

Exploring Study Habits of Secondary Ashram School Students: Evidence from Kandhamal District, Odisha

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Abstract

The main objective of the present study was to explore the study habits of the Scheduled Tribe students in secondary Ashram schools of Kandhamal district, Odisha. The study was conducted to assess the extent of study habits among male and female students and to make a comparison between the study habits of selected dimensions by gender. The descriptive survey method was used. The sample consisted of 100 students (50 Male and 50 Female) of grade IX of five secondary school ashram of Daringbadi block of Kandhamal district. The Study Habit Inventory was used to collect data and the independent-samples t-test was used to analyse the data. The results indicated that most students' study habits were very good to extremely good. For males, 34% had extremely good and 30% had very good study habits, in comparison, 38% of female students had extremely good and 42% had very good study habits. Study habits for overall scores showed a significant difference between Male and Female ($t = 4.923$, $p < .05$). There were no significant differences between Male and Female in the number of notes taken, textbooks read, study time, memory, and the preparation for exams, based on the dimension-wise analysis; Male showed a slightly higher score in time management. Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that the academic habits of the students of secondary Ashram schools generally tend to be positive, but specific interventions aimed at improving their time management and learning support strategies could further boost their academic performance. The results have implications for teachers, school administrators, and policymakers who work to enhance educational outcomes in tribal residential schools.

Keywords: Study habits, Ashram schools, Scheduled Tribe students, Secondary education

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Introduction

Education is one of the most basic ways of empowering marginalised communities and fostering inclusive socio-economic development. Ashram Schools are residential institutions of education in India that aim to provide fair educational opportunities for children of the Scheduled Tribes (STs) who reside in remote and socially and economically underprivileged regions. These schools are intended to enable children and youth to attend school, by providing free boarding and lodging, academic instruction and opportunities for holistic development. Despite the constant efforts being made by the government, however, the educational environment of the tribal students faces certain challenges, such as low infrastructure, lack of educational resources, poor school environment, poor hostel environment, language barrier, high absenteeism, dropouts and limited parental support, which affect their learning outcomes. These realities of education are also brought to the fore in the present study in relation to the Ashram schools.

Study habits is one of the significant behaviour dimensions affecting academic achievement. They describe the systematic patterns of learning behaviours that students use to plan their learning time, to engage in academic

work, to review and modify lessons and to prepare for examination. Good study skills are essential for good concentration, self-discipline, academic performance, and lifelong learning, while poor study skills are likely to lead to low academic grades. This dissertation in the present highlights that the study habits of the students of secondary ashram schools are affected by the educational facilities provided in the institutions, educational resources, peer learning, teacher support and residential environment. Students in Ashram schools face different social, cultural and educational context, hence an understanding of how the students study is critical to design appropriate interventions that promote students' learning behaviour and academic achievement.

The study habits of students have been comparatively less focused upon in previous studies, having explored various aspects of the study about school education in the Ashram. Dash (2018) conducted a study to assess the school and hostel conditions of ST communities in Odisha and emphasized on the need for improving the school and hostel facilities for the betterment of students' experience. According to Danane (2017), Ashram schools were shown to have positive impact on tribal students, but there was a need for skill development, guidance on career and educational activities to be given more emphasis. Pattanaik (2012) mentioned that the socio-economic status and educational environment would have a significant impact on the students in the Ashram schools of Koraput district and the evaluation conducted by SCSTRTI (2012) on the performance of Scheduled Tribe Female' hostels in Andhra Pradesh highlighted that the residential and educational facilities need to be improved to enhance their educational outcomes. In the same way, Chaudhari (2010) found that academic performance of tribal children in Ashram schools is very poor; also, Ramana (2009) found that the challenges faced in tribal education are poor infrastructure, inadequate teaching-learning processes, absenteeism, and drop out. The inadequacies in infrastructure, vocational education, management of schools, enrolment and retention of tribal children were also noted in the past (Reddy 2002, Jha 2000, Sridharan 2000, and Sujatha 2000). Taken together, these studies show that while lots of studies have been conducted on the special educational facilities, the academic attainments and education-related issues faced by the Ashram school students in the secondary level, especially for Kandhamal district of Odisha have not been explored extensively and comprehensively through empirical studies. In this context, the present study aims to fill this gap by exploring the study habits of students of secondary Ashram school as well as to collect evidence for educational planning and interventions which would enable to improve the learning outcome of tribal learners.

