INTRODUCTION: The word 'Myth' is derived from the Greek word "Mythos", meaning the stories passed by a group of certain population having a strong impact on seeking general and dental treatment even during illness.

AIM: The aim of this study was to access the prevalence of dental myths among the young population and to interpret their level of knowledge, awareness and perception.

MATERIALS AND METHOD: A cross-sectional questionnaire survey was conducted amongst 500 young population of age between 18-28 years between May to August 2020, COVID-19 pandemic period. A pretested validated questionnaire was formatted on Google forms and circulated in various social media platforms. The collected data was subjected to statistical analysis.

RESULTS: The mean age of the study population was 22.66±2.38 years, and 59% were females and 41% were males. About 65% (325) and 56% (280) of the study subjects believed correctly that mouthwash alone will not maintain oral health and chewing gum will not clean their teeth, respectively. When asked about their responses in case of pain in oral cavity, most people 46% (230) reported they would visit a dentist and major segment of study subjects 56% (281) believed that there can be more methods for treating oral pain other than the extraction of the tooth itself.

CONCLUSION: The result of this study revealed that the younger population are more aware and didn't believe much regarding various dental myths.

KEYWORDS: Beliefs, Population, Community
believed among young population of age between 18-28 years. The study was conducted during the COVID-19 lockdown period. A pretested and validated electronic questionnaire assessing the knowledge, awareness and perception of young adults regarding prevalent dental myths was framed on online filling format using Google forms. Then the link was circulated on various social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Messenger and Instagram, with a note explaining the purpose of the study.

The questionnaire was designed in accordance with the factors believed by people traditionally, mostly with the close-ended questions and a few open-ended questions to offer the subject the opportunity to express his/her views. The study was conducted between 21st May 2020, and 7th August 2020. The participants were asked to complete and submit the responses. It took about 5-7 minutes to complete the survey. Form limiter was used to limit multiple responses from same participant and to limit the data collection up to 500 responses.

The questions were framed to access the knowledge, awareness and perception of dental myths among the young population. Data was analyzed by the t-test using SPSS version 16.0

RESULT
A descriptive cross-sectional survey was conducted to evaluate the prevalence of dental myths among the young population. The age of the study population ranged from 18-28 years (Mean - 22.66; SD+2.38, Figure 1) and 295 (59%) were females and 205 (41%) were males (Figure 2).

When questioned about ‘brushing pattern and techniques’, 67% (335) considered erroneously that bleeding while brushing was not an important sign for poor gingival health and almost 68% (343) reported that they would stop brushing if their gums started bleeding.

About 65% (325) and 56% (280) of the study subjects believed correctly that mouthwash alone will not maintain oral health and chewing gum will not clean their teeth, respectively. When asked about their responses in case of pain in oral cavity, most people 46% (230) reported they would visit a dentist and major segment of study subjects 56% (281) believed that there can be more methods for treating oral pain other than the extraction of the tooth itself. When questioned that "Is it okay to have a decayed tooth if it doesn’t cause any pain?", 61% (305) of the study subjects agreed that it was not okay, also 58 % (292) acknowledged that teeth will not always regrow in place of the extracted decayed teeth and about 62% (314) of study subjects admitted that extraction of wisdom teeth will not lead to loss of wisdom. Additionally, most of the study subjects, 65% (326), denied the generally dispersed myths regarding the malalignment of teeth that irregularly placed tooth was fortunate. When questioned about the artificial tooth replacements, 68% (344) didn't agree with the shared myth that artificial tooth was extracted from another human.

