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The impact of social media on patient expectation and satisfaction of dental treatment at King Hussein Medical Center

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Abstract
Background: The social media (SM) is nowadays a major source of information for almost all the patients, it affects their dental care by influencing their expectation, decisions of treatment and satisfaction with the final outcome.
Many of the practicing dentists and dental clinics uses different social media platforms to post dental procedures with before and after results which create unrealistic expectation regarding aesthetic outcomes, cost of treatment and duration of treatment with recovery.
Aim: To evaluate the effect of the social media in patient awareness to the expectation of the dental care.

Keywords: Social media, dental care, patient awareness, patient expectations, treatment decisions

Introduction

Social media is the web based resources that gives information and make communication between members of different ages in variable communities. Users of social media are able to post updates, stories, texts, audio and pictures. In addition to comment, like, share and discus many different topics. Platforms such as Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram, X (previously known as twitter) and TikTok can influence people thinking and knowledge.

Methods

This retrospective study will include 247 patients, aged 18-43 years, all patients were attending dental clinics at King Hussein Medical Center- Amman/Jordan from the period July 2025 to Mar 2026.
247 patients (129 Males and 118 females) participated in this study, they were informed about the aim of the study and consent form was approved, a questionnaire of 45 questions used to collect information and data from the patients, regarding their pattern of social media usage, platform used and duration of use.
The inclusion criteria consisted of:

1. Patient must be adult or over 18 years old.
2. History of dental procedure within the last four to six months.
3. Must be active on and using social media

The patients will be interviewed as a follow up to assess their expectation and satisfaction about the dental care and evaluate any misinformation for dental treatment.
The exclusion criteria included

1. Patients under 18 years.
2. Pateints with no access to social media.
3. Patients who underwent simple dental procedure.

Results

The mean age of the participants was 30.5 years, most of the patients were high school graduates (51.3%) and reported using social media in (95.8%). This study showed that females used social media more than males. The most social media platform used by the participants is Facebook (31.2%) followed by WhatsApp (18.7%). The duration of participant social media was less than 30 mins in (32.3%), between 30-60 mins in (34.6%) and more than 60 mins in (33.1%). About two third of the participants reported that dental treatment posts on the social media reflect reality (76.5%). Regarding the group who did not use social media, they believed that obtaining dental care information through the social media is unnecessary or a waste of time.

Table 1: Number of participants using social media by gender.

Number of patients	247	Number of participants using social media
Male	129	120
Female	118	115

Table 2: Social media platform mostly used by the participants.

Social media platform mostly used by the participant	
Facebook	77 (31.2%)
Whatsapp	46 (18.7%)
Instagram	43 (17.7%)
Snapchat	34 (14.1%)
X (previously known as twitter)	24 (9.5%)
TikTok	16 (6.4%)
Others	7 (3.8%)

Table 3: Duration of using the social media.

Duration of social media usage per day	
Less than 30 mins	80 (32.3%)
Between 30-60 mins	85 (34.6%)
More than 60 mins	82 (33.1%)

Table 4: Reality of dental outcome within the social media.

Reality of dental outcome in social media	Number of participants
Believe	188 (76.5%)
Don't believe	59 (23.5%)

Discussion

The study focused on the impact of the social media on the patient expectations and satisfaction of dental producers in King Hussein Medical Center. Patients participate in this study describes the influences of the social media in their perception of dental treatment which create unrealistic expectations about their dental outcomes specially within the restorative and cosmetic dentistry.

In the last few years social media showed increase in the number of platforms, nowadays patients can access dental information through social media without visiting a dental healthcare professional. Information about cosmetic dentistry, orthodontics, dental implants, veneers, tooth whitening and preventive care are provided by the social media, this will lead to misunderstanding to the patients when they arrive at the dental clinic about their diagnosis, duration of treatment, cost and expected results.

Patient expectations can be influenced by other reasons such as recommendation from family or friends, previous dental experience or the information provided by healthcare professionals. Patient expect minimal duration of dental treatment with instant results, painless procedures and celebrity style smile.

Patients satisfaction is multifactorial concept that includes satisfaction within the waiting time at the clinic, staff behavior, comfort of the visit, cost of the treatment and overall treatment experience specially the final outcome.

The findings reveled that participants showed low level of awareness and information about the realistic outcomes of their dental treatment, participants also complain from incomplete and unreal information on the social media that misled them, participants also reported lack of communication prior to the dental management in addition to high-cost treatment.

Most of the dentist have either personal or professional social media account, they usually post images and videos of cases they encounter in their practice, this helps them in terms of marketing, building their reputation and also in public awareness.

Dentists and dental professionals face major challenge by encountering the patients' unrealistic expectations based on the advertisement seen in the social media, for example patient who expect specific cosmetic outcome result based on videos or photo seen online may show dissatisfaction if the clinical outcome differs from when was expected, also it was difficult for dentists to complete the patient management plans within short timeframe expected by the patients.

At King Hussein Medical Center understanding that the patients are increasingly have access to the social media before and after their dental visits, investigating how social media can influence patient satisfaction and expectations can help dental health care professionals to build more effective communication strategies and improve the quality of dental outcome to be consistent with the patients expectations.

Conclusion

This study reveled that social media had powerful role in building patient's dental care expectations and satisfaction, most of the participants developed unrealistic expectation of the treatment outcome due to the idealized cases published on the social media, this led to disappointment due to differences in the results they get after visiting dental clinics. Large number of dentists faces difficulty in handling and managing the overestimated expectations of the patients. It is recommended that dental healthcare professional improve their communication strategies using social media to investigate how social media influence patients expectations and satisfaction.

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