

## **SUPERSTITIOUS BELIEFS OF HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS, IN PATHANAMTHITTA DISTRICT OF KERALA STATE**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Superstition is a belief or practice resulting from ignorance, fear of the unknown, trust in magic or chance which is transferred from generation to generation. The assessment of superstitiousness, as a component of paranormal belief has encountered by many conceptual and psychometric difficulties (Harvey J. Irwin). Superstition is primarily ignorance. Men due to lack of proper culture and education, they hoped to be depended upon certain happenings. Effects of superstition on student life are mainly loss of concentration, lack of interest in studies, mental disorder and hampering the development of an individual's personality. To eradicate this, present study has made an attempt to study the superstitions of higher secondary School teachers by taking a sample of 200 teachers. The present study also aims to find out the difference, between the superstitious beliefs of higher secondary teachers, whose age is below 35 and above 35, teachers coming from village and town area and those who teach in government and aided higher secondary schools in Pathanamthitta District of Kerala State. The superstitions do not differ significantly between that groups classified in terms of age, place of residence and type of management. The analysis and interpretation are made, by us through authentic statistical techniques.

**KEYWORDS:** Superstitious Beliefs, Higher Secondary, School, Teachers, Pathanamthitta, Kerala

### **INTRODUCTION**

The word superstition is not a useful scientific term because one man's superstition is another man's religion or moral convention. It is a common and blind belief that, certain events bring good luck or bad luck, for a person and that happiness can be foretold, by specific unrelated prior events. Superstitious persons have faith in luck, ghosts, evil spirits, omens, supernatural powers, etc. They think that these powers govern our success and failure. The measurement of superstitiousness is to play a pivotal role in the development of interest, in the construct of paranormal belief. There are various traditions and beliefs that have been followed by Hindus, since ancient times. Most of these beliefs, it is argued nowadays are Superstitions, which people follow blindly for the fear of being cursed or harmed, by powers or God. However the research studies have shown now that, some of these beliefs or superstitions have scientific reasons associated with them. Therefore, it is hard to make out the boundaries of superstition and it is a belief which is irrational and mysterious or a tendency to gain privilege, from the supernatural powers. Thus, the form of a particular superstition may be decided by environmental and social factor, and the demand to cope with prevailing superstitions. The degree to which a person feels the desire or need to control events in their lives also influences how the superstitious a person is. The internal

and external locus of control is associated, with the belief in superstition.

### **Need for the Study**

A study related to the superstitions of teachers shall be of paramount importance to all; because teachers are the makers of the society. Therefore, a study on this direction shall have social, educational and philosophical values. The beliefs of the teachers are considered, to be associated with their quality and effectiveness; moreover there is a chance of transferring the same to the students. The blind belief on superstition from the minds of the teachers is to be eradicated, with the help of the study.

### **Review of Literature**

India is a veritable museum of superstitions. Instead of using the phrase ‘Superstitious belief’ it is better to use the phrase ‘Superstitiousness of a belief’. A belief which is most acceptable in the light of present day Scientific Knowledge can be considered as the least superstitious belief.

Superstition is primarily ignorance. Men due to lack of proper culture and education, it hoped to be depended and to some extent relied upon certain happenings, mostly in the nature of unexplainable. Belief in the ability to attract good luck provides a greater illusion of control than the belief that an event, such as breaking a mirror, unavailability brings bad luck by RICHARD MORRIS & MARK D GRIFFITHS (2013). The findings here provide preliminary support for the idea that superstition, paranormal belief, sensation seeking, impulsivity and irrational beliefs, about gambling related factors, probability and chances are involved in affinity for gambling. India is a land of superstitions and a child perceives, and devours superstitions from his/ her very childhood. People were scared in the Middle Ages and didn’t know, about the world and used superstitions as a way, to explain why and how things happened in the middle ages that’s why there is superstitions. If people in the middle ages would have known more about the world there probably wouldn’t be as many superstitions today, also religious people used superstitions to these advantages, as in to tell people that, this is what happens when you don’t do god’s will RUTHANNE CULBERT (2013).

We the superstitious engage in superstitious behaviors, in order to regain a sense of control in an otherwise uncontrollable situation KAITLYN HANISKO (2013). There is a relationship between gender and tendency, to superstition by ROGHAYYESH EBRAHIMI ZAD (21014) in Superstitious beliefs and some of its causes. The belief in superstitions is a general characteristic of a subject and not limited to a certain category of superstitions. The more a person is superstitious, the more it will allow more time performing rituals OLGA DOMNICA MOLDOVAN (2016).

