

Survey on Superstitious Beliefs of 18+ Population in Sangli-Miraj-Kupwad Municipal Corporation

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Abstract: *This study examined superstitious beliefs and anxiety among individuals aged 18 years and above and explored their association with socio-demographic variables. A descriptive cross-sectional survey was conducted with 241 participants selected through simple random sampling without replacement. Data were collected using structured questionnaires, including the Indian Superstitious Scale and the GAD-7 scale for anxiety. The findings showed that superstitious beliefs varied according to age, gender, marital status, education, family type, and occupation, while religion and place of residence had little influence. Females showed slightly higher superstition scores, and individuals aged 51–60 years reported comparatively higher beliefs. Anxiety levels were associated with age, marital status, and education. A small positive correlation was found between anxiety and superstitious beliefs, indicating that higher anxiety may be linked to slightly stronger superstitious beliefs.*

Keywords: *Superstitious Beliefs, Anxiety, Correlation, Mental Health, Socio-demographic factors, GAD-7, Cross-sectional survey.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Superstitions are common phenomenon in human society [1]. Superstitious beliefs are commonly observed in many societies and cultures across the world. Superstitious beliefs are widely prevalent in many cultures and societies across the world. These beliefs are often based on traditions, myths, religious practices, and cultural customs rather than scientific evidence. In India, superstitions have been deeply rooted in social and cultural life for centuries and continue to influence the daily behavior and decision-making of many individuals. People may follow certain rituals, avoid specific activities on particular days and believe in signs and omens to ensure good luck. Superstitious beliefs can play both positive and negative roles in people's lives. While some individuals consider them harmless cultural practices, others may rely on them to cope with uncertainty, fear, and stress. When individuals experience anxiety, they may adopt superstitious behaviors as a way to reduce stress and gain a sense of control over uncertain outcomes.

In the Indian context, superstitions related to astrology, omens, black magic, religious rituals, and traditional practices are commonly observed in different communities. These beliefs may vary according to age, education, socio-economic status, and cultural background. Understanding the relationship between superstitious beliefs and anxiety levels is important because excessive reliance on such beliefs may affect mental health, decision-making and overall well-being [3]. Therefore, studying superstitious beliefs and anxiety levels among Indian people is essential to explore how cultural beliefs interact with psychological factors. This research can help identify the extent of superstitious thinking in society and its association with anxiety, which may further contribute to developing awareness programs and psychological interventions to promote rational thinking and mental well-being. Psychological research suggests that such beliefs often arise when individuals try to explain uncertain or uncontrollable events in their environment [5].

In India, superstitious beliefs have been deeply rooted in cultural traditions and social practices for centuries. Various superstitions related to astrology, omens, rituals, black magic, and traditional customs continue to influence people's daily



lives and decision-making processes. Despite scientific and technological advancements, many individuals still follow these beliefs due to cultural inheritance, social influence, and lack of awareness [4].

Psychological factors also play an important role in the formation and persistence of superstitious beliefs. Anxiety is one of the major emotional factors associated with superstitious thinking [8]. Anxiety refers to a feeling of worry, fear, or uneasiness about uncertain situations or future events. When individuals experience anxiety or a lack of control over life circumstances, they may adopt superstitious behaviors as coping mechanisms to reduce stress and gain a sense of control. Research has shown that personality traits associated with emotional instability are often linked with higher levels of superstition [3].

Studies conducted in the Indian context also indicate that superstitious beliefs may vary depending on factors such as religion, education, culture, and psychological characteristics. Research among young adults in India has explored the relationship between superstitious beliefs, anxiety, and cognitive processing patterns, highlighting the complex interaction between cultural beliefs and psychological factors [2].

Understanding the relationship between superstitious beliefs and anxiety levels is important because excessive reliance on such beliefs may influence mental health, decision-making, and social behavior. Studying these factors among Indian people can help identify the extent to which cultural beliefs interact with psychological conditions such as anxiety. Such knowledge may contribute to promoting scientific thinking, mental health awareness, and rational decision-making in society.

