

HOW SUPERSTITIOUS ARE YOU?

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INTRODUCTION

Black cat is something that many people are afraid of crossing path with. Whenever you pass a black cat, it is said to you that take a bath or pray to god otherwise bad luck will not leave you forever. Almost everyone has gone through something that does not make any sense but is forbidden to do. We name them superstitions; they are something that we widely believe and practice in our daily lives without justified or scientific reasons behind it. The origin of superstitions has been debated for a long time. Some superstitions may have started as a way for parents to discipline their children and teach them religious practices, some even come from urban myths that are byproducts of youth imagination, some even lost their original meaning during the complex evolution of culture. At the end of it, most people follow superstitions for the sake of it, and not all people believe in the same superstitions. Bangladesh and Indonesia are no exception to this. Both countries have some superstitions prevailing in their societies. What amazes us is that, though they are two very different countries and have different superstitions, there are some common superstitions that share both grounds.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Superstition is a belief that people have inherited either from their previous generation or surroundings. Different regions have different superstitions but there is one thing that should not be jinxed with it. It is dogmatism. People may get superstitious in both countries but most of the superstitions are harmless. A harmless belief to be extra careful from a crisis. To add more, sometimes these superstitions are followed just to not hurt our elderly and to respect them as they hold a firm belief in these superstitions. On the other hand, some superstitions are simply formulated just to teach the children discipline. Some superstitions have a scientific base and it is thought that people of ancient time may have not really explained these in a scientific way thus they choose to go with superstitions.

In Bangladesh there are lots of superstitions that are followed or instructed to follow. There are some superstitions that all the people that geographically belong to Bangladesh may relate. They believe that pregnant women shouldn't cut anything during a solar eclipse because the child could become disfigured. Wearing gold jewellery and gold nose piercing can keep your husband safe. Fun fact is that when a married woman breathes out it is thought that she is breathing out the poison air and it may harm the husband. So, wearing a nose pin made of gold may filter out her breathing. Then again Cutting paper unnecessarily is unsafe as it is said that you could increase your enemies with it. Flipping slippers and sandals in the wrong direction, while it is a minor annoyance, could bring fights, but bringing garlic or dried chili while carrying food at night could ward off demons (Dracula isn't the only one who hates garlic!)

In Indonesia, sweeping dirty floors during the night means 'sweeping/throwing' away your good luck/omen. Sitting on doorways will make you lose and struggle to find your other half. Getting hit by any kind of bug while driving means that you'll get a visitor to your house. Depending on what type of bug it is, it could be an eventful visit from an old friend or a client for business opportunities, (butterflies, dragonflies, etc.), or an angry neighbor next door or a tax collector (wasps, bees, etc.)

Despite these similarities and being on two different sides of the earth, Indonesia and Bangladesh share some similar superstitions. Most of them are derived from either religious perspective or harvesting food as both countries share a common religion and have similarities in food. In fact the main food of both countries is rice. For example, you shouldn't sit on pillows since it could cause blains on your bottoms. Some also argue that it's simply rude and filthy to put your bottoms where your heads should be. Whistling during the night is also forbidden because it could invite demons. Cutting your fingernails also must not be done during the night because you could accidentally cut your fingers off, even when modern technology does allow for it. Lastly, it's recommended to eat your food and clean off the plate because any edible leftovers would cry. This one not only taught us to not waste food, but also to appreciate every meal given to us.

CONCLUSIONS

At the end of it, superstitions are both unique and normal for it to happen. They are what makes us, humans, human; it's a part of our culture, and these cultures shape our identity and uniqueness while also showing similarities between different nations. To reason against or with superstition could lead to further development of their meaning down the line, shaping our culture for our grandchildren for years to come.