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HEALTH SEEKING BEHAVIOUR OF SIDDHIS: A CASE STUDY OF UTTARA KANNADA DISTRICT IN KARNATAKA STATE



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Abstract: Every tribal society irrespective of its folk and urban cultural elements would have been disappeared, had it not been recognized the notion of health Seeking behaviour. Siddhis in the state are small, homogeneous, typical language and isolated human group. According to the Bombay Gazetteer the Siddhis were escaped from Goa from their masters and settled in India and Yellapur Talukas, Uttar-Kannada District. They are described as having a black skin, curly hair, sloping forehead and thick lips. The people known as Khaphris are Goan Catholic Christians. They speak Konkani and are described as Siddhis in physical appearance. The Sidamo tribe in Africa practiced circumcision and grew a tuft of hair on the head. These practices in India continued among the Siddhis. This article deals with beliefs and practices, related to Siddhis with regard to their food patterns, ideas regarding hygiene, community sanitation and their concepts about illness and associated beliefs, their notions about supernatural and spirits as well as treatment in seeking behaviour. Explanation given on the above aspects is an attempt to make holistic approach towards the idea of understanding the knowledge, attitudes, Perceptions and practices relating to the overall health seeking behavioral system of Siddhis of Uttar - Kannada District in Karnataka state.

Keywords: Siddhis, Society, Folk, Cultural and typical.

INTRODUCTION:

This study consider the health and seeking practices have relevant socio-economic and culture basis for their evolution in any social structure support for many concepts can be obtained by understanding health seeking practices in a society. Since health is influenced by a number of factors such as adequate food, housing, basic sanitation, healthy lifestyles, protection against environmental hazards and communicable diseases, the frontiers of health extended beyond the narrow limits of medical care. It is clear that "health care" implies more than "medical care". It embraces a multitude of services provided to individuals or communities by agents of the health services or professions, for the purpose of prompting maintaining monitoring, or restoring health.

Siddhis in the state are small, homogeneous, typical language and isolated human group. According to the Bombay Gazetteer the Siddhis were escaped from Goa from their masters and settled in India and Yellapur Talukas, Uttar-Kannada District. They are described as having a black skin, curly hair, sloping forehead and thick lips. The people known as Khaphris are Goan Catholic Christians. They speak Konkani and are described as Siddhis in physical appearance. The Sidamo tribe in Africa practiced circumcision and grew a tuft of hair on the head. These practices in India continued among the Siddhis.

OBJECTIVES

To understand the health and seeking practices of the Siddhi. Awareness regarding the nature of work, leisure sanitary habits and food habits.

To analyze the beliefs and practices associated with health and seeking conditions, and

To know the various diseases and treatment method.

All the above mentioned objectives will through light on exciting picture adopted and practiced by Siddhi.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

For the research I had chosen Uttar-Kannada District of Karnataka State, for the reference. For collection of data pertaining to my research theme I have prepared a structured questioner, and indepth interview and through participant observation method.

SIDDHIS HEALTH AND SEEKING

The study clearly throughs the light that the practice and beliefs of pertaining to health and seeking varies from society to society. Both health and seeking play a vital role in the socio-cultural and economic functioning of any society. Spread of communicable diseases is directly related to personal and also to community seeking. Under such condition with agricultural activities it would be very difficult to maintain higher level of seeking. However people

constantly try to avoid diseases by following certain social restriction for certain activities which have support of beliefs. In order to understand the health and seeking practices of the Siddhis, the observation of their work, and leisure sanitary habits, toilet specialization, food habits, house types, personal cleanliness has studied.

It was observed that men and women of Siddhis irrespective of their sex are habituated to taking alcoholic drinks. Usually people consume illicit drinks in the village. Since many of the preparation need very less time to prepare, usually items are prepared and consumed within short time. In turn they are unconscious about the bad effect of alcoholism.

Environment in which one is living, play the significant role in the health and seeking, it was observed that villagers are least bothered about the cleanliness of the surrounding of their houses. The premises around the houses of these people are used for collecting dung's and manure etc. No drainage system in the area and more over it is open drainage system, where the waste water flows besides their houses and spread over in their premises which may lead many kind of contagious diseases and toilet facility is not in their houses and the people were use to go out skirts of their residential area.

Another important factor for healthy living is the cleanliness. The Government of India and Government of Karnatak have introduced many development schemes like the Ashraya Yojana Scheme, construction of houses. In the area major types of houses like Thatched houses, Tiled houses, Mud houses, Country tiled houses, and R.C.C houses. Can be seen without proper plan.

It is interesting that, most of the Siddhis people have not constructed separate cattle shed, therefore cattle urine flows outside and stagnates. Which may result to suitable breeding places for flies, mosquito, etc, which leads to unhygienic condition.

DISEASES AND TREATMENT METHOD

Disease is organic when it affects the structure of the body and functional when there is no visible change in structure, but there is failure of any function in the body - When a contagious diseases occurs in a certain locality more are less constantly it is said to be endemic, when it affects a very large part of community from time to time only it is said to be epidemic when an epidemic spreads over large area of a continent it is called a pandemic, and single stray cases of a contagious diseases in a given locality are spoken sporadic. The most important fact about the primitive medicine is the way in which it is integrated into a whole are a paternal, the main strength of the preventive medicine lays in psychotherapy and the sanction that medicine man or a magician carried with him is the faith of entire community. Among Siddhis diseases can be studied under several categories such as Common, Hereditary, Contagious, and Epidemic.

