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# Association of pain in relation to root canal treated tooth and incomplete obturationretrospective study

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#### **ABSTRACT:**

The retrospective study was conducted among patients visiting an institution in Chennai. The aim of the study was to evaluate the association of pain in relation to root canal treated teeth with incomplete obturation. The patients were assessed using the patient records from the university. Patients who reported with pain following root canal treatment were selected for the study. The etiology of pain post-endodontic treatment was evaluated. The prevalence of incomplete obturation as a radiographic finding was recorded to determine its association with the post-endodontic pain. The study was approved by the Institutional Review Board. The association of pain and no pain in the root canal treated tooth with incomplete obturation was found to have no significant difference [Pearson Chi- Square 0.087]. Considering the influence of age on the association with pain showed no or negligible relationship (Value -0.375). Considering the influence of tooth on the association with pain showed positive relationship (Value -0.005). Considering the influence of gender on the association with pain showed no or negligible relationship (value -0.187). Hence an association of pain in root canal treated teeth with incomplete obturation was not established. However, prevalence of pain was higher in incompletely obturated lower posterior teeth followed by upper posterior teeth. Incidence of pain in relation to root canal treated teeth with incomplete obturation was higher in females among age groups 19 to 35 years.

Keywords: Root canal treatment, incomplete obturation, pain.

#### 1.INTRODUCTION:

Disease of the pulp can be infectious or inflammatory 1. Dental caries are easily detectable and reversible at an early stage. Once the incipient lesion proceeds to cavitation, the condition becomes irreversible. Hence it is necessary to prevent the progression of dental caries at an early stage, rather than to develop treatment strategies for progressive dental caries <sup>2</sup>. The major hurdle in root canal disinfection is the removal of the bacterial biofilm. The only way to achieve optimal removal is by following a proper irrigation protocol and final irrigants activation <sup>3</sup>. Rapid treatment can prevent long-term damage to the orofacial structures and save the teeth 4. Use of an effective intracanal medicament will assist in the disinfection of the root canal system. Such medication should be effective throughout its period of application and penetrate the dentinal tubules, eliminating bacteria that may be present, with little toxicity to the periradicular tissues 5 Non carious loss of tooth structure in the cervical region is a very common clinical condition with the fact that the prevalence and severity of these lesions have been found to increase with age <sup>6</sup>. Dental erosion is defined as the loss of tooth structure due to a chemical process that does not involve bacteria<sup>3</sup>. Post endodontic pain is the most widely studied topic in endodontics. There are several factors associated with pain after root canal treatment <sup>7</sup>. One of the important aspects of root canal therapy is to control pain after treatment. Postoperative pain is an unwanted yet unfortunately common sensation after endodontic treatment 8. Preoperative factors like acute exacerbation of chronic lesion, non-vital lesion, previously open tooth, unusual preoperative factors like acute exacerbation of chronic lesion, non-vital lesion, previously opened tooth, unusual canal anatomy, periapical; cyst, abscess or fracture teeth and also intraoperative factors like lack of use of rubber dam, irritating canal filling materials, incomplete irrigation, mechanical extrusion of filling materials and instruments, procedural complications, overlooked canals, incomplete obturation can give rise to more pain 9 10 11. Amongst these some factors are frequently overlooked or missed by a busy practitioner. This can lead to unexpected postoperative complications, especially pain. The occurrence of postoperative pain of mild intensity is not a rare event even when endodontic treatment has followed acceptable standards 12. The regulation of extracellular matrix in both physiologic and pathologic conditions is carried out by different protease systems which include cysteine proteinase, aspartic proteinase, serine proteinase, and metalloproteinases <sup>13</sup>.

