

A Cross-Sectional Survey of Patient Perception and Knowledge of Dental Implants in Japan

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1 Background

It is projected that by 2026, 23% of the US adult population will have dental implants, a significant increase from 6% in 2016. Dental implants prevalence among Japanese adults was only 3.1% in 2016 despite increasing needs for partial edentulous rehabilitation, especially with the growing elderly population in Japan. Japan’s universal health care system does not cover dental implants. The purpose of this study is to collect data on patients’ knowledge and perception of dental implants with the intention to provide dental professionals and policymakers a better understanding of ways to improve and promote dental implant therapy as a treatment option. We hope to promote implant therapy as an essential treatment option that is covered under Japan’s universal healthcare system.

2 Methods

An online survey with 15 questions was created using Qualtrics. The survey was reviewed by faculty members involved in Pre-doctoral and Advanced Graduate Periodontics Education at the Harvard School of Dental Medicine. The survey was then translated from English to Japanese by collaborators in Japan. The survey was distributed to 10 dental offices located across rural and urban cities. Two study groups were formed: one group with no history of implant therapy and another group consisting of subjects who have received at least one implant in the past. This study was approved by the Institutional Review Board of Harvard Medical School (IRB18-0710-02).

3 Results

The survey data collected consisted of 1172 adult patients of both gender (58.7% females, and 41.3% males) . People over the age of 60 comprised the largest response group (28%), and the second largest response group was between the ages 41 to 50 (23%).

