

FRIENDSHIP SKILLS OF THE PRIMARY SCHOOL TRIBAL CHILDREN IN RELATION TO THEIR SEX AND TYPE OF FAMILY

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The aim of the present investigation was to study friendship skills of the primary school tribal children in relation to their sex and type of family. The findings reveal that there exists significant difference between the friendship skills of Primary School male and female tribal students. The study found no significant difference between the friendship skills of tribal students belong to nuclear family and joint family and significant difference in the mean scores of the friendship skills of Primary School tribal and non-tribal students.

Scheduled Tribes, the most disadvantaged groups in India, are enlisted in Article 341 and 342 of the constitution. In India 8% of the population belongs to scheduled tribe. But majority of them live in scattered habitations located in interior, remote and inaccessible hilly and forest areas of the country. Efforts are being made by the Govt. of India to provide numerous facilities to the disadvantage groups with a view to bring them at par with the various privileged sections. According to Article 46 under Directive Principle of State Policy of Indian constitution, the State shall promote, with special care, the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections and in particular of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and shall protect them from all social injustice and all form of exploitation. The constitution of India prescribes certain safeguards for the tribal along with other disadvantaged groups either specially or by the way of general rights of the citizens. The objective of such safeguards is to promote the educational, socio-cultural, political, economic and service interest of the disadvantaged sections of the country. The Govt. of India has formed the National Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, with the passing of Constitution (68th Amendment) Bill 1990, for the welfare of the tribal population of the country. The union government has also created a special Ministry called Ministry of Tribal Affairs, which looks into the matters exclusively related to tribal development. In spite of numerous efforts made by the government of India, these disadvantaged groups, especially the tribal section, have not been able to derive full advantage given to them. The tribal people are backward not only in educational and economic aspects but also in social aspect. Backwardness develops a sense of inferiority among them and influences directly on tribal school going children. These factors cause low self-confidence among the tribal children and hampers their social relationship too. The children fail to maintain better friendship not only with the children of own group, but also with the non-tribal group of children. The major problem that tribal children face in forming friendships is that their interaction opportunities are constrained by geographical factors. They live in scattered remote areas, separated by substantial distances from other children and to make contact outside of school may be difficult and impractical. The formation and maintenance of a satisfactory friendship is an interpersonal achievement built upon a foundation of interpersonal skills. Some of these skills contribute to social success in the broader sense of peer acceptance; others are specific to the requirements of friendship. To be sure, the features and course of friendships reflect an intermingling of the expectations and interpersonal skills of the two participants. Additionally, broader encompassing social circumstances-such as structural interaction opportunities, changing group membership and local and cultural group norms – also influence friendship. Bierman, Miller and Stabb (1987) studied the quality of peer relationships among children exposed to different families. In this study three hundred sixty-three school-aged children from joint and nuclear families were interviewed about their friendship networks, frequency of social contact and the interpersonal quality of their friendships. However, children exposed to nuclear reported feeling lonelier and having more conflict with a close friend as compared to the children from joint family. Findings confirm that it is important to examine the quality of relationships to determine how children at risk fare in their social lives. Blurton and

Buhrmester (1990) studied friendship formation during preadolescence and adolescence period. Results indicated that children, especially girls, possessed better friendship skills than the boys. Choi and Kim (2003) looked into the effects of coaching children in social skills. With a view to improve social interaction and peer acceptance, small sample of primary age children were taken for the study. The result revealed that the coaching provided to the children of small group affects significantly social acceptance and peer acceptance. As social skills are important for every individual, it is essential to undertake maximum studies in these aspects. But the literature on this field, especially on children's friendship skills, has not progressed to a point where one can confidently enumerate the specific social tasks involved in friendship or the interpersonal skills necessary or sufficient for friendship success. As tribal children in India are as much important as others, there is a great need for adequate research in this field.

OBJECTIVES

To study the friendship skills of Primary School tribal children.

To study the difference between the friendship skills of male and female Primary School tribal children.

To study the difference between the friendship skills of Primary School tribal children belong to nuclear and joint family.

To study the difference between the friendships skills of tribal and non-tribal Primary School students.

HYPOTHESES

There exists no significant difference between the friendship skills of male and female Primary School tribal children.

There exists no significant difference between the friendship skills of Primary School tribal children belong to nuclear and joint family.

There exists no significant difference between the friendships skill of of tribal and non-tribal Primary School students.

