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## Patient preferences in selecting a dentist: Survey results from the urban population of Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

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**Introduction:** Awareness of gender- or nationality-driven preconceptions can help dentists to have a better interpretation of the dentist-patient relationship. It is even more noteworthy to understand these predilections in Saudi society, where women and men are usually segregated due to religion- and culture-based considerations. This study is one of the first to explore the preferences of patients when selecting a dentist with respect to gender and nationality in the city of Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

**Materials & Methods:** A total of 445 community residents residing in Riyadh were randomly selected for a cross-sectional study. The participants completed a survey designed to assess which of two factors (gender and/or nationality) were perceived as most relevant in choosing a dentist. Statistical analysis of the data was performed using the SPSS 11.5 software.

**Results:** Female participants did not show any preference for the gender of the dentist; whereas 40% of the male participants preferred a male dentist. Participants also favored male dentists in the fields of oral surgery (78.9%), implants (74.1%), endodontics (67.5%), orthodontics (65.8%) and prosthodontics (64.2%). An exception was noted in pediatric dentistry, for which female dentists were favored by 52.8% of the participants. Additionally, most (66.1%) participants did not have any preference for the nationality of the dentist.

**Conclusion:** Riyadh residents showed a general preference for a male dentist but demonstrated no preference for nationality when selecting a dentist.

### Biography

Nadiah Wasef Ibrahim Al Nahhas, BDS, MSc, Consultant (SCFHS), is also a Consultant in Dental Public Health at the College of Dentistry, King Saud University, Department of Periodontics & Community Dentistry. She is graduated with a degree in Bachelor of Dental Surgery from Cairo University, Cairo, Egypt. She took Master of Public Health from the College of Dentistry, King Saud University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia in 1998. She became Consultant in Public Health in Saudi Commission for Health Specialist (SCFHS) in 2006. She was Course Director for three courses in Dental Assistant Diploma Program in College of Dentistry, King Saud University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia from 2007 to 2012. She is Course Director and Co-Course Director in Preventive and Public Health courses at the College of Dentistry, King Saud University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, since 1998 to present.

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