

Adjustment of Tribal Students in Schools: Problems and Perspectives

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Abstract

Education is considered as a crucial factor in development. It is the most powerful instrument for ensuring equality of opportunity; keeping in view of this assumption the government has been making several efforts to education by extending special educational institutional facilities. But the development in education sector is still lacking in tribal community. Poor academic performance and increasing dropout rates are still in their community. There is a connection with one's overall development and adjustment to the school. Poor school adjustment can cause adverse effect in the performance of a student. While considering a tribal student these chances are high. They may feel more difficulty in school adjustment because they are forced to sit in schools where there exists an environment which is ethnically and culturally different. This study aimed to describe the adjustment of tribal students in their school. And it mainly discusses the educational, emotional and social adjustment of the students with respect to their school.

Keywords: Tribal Students, Educational Adjustment, Emotional Adjustment, Social Adjustment.

I. INTRODUCTION

Education is considered as an effective tool for ensuring equality of opportunity and for the overall development of a society. India has been investing a considerable amount of money in the educational sector and we have established many educational institutions in all across India. The Govt. of India has enacted "Right to Education Act" and it marks the education as a fundamental right. In our country schools are the key medium for attaining this fundamental right. School is an institution which contributes to the total educational and socialisation process directed to the development of personality of an adolescent (Greenbaum, 1974). School environment includes relationships among and between administration, teachers, parents, students and the community that overall development through the academic demands of formal curricula and through exposure to teachers who emphasize academic achievement, motivation to learn and self-improvement (Newman and Newman, 1986). So for the overall development of a student proper school environment and school adjustment are essential.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A. Tribes

The tribal people of India are called "Scheduled Tribes" in the Indian constitution. The tribal population of the country, as per 2011 census, is 10.43 crore, constituting 8.6% of the total population. Tribal communities live, in various ecological and geo-climatic conditions ranging from plains and forests to hills and inaccessible areas. In Kerala they are predominantly live in the Western Ghats. According to 2011 census the scheduled tribe population in Kerala constitutes 1.45 % of the total population. The highest proportion of scheduled tribe has been recorded in Wayanad (18.35%).

The essential characteristics first laid down by the Lokur Committee, for a community to be identified as Scheduled Tribes are – indications of primitive traits; distinctive culture; shyness of contact with the community at large; geographical isolation; and backwardness. Though there are certain commonalities in the life style and culture, all tribal communities are different from one another. Moreover they are clearly distinct from the main stream society.

In Kerala, tribes are considered as most marginalised category. While considering their economic and educational status in Kerala there can see a large disparity in between general and tribal categories. According to the census in 2011, Kerala's general literacy rate is 94% but the scheduled tribe's literacy rate is only 75.8% and their dropout rate is very high. Personal factors such as aptitude and state of health, interpersonal factors such as social isolation, rejection by peers; family factors such as parental attitudes; institutional factors such as atmosphere at school, educational practices and environmental factors are the reason for this underdevelopment in tribal education.

B. School Adjustment

Adjustment is the process of establishing satisfactory relationship between individual and his environment. According to Shaffer, L.S. "Adjustment is the process by which living organism maintain a balance between his needs and the circumstances that influence the satisfaction of these needs". If a person is well adjusted to his circumstances, then only he can survive without psychological stress resulting from maladjustment. There are mainly four areas of adjustment- home adjustment, social adjustment,

health and emotional adjustment and school adjustment. School adjustment means the capacity of a person to respond to the school environment which includes curricular and co-curricular activities. Adjustment during the period of adolescence will determine to a large extent what will one be as a person as an adult. So the school adjustment is very important because school plays a vital role in the development of an adolescent as they spend most part of their life is in at school.

School adjustment is a broad construct which consist of many different aspects such as academic achievement, school satisfaction, school engagement and pro social behaviour. Poor school adjustment leads to low academic achievement, behavioural problems, and discordant educational aspirations and even school dropout (Vasalampi et al. 2009; Raju & Rahamtula 2007). Adjustment to schooling is influenced by a variety of personal and family characteristics, and societal trend. It is the interaction of the child's personal characteristics and their experience that ultimately determines how a child adjusts to schools (Margetts, 2002). In the case of tribal students they may feel difficult in school adjustment because they are being forced to sit in schools where ethnically, culturally and linguistically strange people appointed as teachers and chapters are little connection to their life style, culture and taught. The scope of the study is to describe and explore the educational, emotional and social adjustment problems of tribal students in their school. Education develops the positive attitude values and culture in one's own life and for this proper school environment is essential. Along with that the attitude and interest of the student is also important. Hence the result will help to find out the actual problems faced by them and which can be taken into consideration while planning policies and programmes in school.

III. METHODOLOGY

Since it is an attempt made by the researcher to discuss and describe the adjustment problems of tribal students in their school, the design is descriptive in nature. Simple random sampling method was used for selecting the samples. Population of the study comprises students who are studying in 8th and 9th standard in a tribal residential school in Wayanad District in Kerala. 80 samples were collected for the study.

IV. MAJOR FINDINGS

- Age group of the respondents in this study falls between 12 years and 15 years. Since the samples were collected from 8th and 9th standard majority of the respondents are in the age of 13 (48.8%) and 14 (37.5%). Among the

respondents 52.5% are females and 47.5% are males.

