



EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATION AND SCHOOL ADJUSTMENT AMONG PARTICULARLY VULNERABLE TRIBAL GROUP ADOLESCENTS: A COMPARATIVE STUDY

Gursinga Lakshman Kumar, Research Scholar,
Dr. A Anupama, Assistant Professor,
Department of Psychology, Osmania University, Hyderabad, India

Abstract

Adolescence is a transition phase in which they undergo various significant changes influenced by self and environment where their aspirations tend to rise. Educational aspiration is a strong desire where an individual sets realistic goals and approaches to accomplish any work and evaluate one's own performance. Adjustment, a psychological process that helps them in benefitting from learning, is an important factor for tribal adolescents which enhances or deteriorates their academic performance. This comparative study explores the role of Educational Aspiration and School Adjustment among Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTG) adolescent girls. A sample size of 174 (87 PVTG & 87 Non-PVTG) indigenous adolescent girls who are natives and dwellers of ITDA Telangana state forest areas was chosen using a purposive sampling technique. Educational Aspiration Inventory (EAI), Students School Adjustment Scale (SSAS) and demographic form were used as tools for the study. The independent sample t- test found no significant differences between PVTG and Non-PVTG in Educational Aspiration but significant differences between PVTG and Non-PVTG with reference to School Adjustment. The results also revealed a positive correlation and statistical significance between Educational aspiration and School Adjustment for both PVTG and Non-PVTG adolescent girls. The conclusion depicts the role and relationship between adjustment and educational aspirations among vulnerable tribal groups.

Keywords: Adolescents, Educational aspiration, Adjustment, Vulnerable and Indigenous

Introduction

Adolescence, usually termed as the phase of '*Stress and Storm*', is a remarkable transition phase of a person's life from puberty which undergoes great significant changes in physical, intellectual, emotional, social and psychological dimensions (Gestsdottir & Lerner, 2008). During this Adolescent period, the child starts experiencing different circumstances, committing mistakes and re-learning from them. While some try to give up, some try to acquire new habits that change their behaviour. Adolescents from countries like India, rich in cultural diversity- are highly dependent on their parents for most life-changing decisions like choosing courses in academics, educational choices and career choices. The Scheduled Tribe population is one of India's most illiterate, economically disadvantaged, and marginalized communities. Thus, among the Indian tribal communities whose belief systems vary and follow unique cultures, education is regarded as a marker and a tool for socio-economic development.

The Scheduled Tribe population constitute 9.08% of the total population of Telangana State. As per the Annual report of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Govt of India, 2016-17, over 700 notified Scheduled Tribes are recognized nationwide. 75 communities identified as Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (earlier known as Primitive Vulnerable Tribal Groups), of which four communities – Chenchu, Kolam/Kolawar, Thoti and Konda Reddis (Hill Reddis) are notified as per Andhra Pradesh Reorganization Act (2014) where these communities have a pre-agriculture level of technology, stagnant or declining population, extremely low literacy and a subsistence level of the economy. There exist inter-tribal inequalities in regard to socio-economic transformation.

The main goal of education - 'holistic development of personality' can be achieved only through seriousness in one's aspiration. Aspiration is defined as a "frame of reference incorporating



self-esteem as a benchmark against which the person perceives the sensation of success or failure.” Educational aspiration is a strong desire where an individual sets realistic goals, follows certain approaches to accomplish work and evaluates one’s performance. Education aspiration and achievement are influenced to some extent by social circumstances. Young children’s aspirations guide what students learn in school, how they prepare for adult life, and what they eventually do.

“Adjustment is the process of finding and adopting modes of behaviour suitable to the environment or the changes in the environment”. Nowadays, school adjustment is a phenomenon that is of great concern to educationalists as well as health practitioners to help their students adjust and benefit from school. Research on educational aspiration and school adjustment is not conclusive. Various studies have already found that poor school adjustment leads to low academic achievement, behavioural problems, discordant educational aspirations and even school dropout. Tribes in India have enrolled for a greater count in dropout rates. This study explores Educational Aspiration and School Adjustment among Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group adolescents.

