

### A Study of Beliefs Towards Social Myths in Context of Area

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#### Abstract

*The myth which is common to a large group of people as opposed to an individual myth is known as Social myths. Social myths are an integrative part of every society or any social system. It serve as the beliefs and interest of different social groups and culture across the world. It had been created in the past to live in harmony but now it has no significance. The present study has been undertaken by the investigator to identify the beliefs of urban and rural students towards social myths. To find out the existence of beliefs over social myths, 80 students were selected and assess different aspects among urban and rural students. Investigator made a checklist for data collection which had components like menstruation, transgender, disability, solar eclipse, and other common beliefs, it contains 20 statements. After statistical analysis, data reveals that both urban and rural students had very less beliefs.*

**Keywords:** Beliefs, Social Myths, Students, Harmony, Social Transformation

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### Introduction

Different historical periods have different myths and these myths play important role in every society. It is one of the main factors in shaping the culture globally. It would say that myths not only the foundation of culture but also the source of philosophy. Myths is a usually traditional story of ostensibly historical events that serves to unfold part of the world view of a people or explain a practice, belief, or natural phenomenon (Merriam-Webster Dictionary).

Social myth is a system of semiotic values that has an ontological status and is actual for a certain society during a certain period of its development. As R. Barthes affirms, myth makes social, cultural, ideological and historical things turn into "natural" (the phenomenon of mythical inversion). Social myths in a various ways interconnect with a society and are an integrative part of any social system. It express the interests of different social groups and can be used as a tool of power or object of quasi-religious belief, etc. (Andriyenko, 2008)

A social myth is always an unevenly calibrated mixture of reality and fiction (myths are both factual and fictional), of reason and emotion, of consciousness and unconsciousness, of truth and falseness. Social myths is common to a large number of people of a society but it is restricted to some lofty ideas such as freedom, equality, democracy and peace (Bouchard, 2016). The process of creating myths takes place in every society, but the highest level of this activity can be observed in times of dramatic social transformations when old and new mythologies coexist in social consciousness to maintain harmony within social system. Usually this coexistence is very far from harmony. In the context of social transformations, myths have the meaning of ideological convictions or objects of quasi-religious belief. A rapid change in social order is a serious stress for practically all members of the social community. When any rational planning does not correspond to reality, general strain is often realized in the active creation of social myths. Social myths often include the idealist project

of the future social development (Lustin, 2016). In India, people follow same tradition and ritual as followed in past and take it granted. Social myths is adopted as tradition without any rational viewpoint. If people beliefs blindly, the progress of society slows down or cease that indirectly affect the harmony. Education is the best tool to eradicate these myth as the perception of new generation is different from the old one, and it hinders the growth of individual, in turn, development of Nation.

### Literature Review

**Mocan, N. and Pogoreleva, L. (2017)** carried out a study on ‘Compulsory schooling laws and formation of beliefs: Education, religion and superstition’ and found that more education, due to increased mandatory years of schooling, reduces individuals’ propensity to believe in the power of lucky charms and the tendency to take into account horoscopes in daily life. This study use data from European Values Survey to apply the empirical design using micro data to analyze the impact of schooling on superstitious beliefs.

**Chakraborty, S. And Gogoi, M. (2016)** carried out “A Study on Superstitious Beliefs of the Secondary School Students of Dibrugarh District of Assam”. The study revealed that many superstitious beliefs still exists among the people of Dibrugarh District. The study also revealed that the rural students are more superstitious than urban students. Moreover, the students studying in English medium schools are less superstitious than the students studying in Bengali medium schools and Assamese medium schools.

**Kalita, M. (2016)** studied Prevalence of Superstitious Belief among the (ST) Scheduled Tribe Students of Nalbari District. In the paper, two hypothesis formulated and no significant difference between Male and Female towards superstitious beliefs was found and in case of second hypothesis also no significant difference between graduate and Post-Graduate students towards superstitious beliefs was observed. The investigator has tried to draw attention of all kinds of educated people towards the harmful effects of superstitions in the society and put forward suggestions to make a society free from social evils due to superstition in India.

**Raut, P. et al. (2015)** ‘Need for Counselling Services to Get Rid of Negativity Linked with Menstruation- A Study among Late Adolescent Rural Girls in Central India’. A community based cross-sectional study, was carried out in different schools & local colleges in Seloo village, Wardha(MS), India during July-December 2014. Out of 350 adolescent girls, majority of the girls 211(60.3%) belonged to joint family and class IV socioeconomic status 241(68.9%). Among 350 girls, 274(78.3%) girls had negative reactions towards menstruation

like feeling upset (34.57%), scared (23.43%), guilty (7.71%), and shameful (18%). The reasons contributing to negativity were mainly false cultural beliefs/myths, conduct of the surrounding individuals, society with the girls during the menstrual period, boredom with regard to restriction of physical activities, period of isolation, pain & discomfort associated with menstruation.

**Shiah Y.J. et al. (2010)** studied 'Paranormal Beliefs and Religiosity: Chinese Version of the Revised Paranormal Belief Scale'. The study investigated the relations of paranormal beliefs with religiosity in Chinese sample. It was concluded that the greater involvement of practitioners of traditional Chinese religions in activities emphasizing paranormal experiences might contribute to their greater paranormal belief, especially as compared to the minority Christian group. The results are consistent with the idea that Christianity may offer the least support for paranormal belief.

### **Objective:**

The purpose of the study to select the group was to ascertain whether the social myths still hold a value in belief system of urban and rural students in current scenario with following objectives-

1. To examine beliefs of urban and rural students of Teacher's University, Gandhinagar.
2. To compare the beliefs towards social myths among urban and rural students of Teachers University, Gandhinagar.

