



REMARRIAGE AMONG THE BAIGA TRIBE OF CHHATTISGARH

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ABSTRACT

Attempts were taken up to explore the nature of remarriage/polygamous marriages and what could be those factors that led to remarriage/ polygamy among the Baiga of Chhattisgarh. Objectives of the study were to find out the incidences of remarriage among the Baiga tribe of Chhattisgarh, to explore notion and approaches regarding remarriage and to conceptualize the pattern of remarriage among the Baiga tribe of Chhattisgarh. 400 married Baiga males belonging to age 18-49 years were selected through multistage random sampling. These 400 Baiga males i.e. 235 males from Bodala and 165 males from Pandariya development blocks of Kabirdham district of Chhattisgarh, India were randomly selected. Structured interview schedule were used for collection of data. The finding was, in Baiga society, the polygamy form of marriage does have existence. But there is no tradition of polygamy, it is just a remarriage. Polygamy was the exigent result of the contemporary materialistic, social and demographic conditions of the society. As a conclusion, the remarriage found in the Baiga tribe of Chhattisgarh is purely a circumstantial polygamous marriage whose main reason is the death of their ex-wives, not a custom or tradition.

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INTRODUCTION

According to the Library of Congress (1995), rules for the remarriage of widows differ from one group to another. Generally, lower-ranking groups allow widow remarriage, particularly if the woman is relatively young, but the highest-ranking castes discourage or forbid such remarriage. The strictest adherents to the nonremarriage of widows are Brahmans. Almost all groups allow widowers to remarry. Many groups encourage a widower to marry his deceased wife's younger sister (but never her older sister).

By forms of marriage or remarriage, it means here the number of marriages, which the Baiga men, subjected to present study, did undergo. If any Baiga married one time, the form of such a marriage is monogamous. If a Baiga married more than once, his marriages will be polygamous in form. Attempts were taken up to explore the nature of remarriage/polygamous marriages and what could be those bio-social factors that led to remarriage/ polygamy.

Objectives of the study

1. To find out the incidences of remarriage among the Baiga tribe of Chhattisgarh.
2. To explore notion and approaches regarding remarriage among the Baiga tribe of Chhattisgarh.
3. To conceptualize the pattern of remarriage among the Baiga tribe of Chhattisgarh

METHODOLOGY

400 married Baiga males belonging to age 18-49 years were selected through multistage random sampling. These 400 Baiga males i.e. 235 males from Bodala and 165 males from Pandariya development blocks of Kabirdham district of Chhattisgarh, India were randomly selected. Structured interview schedule were used for collection of data. The results were analyzed using the 16.0 SPSS package.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Incidences of remarriage

The results arrived at the study, are shown in table no. 01 according to which majority (87.2%) of Baiga men are found to have married once in comparison to 12.8% incidence of those marrying more than once. It clearly shows that Baiga tribe allows only one marriage, traditionally. It is worth mentioning that in most cases among those married second time; invariably it is after the death of first wife. Those who married more than once-under serial polygamous- those who recourse to polygamy and represented it- more than half among them had married second time after the death of their first wife or had been divorced from her. Some married more than once due to prolonged illnesses of the wives. The finding was, in Baiga society, the polygamy form of marriage does have existence. But there is no tradition of polygamy, it is just a remarriage. Polygamy was the exigent result of the contemporary materialistic, social and demographic conditions of the society.

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Table 1 Incidence of remarriage among the respondents

Form of marriage	No. of the respondents	Percent n=400
Remarriage	51	12.8
Only once marriage	349	87.2
Total	400	100.0

Distribution pattern of remarriage

Among the Baiga men, who have married more than once, proportion of those marrying twice and thrice are observed to be 84.3% and 12.8%, respectively that corresponds to 10.8% and 2% of the total. Maximum number of marriages is found to be three among the Baiga men (Table no.02)

Table 2 Distribution Pattern of Remarriage

Number of marriage	No. of the respondents	Percent n =51	Percent n =400
Marriage in twice	43	84.3	10.8
Marriage in thrice	8	15.7	2.0
Total	51	100.0	12.8

Factors underlying remarriage among the respondents

The findings from the study are presented in table no.03 which shows that incidence of first wife's death (60.46%) and suspicious behavior (16.27%) are prominent factors responsible for Baiga men for opting remarriage. Besides, divorce (11.62%) barrenness (6.97%) and sickness of wives (4.65%) are other factors recorded for remarriage among Baiga males

Table 3 Factors underlying remarriage among the respondents

Factors of remarriage	No. of respondents	Percent n = 43
Death of wife	26	60.46
Barrenness of wife	3	6.97
Divorce	5	11.62
Sickness of wife	2	4.65
Suspicious behavior of wife	7	16.27
Total	43	100.0

Incidence of Delivery Death among the respondents' wives

Table no. 04 reveals that delivery death of Baiga women constitutes 42.38% of total number of death of the wives of the respondents. It corresponds to 2.75% of the total surveyed Baiga families.

