Monolithic Endocrown Vs. Hybrid Intraradicular Post/Core/Crown Restorations for Endodontically Treated Teeth; Cross-sectional Study

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A B S T R A C T
The gold standard for restoring Endodontically Treated Teeth (ETT) with successful clinical longevity requires having minimal invasive preparations and maximal tissue conservation. Many dentists still consider hybrid post/core/crown to be the first choice for restoring ETT. Endocrown is a viable alternative treatment modality to hybrid post/core/crown. This study aims to assess the proper judgment of dentists working in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia on the use of monolithic endocrown versus hybrid post/core/crown for restoring ETT. The IRB of Princess Nourah Bint Abdulrahman University (PNU) Institutional Review Board reviewed this study. The questionnaire was validated and electronically distributed. The participants were pre-informed that their responses are completely anonymous and used for professional purposes only. The questionnaire surveyed dentists working in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, about their preference for different ETT restorative modalities at various clinical scenarios. Data were analyzed using One-way ANOVA and t-test. All P-values of < 0.05 were considered statistically significant. A total of 275 responses were collected; 61.45% were females and 38.55% males. 56% of them were general practitioners, while 16% were consultants. Prefabricated post/core was the most preferred technique among the participants (18.55%), followed by endocrown (12.36%), and lastly, cast post/core (8.73%). The amount of remaining tooth structure was the most influential in the treatment selection (30.18%), followed by the presence or absence of 1–2 mm ferrule (17.82%). Interocclusal space (12.36%) was the least influential factor. Endocrown recorded 63.27% as the most preferred line of treatment in case of insufficient interocclusal space. 40.36% preferred endocrown for patients with occlusal risk factors. The amount of the remaining tooth structure and the tooth position significantly affect the treatment options of the participants. Endocrown was the most preferred treatment modality for restoring ETT for patients with occlusal consideration.
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1. Background
Reconstruction of Endodontically Treated Teeth (ETT) with coronal destruction in clinical practice remains a challenge. ETT lose their mechanical properties, teeth become fragile and more prone to fracture due to mainly loss of tooth structure integrity (Sevimli et al., 2015). Extirpation of pulp tissue and loss of vitality deteriorate the neurosensory feedback system. This may lead to dentin’s diminishing physical properties like modulus of elasticity and fracture resistance, which may contribute to the higher failure of ETT. However, a lack of evidence is apparent (Sedrez-Porto et al., 2017). Access cavity, enlargement of the pulp chamber, and loss of dentin supporting walls during endodontic treatment significantly decrease overall fracture resistance of teeth, increase cuspal deflection, and cuspal fracture. Therefore, maintaining and preserving tooth structure is the most critical factor when treating ETT (Sedrez-Porto et al., 2017).

It is essential to consider the following factors during the restoration of ETT; the number of remaining tooth structures, the
tooth's location in the dental arch, occlusal forces, and aesthetics where appropriate (Caplan et al., 2002). Prognosis of ETT depends on the success of root canal treatment, efficient obturation of the canal, and minimizing the leakage of oral fluids and bacteria into peri-radicular areas maintained by durable coronal restorations that seal and seat properly (Tabassum et al., 2016). It is crucial to have a well-planned coronal restoration to avoid the complications of ETT. The restoration of ETT usually involves a conventional post and core foundation system and crown or endocrown system.

Post and core is a dental restoration used to sufficiently build up tooth structure for future restoration with a crown when there is not enough tooth structure to properly retain the crown due to tooth structure loss to either decay or fracture (Sedrez-Porto et al., 2017). There are two essential rules to be followed in the selection of posts. First, the retention of the post to be able to resist the vertical forces. Second, the resistance of the post to be able to resist the horizontal and rotational forces. Post resistance is influenced by the ferrule, anti-rotational features, length of the post, and rigidity (Khaldi et al., 2020).

The post and core system types could be cast or prefabricated metal (para post) and fiber prefabricated post systems. However, the prefabricated post systems take less time to place. It does not involve any lab work and can be inserted immediately upon the decision to utilize it once the endodontic therapy has been completed and the post space created, leaving 4–5 mm of an apical seal. The length of the post hole is recorded. The post is shortened from its apical end to preserve the retentive tag for the core (Deepak M. Vikhe, 2021).