### **Aim of the Study**

The study has been conducted to find out the level of superstitious beliefs of selected higher secondary school teachers. Also, we have to find out whether there is any significant difference, in superstitious beliefs among higher secondary school teachers, whose age is below 35 and above 35, teachers who are residing in village and town area, who are working in Government and Aided higher secondary schools in Pathanamthitta District of Kerala state. This study related to the superstitious beliefs of teachers shall be of paramount importance to all, because the teachers are the builders of the society. Superstitious beliefs of the teachers influence their students negatively. Therefore, a study on this direction shall have social, educational and psychological values.

The aim of the study is to find out the level of Superstition of higher secondary school teachers, in Kerala. Therefore, the result of the study shall have social, educational and psychological impacts.

### Objectives of the Study

- To find out the level of superstitious beliefs of higher secondary school teachers.
- To find out whether there is any significant difference in the superstitious beliefs of the higher secondary school teachers, whose age is below 35 and above 35.
- To find out whether there is any significant difference in the superstitious beliefs of the higher secondary school teachers, whose place of residence is village and town.
- To find out whether there is any significant difference in the superstitious beliefs of Government and Aided higher secondary school teachers.

### HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

In this Study the following Null Hypotheses are to be Used

- There is no significant difference in the superstitious beliefs of higher secondary school teachers, whose age is below 35 and above 35.
- 2. There is no significant difference in the superstitious beliefs of higher secondary school teachers, whose place of residence is village and town.
- 3. There is no significant difference in the superstitious beliefs of Government and Aided higher secondary school teachers.

### RESEARCH METHOD

For the present study, the investigator followed the normative survey method. The population selected is the school teachers and the sample used here are higher secondary school teachers in Kerala. Researcher collected the data from 200 higher secondary school teachers, from 12 higher secondary schools in Pathanamthitta District of Kerala State. The researcher used stratified random collection technique, for the sample collection. Sub sample collected on the basis of age (Below 35-96, Above 35-104), place of residence (Village-40, Town-160) and type of management (Govt-131, Aided-69) used t-test to find out the significant difference, among the mean scores of the above sample.

**Table 1: Distribution of the Total Sample and Sub-Samples Based on age, Place of Residence and Type of Management**

Sl. No	Name of the School	Number of Higher Secondary Teachers						
		Total	Age		Place of Residence		Type of Management	
			Below 35	Above 35	Village	Town	Govt.	Aided
1	GHSS Omalloor	15	6	9	3	12	15	
2	GHSS Thottakkonam	15	7	8	3	12	15	
3	St:Mary's MMHSS Adoor	17	8	9	3	14	-	17
4	PSVPMHSS Ayravon	18	9	9	4	14	-	18
5	SNDPHSS Chenneerkara	16	9	7	3	13	-	16

Table 1: Condt.,								
6	GHSS Konni	19	12	7	4	15	19	-
7	SNVHSS Angadical	18	10	8	4	14	-	18
8	GBHSS Maroor	17	9	8	4	13	17	
9	GHSS Adoor	19	7	12	4	15	19	-
10	GHSS kalanjoor	18	8	10	4	14	18	-
11	GHSS Elimullumplackal	13	5	8	2	11	13	-
12	MTHSS Pathanamthitta	15	6	9	2	13	15	
Total		200	96	104	40	160	131	69

### Tools of the Study

- General Information Schedule
- Superstitious belief scale

The present investigation is concerned with superstition, among higher secondary school teachers. As there was no appropriate tool for measuring the above variables. The investigator developed certain relevant tools, for measuring the superstitious belief using questionnaire, which consists of a set of 60 statements (50 positive and 10 negative statements), to measure the various aspects of superstitious beliefs in the daily life. Each statement has the options namely 'Yes', 'No'. The responses of the subjects are scored by 1 & 0, respectively for the positive statements and the scoring procedure are reversed for the negative statements. Also, the personal data sheet were collected on the details regarding caste, gender, subject of teaching, age, nature of school, marital status and place of residence etc. Here, the reliability of the scale is found to be 0.73 and the opinion of the experts in the field, is that the test possessed face validity and content validity.

### STATISTICAL TECHNIQUE

**Descriptive Statistics:** Mean, Standard deviation

**Interferential Statistics:** t-test

Random sampling methods were used for the present study. The sample for the present study consists of 200 higher secondary school teachers, in Pathanamthitta district of Kerala State.

### VARIABLES OF THE STUDY

The independent variable of the study is Superstition and a general data sheet is also used, to measure some demographic variables used here are age, place of residence and type of management of higher secondary school teachers.

