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CHAPTER V
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This chapter contains a brief summary of the study, followed by the major conclusions arrived at, as well as the implications of the study and the suggestions for further research.

5.1 SUMMAR Y OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the investigation is to study the role played by the parents, in the education of tribal children studying in the secondary level classes of Kerala. The objectives, hypotheses, and the methodology of the study are detailed below.

5.1.1 Objectives

1. To analyze the attitude of tribal parents towards education with respect to certain selected socio-demographic variables.

2. To find out the relationship between tribal parents’ attitude towards education and the academic achievement of their children.

3. To analyze the nature of tribal parents’ involvement in the education of their children with respect to certain selected socio-demographic variables.

4. To find out the relationship between tribal parents’ involvement in education and academic achievement of their children.
5. To analyze the nature of child rearing practices of tribal parents with respect to certain selected socio-demographic variables.

6. To find out the relationship between child rearing practices of tribal parents and academic achievement of their children.

7. To analyze the nature of parent-child relationship in tribal communities with respect to certain selected socio-demographic variables.

8. To find out the correlation between parent-child relationship and academic achievement of tribal children.

9. To analyze the parenting skills of tribal people with respect to certain selected socio-demographic variables.

10. To find out the relationship between parenting skill of tribal parents and academic achievement of their children.

5.1.2 Hypotheses

1. The attitude of tribal parents towards education will not differ significantly with respect to the selected socio-demographic variables.

2. There will be no significant influence of the parent’s attitude towards education on the academic achievement of tribal students.

3. The involvement of tribal parents in the education of their children will not differ significantly with respect to the selected socio-demographic variables.

4. The tribal parents’ involvement will not have an influence on academic achievement of their children.
5. The child rearing practice of tribal parents will not differ significantly with respect to the selected socio-demographic variables.

6. There will be no significant influence of the child rearing practices on academic achievement of tribal students.

7. The parent-child relationship in tribal people will not differ significantly with respect to the selected socio-demographic variables.

8. There will be no significant influence of the parent-child relationship on academic achievement of tribal children.

9. The parenting skill of tribal parents will not differ significantly with respect to the selected socio-demographic variables.

10. There will be no significant influence of the parenting skills on academic achievement of tribal children.

5.1.3 Methodology in Brief

The present investigation is intended to study the existing role of parents in the education of tribal students. To provide valid answers to the specific research questions raised in the study, Descriptive Research method was followed and Normative Survey was adopted for collecting data relevant for the study. The sample for the study constituted a representative group of tribal students in Kerala (N = 315) and their parents (N = 315 + 315 = 630), selected on the basis of ‘stratified random sampling technique’. The tools used for collecting data were: (1) Scale for Attitude towards Education (Sukumaran & Suresh, 2010), (2) Parent Involvement in Children's Education Scale: P-Version (Sukumaran & Suresh, 2010), (3) Parent Involvement in Children's Education Scale: C-Version (Sukumaran & Suresh, 2010), (4) Child Rearing Practice Scale (Sukumaran & Suresh, 2011), (5) Parent Child Relationship Scale for Children (Arjunan &
Nambeesan, 2009), (6) Parent Child Relationship Scale for Parents (Arjunan & Nambeesan, 2009), (7) Parenting Skill Assessment Scale for Children (Arjunan & Nambeesan, 2009), (8) Parenting Skill Assessment Scale for Parents (Arjunan & Nambeesan, 2009). Average of the total marks obtained for two state wide examinations (annual examination of 2010 and first terminal examination of 2011), conducted by Govt. of Kerala for schools following state syllabus were taken as score for the academic achievement of the students. The tools were administered on the sample under standardized conditions and the data thus collected were analyzed using appropriate statistical techniques such as (i) Computation of Mean (M), Median (Mdn), Standard Deviation (σ), Skewness (Sk) Standard error of mean (SE_M), Mean population values (M_POP) etc. (ii) Chi-square (χ^2) test (iii) Computation of t-value, (iv) One-way ANOVA, (v) Computation of Pearson’s Product-Moment Coefficient of Correlation (r-value), and population values of coefficient of correlation (r_POP.), and (vi) Test of significance of the differences between coefficient of correlation.