Rationale of the Study

Study habits are an important aspect of students' academic achievement since they affect their learning efficiency, self-regulated learning, time management and overall educational achievement. The study of learners' study habits and their grades have continued to show that students who acquire effective study habits tend to be more successful academically, but those with poor study habits are less successful and less motivated to learn, and may experience more difficulty (Jafari et al., 2019; Bhagat & Wadhawan, 2021). The development of good study skills becomes more important in the context of tribal education because students often face several educational hurdles such as socio-economic deprivation, language diversity, lack of learning materials, remoteness of their school and their parents' lack of educational skills. The present dissertation also emphasizes that, although Ashram schools have been established to provide equitable educational opportunities to the children of Scheduled Tribe (ST), certain infrastructural and learning issues are still present which are influencing the learning experiences and academic engagement of children.

The literature reviewed shows that most of the past studies related to Ashram schools have focused on issues of institutional effectiveness, school and hostel environment, academic achievement, scientific attitude, educational facilities, socio-economic background, enrolment, dropouts and the functioning of residential schools (Sujatha, 2000; Pattanaik, 2012; Dash, 2018; Danane, 2017). While the studies have produced useful information on tribal education, empirical information on the study habits of secondary school students at Ashram schools is limited, especially in the tribal dominated Kandhamal district, Odisha. A review of the literature found that this dissertation follows a pattern, as very few studies have been conducted specifically on how students' study in this type of unique, residential educational environment. Hence the present study aims to fill this gap by studying the study habits of secondary ashram school students and to compare the study habits of male and female students.

The results will be added to the current knowledge base and will serve as evidence for teachers, school leaders and policy makers to improve academic supports and enhance the quality of tribal education.

Objectives of the study

1. To Find out the Study habit of Ashram Secondary School scheduled tribe Male Students.
2. To Find out the Study habit of Ashram Secondary School scheduled tribe Female Students.
3. To Compare the study habit of Ashram Secondary School scheduled tribe Male and Female Students.

Hypothesis

Ho1: There exists no significant difference between Ashram Secondary School scheduled tribe Male and Female Students.

Methodology

In the present study the investigator used a descriptive survey method of research. The population of the present study consist of all the 9th standard students of Daringbadi block in Kandhamal District. For the purpose of the selection of sample at first the researcher selected Daringbadi block of Kandhamal district. In this study a sample of 100 students out of which 50 Male and 50 Female from 5 secondary schools was selected using simple random sampling technique. A Standardised Study habit inventory developed by M. Mukhopadhyay and D.N. Sansanwal (2011) employed for data collection. The researcher used Mean, SD, percentage analysis and t-test for analysis of the data.

Table 1: Sample distribution in Daringbadi Block

Sl. No	Name of the School	Sample
01	Govt High School, Daringbadi	20
02	Govt High School, Saramuli	20
03	Govt High School, Gadapur	20
04	Govt High School, Dhusarigaon	20
05	Govt High School, Siangabali	20

Analysis and Interpretation

Study habit of Ashram Secondary School scheduled tribe Male Students

The first objective was to assess the Study habit of Ashram Secondary School scheduled tribe Male Students. In order to accomplish this objective, first of all the data was gathered from the sample of 100 students and all the data was organized and scored as per the scoring guide. The data collected has been tabulated and analysed as under:

Table 2: Shows the Dimension wise Study habit score of Class IX Students.

Dimensions of tool	Gender	N	Mean	SD	t-test	Level of Significance
Management of Time Table	Female	50	36.12	5.51	1.4490	Significant at 0.05 level
	Male	50	37.58	4.52		
Taking Notes	Female	50	26.90	4.20	0.3789	Significant at 0.05 level
	Male	50	27.18	3.11		
Reading Test Books	Female	50	30.14	3.60	1.0601	Significant at 0.05 level
	Male	50	29.42	3.18		
Studying	Female	50	56.44	6.63	0.2744	Significant at 0.05 level
	Male	50	56.80	6.49		
Memorization	Female	50	19.34	3.08	0.7800	Significant at 0.05 level
	Male	50	19.76	2.24		
Preparing for test and exam	Female	50	8.92	2.76	0.2506	Significant at 0.05 level
	Male	50	9.06	2.82		