According to the study subjects, the food items causing tooth stains ranged from tea/coffee (28%), chocolate(15%), beverages(8%), banana stem(5%), and...
| QUESTION                                                                 | RESPONSE                          | N   | %   |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----|-----|
| Do you think bleeding while brushing is normal?                         | Yes                               | 99  | 19.8|
|                                                                         | No                                | 335 | 67  |
|                                                                         | May be                            | 66  | 13.2|
| If your gums are bleeding, will you still brush your teeth?             | Yes                               | 157 | 31.4|
|                                                                         | No                                | 343 | 68.6|
| Do you think scaling (Tooth Cleaning) will make your teeth weak?        | Yes                               | 116 | 23.2|
|                                                                         | No                                | 204 | 40.8|
|                                                                         | May be                            | 126 | 25.2|
| Do you think cleaning with salt water or gargling makes your teeth white or shiny? | Yes                               | 145 | 29  |
|                                                                         | No                                | 201 | 40.2|
|                                                                         | May be                            | 119 | 23.8|
| Do you think using mouth wash alone is enough to maintain good oral health? | Yes                               | 137 | 27.4|
|                                                                         | No                                | 325 | 65  |
|                                                                         | Don’t know                        | 38  | 7.6 |
| Do you think retention of milk tooth (deciduous tooth) is normal?       | Yes                               | 149 | 29.8|
|                                                                         | No                                | 225 | 45  |
|                                                                         | Don’t know                        | 126 | 25.2|
| Do you think treating milk tooth is not necessary as they will exfoliate? | Yes                               | 140 | 28  |
|                                                                         | No                                | 171 | 34.2|
|                                                                         | May be                            | 92  | 18.4|
| Do you think placing the exfoliated upper deciduous teeth in cow-dung and lower teeth in roof top will make the permanent tooth to erupt straight? | Yes                               | 69  | 13.8|
|                                                                         | No                                | 228 | 45.6|
|                                                                         | May be                            | 81  | 16.2|
| Do you think extraction of teeth is the only way for immediate relief of pain? | Yes                               | 91  | 18.2|
|                                                                         | No                                | 281 | 56.2|
| How do you prefer to treat a painful teeth?                             | Salt with hot water               | 156 | 31.2|
|                                                                         | Clove oil                         | 87  | 17.4|
|                                                                         | Camphor                           | 27  | 5.4 |
|                                                                         | Visit dentist                     | 230 | 46  |
| Do you think that any of the following will reduce pain?                | Alcohol                           | 34  | 6.8 |
|                                                                         | Tobacco                           | 25  | 5   |
|                                                                         | Aspirin                           | 168 | 33.6|
|                                                                         | None of the above                 | 273 | 54.6|
| Do you think dental treatments are always painful?                      | Yes                               | 120 | 24  |
|                                                                         | No                                | 202 | 40.4|
|                                                                         | May be                            | 142 | 28.4|
| Do you think extraction of teeth is the only way for immediate relief of pain? | Yes                               | 91  | 18.2|
|                                                                         | No                                | 281 | 56.2|
|Question                                                                 | Yes | No  | May be | Don’t know |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|-----|--------|------------|
|Do you think removal of upper teeth will cause loss of vision?          | 56  | 257 | 75     | 112        |
|Do you think teeth lost due to caries / mobility will lead to short sightedness? | 69  | 238 | 65     | 128        |
|Do you think it is okay to have a decayed tooth if it doesn’t cause any pain? | 84  | 305 | 59     | 52         |
|Do you think irregularly placed tooth or gap between teeth is lucky?    | 74  | 326 | 53     | 47         |
|Do you think artificial teeth are natural teeth that are extracted from another human? | 57  | 344 | 40     | 59         |
|Do you think removal of wisdom tooth will lead to loss of wisdom?       | 58  | 314 | 47     | 8          |
|Do you think all dental treatment during pregnancy should be avoided?   | 212 | 102 | 101    | 81         |
|Do you think oral health has relationship with rest of the body?        | 298 | 99  | 53     | 50         |
|Do you think chewing gum will clean your teeth?                         | 98  | 280 | 91     | 31         |
|Do you know that there are two types of dentition in human beings?      | 243 | 88  | 55     | 114        |
|Do you think teeth will always regrow in the place of extracted decayed tooth? | 84  | 292 | 69     | 55         |

**Table 1.** Responses of study subjects according to their knowledge, awareness and perception of dental myths.
miscellaneous included turmeric, colouring agents, pan chewing, candy etc (table 1).

The belief in myths were compared between male and female study subjects and the findings are as follows: When questioned about whether placing the exfoliated upper deciduous teeth in cow dung and lower teeth in roof top will make the permanent tooth to erupt straight, it was observed that more number of females had answered correctly when compared to males and the difference was significant statistically (p=0.000). Also, greater number of females has answered correctly that tooth extraction was not the solitary manner for pain relief when compared to males, and the difference was significant statistically (p=0.000). Similarly, more number of females believed that removal of wisdom tooth will not lead to forfeiture of wisdom and artificial teeth were not extracted teeth from another human being when compared to males ant it was significant statistically (p=0.000, table 2).

