The Effects of Social media on Aesthetic Dentistry: A Survey-Based Study

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Abstract—**Aim:This study aims to evaluate how digital platform shapes public perception, motivation and behavioural inclination toward seeking aesthetic dental procedures.**

Materials and Methods:A structured questionnaire was distributed to 100 participants, collecting data on demographics, digital platform usage, attitudes toward aesthetic dentistry, and the influence of online content on dental treatment decisions. Responses were analysed using descriptive statistics and visualized through pie and bar charts.

Results:Digital platforms are widely used among respondents, with 87% accessing it multiple times daily. While 81% reported some change in perception toward aesthetic dentistry due to social networking, only 16% felt directly influenced to seek treatment. Most participants were motivated by personal appearance, and a majority remained sceptical about the trustworthiness of social networking dental advertisements. Only a small fraction underwent aesthetic dental procedures as a result of Internet community influence.

Conclusion: Digital platform increases awareness and shapes perceptions of aesthetic dentistry but has limited direct impact on treatment decisions. Dental professionals should address misconceptions and manage expectations arising from social web exposure.

I. INTRODUCTION

Background

The rise of social web has transformed the landscape of healthcare communication, particularly in fields driven by aesthetics and personal appearance. Aesthetic dentistry, which focuses on improving the visual appeal of teeth and smiles, has become increasingly visible on platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube. These platforms allow dental professionals, influencers and patients to share before and after photos, testimonials, and promotional content, reaching a broad audience and shaping public perceptions.

As individuals are exposed to idealized images and stories of dental transformations online, their expectations and motivations regarding aesthetic dental treatments may shift. Social web can influence not only how people view their own dental appearance but also their willingness to seek cosmetic procedures. However, the extent and nature of this influence remain subjects of ongoing investigation.

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study utilized a cross-sectional survey design to assess the effects of digital platform on perceptions and decisions regarding aesthetic dentistry among the general public.

Study Population

A total of 100 participants were recruited for the survey. The sample included individuals of varying ages, genders, and educational backgrounds to ensure diversity and representativeness. Participants ranged in age from under 18 to over 46 years, with a balanced distribution of male and female respondents. The educational qualifications of the participants spanned from undergraduate to professional levels, providing a broad perspective across different educational strata.

Survey Instrument

A structured questionnaire was developed specifically for this study. The survey comprised multiple sections

designed to capture comprehensive information on the following topics:

- Demographics: Age, gender, educational background.
- Dental Visit History: Whether participants had visited a dentist for appearance-related (aesthetic) reasons.
- Social web Usage: Frequency of social web use, platforms accessed, and whether participants followed dental professionals or influencers online.
- Perceptions and Attitudes: Changes in perception of aesthetic dentistry due to social web, consciousness about dental appearance, and dissatisfaction after viewing idealized smiles.
- Influence and Motivation: Influence of digital platform on the desire to undergo aesthetic dental treatment, motivations for considering procedures, and expectations regarding treatment outcomes.
- Beliefs and Trust: Belief in digital enhancement of dental images and trust in social web dental advertisements.

- Treatment Decisions: Actual aesthetic dental treatments undergone as a result of social web influence.

Data Collection

The questionnaire was distributed electronically to participants. Responses were collected anonymously to encourage honest and unbiased answers. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study and assured of the confidentiality of their responses.

Data Analysis

Collected data were compiled and analysed using descriptive statistical methods. The results were summarized as percentages and frequencies for each survey item. Visual representations, including pie charts and bar graphs, were generated to illustrate key findings and trends within the data.

Ethical Considerations

Participation in the study was voluntary, and informed consent was obtained from all respondents. No personally identifiable information was collected, and all data were handled in accordance with ethical guidelines for research involving human subjects.

