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Parental Perceptions during Paediatric Dentistry Treatments

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Abstract: Background: Parental perceptions play a vital role in shaping the experiences of children during pediatric dentistry treatments. Understanding these perceptions is essential for improving the quality of care and reducing dental anxiety in both parents and children.

Methods: A survey was conducted with 50 parents visiting Thai Moogambigai dental college for their children's dental treatments. The study explored parental perceptions, attitudes, and concerns regarding pediatric dentistry, as well as their trust in dental professionals.

Results: Approximately half of the parents expressed moderate confidence in pediatric dentists' expertise during their children's dental treatments. The child-friendly environment in the pediatric dentistry department was perceived as extremely helpful in alleviating parental concerns. A significant portion of parents completely trusted the treatment recommendations provided by pediatric dentists.

Conclusion: This study provides valuable insights into parental perceptions during pediatric dentistry treatments, emphasizing the importance of trust, communication, and a welcoming environment. The findings suggest opportunities for enhancing parental trust in dental professionals and reducing anxiety.

Keywords: Pediatric dentistry, parental perceptions, dental anxiety, trust, communication, child-friendly environment, oral health, dental professionals.

I. INTRODUCTION

Pediatric dentistry plays a crucial role in safeguarding the oral health of children, ensuring not only the physical well-being but also the psychological and emotional comfort of young patients. While the dental profession continues to make strides in delivering child-friendly and painless treatments, parental perceptions, attitudes, and concerns during pediatric dental visits are of paramount importance. Parents often serve as the gatekeepers to their children's healthcare decisions, and their beliefs and experiences significantly influence a child's dental care journey.¹ Understanding parental perceptions during pediatric dentistry treatments is not merely an academic exercise but a practical necessity for dental professionals. It provides a window into the world of caregivers as they navigate the realm of pediatric dental care with their children. It sheds light on the factors that influence their choices, the concerns that weigh on their minds, and the impact of their experiences on their children's oral health. The relationship between parents, children, and pediatric dental care is a complex interplay of emotions, knowledge, and trust. Parents' attitudes towards dentistry can influence children's compliance with treatments, the development of dental anxiety, and their long-term oral health habits. Thus, gaining insights into parental perceptions can aid healthcare providers in tailoring their approach to meet the specific needs and concerns of both children and parents, thereby improving the overall quality of pediatric dental care.² This study aims to delve into the depths of parental perceptions during pediatric dentistry treatments. By exploring the beliefs, attitudes, and concerns of parents, this research seeks to offer a comprehensive understanding of this crucial aspect of children's healthcare. Through surveys, interviews, and observations, we aim to uncover the nuances of parental experiences, identify common patterns, and shed light on areas for improvement in pediatric dental care practices. In doing so, we hope to contribute to the body of knowledge that guides the development of more compassionate, effective, and child-friendly dental care for the youngest members of our society.

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

A survey was conducted in Department of Pediatric and Preventive dentistry at Thai Moogambigai Dental college and Hospital in Chennai for children's between age 5-14 years. We employed a structured questionnaire with ten questions that focused on parental perceptions during pediatric dentistry treatments and was given to parents accompanying the children.

A total of 60 participants were included in the study, and all of them provided their informed consent to participate among which 50 responses were selected. The questionnaires were distributed in a paper format, and after collecting the data, it was transferred to an Excel spreadsheet for further analysis. Data analysis was carried out using PSPP 3.0 software.