- Analysing the tribal categories of the respondents, it can be observed that the respondents are mainly from 9 tribal groups such as Kurichiyans (23.8%), Kurumans (17.5%), Paniyans (15%), Irula (11.3%), Kattunayakans (11.3%), Karimpalans (7.5%), Muthuvan (6.3%), Mavilan (3.8%) and from Adiyans (3.8%). The respondents from Kurichiyans and Kuruman communities are comparatively high. The main reason for this is that the presence of these two communities are comparatively high in Wayanad and it is also found that these two communities are the most advanced group among tribes and they gave more importance in the education of their children.
- Analysing the family structure of the respondents it can be seen that 72.5% are belongs to nuclear family. From this high percentage itself it is clear that the impact of modernisation is noticeable in the tribal communities too. Reducing number of joint families shows that there is a remarkable change occurring in the family system and culture of tribal communities also like other general communities.
- 90% of the respondents are saying that their parents are supportive in their studies. More than half percentage (51.25%) of respondents says that mothers are giving more attention in their studies.
- From the data it is found that majority of the respondents (66.2%) are having problem in understanding the language of teachers. Most of the teachers are from general category so that the slangs are different. It is not easy for the students from the tribal category to follow these slangs and to understand things.
- 53.8% respondents are afraid of exams. And 12.5% of the respondents are failed in some classes. 23.8% of the respondents feel like to stop their studies. The respondents who felt like discontinuing their studies are having adjustment problem with the atmosphere in the school and hostel.

A. Educational Adjustment

- Data shows that majority of the students (95%) are interested to come in school but at the same time more than 90% of the students were not much interested to sit in their classes. They say that they feel yawning during the class time. The teaching methods and difficulty in understanding lessons may be the reason for this disinterest. And some are saying that they get irritated when teachers come in their class in extra hours.

- The study reveals that more than 60% of the respondents don't have the habit of regular studying; most of the students say that they feel very lazy and become tired when they reached at hostel and that is why they were not taken any initiation to study regularly.
- 81.3% of the respondents are facing difficulty in understanding lessons. Language is the main barrier for them. Some of the students say that they feel more difficulty in understanding lessons in English. The method of teaching and the difficulty in following the language of the teachers are the reason for this.
- It is found that 73.3% of the respondents have the problem of forgetfulness. The respondents say that they cannot perform well in the examination due to this problem. Improper study method is the main reason for this.
- 83% of respondents are interested in reading text books and 77.5% have a habit of taking books from the library.
- 51.3% of the respondents say that the teachers are not taking care of their problems properly and 61.3% respondents were get scolded by their teachers regarding their studies in every day.
- 95% of the respondents say that they were like to work with their friends and 83.8% have a friendly relation with their friends.
- More than half percentage (68.8%) of the respondents didn't like to sit in front bench. As a reason for this they are saying that the teachers will always ask questions to the students those who are sitting in the front benches and for avoiding this questions they prefer to sit in back rows.
- The participation of respondents in sports items are comparatively high (93.8%).

V. SUGGESTIONS

B. Emotional adjustment

- It is found that 63.8% of the respondents are afraid of their school and 80% of the respondents were used to quarrel with their friends and classmates.
- Among the respondents 71.3% of the respondents were getting worried when they get scolding from teachers and 35% of the students saying that they feel jealous when the teachers appreciate other students in their class.
- Majority of the students that is 88.8% of the respondents having the habit of participating in programmes which have been conducting by their school.
- About 58.8% respondents feel resentfulness while asking questions and 60% of the students say that they were having resentful feelings towards the teachers when they get low marks. Most of the students (72.5%) are afraid of meeting their senior students.
- 51.2% of the respondents are not satisfied with their school especially with the infrastructure of the school. Bad experiences from the seniors and strictness from the teachers also be a reason for this.

C. Social adjustment

- 42.5% of the respondents are hesitating in asking questions to the teachers in class and 51.2% of the respondents were hesitating to approach teachers

- Teachers shall build-up and maintain a close relationship with each student for their holistic development.
- Teachers who can speak and understand the tribal language are to be appointed or the present teachers shall be study the tribal dialect.
- Educated tribal youth shall be recruited as a teacher and posted in the tribal schools especially in lower classes.
- Teachers who are working in tribal areas should undergo through a short orientation course in tribal development and culture.
- In planning for tribal education the traditional technique of education of various tribal communities and their cultural traits should be taken into consideration and incorporated as far as possible.
- The content of education should boost their cultural norms so as to make them proud of their culture, rather than embarrassing them. The kind of education provided now does not take into consideration of this aspect. The syllabus may also include vocational training courses suitable to the children.
- Since these tribal children are very active in extra-curricular activities, those who can perform well in such activities can be given special coaching/training and they may be fine-tuned to get careers in the field of sports and Arts.
- Incorporation of the Non-formal education will be more appropriate in the case of disadvantage groups like tribes, because it is more learner's centred than formal education system. And the curriculum is also flexible according to the learner's age, culture, language, needs and problems. So this type of learning can moderate the adjustment problems of the students to an extent.

VI. CONCLUSION

The research reveals that the tribal students have adjustment problems in the educational, emotional and social areas. It was found that the language problem is one of the major factor that

determines the educational adjustment of the students. The result of cross tabulation between the variables; difficulty in understanding the language of teachers and the difficulty in understanding lessons also agrees with this fact. It shows that 57.5% respondents having both the problems. Teaching methods and syllabus are also leading to poor adjustment in the area of education. These adjustment problems leads to dissatisfaction towards the school and it will negatively affect the academic development of the students. These problems can condense to an extent if the Students could get an opportunity to express their views and developing a healthy relationship with others in the school. For improving adjustment level of the students there can conduct life skill education and mental health related programmes in the school. Through the combined efforts of the students, teachers, parents, government and community based organisations there can create a better atmosphere in each school.

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