Moreover, various luting agents as zinc phosphate and self-adhesive/conventional resin types of cement may be used to lute these posts. Composite or amalgam built up freehand. Final preparation of crown then final impression (Sedrez-Porto et al., 2017). The occlusal portion in impression taking (Tzimas et al., 2018). The characteristics of the preparation of endocrowns are jointly prepared parallel occlusal surfaces. It provides stress resistance and supragingival cervical margin. This maintains periodontium health and facilitates impression taking (Tzimas et al., 2018). The occlusal portion in the endocrown has high fracture resistance. Its thickness varies from 3 to 7 mm higher than the conventional crown (Sevimli et al., 2015). Therefore, no additional macro-retentive preparation or ferrule is needed. Incorporating a ferrule does not offer any significant difference in fracture resistance with non-ferrule prepared endocrown (Tzimas et al., 2018).

Endocrown restoration is fabricated using a conventional heat-pressed or computer-aided design/computer-aided manufacturing (CAD/ CAM) system. CAD/CAM technology is widely used nowadays in dental settings. It has the advantage of providing high-quality restoration in a very short chair side time. Since the development of CAD/Cam, many related materials have been utilized (Tzimas et al., 2018; El-Damanhoury et al., 2015). The most common materials used for endocrown are leucite reinforced, lithium disilicate reinforced ceramics, and monolithic zirconia ceramics. Lithium disilicate is one of the most used materials for endocrown. It has good aesthetic value and adequate mechanical strength (Guo et al., 2016; Carvalho et al., 2016). Resin composite materials have recently been developed and used. Nanoceramic resin restorative materials have a modulus of elasticity similar to dentine, less crack propagation, and higher fracture resistance than ceramics (Sevimli et al., 2015). However, microleakage is a problem in resin composite materials (El-Damanhoury et al., 2015). Moreover, it has less strength and fracture resistance than disilicate lithium glass–ceramic (Guo et al., 2016).

The recent application of endocrown in clinical practice presented several merits over posts and cores. Endocrowns aim to maintain ETT compromised structure's biomechanical integrity and preserve maximum tooth structure for bonding (Sevimli et al., 2015). This approach results in minimal tooth structure loss, superior mechanical properties, fewer clinical steps, and reduced cost (Carvalho et al., 2016). Esthetic properties are also superb. Additionally, they present a significant advantage when posts are contraindicated due to short or narrow canals. Despite the increased popularity of endocrown restorations among dental practitioners, the question that remains is whether clinicians should consider using endocrown instead of conventional treatments with intra-radicular posts. Several in vitro studies have investigated the performance of endocrown compared to traditional post retained crowns. Studies have reported that endocrown have a comparable or even superior fracture strength to conventional crowns when used in molars, premolars, and even incisors (Sevimli et al., 2015; Carvalho et al., 2016). However, to the best of our knowledge, there is still scarce clinical evidence in the literature. Nevertheless, in vitro evaluations reporting on the fracture strength of endocrown are reasonably available; thereby, observational studies consider this subject and the clinician's opinions (Rayyan et al., 2019).

To meet the patient's needs and expectations with long-term restorative success, dentists should be familiar with every avail-
able dental treatment option. The purpose of this study is to assess the ability of the dentists working in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, to select the proper clinical situation for the use of monolithic endocrown vs. hybrid intra-radicular post/core and crown to restore endodontically treated teeth.

2. Methodology:

This cross-sectional study was conducted to assess the use of monolithic endocrown vs. hybrid intra-radicular post/core & crown to restore endodontically treated teeth among dentists working in Riyadh city, Saudi Arabia. Institutional Review Board (IRB) ethical approval was obtained from Princess Nourah bint Abdulrahman University Research Centre on September 16th, 2019. The survey in this study was adapted from a previously validated and published questionnaire (Ratnakar et al., 2014). For validation, four arbitrators from the college of dentistry, Princess Nourah bint Abdulrahman University (PNU), self-assessed and evaluated the questionnaire. The questionnaire was modified according to its inputs. The questionnaire consisted of three parts; the first part gathered demographic information about the participants, including gender sex, age group, clinical specialty, clinical title, and workplace. The second and third parts consisted of sixteen multiple choice type questions. The second section of the questionnaire collected information about the frequency of using posts, the type of post/core material used, and the final extra coronal restoration choice for restoring endodontically treated teeth. The third and last section of the questionnaire collected information about different restoration techniques for endodontically treated teeth at different clinical scenarios.

