

## KNOWLEDGE, AWARENESS AND ATTITUDE ABOUT CONSCIOUS SEDATION AMONG DENTAL STUDENTS-A SURVEY

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### ABSTRACT

**Aim and Objective:** To assess the knowledge, awareness and attitude about conscious sedation among dental students.

**Background:** Conscious sedation is a combination of medicines that will help a patient to relax (a sedative) and to block pain (an anesthetic) during a dental procedure. This will be useful for the dentist to perform invasive procedures without any pain. Thus, this survey assesses the importance of conscious sedation in dentistry.

**Reason:** Thus they evaluate the knowledge, awareness and attitude about conscious sedation among dental students.

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### INTRODUCTION

Conscious Sedation is a minimally depressed level of consciousness that retains the patient's ability to maintain a patent airway independently and continuously and respond appropriately to physical stimulation and verbal commands. It is mainly given through intravenous route<sup>[1]</sup> It may be administered during therapeutic, diagnostic or surgical procedures. The drugs, dosages and techniques utilized are not intended to produce loss of consciousness. Conscious sedation should be distinguished from two other levels of consciousness: deep sedation and general anaesthesia. Deep sedation is a controlled state of depressed consciousness or unconsciousness from which the patient is not easily aroused, accompanied by a partial or complete loss of protective reflexes, including the ability to maintain a patent airway independently and respond purposefully to physical stimulation or verbal command. General anaesthesia is a controlled state of unconsciousness accompanied by a loss of protective reflexes, including loss of the ability to maintain a patent airway or to respond purposefully to physical stimulation or verbal command. Since, there is not much awareness about conscious sedation among dental students this survey based research would be helpful for them to gain much awareness about it. The purpose of this follow-up study was to assess and compare the quantity and quality of dental undergraduate teaching in conscious sedation with comparisons to a previous study conducted.

Similar in the medical field, survey regarding the acquisition of sedation in colonoscopy was done.<sup>[2]</sup> The results was that perception (level of knowledge) of patients about their sedation/anaesthesia was highly variable, and was influenced both by having had a prior colonoscopy and by having had a discussion with an anaesthetist prior to the day of procedure. This study was conducted to bring about awareness of conscious sedation among dental students.

### MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was designed as a prospective, questionnaire-based survey. A structured questionnaire enquiring about their knowledge regarding conscious sedation was administered to dental students studying in Saveetha Dental College. An online link was given and the responses were obtained online. The questionnaires were designed to ensure brevity and ease of completion. Each question had a set of options and the students had to choose one option. The sample size was 100.

#### Questionnaire

1. Do you have any knowledge about conscious sedation?
2. Have you ever undergone a treatment with conscious sedation while visiting a dentist?
3. Have you attended any seminars regarding conscious sedation?
4. If so, was it so knowledgeable so that it was helpful for you?
5. Had you had any demonstrations or hands-on conscious sedation?

