

Religious Practices amongst Adolescents: A Human Geographical Research with the Kurumbas tribe at Velarikombai, Western Ghats, India

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Abstract: Religion is a collection of systems like values, principals, beliefs, etc. which makes human beings focus on their spiritual and moral life. Numerous religions have their individual sanctified places and divine books. The eventual motives behind all these faiths are to make human beings as holy beings and prepare them for the everlasting life after death.

An adolescent, in the open-minded period, is a product of enhancement and culture in all magnitudes. A huge change around the sphere due to modernization has fetched in number of hitches for the adolescents of new generation to get along the religious life. In this case, many children turn out to be an atheist or losing interest to get along with the religion and its practices. This gentle fabrication of religious life is outlined in this current study among the adolescents existing in Velarikombai of Western Ghats, India.

Keywords- Religion, Adolescents, Kurumbas, Western Ghats.

I. Introduction

The word adolescence has arisen from the Latin verb "Adolescere" which means "to rise". It is a switch over phase from juvenile to adulthood. Adolescence not only fetches transformation in the body but also in the knowledgeable formula. These above variations have striking ups and downs on spiritual functioning. Erick. H. Erickson in his lyricsexpresses adolescences as "A period of rapid change- physical, physiological and social a time when all sameness and continuities relied upon earlier is more or less questioned again".

Religion in contemporary times plays a bubbly role in individual life as it takes control over their moral lives and standards. As scripture says there are roughly 2400 religions in the world which are trying to have control over man's lifecycle and mold them to the track of ceaseless life after death. There are different religious practices happening in different parts of the world. An estimate says that 59% of the world population gives importance to the religious practices and 23% of people do not give importance.

Kurumbas tribe in Velarikombai - A brief outlook

Kurumbas are reputable in the Sothern portion of India specifically in the Western Ghats. The name of Kurumba is seemed to be emerged from initial tending sheep occupation. According to the 1981 survey there were 4353 Kurumbas living in the Ghats. Their settlement is referred as "mottam". The Kurumba people are basically murky skinned, well built with a reasonable tallness. They are basically of people who consumes non vegetarian. Till date they practice cross cousin matrimony.

Kapp (1985) recognized six types of Kurumba clans in the Nilgris region of the Western Ghats. They are AluKurumbas, Mudugas, BettaKurumbas, JenuKurumbas, MulluKurumbas and UraliKurumbas. The AluKurumbas have their own dialect called Kurumbashe. Jenu&BettaKurumbas speak Kannada dialect. MulluKurumbas speak Malayalam as their mother tongue. Kurumbas in the earlier were hunters, but now they have taken a drift and started to accept many types of revenue generations programs. Kurumba people distinguish a person from their own community and make him presides over the Kurumba tribal assembly. Kurumbas were animists earlier and now they follow the Hindu cults and worship Kurumbadevaru and karupadeThayi as their gods and goddess inside their forests. They always live in a continual fear that wicked spirits try taking ownership on them. The terror among these evil spirits is named muniravala. For which they offer a buffalo sacrifice annually. Now a days Kurumbas started worshipping siva, bhadrakali, murugan, etc. AluKurumbas are experts in doing witchcraft by using their belief systems. MulluKurumbas worship boothadideivam as their god. Betta&JenuKurumbas worship billemamma, chikkamma, bhairava, mannivatha, bilsaladamma, etc. But most of the UraliKurumbas are still animistic and their community spirit is sannachatan.

Kurumbas are more into music. The men play harmony and the women dance for it. They use four types of music instrument. They are Kolu, Bugir, Are and Tambaute. Their dance is of two categories. They are Yennaattam and Gantesattam.

Western Ghats

The Western Ghats are the mountain ranging from the Deccan plateau to Kanyakumari in the south. It is also one of the famous spots of the biological diversity in the globe. It is the world heritage site of UNESCO. The range of mountains starts from south of river Tapi and ends in Kanyakumari at a distance of 1500 kilometers. The heights of these mountains average up to 1200 meters. There are around 5000 varieties of plants and plenty of animal varieties are found in these ranges. The Western Ghats comprises of many ranges and few of them are Nilgiris, Anaimalai, Sahyadris and Satpura. Among these peaks Anamudi is the tallest with the height of 2694 meters.