The primary aim of root canal treatment is to biomechanically prepare the canal with minimal or no discomfort and to hermetically seal it to aid recovery of insulted periapical tissues and to prevent post-operative pain (flare-up) <sup>14</sup>. Cleaning and shaping of root canal space is one of the most important and fundamental aspects of endodontic therapy. Better endodontic outcomes are achieved when preserving the original canal shape by using less invasive methods <sup>15</sup>. Instrumentation before measurement of root canal length will give rise to ledge formation <sup>16</sup>. Among the factors which influence incomplete obturation is incorrect measurement of root canal length <sup>17</sup>. Repeat radiographs are sometimes needed for correct length measurement. Use of endodontic microscopes can multiply the chances of success and overcome complications <sup>18</sup>. Calcification which is uncontrolled due to failure of enzyme pyrophosphatase, reduction in capillary permeability and blood supply causes calcifications. Teeth in which calcific deposits block access to the canal (s), treatment efforts are often hindered <sup>19</sup>.

Incomplete chemo mechanical preparation can disrupt the balance within the microbial community by eliminating some inhibitory species and leaving behind other previously inhibited species, which can then overgrow <sup>20</sup>. As a result of the increase in microbial virulence, a previously asymptomatic case may become symptomatic. Mechanical instrumentation alone may not be sufficient to remove bacteria and necrotic tissue from root canals owing to the complex anatomy <sup>21</sup>.

The final stage of endodontic treatment is to fill the entire root canal system and all its complex anatomic pathways completely and densely with non-irritating hermetic scaling agents. Total obliteration of the canal space and perfect sealing of the apical foramen at the dentin-cementum junction and accessory canals at locations other than the root apex with an inert, dimensionally stable, and biologically compatible material are the goals for consistently successful endodontic treatment <sup>22</sup>.Previously our team has a rich experience in working on various research projects across multiple disciplines The <sup>22–2425–36</sup>. The aim of the study was to evaluate the association of pain in relation to root canal treated teeth with incomplete obturation.

## 2.MATERIALS AND METHOD:

**Study Setting** 

The study was conducted with the approval of the Institutional Ethics Committee [SDC/SIHEC/2020/DIASDATA/0619-0320]. The study consisted of one reviewer, one assessor and one guide .

#### **Study Design**

The study was designed to include all patients who reported with pain following root canal treatment. The patients who did not fall into this inclusion criteria were excluded.

#### **Sampling Technique**

The study was based on a non probability consecutive sampling method. To minimise sampling bias, all case sheets of patients who reported with pain following root canal treatment were reviewed and included. The etiology of pain post-endodontic treatment was evaluated. The prevalence of incomplete obturation as a radiographic finding was recorded to determine its association with the post-endodontic pain.

#### **Data Collection and Tabulation**

Data Collection was done using the patient database with the timeframe work 01 June 2019 and 31 march 2020. About 145 case sheets were reviewed and those fitting under the inclusion criteria were included. Cross verification was done with the help of Photographs and radiographic evidence. To minimise sampling bias all data were included. The exclusion criteria was patients with systemic illness. Data was downloaded from DIAS and imported to Excel, Tabulation was done. The values were tabulated and analysed.

## **Statistical Analysis**

Descriptive statistics were performed using SPSS by IBM on the tabulated values. Chi-Square test was performed and the p value was determined to evaluate the significance of the variables it was used to evaluate the association between the age and gender with the type of treatment in the affected tooth. The results were obtained in the form of graphs and tables.

#### **3.RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:**

From the patient record a total of 145 cases having incomplete obturation in the root canal treated tooth were retrieved.

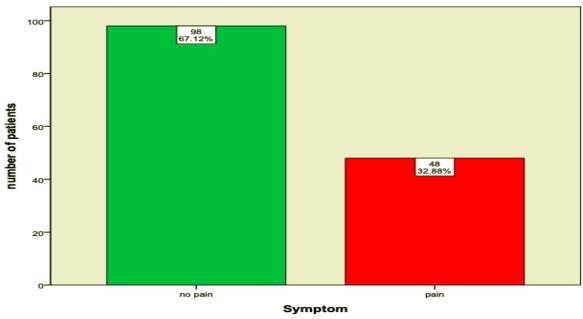


Figure 1: Bar chart showing distribution of patients with and without pain in relation to incompletely obturated teeth. X axis denotes the distribution of patients based on symptom of the incompletely obturated tooth and Y axis denotes the number of patients with incompletely obturated teeth. Among the patients with incompletely obturated teeth 67.58% of the study population presented with no pain (green) and only 33.10% of the study population presented with pain (red). [Pearson Chi square value - 143.73, p value- 0.087, insignificant]. Hence, there was no statistically significant association between symptom and incomplete obturation of teeth.

