

CONNECTION MATTERS

Il valore dell'interdisciplinarietà in Fisioterapia Muscoloscheletrica



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TEMPOROMANDIBULAR DISORDERS: A NATIONAL SURVEY OF PHYSIOTHERAPISTS ON THE ASSESSMENT AND TREATMENT STRATEGIES

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Introduction and Aims

Temporomandibular disorders (TMDs) encompass several musculoskeletal conditions that affect the temporomandibular joint (TMJ), masticatory muscles, and associated structures (1). According to the literature, only a few contact hours are dedicated explicitly to TMD content in Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) curricula, with educational opportunities relegated just to post-graduate courses (2). The purpose of this study is to evaluate the current knowledge of Italian physiotherapists (PTs) regarding the management of TMDs and whether any evidence-based diagnostic criteria and treatment strategies are used in managing people with TMDs (3).

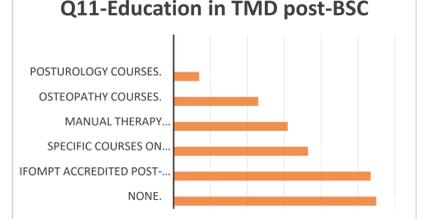
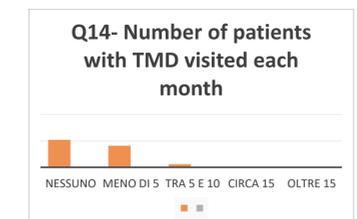
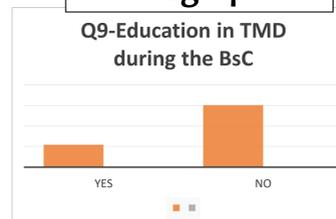
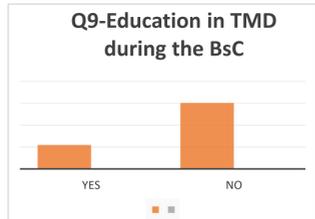
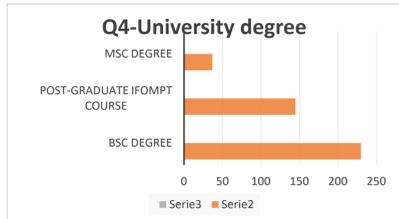
Methods

In this observational study, an online questionnaire was used. Responders were evaluated on demographic information, general knowledge of TMD and assessment and therapeutic techniques.

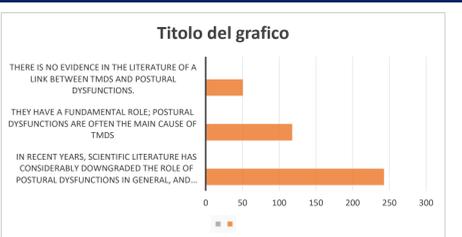
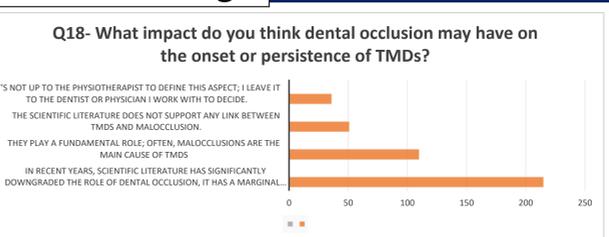
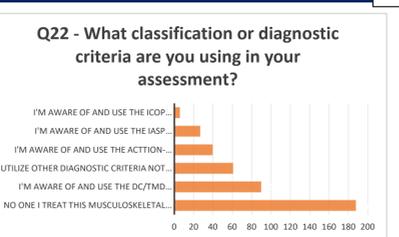
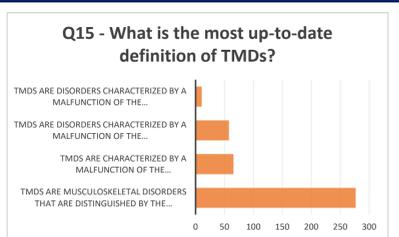
Results

A total of 412 responses were collected with a 100% completion rate. Despite the high prevalence of TMDs, most of the Italian PTs treat no or very few TMD patients per month, likely due to initial patient contact with dentists in Italy. The surveyed sample demonstrated good knowledge of TMD, however, there were discrepancies in beliefs about controversial subjects such as the relationship between malocclusion/posture and TMDs (4).