III. RESULTS

Category	Variable / Response	Findings (% of respondents)	Interpretation
Demographics	Age distribution	18–25 yrs: 55%; 26–35 yrs: 20%; 36–45 yrs: 13%; 46+ yrs: 9%; <18 yrs: 3%	Majority of respondents were young adults (18–25 years).
	Gender	Female: 54%; Male: 46%	Nearly equal gender distribution.
	Educational qualification	Undergraduate: 50%; Professional: 41%; Others: 9%	Participants represented diverse educational backgrounds.
Dental Visit Behaviour	Visited dentist for aesthetic reasons	Yes: 31%; No: 69%	Majority had not visited a dentist for aesthetic purposes.
Social Media Usage	Frequency of use	Multiple times daily: 87%	High engagement with social web among participants.
	Follow dental professionals/influencers	Yes: 27%; No: 73%	Most users do not follow dental content specifically.
Perception Change	Change in perception toward	Completely changed: 11%;	Most respondents reported

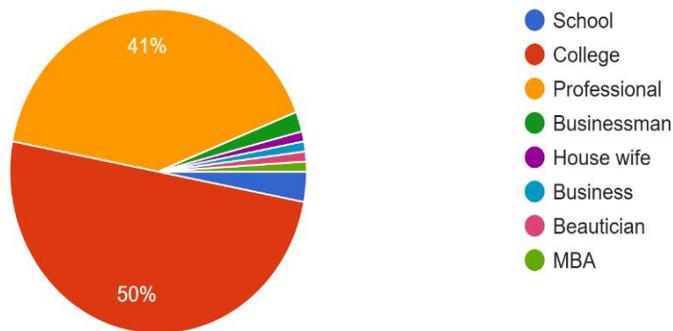|	aesthetic dentistry	Slightly changed: 70%; No change: 19%	some degree of perception change.
	Consciousness about smile	Not at all: 11%; Slightly: 15%; Moderately: 40%; Quite: 29%; Extremely: 5%	Majority became more conscious of their dental appearance.
	Dissatisfaction after viewing idealized smiles	Often: 12%; Sometimes: 49%; Rarely: 37%; Never: 2%	Nearly half occasionally felt dissatisfied after exposure to "perfect" smiles.
Influence and Motivation	Influence of social networking to undergo treatment	Yes: 16%; Maybe in future: 35%; No: 49%	Direct influence on treatment decisions was limited.
	Primary motivation for aesthetic procedures	Better appearance: 92%; Peer/partner influence: 5%; Celebrity/influencer: 3%	Personal appearance was the main motivating factor.
	Expectation of instant results	Yes: 19%; No: 26%; Not sure: 55%	Many participants were uncertain about realistic treatment outcomes.
Beliefs and Trust	Belief in digital enhancement of dental images	Yes: 72%; No/Not sure: 28%	Majority perceived social web dental images as digitally altered.
	Trust in dental advertisements on social web	Not trustworthy: 77%; Somewhat: 18%; Very: 5%	High levels of scepticism toward social web dental content.
Treatment Outcomes	Underwent aesthetic treatment due to social web	None: 83%; Aligners: 9%; Whitening: 5%; Depigmentation: 3%; Veneers: 2%; Braces: 1%	Very few underwent aesthetic procedures influenced by social web