The climate in the Western Ghats is a little humid. The average temperature found in these hilly areas is around 15°C. Sometimes it also gets frozen in the winter seasons. During the south west monsoon, the coastlines of Maharashtra, Karnataka and Kerala receive a huge quantity of rainfall. Rivers like Godavari, Cauvery and Krishna take their roots from Western Ghats and finish their journey towards Bay of Bengal. There are other short rivers starting from these mountains and draining into the Arabian Sea. All these rivers are always dependent on the amount of rainfall through the monsoon.

The southern parts of the Western Ghats are very dense especially in the Nilgiris region. Many tribal people live in this thick forest for the past many years. Some well-known tribes of this region are Todas, Allar, Adiyans, Cholanayakans, Kots, Kader, Karimpalans, Mudugar, Malamalasar, Kurumbas, Malasar, Irulas, Malayan, Soligas, Paniyans, Kattunayakans, etc.

Review of Literature

W. Francis (Former Indian Civil Service Administrator) (1908) studied on "The Origin of Kurumbas of Nilgiris". The author has found that Kurumbas are the folks who were living at the regime of King Pallavas. When the Chola Empire conquered the Pallavas these people were devastated and for their defense they ran to the mountainous areas.

Edgar Thurton (Superintendent, Madras Government Museum & Member of a social Anthropology of Paris) researched on "Castes and Tribes of South India". The biographer found out that Kurumbas are fundamentally wood cutting people. They were formerly indistinguishable with the shepherd Kurumbas and their contemporary separation is purely the outcome of their isolation in the fastness of the Western Ghats, to which their ancestors fled, or gradually retreated after fled, or gradually retreated after the downfall of the Kurumba dynasty.

II. Research Methodology

Goals of the Study

1. To study the socio- demographic details of the school going children among Kurumba Tribe at Velarikombai.
2. To study the awareness of school going adolescents towards religious practices
3. To study how much importance the adolescents give towards religion.
4. To study how far the adolescents are able to lead a moral life through their religious practices.

Study Strategy

The researcher applied descriptive study plan. The descriptive study design suits this study as the researcher has tried to label only the religious life of school going adolescents in the Kurumba community at Velarikombai

Hypothesis

- Age might influence the religious life.
- Religion might influence the religious life.
- No. of family members might influence the religious life.
- Gender might influence the religious life.
- Type of family might influence the religious life.
- Monthly income of the family might influence the religious life.
- Level of education might influence the religious life.

Universe and Sampling

The Kurumba people who are living in Velarikombai are 327. The Scholar selected 60 respondents by using purposive sampling technique.

Tools of Facts gathering

The Researcher used discussion schedule to collect data from Velarikombai place for the study.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Distribution of respondents on the basis of their Age

<i>Age</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
13-14	19	31.7
15-16	21	35
17-18	20	33.3
Total	60	100

Among 60 respondents majority of the respondents 35 % (21) belong to the age group of 15-16, 20% (33.3) belong to the age group of 17-18 and 19 % (31.7) belong to the age group of 13-14.

Distribution of respondents on the basis of their Religion

<i>Religion</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Hindu	52	86.7
Christians	8	13.3
Total	60	100

Among 60 respondents majority of the respondents 86.7% (52) are hindus and 13.3% (8) are Christians.

Distribution of respondents on the basis of their family members

<i>No. of family members</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Less than 4	16	26.7
Above 5	44	73.3
Total	60	100

Among 60 respondents majority of the respondents 73.3% (44) have more than five members in the family, 26.7% (16) respondents have less than four members in the family.

Distribution of respondents on the basis of their gender

<i>Gender</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Male	28	46.7
Female	32	53.3
Total	60	100

Among 60 respondents majority of the respondents 53.3% (32) are females and 46.7% (28) respondents are males.

Distribution of respondents on the basis of their family type

<i>Type of family</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Joint	46	76.7
Nuclear	14	23.3
Total	60	100

Among 60 respondents majority of the respondents 76.7% (46) come from joint family type and 23.3% (14) come from nuclear family type.

Distribution of respondents on the basis of their family income

<i>Income (p.a.)</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Less than 30000	22	36.7
30001-40000	16	26.6
40001 & above	22	36.7
Total	60	100

Among 60 respondents, majority of the respondents' family 36.7% (22) earn less than 30000 p.a. 36.7% (22) respondents family earn more than 40001 p.a., 26.6 % (16) respondents family earn between 30001- 40000 p.a.