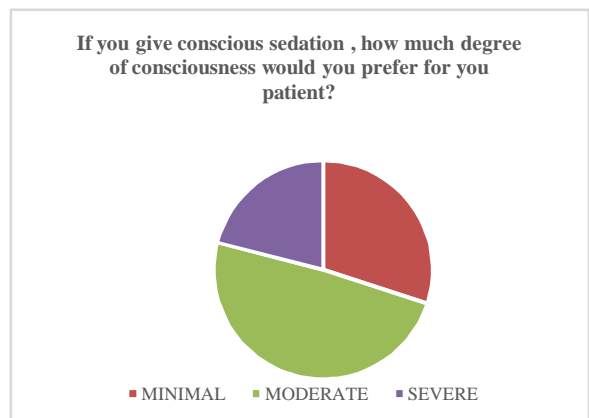
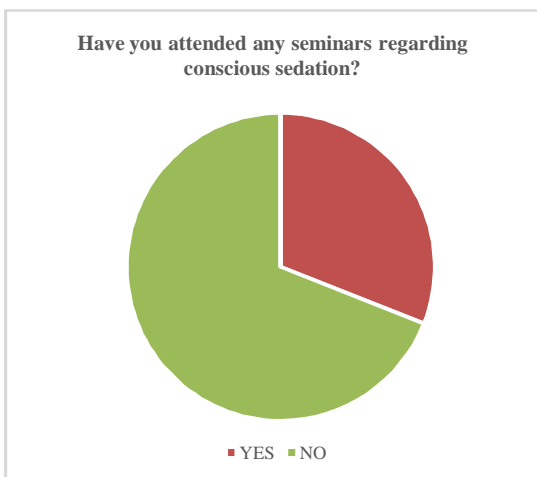
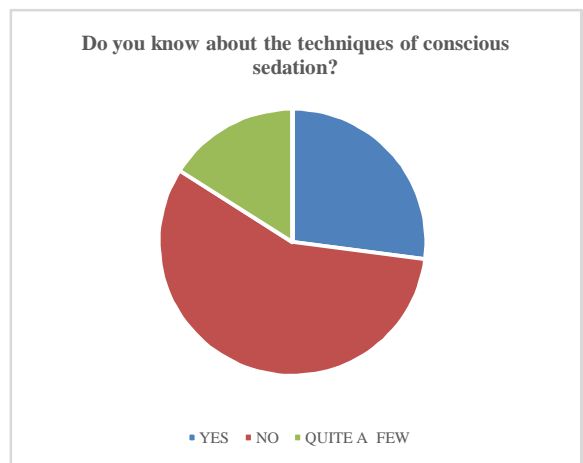
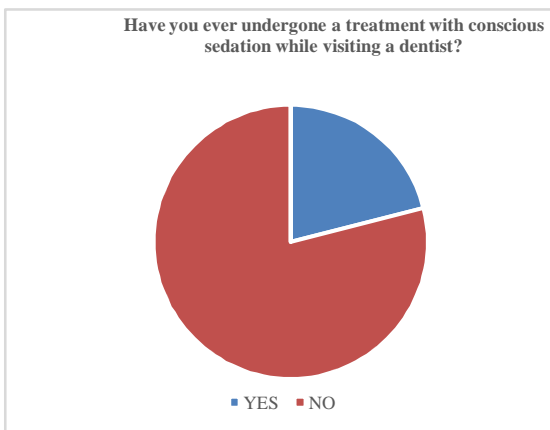
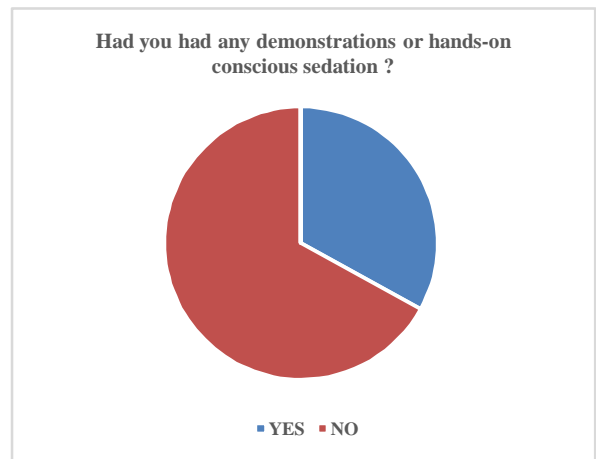
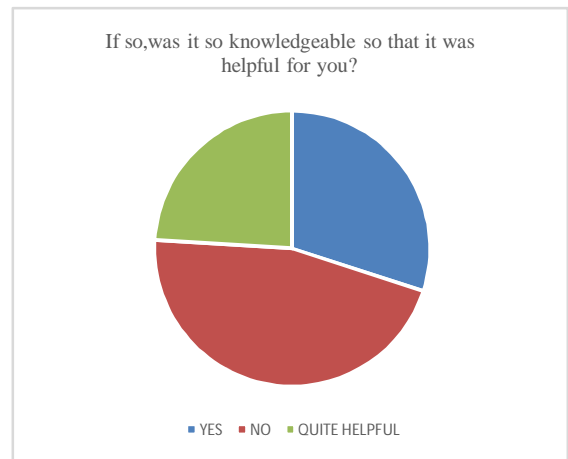
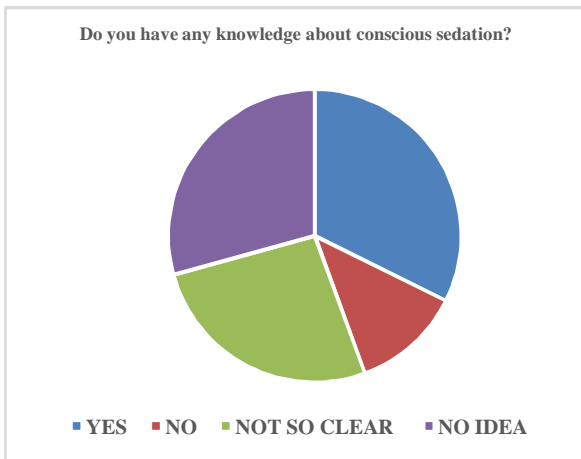
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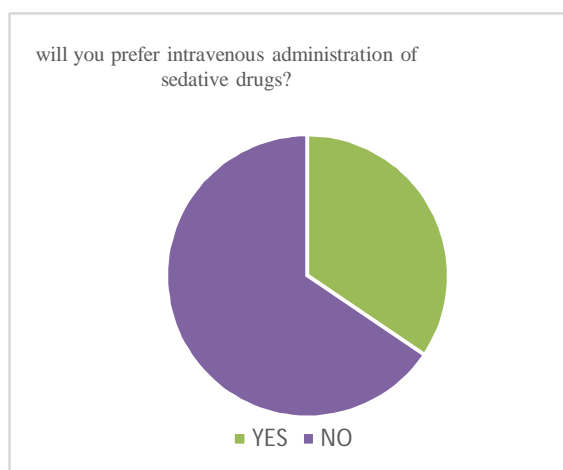
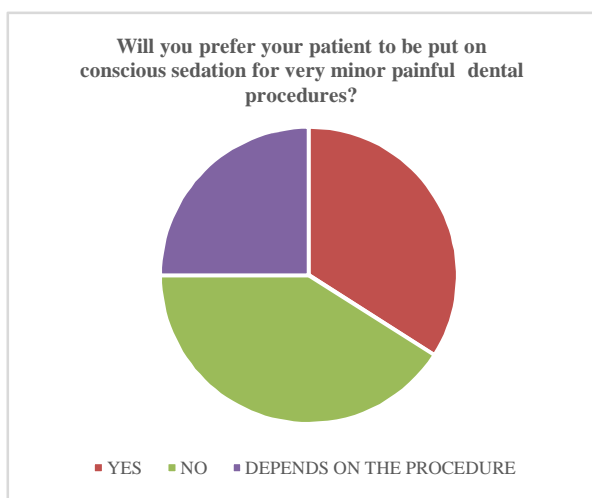
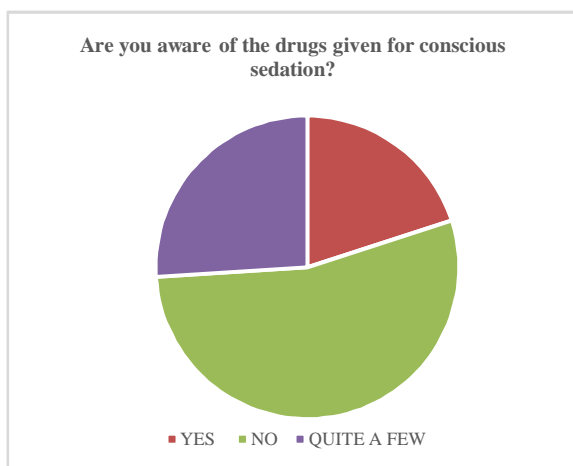
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6. Do you know about the techniques of conscious sedation?
7. If you give conscious sedation, how much degree of consciousness would you prefer for you patient?
8. Are you aware of the drugs given for conscious sedation?
9. Will you prefer your patient to be put on conscious sedation for very minor painful dental procedures?
10. Will you prefer intravenous administration of sedative drugs?