Subjects’ Perceptions of Oral Implant Therapy

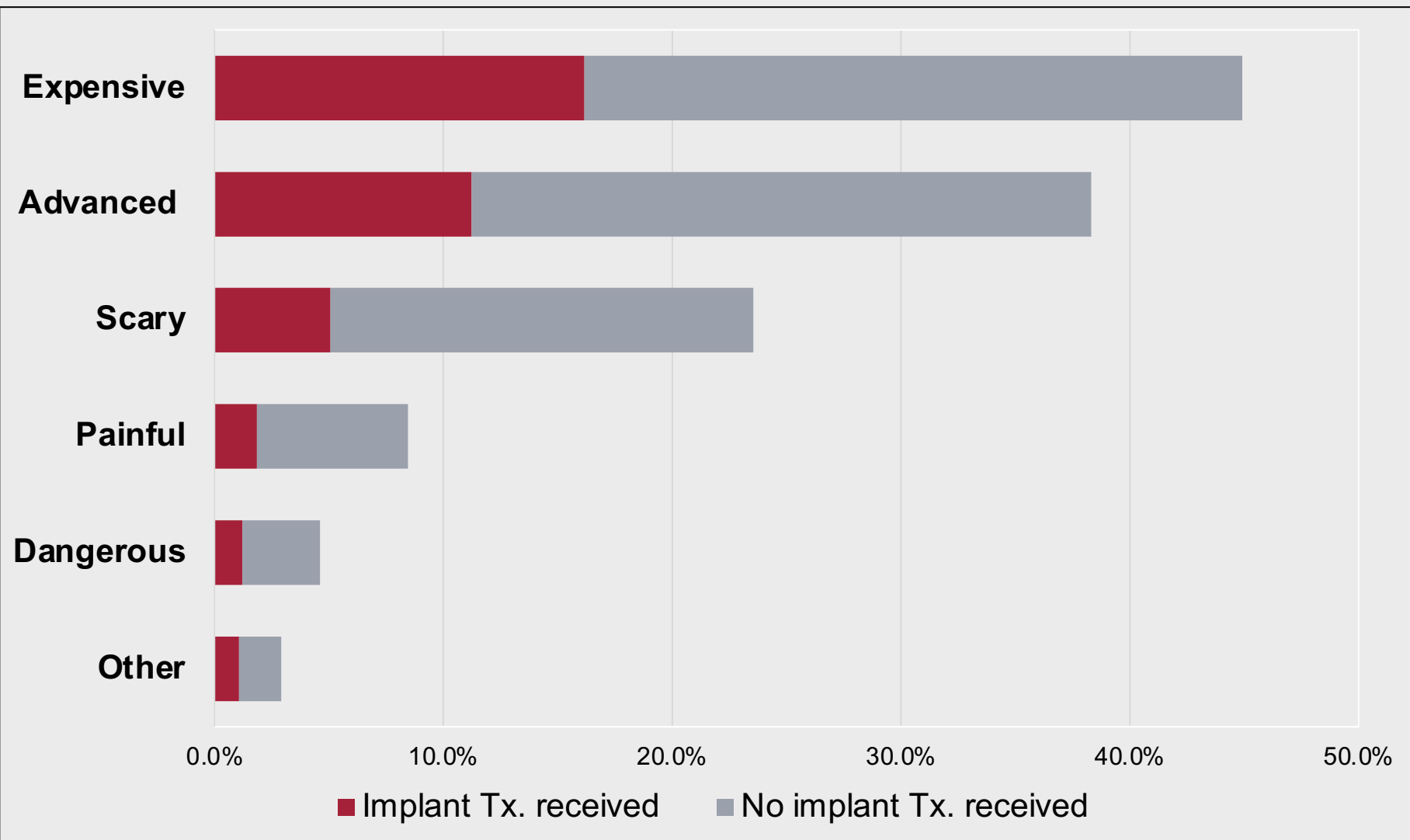


Table 1: The most common perceptions study subjects had towards implant were that implants are “expensive”, “advanced”, and “scary”. The group with no implant experience are more likely to have those perceptions.