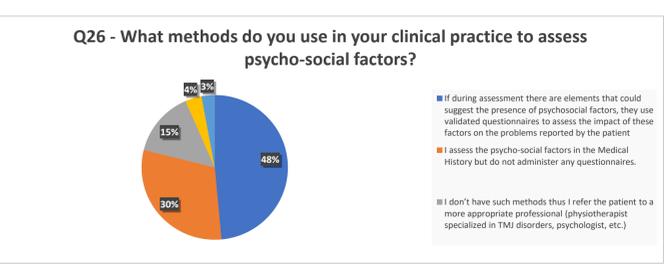
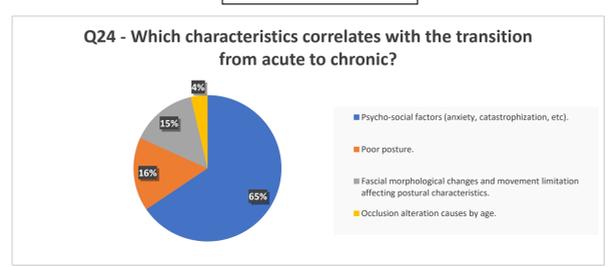
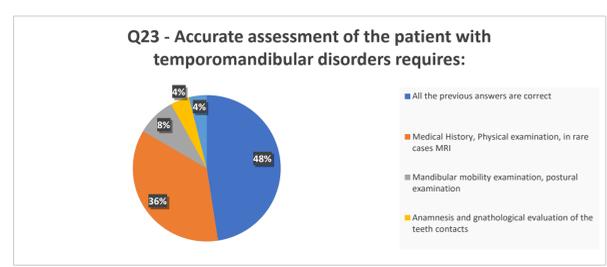
Demographics



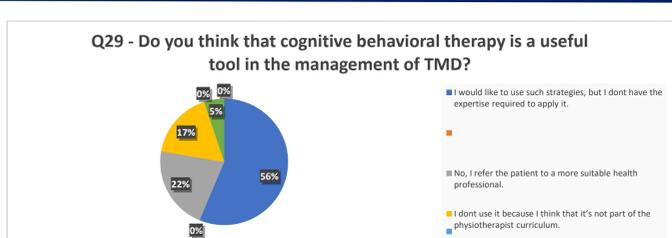
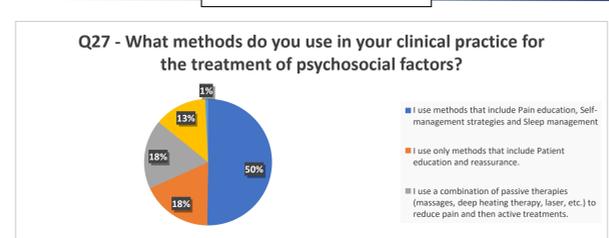
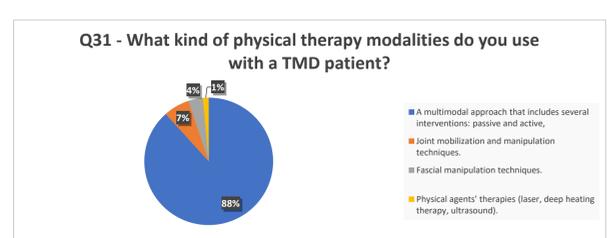
General knowledge



Assessment



Treatment



Conclusions

Italian PTs show appropriate knowledge of the different management aspects of TMDs, however, when it comes to putting this knowledge into practice, clinical practice does not always adhere to the guidelines or recommendations of the most recent scientific literature.

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Keywords

Temporomandibular disorders; physical therapists; disease awareness; knowledge assessment; curriculum