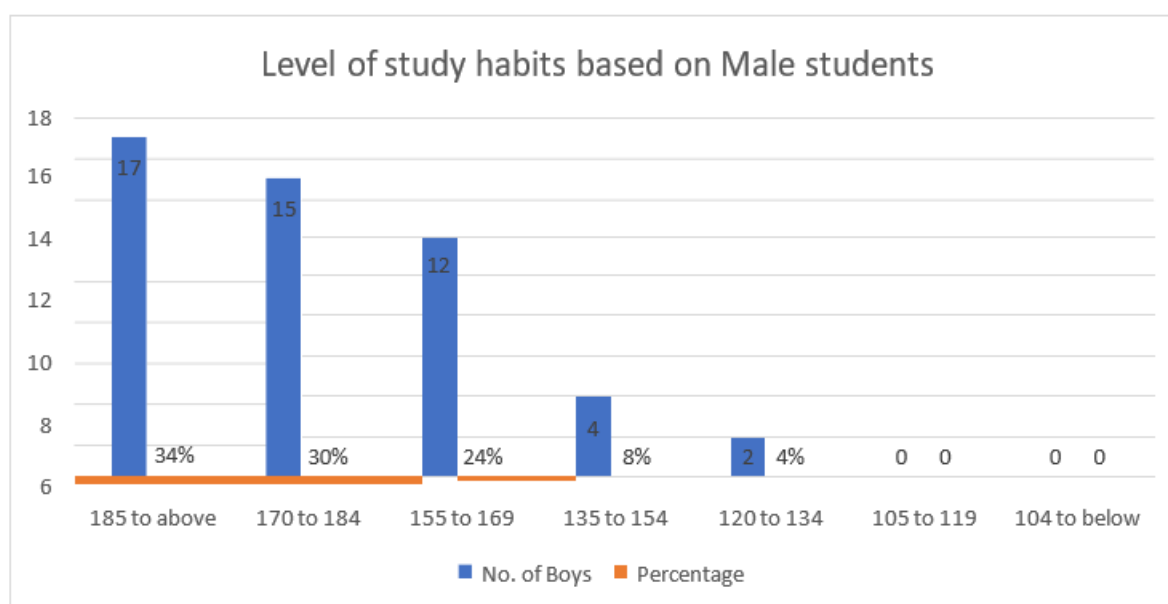
Table 3: Shows the number, mean and S.D. of the total secondary male students

Group	Number	Mean	S.D.
Male Students	50	214.18	7.836

Table 4 Shows the level of study habit of secondary male student.

Sr. No	Range of Raw scores	Level of Study Habits	No. of Male	Percentage
1	185 to above	Extremely Good	17	34%
2	170 to 184	Very Good	15	30%
3	155 to 169	Above Average	12	24%
4	135 to 154	Average	4	8%
5	120 to 134	Below Average	2	4%
6	105 to 119	Poor	-	-
7	104 to below	Extremely Poor	-	-

From the table 4 we observed that, out of 50 Male, 2 (4%) are having below average study habits, 4 (8%) are having average study habits, 12 (24%) are having above average study habits, 15 (30%) are having very good study habits whereas 17 (34%) are having extremely good study habits. It indicates that no Male are having poor study habits.

**Fig 1. Showing the Level of Study Habits of Secondary School Male Students**

Study habit of Ashram Secondary School scheduled tribe Female Students

The second objective was to assess the Study habit of Ashram Secondary School scheduled tribe Female Students. In order to accomplish this objective, first of all the data was gathered from the sample of 100 students and all the data was organized and scored as per the scoring guide. The data collected has been tabulated and analyzed as under:

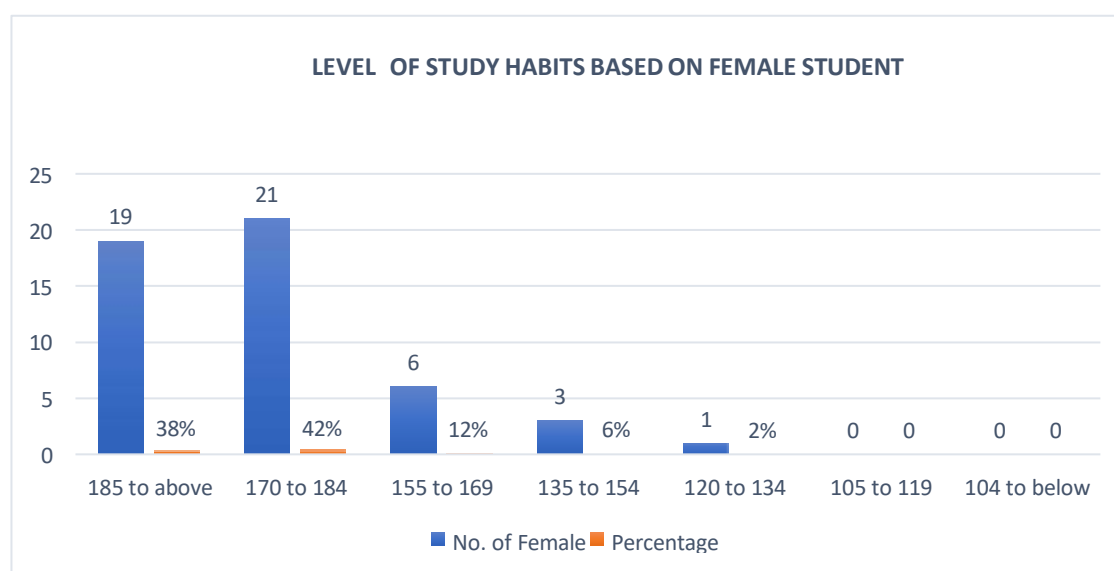
Table 5: Shows the number, mean and S.D. of the total Secondary Female Student.

Group	Number	Mean	S.D.
Female Students	50	207.62	5.228

Table 6: Shows the level of study habit of secondary female student.

Sr. No	Range of Raw score	Level of Study Habits	No. of Female	Percentage
1	185 to above	Extremely Good	19	38%
2	170 to 184	Very Good	21	42%
3	155 to 169	Above Average	6	12%
4	135 to 154	Average	3	6%
5	120 to 134	Below Average	1	2%
6	105 to 119	Poor	-	-
7	104 to below	Extremely Poor	-	-

From the table 6 we observed that, out of 50 Female, 1(2%) are having below average study habits, 3(6%) are having average study habits, 6(12%) are having above average study habits, 21(42%) are having very good study habits whereas 19(38%) are having extremely good study habits. It indicates that no Male are having poor study habits.

**Fig 2. Showing the level of study habits of female students**

Comparison of the study habit of Ashram Secondary School scheduled tribe Male and Female Students

Ho1: There exists no significant difference between Ashram Secondary School scheduled tribe Male and Female Students.

Table 7: Shows the number, mean and S.D. Study habits in terms of Gender

GENDER	N	Mean	SD
Female	50	214.18	7.836
Male	50	207.62	5.228

Table 8: Significant difference of Mean Study habit Scores

GENDER	N	M	SD	Df	t-value	Level of significance	Remarks
Male	50	214.18	7.836	49	4.923	Significant at 0.05 level	Ho1 is rejected
Female	50	207.62	5.228				

N.B- 1. N=100 (Male-50, Female-50)

't' value= 4.923

2. The calculated 't' value is greater than the tabulated value and is significant at 0.05 level of significance

It is inferred from the table 8 that the obtained t-value (4.923) is more than the tabulated t-value (1.9845) given in the table at 0.05 level of significance ($df=49$). So, the hypothesis “There is significant difference between the mean study habits scores of Male and Female studying in class IX” is significant at 0.05 level and the hypothesis is rejected. The study analyzed the study habits of 50 Male and 50 Female in Class IX, categorizing them into different levels: below average, average, above average, very good, and extremely good. The results showed that Male had a higher percentage of extremely good study habits (34%), while Female had a higher proportion of very good study habits (42%). The statistical analysis, represented by the t-value (4.923), exceeds the tabulated t-value (1.9845) at a 0.05 level of significance with 49 degrees of freedom, indicating a statistically significant difference in study habits between Male and Female.