The survey targeted 1000 Saudi and non-Saudi dentists, either general practitioners, residents, specialists, and consultants treating ETT working in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. According to sample size calculation using Power Analysis and Sample Size (PASS) software, a sample size of 345 from a population of 1000 produces a two-sided 95% confidence interval with a precision (half-width) 0.0500 when the actual proportion is near 66.35%.

The questionnaire was converted to an online electronic form using Google Forms (Google Forms, 2019; a free web-based survey generator). A link to the questionnaire was generated and distributed via email and social media platforms. The questionnaire link was left open for six months. A reminder to participate was sent twice after every three weeks apart after the initial invitation. The collected data from 275 dentists were analyzed using computer software SPSS 16 (SPSS, Inc. Chicago, IL, USA). Frequencies and percentages were calculated for the various participant inputs. The questionnaire consisted of three parts; the first part gathered demographic information about the participants and the belief that intra-radicular post reinforces ETT, with correlation coefficient = 0.17, P-Value = 0.03 (P < 0.05). About half (53.51%) of the participants, considered prefabricated fiber post and composite core to be the most retentive post and core system. 52.63% preferred to use it due to its longevity. The most used cement for post cementation by more than half of the participants (54.39%) is composite resin cement. 28.95% of respondents showed that loss of retention is the most common cause of failure of restored ETT (Table 2).

In case the where the remaining tooth structure is greater than 50%, 45.61% of respondents are restoring ETT anterior tooth with a tooth-colored restoration, while 32.46% are restoring ETT posterior tooth with a tooth-colored crown (Table 2).

In cases where the remaining tooth structure is < 50%, 39.47% would restore ETT anterior tooth with a prefabricated post and tooth-colored core and crown. Almost the same percentages (36.84%- 35.09%) would restore ETT anterior tooth with a tooth-colored crown and prefabricated post and tooth-colored core and crown, while 40.35% are restoring ETT posterior tooth with a prefabricated post and tooth-colored core and crown (Table 2).

In cases where the remaining tooth structure is < 50%, 39.47% would restore ETT anterior tooth with a prefabricated post and tooth-colored core and crown. Almost the same percentages (29.82–28.95%) would restore ETT posterior tooth with a prefabricated post and tooth-colored core and crown and custom made a metal post and core with a tooth-colored crown (Table 2).

Generally, 29.73% of the participants are using prefabricated post and tooth-colored core and crown to restore ETT (Fig. 1).

Endocrown recorded 63.16% as the most preferred line of treatment to restore an ETT in case of insufficient inter-occlusal space, while 40.35% preferred endocrown for a patient with occlusal risk factors, such as bruxism or unfavorable occlusal relationships (Table 2). Generally, 51.84% of the participants would prefer endocrown in both cases (Fig. 2).

There is a significant relationship between the age of the participants and the belief that intra-radicular post reinforces ETT, with correlation coefficient = 0.17, P-Value = 0.03 (P < 0.05). About half (50%) of the youngest dentists (25–35 years), as well as 37.25 % of

| Characteristics                  | (Number) | (Percentage) |
|----------------------------------|----------|--------------|
| **Gender**                       |          |              |
| Female                           | 169      | 61.45        |
| Male                             | 106      | 38.55        |
| **Age Group**                    |          |              |
| 25–35                            | 198      | 72.00        |
| 36–45                            | 51       | 18.55        |
| 46–55                            | 19       | 6.91         |
| >55                              | 7        | 2.55         |
| **Clinical Title**               |          |              |
| Consultant                       | 45       | 16.36        |
| Specialist                       | 51       | 18.55        |
| Resident                         | 25       | 9.09         |
| General dentist                  | 154      | 56.00        |
| **Specialty**                    |          |              |
| Prosthodontics                   | 55       | 20.00        |
| Restorative dentistry            | 29       | 10.55        |
| Endodontics                      | 34       | 12.36        |
| Others                           | 157      | 57.09        |
| **Work Place**                   |          |              |
| Hospitals                        | 63       | 22.90        |
| Educational institution          | 89       | 32.36        |
| Dental center                    | 84       | 30.54        |
| Other                            | 39       | 14.18        |

| Characteristics                  | (Number) | (Percentage) |
|----------------------------------|----------|--------------|
| **Endodontic Treatment**         |          |              |
| Metal post and core              | 172      | 62.36        |
| Pre-fabricated fiber post and    | 55       | 20.00        |
| composite core and crown         |          |              |
| Endocrown                        | 92       | 33.65        |
| Prefabricated post/core and      | 256      | 92.92        |
| tooth-colored crown              |          |              |