Review of Literature

Research has shown that lack of stable livelihood, ill health, poor parental motivation, socio-cultural norms relating to conduct and marriage, gender differences, inaccessibility of school, discrimination and ignorance at school, stereotyping by the students of other communities, medium of instruction, lack of awareness on opportunities after education act as barriers in educating tribal girls (Thamminaina & Mohanty, 2020). Behera (2019) examined the status and advancement of basic education in the lives of Scheduled Tribes. Goswami (2020) investigated the prevalence of malnutrition among PVTGs. Indeed, most of the literature on poverty alleviation, health, livelihood, social justice, and empowerment is available (Chaudhary, 2012; Xaxa, 2008). Despite various safety nets, PVTGs, particularly girls, continue to lag in schooling. The research focused on general risk factors influencing school performance and described the common threads indicating the predictors of academic adjustment among Indigenous youth. The importance of educational environments in which we focus on differences in school adjustment and academic accomplishment between school types (e.g., tribal schools vs public schools) as a result of institutional community and cultural continuity (Thamminaina & Mohanty, 2020). As a result, discrimination may present an additional barrier to school adjustment, particularly in situations where Indigenous culture is not appreciated. Sharma (1994) investigated tribal students’ educational attitudes about education compared to non-tribals. The main findings were that there is a considerable difference in attitudes between tribal and non-tribal students. Caste and religious considerations majorly impact the attitudes of students from various groups. In a national sample of children ten years or older, who lived in a different household from their fathers, King (1994) concluded that higher levels of financial assistance from non-residential fathers were connected to higher levels of global academic self-concept. Other characteristics considered in this study included the mother’s matrimony status at the time of birth, the child’s distance from their father, and the family’s economic position.

Several (2013) compared the psychological adjustment of tribal and non-tribal college students, and the findings showed a substantial difference between the two groups. Non-tribal college students’ psychological adjustment was superior to tribal college students. The psychological adjustment of male college students is superior to that of female college students. The Impact of Anxiety and Personality Dimension on the Adjustment of Tribal College Girl Students was studied by Sharma, V. K., Jagtap, B. L., and Chaudhury (2021) on a sample of 180 students. The results showed that anxiety has a significant impact on adjustment while extraverted personality has a positive impact on adjustment in college tribal girl students.

A study among tribal and non-tribal students found that tribal students showed more anxiety and adjustment-related problems when compared to their non-tribal counterparts (Zaki, 2012). If a person does not maintain a proper adjustment to the surroundings, they may become a victim of mental stress or disorder. Human adjustment patterns are altering dramatically in the dynamic setting.



Similarly, college students confront numerous challenges during their prime period of education. They are highly concerned about their careers. In between, they appear anxious about how they will perform better tomorrow. As a result, their level of adjustment is also influenced by now and then. Individual personality traits are another critical factor that moulds behaviour to adapt to the environment and become unique adaptations (Lazarus,1976).

The rationale of the Study

One of the purposes of education is to train students for healthy adjustment in various life situations, implying that education and adjustment are complementary and linked to each other. The previous literature review considers the relationship between culture, their socio-demographic characteristics and academic achievement, which gives us a scope to explore their cultural factors and aspirations. Research on factors affecting their mental health profile, educational aspirations, adjustment and socio-economic development among Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups in the psychology domain are studied narrowly. Education is the base for development, so their socio-demographic characteristics are assumed to enhance their performance later in life. Hence, this comparative study attempts to assess and explore the relationship between educational aspirations and adjustment among indigenous adolescents.

Statement of the problem:

The statement of the problem is as follows: “Educational Aspiration and School Adjustment among Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group adolescents: A Comparative study”.

Objectives

The main objectives of the study are:

- 1) To examine the socio-demographic profile of PVTG and non-PVTG adolescent girls
- 2) To study the Level of Educational aspiration and school adjustment among PVTG and non-PVTG tribal adolescent girls.
- 3) To study the relationship between educational aspiration and School adjustment among tribal adolescent girls (PVTG and non-PVTG).