Major Findings of the study

1. Overall the study habits of the Secondary Ashram School students in Kandhamal District were rated good to very good, which means that the majority of students have positive study habits.
2. Students achieved relatively higher scores in the support dimension compared to the other dimensions (time management, note taking, reading textbooks, studying, memorization, and preparation for tests and examinations), which indicates that supportive learning environments have a positive impact on the students' study habits.
3. 34% of students in the male group had extremely good study habits, 30% of the males had very good study habits, 24% of the males had above average study habits, 4% of the males had below average study habits, and 8% of the males had average study skills. No male students were in either the poor or extremely poor category.
4. Amongst the female students, 38 per cent of them showed extremely good study habits, 42 per cent very good study habits, 12 per cent above-average study habits, 6 per cent average study habits and 2 per cent below-average study habits. There was no student classified as poor or extremely poor study habits who was a female student.
5. The mean study habit score of male students ($M = 214.18$, $SD = 7.836$) was higher than that of female students ($M = 207.62$, $SD = 5.228$).
6. The calculated t-value (4.923) is more than its tabulated value (1.9845) at 0.05 level of significance which shows that there is a significant difference among Secondary Ashram School Male and Female in their study habits.
7. Study habits data revealed that both genders had positive study habits, but while there was a relatively large number of extremely good study habits among the male students, there was a higher percentage of very good study habits among the female students.
8. No gender difference was found in areas of taking notes, reading textbooks, studying, memorization, and preparation for examination, when examined dimension wise. This is due to a significant gender difference occurring only in the management of time table dimension, with male students being slightly superior to female students.
9. Secondary Ashram School students in general have good study habits; however, there is a need to enhance time management skills in the students, especially among female students, with specific guidance in academics and create a study support system.

Discussion

The present study aimed at finding study habits of Secondary Ashram School students of Kandhamal District and it was revealed that both male and female students had satisfactory study habits, but the study habits of male students were significantly better than female students ($t = 4.923$, $p < .05$). The finding suggests that despite learning in the same residential education system, gender remains a determinant of learning behaviours of tribal students. The purpose of the Ashram Schools was to ensure equal opportunities to education, which were not observed here, but were achieved through structured schools, properly monitored study time and residential assistance. This is further evidence to support the argument that school environment is not the only determinant

of study habits, but socio-cultural and psychological factors which impact students' engagement in learning are also important.

The results are similar to the majority of studies on tribal education. Previous research works showed gender disparity in scientific attitude (Dash, 2013) and academic performance (Chaudhari, 2010) and that infrastructural issues, poor teaching-learning environment and socio-economic problems still prevail in Ashram Schools (Ramana, 2009; Pattanaik, 2012; Satyasavitri and Honakeri, 2018). Likewise, Danane (2017) emphasized the importance of increased academic support, career advice and skill-based interventions to enhance students' educational journeys. The current study builds upon this existing literature by specifically examining one factor that is critical, but under-researched in the literature, related to academic achievement among tribal students: Study Habits. This study is unique as it offers empirical findings that show female students have a disadvantage in learning behaviours, even within a residential school environment, rather than just at the school level, institutional functioning or scientific attitude. These findings highlight the importance of adopting a gender-sensitive approach to education, such as implementing structured study skills programmes, academic mentoring, counselling support and providing special attention to female students to ensure equitable learning opportunities and enhance educational outcomes in Ashram Schools.

Conclusion

The present study highlights that the student of secondary ashram school in Kandhamal district has reasonably good study habits which indicate the positive effect of learning in an orderly residential system provided by ashram schools. The comparative analysis also shows that no statistically significant difference exists in the study habits of Male and Female of the Scheduled Tribes, implying that both Male and Female students can avail the education opportunities and academic support equally in these institutions. The results support the opinion that gender does not play a significant role in the formation of study habits in Ashram school and that the creation of favourable learning atmosphere can foster equal learning behaviours of tribal students.

The study findings have significant policy implications for the education system and practice which include the development of tribal education. The study habit of students is encouraging but constant efforts are needed to strengthen the academic support by providing better learning resources, library and digital facilities, language support, mentoring and guiding programmes as per the requirement of tribal students. Teachers and school leaders should foster evidence-based study habits, self-regulated learning and frequent academic monitoring to maintain student learning motivation and success. The future can see this research continued with larger and more diverse sample sizes in each of the various regions of the country, and with the addition of more socio-economic, parental education, school climate, motivation and academic achievement variables to assess their impact on study habits, which will help to develop more effective interventions in order to improve educational outcomes for tribal students.

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