



## MAHATMA GANDHI MISSION'S DENTAL COLLEGE & HOSPITAL

Accredited by NAAC with "A++" Grade  
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### **CULTURAL BELIEFS AND ORAL HEALTH PRACTICES AT BUDDHA VIHAR, NEW PANVEL**

**Date: 7<sup>TH</sup> December 2026**

**Venue: Buddha Vihar, New Panvel**

**Faculty: Dr. Sujata Hirave, Dr. Ragini Sanaye**

**Organizing Agency: Department of Public Health Dentistry MGMDCH; NSS unit of MGMDCH**

**Number of Students attended: 4**

Oral health is an essential component of overall health and well-being. Cultural beliefs, traditions, and local practices significantly influence the way individuals maintain their oral hygiene and seek dental care. In many communities, oral health practices are shaped by long-standing customs, home remedies, and misconceptions passed down through generations through oral communication.

The Department of Public Health Dentistry at MGM Dental College and Hospital organized a community dental health camp focusing on "**Cultural Beliefs and Oral Health Practices.**" The camp aimed to understand the cultural influences affecting oral health behaviours and to educate the community about scientifically recommended oral hygiene practices.

#### **Aim and Objectives:**

- To identify common cultural beliefs and traditional practices related to oral health.
- To evaluate the community's knowledge and attitude toward oral hygiene.
- To educate individuals about proper oral health practices.
- To correct misconceptions regarding dental diseases and treatment.
- To encourage regular dental check-ups and preventive oral care.

## Method:

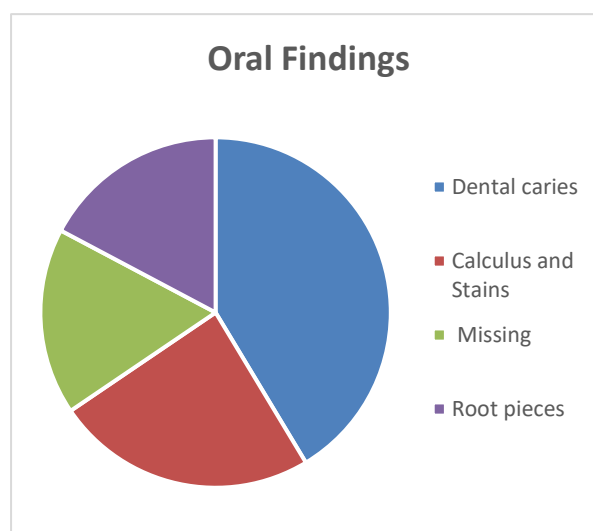
The camp was conducted at Buddha Vihar, New Panvel by the Department of Public Health Dentistry, MGMDCH. A structured questionnaire was used to collect information regarding the participant's oral hygiene habits and cultural beliefs associated with oral health. Type III oral examinations were carried out using sterilized instruments under adequate illumination.

Health education was delivered through interactive sessions, demonstrations of proper brushing techniques, and distribution of informational pamphlets. Participants were also counselled individually regarding the importance of maintaining good oral hygiene and seeking professional dental care when required.

**Observations:** A total of 29 individuals participated in the camp out of which significant number of participants relied on traditional practices such as using neem sticks, charcoal, or salt for cleaning teeth. Some individuals believed that tooth extraction could lead to loss of eyesight or general weakness. A few participants preferred home remedies over professional dental treatment for toothache and gum problems. However, many participants showed willingness to learn and adopt better oral health practices after receiving proper guidance.

## Oral health status:

Findings	No. of individuals	Percentage %
Dental caries	12	42
Calculus and Stains	7	24
Missing	5	17
Root pieces	5	17



### Interpretation and conclusion:

The camp highlighted the strong influence of cultural beliefs on oral health behaviors within the community. Out of 29 individuals, it was found that 12 had dental caries, 5 had missing teeth and root pieces and others had varying grades of calculus and stains. While some traditional practices such as the use of neem sticks may have certain benefits, many misconceptions and inadequate practices can contribute to poor oral health outcomes. Some individuals believed that tooth extraction could lead to loss of eyesight or general weakness. A few participants preferred home remedies over professional dental treatment for toothache and gum problems. In conclusion, integrating cultural understanding with oral health education is essential for improving community oral health and promoting preventive dental care.



Investigations done by the Dental Team

### **List of Attendees**

<b>Sr. No</b>	<b>List of Participants</b>
<b>Name of faculty</b>	
1.	Dr. Sujata Hirave
2.	Dr. Ragini Sanaye
<b>Name of Interns &amp; students</b>	
3.	Inash Kharbe
4.	Devashree Kamble
5.	Pratik Palve
6.	Tanmay Kamodkar