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SUPERSTITIOUS BELIEFS AND NEED FOR CENTRAL ANTI-SUPERSTITION LAW

M. Kowsalya Devi and A. Kirupanethi

Final Year BA LL.B Students of Government Law College Dharmapuri

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to underline the sources and historical practices of such beliefs. It should be made clear that the rationale behind such practice creates a mere nexus between phenomenon and objects which is questionable at the very origin of scientific thinking. In view of enormous differences behind these practices, a central Anti-Superstition law shall be made as a separate legislation to criminalise the Superstitious practices. to comprehend how superstition came to be in India. The objective of this study therefore is to draw attention to how different personalities have contributed to the mantle and Pandora of these beliefs being opened, to highlight the harm and backwardness it has brought about in our society, to highlight critical actions that must be done in order to alter people's perceptions.

1. INTRODUCTION

India is a secular country and also a multi-religious country well known for the traditional and cultural practices which makes India stand out from other nations. Indian laws are framed in such a way that no religion could be harmed or discriminated against. But every religious system accumulates certain superstitious beliefs. Superstition has been influential deeply when taken a look at history. This is because of having believed that religion is a belief system that relates humanity to spirituality. As a result of religious denomination, the practice of superstition becomes stronger.

2. SOURCES OF SUPERSTITIOUS BELIEFS

Every single person holds some sort of faith or belief that relates quietly to superstition. Occasionally, long-standing customs are labelled as superstitions even though they have a scientific basis. These individuals in positions of power also abuse these customs, turning them into laws, using them as a means of disinformation against specific people, or using them for personal gain. Some people even have a tendency to form their own personal superstitions. For example, a horse player might be certain that black horses are good runners.

Superstitious beliefs' sources:

- i. Captains
- ii. Seniors
- iii. Society
- iv. Creative narratives
- v. Academics
- vi. Legends

In India, superstition is regarded as a pervasive social issue. Superstitions are typically blamed on illiteracy. However, educated individuals have also been seen adhering to potentially superstitious beliefs in India. Every region has its own set of beliefs and customs, and many of them differ from one another. A harmless lemon and chilly totem for warding off evil eyes might be combined with more sinister customs like burning witches. Several of these customs and beliefs date back hundreds of years and are regarded as traditional.

Several of these customs and beliefs date back hundreds of years and are regarded as elements of religion and tradition. Therefore, there is frequent resistance to the introduction of new prohibitory laws.

One could argue that Indian superstitions and beliefs are inherited from one generation to the next. Nonetheless, some decisions were unavoidably supported by science, such as the recommendation that tulsi leaves be swallowed rather than chewed. This is because, despite their health benefits, tulsi leaves contain a trace amount of arsenic, which can erode enamel. A lot of Indians think that it's best to stay inside during an eclipse. The scientific explanation for this is that solar eclipses can result in "eclipse blindness" or retinal burns.

3. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In Ancient India:

Although the intelligents disapproved of it, superstitions and omens were widely believed in by people from all walks of life during that time. The sacrificial cult developed greatly in the Vedic cult. The horse sacrifice, or Ashvamedha, was the most well-known of them. The main goal of the sacrifice was to appease the gods so that benefits could be obtained from them. The length of a yajna, or sacrifice, is greatly increased in the Later Vedic Age, lasting anywhere from twelve days to a year or longer.

In Early Mediaeval India:

There are specific examples in the literature of superstitions clinging to even the most affluent members of society. The horoscope was always drawn shortly after a child was born in the Middle Ages. In addition to creating horoscopes, Akbar honoured the Hindu belief that "whenever God after long expectation has bestowed an auspicious child, he be not produced before the honoured father till after a long delay" by travelling to Fatehpur Sikri to see his newborn son Salim (Chopra, Puri and Das, 1974)

In Modern Day India

The country's social rigidity and illogical customs from the eighteenth century became glaring characteristics. Religious superstitions started to permeate every aspect of social life as a result of religions placing a higher value on outer form than on inner reality.