### Table 1
Socio-Demographic Characteristic of the Dentists Participating in The Survey.

| Work Place   | (Number) | (Percentage) |
|--------------|----------|--------------|
| Hospitals    | 63       | 22.90        |
| Educational institution | 89       | 32.36        |
| Dental center | 84       | 30.54        |
| Other        | 39       | 14.18        |

(12.36%) and lastly cast post/core (8.73%). The amount of remaining tooth structure was the most influential factor in the treatment selection (30.18%), followed by the presence or absence of 1–2 mm ferrule (17.82%). The least influential factor was the interocclusal space (12.36%). (Table 2).
Participating Dentists Responses to The Questions, by Percentage of Respondents to Each Item.

| Items                                                                 | A                           | B             | C             | D             | E             | F             |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| 3. Do you believe that ferrule effect can increase the fracture resistance of ETT? | 80.70% 9.65% 17.28%        | 12.36% 7.89% 17.28% | 29.82% 25.44% 14.91% | 40.35% 14.91% 10.53% | 12.28% 18.42% 10.53% |
| 4. What is/are your preferred fabrication technique for intraradicular post to restore ETT? | 45.61% 24.56% 15.79%    | 3.51% 4.39% 6.14% | 18.42% 32.46% 17.54% | 10.53% 14.91% 10.53% | 19.30% 25.44% 14.91% |
| 5. Which type of intraradicular post fabrication technique do you prefer regarding retention? | 18.55 8.73 12.36 30.18 | 12.36 17.82 24.56 16.67 | 20.18 28.95 18.42 17.82 | 15.79 3.51 18.42 14.91 | 10.53 14.91 10.53 14.91 |
| 6. What is the type of cement you commonly use for intraradicular post cementation? | 7.89% 2.63% 16.67% | 18.42% 32.46% 17.54% | 10.53% 14.91% 10.53% | 18.42% 32.46% 17.54% | 10.53% 14.91% 10.53% |

4. Discussion

This study is the first attempt to comprehensively and objectively assess dentists’ ability working in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, to select the proper clinical situations for the use of monolithic endocrown vs. hybrid intra-radicular post/core and crown to restore endodontically treated teeth.

Despite sending multiple reminders, only 275 returned the completed questionnaire, representing a response rate of around 28%. This response is statistically adequate and greater than 10%
of the overall population size (Verma et al., 1991; Ronán Conroy et al., 1986; Ross, 2004). However, the respondents’ characteristics may have been different from those of the entire target population in a way that influenced the results. Therefore, some over-or underestimation cannot be excluded and the results should be generalized with caution.

Inconsistent with the established high level of evidence that stated the primary purpose of the intra-radicular post is to retain the core, about half of the participants (42.98%) believe that intra-radicular post reinforces ETT, which might influence the high percentage of its use (78.95%) among the participant dentists. This result is consistent with another study done among dentists in the north region of Saudi Arabia (Akbar, 2015).

Regarding the ferrule effect, the vast majority of respondents (>80%) believe that ferrule can increase the fracture resistance of ETT. A previous study considered ferrule as an essential principle for long-term success when post used. However, the incorporation of ferrule did not significantly influence the clinical outcomes in using endocrown (Tzimas et al., 2018).

Following the findings of multiple survey studies on dentists, this study found that prefabricated post/core is the most preferred technique among the participants (Sarkis-Onofre et al., 2015; Wahab et al., 2021), followed by endocrown, and cast post and core.

Biomechanical properties of ETT teeth play a principal role in selecting the proper restoration followed by endodontic therapy. Loss of structural integrity has been identified as the main cause of fracture in ETT (Sevimli et al., 2015). Accordingly, the remaining tooth structure was the most influential factor in the treatment selection among the respondents, followed by a 1–2 mm ferrule presence or absence. In contrast, the least influential factor was the interocclusal space.