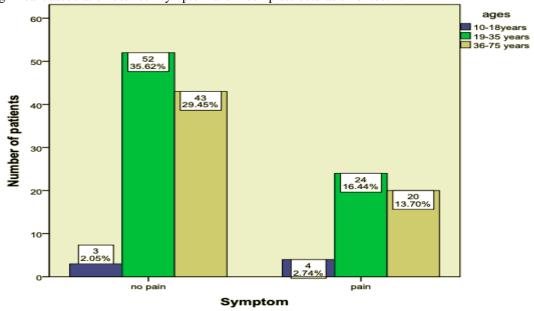


Figure 2: Bar chart showing association between age and symptom of incompletely obturated teeth. X axis denotes the distribution of symptom and Y axis represents number of patients with incomplete obturation. Maximum number of patients exhibiting pain belong to the age group 19 to 35 years (green) and the minimum number of patients exhibiting pain belong to the age group 10 to 18 years (blue). [Pearson Chi square value - 1.962, p value- 0.375, insignificant]. However, there was no significant association between age and symptom exhibited by the patient.

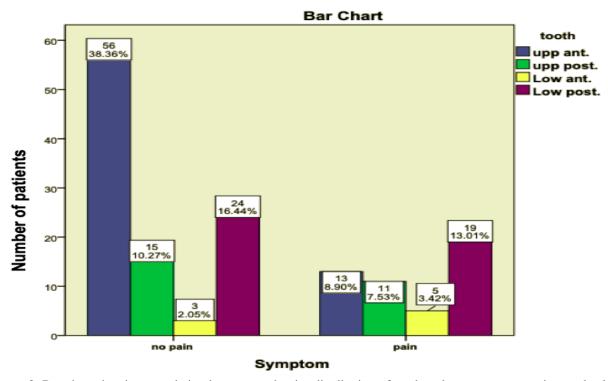


Figure 3: Bar chart showing association between arch wise distribution of tooth and symptom among incompletely obturated teeth. X axis denotes distribution of symptom among teeth with incomplete obturation and Y axis denotes the number of patients with incomplete obturation. Among patients exhibiting pain with incompletely obturated teeth, the most affected teeth belonged to lower posteriors (violet)(13.01%). [Pearson Chi square value - 12.881, p value-0.005, statistically significant]. Hence, there was no significant association between arch wise distribution of tooth and symptom exhibited by the patient.

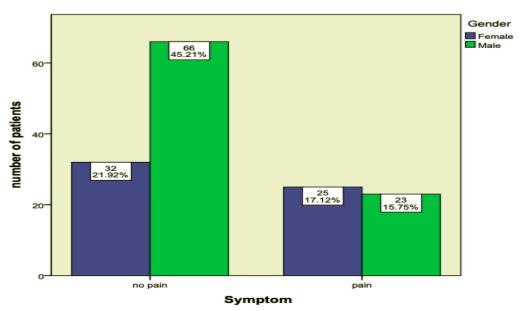


Figure 4. Bar chart showing association between symptom and gender among patients with incompletely obturated teeth. X axis denotes the distribution of pain and Y axis denotes the number of patients with incompletely obturated teeth. Maximum number of patients exhibiting pain belongs to the female (blue) gender (17.12%) [Pearson Chi square

value - 5.111, p value- 0.184, insignificant]. However, there was no significant association between symptom and gender of the patients with incompletely obturated teeth.