Objectives:

- To assess the level of superstitious beliefs among people of aged 18 and above.
- To examine whether superstitious belief differ across gender.
- To find correlation between superstitious belief score and anxiety.
- To associate psychological and socio- demographic variables among people

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Superstitious beliefs have existed in human societies for centuries and continue to influence people's behavior even in modern times. According to Stuart A. Vyse in *Believing in Magic: The Psychology of Superstition*, superstition often develops from humans' natural tendency to search for patterns and meaning in uncertain situations. When individuals experience events that appear connected, they may develop rituals or beliefs that they think can influence outcomes. Similarly, Richard Wiseman and Caroline Watt suggested that superstitious beliefs, such as carrying lucky charms, often provide psychological comfort and a sense of control during stressful or unpredictable situations.

Research has also examined the relationship between superstition and personality traits. A study by B. Kulkarni, A. Matcha, and A. Patil found that individuals with higher levels of neuroticism are more likely to hold superstitious beliefs, possibly because they experience greater anxiety and emotional instability. In the Indian context, superstition continues to play an important role in everyday life. Studies by G. K. Sethi and N. K. Saini show that superstitions remain widespread in Indian society despite increasing education and modernization. To better understand such beliefs in India, S. An and colleagues developed the *Indian Superstition Scale*, which measures culturally specific superstitious practices. Additionally, anxiety in such studies is often assessed using tools like the *Generalized Anxiety Disorder-7* scale. Overall, previous research indicates that superstition is influenced by psychological needs, cultural traditions, and individual personality traits.

III. METHODOLOGY

The study targets aged 18 and above people at Sangli-Miraj-Kupwad Municipal Corporation. A cross-sectional survey was conducted to gather data. A population size is around 8 lakh and the sample size 241 is selected through Simple Random Sampling Without Replacement to ensure unbiased selection of sample units.



Data for the study were collected through an offline survey method. Participants were approached in person and asked to respond to a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of items measuring the relevant study variables and socio-demographic information. Respondents were informed about the purpose of the study and their consent was obtained before participation. They completed the questionnaire manually, and the responses were later compiled and entered into a digital format for statistical analysis.

The tools used for data collection consisted of structured questionnaire with different sections. Section I included demographic variables such as gender, age and religion. Section II(A) included the Generalized Anxiety Disorder Scale (GAD-7), which is standardized 7 item scale used to assess the level of anxiety among individuals [12]. Section II(B) consisted of The Indian Superstitious Questionnaire, which was used to measure superstitious beliefs [11].

IV. STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Graphical Representation:

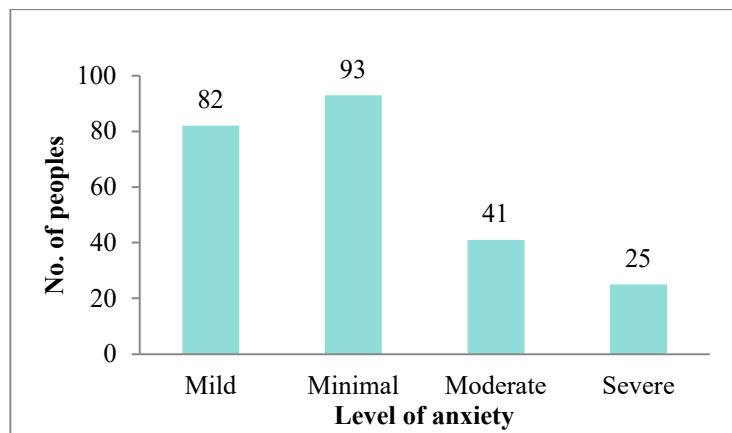


Fig. 1: The figure shows distribution of people according to their level of anxiety.

