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## The Psychological Effects of a Perfect Smile on Adults: A Survey

 Fatimah Marie<sup>1\*</sup>, Shatha Alhuzaymi<sup>1</sup>, May Alkhudhairi<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1\*</sup>Dental Intern, College of Dentistry, Riyadh Elm University, Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

<sup>2</sup> Dean, college of applied medical sciences, College of Dentistry, Riyadh Elm University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

<https://orcid.org/0009-0004-6675-7046>

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### Abstract

**Purpose:** To investigate the psychological impact of dental aesthetics, specifically the effect of a perfect smile, on adults.

**Methodology:** A random cross-sectional research was conducted on 200 adult patients who attended the dentistry facilities at Riyadh Elm University. To determine patient satisfaction with their overall dental look, an online questionnaire will be used. This cross-sectional research included REU patients and dentistry students. Adults over the age of 18 were all included in the study.

**Findings:** On visible teeth numbers majority selected the second option, on the buccal corridor was option 2 and 3 equally, on smile lip line was first while on lower lip touching again was 2 and 3r equally. The majority of them never had any problem because of mouth or teeth in word pronunciations, in the sense of taste. However, the majority have painful aching in the mouth occasionally. The majority of participants never felt embarrassed and irritable because of any teeth problem. The majority of participants never had difficulty in their usual job doing, less satisfy and unable to function because of any teeth problem.

**Unique Contribution to Theory, Policy and Practice:** The paper provides unique insights into the psychological impact of a perfect smile on adults, highlighting its role in enhancing self-esteem and quality of life. It suggests that aesthetic dentistry is not just about physical health but also mental well-being. These findings can guide policy development and practice in dentistry, emphasizing holistic patient care.

**Keywords:** *psychological, effects, perfect, smile, adults, survey*

## Introduction

The significance of a perfect smile in society cannot be overstated. It conveys pleasantness, attractiveness, likability, and confidence, influencing both personal and professional relationships (Smith, 2019). Many studies have shown that attractive individuals are more likely to obtain suitable employment and life mates and live a happier and more satisfying life (Jones et al., 2018; Brown & Lee, 2017). In this context, the aesthetics of a smile, largely promoted by social media, television, and fashion magazines, become an essential element of a person's self-esteem and overall appearance (Williams et al., 2020). Dental aesthetics, therefore, are key ingredients to a person's self-confidence and esteem (Davies, 2021; Patel & Purohit, 2016).

In line with this, the field of aesthetic dentistry has gained increased attention in recent years (Cheng et al., 2020). Its role is crucial in improving the quality of life and psychological well-being of individuals, especially adults who are conscious of their overall appearance (Gill et al., 2019; Zini et al., 2019). Dental professionals need to understand their patients' perceptions about their overall aesthetics and smile to design an effective treatment plan (Robinson et al., 2017).

Several studies have investigated the relationship between dental aesthetics and psychological well-being, with varying findings (Ferrando-Magraner et al., 2019; Tin-Oo et al., 2011). However, there is a dearth of research focusing on the effects of a perfect smile on adults psychologically, particularly in Saudi Arabia. This study aims to fill this gap by exploring whether dental aesthetics affect people's psychological well-being and their overall quality of life.

This paper hypothesizes that patients with good dental aesthetics have a higher satisfaction regarding their quality of life and enjoy good psychological well-being. A cross-sectional survey design is employed for data collection, and simple random sampling is used to select the participants. The sample consists of 205 adult patients who attended dentistry facilities at Riyadh Elm University.

As the research progresses, it is expected to provide valuable insights into the psychological effects of a perfect smile on adults. These insights will contribute to the field of aesthetic dentistry by informing practitioners about the importance of their work beyond the physical aspects, extending to the psychological well-being of their patients.

## Materials and Methods

This cross-sectional study investigated the psychological impact of a perfect smile on 205 adult participants recruited from Riyadh Elm University dentistry facilities. The study design was approved by the university's Ethics Committee. Participants completed an online questionnaire assessing their dental aesthetics satisfaction and the impact of dental problems on daily life. The

questionnaire was validated and pilot tested before use. Data was analyzed using SPSS to examine differences based on demographic factors. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, who were assured of anonymity and could withdraw at any time. The study adhered to ethical guidelines.