The use of fiber posts has been increasing in recent years compared to different other types of posts (Atlas et al., 2019). Half of the participants (53.51%) in this study considered prefabricated
### Table 3
Cross Tabulation of Age and Various Significant Variables.

| Characteristics                             | Options                                                                 | 25–30 | 36–45 | 46–55 | >55 | Total | P value |
|---------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-----|-------|---------|
| Q2: Do you believe that intraradicular post reinforce the endodontically treated teeth (ETT)?  | Yes                       | 99    | 50    | 19    | 37.25 | 0     | 118    | 43     | 0.03 |
|                                             | No                       | 72    | 36.4  | 22    | 43.14 | 0     | 120    | 43.6   |      |
|                                             | Not sure                 | 27    | 13.6  | 10    | 19.61 | 0     | 37     | 13.4   |      |
|                                             | Total per Age group      | 198   | 72    | 51    | 18.55 | 19    | 6.91   | 7      | 2.55 | 275   | 100   |      |
| Q5: Which type of intraradicular post fabrication technique do you prefer regarding retention? | Prefabricated metal post and amalgam / composite core | 10    | 5.05  | 6     | 11.76 | 0     | 16     | 5.82   | 0.04 |
|                                             | Prefabricated fiber post and composite core                           | 121   | 61.1  | 15    | 29.41 | 5     | 26.32  | 5      | 71.43 | 146   | 53.1  |      |
|                                             | Prefabricated ceramic post and composite core                         | 19    | 9.6   | 4     | 7.84  | 0     | 23     | 8.36   |      |
|                                             | Custom made metal post and Core                                      | 14    | 7.07  | 14    | 27.45 | 3     | 15.79  | 2      | 28.57 | 33    | 12    |      |
|                                             | Custom made zirconia post and Core                                    | 17    | 8.59  | 4     | 7.84  | 2     | 10.53  | 0      | 23    | 38    | 8.36  |      |
|                                             | Endocrown                                                             | 17    | 8.59  | 8     | 15.69 | 9     | 47.37  | 0      | 34    | 12.36 |      |
|                                             | Total per Age group                                                  | 198   | 72    | 51    | 18.55 | 19    | 6.91   | 7      | 2.55 | 275   | 100   |      |
| Q8: What is the most frequent failure of ETT? | Endodontic failure                                                   | 60    | 30.6  | 7     | 13.73 | 0     | 0      | 67     | 24.36 |      |
|                                             | Crown fracture                                                        | 36    | 18.18 | 7     | 13.73 | 2     | 10.53  | 0      | 45    | 16.36 |      |
|                                             | Root fracture                                                         | 46    | 23.23 | 6     | 11.76 | 2     | 10.53  | 2      | 28.57 | 56    | 20.36 |      |
|                                             | Loss of retention                                                     | 46    | 23.23 | 19    | 37.25 | 12    | 63.16  | 2      | 28.57 | 79    | 28.73 |      |
|                                             | No failure                                                            | 10    | 5.05  | 12    | 23.53 | 3     | 15.79  | 3      | 42.86 | 28    | 10.18 |      |
|                                             | Total per Age group                                                  | 198   | 72    | 51    | 18.55 | 19    | 6.91   | 7      | 2.55 | 275   | 100   |      |