III. RESULTS

A total of 50 parents were involved in this study, with 54% being mothers and 46% being fathers. [Figure 1] Approximately 40% of the participants resided in the same vicinity as the dental college. Among the mothers, 66% identified themselves as homemakers, while 34% of the fathers worked as auto-drivers. In terms of professions, 10% of the overall participants were engineers, and 14% were engaged in business. [Figure 2] Regarding their perceptions of pediatric dentistry, 52% of the participants expressed moderate confidence in the expertise of pediatric dentists when their children underwent dental treatments. Half of the parents found the environment of the pediatric dentistry department to be extremely helpful in alleviating their concerns during their child's treatments. A significant 64% of the parents expressed complete trust in the treatment recommendations provided by pediatric dentists for their child's oral health. In terms of communication, 50% rated the effectiveness of the discussions with pediatric dentists about their child's dental procedures as good. When asked about the overall quality of care their child received during visits to the pediatric dentistry department, 54% of parents maintained a neutral stance. Approximately 56% of the parents found the staff at the pediatric dentistry department to be extremely approachable and friendly during their child's treatments. However, 32% admitted to frequently experiencing anxiety or worry when their child underwent dental procedures in the pediatric dentistry department. Regarding convenience and scheduling, 54% of the participants found the waiting time for appointments at the pediatric dentistry department to be convenient. A majority, 78%, believed that the treatments provided by pediatric dentists played a moderately crucial role in maintaining their child's oral health. Additionally, 46% of the parents actively participated in the decision-making process regarding their child's dental treatment during their visits to the pediatric dentistry department. [Figure 3]

