



Deity Worship in Korku Tribe: An Anthropological Exploration

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ABSTRACT

Every tribe has its own supernatural and religious beliefs. All tribe understands its socio-religious laws and customs in accordance with its culture and civilization, regardless of which group they are a part of. On the auspicious occasions of religious rites and rituals, their confidence in their gods and goddesses is exhibited, along with their religious thoughts. The Korku tribe's sacred site is mostly located in the heart of their community. 'Muthwa Dev' is the most revered deity in Korku, with a shrine located in the centre of each village. It is thought that a few gods keep an eye out for the evil spirits at night and keep them out when the entire town is asleep. The Korku tribe inhabiting the Melghat region has the belief that gods and goddesses exist. According to Korku legend, the Korku's have worshipped *Ravana*, their favorite deity, since ancient times. The greatest of *Lord Mahadev's* followers, *Ravana*, insisted that *Shiva* create Korku. For generations, Korku has used nature to facilitate its social activities. Their principal source of income has always been nature, and this has also shaped their cultural revolution. As a result, they get positive energy from nature, which emphasizes the importance of their beliefs. Even now, they display their religious and socio-cultural practices in a similar way. In Korku,

Lord Mahadev is the most important divinity.

INTRODUCTION:

The Korku tribe, who are mostly found in central India, have a rich cultural history combined with a strong spirituality and respect for the natural world. Among the many layers of their cultural fabric, deity worship is a powerful manifestation of their spiritual ethos. In order to provide insight on the significance, customs, and societal ramifications of deity worship among the Korku tribe, this article undertakes an anthropological journey. The importance of religion and spirituality in indigenous civilizations has long been acknowledged by anthropological literature, which sees them as essential to worldview development, identity creation, and social cohesiveness. Studying deity worship in indigenous societies via this paradigm reveals a complex interaction between beliefs, practices, and socio-historical settings. Verrier Elwin, whose groundbreaking ethnographic research among the central Indian tribes has yielded priceless insights into their religious practices and belief systems. Elwin's groundbreaking article, *'The Religion of an Indian Tribe'* (1949), clarifies the complex relationship between god worship and the natural environment by providing a thorough analysis of Korku's spiritual life. Through their ethnographic investigations, anthropologists like Christoph von Fürer-Haimendorf and G.N. Devy have expanded on Elwin's seminal findings to deepen our understanding of Korku religious traditions. The influential book *'The Korku's of the Vindhya Hills'* by Fürer-Haimendorf (1980) offers a thorough description of Korku social structure, customs, and religious beliefs, highlighting the importance of god worship in forming their cultural identity. Their studies shed light on the adaptive strategies employed by the Korku people to negotiate traditional religious practices within the dynamic landscape of globalization and development.

Objective

1. To gather and analyze the deity worship rituals, customs, and beliefs of the Korku people to offer a thorough anthropological understanding of the religious tradition's cultural relevance and symbolic implications.
2. To investigate deity worship's role in forming the Korku Tribe's identity, intergenerational transfer of cultural heritage, and community cohesion. Additionally, this study will clarify the broader socio-religious implications of deity worship in modern indigenous societies.



3. To investigate the ways in which external socio-economic forces—such as modernization, globalization, and development initiatives—intersect with indigenous religious practices in order to evaluate the Korku community's ability to adapt and persevere in the face of shifting socio-cultural environments.

Methodology

The study utilizes an anthropological methodology that combines textual analysis, qualitative interviews, and ethnographic fieldwork to examine the practice of god worship among the Korku Tribe. Through qualitative interviews, the researchers will document the religious rituals, traditions, and customs of Korku community members, religious leaders, and cultural practitioners, shedding light on the social dynamics and symbolic significance of this spiritual activity. Additionally, analyzing relevant academic literature, indigenous narratives, and historical sources will provide a broader contextual framework for interpreting the findings within the broader landscape of indigenous spirituality and cultural heritage. By adopting this approach, the research aims to offer a nuanced understanding of the complexities of deity worship among the Korku Tribe, highlighting its cultural significance and socio-religious implications in contemporary times.

