

Consanguinity and Reproductive Health among Kurichias: A Tribal Population of Kerala

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ABSTRACT The degree of success or failure experience by an organism in its effort to respond adaptively to an environmental challenge is estimated by different health indicators like fertility, mortality and morbidity. The rate of fertility, mortality and morbidity which are the expression of health and disease are studied among Kurichias – a tribal population of Kerala, in relation to consanguinity to understand the structure of a population. Consanguineous marriages are practiced more than the non-consanguineous. The autosomal and sex-linked inbreeding co-efficient are 0.0608 and 0.0688 respectively. The age at marriages is less among the women of consanguineous marriages than the non-consanguineous marriages. Low fertility, live births and, high prenatal, postnatal mortality rate and hereditary diseases are observed among consanguineous couples than the non-consanguineous couples. The congenital malformations are observed only in consanguineous marriages. Among consanguineous marriages, the disease prevalence, prenatal, postnatal mortality and morbidity are very high due to the increase in homozygosity and enhanced risk of hereditary disease transmitted through recessive alleles.