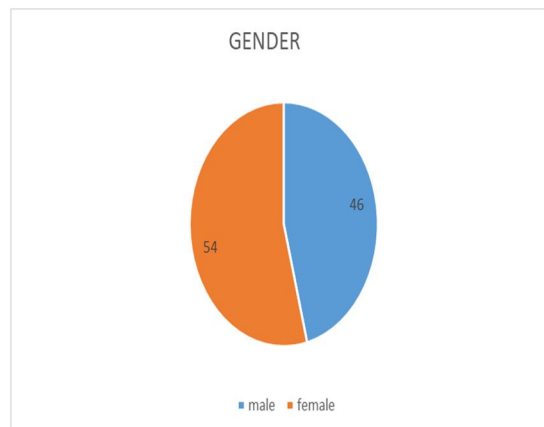


Figure 1

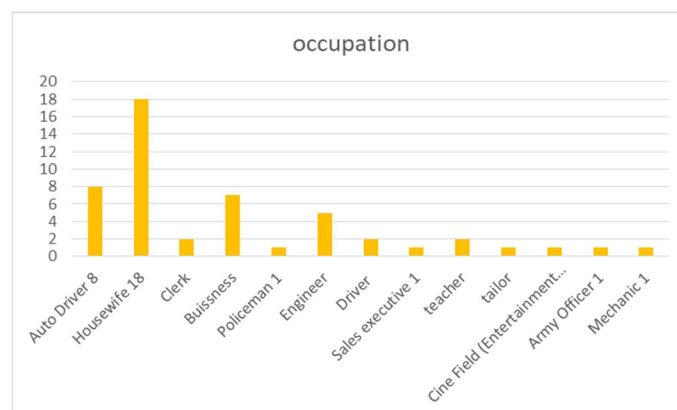


Figure 2

IV. DISCUSSION

This study aimed to assess parental perceptions during pediatric treatment among 60 parents in which 50 participants attended the survey. Fifty parents in all, 46 percent of whom were fathers and 54 percent of whom were mothers, participated in this study. Roughly forty percent of the subjects lived close to the dentistry college. When it came to their opinions on pediatric dentistry, 52% of the participants said they had a moderate level of confidence in the skills of pediatric dentists when their kids received dental care. During their child's treatments, half of the parents reported that the pediatric dental department's atmosphere much helped to allay their worries. Regarding their child's dental health, a noteworthy 64% of the parents said they fully trusted the treatment suggestions made by pediatric dentists. 50% of respondents said that they had a good or excellent communication experience while discussing their child's dental procedures with pediatric dentists. Of the parents questioned about the general quality of care their child received at the pediatric dental department, 54 percent took a neutral position. A little over half of the parents said that the pediatric dental department's personnel was very nice and approachable when their child was receiving treatment. Nonetheless, 32% of respondents acknowledged that they regularly felt anxious or concerned when their child had dental work done in the pediatric dentistry department. In terms of scheduling and convenience, 54% of participants thought that the pediatric dentistry department's appointment waiting times were reasonable. Most, 78%, thought that their child's dental health could be maintained only with the help of treatments from pediatric dentists. Furthermore, during their visits to the pediatric dentistry department, 46 percent of the parents actively