5.2 MAJOR CONCLUSIONS OF THE STUDY

The major conclusions that were drawn from the results of the present study are the following:

1. Only a minority of the tribal parents have high positive attitude towards the education of their children. Majority of them possess neutral attitude towards education.

2. Attitude towards education is almost normally distributed in the population of tribal parents.

3. Fathers and mothers of tribal students differ significantly with regard to their attitude towards education. Mothers of tribal students have more
favourable attitude towards the education of their children compared to that of their fathers.

4. Tribal parents with more than one school/college going children have more favourable attitude towards education than their counterparts with single children.

5. Attitude towards education of tribal parents vary significantly with regard to their income. Parents who reported to have better income were found to possess higher positive attitude towards the education of their children compared to low income parents.

6. Parents involved in mainstream income generating activities have more favourable attitude towards education of their children compared to parents who are engaged in traditional subsistence activities.

7. Parents whose children are doing their schooling as day scholars have more desirable attitude towards education than parents whose children are attending residential schooling.

8. Parents claimed to have received at least two years of formal education have better attitude towards education than their counterparts who have received no formal education.

9. The attitude of tribal parents towards the education of their children has a significant, positive and substantial relationship with the academic achievement of their children.

10. Compared to the academic achievement of tribal boys, that of tribal girls is found to be influenced more strongly by the attitude of their parents towards education.
11. The academic achievements of tribal students are found influenced more by the attitude of their mothers towards education than by their fathers’ attitude towards education.

12. Only a small proportion of tribal parents have high involvement in the education of their children.

13. Involvement of tribal parents in the education of their children is normally distributed.

14. Tribal fathers and mothers differ significantly with regard to their involvement in the education of their children. Overall, tribal mothers have better involvement in the education of their children compared to tribal fathers.

15. Tribal boys and girls differ significantly with regard to the involvement of their parents in their education. Parents involve more enthusiastically in the education of boys than that of girls.

16. There is a significant difference between Day-schooling and Residential-schooling tribal students with regard to the involvement of parents in their education. Tribal parents are more involved in the education of day-scholars compared to their residential school counterparts.

17. Number of school/college going children in the family as such is not a decisive factor in influencing parents’ involvement in the education of tribal children.

18. Parents engaged in mainstream income generating activities are more involved in the education of their children than those who are engaged in traditional subsistence activities.
19. Tribal mothers having at least two years of formal education have a higher involvement in the education of their children compared to their illiterate counterparts. Whereas, the formal education received do not discriminate the tribal fathers’ involvement in the education of their children.

20. There is a significant positive and substantial correlation between academic achievement of tribal students and the involvement of their parents in their education.

21. The influence exerted by the involvement of mothers in the education of the tribal students is significantly stronger than that exerted by their fathers.

22. The involvement of tribal parents in the education of their children is found to influence both boys and girls somewhat alike.

23. Only a small proportion of the tribal parents have high child rearing practice. Majority of them possess average child rearing practice.

24. The child rearing practice is normally distributed in the population of tribal parents.

25. Fathers and mothers of tribal students differ significantly in most areas of child rearing practice. The tribal mothers are more involved in the Responsibility Training, Nurturance Training, Achievement Training, and Self Reliance Training of their children; while tribal fathers are more involved in the Obedience Training of the children. Both the parents are almost equally involved in the General Independence Training of the tribal children.

26. Mothers who have received at least two years of formal education have more efficient child rearing practice than those who have not received any formal education.
27. Formal education is not found to be a decisive factor in discriminating the efficiency of child rearing in the case of tribal fathers.

28. The child rearing habits of parents do not differ significantly according to their income. High income and low income tribal parents bring up their children almost in the same manner.

29. Involvement of parents in mainstream income generating activities does not found to be influential in deciding their child rearing practice.

30. The child rearing practices adopted by tribal parents have a significant positive but low correlation with the academic achievement of their children.

31. The tribal mothers exert a stronger influence on the academic achievement of their children by the way of bring-up their children.

32. The academic achievement of tribal boys and girls are influenced alike by the manner in which they are brought up by their parents.

