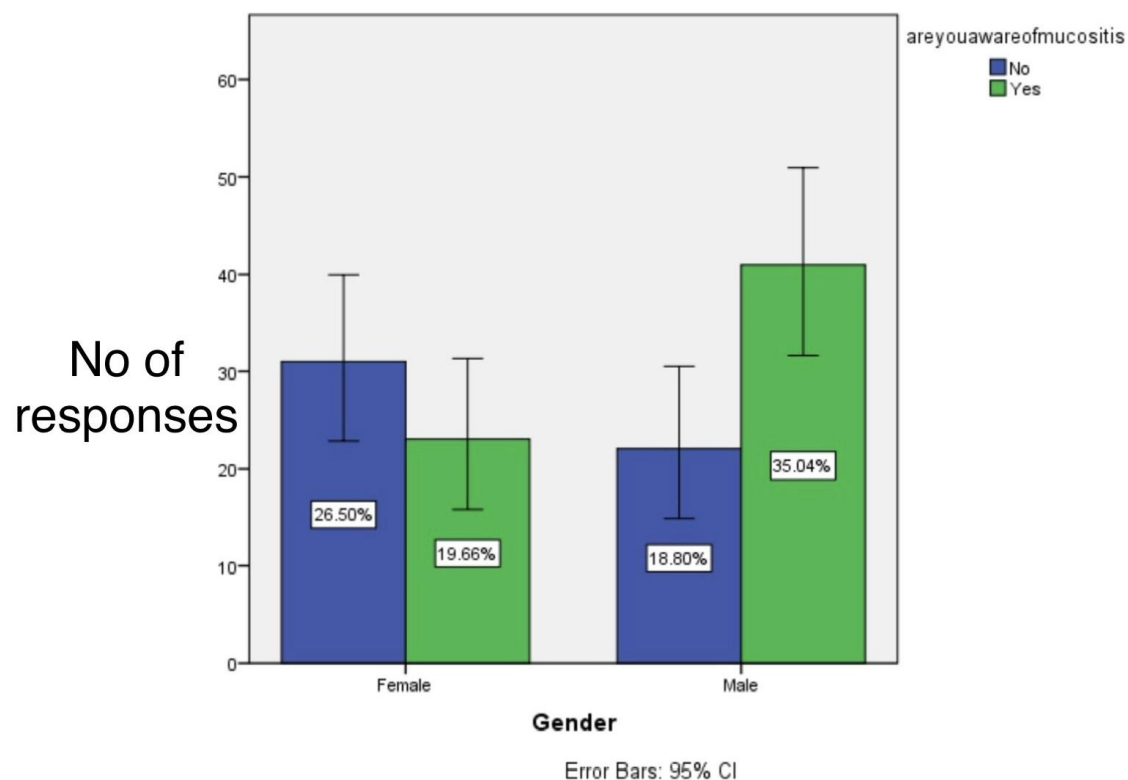


Figure 12 : The bar graph represents the association between the age and awareness of the term mucositis. X axis represents gender and Y axis represents percentage. Blue represents No(26.50% and 18.80%) and Green represents Yes(35.04% and 19.66%). Pearson chi square value is 0.00, ($P < 0.05$) Hence it is statistically significant. Majority of males were more aware of mucositis than females.