participated in the decision-making process regarding the dental treatment for their kid. The study by Vasiliki et al., on The effect of parental presence on the child's perception and co-operation during dental treatment reported the article appears to center on the impact of parental presence during dental treatment on a child's perception and cooperation. It delves into the dynamic between the parent's presence and the child's emotional state during dental procedures. The article likely investigates whether the presence of a parent can alleviate anxiety and enhance cooperation in children during dental treatment. In contrast, our survey paper mainly focuses on parental perceptions and experiences of pediatric dentistry. It discusses factors such as parental confidence in pediatric dentists, trust in treatment recommendations, and the effectiveness of communication with dental practitioners. While it touches on parental anxiety, the primary emphasis is on parental views and interactions in the dental care context. When comparing the two pieces of research, it's evident that both parental presence and parental perceptions play crucial roles in pediatric dentistry. Parental presence can be a critical factor in shaping a child's emotional experience during dental treatment. When parents are present, children may feel more secure and cooperative. This is in line with the idea of "show, tell, do," a common behavioral management technique in pediatric dentistry where the dentist demonstrates the procedure to the parent and child, thus reducing fear and anxiety.

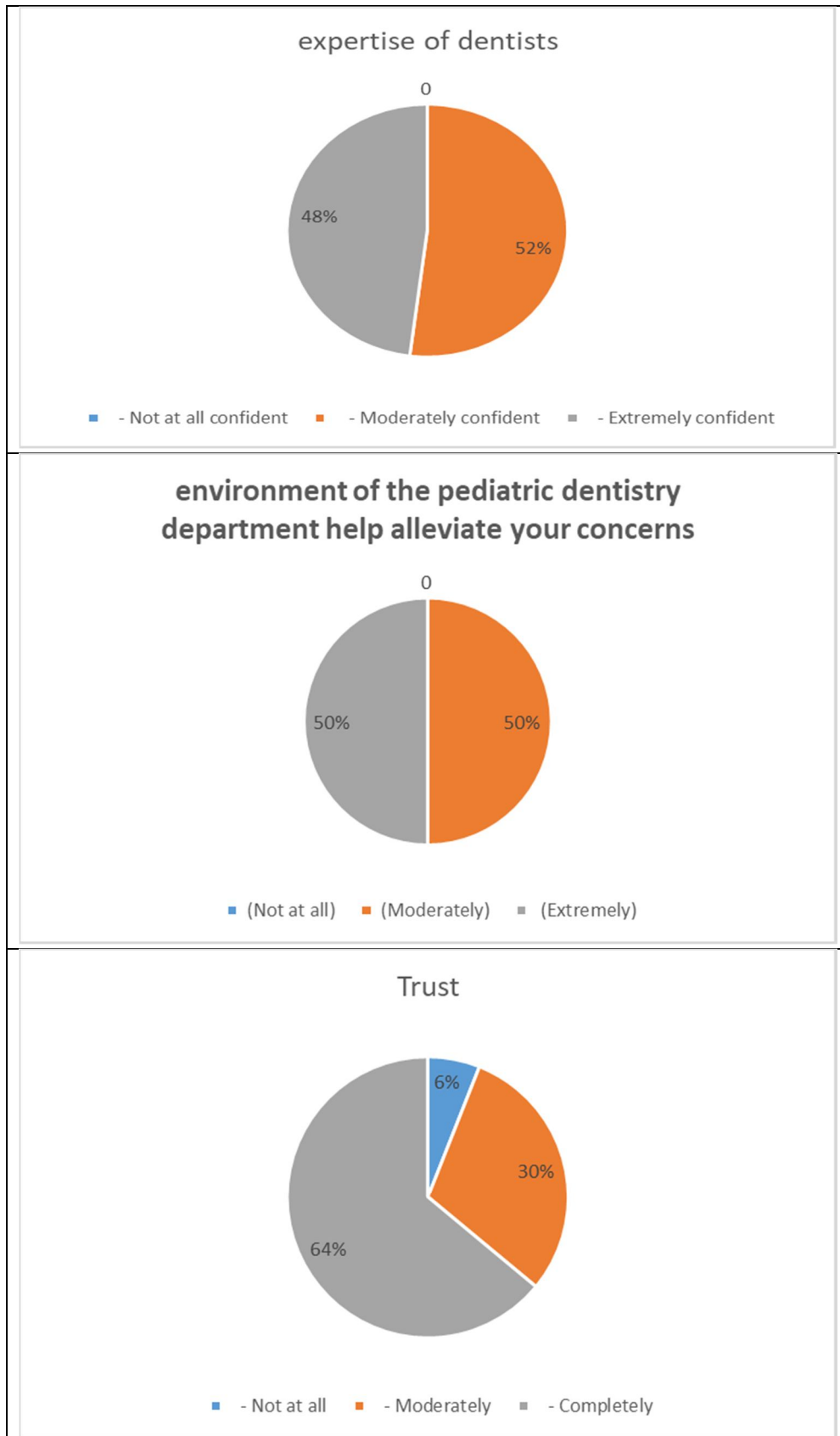
However, it's also important to consider the parents' own perspectives and feelings, as demonstrated in the survey paper. Parents' confidence in the expertise of pediatric dentists, trust in treatment recommendations, and their overall experience at the dental department significantly influence their acceptance of dental treatment options for their children.

