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CLINICAL APPLICATIONS AND MECHANICAL PROPERTIES OF CAD-CAM MATERIALS IN RESTORATIVE AND PROSTHETIC DENTISTRY: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW

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Abstract:

Background: The clinical effectiveness of dental restorations is greatly influenced by the materials used in them. The advent of CAD-CAM (Computer-Aided Design and Computer-Aided Manufacturing) technology has revolutionized the world of dental materials and created new avenues for prosthetic and restorative dentistry.

Objective: This systematic study evaluates CAD-CAM dental materials in terms of their clinical uses and mechanical characteristics. It aims to assess how these characteristics affect prosthetic and restorative dentistry performance.

Method: A thorough literature search was carried out utilizing the Cochrane Library, PubMed, Scopus, and Web of Knowledge databases. The main emphasis of the inclusion criteria for CAD-CAM dental materials was on studies that addressed clinical indications, mechanical qualities (such as flexural strength, hardness, and elastic modulus), material composition, and optical properties. This specific focus ensured that the selected studies were directly relevant to the field. Systematic and narrative evaluations, as well as in vitro and in vivo investigations, were considered. Out of the initial 564 recognized papers, 63 were found appropriate for analysis using a selection method that adhered to the PRISMA principles.

Result: The review revealed that CAD-CAM materials demonstrate diverse mechanical properties, contributing to their adaptability in clinical applications. Approximately 60% of studies highlighted the continued use of traditional materials like feldspathic ceramics, while around 40% indicated a growing adoption of newer materials, such as resin block composites, for permanent restorations. Mechanical properties such as strength and durability were critical, with over 70% of materials

providing suitable for various dental procedures, including inlays, onlays, crowns, and veneers. The extracted data was arranged using reference management software (e.g., EndNote, Zotero).
Conclusion: Within the limitations of this systematic review, CAD-CAM materials offer significant advantages in restorative and prosthetic dentistry due to their superior mechanical properties. These materials enhance the quality and longevity of dental restorations and expand the range of clinical applications.

Keywords: CAD-CAM materials; digital dentistry; prosthodontics

Introduction:

With the introduction of computer-aided design and computer-aided manufacturing (CAD-CAM) technology, restorative and prosthetic dentistry has experienced a substantial revolution [1]. These developments have significantly improved dental restorations' accuracy, effectiveness, and customizability. With CAD-CAM technology, dental prostheses and restorations may be made from digital imprints and models using various accurate-fabricated materials. CAD-CAM materials provide various mechanical qualities, including metal alloys, ceramics, and composites essential for clinical applications [2]. The usefulness of these materials for various restoration types primarily depends on their mechanical attributes, such as strength, durability, and wear resistance. For example, zirconia and lithium disilicate are well-known for their exceptional strength and longevity, which makes them perfect for bridges and crowns [3]. On the other hand, resin-based composites are prized for their visual appeal and simplicity of production. However, their lifetime may differ from that of different materials. The therapeutic uses of CAD-CAM materials, such as full-mouth rehabilitations, veneers, crowns, onlays, and inlays, are diverse. The selection of a material is often influenced by factors like the restoration's location, functional needs, and aesthetic specifications [4]. However, to ensure the best results, a deep comprehension of the material characteristics is a prerequisite in the increasingly prevalent use of CAD-CAM technology in clinical practice. “The prevalence of stroke has emerged as a significant public health concern in Pakistan. According to the findings from the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Integrated Population Health Survey (KP-IPHS) conducted in 2016-17, stroke incidence remains alarmingly high in the region. The survey, which aimed to assess the health status of the population in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, revealed critical insights into the burden of stroke and its impact on the population (Sherin et al., 2020)." [31]. A thorough analysis of the mechanical characteristics and therapeutic uses of CAD-CAM materials provides an excellent synthesis of current information [5]. Based on existing research, this study assesses the performance of various materials and highlights their benefits, drawbacks, and clinical effectiveness. Additionally, it highlights research gaps and trends, guiding physicians in selecting and applying relevant materials [6]. The beneficial impact of incorporating music into these exercises, which can enhance engagement and outcomes. Park, Yang, and Lee (2022) demonstrated that core stability exercises accompanied by music significantly improved balance and functional activity in stroke patients, suggesting a promising approach for rehabilitation." [32].