33. The overall parent-child relationship in tribal population is not high.

34. The parent-child relationship is normally distributed in the tribal population.

35. The tribal fathers and mothers differ significantly in their relationship with their children. Compared to tribal fathers, tribal mothers possess stronger relationship with their children.

36. Tribal children perceive their fathers as more Demanding, Rejecting, Neglecting and Indifferent than their mothers; and mothers as more Loving and Protecting than fathers. They perceive fathers and mothers as alike in
Symbolic Punishment, Object Punishment, Symbolic Reward and Object Reward.

37. Tribal boys and tribal girls differ significantly in their perceived relationship with their parents. The parent-child relationship, as perceived by boys, is better than that perceived by girls.

38. Parents who have received at least two years of formal education possess better parent-child relationship than their illiterate counterparts.

39. Tribal parents do not differ significantly in their child rearing behaviour according to their income.

40. Parents’ occupational status as such is not decisive in discriminating the parent-child relationship among tribal people.

41. There exist a significant correlation between academic achievement of tribal children and all the dimensions of their parent-child relationship except ‘Demanding’. Whereas dimensions such as Protecting, Symbolic Reward, Loving and Object Reward are positively correlated with the dependent variable, dimensions like Symbolic Punishment, Rejecting, Object Punishment Indifferent, and Neglecting are correlated negatively. While academic achievement is correlated substantially with dimensions like Protecting, Symbolic Reward, and Loving, the correlation obtained is low in the case of dimensions like Symbolic Punishment, Object Reward and Neglecting. The correlation between academic achievement and remaining dimensions of parent-child relationship, that is, Rejecting, Object punishment, and Indifferent are negligible.

42. The correlation between tribal children’s academic achievement and their mother’s relationship dimensions like Loving, Protecting, and Symbolic Reward is positive and significant. Though the estimated correlation
between academic achievement and the Symbolic Punishment dimension of mothers’ relationship is low and negative, it is also significant. Demanding is a relationship dimension of the mother which is not significantly correlated with academic achievement of tribal children.

43. Protecting, Loving, and Symbolic Reward are the fathers’ relationship dimensions with which the academic achievements of tribal children are correlated significantly, positively and substantially. The correlation is significant, positive but low in the case of object reward. Although the correlations between academic achievement and dimensions like symbolic punishment and neglecting are low and negative, they are significant. Though academic achievement of tribal students is found to correlate significantly and negatively with fathers’ relationship dimensions like Rejecting and Object Punishment, the r-value obtained is negligible. The dependent variable is not correlated significantly with the dimension ‘Demanding’.

44. Compared to those of mothers, the fathers’ relationship dimensions like protecting, symbolic reward and loving are found to influence the academic achievement of tribal students more strongly. The tribal fathers and mothers do not differ significantly with regard to the correlation between academic achievement and other relationship dimensions.

45. Tribal parents do not have high parenting skills. Majority of them are just average in their parenting behaviour.

46. The parenting skill is normally distributed among the population of tribal parents.

47. Tribal mothers excel tribal fathers in their parenting skill.
48. The fathers and mothers of tribal students are not alike in most of the domains of parenting behaviour. In the domains of *Nurturing, Involvement, and Communication with Child*, tribal mothers excel their husbands; whereas, in the domain of ‘Child Management and Supervision’, the tribal fathers surpass the tribal mothers. No significant difference was found to exist between tribal fathers and tribal mothers in the domains of ‘*Enriched Environment*’ and ‘*Parent-Child Activities*’. 

49. Tribal boys and tribal girls do not differ significantly with regard to the perception of the parenting skill of their fathers and mothers.

50. Mothers who have received at least two years of formal education excel their illiterate counterparts in their parenting skill.

51. The formal education is not a criterion for discriminating the parenting skill of tribal fathers.

52. Parents who have engaged in mainstream income generating activities have better parenting skill compared to those involved in conventional livelihood activities.

