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ASSESSING THE CORRELATION BETWEEN MALOCCLUSION AND PSYCHOSOCIAL WELL-BEING

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Introduction: Orthodontic treatment can include physical and/or psychosocial elements in addition to straightening teeth.

Objective: Assess the correlation between malocclusion and psychosocial well-being from the perspective of younger patients, their caregivers, through the inclusion of normative criteria.

Materials and Methods: A cross-sectional study design was employed. Data was collected at a single point in time from a sample of prospective patients. 86 patients and their caregivers met the inclusion criteria and were asked to complete the questionnaires. The mean age of patients included in the study was 13.57 +/- 1.57 years, which included 55 females and 31 males. Data collection was undertaken through clinical exams, and each patient was assessed via the Index of Orthodontic Treatment Need (IOTN), both dental and aesthetic component grades. Correlation tests used included Pearson correlation, Pearson Chi-squared, Phi coefficient and Gamma tests.

Results:

1. There is a very strong correlation between patients' satisfaction with body image and their caregivers' satisfaction with their childrens' body image ($p < 0.01$)
2. There is a significant difference between caregivers' and childrens' motivations to seek orthodontic treatment ($p < 0.01$).
3. No significant difference between males and females with regards to being bullied about dental appearance ($p > 0.01$).
4. There is a weak correlation between caregivers' satisfaction with tooth appearance and IOTN dental and aesthetic component grades. As the satisfaction score increases (reflecting overall dissatisfaction with body image), the more likely that the patient actually needs treatment ($p = 0.01$).
5. There is no significant correlation between children satisfaction with their teeth and IOTN dental and aesthetic component grades ($p > 0.01$).

Conclusion: Malocclusion does impact perceptions of psychosocial well-being.