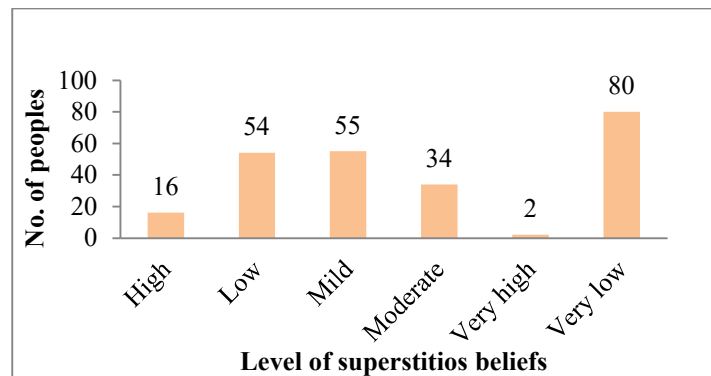


Fig. 2: The figure shows distribution of people according to their level of superstitious beliefs.



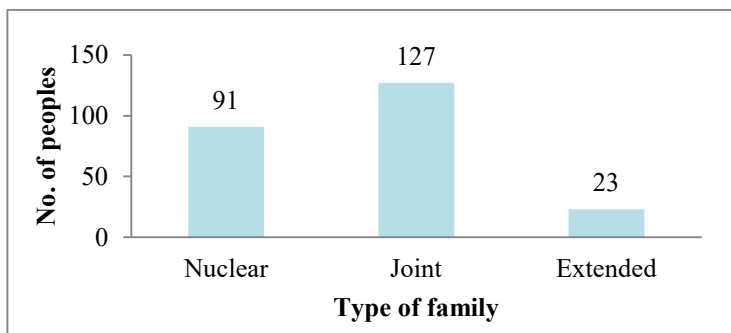


Fig. 3: The figure shows distribution of people according to their type of family.

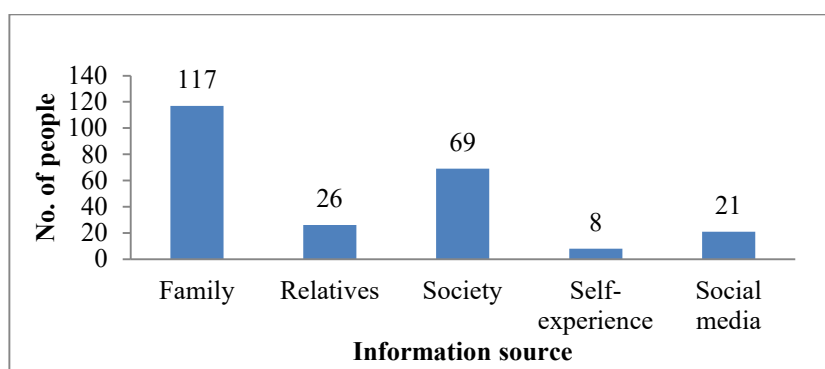


Fig. 4: The figure shows distribution of people according to Source of information.

TABLE I

To assess the relationship among Superstitious belief Scores and Anxiety of people, the Pearson's correlation coefficient is as follows,

	Anxiety	Superstition
Anxiety	1	
Superstition	0.501386	1

TABLE II

To check whether there is any association between level of superstitious beliefs and selected demographic variables the Chi-square test is used. The result of the test is as follows:

Hypotheses:

H₀: There is no significant association between level of superstitious beliefs and selected demographic variables.

H₁: There is significant association between level of superstitious beliefs and selected demographic variables.