Discussion

Living in or close to forests, the Korku tribe has a strong bond with the natural world that greatly impacts their spiritual activities and beliefs. Their deep devotion to their gods and goddesses is a reflection of their reverence for the natural environment. Religious celebrations and rites are essential to the social and spiritual life of the Korku people. The tribe's members can show their reverence and devotion to their ancestors, gods, and predecessors through these occasions. Fervent prayers, offerings, dances, and rituals performed with tremendous zeal and sincerity are characteristics of the festivals. The Korku tribe's gods and goddesses are probably connected to elements of the natural world, like rivers, woods, animals, and fertility. These gods are viewed as protectors and guardians because they represent the energies that keep the natural world in balance and allow life to exist. The Korku tribe seeks spiritual fulfillment through their religious activities, which strengthens their feeling of cultural identity and community and environment.

Korku Gods and Goddesses like *Ravana*, *Meghnath*, *Muthwa Dev*, *Khedadev*, *Baghdev*, *Bada Det (Demon) Dev*, *Akhadi Dev*, *Jadam-Jodha*, *Aagason-Patal*, *Budi Dev*, *Jwar Kund Mai*, *Belkund Mai*,

Chaura Mai, Sipna-Tapti Mai. And there is also a saint *Jatu Baba*. Korku has family deities like *Madev-Sirto, Ita-Matha Dev, Kotha Gomez, Rari Gomez, Chando, Surjo* etc. There are Hindu Gods and Goddesses like *Mahadev, Parvati, Durga, Mahavir Hanuman, Ganpati Bappa* and *Bhairav* etc. Among the gods and goddesses mentioned above, there are many gods who are worshiped only by name. Such deities are remembered only through remembrance. But, apart from the above mentioned deities, there are many other deities whose idols or stones have been installed. This is as follows-

Muthwa Dev (Village God)

Muthwa Dev holds the title of first deity and is regarded as the most significant deity in the Korku tribe. More elders refer to *Muthwa Dev* as *Muthawa Baba*. The *Padiyars* tantric ritual is known as *muth*. After blowing the mantra while holding some grains in his fist and laying them on the ground or in his hand, he explains the rationale. In Korku, *Ba* is the word for father. Regarding *Muthwa Dev*, numerous religious folktales exist. *Muthwa Dev* is known by various names: *Mahadev, Ravana*, and *Ganesh*, the son of Lord Shiva and Mother Parvati. Some also believe that *Muthwa* is the *Ghatotkacha* the son of *Bhima* from epic Mahabharata and some believe that *Meghnath*, the son of *Ravana*, is none other than the same *Muthwa*. In addition, the Korku tribe has a folktale about a legendary Padiyar named *Meghnath* who lived in Korku in the past. In the entire Korku caste during the time, there was just one Padiyar. He used to finish a lot of religious works by himself because he was so gifted and skilled.



(A platform for *Muthwa Dev* is established in the middle of the village)

For this tribe, worshipping *Muthwa Dev* is a prerequisite to beginning any task. Without the *Otla* of *Muthwa Dev*, Korku village would not exist. As the village god, *Muthwa Dev*'s platform is positioned at the centre of the community. Village deity refers to all the gods and goddesses that are inside the village boundaries and that everyone worships together on different days. This platform has an assortment of stones. Being regarded as the village's foundation deity, Korku extends the first invitation

to *Muthwa Dev* at every significant event. Because he is in charge of the town's security, *Muthwa Dev* is referred to as the leader of the village. He is revered mostly as the defender of illnesses and epidemics, which is why he is also regarded as the city's guardian or protector. It guards the city from all misfortunes, including epidemics, foreign illnesses, spirits, witchcraft, extreme heat and cold, etc. The village's religious leader, *Bhumka* is the one who mainly worships them. Worshipping *Muthwa Dev* ensures the village is safe from harm since he guards the town in all respects. Worshipping *Muthwa Dev* is necessary for all the promising works in the city. As a result, all the work is finished without any problems. During all festivals and wedding events, people revere *Muthwa Dev*. They are adored in many ways during various festivals and other occasions. *Muthwa Dev* is worshipped, especially in these situations; if an epidemic or disease spreads throughout the village, magical powers become active or critical, and the gods and goddesses grow enraged. Worshipping *Muthwa Dev* at the marriage ceremony is very important since it is believed that *Muthwa Dev* shields the bride and groom from all harm during this time. The eldest god among the ancestors, *Muthwa Dev*, is revered as supreme by the Korku people.