### Table 4
Cross Tabulation of Gender and Various Significant Variables.

| Characteristics                             | Options                                                                 | Female | Male | Total | P value |
|---------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|------|-------|---------|
| Q8: What is the most frequent failure of ETT? | Endodontic failure                                                   | 51     | 30.18 | 17    | 16.04  | 68     | 24.73 | <0.00001 |
|                                             | Crown fracture                                                        | 27     | 15.98 | 19    | 17.92  | 46     | 16.73 |      |
|                                             | Root fracture                                                         | 24     | 14.2  | 31    | 29.25  | 55     | 20    |      |
|                                             | Loss of retention                                                     | 58     | 34.32 | 22    | 20.75  | 80     | 29.09 |      |
|                                             | No failure                                                            | 9      | 5.33  | 17    | 16.04  | 26     | 9.45  |      |
|                                             | Total                                                                 | 169    | 61.45 | 106   | 38.55  | 275    | 100   |      |
| Q11: What is your preferred line of treatment to restore an anterior ETT with 50% remaining sound tooth structure (Up to one-half of the coronal tooth structure missing)? | Tooth colored restoration                                             | 14     | 8.28  | 14    | 13.21  | 28     | 10.18 | 0.035 |
|                                             | Tooth colored crown                                                   | 77     | 45.56 | 24    | 22.64  | 101    | 36.73 |      |
|                                             | Prefabricated post and tooth colored core and crown.                  | 58     | 34.32 | 39    | 36.79  | 97     | 35.27 |      |
|                                             | Custom made metal post and tooth colored crown                        | 5      | 2.96  | 7     | 6.6    | 12     | 4.36  |      |
|                                             | Custom made tooth colored post and crown                              | 12     | 7.1   | 15    | 14.15  | 27     | 9.82  |      |
|                                             | Endocrown                                                             | 3      | 1.78  | 7     | 6.6    | 10     | 3.64  |      |
|                                             | Total                                                                  | 169    | 61.45 | 106   | 38.55  | 275    | 100   |      |
| Q14: What is your preferred line of treatment to restore a posterior ETT with < 50%: All or more than one-half of the coronal tooth structure missing? | Tooth colored restoration                                             | 0      | 0     | 15    | 14.15  | 15     | 5.45  | 0.004 |
|                                             | Tooth colored crown                                                   | 5      | 2.96  | 10    | 9.43   | 15     | 5.45  |      |
|                                             | Prefabricated post and tooth colored core and crown.                  | 56     | 33.14 | 27    | 25.47  | 83     | 30.18 |      |
|                                             | Custom made metal post and core with tooth colored crown              | 43     | 25.44 | 36    | 33.96  | 79     | 28.73 |      |
|                                             | Custom made tooth colored post and core and crown                     | 22     | 13.02 | 12    | 11.32  | 34     | 12.36 |      |
|                                             | Endocrown                                                             | 43     | 25.44 | 6     | 5.66   | 49     | 17.82 |      |
|                                             | Total                                                                  | 169    | 61.45 | 106   | 38.55  | 275    | 100   |      |
Table 5
Cross Tabulation of Specialty and Various Significant Variables.

| Specialty Groups | Total | P value |
|------------------|-------|---------|
| Specialty Options | Prosthodontics | Restorative Dentistry | Others |
| (n) | (%) | (n) | (%) | (n) | (%) | (n) | (%) |
| Q7: What is the type of cement you commonly use for intraradicular post cementation? | | | | | | | |
| Zinc phosphate | 7 | 20.59 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 20.59 |
| Zinc polycarboxylate | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 4.46 |
| Glass ionomer | 12 | 21.66 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 34 | 21.66 |
| Reinforced glass ionomer | 2 | 3.64 | 0 | 0 | 10 | 29.41 | 39 | 24.84 |
| Composite resin cement | 41 | 74.55 | 29 | 100 | 17 | 50 | 63 | 40.13 |
| Total | 55 | 20 | 29 | 10.55 | 34 | 12.36 | 157 | 57.09 |

| Q8: What is the most frequent failure of ETT? | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
| Endodontic failure | 9 | 20 | 15 | 29.41 |
| Crown fracture | 0 | 0 | 7 | 13.73 |
| Loss of retention | 0 | 0 | 3 | 6.02 |
| No failure | 5 | 11.11 | 5 | 10.34 |
| Total | 55 | 16 | 51 | 18.55 |

Table 6
Cross Tabulation of Clinical title and Various Significant Variables.

| Specialty Groups | Total | P value |
|------------------|-------|---------|
| Specialty Options | Consultant | Specialist | Resident | General dentist |
| (n) | (%) | (n) | (%) | (n) | (%) | (n) | (%) |
| Q7: What is the most frequent failure of ETT? | | | | | | | |
| Endodontic failure | 7 | 16.36 | 3 | 10.55 | 3 | 12.05 |
| Crown fracture | 5 | 11.11 | 10 | 20 | 5 | 20.00 |
| Root fracture | 7 | 15.56 | 7 | 14.55 | 3 | 12.05 |
| Loss of retention | 14 | 31.82 | 7 | 14.55 | 5 | 20.00 |
| No failure | 5 | 11.11 | 5 | 10.34 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 45 | 16.36 | 51 | 18.55 | 25 | 9.09 |

| Q7: What is the type of cement you commonly use for intraradicular post cementation? | | |
|--|---|---|
| Zinc phosphate | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Zinc polycarboxylate | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Glass ionomer | 12 | 21.66 | 2 | 4.76 |
| Reinforced glass ionomer | 2 | 3.64 | 2 | 4.76 |
| Composite resin cement | 41 | 74.55 | 39 | 80.43 |
| Total | 55 | 20 | 51 | 100 |

| Q8: What is the most frequent failure of ETT? | | |
|--|---|---|
| Endodontic failure | 7 | 14.62 | 19 | 37.25 |
| Crown fracture | 7 | 14.62 | 20 | 40 |
| Root fracture | 7 | 14.62 | 3 | 6.12 |
| Loss of retention | 19 | 38.78 | 5 | 10.20 |
| No failure | 5 | 10.20 | 5 | 10.20 |
| Total | 55 | 16 | 51 | 18.55 |