The Common Diseases prevalent in the Siddhis are fever, dysentery, cough and cold. Hereditary diseases are those which are inherited from the parents, people of Siddhis are considered by the rural folk as the disease sent by the Gods for the sins of the victims not only in this life but also in

their past birth. Asthma is the most common hereditary disease observed among the Siddhis. Contagious diseases, the diseases which spread from patient to others through physical contact, cold; diarrhea, skin diseases, eye infection, chickenpox and cholera are common. Siddhis informants feel that Epidemic Diseases related are usually believed to be sent by their ancestors or Gods as a punishment for the evil deeds of man. It is believed that when Gods or ancestors are neglected or disrespected they become angry and stop their protective roles towards man and thus allow evil beings to come inside the living and give troubles. Under these conditions they realize to take vows to the deities and ancestors to get cure and of such circumstances they prepare sweet dishes and offer to their concerned deities and ancestors.

The belief on the part of Siddhis is to consider that cold comes from drinking water from different places, due to cold weather and soak. There are two types of headache one is common headache without area restriction and other half-headache [Arda-Talenauvu] restricted to specific part. Treatment method for such cases involves the use of mixture of little turmeric (Arashina), cumin (Jeerige) cardamom (Yalakki) boiled in water for few minutes and then the decoction is consumed 3 to 4 times for five days. During the treatment patient should take rice and curry only.

Ear disease usually common among Siddhis. When the symptoms are ear pain and sometimes puss or blood starts coming from the ear. The most popular treatment used by Siddhis is, they take thick leaves of Kanbandurali a parasitic plant which usually grows on mango tree is heated and juice is extracted and poured in the ear which cures ear infection with-in-a day or so. The other most common treatment for ear pain is using coconut warm oil mixed with garlic. Diarrhea or Loose Motion the Siddhis think that this is due to indigestion and some disorder in the stomach. Treatment for this disease is a mixture of lime juice and banana given to the patient at early morning that cures with-in a day. Siddhis believe that if they fail to pray or worship Goddess, their children will suffer from measles. During the field work it was observed that two children were suffering from measles. Treatment Child is given massage of castor oil (oudal enni) followed by bath of hot water mixed with neem (bevu) juice. Every Tuesday and Friday they worship all goddesses in the village temples by offering groundnut oil to deities of gods and goddesses. During this time solitary confinement is provided to the patient. Early immunization by measles vaccine has to be given at 9-12 months of age. Jaundice (kamani) affects people of all age and sexes however in pregnant women it is more common among Siddhis. Jaundice spreads due to dirty water. Treatment given to such patients is mixture of castor (awdalar) leaf and Jaggery (bella) is consumed twice a day for one a week. For stomach pain; they use lemon leaves along with salt are grinded and given for drinking for two days or they use mixture of soda and lemon juice. For minor wounds turmeric powder and ghee mixed thoroughly and applied on the place of wound.

Leprosy a chronic infection disease caused by muco-bacterium leprol, depending on what tissue of organ of the body is involved. Among the Siddhis the Naativaidhya give chalmurga oil, used for external application prepared

out of bile Karke (white gross) along with lemon juice (Limberasa) and applied all over the body once in a day. Normally persons affected by leprosy will not be allowed to stay in groups. Paralysis Naativaidhya starts his treatment with giving pigeon blood to the patient. He prepares paste by herbs and applies it with oil and rubs it to the paralyzed parts. According patient should not eat non-vegetarian food.

Asthma is the most common hereditary disease observed among the Siddhis. It is respiratory disease found in the all old age groups above 40 years. Mainly this disease occurs during the winter season. Patients usually take Decoction of bamboo (bidru) leaf boiled 2or 3 glass of water is consumed thrice a day for 5 months. Another medicine is the mixture of garlic (ballulli), honey coriander (havej) and popper gum (menasinakalu) ginger (shunti) and ocium sanctum (tulusi) leaf consumed daily during the night for 3 months. During this treatment patient should not use oily food, cold food and should not drink cold water.

Siddhis trace to the evil spirits for certain disease. It is believed that usually evil spirit are located in old deserted houses old tamarind tree old wells etc. and certain other places like burial grounds and cremation grounds, that they appear on dark moon day (Amavase). Siddhis believe that certain precautions protect them by spirit. Most of the psychological diseases which need long term treatment.

CONCLUSION

Now a days they are more conscious about of health and seeking problem. The government of India and the State government has implemented different health related Programmes and facilities and it is properly utilized in this Uttar-Kannada District Siddhis. When they fall sick, they first go to quack or Naativaidhya. If they are not cured then they visit nearby primary health centre (PHC), where treatment is free of cost. Normally for small ailments like cough and cold they visit Naativaidhya. For major illness they visit hospital. If treatment is of short period they stay there, otherwise they prefer to come back to their respective plans with prescribed medicine. They feel that admitting a patient to the big hospital involves many procedures and financial problems. Therefore, villagers prefer to stay back. In the context of industrialized and urbanized setup, majority of the Siddhis depend on modern medicine and slowly they are giving up their treatment method of curing the disease.

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