Hypotheses

H₀1. There is no significant difference among PVTG and Non-PVTG adolescents on educational aspiration.

H₀2. There is no significant difference between PVTG and Non-PVTG adolescents on school adjustment.

H₀3. There is no significant relationship between educational aspiration and school adjustment among PVTG adolescents.

H₀4. There is no significant relationship between educational aspiration and school adjustment among Non-PVTG adolescents.

Variables

Dependent variables: (i) Educational Aspiration, (ii) School Adjustment

Independent Variables: Type of the Group (i) PVTG (Chenchu, Thoti, Kolam, Kondareddis)

(ii) Non-PVTG (Gond, Koya)

Tools used for the study

The standardized tools-Educational Aspiration Inventory (EAI) developed by Dr Pradeep Kumar (2012), the Students School Adjustment Scale (SSAS) developed by Dr Surekha (2018) and the Demographic form developed by Researcher was used for the study.

Sample: Non-Probability Purposive Sampling technique is used for selecting the study sample. A sample size of 174 girls (87- PVTG and 87 Non-PVTG) was selected based on the inclusion criteria, which included only adolescent girls. The sample from Chenchu, Konda reddy, Kolam, Thoti, and



Kolawar tribes belong to the Primitive Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG). In contrast, adolescents from Koya and Gond tribal communities fall under the Non-PVTG category in this study.

Inclusion Criteria: PVTG adolescents college going students belonging to tribal communities of Chenchu, Kondareddy, Kolam, Thoti and Kolawar, whereas Koya and Gond adolescent girls from the non-PVTG group are natives of Integrated Tribal Development Agency areas of Telangana state.

Exclusion Criteria: School dropout tribal adolescents are not considered for the study.

Research Design: Descriptive Correlation Design would be chosen as the Research design for this present study.

Data and Sources of Data

Primary data was collected from the participants of this study. With the permission of the authorities of respective educational institutions and the consent of the participants, the data was obtained.

Statistical Analysis

Descriptive statistics, Pearson's Product moment co-efficient of correlation and Independent Sample t-test are used for analyzing the data. Pearson's Product moment coefficient of correlation has been computed to determine the relationship between Educational Aspiration and Adjustment among PVTG and Non-PVTG female students. An Independent Sample t-test has been used to determine the difference between the two groups.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table No. 1: Mean, S. D. and t-ratio showing the difference between PVTG and Non-PVTG adolescents on Educational aspiration

Group Statistics

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t-value
Educational Aspiration	PVT	87	2.7448	.28985	.03108	1.345
	Non-PVT	87	2.6776	.36510	.03914	

** Significant at 0.01 level

An independent samples t-test was conducted to compare the Educational Aspiration of Non-PVTG and PVTG adolescent girls. There were no significant differences ($t(172) = 1.345, p = 0.180$) in scores for the PVTG Group ($M=2.74, SD =0.28$) and PVTG Group ($M= 2.67, SD = 0.36$). The magnitude of the difference in the means (mean difference = 0.07), 95% CI: -.031 to 0.165) was minimal. Hence, H1 was supported, which implies that PVTG adolescent girls and Non-PVTG adolescents do not differ in Educational aspirations. Studies by Naqvi and Khan (2018) and Pabitra (2021) support the hypothesis. In their study, the authors found the differences and relationships between tribal and non-tribes. Students from the scheduled tribal community are on par with their non-tribal counterparts in Educational Aspiration and Academic Achievement; they possess a significant and favourable association. Bashir and Kaur (2017) conducted a study to determine educational aspirations about their school environment and location. The results elucidate that no significant difference existed between rural and urban students regarding their educational aspirations. In a sociological study on Orissa tribes, children were found to have different thinking levels than other rural children. A variety of elements typically influence the development of aspiration. Culture, family environment and socio-economic level, location of living, teaching commitment, and other factors all impact the development of aspirations. Despite their inaccessibility to educational resources and tribe Vulnerability, they don't possess much difference in terms of Educational aspirations.