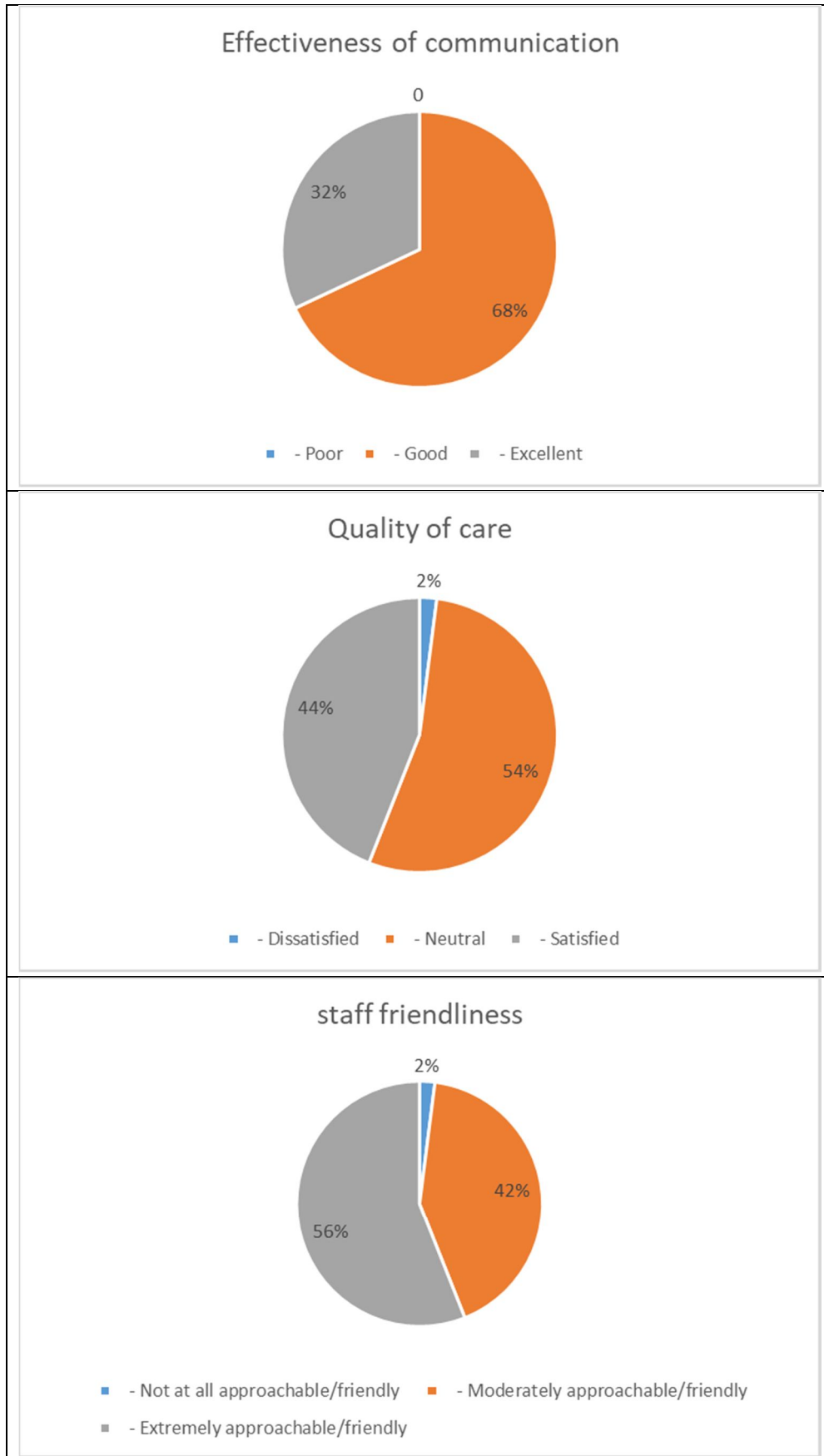
V. CONCLUSION

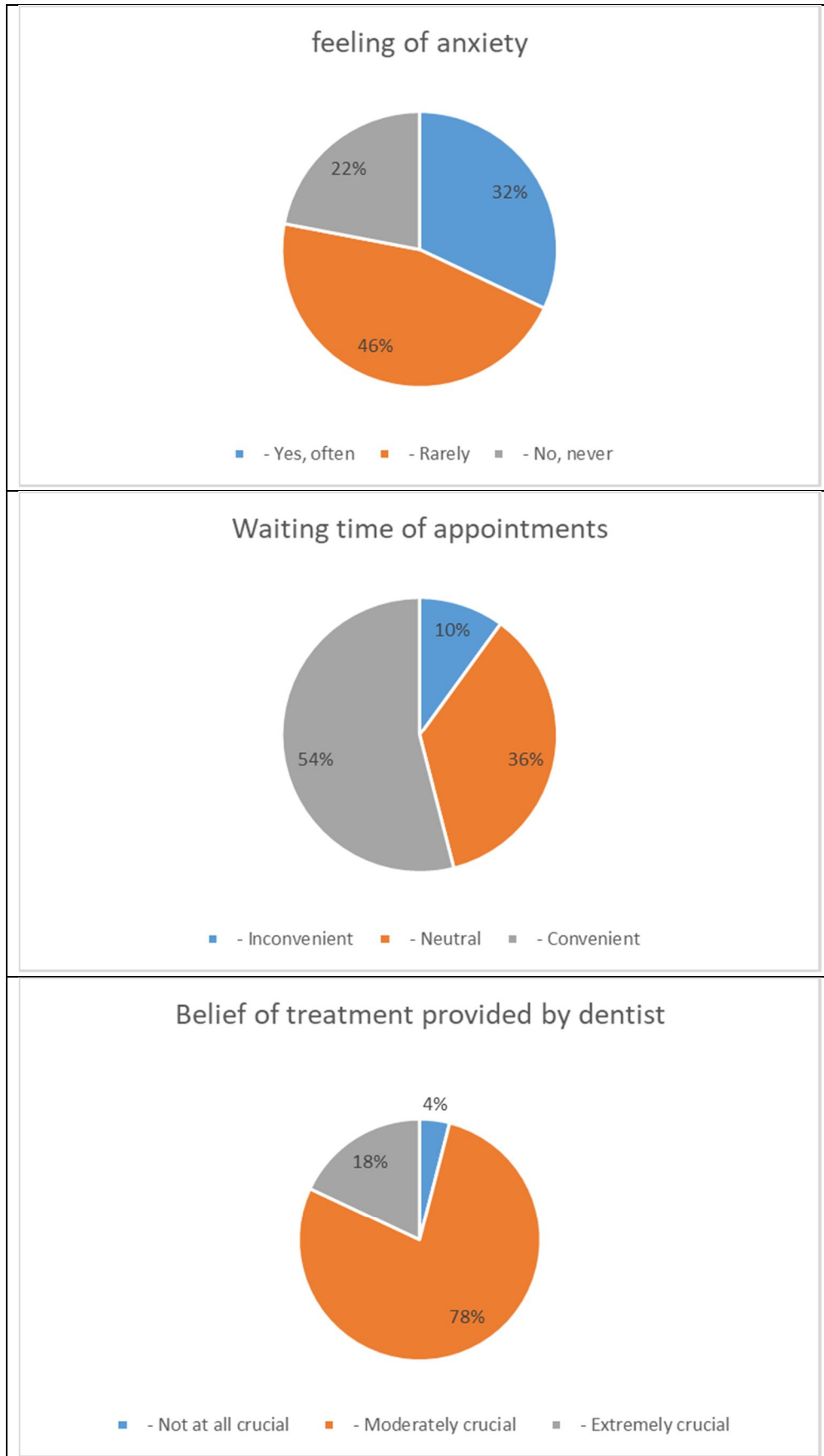
In conclusion, this study provides valuable insights into the perceptions, concerns, and experiences of parents during pediatric dentistry treatments. It highlights the importance of trust, effective communication, and a child-friendly environment in dental practices. Additionally, the findings indicate areas where improvements can be made to enhance the overall experience and address parental concerns, ultimately contributing to better pediatric dental care. Further research and targeted interventions may be needed to address the specific needs and concerns of parents in this context.