Subjects’ Information Sources Regarding Dental Implants

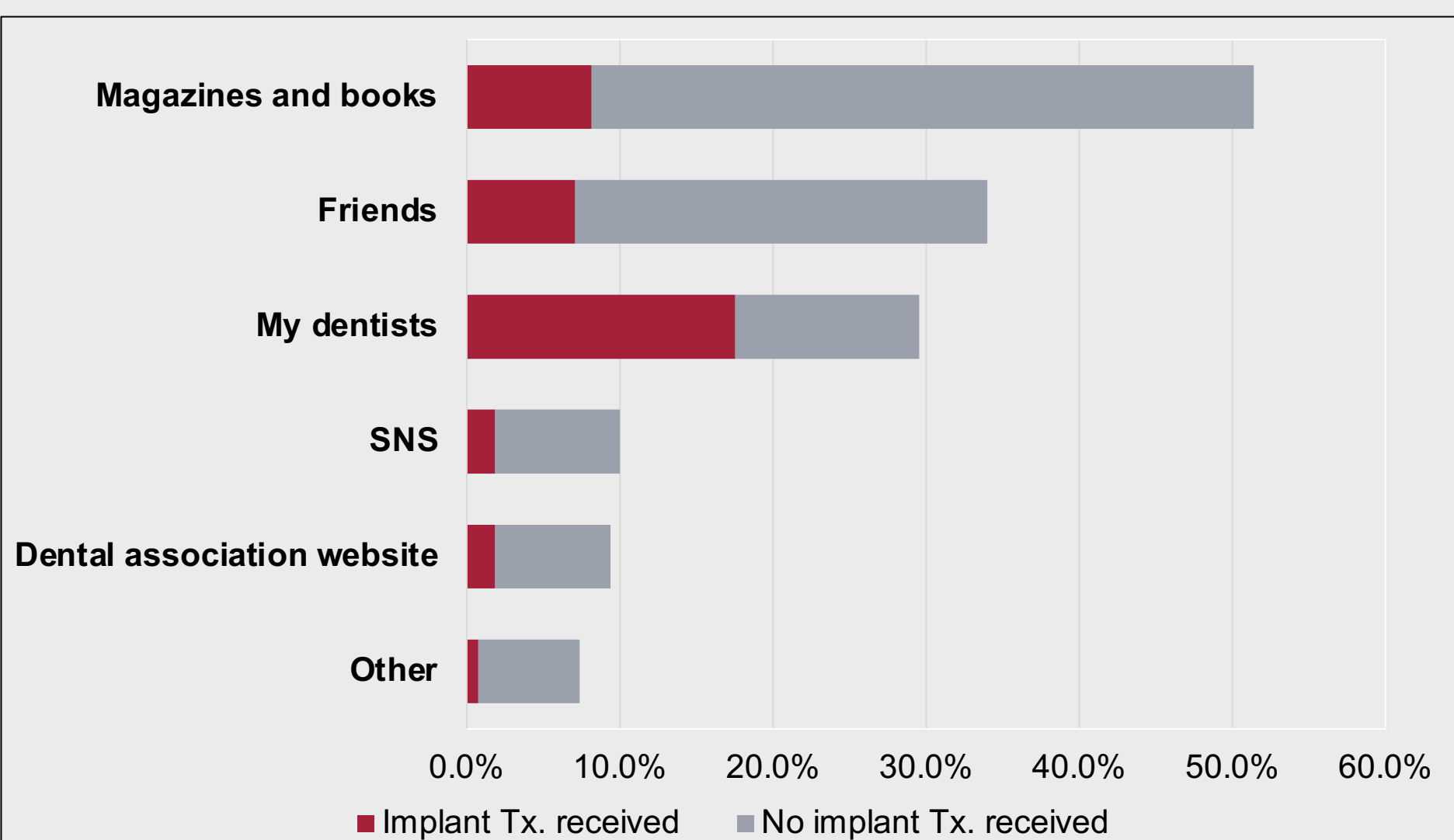


Table 2: Magazines and friends were the most common sources for those who have no implant experience. Dentists are the most common source for subjects who received implants in the past.

Decision Making when Considering Dental Implants

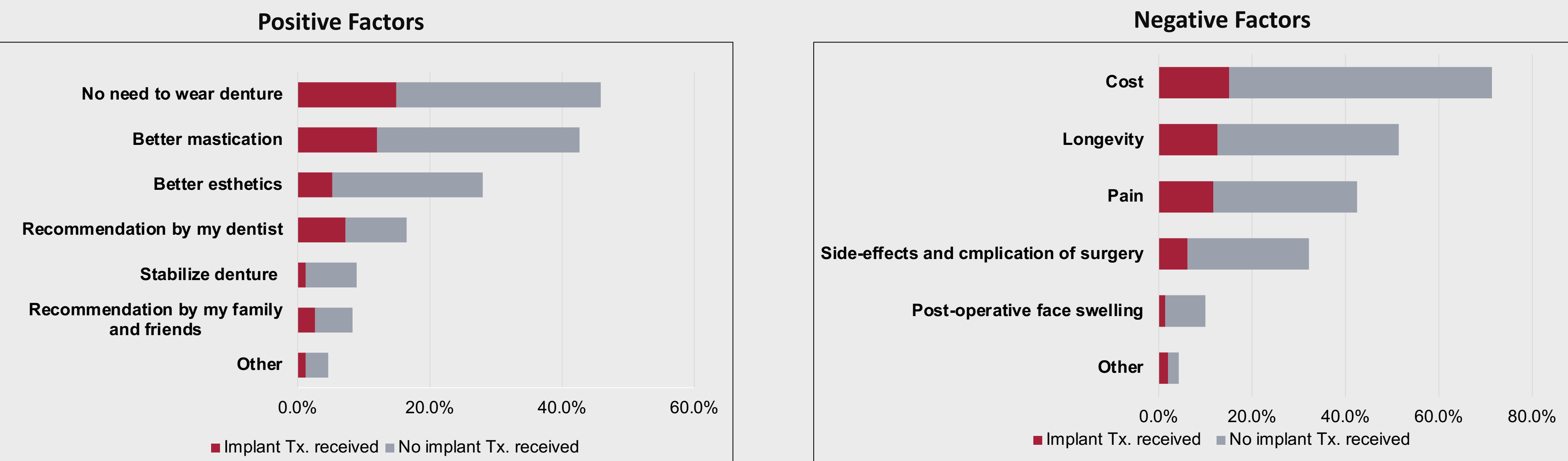
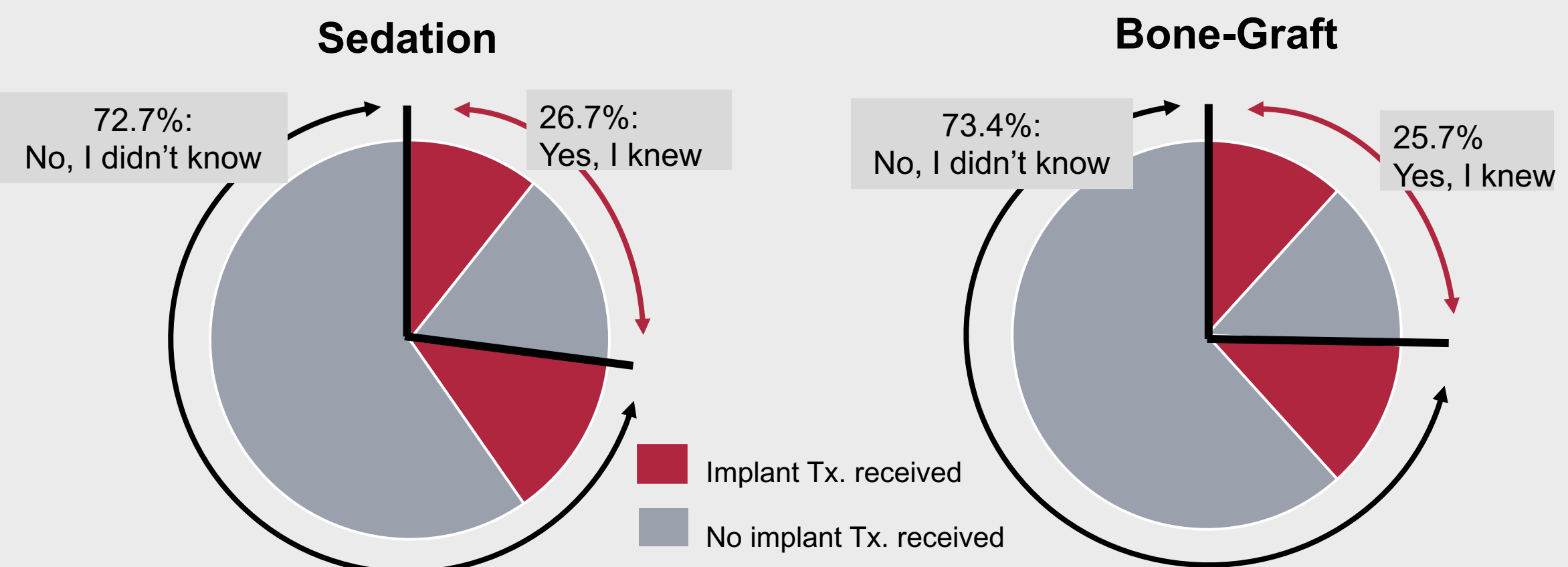