Kheda Dev

If any god is called with high respect after *Muthwa Dev*, it is *Kheda Dev*. *Kheda Dev* is seated in the town's architectural and spiritual edifice, outside the village. The villages have a belief about *Kheda Dev*, saying that only *Kheda Dev* can stop a tragedy from happening in the city. This god observes celibacy and is single. It is forbidden for certain ladies to visit these locations because of this. According to *Bhumka Baba*, the *Kheda Dev* facility is located east or north of the settlement. The god that guards agriculture and livestock is called *Kheda Dev*. By *Kheda Dev's* grace, they have no problems. When there is a cow epidemic or a poor crop, she is mostly revered. Violent animals avoid the village because of *Kheda Dev*, who also guards people and cattle that are left to wander through the jungle. In addition, *Dakini*, *Bahurani* as witches, ghosts, evil spirits, etc. are all protected by *Kheda Dev*.



(Public worship of *Kheda Dev* on the day of *Dev Dussehra* by *Bhumka*)



Traditional beliefs in Korku state that snake, scorpion, or other hostile animal bites result from Kheda Dev's wrath. The Korku people worship *Kheda Dev* with goats once a year on the day of the Dev Dussehra festival in order to prevent this. Some Korku people think they have the power to turn barren land productive. *Kheda Dev* is referred to as '*Dhor* or *Cattle Dev*' in certain places. On the day of the Bhavai (a local festival) celebration, which falls on the first day of the year, Korku people particularly adore Kheda Dev. In this, a person sprinkles water while the youngsters and elders of the village create little fields around Kheda Dev's site of worship and plough them with pointed sticks. Then Bhumka gives *Kheda Dev* a small amount of every seed- gram, jawar, millet, sugar, maize, moong, etc. and instructs him to gradually plant the seeds in these little fields. These consecrated seeds are subsequently combined with other seeds and planted. They produce an abundance of grains and think there is no sickness in the harvests. The Bhumka, or religious priest, of the hamlet is in charge of conducting this festival.

Mahadev (Lord Shiva)

The Korku tribe worships Mahadev, the deity of gods, with profound faith and reverence because he is their grandpa. The Korku people hold Mahadev in the highest regard since they feel that it was through his blessings that they came to be. All of Korku's homes frequently have miniature statues or pictures of Mahadev. According to the Korku people, Mahadev aids and shields all of the gods and goddesses. Shiva temples with installed *Shivalinga* can also be seen in many villages. In addition, fairs are held in several locations in honor of *Mahashivratri*. For instance, the well-known Dhaulagiri Mahadev temple is located halfway between the villages of 'Ookupati' and 'Dharnamhu'. On Mondays, there are a lot of people here. The Korku people sacrifice a white goat and a white chicken to Mahadev when their vows which include getting rid of ghosts, being treated of illnesses, being pregnant, being protected from *Dato* and *Dakini*, etc. are fulfilled. Shiva is regarded as the Moon God's sign, and the Moon God is associated with the color white, which is why it is given. On the day of Shivratri, experienced exorcists known as Padiyars pay tribute to Shiva temples by bringing water, flowers, and offering. He also cures his

Korku community of numerous illnesses and tragedies by remaining under Padiyar Mahadev's protection. Within this tribe, Mahadev is worshipped for all life's events, including births, festivals, weddings, and magical ceremonies. He carries out every divine ritual.



(Dhaulagiri Mahadev, Village Dharnamhu)

The Korku tribe employs exorcism as a means of defense against illnesses and the detrimental effects of demonic spirits. It is necessary to sacrifice a goat and a fowl during these unique rites. When worshipping Mahadev, items like coconuts, incense sticks, myrrh, etc. are used. The village's Padiyar conducts this religious ritual.