53. Compared to single child parents, those having more than one child are better in their parenting skill.

54. The parenting skill is significantly and positively correlated with the academic achievement of tribal children. The correlation between the variables is only slight. The significant and positive correlations between the variables are found to exist in all the six domains of parenting skill. While the degree of relationship of academic achievement is substantial with the dimension ‘*Involvement*’, it is negligible with ‘*Parent-child Activities*’. The estimated correlations between the independent variable and the remaining dimensions of parenting skill are low.
55. *Involvement* is the parenting skill dimension of tribal fathers which is correlated substantially and positively with academic achievement of their children. Low, but significant positive correlation is found exist between academic achievement of tribal children and other parenting skill dimensions of their fathers except *Parent-Child Activities* where the estimated correlation is negligible. In the case of mothers, the only substantial degree of relationship between the variables is found to exist in the domain of *Nurturing*; low positive correlation in other domains except *Parent-Child Activities*, where the relationship is negligible.

56. The tribal fathers and tribal mothers differ significantly with regard to the correlation between their children’s academic achievement and two of the dimensions of parenting skill, that is, *Involvement* and *Nurturing*. Compared to that of mothers, the fathers’ *involvement* is more influential to the academic achievement of tribal children. Whereas, in the case of *nurturing*, the influence exerted by mothers are more decisive than that by fathers.

57. The role played by the tribal parents by the way of their attitude towards education, involvement in education, child rearing practice, parent-child relationship and parenting skill are crucial and decisive in the education of their children.

### 5.3 SUGGESTIONS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

The present investigation was basically intended to study the role of family in the education of tribal children by taking their academic achievement as dependent variable and certain parent related factors such as parents’ attitude towards education, parent involvement in education, parent-child relationship, child rearing practices, and parenting skill as independent variables. The findings
of the study have certain theoretical as well as practical implications in the planning and practice of education for tribal children in the country. The important implications are outlined below:

1. The present study revealed that only a low percentage of tribal parents have positive attitude towards education. A significant positive correlation between tribal parents’ attitude towards education and the academic achievement of their children were also found in the study. The findings imply that any step taken by the government or other agencies for the educational upliftment of tribal children will be effective only if it brings about desirable changes in the attitude of their parents towards education. Continuous interventions are needed to emphasize the intrinsic worth as well as utilitarian aspects of modern education among the tribal people. Wide publicity, utilizing modern media technology as well as traditional folklore and theatre art forms, should be made to inculcate educational awareness among the tribal parents. Adult education and tribal extension education should give emphasis to the development of positive attitude towards education along with instilling skills and knowledge.

2. Another revealing finding of the study is that the tribal fathers trail behind the tribal mothers in their attitude towards education. As the head of the family, and also as the main stakeholder of the education of children, the attitude of fathers is more important and influential than the attitude of mothers towards formal education. Educational advancement of tribal people will become a reality only if they find some meaning in education. The importance that the tribal people given to formal education is an outcome of their attitude towards education. Unless parents have desirable attitude towards education, their children will fail to internalize the value of education and thus hampering the development of positive attitude towards education. The finding of the study demands that any step to inculcate
desirable attitude towards education in the tribal population should address the tribal fathers more than that do for the tribal mothers.

3. Since attitudes are mostly imbibed as a part of socialization, parents’ attitude always influence children’s attitude. It has got a reciprocal effect to the extent that children’s attitude in turn affect the attitude of parents too. Having children going school/college may also bring changes in the attitude of parents as the children open a new world of knowledge and learning before them. More the number of children going to education, more desirable will be their attitude towards education. This finding may have an implication in bringing out desirable changes in the attitude of parents towards education by way of utilizing the children themselves as brand ambassadors of education. The tribal parents can be accessed through their own children to inculcate desirable values and attitude towards education.

4. Socio-cultural as well as material deprivation from time immemorial delimit the aspirations of the life of tribal people. Low standards of living do not permit them to set higher goals in life. A better living standard, made available through better income, may permit them to dream high, set higher goals and to form more positive attitude towards education. In the present study, higher positive attitude towards education was found among tribal parents having high income. The implication of this finding is that no educational programme for tribal children will be effective unless it is accompanied by genuine steps to enhance the standard of living of tribal people. Educational programmes for tribal children should be linked with community development and income generating programmes for the tribal people.