## RESULTS

The online results are represented graphically as shown below





## DISCUSSIONS

Back in 1999, Dr Meg Skelly highlighted that “unless something positive is done to put consistent and effective undergraduate teaching in place now, there will be no future undergraduate teachers or postgraduate trainers. Those of us who teach conscious sedation today will have no successors. Sedation will be lost.”<sup>[3]</sup> Thus, the importance of sedation dates back to 20<sup>th</sup> century. According to this study, it was seen that 32% of the students do not have much knowledge about conscious sedation. Moreover, they are lack in proper

knowledge on sedation. Majority of the students, (79%) have not undergone any treatment with conscious sedation. Not all students have attended seminars on conscious sedation and hence they don't have much attitude. A greater percentage of the students do not have any practical knowledge or hands on experience. The majority of the student population those who attended seminars regarding this (30%) feel that they were not so helpful and hence they need to educate on this concern more. Many of them prefer to give moderate dose of sedation to the patients. They also say that they would prefer conscious sedation based on the dental procedure.

## CONCLUSION

Leitch and Girdler<sup>[4]</sup> (2000) conducted a study in 1998 that looked for the first time at the quantity and quality of dental undergraduate teaching in conscious sedation in the dental schools of the United Kingdom and Ireland. The conclusions were that undergraduate sedation teaching varied considerably across United Kingdom and Irish dental schools. Students at most of the dental schools were failing to receive adequate hands-on sedation experience, especially in intravenous techniques, and the authors suggested that undergraduate sedation training must improve if conscious sedation is to become the principal alternative to general anaesthesia in dental practice.

This study inferred that the knowledge, awareness and practice about treating patients with conscious sedation among the dental students was inadequate. Hence, vigorous dental education programmes needs to be initiated to address this concern among dental students. Conscious sedation plays an important role in paediatric dentistry because it gives easy control of the child.<sup>[5]</sup> They facilitate the provision of quality care and minimise the extremes of disruptive behaviour. According to a report<sup>[6]</sup> provides recommendations for all practitioners providing conscious sedation whether in primary care or in hospitals. It underlines the importance of the referring dentist and the sedationist considering alternative methods of pain and anxiety control and discussing these with the patient before deciding that conscious sedation is appropriate.<sup>[7]</sup> The need for both theoretical and practical training, continuing updating and clinical audit for the whole dental team is stressed as part of the clinical governance framework for ensuring the delivery of a high quality service and the necessity of having the appropriate equipment and drugs and ensuring that the equipment is properly maintained.

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