M. Soliman, L. Alshamrani, B. Yahya et al. Saudi Journal of Biological Sciences 28 (2021) 6523–6531
A study done by (Aurélio et al., 2016) revealed that a com-tooth-colored core and crown of half of the tooth structure pre-

ferred glass fiber posts as their first choice to restore ETT, whereas non-specialists tend to prefer cast metal posts (Atlas et al., 2019). The same study revealed that resin cement was the most commonly selected material among participants (Atlas et al., 2019). This is consistent with the results of this study.

Regarding restoring ETT with a tooth-colored crown, 45.6% of the participants chose to restore the anterior ETT with tooth-
colored restoration while (32.46%) decided to restore the posterior ETT with a tooth-colored crown in cases where the remaining tooth structure was more than 50%. A previous study by (Sarkis-Onofre et al., 2015) revealed that in ETT with three or four coronal walls left, at least one marginal ridge remaining, and no undermined cavity walls, direct adhesive restoration may be considered an alternative cuspal coverage. For posterior teeth with few or weakened coronal walls, cuspal coverage with an adhesively placed onlay, a partial crown, or a conventional crown is advised (Sarkis-Onofre et al., 2015).

In the case of the remaining tooth structure is 50%, almost sim-

of the participants chose to restore the anterior ETT with tooth-colored crown and prefabricated post and tooth-colored core and crown. The percentage increased to (40.35%) to restore the posterior ETT with prefabricated post and tooth-colored core and crown of half of the tooth structure pre-

preserved. A study done by (Aurélio et al., 2016) revealed that a compre-

prehensive literature review recommends restoration of root-filled molars and premolars exhibiting limited tissue loss, that is, with 50% or more of the coronal structure preserved, without post-

placement, especially when cusp protection is preplanned.

Furthermore, (Sevimli et al., 2015) a review study revealed that since the coronal structure is enough to provide restoration stabil-

ity, retention, and strength, teeth with existing medium-sized restorations that require root canal therapy do not need a post-

core restoration. Complete occlusal coverage, such as an endo-
crown or onlay restorations, is suggested using a composite resin liner-base to create an even cavity preparation and fill undercuts.

When a tooth has more than 50% of the coronal structure miss-

ing, post and core foundation is preferable. The choice of appropri-

ate post and core restorations is often complicated and should be guided by knowledge of their physical properties (Guldener et al., 2017). In this study, the results show that about (39.47%) of respondents preferred to restore ETT anterior tooth with a prefabri-
cicated post and tooth-colored core and crown in cases where more than 50% of coronal tooth structure is missing. Furthermore, con-

sidering the same case, (29.82 %) are restoring ETT posterior tooth with a prefabricated post and tooth-colored core and crown and custom-made a metal post and core with a tooth-colored crown. A study by Guldener et al., 2017 revealed that if the coronal struc-
ture is highly damaged, with considerable loss of tooth structure, post-
placement and core build-up are needed, followed by full coronal coverage.

On the other hand, our findings revealed that (63.16%) of dental practitioners in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, uses endocrown as the most preferable treatment line to restore an ETT in cases of insufficient inter-occlusal space. 40.35% preferred endocrown for a patient with occlusal risk factors such as bruxism or unfavorable occlusal relationships. In support of these results, Sedrez-Porto et al., (2016) demonstrated that endocrown restorations have high frac-
ture strength and are preferred more than other conventional treatments using posts, direct composite resin, or inlay/onlay restorations. Moreover, endocrown seem a more reliable alterna-
tive for load-bearing teeth (Dogui et al, 2018).

Another study by Sevimli et al., (2015) compared equivalent stresses in molars restored with endocrowns versus posts and cores during masticatory. Simulations concluded that under phys-

iological loads, ceramic endocrowns ideally cemented in molars are more resistant to failure and fracture than those with fiber-

reinforced composite (FRC) posts and other conventional restora-
tions. Additionally, this study indicates that the majority of the participants take into consideration the following factors; the amount of the remaining tooth structure, the interocclusal space, and the presence or absence of 1–2 mm ferrule effect when select-
ing the line of treatment to restore ETT. This suggests that dental practitioners in Saudi Arabia follow the treatment strategies of ETT under the current state of evidence-based knowledge.