5. The study revealed that tribal people who are engaged in mainstream income generating activities have more positive attitude towards education of their children compared to those who are engaged in traditional food-
gathering activities. This may be due to the fact that the former group has better interaction with outsiders and more educated people than the later group. Education is always a criterion and decisive factor for getting involved in and to be successful with mainstream income generating activities. Naturally people engaged in such activities will develop better positive attitude towards education than those who are engaged in traditional food-gathering activities. This finding of the study has its implication in the socio-economic and educational development of tribal people in which they should also be attracted to the mainstream income generating activities by providing vocational education without alienating them from their age old customs and traditions.

6. In the present study, the parents of day-schooling tribal children were found to have better attitude towards education. The social atmosphere of the family changes when a child starts going school. S/he brings the *culture of education* to family that opens up the inner eye of the illiterate parents. The children start influencing the parents through their school life and the attitude of parents to education swings to the positive side. This happens more strongly when the child stay with parents and attend the school as day scholars. Where children are studying in residential schools, they are separated from the family and parents are not much influenced by the education of their children. The involvement of parents in the education of their children increases when they attend the schools as day scholars and they become more sensitized towards the educational system and educational process. This situation first enhances their awareness and later instill positive attitude towards education. This finding implies that the very concept of residential schools needs to be critically examined and the government should play its educative role by supporting tribal families and by providing necessary learning facilities in the family itself.
7. Literacy breeds greater positive attitude towards education. Compared to illiterate parents, educated parents have more positive attitude towards education. A field implication of this finding is that continuous effort to provide adult education to tribal parents should be a feature of the educational scheme for tribal children. Adult education centres should be started in tribal areas to impart life oriented education to tribal parents which will promote their positive attitude towards education.

8. One of the revealing findings of the present study is that the academic achievement of tribal children is significantly influenced by the attitude of their parents towards education. The attitude of parents is a crucial factor contributing to children’s education. The quality of learning environment at home, extent of parental involvement in education, availability of learning facilities, parental support and encouragement for learning etc. largely depends upon the parents’ attitude towards education. Steps should be taken, in the light of the present study, to inculcate positive attitude in tribal parents towards education through organized educational and community activities. They should be given a more meaningful role in the education of their children by sharing them the responsibilities of education. Life-centred and problem based adult education should be given to the illiterate tribal parents side by side with the education of their children. This will inculcate more positive attitude in the parents towards education which in turn will contribute to the improved achievement of their children.

9. Since the attitude of parents towards education has a stronger influence upon the academic achievement of their daughter, rather than upon that of their sons, any programme for the educational development of tribal girls should address their parents’ attitude towards education. While launching community-based educational activities targeting the tribal parents, priority should be given to parents of girl children. Special incentive schemes for
parents of girl children should be offered so that they will have better living conditions and home amenities supporting the education of their girls.

10. The finding that the attitude of mothers has a greater bearing on the education of tribal children compared to that of their fathers imply that any step taken to educate the tribal parents should focus more on tribal mothers than on tribal fathers. Where the resources for educating the tribal population are limited, it will be more productive and lucrative to spend the resources to educate the tribal mothers. The present study has clearly revealed that the mothers of tribal children have greater positive attitude towards education than their fathers; and that the achievements of the tribal children are more strongly influenced by their mothers’ attitude towards education compared to that of their fathers. Any step taken to uplift the status of tribal women will have its positive impact on the achievement of their children. In the light of the present study, a more important role should be given to the tribal women in the family and community development programmes for tribal population.

11. Though involvement of parents in children’s education is highly valued and appreciated in all cultures, the present study revealed that only a small proportion of tribal parents show high involvement in the education of their children. This situation demands an urgent intervention from the part of educational agencies and tribal development agencies to promote the involvement of tribal parents in the education of their children. Participation of parents in to the education of children could be achieved partly by extending the activities of PTAs and MPTAs which are already in the field. Qualified and specially trained persons, preferably from the tribal community, shall be appointed to work as liaison officers to promote home-school relationship. Orientation to tribal parents should be given to make them aware of the need and importance of parent involvement in the
education of their children. The school should take the responsibility of promoting parent involvement by holding meaningful, frequent and two-way communication with parents of tribal children. Parent-teacher meetings on a monthly basis should be a feature of schools working in tribal areas. Inspirational talks, film shows, sharing of experiences, parent counseling etc. should be a feature of such meetings. Incentives should be given to parents attending such meetings which will be helpful to develop positive minds towards education.

