Clinicians use YouTube to explore origins of dental fear

By analysing 182 videos with people expressing their views and experiences on the condition, they found that fear of the dentist not only has different manifestations and impacts but is also caused by yet unrecognised factors like improper behaviour or work ethic of the clinician. Another major cause reported was to be the influence of parents and peers who shared unpleasant dental experiences with their children or used their fear of a dental visit for making them more compliant.

Commenting on their findings, the researchers stated that results do not only allow better insight of how the condition emerges and manifests over time but also that social media like YouTube can offer some value for understanding health issues better. However, they recommended to confirm their findings through more examinations incorporating in-depth interviews with patients and parents.

“Dental fear and anxiety in children is known to cause uncooperative behaviour during dental visits, delays in treatment, sleep disorders and psychological issues that can affect daily life,” said co-author Professor Nigel King from the University of Western Australia’s Faculty of Medicine. “The personal narratives and original sharing present in social platforms is increasingly used by patients and the public to YouTube provide a rich context to our existing knowledge of dental fear.”

Previous studies on children and adolescents have suggested dental fear to be caused primarily by negative dental experiences gained prior to treatment, among other reasons. According to a 2007 report from Sweden, approximately 1 in 10 children is currently estimated to suffer from the condition, however, other studies have considered this number to be higher.

Common treatment techniques for dental anxiety include the use of sedatives like nitrous oxide/oxygen or distraction methods.
National University of Singapore to expand dental faculty and services

SINGAPORE: The National University of Singapore’s Faculty of Dentistry is on the brink of a major expansion, Dental Tribune Asia Pacific has learned. Officials recently unveiled plans to transform the current facilities into an oral health-care centre, which will include the construction of a new, state-of-the-art building and extend the university’s clinical offering.

In addition, the centre will facilitate research on regenerative biology and tissue engineering, among other fields. The opening of the new centre is anticipated for 2017, according to reports by the Singapore newspaper The Straits Times. It will allow the faculty to increase its annual intake of undergraduates to 80, the number needed to address the growing demand for dental services in the city-state, based on Ministry of Health projections. While the estimated development expenses for the new facility were not disclosed, the university told the newspaper that it aims to raise US$50 million for the project. The remaining development expenses will likely be borne by the government.

Speaking to Dental Tribune, the faculty would not divulge any further details on the matter, saying that the expansion is still in predevelopment.

Teaching, research and clinical services at the faculty are currently hosted in different facilities at the university itself and the National University Hospital. Established in 1929 by the British, the faculty offers a number of dental programmes, including a Bachelor of Dental Surgery and Master of Dental Surgery. According to university figures, over 200 dental students were enrolled at the faculty last term.

Rice is believed to have first been domesticated in the Pearl River valley in China, and the earliest archaeological evidence of rice intensification in mainland South-East Asia dates back to approximately 4,000 yr. Until now, the crop remains one of the main sources of food and income for the majority of people living there. Thailand is the world’s largest exporter of rice after India, producing over ten million tons a year.

Fossil teeth like this found in Thailand were examined by the researchers. (DTI/Photo courtesy of Sian Halcrow, University of Otago, New Zealand)