2. Age

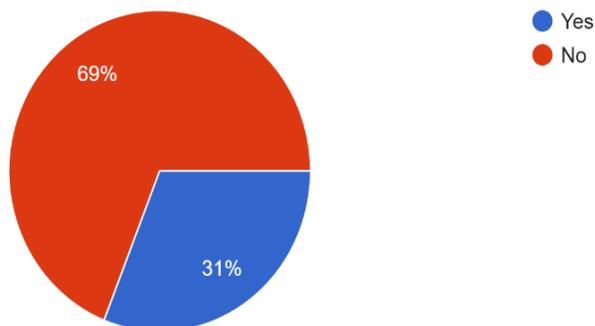100 responses

3. Gender

100 responses

Male
Female
Other
Prefer not to say

54%

46%
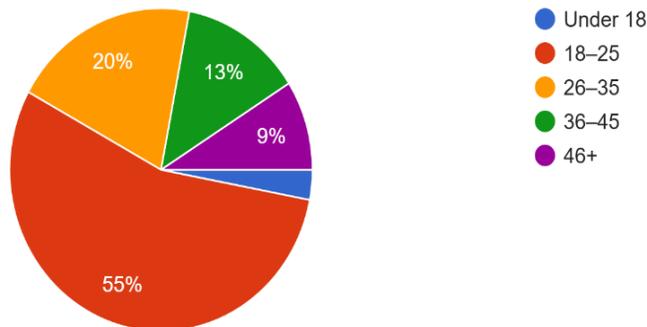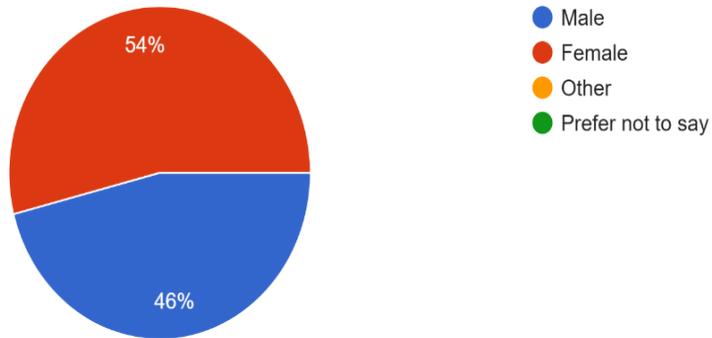
4. Educational background

100 responses

School
College
Professional
Businessman
House wife
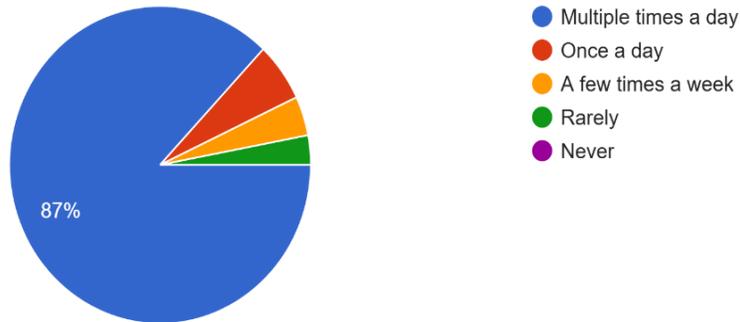Business
Beautician
MBA

41%

50%

5. Have you ever visited a dentist for appearance-related (aesthetic) treatment?

100 responses

Yes
No

69%

31%

6. How frequently do you use social media platforms (Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, etc.)?
100 responses

- Multiple times a day
- Once a day
- A few times a week
- Rarely
- Never

87%

7. Do you follow dental professionals, clinics, or dental influencers on social media?
100 responses

- Yes
- No

73%

27%
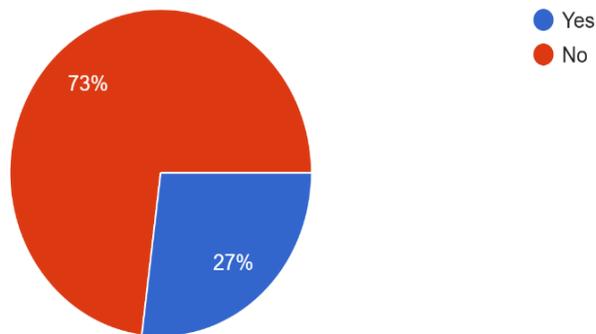
8. Since using social media, has your view of cosmetic dental treatment changed?
100 responses