12. The finding that the involvement of tribal fathers in the education of their children is poorer than that of tribal mothers calls for an urgent steps to be taken for attracting them to the educational world of their children. Positive steps should be taken by the concerned authorities to ensure tribal fathers’ participation in school activities as well as home-based learning of their children by motivating them through incentive rewards, role assignments, capacity building, awareness campaigning and other such activities.

13. The present study revealed that tribal parents have more involvement in the education of their boys compared to that of their girls. Education of girls had been a neglected area in many marginalized communities throughout India and the same is the condition with tribal population. It is to be mentioned, however, in this context that they are also coming up to the main stream education mostly due to the measures taken by the government. Education of girls is still not a concern of most of the tribal parents due to multiple reasons, most of them being socio-cultural rather than economic. Measures needed to be taken to dissolve the socio-cultural barriers between the tribal communities and the general population. The steps taken for mainstreaming of tribes by ameliorating their socio-economic conditions should be accelerated by opening more income generating activities and also by launching community development
programmes. This will help them to overcome some of the barriers on the way of girls’ education and they will realize that education of their girl child is equally important.

14. One of the noteworthy findings of the present study is that parents are more involved in the education of day-schooling children compared to that of residential-schooling children. When children are separated from their home to hostels for education, naturally the involvement of parents in their day-to-day activities is reduced. The long-standing effect of residential schooling on educational achievement of tribal students depends upon many factors; parent involvement being just one. The role played by parents in the emotional, social and cultural development of a child is unparalleled. When a child is separated from his/her parents at an early age of five for the purpose of education and retained in the hostel, s/he is denied several things needed for his emotional, social and cultural development. Tribal children are first generation learners. The school going child brings the light of knowledge to the darkness of family illiteracy. The illiterate parents get opportunity to come in contact with world of education through their children. Residential schooling reduces the home-school interaction which is needed for the total development of the child as well as the community. Alienation of education not only from the socio-cultural environment of the learner but also from the psycho-emotional environment of the family is the bitter reality of the education of tribal children in Kerala. Government has taken only the economic side of education into account, not it’s emotional, social, cultural and humane side. The present residential type education given to tribal children will result in widening the gap between parents and children, making the latter emotionally, socially and culturally shaky. Hence, the investigator suggests day-schooling for tribal children with the active involvement of parents with financial support of the government given to the family.
15. It was made known from the present study that parents leading the traditional food-gathering life style have less involvement in the education of their children than people who are engaged in mainstream income generating activities. This difference may be attributed to the influence of outer world in setting the goals of life by the tribal parents. Education as such is not a big business in tribal societies as the very philosophy of life and its goals are far separated from that of the general population. Modern life and its intricacies are still beyond the realities of tribal life. Securing the support of parents in the education of tribal children requires convincing them the necessity of education and provides an education rooted in their culture. Mainstreaming of tribal parents especially those who are still leading the traditional life is a prerequisite to secure the support and participation of them in the education of their child. Some cults of tribes are less lenient to education and influence of modern world. Special programmes should be planned for these groups to ensure their involvement in the education of their children.

16. It is found that tribal mothers who have received some formal education have better involvement in the education of their children compared to the illiterate mothers. This finding is a clear indication that any mount of education given to tribal mothers will have its influence on their involvement in the education of children. Steps should be taken in the light of the present study to impart adult education to tribal mothers which will not only empower them but also contribute to the education of their children.

17. It is found in the present study that involvement of tribal parents has a significant positive impact on academic outcome of their children. Moreover, the involvements of mothers have stronger influence on children’s education than that of their fathers. One of the ideal ways to
enhance the educational attainment of tribal children is to secure the involvement of their parents, particularly that of their mothers in their education. Administrative level steps should be taken to strengthen the home-school relationship. Strengthening of the activities of MPTA in tribal schools, school extension services targeting parents in general and mothers in particular, empowerment of tribal mothers, incentives for mothers of school going child etc., are some measures the investigator suggests to ensure tribal parents’ involvement in the education of their children.