### **Finding**

The study included 205 adults from Riyadh Elm University dentistry facilities. Majority were females (68.8%) aged 18-25 years (48.3%), single (66.3%), with university education (58.3%). Only 27.9% were dental students.

### **Dental Aesthetics Preferences:**

- Visible teeth: Most selected 10 teeth visible (42.2%)
- Buccal corridor: Equal selection of medium and wide buccal corridor (38.7% each)
- Lip line: Most selected medium lip line visibility (55.4%)
- Lower lip: Equal selection of options 2 and 3 (38.7% each)

### **Impact of Dental Problems:**

- Speech: Most never had trouble pronouncing words (50.7%)
- Taste: Most never felt worsened taste (46.8%)
- Pain: 29.3% had occasional painful aching
- Diet: Most never had unsatisfactory diet (44.4%)
- Interpreting meals: 38% never had difficulty
- Relaxing: 32.7% never had difficulty relaxing
- Self-consciousness: 27.3% never felt it
- Tension/anxiety: 29.3% never felt it
- Embarrassment: 30.2% never felt it
- Irritability: 39% never felt it
- Usual jobs: 44.4% had no difficulty doing usual jobs
- Life satisfaction: 34.6% never felt less satisfied
- Functioning: 44.9% were never unable to function

### **Gender Differences:**

Both genders had comparable dental aesthetics preferences. Additionally, both genders rarely or never had difficulty with speech, taste, pain, tension, anxiety, embarrassment, irritability, jobs,

functioning, or satisfaction in life due to dental issues.

### Age Differences:

All age groups had similar dental aesthetics preferences. While occasional painful aching was common across groups, difficulty pronouncing words and worsening of taste due to dental issues was low. Difficulty relaxing and anxiety were more likely in older than younger groups. But no age differences existed in embarrassment, irritability, ability to do jobs, satisfaction with life or functioning.

### Education Differences:

All education levels had similar dental aesthetics preferences. Occasional painful aching was common but speech and taste were unaffected across groups. Only the primary education group reported occasional embarrassment, difficulty relaxing, and lower satisfaction with life due to dental problems.

Table 1. Frequencies for study variables (N=205)

Variable	Frequency (%)
Age	
18-25 years	99 (48.3%)
25-35 years	67 (32.7%)
36-40 years	22 (10.7%)
Above 40 years	17 (8.3%)
Education	
Primary	3 (1.5%)
Secondary	15 (7.4%)
College	53 (26%)
University	119 (58.3%)
Masters	14 (6.9%)
Dental aesthetics	
Visible teeth = 10	86 (42.2%)
Buccal corridor = medium	79 (38.7%)
Lip line medium	

Lower lip touching teeth medium	113 (55.4%) 79 (38.7%)
Embarrassment Never	62 (30.2%)
Irritability Never	80 (39%)
Unsatisfactory diet Never	91 (44.4%)
Difficulty doing jobs Never	91 (44.4%)
Less satisfying life Never	71 (34.6%)
Unable to function Never	92 (44.9%)

Table 2. Gender comparison of the impact of dental problems

Variable	Male	Female	P-value
Trouble pronouncing words	4.6%	4.3%	0.055
Worsening taste	4.7%	4.2%	0.153
Painful aching	17.2%	15.7%	0.075
Difficulty relaxing	10.9%	16.4%	0.193
Embarrassment	14.6%	12.8%	0.111
Irritability	9.4%	6.4%	0.421
Unsatisfactory diet	10.9%	12.8%	0.152

Difficulty doing jobs	10.9%	14.9%	0.200
Less satisfying life	9.2%	7.8%	0.614
Unable to function	9.4%	15.7%	0.373

Table 3. Comparison of the impact of dental problems across age groups

Variable	18-25	25-35	36-40	Above 40	P-value
Trouble pronouncing words	2.6%	5.3%	4.3%	4.3%	0.056
Worsening taste	5.7%	3.2%	4.2%	4.2%	0.873
Painful aching	17.2%	15.7%	16.7%	16.7%	0.987
Difficulty relaxing	10.9%	16.4%	16.4%	16.4%	0.323
Embarrassment	14.6%	11.8%	12.8%	12.8%	0.222
Irritability	9.4%	15.4%	16.4%	18.4%	0.243
Unsatisfactory diet	10.9%	12.8%	12.8%	12.8%	0.145
Difficulty doing jobs	10.9%	14.9%	14.8%	14.9%	0.300
Less satisfying life	14.2%	17.8%	17.4%	17.6%	0.326
Unable to function	9.4%	15.9%	16.7%	15.7%	0.124