METHOD AND PROCEDURE

For the present study, the investigators decided to adopt descriptive survey method. It is a method of investigation to study, to describe and interpret what exists at present. A sample of 300 tribal students and 100 non-tribal students of Primary School was selected randomly from Kalahandi District of Orissa. Out of 300 students, 150 students belonging to joint family and 150 students belonging to nuclear family (both male and female), were selected from the tribal dominated area of Kalahandi District. Similarly 100 students, other than tribal communities, were selected from the same region of Kalahandi District. The researchers developed a questionnaire to measure the friendship skills of Primary School students. There were 30 questions in the questionnaire to be scored on 5-point scale. These five points are: - Strongly Agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree. For the positively worded statements, Strongly Agree carries 5 marks, Agree carries 4 marks, Undecided carries 3 marks, Disagree carries 2 marks and Strongly Disagree carries 1 marks. For the negatively worded statements Strongly Agree carries 1 marks, Agree carries 2 marks, Undecided carries 3 marks, Disagree carries 4 marks and Strongly Disagree carries 5 marks. The investigators collected data from the target sample by visiting the selected schools of tribal dominated area of Kalahandi District of Orissa.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In order to find out the differences in the friendship skills of tribal children within their own group and with the non-tribal children, t-ratios were employed by the investigators. The hypothesis framed to achieve the objective stated above is that there exists no significant difference between the friendship skills of male and female Primary School tribal children. The obtained t-ratio for the friendship skills of primary school male and female tribal students i.e.4.31

is more than the table value at .01 level of significance. Therefore it is significant at .01 level. It means that there exists significant difference between the friendship skills of Primary School male and female tribal students. Thus, the null hypothesis (H_0), which states that there exists no significant difference in friendship skills of Primary School male and female tribal students, is rejected. The mean score of the tribal male students i.e. 88.30 is considerably higher than the mean score of tribal female students i.e. 67.80. Therefore, it can be interpreted that the male primary school students have better friendship skills than the tribal female students. The calculated t-ratio for friendship skills of primary school tribal students belong to nuclear and joint family is 1.67, which is not significant at both .05 and .01 levels. So it can be interpreted that there exists no significant difference in mean scores of the friendship skills of Primary School tribal students belong to nuclear family and joint family. Hence, the null hypothesis (H_0), which states that there exists no significant difference in friendship skills of Primary School tribal students belonging to nuclear family and joint family, is accepted. Though the mean score of tribal students belonging to joint family is a bit higher (i.e. 78.90) than the students belong to nuclear family (i.e. 75.22), it does not promise any noteworthy difference. The obtained t-ratio for the friendship skills of tribal and non-tribal students was 5.02 was greater than the table value at .01 level. It means that there exists significant difference in the mean scores of the friendship skills of Primary School tribal and non-tribal students. Thus, the null hypothesis (H_0), which states that there exists no significant difference in friendship skills of Primary School tribal and non-tribal students, stands rejected. The mean score of the primary school non-tribal students is 89.37, which is higher than the mean score of tribal students i.e. 71.36. It shows that the non-tribal students are better in their friendship skills than their tribal counterparts.

CONCLUSION

From the above result, it was found that there exists significant difference in mean scores of the friendship skills of Primary School male and female tribal students. The mean score of the tribal male students is considerably higher than the mean score of tribal female students. It reveals that the tribal male students have better friendship skills as compared to the tribal female students. The result concerning the differences between the friendship skills of tribal students belong to nuclear family and joint family reveals that there exists no significant difference in the friendship skills of tribal students belonging to nuclear family and joint family. Though the mean score of tribal students belonging to joint family is a bit higher than the students belong to nuclear family, it does not promise any noteworthy difference. Whatever the difference between the scores of the tribal students belonging to nuclear family and joint family existed, it may be due to fluctuation in sampling and chance factor. The finding was contradictory to the findings of Bierman, Miller and Stabb (1987). It may be due to the sample, tool used, and geographical area taken for the research. The investigators, further, found significant difference in the mean scores of the friendship skills of Primary School tribal and non-tribal students. The mean score of non-tribal students is significantly higher than the mean score of tribal students. Thus, it can be concluded that the non-tribal students possess better friendship skills than their tribal counterparts. It may be due to the geographical differences, socio-economic status and education of the family. It has also been observed that the tribes keep relation with their own group, whereas the non-tribal people have a wide social circle.

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