



G3 Should Facial Marks Created Because of Tooth Loss Be Considered as Hard Evidence?

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Learning Overview: After attending this presentation, attendees will be familiar with different views on using facial marks due to tooth loss.

Impact on the Forensic Science Community: This presentation will impact the forensic science community by providing another way to use facial marks due to tooth loss in forensic cases.

Opinions on using facial marks resulting from tooth loss as hard evidence vary. This study attempts to evaluate different opinions on using facial marks due to tooth loss as evidence according to Turkish penal code.

This study brings together opinions and applications of facial marks due to tooth loss by forensic experts, dentists, and jury members as a piece of evidence used in a usual course of their practice. Data has been analyzed and evaluated by a statistical program.

A total of 162 people participated in this study, which included 103 forensic experts/assistants, 38 jurists, and 21 dentists. Of these, 38.8% of the forensic experts/assistants, 90.5% of the dentists, and 34% of the jurist participants in the study were professionals practicing in three big cities of Istanbul, Ankara, and Izmir. Just over 60% (61.1%) of participants had less than 10 years of experience, while 38.5% had more than 11 years of experience in their respective professions. Even though the number of participants with less than 10 years of experience in the study is statistically higher, the majority of the dental participants had more than 11 years of experience ($p < 0.05$). Thirteen percent of the study subjects were categorized as having no face marks because of tooth loss and 87% had definite facial marks as a result of tooth loss. In categorizing study subjects, there was no statistical significance among participants according to their areas of expertise or years of experience ($p < 0.05$). Participants were grouped according to their area of expertise and written opinions.

Tooth loss can be repaired close to its original aesthetic appearance with today's dental technologies that are available to dentists. Despite this advance in dentistry, people with tooth loss have to live the rest of their lives with dentures or without replacing the tooth/teeth at all. There are several reasons that contribute to one's decision to not seek dentist's help; major contributors include fear of dental treatment, economic reasons, lack of access to dental services, and transportation problems. The importance of evaluation of facial marks due to tooth loss and its application are what this study hopes to highlight.

Tooth Loss, Facial Marks, Evidence