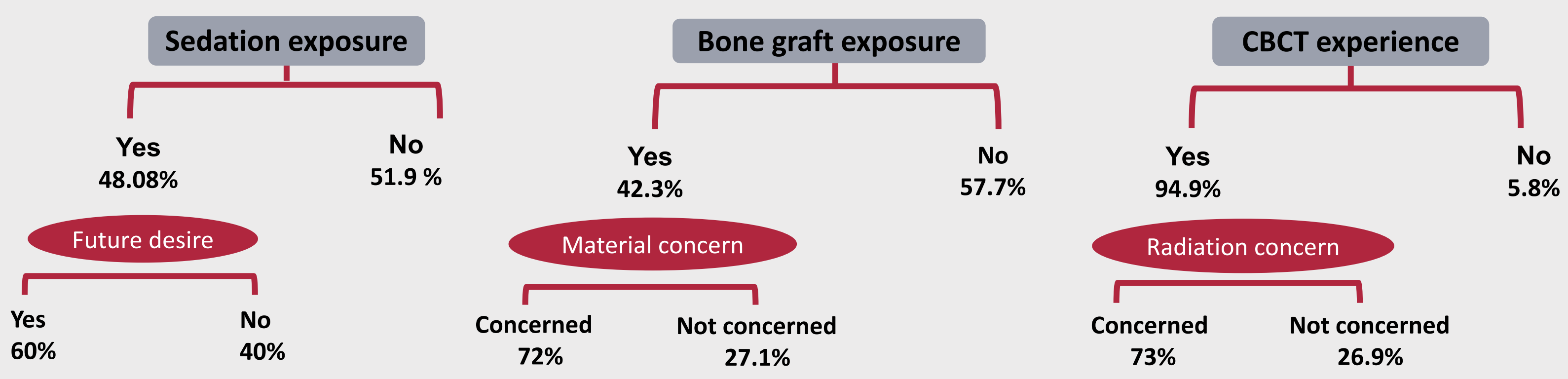
Table 3: Both study groups consider implant therapy a viable option to negate the need to wear dentures and to improve mastication. Both study groups also share common causes of concerns. These concerns include cost of treatment, longevity of implants, and pain both during the procedure and post-operatively.

3 Results

Knowledge of Sedation and Bone Graft



Experience, desire and concerns patients who received implant.



4 Conclusion

Patient education in implant therapy is essential in expanding the utilization of this effective treatment in Japan’s aging population. Japan’s current healthcare structure does not include implant therapy in its dental care services, and the cost of such treatments are high. In addition, there is a lack of knowledge regarding implant therapy and its associated procedures. Japan’s patients’ misconception of implant therapy should be addressed, as the need for such services is bound to increase in the near future. Trusted public information on dental implants should be readily available and accessible. Dental providers should be better trained to communicate and execute implant procedures.