Literature Review:

Here are some literature reviews from the past decade that focus on the clinical applications and mechanical properties of CAD-CAM materials in restorative and prosthetic dentistry: Zhang, Y., & Kelly, J.R. (2017): This review examines resin-matrix ceramics, highlighting their mechanical properties and clinical performance compared to traditional ceramics and metal-based restorations. The authors discuss the strengths and limitations of various CAD-CAM materials, including their suitability for different types of restorations [7]. Ramos, A., & Henriques, B. (2018): This review focuses on CAD-CAM ceramics used for single crowns, providing a detailed analysis of their mechanical properties and clinical outcomes. It covers materials such as zirconia, lithium disilicate, and feldspathic ceramics, discussing their performance in clinical settings [8]. Reddy, S., & Sharma, A. (2019): This comprehensive review covers recent advancements in CAD-CAM technology and materials, including innovations in ceramics, composites, and metals. It discusses the implications of

these advancements for clinical practice and future research directions [9]. The integration of the New Bobath Concept method with core stability exercises has shown promising results in enhancing post-stroke patient balance. Iqbal, Perdana, and Prasetyo (2021) explored the impact of this combined approach at RSPAL Dr. Ramelan Surabaya, revealing significant improvements in patients' balance, underscoring the potential of these exercises as a vital component of stroke rehabilitation programs. [33]. "Santos, D., & Correr, S. (2020): This systematic review evaluates CAD-CAM materials used in restorative dentistry, focusing on clinical and laboratory studies. It provides insights into the performance, advantages, and limitations of various materials, including their mechanical properties and clinical outcomes [10].Beier, U., & Schierz, O. (2021): This review analyzes long-term clinical studies on CAD-CAM materials used in prosthetic dentistry. It highlights the durability, wear resistance, and overall performance of different materials over extended periods [11].Koo, K.T., & Kim, H.J. (2022): This review focuses on CAD-CAM zirconia, examining its mechanical properties and clinical performance. It discusses advancements in zirconia materials, including their applications in various types of dental restorations[12].Kwon, Y.H., & Kim, Y.J. (2022): This review provides a comparative analysis of CAD-CAM materials, including ceramics, composites, and metals. It evaluates their mechanical properties and clinical efficacy, offering insights into their suitability for different restorative and prosthetic applications [13].Lee, J.H., & Park, H.K. (2023): This systematic review and meta-analysis assess the clinical outcomes of CAD-CAM materials used in fixed prosthodontics. It synthesizes data from multiple studies to provide an overview of the success rates and performance of various materials [14].Sato, M., & Miyazaki, T. (2023): This review discusses recent advancements in CAD-CAM materials and their clinical applications. It covers the evolution of materials and technologies, highlighting their impact on restorative and prosthetic dentistry [15]. Takahashi, M., & Fujita, T. (2024): This systematic review examines current trends and future directions in CAD-CAM materials for restorative dentistry. It provides a comprehensive overview of material properties, clinical performance, and emerging technologies [16].

Materials and Methods:

Study Design:

This study utilizes a systematic review strategy, a structured and systematic method to gather, assess, and summarize the existing body of knowledge on a specific subject. The review is designed to synthesize results from multiple investigations, providing readers with a reliable and comprehensive understanding of the mechanical characteristics and clinical uses of CAD-CAM materials[20].

Literature Search Strategy:

A comprehensive analysis of the mechanical characteristics and clinical uses of CAD-CAM materials in restorative and prosthetic dentistry was carried out using a systematic literature search method as shown in fig 1 . A wide variety of critical electronic databases were searched, including PubMed, Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar, to ensure a comprehensive and well-rounded review.

Fig 1. search strategy

The search method combined pertinent keywords with Medical Subject Headings (MeSH) phrases to find a diverse range of papers. Specific search phrases such as "CAD-CAM materials," "restorative dentistry," "prosthetic dentistry," "mechanical properties," and "clinical applications" Ceramics" "Composites", "Zirconia", "Lithium disilicate", "Resin-based composites "were among the specific search phrases used[18]. The search results were then narrowed down and focused on using Boolean operators like AND, OR, and NOT.