The observed results of the correlation between the partici-

pant’s age and the belief that intra-radicular post reinforces ETT were statistically significant P-value = 0.03 (P < 0.05). About half (50%) of the youngest dentists (25–35 years), (37.25 %) of the dent-

ists between 36 and 45, believed that the ETT has become stronger after post/core restoration. In contrast, 100 % of dentists more than 46 years old do not believe in that. There is also a significant statis-
tical relationship was noted between the participant’s age and the most preferred Intra-Radicular Post (IRP) fabrication technique in terms of retention. 61.1% of dentists (below 35) believed that pref-

fabricated fiber post and composite core is the most retentive post. However, this percentage decreases to 26.3 % among age group 46 to 55 years old dentists. A possible explanation is that young recently graduated dentists are more conversant with updated lit-

erature and are probably more influenced by continuous profes-
sional development courses. In a study done in Brazil by (Sedrez-
Porto et al., 2017) results showed that dentists have a preference for cast metal posts. This was attributed to the lack of continuing education courses after graduation.

In addition, this study found there is a significant relationship between the number of intra-radicular posts placed by the partici-

pant/week and the preferred intra-radicular post-fabrication tech-
nique in terms of longevity p-value = 0.04 (P < 0.05). The majority of the present survey respondents favored prefabricated fiber post and composite core as the best technique regarding longevity. In another similar study, Sedrez-Porto et al., (2017) noted that prefab-
ricated post was preferable to most dentists. This is because pre-
fabricated posts are easier to fabricate with much minimum time and visits.

There are many identified causes of failure of ETT that are post

retained. Some of them are endodontic failure, loss of retention, root fracture, recurrent caries, and periodontal diseases (Terry et al., 2010). In this study, the correlation between participants’ specialty and the most frequent cause of failure of ETT, is statistically significant with a P-value < 0.05. Prosthodontists and restora-
tive dentists reported a loss of retention as the most frequent cause of failure of ETT. On the other hand, endodontists reported endodontic failure as the most frequent cause of ETT failure. The results of this study are contrary to the results of another similar study done in India. In that study prosthodontists and general den-
tists reported endodontic failure as the main cause of the failure of ETT. Endodontists reported the loss of retention of posts as the most frequent cause of ETT failure in the same study (Kavlekar et al., 2016). In another study done by Olay et al., (2018) revealed that restorative and endodontic were the most frequent reasons for failure and prosthetics as the most common reason for extraction.

Concerning the participants’ specialty and the commonly used cement for IRP, there is a statistically significant relationship P-

value = 0.009 (P < 0.05). Most of the prosthodontists (74.55%) used composite resin cement for intra-radicular post cementation. All restorative dentists, half of the endodontists, and 40% of the den-
tists from other specialties also commonly use composite resin cement. Most of the respondents in this investigation favored using

composite resin cement for intra-radicular posts. This result may be attributed to the fact that the adhesive cementation system provides reliable and long-lasting bonding to root canals, where mechanical retention is compromised (Maroulakos et al., 2018). Successful adhesion to the radicular dentin relies on various factors. These factors include: morphology of dentinal tissue, materials used during endodontic treatment, technique for adhesive cementation of the endodontic post, and the geometric characteristics of the root canal space. In addition, post-surface treatments and proper selection of root canal irrigants and adhesives are other factors for the bond strength (Sedrez-Porto et al., 2017). A study by Sarkis-Onofre et al. (2015) has demonstrated that the use of resin composite core material was preferred for luting endodontic posts due to the simplicity and homogeneity of using the same material for the post and core placement.

5. Conclusion

The amount of the remaining tooth structure and the tooth position significantly affect the participants’ treatment options. When a tooth has more than 50% of the coronal structure missing, post and core foundation was preferable. Prefabricated fiber post and composite core are considered the most clinical used post and core systems.

Endocrown was selected as the most preferred treatment modality for restoring ETT for patients with occlusal consideration. As monolithic endocrowns have superior fracture resistance when compared to those restored with hybrid post/core/crown. Moreover, when the coronal structure is enough to provide restoration stability, retention, and strength, ETT does not need a post-core restoration.

Declaration of Competing Interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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