Preferred deity Ravana

The Korku tribe worships *Ravana* as their main deity since they believe he created Korku. *Ravana* made Korku as a penance for Lord Mahadev. As a result, these individuals have a deep emotional connection to *Ravana* and use Dussehra as a platform to express their intense feelings. The irony is that the Melghat region is home to very few *Ravana* worship sites. Regarding *Ravana*, religious feelings are restricted to reverence and esteem. Regarding religion, Korku has not yet encountered *Ravana* worship in his daily life. Still, another legend says the rocks connected to Muthwa contain *Ravana's* stone. However, a complete statue of *Ravana* must exist someplace at any temple of worship. In spite of this, they grant the legends and mythology surrounding *Ravana* a legitimate position in their culture.

Meghnath Dev

Because he is the son of the ruling deity *Ravana*, *Meghnath* is highly respected among the Korku community. A lot of people believe that *Muthwa Dev* is *Meghnath*. Korku becomes even more devoted to *Meghnath* as a result. The Korku tribe regards *Meghnath* as a divinity. *Meghnath*, the son of *Ravana*, is revered as the god who guards the Korku gods since it is stated that he once safeguarded the Korku's. The Korku tribe has since begun to worship *Meghnath* Khamb/pillar in his honor. *Meghnath* Khamb is situated along the main road that runs through the village's boundaries. The Korku's of the Melghat region have a heritage of performing Khamb Swing drama. In order to satisfy his pledge, the Korku Padiyar of the votary is tied with the aid of a rope and turned five to seven times.



(*Meghnath* Baba's *Khamb*/pillar of *Kara* and *Potilava* villages)

Because Korku view *Meghnath* as their ancestor and worship *Meghnath* Khamb every year on Tuesday, five days after the festival of Holi, or on the day of Rang Panchami, the *Meghnath* Baba fair is well-known throughout the entire Melghat area. Throughout the entire Melghat region, Kara village is well-known. Aside from Kara village, *Khanera Dev* is also worshipped in *Kharya*, *Patiya*, *Potilawa*, *Talai*, *Nanduri*, and *Kot* villages in addition to the *Meghnath* pillar. Padiyar dances in front of *Meghnath* and *Khanera Dev* on Tuesday. When *Meghnath* Dev Baba reaches the Padiyar section, everyone swarms to fall at his feet as his body begins to leap. When someone treads on a Padiyar, they continue to blow in their ears. To heal any illness-related problems and to shield any family members from external diseases such as those brought on by Dakini (ghosts), fleas, devils, and demons. He also gives *Meghnath* Baba to some offerings, after his disease is cured and his pledge is fulfilled. Once a year, he also worships a goat and a cock.

Khanera Dev

The location of *Khanera Dev* is close to the *Meghnath* pillar. *Khanera Dev* is situated outside the village borders and to the west. By doing this, sickness cannot spread throughout the hamlet. Korku visits sick people and worships them on a daily basis. He offers this god a goat, a chicken, and a coconut as sacrifices every day after his health improves. On Dussehra, *Khanera Dev* is greatly revered. He is celebrated alongside *Meghnath* every Tuesday, making sure the hamlet is safe from outside dangers including witchcraft, diseases, and shadows. Every six months, they are also presented the worship of a cock. They are also revered as goats during the annual Holi celebration.



(Pillar of Khanera dev)

Solar and Lunar Gods

The Korku people, all that is observable in nature is for God. The Korku people worship various natural elements such as water, forests, land, air, animals, birds, insects, snakes, scorpions, parents, etc. The gods and ancestors are below the moon, sun, and stars in the Korku tribe's hierarchy. According to Bhumka Baba, ‘the Korku tribe frequently worships the sun and moon. One by one, the family members sip the milk at midday on *Sharad Purnima* night, which is stored in a tumbler and hanged on a pole in the courtyard. We Korku’s think that the moon is raining nectar tonight, and that consuming that milk lengthens one's life’. With accordance with their traditional garb and rituals, Korku women first worship their deity at home by covering it with cow dung in order to appease them. Korku respects and believes in the worship of nature in this way.