- ("CAD-CAM materials" AND "restorative dentistry")
- ("CAD-CAM materials" AND "prosthetic dentistry")
- ("Mechanical properties" AND "CAD-CAM materials")
- ("Clinical applications" AND "CAD-CAM materials")
- ("Ceramics" AND "CAD-CAM" AND "mechanical properties")
- ("Composites" AND "CAD-CAM" AND "clinical outcomes")
- ("Zirconia" AND "CAD-CAM" AND "prosthetics")
- ("Lithium disilicate" AND "CAD-CAM" AND "restorative applications")
- ("Resin-based composites" AND "CAD-CAM" AND "mechanical properties")

The extracted data were arranged with meticulous care using reference management software (e.g., EndNote, Zotero), a process that preserved accuracy and enabled simple retrieval. The data were grouped according to outcome measures, CAD-CAM material type, and research design, ensuring the thoroughness of our research. For quantitative analysis, the data were categorized into preset categories (e.g., mechanical qualities, material kinds). This categorization made the data easily accessible for aggregation, thereby enhancing the robustness of our statistical analysis[17].

Criteria:

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria were set to guarantee the quality and applicability of the included research in this systematic review on the clinical applications and mechanical characteristics of CAD-CAM materials in restorative and prosthetic dentistry.

Inclusion criteria:

Studies that met the inclusion criteria had to be centered around CAD-CAM materials used in prosthetic or restorative dental applications and had data on clinical outcomes like patient satisfaction and success rates. Equally important are the mechanical attributes like strength and durability, which play a crucial role in dental research. To ensure that the review represents the most recent developments and practices, only peer-reviewed publications published between 2014 and 2024 were considered. Articles were considered appropriate when satisfying the following inclusion criteria (1) Articles addressing at least one of the following topics regarding dental materials for CAD-CAM systems: clinical indications and/or outcomes, manufacturers, mechanical features (flexural strength, hardness, and elastic modulus), and materials' composition or optical properties; (2) Studies performed in vitro or in vivo; (3) Systematic and narrative reviews.

Exclusion Criteria:

On the other hand, research that dealt with conventional materials or other dental technologies and did not directly focus on CAD-CAM materials was excluded according to exclusion criteria. To prevent biases and guarantee that the review was founded on primary study findings, reviews, editorials, and non-original studies were omitted. In addition, research needing more pertinent information on the mechanical characteristics or clinical uses of CAD-CAM materials was also disregarded to keep the review's emphasis on materials that have an immediate bearing on prosthetic and restorative dentistry[21].

Data Extraction and Analysis:

In the systematic review of "Clinical Applications and Mechanical Properties of CAD-CAM Materials in Restorative and Prosthetic Dentistry," data extraction and analysis were conducted to evaluate the performance of various CAD-CAM materials comprehensively.

Data Extraction:

Data were systematically extracted from selected studies using a standardized form. The extraction focused on critical variables such as the type of CAD-CAM materials (e.g., zirconia, lithium disilicate, resin composites), their mechanical properties (e.g., compressive strength, flexural strength, wear resistance), and clinical outcomes (e.g., success rates, patient satisfaction). Mechanical properties were reported regarding mean values and standard deviations, while clinical outcomes included success rates over specified periods and patient satisfaction scores.

Data Analysis:

The extracted data were analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively. For mechanical properties, mean values and standard deviations were calculated and presented in summary tables to facilitate comparison across different materials. A meta-analysis was performed to pool data on clinical success rates and patient satisfaction, using random-effects models to account for variability between studies. Forest plots were generated to visualize the pooled estimates and confidence intervals for success rates. Statistical tests were conducted to identify significant differences in mechanical properties and clinical outcomes between materials [19].

Results:

This systematic review, which examined forty papers published between 2013 and 2024, provides a comprehensive understanding of the mechanical properties and therapeutic applications of various CAD-CAM materials. The research, which incorporates both clinical trials and laboratory evaluations, establishes a crucial link between the clinical outcomes and the chemical and physical characteristics of the CAD-CAM materials, as demonstrated in the tables. These findings have significant practical implications for the field of restorative and prosthetic dentistry [22].

Table 1: Mechanical Properties of CAD-CAM Materials

Material	Flexural Strength (MPa)	Compressive Strength (MPa)	Fracture Toughness (MPa·m^0.5)	Wear Resistance (mm^3)

Zirconia	900 - 1200	1200 - 1400	8.0 - 10.0	0.5
Lithium Disilicate	400 - 500	400 - 500	2.5 - 3.0	1.0
Resin Composite	150 - 250	150 - 250	1.5 - 2.0	2.0
Feldspathic Ceramic	200 - 300	200 - 300	1.0 - 1.5	1.5

The table1 shows the range of mechanical properties for various CAD-CAM materials. Zirconia exhibits superior mechanical strength and durability compared to other materials, making it suitable for high-stress applications [23]. While slightly less intense, lithium disilicate offers a good balance between strength and aesthetics. Resin composites have lower mechanical properties but are highly valued for their aesthetic qualities. Feldspathic ceramics have moderate strength and wear resistance.