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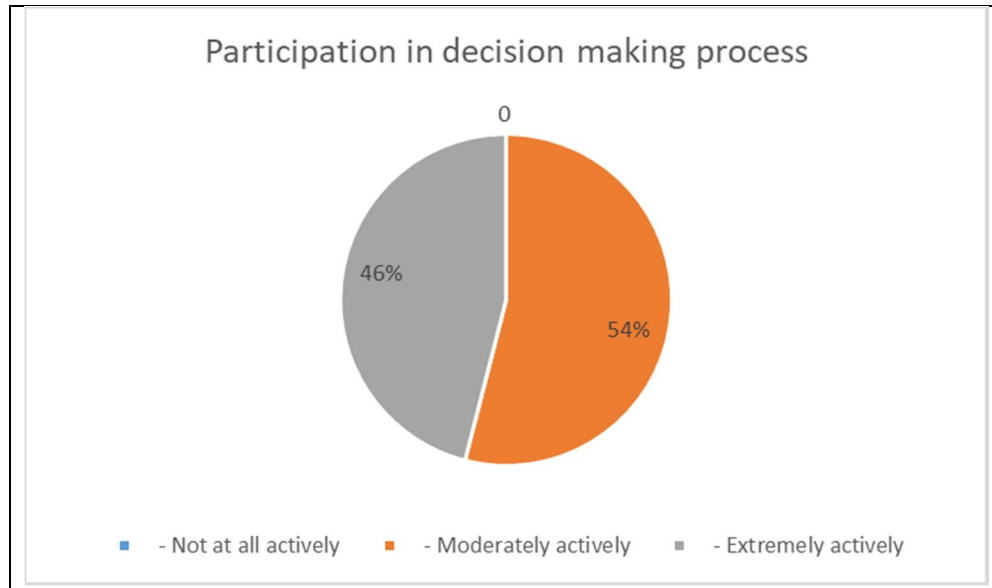


Figure 3



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