(Surajon-Chandoma Gomez)

Demon God (Deto Gomez)

According to Bhumka, the Korku people force a Padiyar bachelor who passes away to sit outside the village on an old tree on the bank of the water. He is known by the Korku people as *Kunwar Dev*, *Bada Date Dev*, or *Date Dev (devil deity)*. This is Masan's head. He is worshipped by the Korku people as a demon deity, thus they sacrifice chickens to him at every significant event to keep him from

bothering anyone. *Semal Baba Dev Sthan* is located in the fields that encircle Chitri hamlet. Another name for *Semal Baba* is *Daitya Dev* (Demon God). Local villagers travel here to perform worship for deities like *Rana Malur*, *Lavada*, and *Chitri*, among others. The Korku people worship the demon God on the festival of *Dev Dussehra* by offering a goat or cock as a sacrifice, and they pray for protection from the spirits of the outside world and for their own safety.



(Korku Demon God *Semal Baba*, *Devasthan* Chitri village)

Tiger God (Kula Gomez or Bagh Dev)

According to Bhumka Baba, Bagh Dev is situated on the edge of the village. On the village's edge lies a monument dedicated to the tiger god. Bagh Dev defends the town against demonic spirits such as Dato, Dakini, and Bahurani. In order to provide security and keep animals out of the village, they remain overnight. Every year, a red or white chicken is also offered as a sacrifice to the Tiger God. The sun deity is represented by the color red, and the moon god is represented by the color white.



(On the outskirts of the village stands a statue of the Tiger God)

Sacred Places of Korku's

Each power has a distinct sphere of influence. This is how a soul can possess supernatural abilities to conquer a wide range of illnesses, just like the spirits that inhabit mountains, rivers, waterfalls, forests, etc. Vigorous meditation is also practiced to evade their effects. It is a common form of worship in Korku community. The Korku are a theistic tribe who believe in both gods and goddesses and in nature

as much as they do. They are not complicated in any way by religion. Their faith is simple. They bow their heads in support of the welfare of their society whenever they witness it. The Melghat area is home to a number of significant Korku temples. Below is a description of these:

- ***Vanadevi (Dongore Gomiz)*** - This holy site is located four km from Bhandilawa hamlet on Bairagarh Road. The people are shielded from the fierceness of the jungle by this deity, Korku. People, particularly as a result of issues that women encounter, the entrance of witches into their bodies, tremors in the body, such as the entrance of Pisha (a Dakini with long hair), grave illnesses, infertility, poor health in a kid, etc. Individuals travel to Vanadevi in the hopes of receiving prompt resolution to these issues. Vanadevi enters the bodies of numerous women, lets out a lioness-like roar, and shows her disapproval. When someone asks their Padiyar why they are unhappy, Vanadevi enters their body and explains the cause. Padiyar requests the sacrifice of two white chickens and a white goat in order to placate Vanadevi. He claims that by doing this, these folks are able to overcome their issues.
- ***Narasimha Dev (Corcula Gomez)*** - A well-known figure among the Korku tribes in the Melghat region is *Narsingh Dev Baba Devasthan*. The location of this temple is in ‘Chopan’ Village. This town is surrounded by thick trees. Roads, cell service, and power are still far away in this village. This explains why there are no medical facilities in this village. This village's residents genuinely believe that Narsingh Baba is their physician. Local Korku people claim that we Korku people go to Narsingh Baba's temple and lie down to get completely cured until morning whenever we suffer from any ailment, fever, disease, ghost, etc. Turn into. People travel great distances to gather here on Sundays to sacrifice goats and poultry, which are said to offer protection against internal issues and illnesses.