Table No. 2: Mean, S. D. and t-ratio showing difference between PVTG and Non-PVTG adolescents on School Adjustment



Group Statistics

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t-value
Adjustment Level	Non-PVTG	87	2.1861	.31791	.03408	9.28*
	PVT	87	1.7720	.26849	.02878	

** Significant at 0.01 level

An independent samples t-test was conducted to compare the School Adjustment for PVTG and Non-PVTG adolescent girls. There were significant differences ($t(172) = 9.282, p = 0.00$) in scores for the Non-PVTG Group ($M=2.18, SD = 0.317$) and PVTG Group ($M= 1.772, SD = 0.268$). The magnitude of the difference in the means (mean difference = 0.41), 95% CI: 0.326 to 0.502) was very small. Hence, H1 was rejected. Suvera (2013) compared the psychological adjustment of tribal and non-tribal college students. The findings showed a substantial difference between the two groups, where non-tribal college students' psychological adjustment was superior to tribal college students. The psychological adjustment of male college students is superior to that of female college students.

In terms of the school environment, with dropout rates in some Indigenous communities approaching 35% and prior research indicating that negative school adjustment and attitudes toward school lead to school dropout for all ethnic groups (Bachman, 1991), it is critical to understand which factors contribute to school adjustment among Indigenous students. In a culturally "safe" environment, indigenous children experience less distress and have a more positive school adjustment. However, the location of their educational institution affects their adjustment level in various ways. Between elementary and junior high school, students' school adaptability tends to deteriorate (Barber & Olsen, 2004; Zanobini & Usai, 2002). Another study by Sharma, V. K., Jagtap, B. L., and Chaudhury (2021) found that the personality of tribal girls had a significant impact on adjustment which can be implied to our research that Non-PVTG tribal group (Koya and Gond) adolescent students adjustment vary with PVTG (Chenchu, Thoti, Kolam, Kolawar and Kondareddi) adolescents.

Table 3 shows the relationship between educational aspiration and school adjustment among PVTG adolescents

	Educational Aspiration	Adjustment level
Educational Aspiration 1		
Adjustment level	.198*	1

*Significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The Pearson product correlation of Educational Aspiration and School Adjustment among Non-PVTG adolescent girls was positive and statistically significant. ($r = .198; p < .05$). Hence, Ho1 was rejected. It shows that an increase in Educational Aspiration would lead to higher School Adjustment among Non-PVTG adolescent girls.

Table 4 shows the relationship between Educational Aspiration and School Adjustment among Non-PVTG adolescents.

	Educational Aspiration	Adjustment level
Educational Aspiration 1		
Adjustment level	.256*	1

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The coefficient of correlation between Educational Aspiration and School Adjustment among PVTG adolescent girls was positive and statistically significant. ($r = .256; p < .05$). Hence, Ho1 was rejected. The result shows that increased school adjustment would lead to higher Educational Aspiration among PVTG adolescent girls.



Table 3 and Table 4 show the correlational analysis between School adjustment and Educational Aspiration among PVTG and Non-PVTG adolescents, respectively. In both cases, it was found that Educational Aspiration and School Adjustment are positively related. Earlier research studies conducted in these domains have supported this study's results. The conceptual model and studies outlined by Grolnick, Kurowski, and Gurland (1999) focused on the two pathways, describing how parent participation and parenting styles are related to children's adjustment to school. Findings of the study Singh, Pandey and Singh (2015) analyzed a significant relationship between home environment and educational aspiration. Though both tribal groups belong to the indigenous communities, they share many things in common. In many comparative studies, non-tribal students performed better than tribes because of the genuine problems. In a survey by Mishra (2020), the findings reveal that male students have more social adjustment difficulty than female students, while female students have more emotional adjustment difficulty than their male counterparts; male and female students do not differ from one another in home and health adjustment areas; female students have higher educational aspiration than male students. Thus, Educational Aspirations and Adjustment are correlated.

