

Forgiveness and Death Anxiety in Tribes: A Review

Jamadar C*

*Maharani's Arts College, Mysore, Karnataka, India.

Received February 20, 2020; Revised March 16, 2020; Accepted March 18, 2020

ABSTRACT

Karnataka is home to 42,48,987 tribal population. Among them 50,870 belong to the primitive group. Although these individuals represent 6.95 percentage of the total population of Karnataka, they undoubtedly add onto the cultural heritage of the state. Deep in the darkness of the Nagarhole forest resides several groups of tribes, they are, Jenu Kurubas (honey gatherers), Betta Kurubas who are also known as (gatherers of forest produce), Hakki-Pikki (bird trappers) and Yeravas (cultivators). These tribes lived a nomadic life collecting and gathering food and fuel, such as, fruits, tubers, honey and dry wood (non-timber) for their basic sustenance. Hence, they completely depended on forest for their day today requirement. These tribes speak a variant from Kannada that is, "jenu-nudi", which is a dialect of Kannada.

The aim of the study was to review the forgiveness and death anxiety among tribes. The participants of this study were the adult tribes that encompassed 25 females and 25 males, in the age range of 20-70 years and they were residents of the Shattahalli Camp Hunsur, Mysore district (Karnataka). After considering the adaptability, nature of living and the socio-cultural practices of these tribes, it was evident that forgiveness was high and death anxiety was low among the tribal population as per the researcher's observation. Tribes are synonymously known as the primitive people; by studying about them we can draw lessons to lead a healthy and happy life.

Keywords: Forgiveness, Death anxiety, Culture practices

INTRODUCTION

Nagarhole National Park also called as the Rajiv Gandhi National Park is located 50 km away from the Mysore city. Nagarhole National Park was set up in the year 1955 along with the Bandipur National Park, Mudumalai National Park and the Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary, which is the largest wildlife protection area in South India.

In 1988, this area got the status of National Park and was declared as a Tiger Reserve in the year 1999. Thus, in the year 1999-2000, the tribal families were asked to move out of the forest area, as per the implementation of [1]. Since then 487 families have been relocated in the nearby villages such as Sollepura and Shettihalli, in the Hunsur district. The rehabilitated tribes in Shettihalli were given Rs 10 lakh compensation including the land for agriculture.

Today the tribes of Nagarhole forest live in Hadis/ Hamlets which are located at the interior as well as in the periphery of the forest. These tribes rarely mingle with other tribal communities that reside nearby. After relocation, these tribes are working as daily labourers for the landlords in the nearby plantations. The literacy rate among them is 47.66 percentage

(according to the report – tribes in Karnataka: status of health research).

Socio-cultural practices

Tribal population is known for their traditional as well as socio-cultural practices. The tribes of Nagarhole are not indifferent from them.

Family and kinship

The nuclear family pattern is commonly found among these tribes wherein, the elderly male member is the head of the family. The female member-only assists the male head. Thus, the male head of the family decides the economic, social and religious matters, which is accepted without questioning. An

Corresponding author: Chandrakanth Jamadar, Post Graduate Department of Psychology, Maharani's Art college, JLB Road Mysore, PIN-570005, Karnataka, India; Tel: (0)9738757666; E-mail: mscbrain@gmail.com

Citation: Jamadar C. (2022) Forgiveness and Death Anxiety in Tribes: A Review. J Psychiatry Psychol Res, 5(2): 304-306.

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early marriage that is, between 12-18 years, is preferred. After marriage, the newlywed couples start to live independently. Consanguineous marriage is commonly found [2].

Religious practices

The tribes of the Nagarhole forest living in Shettihalli, has given up several traditional tribal practices and has adopted various customs and practices of the Hindu tradition. Although they worship nature and offer prayers to the tree god in the Nagarhole forest, they also visit temple which has been built in the Shettihalli camp.

Forgiveness

Forgiveness can be defined as the propensity to forgive. Forgiveness encompasses two components that are, the interpersonal Forgiveness and intrapersonal Forgiveness [3,4]. The interpersonal component is the expression of Forgiveness in the direction of others whereas intrapersonal component recognizes the psychological aspect of Forgiveness, such as the desire to forgive an individual [5,6]. Previous research studies have suggested that Forgiveness is low among the tribal's.

Death anxiety

Death is an inevitable end of all living beings. Human beings experience fear of death because unlike other species there is human beings have an awareness of one's mortality [7]. The reaction towards death varies across individuals [8,9]. Some welcome it, some don't openly discuss it and some others try to forget it due to its haunting nature. Death anxiety can be defined as the anxiety caused by conscious and unconscious fear of death and dying. Previous research endeavours have suggested that death anxiety is high among the tribal.

The research study "Forgiveness and death anxiety in tribes" was conducted on a sample of 50 adult tribes that encompassed 25 females and 25 males, in the age range of 20-70 years [10]. The respondents were from the Shattahalli Camp Hunsur, Mysore district (Karnataka). It was noted that these tribes were the one who was asked to leave the Nagarhole forest after the implementation of the Karnataka Forest Act, 1963. Hence, these tribal people were rehabilitated in the nearby Shattahalli village; they were provided residence and land for agriculture (one newly built house and 3 acres of agricultural land per family) by the government of Karnataka.

In this research, the tribes were scaled in a continuum for forgiveness and death anxiety in different levels that is, either high average or low [11]. But the disposition of forgiveness and death anxiety its self has several aspects and hence the study could have highlighted the dimensions of forgiveness and death anxiety [12].

The study held an objective to find the level of forgiveness and death anxiety among tribes apart from noting the difference in forgiveness and death anxiety among men and

women. This study could have employed a co-relational method to find out the influence of forgiveness on death anxiety or vice versa [13].

The hypothesis of the study stated that women have greater forgiveness and death anxiety than the men but the results revealed that there was no difference in the levels of forgiveness and death anxiety among men and women, but the mean scores highlighted that forgiveness was comparatively high among women than in men, whereas the death anxiety was greater in men than in women.

Considering the adaptability, nature of living and the socio-cultural practices that these tribes follow, forgiveness could have been higher as the tendency to seek revenge when victimized or insulted was not so evident among these tribes as per the researcher's observation. However, the death anxiety was low among these tribes, which are following the researcher's observation. Such results could be due to the reason that the questionnaire used in this study was not standardized on the tribal population [14].

Henceforth, in this research study "Forgiveness and death anxiety in tribes", the result reveals that Forgiveness is average and Death anxiety is low among the tribes. This kind of results was obtained due to the difference in nature of the living condition that encompasses the factors [6]. Such as, the nature of the living condition, socio-cultural aspect and the religious practices followed by the tribes residing in the Shettihalli, Hunsur district.

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