- Completely changed
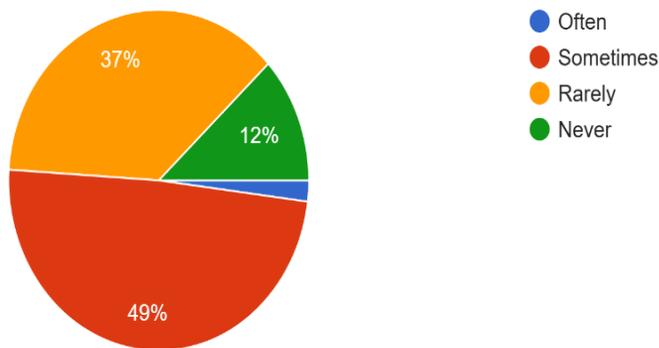- Slightly changed
- No change

19%

70%

11%
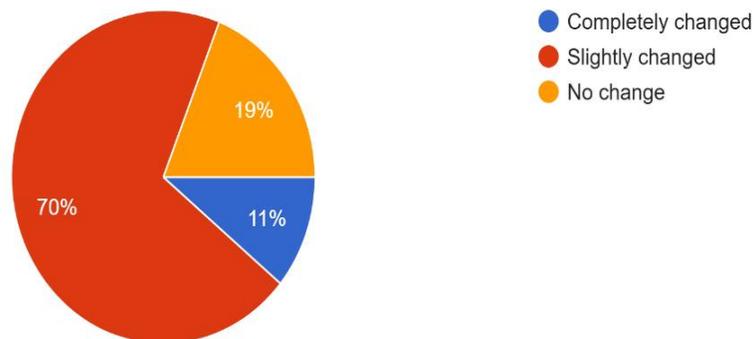
9. Do you feel social media has made you more conscious about your smile or teeth appearance?
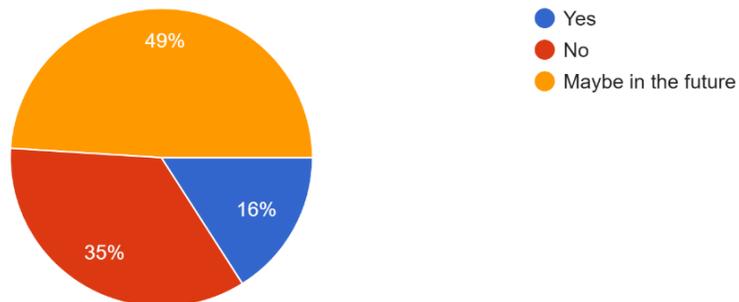100 responses
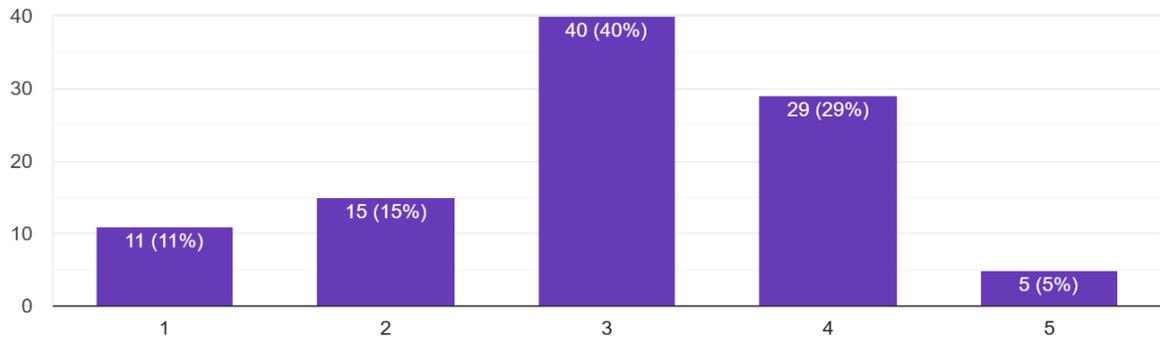
10. Have you ever felt dissatisfied with your smile after seeing "perfect" teeth on social media?
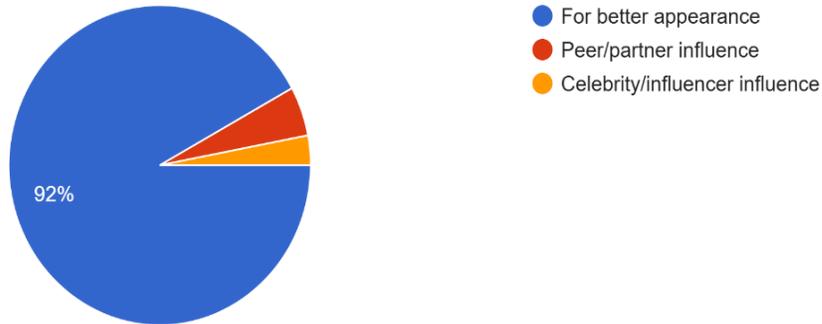100 responses