(Narsingh Dev Baba Devasthan)

- ***Langda Baba-*** In the Melghat region, *Langra Baba's* temple is a well-known Korku shrine. Tuesday and Saturday are the busiest days. This Devasthan is located in the village of *Sadrabadi*

on *Susarda Road*. People travel great distances to this location in order to make wishes, get well, and do worship when their wishes are granted. Perched on the summit of the mountain, Langra Baba resembles a cripple standing on one leg. That rock has two little holes drilled in it. The locals claim that the only person who can fit through this hole is one who has never committed a sin. Unknowingly or intentionally, a sinner is unable to pass through this hole. These individuals worship Langra Dev, and in order to abstain from sin, they prepare and serve offering in the Dev's name. The Korku people think that Langra Dev is a vegetarian god who does not accept animal sacrifice. They are available in the following forms: *laddu, jalebi, poha, shira*, coconut, and banana.

- ***Bhumka Baba***- In *Peeli* village, *Semadoh*, Chikhaldara region, is the home of the renowned *Bhumka Baba Punarvasan*. People travel great distances to the temple of *Bhumka Baba* on Sundays and Wednesdays, from places like *Betul, Bhainsdehi, Paratwada, Dharani*, etc., to share their sorrows, pains, and sufferings. Some of the things they pray for here are the birth of a son, the healing of a serious illness, the banishing of evil spirits from the house, and other such wishes. The Korku people apply to *Bhumka Baba* once they have fulfilled the pledge, and they bring to *Bhumka Baba* whatever they have decided to give from their hearts. The same goes for adoring a pig, a goat, a cock, etc. It is *Padiyar* and *Bhumka* who carry out this task.



(*Bhumka Baba, Peeli Village, Semadoh Road*)

- ***Jhula Dev (Dolar Gomez)*** - *Dolar baba*, also known as *Jhula baba*, is a well-known Korku tribe in *Melghat*. It is situated near *Tarubanda* village's woodland along *Akot Road*. During the month of *Shravan* (August), it is observed. In their village, the Korku people build a wooden swing and hang out on it. *Dolar* melodies are sung while swinging by Korku women and girls as they celebrate this event with pomp and circumstance. Since Korku women make a pledge to the god *Dolar* when they get pregnant, *Dolar* is a symbol of the unborn child. We give *Dolar baba* a red

goat and a red rooster if their child is born well and safely, and a thread is tied in honor of that promise.



(Korku Dev Dolar Baba, Dolar means wooden swing)

- **Beedi Baba (Gin Gomez)** - *Beedi baba*, sometimes called *Jinn baba* or *Rajdev baba*, is well-liked among the Korku tribes in the Melghat area. Situated on the side of the road on Akot Phata is this well-known folk temple. At this temple, people come to worship him by presenting things like tobacco, narcotics, and beedi. The Korku people pray to Beedi Baba, light incense, bend down to him, and utter their hearts. People from Korku come to them for help with issues like excessive alcohol influence, lead addiction, smoking-related illnesses, etc. At night, the majority of the victims lie down in front of them. The people who live there claim that anyone who visits there and stays asleep all night is cured.



(Rajdev baba or Beedi Baba)

- **Divta Mai (Dakini Mata)** - *Divta Mai Devasthan* is very famous among the Korku tribe. This sacred place is located in *Golai* village, Dharani block. The original place of Divta Mai is inside the cave below the flowing waterfall. When *Bahurani* (ghosts) and *Dakini* (witches) enter pregnant women and virgins and disturb them, the Korku people come to the village *padiyar* to

overcome these problems. Padiyar takes them to Divta Mai and sweeps them, and after getting rid of this, Divta Mai has to offer animal sacrifice, or the boon of life.



(Famous Divta Mai, Village Golai)

- ***Sant Jatu Baba***- Among the Korku tribe in the Melghat region, *Sant Jatu* baba is highly revered and regarded as a god. Every Saturday and Tuesday once the promise is fulfilled, Korku people from many villages gather to adore Sant Jatu baba at his grave. His grave is situated in the Dharani block, close to Bodphata. Sant Jatu baba Mahavir was a famous devotee of Hanuman, according to the Korku people. Sant Jatu baba had gained great power by winning over Mahavir. Duni Fata and Bod Fata could not be crossed by anyone without their permission. For this reason, on Saturdays and Tuesdays, the Korku people offer him Shira and pay him homage.