Conclusion: The conclusion depicts the role of adjustment and educational aspirations among vulnerable tribal groups. There is a considerable increase in Educational Aspiration which eventually lead to higher School Adjustment among Non-PVTG adolescent girls. An increase in Educational Aspiration would lead to a higher School Adjustment among PVTG adolescent girls. PVTG adolescent girls have poor school adjustment than their Non-PVTG counterparts. Though significance and correlation between these vulnerable tribe groups concerning aspirations and adjustment existed, their adjustment levels remain low compared to the mainstream communities. The strategies to enhance the adjustment levels and educational aspirations must be encouraged because their cultural learning methods vary from others.

References

- Bachman, J. G. & Wallace Jr, J. M. (1991). Explaining racial/ethnic differences in adolescent drug use: The impact of background and lifestyle. *Social problems*, 38(3), 333-357.
- Barber, B. K., & Olsen, J. A. (2004). Assessing the transitions to middle and high school. *Journal of adolescent research*, 19(1), 3-30.
- Bashir, L., & Kaur, R. (2017). A study on interrelation of educational aspiration with school environment of secondary school students. *Educational Quest-An International Journal of Education and Applied Social Sciences*, 8(spl), 269-275.
- Behera, J. K. (2019). Problem Statement and Prospects of Tribal Girls' Education. *the NCERT and no matter may be reproduced in any form without the prior permission of the NCERT.*, 44(4), 70.
- Choudhury, A. (2006). Revisiting dropouts- old Issue, fresh perspectives, *Economic and Political weekly*, 5257-5263
- Gestsdottir, S., & Lerner, R. M. (2008). Positive development in adolescence: The development and role of intentional self-regulation. *Human Development*, 51(3), 202-224.
- Grolnick, W. S., & Kurowski, C. O. (1999). Family processes and the development of children's self-regulation. *Educational psychologist*, 34(1), 3-14.
- Kanrar, P., & Goswami, M. (2020). Socio-demographic Profile, Reproductive Health and Nutritional Status Among the Juangs—A Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group of Odisha, India. *The Oriental Anthropologist*, 20(1), 135-149.
- King, V. (1994). Nonresident father involvement and child well-being: Can dads make a difference? *Journal of Family Issues*, 15, 78-96
- Lazarus RS. Pattern of Adjustment. International Student Edition. New York: McGraw Hill, USA; 1976
- Mishra, A. (2020). Relationship between Adjustment and Educational Aspiration among higher secondary students: A Study.



- Naqvi, T. F., & Khan, M. Z. (2018). Level of Educational Aspiration and its predictors: A study of Tribal and Non-tribal students of Government Schools. *IJRAR-International Journal of Research and Analytical Reviews*, 5(4), 284-291.
- Sharma, V. K., Jagtap, B. L., & Chaudhury, S. (2021). Impact of Anxiety and Personality Dimension on Adjustment of Tribal College Girl Students. *J Anxiety Depress*, 4(1), 135.
- Singh, M., Pandey, N. and Singh, A. (2015). Impact of home environment on educational aspiration of intermediate school students. *International Journal of Advanced Engineering Research and Studies*, 4(2), 365- 366
- Suvera, P. S. (2013). Psychological Adjustment: A comparative study of Tribal and Non-Tribal college students. *Asian Journal of Research in Social Sciences and Humanities*, 3(5), 156-169.
- Thamminaina, A., Kanungo, P., & Mohanty, S. (2020). Barriers, opportunities, and enablers to educate girls from Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs): A systematic review of literature. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 118, 105350.
- Zaki A. Anxiety and adjustment pattern among tribal and non-tribal students *Indian Journal of Health Wellbeing*. 2012;3(3):723-5
- Zanobini, M., & Usai, M. C. (2002). Domain-specific self-concept and achievement motivation in the transition from primary to low middle school. *Educational psychology*, 22(2), 203-217