11. Has social media influenced your desire to undergo aesthetic dental treatment?
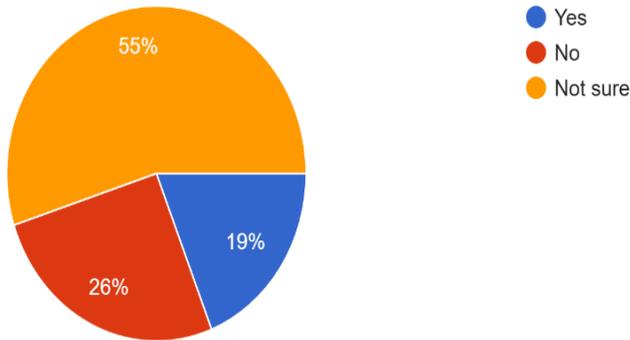100 responses

12. What motivates you most to consider a dental aesthetic procedure?
100 responses

- For better appearance
- Peer/partner influence
- Celebrity/influencer influence

92%

13. Do you expect fast or "instant" results after seeing dental makeovers online?
100 responses

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

55%

26%

19%

14. Do you believe most smiles on social media are filtered or digitally enhanced?
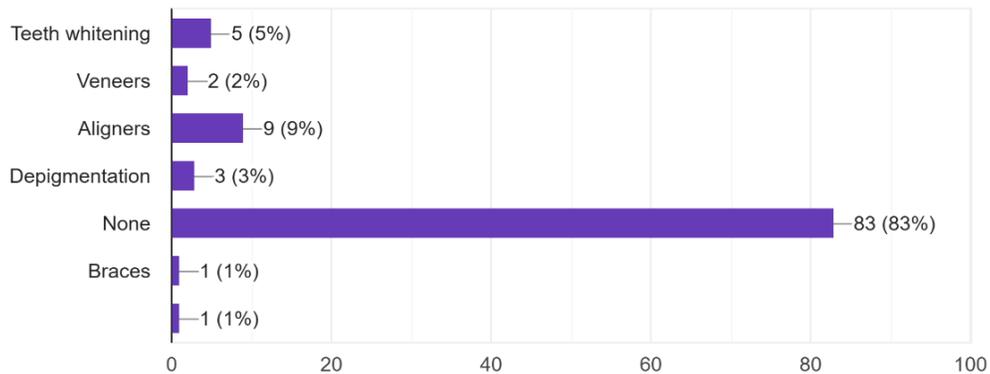100 responses

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

26%

72%
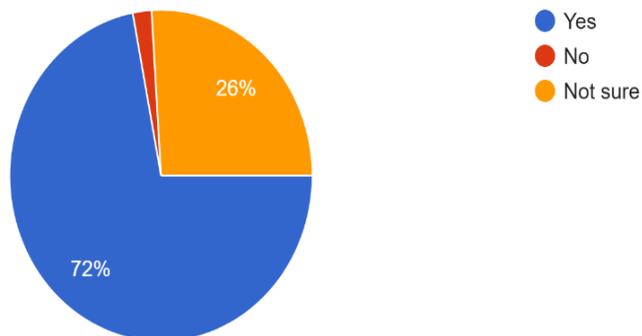
15. How trustworthy do you find social media dental advertisements (e.g., whitening kits, aligners)?
100 responses

