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A REVIEW ON ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN ORTHODONTICS

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ABSTRACT

In today's era, Social media is gaining popularity day by day. This is possible with easy access to smart phones and internet. Social media is a powerful tool of communication between individuals or groups. Social media platforms include Facebook, Twitter, You Tube etc. These platforms are readily used by dental students and dentists. Nowadays, these platforms have been very popular in Orthodontic speciality. Thus, this review article highlights the various advantages of social media in Orthodontics.

Keywords: Social media, Orthodontics, Facebook, Instagram

INTRODUCTION

Social media is a powerful means of connecting with people for informal and formal sharing of their ideas, thoughts. It is an internet based technology that provides the electronic content instantly. In 2021, Around 4.48 billion people across the globe are using social media which accounts to almost 57 % of total global population. In India 448 million people are using social media in 2021.

Dental students are frequently using the internet for dental education as most of them carry smartphones [1].

The major application of Social media in Orthodontics includes marketing of orthodontic practice, and spreading awareness regarding orthodontic treatment [2].

Social media sites involved in Orthodontic practices [3]

1. **Twitter** – This social media platform allows to share a 140 character limit information which can be easily carried out on mobile phones but the disadvantage is that only limited information can be shared using this platform
2. **YouTube**-is a media where orthodontists can upload videos describing the different treatment modalities of orthodontics and also can share videos of their patients but only after patients consent.
3. **Practice Blog** – If a blog is done correctly, it will really be able to target the audience better. Frequent updation and adding relevant posts are key to success.
4. **Facebook**- the advantage of this social media is that it is user friendly and used by majority of population. Here one can share unlimited posts, pictures and videos regarding orthodontic education and self marketing. Business pages can also be created easily using Facebook.
5. **Google Places**–This is an easier way to market your practice, add your clinic pictures , add map to reach there and other useful information. The disadvantage is that both positive and negative views can be added to your profile. Some fake views may be added by fellow competitors.

Review of literature showcasing the usefulness of Social media in Orthodontics

T.H. Al-Gunaid *et al* conducted a cross sectional, questionnaire based study on 477 participants which included orthodontic and non orthodontic groups [4]. They aimed to assess the impact of orthodontic patients' characteristics on their usage and personal preferences of social media .Their study revealed that for the middle-aged group, Twitter, Snapchat, and YouTube were the preferred social media applications while Instagram was preferred choice among the teenage group. The older people favoured WhatsApp. Their study concluded that social media usage was most popular among university graduates, irrespective of whether they were orthodontic or non-orthodontic patients.

Nelson KL *et al* conducted a survey on orthodontists and orthodontic patients to assess their preference for social media and to assess the benefits of social media in marketing of orthodontic practice [5]. They found out that social media was used by 76% of orthodontists and 89% of

patients/parents. Most preferred social media platform was Facebook. They concluded that social media is an effective tool for marketing of orthodontic practice

Alshayea E *et al* conducted a cross sectional , questionnaire based study on 251 participants which included orthodontists [6]. This study aimed to assess social media preferences of orthodontists , benefits of social media in enhancing and whether these sites have any role in marketing of orthodontic practices in Saudi Arabia. The study concluded that social media is used by only 31% of the orthodontists in Saudi Arabia. Instagram and Twitter were most commonly used media

Graf I *et al* conducted a study to assess the posts related to Orthodontics on Twitter and Instagram using both qualitative and quantitative research approach (mixed method analysis) [7]. They used braces, orthodontics and orthodontist as key words and searched for 30 days. 153 posts were found in Twitter and 208 in Instagram. The posts were mainly regarding wearing braces, getting braces removed and limitations of braces. More orthodontics related posts were found in Instagram as compared to Twitter.

Hillstead MB and Park JH have highlighted the importance of orthodontic marketing through Facebook [8].

The authors have explained in detail regarding how to create a facebook business page , how to promote it and manage it . According to the authors, facebook is a great medium for advertisement of orthodontic practice and is successful social media platform that helps in getting new patients.

Henzell M *et al.*, conducted a questionnaire study on 130 orthodontic patients to assess how they share their orthodontic treatment experience on social media platforms [9]. Most of the patients preferred using Facebook. Only 13.3 % of the patients had posted regarding their treatment on social networking sites. This study also emphasized that the patients often forget the instructions given by orthodontist, for which a reminder app on mobile phone can help.

Sidiqqi M *et al* conducted a cross sectional questionnaire survey on 125 orthodontic patients [10]. The study was designed to assess the awareness of orthodontic information on social media as well as their interest in social media in regards to orthodontic treatment. They found that Instagram was most popular social media site for accessing information related to orthodontics followed by snapchat. Around 73% of the patients agreed on using social media sites in future for supportive orthodontic treatment.

Sen S *et al* conducted a questionnaire survey on 500 dental students to assess the role of social media in dental education [11]. They found that smartphone is carried by 93.2% students, 91% students use internet for email purpose and more than 90% students are of the opinion that learning material available on social media enhances their education.

Papadimitriou A *et al* conducted a systematic review to assess the patients perspective regarding relation between social media and orthodontics [12]. This systematic review found out that information related to orthodontic treatment is readily available on the social media. Also information regarding how the patient feels regarding the orthodontic treatment is mentioned in the social media and shows that there is more positive expression towards the treatment rather than negative.

Meira *et al* conducted a cross-sectional questionnaire study to assess the effect of images posted by orthodontists on Instagram on the willingness of patients to get orthodontic treatment [13]. A total of 446 individuals 225 laypersons, 155 dentists and 66 dental students participated in the study. They concluded that for seeking health services, dental professionals opt for Instagram. Also the before treatment and after treatment images posted by orthodontists had a positive impact on future prospective patients.

Al-Silwadi *et al* conducted a randomized controlled trial to assess whether social media is helpful in improving knowledge of patients regarding fixed orthodontic treatment [14]. The sample was divided into two groups, control group received orthodontic information in verbal and written form whereas experimental group received orthodontic information in verbal form, written form as well as a 6 minute you tube video. They concluded that those patients who were given audio visual information by social media platform such as Youtube had a greater knowledge regarding orthodontic treatment.

CONCLUSION

The easy access to internet and availability of smartphones has resulted in increased usage of social media. Social media has proved its benefits in various aspects of dentistry including Orthodontics. Thus social media is the future of Orthodontics and is here to stay for long time.

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