The association of pain and no pain in the root canal treated tooth with incomplete obturation was found to have no significant difference [Pearson Chi- Square 0.087]. Considering the influence of age on the association with pain showed no or negligible relationship (Value -0.116). Considering the influence of tooth on the association with pain showed positive relationship (Value -0.005). Considering the influence of gender, no. of male patients associated with and without pain were 23 (25.8%)and 66 (74.2 %) respectively. No. of female patients with and without pain were 25(43.9 %) and 32(56.1%) respectively. Influence of gender on the association with and without pain showed no or negligible relationship (value -0.187).

Every research is limited in one way or the other and the present one is by no means an exception. As a cross sectional study, the study lacks the ability to establish temporal relationships. Within the limits of the study, 32.4 % of the study population reported with pain and upon inspection incomplete obturation of the canal was discovered. However, upon statistical analysis, the association of pain and no pain in the root canal treated tooth with incomplete obturation was found to have no significant difference [Pearson Chi- Square 0.087]. Complete debridement, disinfection of the pulpal space are considered to be essential for predictable long term success in endodontic treatment <sup>23</sup>. According to El Deeb at al, nearly 60% of endodontic failure is apparently caused by incomplete obliteration of the canal space <sup>24</sup>. Schilder emphasized the distinction between overfilling and underfilling and between overextension and underextension, In underfilling, the canal space is incompletely filled, leaving voids as potential areas of decontamination and infection. <sup>25</sup>. Although there is no direct correlation with classic success/ failure literature, it is interesting to note that there were several areas of findings agreement. Certainly the factors associated with failures and retreatments are multivariate. Overfilling the canal space seems significantly less of a problem than incomplete or poor obturation quality. Incomplete obturation in the Washington study (59%), in the Petersson study (50%), and poor obturation quality noted in this investigation (65%) were all high percentage negative influencing factors 26. Flare-ups are frequent complications which are disturbing to both patients and clinicians and are the cause of the majority of endodontic emergencies resulting in unscheduled visits for treatment. A flare-up is characterized by pain and/or swelling that may arise following initial debridement of the root canals or even after obturation. Among the various factors that play a role in the incidence of flare-ups and in endodontic practice, one of the causes is inadequate obturation <sup>27</sup>. The incidence of postoperative pain following endodontic treatment was reported to be from 3% to 58% 28. Assessment of gender influence on pain experienced by patients, it was found that more females experienced pain due to incomplete obturation compared to males. However, statistical analysis considering the influence of gender on the association with pain showed no or negligible relationship (value -0.187). But the result of the study is in agreement with a longitudinal study which was done to assess the prevalence of post-obturation pain in patients undergoing root canal treatment and to evaluate the influence of factors affecting pain, where 40.2% of patients reported with pain after treatment. The patient's gender was found to be a prognostic determinant. Females were found to have an increased rate of flare-ups than males <sup>29 37</sup>. Another factor, the age of the patient was assessed to identify if any relationship existed. The influence of age on the association with pain showed no or negligible relationship (Value -0.116). This is in agreement with a previous study, where age did not have any significant influence on the incidence of post-incomplete obturation pain 30. There are numerous factors which can account for pain either during or after endodontic treatment. Some of these factors such as unusual canal anatomy, presence of extra canal, lateral canals, variations in location of a canal opening, acute exacerbation of chronic conditions are not entirely under the control of the dental surgeon. However there are other factors for success related to choice of irrigant, intracanal medicament, instruments, instrumentation techniques, obturation techniques, obturation materials, storage medium, post endodontic restoration which are very much under the control of the dental surgeon <sup>17,38,39</sup>. To be forewarned is to be fore-armed. Precautions, approaches and effort to discuss can decide the level of success or failure in endodontics. Our institution is passionate about high quality evidence based research and has excelled in various fields ( 40-50.

#### **4.CONCLUSION:**

Within the limitations of this study, association of pain in root canal treated teeth with incomplete obturation was not established. However, prevalence of pain was higher in incompletely obturated lower posterior teeth followed by upper posterior teeth. Incidence of pain in relation to root canal treated teeth with incomplete obturation is higher in females among age group 19 to 35 years .

### **5.ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:**

Nil.

#### **6.CONFLICT OF INTEREST:**

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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