4. CAUSES AND EFFECTS

Superstition's foundation and source are delusional hopes, and it is founded on ignorance. Superstitions are egotistical, self-imposed ideas. The belief in supernatural influences, particularly their correlation with good or bad luck, is a common yet illogical practice. We must realise that we indulge in superstitions because we believe in them; we think that certain beliefs or certain rituals will benefit us. Superstitious behaviour can include rituals that we engage in to produce a specific outcome. The majority of people in our society believe that most religious people are superstitious. It is actually people's beliefs that give rise to superstition. Most people think superstition has an innate power and charm. Thus consider that practising a religion and practising superstition are completely different aspects.

The idea of superstition is generally widely employed; many of its characteristics remained ambiguous. Superstition in particular is closely associated with social components. It has its origins in extreme poverty and spreads quickly through people's thoughts, but because it has ingrained itself into the culture, it is very challenging to eradicate from our minds. Particularly in underprivileged. People's lives are made insecure and stressful by the high levels of social pressure and emotional stress in our society. We are aware that superstition is a common occurrence. It is actually a psychological idea. First, people develop psychologically on specific issues. Subsequently, they mentioned that their behaviour was psychologically causing matter to the outside world. Therefore, we can learn specific information in this field. Both positive and negative effects are present. Basically, superstition has a negative direct impact on society.

5. PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS

In the book 'Believing in Magic', author Stuart Vyse states that "the dividing line is when you give some kind of magical significance to the ritual." He is implying that not all customs or beliefs are superstitions when he makes this claim.

Superstition in Sports:

Athletes may find that, similar to repeating a mantra, developing a ritual before a game helps to focus and calm them. This is something that many coaches encourage. It is impossible to classify this as a superstition. However, you have crossed over into superstition if he thinks that tapping a ball a specific number of times wins the game. OCD is a condition marked by superstitions such as counting the times you tap a ball.

Superstition Related to Menstruation:

Menstrual-related beliefs India has perpetually been a country inhabited by deities. Indian society is life with erroneous beliefs that have no real purpose other than to feed the superstitious minds of those who are constantly afraid. One such cause is the menstrual cycle. Many laws pertaining to menstruation are merely the result of the greed that the members of this predominantly male society carry within them. Here are a few of them:

- When a woman is menstruating, she shouldn't go into the kitchen.
- A temple is off limits to women who are menstruating.
- Women who are menstruating are dirty and capable of spreading evil.
- The colour red is often associated with evil, impurity, and repulsiveness.
- Certain foods and daily tasks are off limits to women who are menstruating.

These superstitious beliefs has a direct impact on women's mental health whereby it makes them feel they are untouchables.

6. NEED FOR ANTI-SUPERSTITION LAWS

India is a country rich in diversity, culture, tradition, and religion. Each of these elements adheres to a distinct set of beliefs. Certain belief systems have clear explanations, while others are merely followed for the sake of tradition, culture, and religion. In our nation, religion serves as a pivot around which each Indian's life is centred. People frequently misjudge the fine line that separates religion from superstition, and this ignorance fuels a host of heinous crimes like witch hunts and

human sacrifice. Although there are laws against some superstitious crimes, they are not properly enforced. The current laws must be strictly enforced, and more legislation must be created. To effectively end these superstitious practices, its implementation must adhere to very strict guidelines.

7. CONCLUSION

It is evident from the foregoing explanation and observation that superstition is any irrational belief that is brought on by fear or a weak personality and that forces the human mind to hold superstitious beliefs. Because people are ignorant of scientific facts and truths, superstition develops. Superstition impedes the advancement of civilization and inspires a variety of crimes. Superstition has a greater impact on women and those who are emotionally weak. We are limiting ourselves by adhering to superstitious beliefs at a time when the world is progressing thanks to new technology. Superstition is therefore a major barrier to progress. The greatest way to solve this issue is through education. Improved public outreach initiatives have the power to partially eradicate superstition from people's minds and to bring about significant changes that will improve living conditions in India both now and in the future.