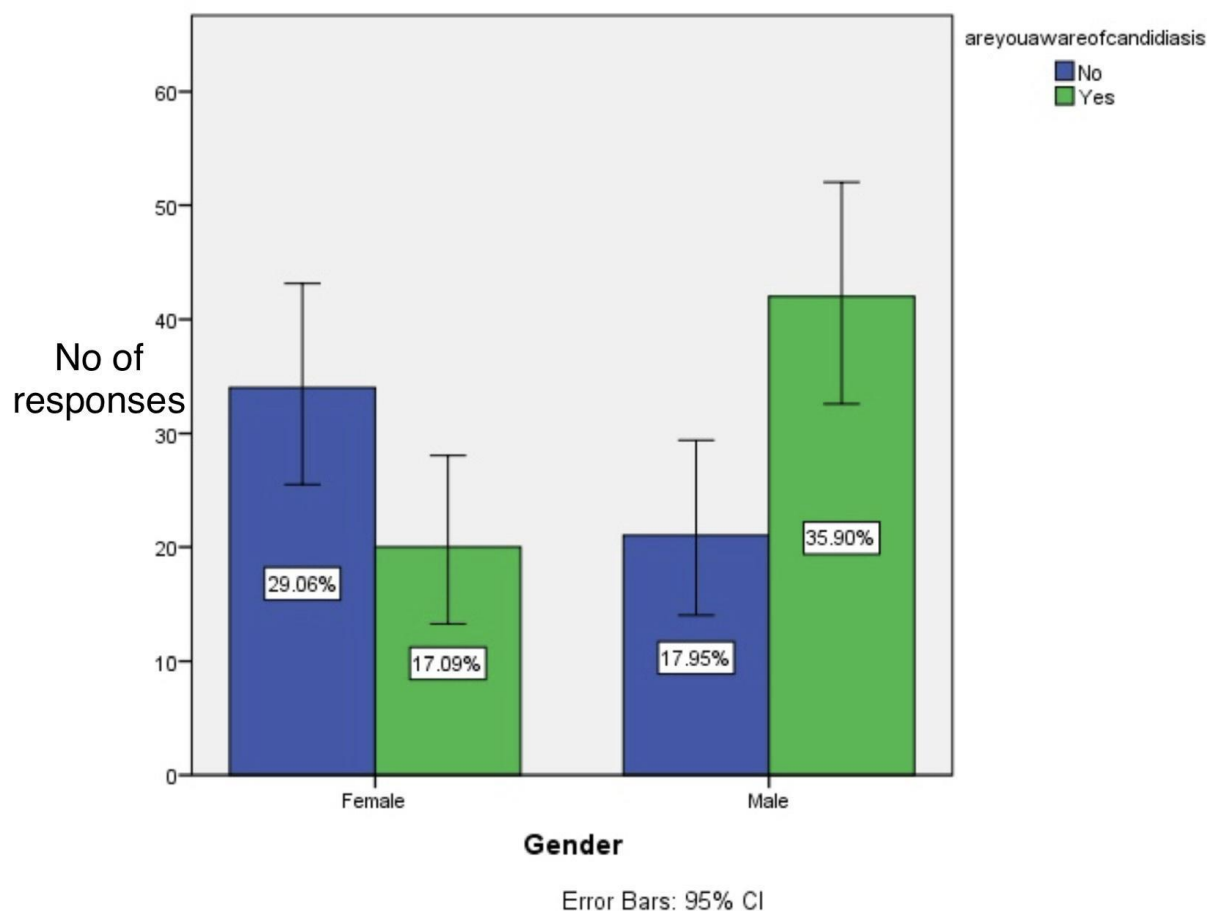


Figure 13 : The bar graph represents the association between the age and awareness of the term candidiasis. X axis represents gender and Y axis represents percentage . Blue represents No(29.06% and 17.95%) and Green represents Yes(35.09% and 17.09%). Pearson chi square value is 0.20, ($P > 0.05$) Hence it is statistically not significant. Majority of males were aware of candidiasis whereas the majority of females were not aware of candidiasis.

In this survey, 53.8% males and 46.2% females participated among 117 people. Only 41.9% of them knew What palliative care is (Figure 1) and 58.1% of them had no idea about palliative care. 53.8% people were aware of the term xerostomia (figure 2) and 46.2% weren't aware of it. When asked do you think Indian dentists practice palliative care 46.2% said yes, 20.5% said no and 33.3% said may be (Figure 3). When asked are you aware of mucositis 54.7% said yes and 45.3% said no (Figure 4). When asked are you aware of candidiasis 53% said yes and 47% said no (Figure 5). When asked do you think the

government should create more awareness among people about Palliative Care 88% said yes and 12% said no (Figure 6). When asked, do you think a dentist should be given special training for Palliative care? 70.9% said yes and 29.1% said no (Figure 7). When asked are you aware of any courses available on Palliative Care for Cancer Patients 75% said yes and 25% said no (Figure 8).

DISCUSSION

The importance of dental care is neglected due to the omission of the dentists as a particular member of the palliative care team. However many of the terminal patients show oral difficulties that affect their day to day quality of life. In a study done by Fahad Saeed, women were more likely (95%) to prefer palliative care than men. In our study only 41.9% of people know what palliative care is and 58.1% don't know about palliative care(26) .

When asked about xerostomia 95% have said it is present and they are aware(27). Comparatively in our study 42.74% said yes and 41.88% said no in the age group of 0-20. High risk group people are the highest risk for developing oral disease(28). Various causes leading to changes in the oral mucosa due to aging are fungal, bacterial, immune system changes(29). Othman et al investigated the barriers in providing proper care for older people among the dental clinics and dentists within the Malaysian government. It looked like the dentists did not want to meet the old trial people at home because of their lack of knowledge, time and skills(30). In another study by, Othman et al suggests that there is a need to promote palliative care services among men, in our study we found that awareness of palliative care has to be promoted among everyone (30,31).

This survey was bound only into the Saveetha Dental College and its students and the sample size was very limited with the limited sample size. This research was done and there were only a few limited articles found.

CONCLUSION

The palliative doctor who does the treatment is considered to be one among the greatest gods as he takes good care of the oral cavity. In India there are palliative care organisations such as NNPC (Neighbourhood Networking in Palliative Care) and Pallium India who take care in helping such communities. A well trained dentist will be a good addition to the oncologists or the other doctors of the palliative care team. The findings of this research shows that we need to improve and create even more awareness and knowledge of Palliative Care in dentistry.

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AUTHORS CONTRIBUTION

Dharaneesh N: Literature search, data collection analysis, manuscript drafting.

Dr.Sindhuja palati: Aided in conception of the topic, has participated in the study design, statistical analysis and has supervised in preparation and final corrections of the manuscript.

Dr. Lakshmi: Data verification, manuscript drafting, preparation of the manuscript.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author declares that there was no conflict of interest in the present study

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Tamilnadu housing board polpettai post Tuticorin - 628002

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