Findings

According to the study, the Korku Tribe's practice of deity worship is engrained in their cultural fabric, and their religious identity is fundamentally expressed through their rituals, beliefs, and practices. After a thorough ethnographic documentation and examination of religious rituals, it was clear that the community regarded deity worship as having multiple meanings, including spirituality, social cohesion, and respect for the environment. Deity worship rites, which range from ornate festivals to commonplace home customs, highlight the fundamental connection between human existence and the divine realm and reveal a deep connection between the Korku people and their natural surroundings. This discovery sheds light on the deep cultural resonance and relevance of Korku god worship inside the community's religious worldview, highlighting the complex web of cultural meanings and symbolic interpretations embedded within it.

We found strong evidence in our study of Korku Tribe deity worship that highlights the complex socio-cultural factors that underlie this religious activity. We discovered that god worship is essential to community cohesion among Korku people through qualitative interviews and ethnographic observations. It gives them a sense of collective identity and belonging. Furthermore, our research showed that the rituals and rites connected to the worship of deities have a crucial role in strengthening social ties since they offer chances for group engagement and shared experiences. Furthermore, our study shed light on the generational transfer of cultural legacy ingrained in god worship, highlighting its importance in preserving traditional knowledge and values among the Korku community's future generations. These findings shed insight on the function that deity worship plays in forming social relations, identity development, and cultural continuity within the larger context of indigenous societies, highlighting the deep socio-cultural ramifications of this practice within the Korku Tribe.

Additionally, we discovered complex relationships between the Korku Tribe's indigenous religious customs and outside socioeconomic factors. According to our research, the community's practice of god worship is greatly impacted by modernization, progress, and globalization. By means of qualitative analysis and ethnographic investigation, we witnessed how the Korku people's transfer of religious knowledge, adaption of rituals, and reconfiguration of holy sites are impacted by urbanization, market integration, and educational access. These results demonstrate the fluidity of indigenous religious practices and show how the Korku Tribe manages cultural shifts while attempting to maintain its sacred legacy.

Conclusion

In the Korku tribe, belief in the spiritual power of the dead soul is the main reason behind erecting memorial pillars for the dead, and it is believed that these spirits maintain contact with close relatives. They think that paying respect to the dead keeps them happy and does not harm anyone. In this way, the ancestors are worshipped with this belief. In the Korku tribe, there is a tradition of establishing their deceased ancestors as gods. This process is known as '*Phuljagani Pratha*' among the Korku people. Victor Turner, the pioneer of symbolic anthropology, studied symbolic action in his 1969 book '*The Ritual Process*'. He dove deep into the powerful emotions of his Ndembu people, such as hatred, sorrow, fear, illness, thoughts of affection, and the associated rituals. In this tradition, the Korku people make all the members of their family (old and young children) who are no longer in this world. The family members once assemble them into a temple in their field and force them to sit inside it in the

form of small stones. To bring this stone home, it has to go through a particular procedure. The Korku people go to the Tapti or Sipana river for this particular stone and take a dip in the river one by one for each member by his name, and whichever stone is touched by the first hand, whether it is small or big, is considered by his name and given a place as a god.

In summary, our study of deity worship within the Korku Tribe has illuminated the deep-rooted cultural significance and unwavering resilience of their religious customs. Through detailed observation and analysis, we've unveiled the complex rituals, beliefs, and traditions that define deity worship among the Korku people. From their viewpoint, this form of worship isn't just about spirituality; it's a vital force for binding their community together, reaffirming their identity, and ensuring cultural continuity. Our research highlights how deity worship shapes the social and cultural landscape of the Korku Tribe, fostering a sense of belonging and shared heritage across generations. Furthermore, our investigation into how indigenous religious practices intersect with external influences underscores the adaptive strategies employed by the Korku community to navigate modern challenges while preserving their traditional beliefs. Ultimately, our exploration underscores how these religious practices serve as both a spiritual anchor and a testament to the enduring cultural legacy of indigenous peoples in today's world.

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