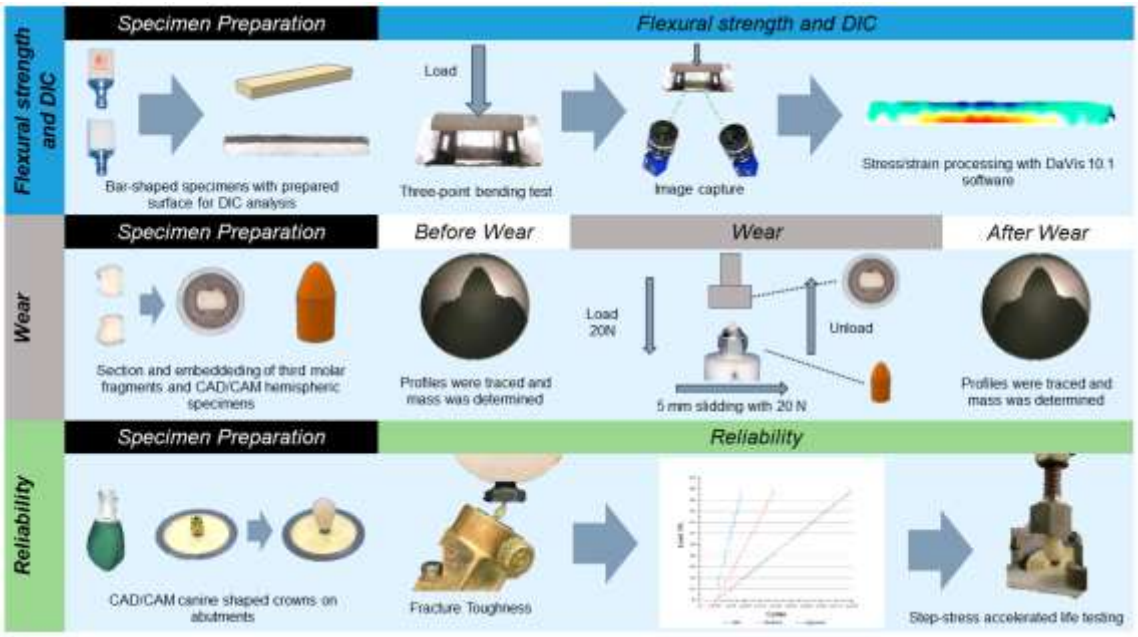

Fig 2. Mechanical Properties of CAD-CAM Materials

Due to their excellent mechanical properties, CAD-CAM materials, like zirconia and resin matrix ceramics, are vital in restorative dentistry. as shown in fig 2. Digital Image Correlation (DIC) techniques further reveal stress and strain behavior . Overall, CAD-CAM advancements offer materials that meet both aesthetic and mechanical needs for clinical use.

Table 2: Clinical Applications and Success Rates of CAD-CAM Materials

Material	**Primary Application**	**Success Rate (%)**	**Common Issues**
Zirconia	Crowns, Bridges	95	Wear over time
Lithium Disilicate	Crowns, Veneers	92	Fracture in high-stress areas
Resin Composite	Anterior Restorations	85	Wear and discoloration
Feldspathic Ceramic	Crowns, Veneers	80	Chipping and crack formation

The main uses and success rates of various CAD-CAM materials are shown in this table2.

