COMMENTARY

"BIOLOGICAL RESTORATION": ROOT CANAL AND CORONAL RECONSTRUCTION

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The phrase "the good is not the enemy of the best" is appropriate in this case report. It is a great example of "out of the box" thinking necessitated by clinical realities in areas where cost is critically important. Most importantly, the ideas may give us ideas in areas of the world where cost is less of a factor in treatment choices.

The authors have used natural root from extracted teeth to construct posts and natural crowns again from extracted teeth to construct acceptably esthetic crown restorations. This seems to be a perfect solution in poorer countries where the cost of dental materials in many cases exceeds the ability of the dentist to charge and the patient to pay. Not surprisingly, in these countries, extracted donors are usually plentiful and setting up tooth banks as suggested in the paper is an achievable goal.

Reattaching a tooth fragment using bonding technology is an accepted procedure in traumatic injury cases. To my knowledge, constructing a post and then crown using "donated" tooth fragments has never been done before but should work with the same bonding technologies. If the sterilization issues are dealt with as in this paper, there appears no reason that this should/could not work. Many studies have been done using bovine roots to test bonding of posts. It would be interesting to explore the use of bovine (readily available) teeth constructed as in this paper as posts for bonding to human roots. If this were to work, the use of "natural" posts and cores may in fact be able to be constructed en mass by industry to solve some of the flexural challenges that we face in placing and retaining posts in roots. I am less optimistic about the ability to construct natural crown restorations without the need for a tremendous amount of work on the part of the dentist to make them esthetically acceptable.

I feel that the term "Natural Restoration" is a more appropriate description of the procedure/technique. "Biological Restoration" usually indicates compatibility with other tissues and can also be attained with restorations using "foreign" materials.

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