### **Research Methodology:**

Methodology is the study of description, explanation and justification of methods employed in conducting a research. Here survey method used in descriptive research method. Descriptive research describes, clarifies, analyses and interprets present situation.

### **Hypothesis formulated for the study:**

Hypothesis is, "tentative generalization of the validity which remains to be tested". The null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) applied to study the beliefs towards social myths in context of area.

**$H_1$ :** There is significant difference between mean scores of beliefs towards social myths of urban and rural students.

**$H_0$ :** There is no significant difference between mean scores of beliefs towards social myths of urban and rural students.

The steps followed for the present study were

- a) **Type of research:** As the research is related to practical problems, it is applied research.
- b) **Sample-** The total 80 students were taken for the present study by random sampling which consists of 43 urban students and 37 rural students from Teacher University, Gandhinagar.
- c) **Method and tool used-** Investigator used survey method for the study and prepared a checklist consist of total 20 items. The items included menstruation, transgender, disability and some common beliefs. Higher the score, more the beliefs and lower the score, less the beliefs towards social myths.
- d) **Collection and analysis of data-** The students from Teacher University, Gandhinagar were selected to collect the data. For the analysis and interpret the data, t-test and percentage have been applied.

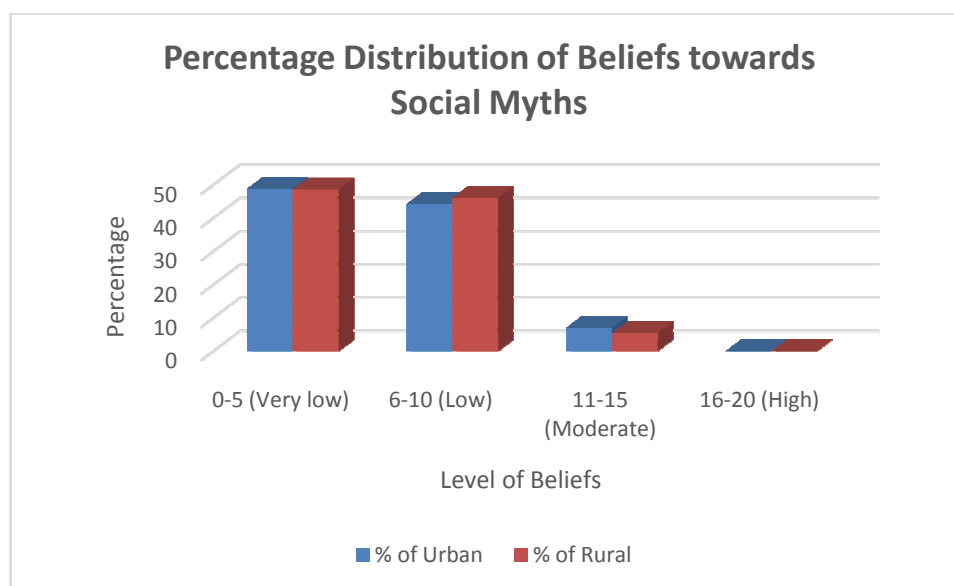
## Result and discussion

To investigate the beliefs towards social myths among urban and rural students, the study were undertaken. Analysis and data interpretation in the form of mean, standard deviation and t-test was done on the basis of score obtained by the students.

**Table 1:** Frequency and percentage of urban and rural students under different level of beliefs towards social myths.

Frequency (Level)	% of Urban	% of Rural
0-5 (Very Low)	48.8	48.6
6-10 (Low)	44.2	46
11- 15 (Moderate)	7.0	5.4
16-20 (High)	0	0

The above data shows that majority of urban and rural respondents were fall under low beliefs. The study found that 48.8% of urban students and 48.6% of rural students were having beliefs of very low level followed by 44.2% of urban students and 46% of rural students having low beliefs. While 7% of urban students and 5% of rural students having moderate beliefs, reflecting the maximum number of students have less beliefs. There is no beliefs on extreme level in both the cases.



**Fig 1:** Percentage distribution of beliefs towards social myths

The histogram shown above depict the percentage distribution of beliefs towards social myths of urban and rural students.

**Table 2:** t-ratio and level of significance to compare beliefs towards social myths of urban and rural students

Group	N	Mean	S.D.	t-ratio	Level of Significance
Urban	43	5.79	3.38	0.34	**
Rural	37	5.54	3.14		

\*\* Significant at 0.05 level

The table shows that the mean score of urban students was 5.79 and standard deviation was 3.38 and the mean score of rural students was 5.54 and standard deviation was 3.14. The value of t-Ratio is 0.34 which is less than the table value of t-Ratio (1.98 at 0.05). It is not significant at 0.05 level of significance. So the null hypothesis is accepted.

**Major Findings:** Social myths has existed in every society and because of variety in myths, it is difficult to generalize. The main finding of the study is

- 1) Maximum response obtained had very low beliefs towards social myths.
- 2) 48.8% urban respondents and 48.6% rural respondents were under the category of very low beliefs as very low score obtained, 44.2% urban and 42% rural have low beliefs, and on moderate beliefs urban have 7% and rural have 5.4 % beliefs. In both cases, zero score obtained for high beliefs.
- 3) There is no significant difference between the mean score of beliefs towards social myths of urban and rural students.



In the present study, urban and rural respondents have almost same or no beliefs towards social myths.

### Recommendations and suggestions

- 1) The study can be conducted on large samples of a Gujarat state and other state also.
- 2) A comparative study can be conducted between the people of different levels of education.
- 3) The study can be conducted between school teacher and college teachers.
- 4) This study can be conducted using different tools.
- 5) This study can also be conducted including scientific attitude, socio-economic status.

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