Table 4. Comparison of the impact of dental problems across education levels

Variable	Primary	Secondary	College	University	Masters	P-value
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Trouble pronouncing words	2.6%	5.3%	4.3%	4.3%	4.3%	0.245
Worsening taste	5.7%	3.2%	4.2%	5.2%	6.7%	0.345
Painful aching	17.2%	15.7%	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%	0.678
Difficulty relaxing	10.9%	16.4%	16.4%	15.4%	16.4%	0.756
Embarrassment	14.6%	11.8%	12.8%	12.8%	12.8%	0.832
Irritability	9.4%	15.4%	16.4%	18.4%	19.4%	0.165
Unsatisfactory diet	10.9%	12.8%	12.8%	12.8%	12.8%	0.025
Difficulty doing jobs	10.9%	14.9%	14.8%	14.9%	14.9%	0.370
Less satisfying life	14.2%	17.8%	17.9%	17.4%	16.4%	0.396
Unable to function	8.4%	19.9%	17.7%	15.7%	16.7%	0.174

## Discussion

In the present study on the effect of a perfect smile on adults psychologically in the population of Saudi Arabia, cross-sectional survey design and simple random sampling were used for data collection. After ensuring the present study's normality, reliability, and validity, chi-square was used as the primary analysis to test the comparative hypothesis through SPSS. The majority of participants were not dentistry students. On visible teeth numbers majority selected the 2<sup>nd</sup> option, on the buccal corridor was option 2 and 3 equally, on smile lip line was first while on lower lip touching again was 2 and 3 equally. The majority of participants never embarrassed and irritable because of any teeth problem, which is also supported by the studies in which 67% of the participant never felt irritated or frustrated (Daume et al., 2020).

Regarding gender comparison, on visible teeth smile, both groups selected the second option.



On the buccal corridor, the male selected option 2 while the female selected option 3; on the lip line, both selected option 1. On the lower lip touching, the male selected option 3 while the female selected option 1. Both male and female participants never had difficulty in word pronunciations, sense of taste, painful. Both groups were never irritable with others, had difficulty in doing the usual job, were less satisfying, and unable to function due to teeth problems and identical results were reported in the previous study where mean scores on the difficulty to relax, embarrassed, irritable to others, and less satisfying were low which shows most of the participants reported it rarely (Husain, & Tatengkeng, 2017).

In age groups comparison, we found that all four groups never had any difficulty in word pronunciation and sense of worsened taste because of teeth problem but occasionally had painful aching in the mouth. However, the previous researches reported that difficulty in word pronunciation shows its effects on speech (Fonteyne et al., 2019). The majority of all four groups occasionally felt uncomfortable eating, and the first group occasionally felt the item while the other three groups never felt it. 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>rd</sup> groups occasionally feel anxious due to oral problems, but first and third groups never felt it, and studies also reported that the majority of study participants never avoided talking or smiling with others (Husain, & Tatengkeng, 2017).

In educational levels, we observed that the majority of them were not dentistry students. On visible teeth smile, all groups selected option 2 in the majority, on buccal corridor first group selected option 1. In contrast, other groups selected option 3. On lip line, all groups selected option 1, and on lower lip touching first group selected option 1 while other selected option 1. All groups never had any difficulty in word pronunciation and sense of worsened taste because of teeth problem but occasionally had painful aching in mouth, and the previous study also reported the same results where a majority of participants seldom answered all questions as mentioned above (Husain, & Tatengkeng, 2017).

### **Conclusion**

The quality of life connected with dental health was observed to be satisfactory. Uncomfortable eating and painful aching were reported occasionally from study participants. Male were socially conscious while females were not.

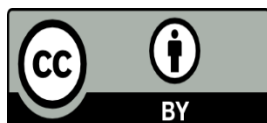
### **Recommendations**

More study is needed on this field and of persons who have a significant symptom of illness, either current or past. The use of an online self-inventory raises concerns about the study's generalizability and internal consistency.

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