Review Article

The impact of artificial intelligence in dentistry

[1]Sukhmanpreet Kaur, [2]Adaa Galhotra

[1]Former BDS student, [2]BDS Intern, Dasmesh Institute of Research and Dental Sciences, Faridkot, Punjab, India

ABSTRACT:
The integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into healthcare has revolutionized numerous fields, with dentistry emerging as one of the most promising areas of innovation. AI technologies have demonstrated considerable potential in diagnostic imaging, treatment planning, patient management, and predictive analytics. This paper explores the current and projected impact of AI in dentistry, focusing on clinical applications, patient outcomes, and ethical considerations. Through a review of recent literature and real-world implementations, the study reveals that AI enhances diagnostic accuracy, reduces human error, improves workflow efficiency, and enables personalized treatment approaches. However, challenges including data privacy, algorithmic bias, and regulatory frameworks remain areas of concern.
Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, machine learning, advanced dentistry.

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INTRODUCTION
Artificial Intelligence has significantly transformed modern medicine by enhancing the accuracy, speed, and personalization of healthcare services. In dentistry, AI is employed in diagnostic radiology, orthodontic treatment planning, robotic-assisted surgery, and administrative tasks. As digital imaging and electronic health records become ubiquitous, dental professionals are increasingly leveraging machine learning (ML), computer vision, and natural language processing (NLP) to augment their capabilities.

This paper aims to provide an in-depth analysis of AI's impact on dental practices, with a focus on how it improves patient care, reduces clinician workload, and advances preventive dentistry.

METHODOLOGY
This research utilizes a qualitative approach, reviewing peer-reviewed journals, case studies, and white papers published between 2018 and 2024. Databases such as Pub Med, IEEE Xplore, and Google Scholar were searched using keywords: "AI in dentistry," "machine learning dental imaging," "dental diagnostics AI," and "AI dental applications." Over 50 publications were shortlisted, and 30 were selected based on relevance, regency, and academic rigor.

APPLICATIONS OF AI IN DENTISTRY
Diagnostic Imaging
AI-powered tools can detect dental caries, periodontal diseases, bone loss, and periapical lesions with high precision. Convolutional Neural Networks (CNNs) trained on radiographs have shown diagnostic accuracy comparable to human experts. For instance, studies demonstrate over 90% sensitivity and specificity in caries detection using AI models.

Orthodontics and Treatment Planning
AI algorithms help in analyzing cephalometric radiographs, predicting tooth movement, and generating customized aligners. Companies like Invisalign use AI to optimize treatment duration and improve outcomes.

Oral Pathology and Cancer Detection
Machine learning models analyze histopathological images and salivary biomarkers to detect oral cancers in early stages. AI can assist in differentiating between benign and malignant lesions, reducing misdiagnosis.

Prosthodontics and CAD/CAM Dentistry
AI enhances the design and manufacturing of crowns, bridges, and dentures. It streamlines the workflow from digital impressions to 3D printing, improving fit and comfort for patients.

Patient Management and Administration
Chatbots, virtual assistants, and automated scheduling systems improve communication and reduce administrative burdens. Predictive analytics assist in patient recall systems, optimizing preventive care schedules.

BENEFITS AND POSITIVE IMPACT
Improved Diagnostic Accuracy: AI mitigates human error in interpreting X-rays and CT scans, especially in early-stage lesions.

Enhanced Efficiency: Reduces time spent on manual analysis and documentation.

Cost Reduction: Optimized workflows lead to fewer clinical errors and unnecessary procedures.

Patient Satisfaction: Personalized treatment plans and shorter visits improve patient experiences.

Education and Training: AI tools help in training dental students with simulation environments and instant feedback mechanisms.

ETHICAL, LEGAL, AND REGULATORY CHALLENGES
While AI brings transformative potential, it also raises ethical and legal concerns:

- **Data Privacy:** Patient data used for AI training must be secured and anonymized.
- **Algorithmic Bias:** AI models trained on non-diverse datasets may perpetuate bias, affecting diagnostic equity.
- **Liability Issues:** It remains unclear whether liability falls on the clinician or the AI developer in case of misdiagnosis.
- **Regulatory Oversight:** The need for transparent and validated AI tools is crucial, with regulatory bodies like the FDA starting to develop frameworks for approval.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS
The future of AI in dentistry lies in:

- Real-time diagnostics via chairside AI tools
- Integration with wearable devices for oral health monitoring
- Federated learning models ensuring privacy-preserving AI
- Robotic-assisted dental surgeries
- Augmented reality (AR) and AI for surgical training and precision

CONCLUSION
AI is reshaping the landscape of modern dentistry, bringing unprecedented improvements in diagnostics, treatment precision, and patient care. As the technology matures and ethical guidelines are established, its adoption is expected to become more widespread. To fully realize the benefits, dental professionals must embrace continuous learning and collaborate with technologists to ensure safe and effective AI integration.

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