**DISCUSSION**

Twentieth century had an upright revolution in both general and oral health in history. India has a lesser economical resource to meet the over-all population's oral health treatment requirements and this crunch is accompanied by an immense disease burden and a low literacy rate. Several factors prompt to false belief on oral health care and treatment. This also compels them to learn supplementary means of dismissing pain such as home remedies rather than consulting a professional dentist. Paul Broca stated that "the least questioned assumptions are often the most questionable". Many researches and studies were conducted among various population to assess their knowledge and awareness regarding dental myths. Since most of the myths and plenty of misconception stands out more than any other when it comes to oral health. The present study aimed to assess the acquaintance and mindfulness among the youngsters on numerous dental myths and oral practices which are widespread in India.

In the present study, 40.4% preferred neem stick for brushing and in the study conducted by Saumyendra V. Singh et al., 56.7% of participants preferred the use of datoon or tree twig. The short coming of the neem stick includes gingival trauma and occlusal wear.

According to the current study, only 23.2% of the subjects reported that scaling will make their teeth feebler with gap formation, scraping /wear of enamel or mobility and it was similar with the earlier study conducted by Kiran et al. where 24.6% of their participants perceived similar misconceptions of scaling. In another study done by Harshada Ragunathan et al. in an out-patient department of a dental college, reported that about 65.9% of participants responded that professional scaling caused sensitivity which they concluded was due to their lack of awareness. This was in contrast to the present study conducted among the younger population who were more aware about oral hygiene treatment procedures.

The present study displayed 28% of the subjects believed that the treatment of milk tooth was not necessary as they will exfoliate in the future. Whereas, in a study conducted by Sharma R et al. about 58.7% of their participants and in a study by Yadav P et al., 46% of their subjects felt that treatment of milk tooth was not necessary as they would be replaced by permanent teeth.

For a long time, placement of tobacco was thought to relieve pain and the same was believed for the analgesic effect. But when a question was asked, which of the following will reduce pain, 6.8% of the participants reported as alcohol, 5.0% reported as tobacco and 33.6% reported as aspirin and surprisingly almost 54.6% of the participants reported as none of the above will actually reduce pain. But in the study conducted by Sharma R et al. and Raina SA et al. showed around 49.4% of their participants believed in the analgesic action of cloves in decayed teeth. It was found that only 17.4% of the participants in the present study believed the same. The clove oil contains active ingredient eugenol, which helps to numb and reduce pain to ease tooth ache but it was not the permanent solution. Smaller proportion of the population believe that using clove as a permanent solution and did not consider dental treatment as a mandatory option for permanent relief.

In the present study 51.3% of participants asserted that loss of vision will not occur after the extraction of upper teeth whereas only 11.2% believed this myth, which is almost similar to the study done by Saravanan N et al., where 20% of their respondents believed in this myth. But it is very much contrast in the study conducted by Gambhir RS et al., where 72.8% of participants believed that extraction of upper teeth leads to vision loss. This might be because of the inappropriate local anaesthetic block which may lead
| QUESTIONS                                                                 | OPTIONS                        | MALE | FEMALE | p-value |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|------|--------|---------|
| Do you think placing the exfoliated upper deciduous teeth in cow-dung and lower teeth in roof top will make the permanent tooth to erupt straight? | Yes                            | 46   | 23     | 0.000   |
|                                                                          | No                             | 78   | 150    |         |
|                                                                          | May be                         | 32   | 49     |         |
|                                                                          | Don’t know                     | 49   | 73     |         |
| How do you prefer to treat a painful teeth?                              | Salt with hot water            | 80   | 76     | 0.001   |
|                                                                          | Clove oil                      | 32   | 55     |         |
|                                                                          | Camphor                        | 16   | 11     |         |
|                                                                          | Visit dentist                  | 77   | 153    |         |
| Do you think that any of the following will reduce pain?                 | Alcohol                        | 20   | 14     | 0.003   |
|                                                                          | Tobacco                        | 17   | 8      |         |
|                                                                          | Aspirin                        | 61   | 107    |         |
|                                                                          | None of the above              | 107  | 166    |         |
| Do you think dental treatments are always painful?                       | Yes                            | 32   | 88     | 0.001   |
|                                                                          | No                             | 84   | 118    |         |
|                                                                          | May be                         | 68   | 74     |         |
|                                                                          | Don’t know                     | 21   | 15     |         |
| Do you think extraction of teeth is the only way for immediate relief of pain? | Yes                            | 50   | 41     | 0.000   |
|                                                                          | No                             | 91   | 190    |         |
|                                                                          | May be                         | 43   | 32     |         |
|                                                                          | Don’t know                     | 21   | 32     |         |
| Do you think removal of upper teeth will cause vision loss?              | Yes                            | 36   | 20     | 0.001   |
|                                                                          | No                             | 90   | 167    |         |
|                                                                          | May be                         | 31   | 44     |         |
|                                                                          | Don’t know                     | 48   | 64     |         |
| Do you think teeth lost due to caries / mobility will lead to short sightedness? | Yes                            | 45   | 24     | 0.000   |
|                                                                          | No                             | 82   | 156    |         |
|                                                                          | May be                         | 24   | 41     |         |
|                                                                          | Don’t know                     | 54   | 74     |         |
| Myth                                                                 | Yes | No   | May be | Don’t know | P-value |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|------|--------|------------|---------|
| Do you think artificial teeth are natural teeth extracted from another human? | 38  | 125  | 14     | 28         | 0.000   |
| Do you think removal of wisdom tooth will lead to loss of wisdom?   | 37  | 106  | 20     | 42         | 0.000   |
| Do you think oral health has no relationship with the rest of the body? | 54  | 102  | 24     | 25         | 0.002   |
| Do you think chewing gum will clean your teeth?                     | 55  | 94   | 41     | 15         | 0.001   |
| Do you know that there are two types of dentition in human beings?  | 77  | 42   | 30     | 56         | 0.001   |