Variables	Chi-square value	p-value	Result
Age	61.517	0.001	Significant Association
Gender	11.53	0.042	Significant Association
Religion	22.506	0.314	Not Significant Association
Marital Status	54.047	0.001	Significant Association



Educational Status	93.795	0.001	Significant Association
Occupation	65.572	0.001	Significant Association
Residence	17.675	0.061	Not Significant Association
Family Type	19.519	0.034	Significant Association

TABLE III

Now to check strength of association between level of superstitious beliefs and selected demographic variables the Cramer V test is used. The result of the test is as follows:

Variables	Cramer's v value	Association
Age	0.505	Moderate
Gender	0.219	Weak
Marital Status	0.273	Weak
Education	0.279	Weak
Occupation	0.522	Strong
Family Type	0.201	Weak

TABLE IV

Now to check whether there is any association between Anxiety level and selected demographic variables the Chi-square test is used. The result of the test is as follows:

Hypothesis:

H₀: There is no significant association between Anxiety level and selected demographic variables.

H₁: There is significant association between Anxiety level and selected demographic variables.

Variables	Chi-square value	P-value	Result
Age	34.287	0.012	Significant Association
Gender	6.387	0.094	Not Significant Association
Marital Status	23.981	0.004	Significant Association
Occupation	27.629	0.068	Not Significant Association
Education Status	39.791	0.001	Significant Association

TABLE V

Now to check strength of association between level of superstitious beliefs and selected demographic variables the Cramer V Test is used. The result of the test is as follows:

Variable	Cramer's v value	Association
Age	0.218	Weak
Marital Status	0.182	Weak
Education Status	0.406	Moderate

To check whether Superstitious Belief Scores of males and females are equal, the Mann-Whitney U test is applied.



Hypothesis:

H₀: There is no significant difference in superstitious belief scores across gender.

H₁: There is significant difference in superstitious belief scores across gender.

U Statistic: 5054.5

P-value: 0.012567

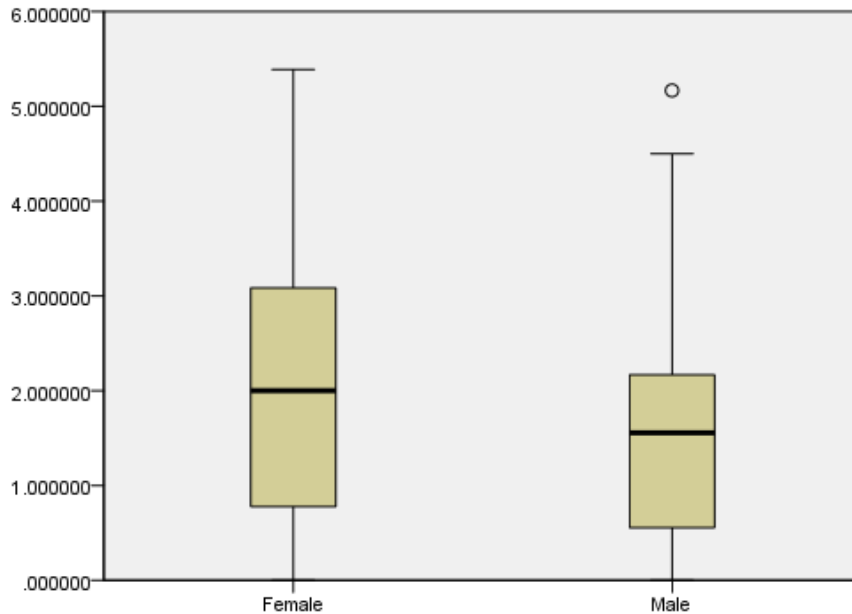


Fig. 5: The figure shows the comparison of superstitious beliefs between male and female.

IV. CONCLUSION

This study found that people aged 51–60 years tend to have slightly higher superstitious beliefs. These beliefs change depending on factors such as age, gender, marital status, education, family type, and occupation, but religion and place of residence do not seem to affect them much. Anxiety levels were found to be related to age, marital status, and education, but not strongly related to gender or occupation. The results also show that females had slightly higher superstition belief scores than males. Overall, there is a small positive correlation between anxiety and superstitious beliefs, meaning people with higher anxiety may also show slightly higher superstitious beliefs.

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