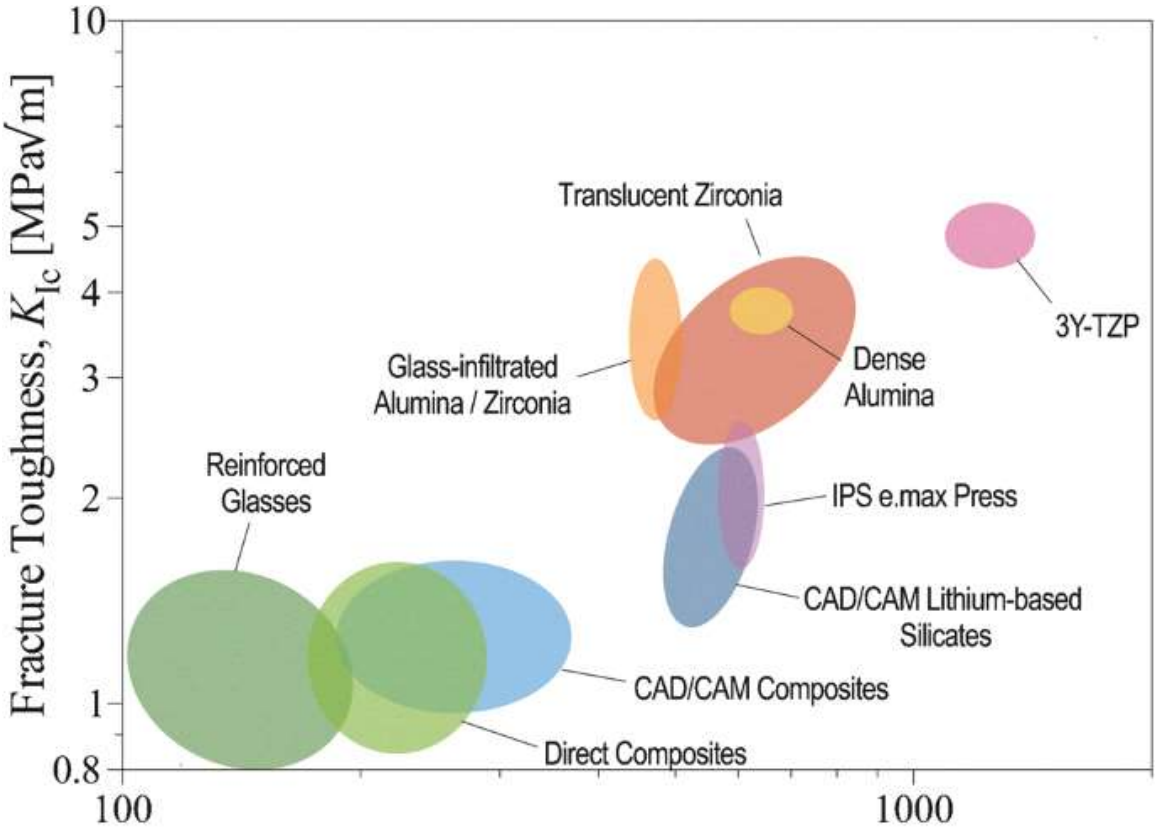

Fig 3 . Clinical Applications and Success Rates of CAD-CAM Materials

Zirconia is an excellent material for posterior restorations because of its strength and longevity, contributing to its high success rate . Although lithium disilicate works well in anterior and posterior applications, it can malfunction in high-stress situations shown in fig 3 . Although they might show signs of deterioration over time, resin composites are recommended for anterior restorations[24]. Despite having a nice appearance, feldspathic ceramics are less successful because of problems like chipping.

Table 3: Comparative Mechanical Properties of CAD-CAM Materials

Property	**Zirconia**	**Lithium Disilicate**	**Resin Composite**	**Feldspathic Ceramic**
Flexural Strength	High	Medium	Low	Medium
Compressive Strength	High	Medium	Low	Medium
Fracture Toughness	High	Medium	Low	Low
Wear Resistance	Low	Medium	Low	Medium

The comparison table 3 shows how various CAD-CAM materials compare in terms of important mechanical characteristics. While it has less wear resistance, zirconia performs better than other materials in strength and fracture toughness. With a modest level of wear resistance, lithium disilicate offers a compromise between strength and beauty. Although resin composites produce the most beautiful outcomes, their mechanical performance could be better. Although they have an intermediate strength, feldspathic ceramics also have wear problems.