Table 2. Distribution of dental myths based on gender

In the present study, 42.4% participants believed that dental treatments during pregnancy should be avoided. In the study conducted by Vignesh R et al. about 56.8% respondents consider that it was better to avoid dental treatment during pregnancy. This shows their lack of knowledge about oral health. Periodontal diseases in the mother may have harmful effects on the developing foetus. Pregnant women with periodontal diseases are at greater risk of having a pre-term or low birth weight babies and high levels of cariogenic bacteria in mothers can lead to increased dental caries in the infants. Preventive oral health care facilities should be provided during pregnancy.

Dental procedures such as diagnostic radiography, periodontal treatments, restorations and extractions are safe and are best performed during the second trimester. If examination indicates a need for scaling and root planing or other periodontal treatments, the procedures can be scheduled early in the second trimester. Because periodontitis has been associated with several poor pregnancy outcomes, although the mechanism remains unclear and the controversy exists. The most common oral disease during pregnancy is gingivitis, as it is aggravated by fluctuations of...
The study was conducted in Lucknow District with a rural population of 18-28 years old. The participants believed that extraction was the only treatment to get rid of ill-fitting teeth whereas in the study conducted by Priyanka S et al. declared that cut brinjals could also stain teeth. The present study found that 56.2% of the participants denied extraction as the only treatment to get rid of ill-fitting teeth. In this study, participants responded that if they had a toothache, they preferred to visit a dentist. The younger population had better knowledge and did not believe in tittle-tattle and desire to be told about others log. Because of the influence of models and social media, younger population desires not to have crooked teeth since it may forbid their level of confidence and charm. The present study showed that 64.4% of the study population believed that irregularly placed tooth or gap between tooth was lucky. This suggests that the present population had more awareness which might be due to the ease in access to the internet and ease of approach to the private dental care.

CONCLUSION

The questions in the present study were unique and consisted of common myths prevailing in India. The results of this study conclude that the younger population have better knowledge and do not believe in tittle-tattle and desire to be told about others log. Evidence based dentistry progress the evidence meritoriously in dental practices. Decrypting the myths by accompanying targeted scientific programmes by the dental health care professionals, non-government and government health organisations to prevent many dental problems and to provide successful treatment. Measures to achieve equal utilisation of dental services and curbing of dental myths at grassroots level can be achieved through introducing the basics of oral hygiene as a part of primary education.

Acknowledgement: We like to thank all the participants in the study for their cooperation.

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Cite this article as:
Mary VA, Kesavan R, Keerthana S, Kiruthiga G, Kowsalya M, Pooja R. Dent-O-Myths Amid Young Community: A Cross-Sectional Study. Int Healthc Res J. 2020;4(8):OR1-OR9. https://doi.org/10.26440/IHRJ/0408.1367

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Source of support: Nil, Conflict of interest: None declared

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