- Very trustworthy
- Somewhat trustworthy
- Not trustworthy
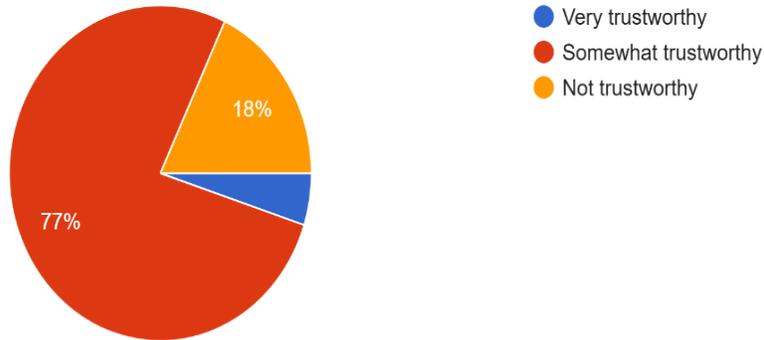
16. Have you undergone any of the following esthetic dental treatments after getting influenced by social media? (Select all that apply)
100 responses

IV. DISCUSSION

The findings of this study highlight the complex relationship between social networking and aesthetic dentistry. Digital platforms are deeply integrated into daily life, with the vast majority of respondents accessing them multiple times a day. This high level of engagement provides ample opportunity for exposure to dental content, including before-and-after transformations, testimonials, and advertisements.

A significant proportion of participants reported that social web had at least a slight impact on their perceptions of aesthetic dentistry, with 81% indicating some change in their views. However, only a small fraction (16%) felt directly influenced to seek treatment, suggesting that while social web can shape attitudes and awareness, it does not necessarily translate into action for most individuals. This finding aligns with previous research indicating that awareness and interest do not always result in behavioural change.

The primary motivation for considering aesthetic dental procedures was personal appearance, with 92% of respondents citing this reason. External influences such as peers, partners, celebrities, or influencers played a much smaller role. This suggests that social web may reinforce existing desires for self-improvement rather than create new ones.

Interestingly, social networking also appears to contribute to increased self-consciousness about

dental aesthetics. Many participants reported feeling more conscious of their smiles and some experienced dissatisfaction after viewing idealized images online. This phenomenon may be linked to the prevalence of digitally enhanced or filtered images, as 72% of respondents believed that most smiles on social web are not authentic. Such exposure can foster unrealistic expectations and potentially negative self-perception.

Trust in social web dental advertisements was notably low, with 77% of respondents expressing scepticism. This lack of trust may act as a barrier to pursuing treatments promoted online, further explaining the limited direct impact of social web on treatment decisions. Only a small percentage of participants underwent procedures such as aligners, whitening, or veneers as a result of social web influence.

Overall, the study underscores the importance for dental professionals to recognize the influence of social web on patient perceptions and expectations. While this can be a valuable tool for education and outreach, it also has the potential to perpetuate misconceptions and unrealistic standards. Dental practitioners should proactively address these issues during consultations, helping patients develop a more balanced and informed understanding of aesthetic dentistry.

V. CONCLUSION

The study reveals that while social web is widely used and has some influence on perceptions of aesthetic dentistry, most respondents remain skeptical about online dental advertisements and digital enhancements. The majority are motivated by personal appearance rather than external influences, and only a small fraction have undergone aesthetic dental treatments due to social web. Social web does increase consciousness about dental aesthetics and can sometimes lead to dissatisfaction after viewing idealized images, but its direct impact on treatment decisions is limited. Dental professionals should be aware of these trends and address misconceptions and unrealistic expectations fostered by social network.

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