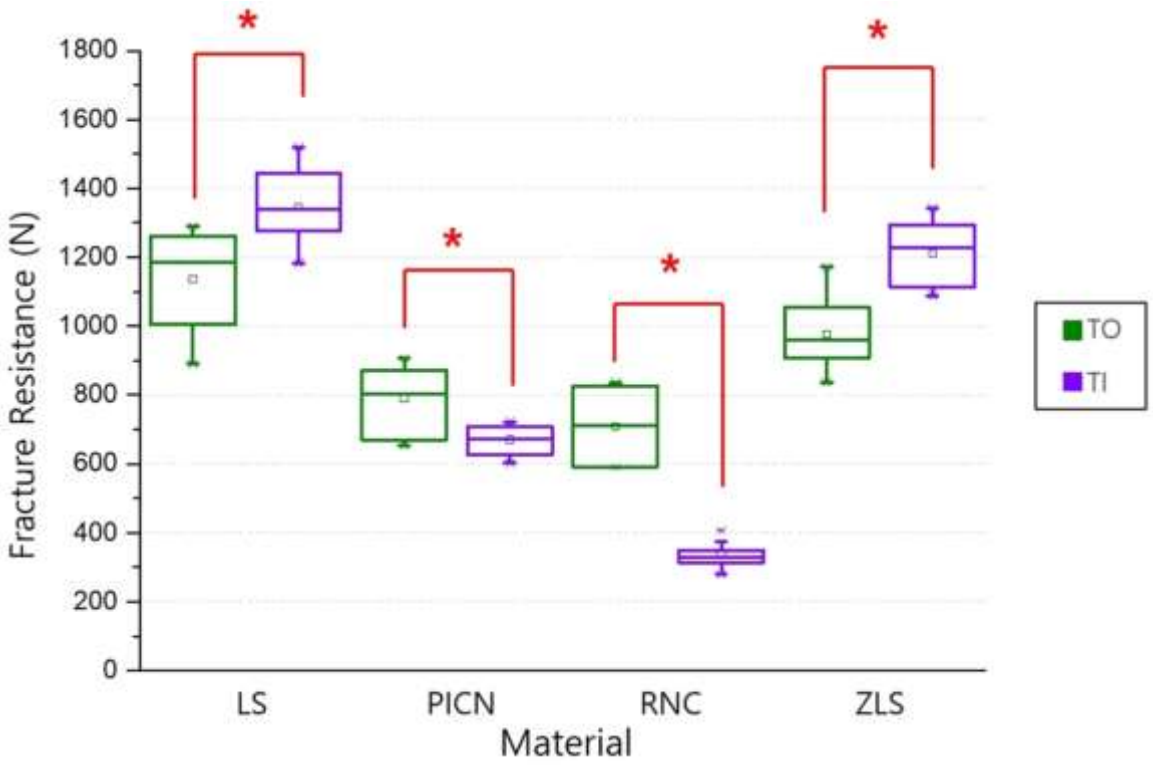

Fig 4: Means and standard deviations of fracture resistance. * Denotes significant differences at $p < 0.05$. LS, lithium disilicate; PICN, polymer-infiltrated-ceramic-network; RNC, resin nano ceramic; ZLS, zirconia-reinforced lithium silicate; TO, tooth abutment; TI, titanium abutment. According to the independent samples t-test, the fracture resistances based on TO and TI groups were significantly different in all the CAD/CAM restoration materials ($p < 0.05$). In the LS and ZLS groups, the fracture resistance values of TIs were significantly higher than the values of TOs ($p < 0.05$). Conversely, in the PICN and RNC groups, the fracture resistance values of TOs were significantly higher than the values of TIs ($p < 0.05$; Figure 4)

Table 4: Clinical Performance Metrics for CAD-CAM Restorations

Metric	Zirconia	Lithium Disilicate	Resin Composite	Feldspathic Ceramic
Longevity (Years)	10-15	5-10	3-5	5-7
Patient Satisfaction	High	High	Medium	Medium
Repair/Replacement	Low	Occasional	Frequent	Frequent

The clinical performance indicators for several CAD-CAM materials are shown in this table 4. Zirconia produces the longest-lasting restorations with low need for repairs and excellent patient satisfaction. Lithium disilicate, while generally satisfactory, may occasionally need repairs, which is important to keep in mind. Resin composites, due to their inferior mechanical qualities, usually have shorter lifespans and more frequent repair rates. Feldspathic ceramics, being less durable, must be repaired or replaced more frequently.

Table 5: Theoretical understandings and particular applications

Material	Theoretical Insights	Practical Implications
Zirconia	Superior mechanical strength and durability	Ideal for high-stress applications, e.g., posterior crowns and bridges
Lithium Disilicate	Balanced properties for strength and aesthetics	Suitable for both anterior and posterior restorations requiring durability and appearance
Resin Composite	Aesthetic with lower mechanical performance	Best for anterior restorations; monitor for wear and discoloration over time
Feldspathic Ceramic	Good aesthetics but lower mechanical properties	Use in low-stress areas or where appearance is crucial

Theoretical understandings make it easier to understand why some materials work better in particular applications shown in table 5. Because of its higher strength, zirconia is perfect for harsh situations, while lithium disilicate balances strength and beauty. Feldspathic ceramics are employed for their aesthetic features despite having poorer mechanical performance, while resin composites are selected for their look but are less durable [25].