Table 4 Incidence of Delivery Death among the respondents' wives

Delivery death	No. of respondent wife	Percent n = 26	Percent n = 400
Yes	11	42.38	2.75
No	15	57.69	3.75
Total	26	100.0	100.0

Incidence of (Post) Delivery Death

The findings from the study are a presented in table no.05 which shows that almost half (45.50%) of post delivery deaths among the Baiga women are found to take place on the day of delivery. Remaining delivery deaths of Baiga women are

observed taking place on 3rd, 5th, 6th, 15th and 90th days in frequency of 9.1% each.

Table 5 Incidence of (Post) Delivery Death

Day of death	No. of respondents' wives	Percent n= 11	Percent n=400
Day of Delivery	5	45.5	1.2
Third Day of Delivery	1	9.1	0.2
Fourth Day of Delivery	1	9.1	0.2
Fifth Day of Delivery	1	9.1	0.2
Sixth Day of Delivery	1	9.1	0.2
Fifteenth day of Delivery	1	9.1	0.2
After three months of delivery	1	9.1	0.2
Total	11	100.0	2.75

Incidence of Death among the respondents' wives from the other causes

The remaining deaths, among Baiga women are found from illness (53.33%), witchcraft (33.33%) and snakebites (13.34%). It corresponds to 2%, 1.25% and 0.5%, respectively of total surveyed Baiga families. It is worth noting that one third (33.33%) deaths of Baiga women still are attributed to witchcraft/sorcery (Table no. 06)

Table 6 Incidence of Death among the respondents' wives from the Other Causes

Causes of death	No. of respondents' wives	Percent n = 15	Percent n = 400
Illness	8	53.33	2
Witchcraft	5	33.33	1.25
Snakebite	2	13.34	0.5
Total	15	100.00	3.75

Practice of Third Marriage

Table no. 07 explicates the finding. Main reasons of the Baiga men marrying thrice are divorce (37.05%), followed by previous wives death (25%) and miscellaneous reasons (37.05%).

Table 7 Practice of third marriage among the respondents

Causes of third marriage	Number of respondents	Percent n = 08	Percent n = 400
Divorce	3	37.05	0.75
Death	2	25	0.5
Other	3	37.05	0.75
Total	08	100.0	-

Type of remarriage

According to the data displayed in table no. 08, most (76.64%) polygamy in Baga is related to marrying any other woman, without marrying her sisters-in-law or his elder brothers' widowed wives.

Table 8 Type of remarriage among the Baiga

Type of remarriage	Number of respondents	Percent n = 51	Percent n = 400
Sororate	09	17.64	2.25
Levirate	03	5.88	0.75
Other	39	76.47	9.75
Total	51	100.0	100.0

Form of remarriage

An overview of table number 09 suggests that the methods of remarriage in Baiga tribe, in particular, are the "Chudi"

marriages (72.54%). "Chudi" marriage is the most commonly practiced and method of remarriage in almost all the tribes of Chhattisgarh and among the all non-savarna castes. The charming features of a "Chudi" wedding are that the bride and groom, who are remarried, do not have to make any special arrangements like a normal marriage. This marriage is accomplished by little presence of very few people as well as in very little resources. The key condition of a "Chudi" marriage is that both the bride and groom are already married. However, if a girl is getting married for the first time with the married person in a remarriage, then in this situation new marriage is done with complete customs. The number of such remarriages in this study is 21.56 percent.

Table 9 Form of remarriage among the Baiga

Form of remarriage	Number of respondents	Percent n = 51	Percent n = 400
"Chudi" marriage	37	72.54	9.25
Marriage by Elopement	02	3.92	0.05
Marriage by Intrusion	01	1.96	0.025
New marriage	11	21.56	2.75
Total	51	100.0	100.0

CONCLUSION

Based on the above results and analysis, it is found that remarriage or polygamy is found in the Baiga tribe of Chhattisgarh, but it is not as of the kind as the bigamy customs found in the Ho, Oregon, and Eskimos tribes. This remarriage found in Baiga tribe of Chhattisgarh is not even related to a polygamous marriage being done by a man to increase his social status. If we see on the basis of the type of polygamous marriage, then find that polygamy in Baiga is related to marrying any other woman of a Baiga male, instead of sororate and levirate. Similarly, on the basis of methods of marriage, it is found that the "Chudi" marriages. As a conclusion, the remarriage found in the Baiga tribe of Chhattisgarh is purely a circumstantial polygamous marriage whose main reason is the death of their ex-wives, not a custom or tradition.

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