



Has COVID-19 Improved Public Awareness on Oral Hygiene?

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Dear Editor-in-Chief

Since the onslaught of COVID-19 started in China at the end of 2019, many governments across the world have actively propagated the importance of hand hygiene, and social distancing. Although Sampson, has highlighted that COVID-19 complications are related to high bacterial load in the mouth, not many media have promoted the role of oral hygiene in controlling of COVID-19 (1). However, general hygiene stress seems to have resulted in increased awareness of the importance of maintaining oral hygiene among the common public.

This phenomenon is observable from information available at Google Trends (<https://trends.google.com/>) as shown in Fig. 1. For India, as an example case for showing public interest over time, the hits scores related to oral hygiene since the middle of 2019. An average line indicates a positive improvement of interest over time for oral hygiene in India, especially after reporting the first case of COVID-19 in 30/01/2020 (2). Not only India but also worldwide interest over time shows improvement, especially after Mar 11th when WHO made the as-

essment that COVID-19 can be titled as a pandemic(3). Comparison of the worldwide interest for two periods, past three months and the same period in 2019, indicated that the average of 52.5 hits for oral hygiene keywords upgraded to 53.5. Common people seem more conscious about their oral hygiene after the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. This trend is in line with the observations of Bains and Bains who had indicated that oral hygiene may reduce the morbidity and mortality related to COVID-19 (4).

Researchers were invited to study empirically our hypothesis that the COVID-19 had positively improved people's oral hygiene awareness. Whether it is caused by Covid-19 or coincided with it, governments must do their part by improving their propaganda on oral hygiene to keep the trend up even after the pandemic.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.



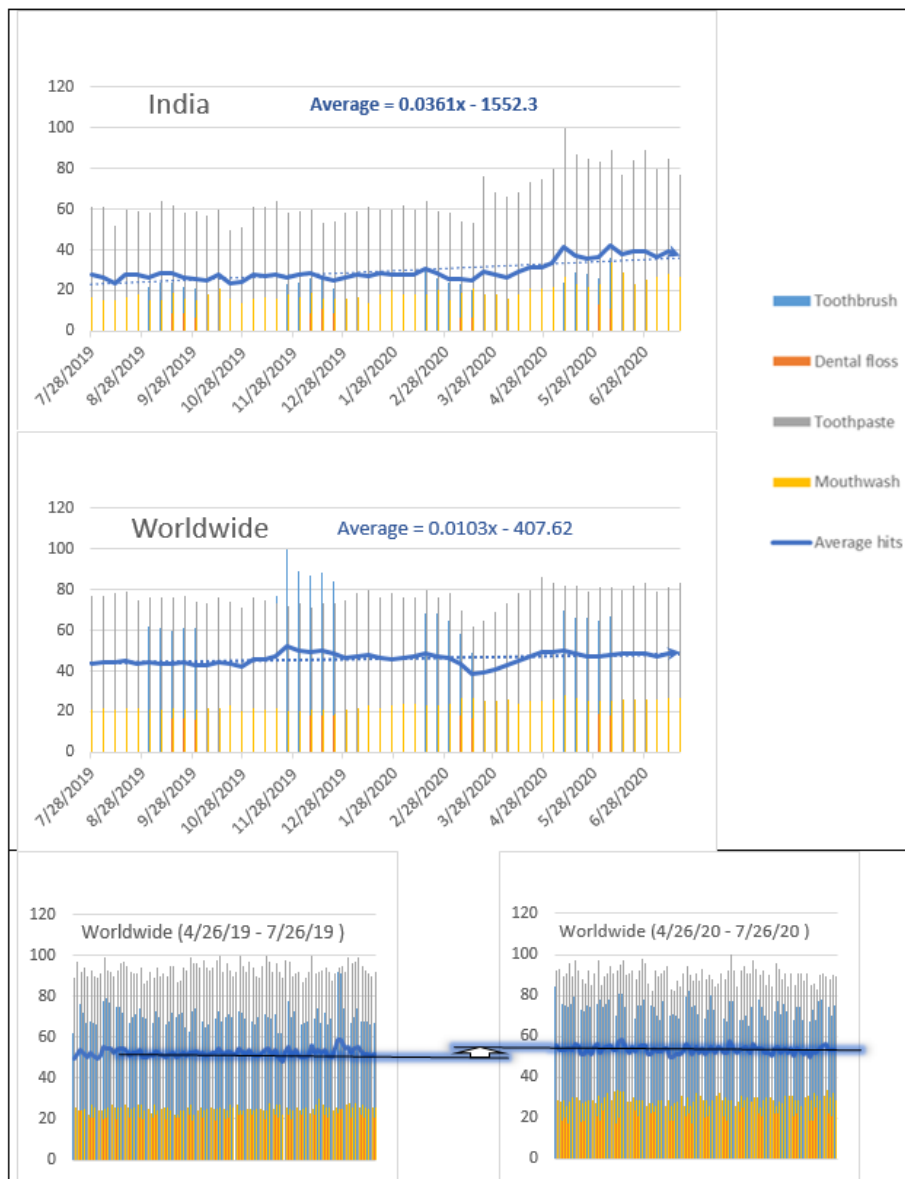


Fig. 1: Google trend Clustered column charts

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