Distribution of respondents on the basis of their Education

<i>Education</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
6 th - 7 th grade	6	10
8 th - 9 th grade	26	43.3
10-11 grade	20	33.3
12 th & above	8	13.4
Total	60	100

Among 60 respondents majority of the respondents 43.3% (26) are doing their 6 & 7th grades, 33.3% (20) respondents are doing their 10th & 11th grades, 13.4% (8) respondents are doing their 12th grade & above, 10% (6) respondents are doing their 6th & 7th grades.

Distribution of respondents on the basis of their Religious life

<i>Religious Life</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Less	20	33.3
Moderate	24	40
High	16	26.7
Total	60	100

Among 60 respondents 40% (24) respondents have moderate level of Religious life, 33.3% (20) respondents have low level of religious life and 26.7% (16) respondents have high level of religious life.

Association between Age and Religious life

<i>Age</i>	<i>Low Religious life</i>	<i>Moderate Religious life</i>	<i>High Religious life</i>	<i>Total</i>
13-14	8(42.1 %)	9(47.4%)	2(10.5%)	19
15-16	6(28.6%)	9(42.9%)	6(28.6%)	21
17 & above	6(30%)	6(30%)	8(40%)	20
Total	20	24	16	60

Calculated Value = 4.667 df= 20

Chi square test was applied to find out the association between age and religious life. It is proved that there is no significant association between age and religious life.

Association between Religion and Religious life

<i>Religion</i>	<i>Low Religious life</i>	<i>Moderate Religious life</i>	<i>High Religious life</i>	<i>Total</i>
Hindu	15(28.8 %)	22(42.3%)	15(28.8%)	52
Christians	5(62.5%)	2(25%)	1(12.5%)	8
Total	20	24	16	60

Calculated Value = 3.570 df= 2

Chi square test was applied to find out the association between religion and religious life. It is proved that there is no significant association between religion and religious life.

Association between No. of family members and Religious life

<i>No. of family members</i>	<i>Low Religious life</i>	<i>Moderate Religious life</i>	<i>High Religious life</i>	<i>Total</i>
Less than 4	9(56.2%)	5(31.2%)	2(12.5%)	16
5 & Above	11(25%)	19(43.2%)	14(31.8%)	44
Total	20	24	16	60

Calculated Value = 5.497 df= 2

Chi square test was applied to find out the association between No. of family members and religious life. It is proved that there is no significant association between No. of family members and religious life.

Association between Gender and Religious life

<i>Gender</i>	<i>Low Religious life</i>	<i>Moderate Religious life</i>	<i>High Religious life</i>	<i>Total</i>
Male	11(39.3 %)	7(25%)	10(35.7%)	28
Female	9(28.1%)	17(53.1%)	6(18.8%)	32
Total	20	24	16	60

Calculated Value = 5.123 df= 2

Chi square test was applied to find out the association between gender and religious life. It is proved that there is no significant association between gender and religious life.

Association between Type of family and religious life

<i>Type of family</i>	<i>Low Religious life</i>	<i>Moderate Religious life</i>	<i>High Religious life</i>	<i>Total</i>
Joint	16(28.8 %)	14(42.3%)	16(28.8%)	46
Nuclear	4(62.5%)	10(25%)	0(12.5%)	14
Total	20	24	16	60

Calculated Value = 4.667 df= 20

Chi square test was applied to find out the association between type of family and religious life. It is proved that there is no significant association between type of family and religious life.

Association between family income and Religious life

<i>Family income(p.a.)</i>	<i>Low Religious life</i>	<i>Moderate Religious life</i>	<i>High Religious life</i>	<i>Total</i>
Less than 30000	8(36.36%)	4(18.18%)	10(45.45 %)	22
30001-40000	6(37.5%)	6(37.5%)	4(25%)	16
40001 & above	6(27.27%)	14(63.63%)	2(9.09%)	22
Total	20	24	16	60

Calculated Value = 45.125df= 20

Chi square test was applied to find out the association between age and religious life. It is proved that there is no significant association between age and religious life.

Association between Education and Religious life

<i>Education</i>	<i>Low Religious life</i>	<i>Moderate Religious life</i>	<i>High Religious life</i>	<i>Total</i>
6 th & 7 th grade	3(50 %)	2(16.7%)	1(33.3%)	6
8 th & 9 th grade	5(19.2%)	15(57.7%)	6(23.1%)	26
10 th & 11 th grade	8(40%)	4(20%)	8(40%)	20
12 th grade & above	4(50%)	4(50%)	0	8
Total	20	24	16	60

Calculated Value = 11.728 df= 6

Chi square test was applied to find out the association between education level and religious life. It is proved that there is no significant association between education level and religious life.