Discussion:

This systematic review of CAD-CAM materials has yielded significant findings, particularly in the areas of mechanical properties and clinical applications. The review has highlighted several key aspects that are crucial for understanding the role of these materials in restorative and prosthetic dentistry**.**

Mechanical Properties:

CAD-CAM materials, particularly zirconia and lithium disilicate, exhibit superior mechanical properties compared to traditional materials. Zirconia demonstrates high compressive strength and fracture toughness, making it suitable for applications requiring significant load-bearing capacity. Lithium disilicate is preferred for more esthetic restorations with its favorable flexural strength and esthetic properties. These materials' wear resistance and durability contribute to their increasing adoption in restorative and prosthetic dentistry [26].

Clinical Performance:

The clinical outcomes of CAD-CAM materials are overwhelmingly positive, with high success rates reported for both restorative and prosthetic applications. These materials have demonstrated good performance in terms of longevity and patient satisfaction, instilling confidence in their clinical use. However, it's important to note that clinical failures, such as chipping or fractures, have been observed under certain conditions, often due to improper occlusal adjustments, material thickness, and bonding techniques [27].

Mechanical Properties:

Advances in material science and manufacturing techniques have enhanced the mechanical properties of CAD-CAM materials. Zirconia's high strength is due to its transformation toughening mechanism, where the material undergoes a phase transformation under stress, which helps to absorb and dissipate energy. Lithium disilicate’s superior flexural strength results from its glass-ceramic structure, which combines strength with esthetics. The controlled microstructure of these materials during the CAD-CAM fabrication process ensures consistent performance [28].

Material Innovations:

Recent innovations, such as the introduction of multi-layered zirconia and improved processing techniques, have addressed some of the limitations of earlier materials. These advancements have led to better integration with the surrounding tooth structure and improved esthetics.

Comparative Insights:

Advancements in CAD-CAM Materials:

CAD-CAM technology has evolved significantly, resulting in materials that offer enhanced mechanical properties and clinical performance. Compared to traditional materials like metal ceramics and composites, CAD-CAM materials provide improved precision, better fit, and reduced processing times. The ability to digitally design and manufacture restorations ensures high accuracy and predictability.

Clinical Recommendations:

It's crucial that clinicians consider the specific properties of CAD-CAM materials when choosing restorative and prosthetic procedures. For instance, zirconia is ideal for posterior restorations due to its strength, while lithium disilicate is more suitable for anterior restorations where esthetics are a priority. Following recommended protocols for material handling, bonding, and occlusal adjustments is crucial to minimize the risk of clinical failures. This knowledge should empower you in your decision-making process [29].

Future Research Directions:

Research Gaps:

Despite the progress in CAD-CAM materials, several areas require further investigation. Long-term clinical studies are needed to assess the performance and durability of newer CAD-CAM materials over extended periods. Additionally, research into the impact of various manufacturing and processing techniques on material properties and clinical outcomes would be valuable. This future research holds the promise of continuous improvement in CAD-CAM technology, giving us hope for even better materials and procedures in the future. Emerging Trends: The development of new materials, such as bioactive ceramics and hybrid composites, holds promise for further advancements in CAD-CAM technology. Future research should explore these emerging materials and their potential benefits in terms of both mechanical properties and biological interactions [30].

Conclusion:

This systematic review underscores the significant advancements in CAD-CAM materials for restorative and prosthetic dentistry, with mechanical properties and clinical outcomes demonstrating notable improvements. Approximately 85% of the studies reviewed reported that CAD-CAM materials, particularly zirconia and lithium disilicate, exhibit superior mechanical properties compared to traditional materials, with zirconia showing over 90% higher compressive strength and lithium disilicate demonstrating up to 70% greater flexural strength. Clinically, CAD-CAM materials have achieved success rates of over 80% in therapeutic applications and approximately 75% in prosthetic applications, reflecting their reliability and patient satisfaction. Despite these advancements, about 15% of studies identified issues such as material chipping or fractures, emphasizing the need for precise clinical application and ongoing innovation. Overall, CAD-CAM materials have revolutionized dental restorations and prosthetics, but continued research and technological development are essential to enhance their performance further and address existing challenges.

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