### Procedure

The investigator used the statistical technique to study mean, standard deviation and t-test. She visited various higher secondary schools located at Pathanamthitta Districts in Kerala. The relevant tool has been prepared in advance, with a programmed of action is administered to the sample population. Maximum care has been given during the test of administration.

The findings of the data were made through the test of significance of difference, between age-below 35 & above 35, place of residence-village & town and type of management-govt. & aided independent groups (t-test). Mean, Standard deviation and t-test are the statistical techniques used, by the investigator for the study.

**ANALYSIS OF THE STUDY**

The statistical analysis is done by collecting responses, from various higher secondary school teachers in Pathanamthitta District. The details of the analysis are given in the following tables.

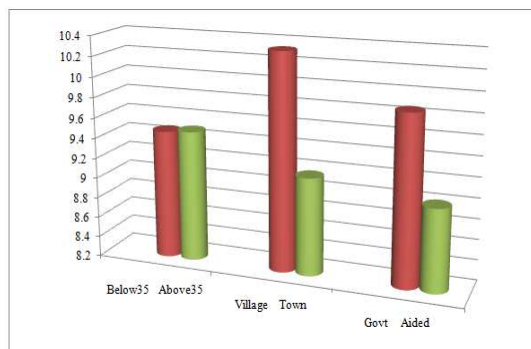
**Table 2: Basic Statistical Constants of the Variable ‘Superstitions of Higher Secondary School Teachers’ based on the Total Sample**

Sample	N	Mean	Median	Mode	Range	Average Deviation	Standard Deviation
Higher Secondary School Teachers	200	9.5	7	0	40	7.03	8.95

**Table 3: Superstitious Beliefs of Higher Secondary School Teachers Based on Age, Place of Residence and Type of Management Level of Significance**

Sub Sample	N	Mean	SD	Critical Ratio	Significant Level(0.05)
Age	Below35	9.47	8.97	1.57	Not Significant
	Above35	9.49	8.98		
Place of residence	Village	10.33	10.96	0.63	Not Significant
	Town	9.16	8.38		
Type of management	Govt.	9.86	9.3	0.65	Not Significant
	Aided	69	9.01		

From the Table it is found that, teachers whose age is below 35 and above 35 of higher secondary school teachers do not differ significantly in the mean values of their superstition, as the t-value calculated (1.57) does not exceed 1.96 the value set, at 0.05 level of significance. The critical value calculated for the superstitious beliefs of teachers, coming from village and town area is 0.63, which is not significant at 0.05level of significance. The table indicates that, superstitious beliefs of teachers coming from village area are greater than those coming from town area. The Table shows that, superstitious beliefs of government and aided higher secondary school teachers, do not significantly differ as the critical value (0.65) is below the limit set for 0.05 level of significance.



**Figure 1: Comparison of Scores on Superstition for Various Groups of Subject**

**TENABILITY OF THE HYPOTHESES**

In the light of the significant findings, drawn out from the study, the first hypotheses, shows that there is no significant difference, in the superstitious belief of different age group of higher secondary school teachers, are accepted. There is no significant difference in the superstitious belief between higher secondary school teachers, coming from village and town area. In the third hypotheses, there is no significant difference in the superstitious belief, between the Government and Aided higher secondary schools teachers, also accepted.

## FINDINGS AND INFERENCES

- There exists no significant difference between the mean scores of superstitions, among the age group of below35 and above 35.
- There exists no significant difference in the mean scores of superstitions, among teachers coming from village and town area.
- There exists no significant difference among the government and aided higher secondary school teachers, in the mean scores of their superstitious beliefs.



**Figure 2**

The findings of the study show that, the different age groups of higher secondary school teachers not differ significantly, in the mean values of their superstitious beliefs. Higher secondary school teachers from village, town area and with different types of management are not significantly differing, at 0.05 level of significance.

## DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

On the whole, when the study is positively correlated, the aided school teachers have obtained low mean scores in superstitious beliefs, than government school teachers. At the same time, the teachers who are belonging to Village area are highly superstitious than those from town area. Also, there is no significant difference between different age group of teachers in their superstitious beliefs.

Thus it can be concluded that, the teachers from village area are more vulnerable than those from town area, with regard to their superstitious beliefs. The study reveals the need for giving more scientific explanation, for their belief systems. With the help of this study, it can be hoped to eradicate the blind belief on superstition, from the minds of the higher secondary school teachers. With the help of this study, it is evident that, there is no deep belief in superstition in the minds of the higher secondary school teachers and in future, it may be completely eradicated.

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