MAJOR FINDINGS

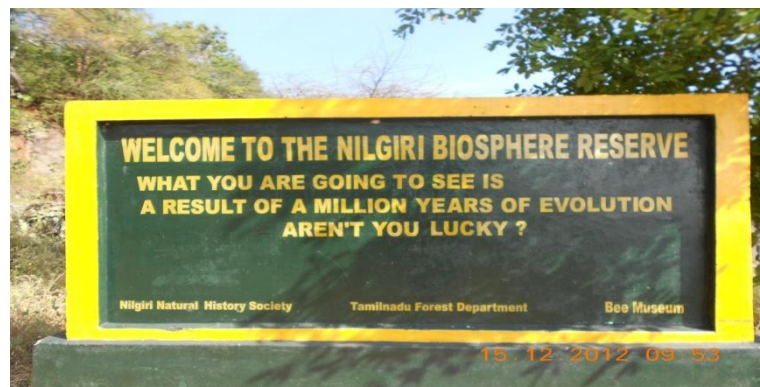
- Among 60 respondents 40% (24) respondents have less moderate level of religious life, 33.3% (20) respondents have low level of religious life and 26.7% (16) respondents have high level of religious life.
- There is no significant difference between the age and Religious life.
- There is no significant difference between the religion and Religious life.
- There is no significant difference between the No. of family members and Religious life.
- There is no significant difference between the gender and Religious life.
- There is no significant difference between the type of family and religious life.
- There is no significant difference between the monthly income and Religious life.
- There is no significant difference between the level of education and Religious life.

III. Conclusion

Religion is a body of cultural and principles that support individuals to emphasis on ethical standards. There are numerous religions across the sphere. There are different practices like sacraments, lessons, sacrifices, centenaries, music, supplications, meditations, etc. Some religions focus more on conviction whereas the others focus more on living. Religious life empowers people to distinguish life when it is labeled as a life focused towards individual flawlessness or a life which seeks God. Religious life is more of amalgamation with the God. The level of participation and following the principles of religion benefits the individual propagate more and more in the rapport with God.

India is known for its religious practices across the globe. But now in fashionable India these religious structures are sluggishly fading out. Especially the youths and the adolescents do not give supplementary importance to religious practices. It fluctuates from place to place. Usually people from the isolated areas or hilly areas will be very religious compared to the people of the metropolitan setting. This exploration clearly shows us about the level of interest among the school going adolescents in the Western Ghats of the Nilgris region towards religion. The affiliation of the children with the religion is just moderate and fewer. Very few actually have a thirst towards their religion. It is clearly seen that age, income of the family, level of education, As religion places an energetic part in lives of individuals by shaping their moral life, the parents should hearten the children to devote more time with the God and make sure they don't fall again by leading an unfruitful life.

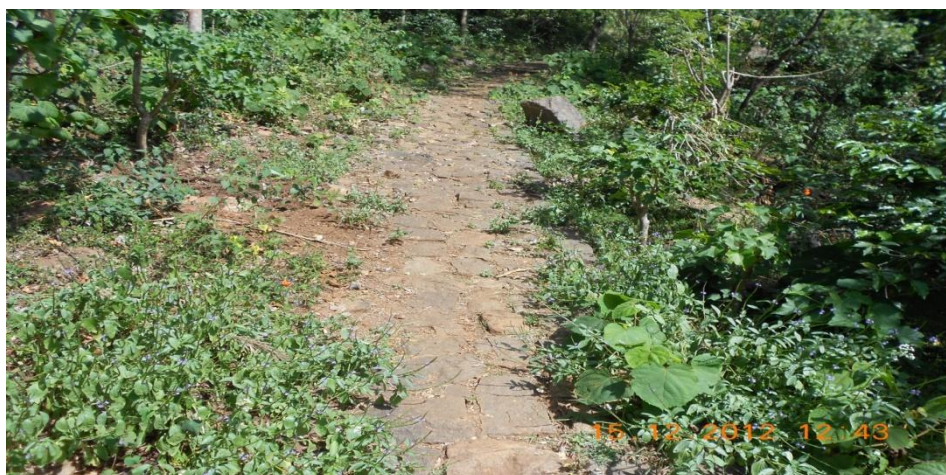
PHOTOS



Entering the Nilgris region of Western Ghats



Few school going adolescents in the area



On the way to Velarikombai... A dense forest

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