18. The finding that only a small proportion of tribal parents adopt high child rearing practice necessitate intervention for improving the way tribal parents bring up their children. Of course there are cultural expectations regarding the standard of child rearing in each society. The variation in child rearing practices within a community, however, is decisive in the personality development of the child. The psycho-social developments of children are much influenced by the way they are brought up by the parents. When parents do not have adequate knowledge and skill in child rearing, the children have to compromise many of their developmental and educational possibilities. The Tribal Welfare Department, joining hand in hand with Educational Agencies and other Government Machineries, should take positive steps to impart adequate knowledge, awareness and skill to tribal parents with an intention to improve their child rearing practice.

19. The domainwise differences found in the child rearing practice of tribal fathers and mothers call for differential treatment to be given to the gender groups while planning and implementing education programmes for improving their child rearing practices. Wide awareness campaign should be launched for tribal parents to develop right skills of child upbringing. The fundamentals of child rearing should be introduced to tribal children
too through the education system so that the coming generations will be benefited. In the light of present study, the educational treatments should be different for tribal fathers and mothers, in which more exposure in areas of Responsibility Training, Nurturance Training, Achievement Training, and Self Reliance Training should be given to young fathers; while skills on Obedience Training should be emphasized for young mothers.

20. The finding that formal education equips tribal mothers to rear their children more efficiently underpins the need for educating tribal mothers as well as the prospective mothers so that they will be more responsible for the development of their children. Adult education targeting young women should be a part of comprehensive tribal development programmes. Steps should be taken to provide knowledge and skills on child rearing to tribal people through organized community services which should be a feature of tribal village life.

21. It has been revealed in the present study that neither the type of job nor the income is decisive in the child rearing practice of tribal parents. It implies that awareness on child rearing should be given to tribal parents irrespective of the type of income generating activity in which they are involved.

22. The study disclosed the significant positive correlation between child rearing practice of tribal parents and the academic achievement of their children. This means that any awareness imparted to young parents and prospective parents regarding child rearing will have its result in the form of improved educational outcome of their children. Stakeholders of community development and educational agencies should join hands to instill necessary awareness about the importance of raising children in tribal parents and prospective parents by developing appropriate programmes. Participation and involvement of tribal mothers should be ensured at all
stages of such an awareness programme as the role played by them is found to be more influential than that played by tribal fathers in child rearing.

23. Developing a warm, responsive, reciprocal relationship between children and parents is considered as a goal by itself, and is deemed important to mental, emotional and social development of children. The study shows that high parent-child relationship exists only in a small proportion of tribal families. Measures in the form of parenting education to promote parent-child relationship among tribal people should be taken for uprising of tribal community. Importance of parent-child relationship should be emphasized by community workers and educators who are working among tribal people. Media based education targeting tribal parents should be imparted to make them knowledgeable about the role to be played as a parent.

24. The finding that parent-child relationship is comparatively weaker among tribal fathers calls for taking steps for ensuring their role in family-building. Since most of the tribes are still leading a life of food-gatherers, the children during early childhood are mostly attended by mothers or other elder female members of the family and no special attention is paid by the fathers. Attempts to mainstreaming of tribal communities have brought some changes in the conventional roles of males and females in the family and increased involvement of fathers in daily affairs of family including upbringing of children are now visible. Taking advantage of these changes, programmes should be implemented to make the parents, especially fathers, aware of the need and importance of playing their role as a father in raising their children. Educational interventions are needed especially for tribal fathers for changing their attitude and behaviour in important domains of parent-child relationship such as Demanding, Rejecting, Neglecting and Indifferent. Behavioural intervention programme for tribal fathers should be
organized to make them flexible, caring, and accepting, and make them sensitive to their children.

25. The gender difference showed by the tribal children in their perceived parent-child relationship clearly demands improving the tribal parents’ relationship with their girl children. As in the mainstream Kerala society or elsewhere in India, the attitude of tribal parents towards their girl children is also really discriminative. Long-term community education interventions addressing all sections of people are needed to change such social outlook. Gender equality should find its place in the curriculum throughout our educational system side-by-side with measures to strengthen the self-esteem and self-efficacy of tribal girls.

26. As revealed in the study, educated parents forms a more harmonious bond with their children when compared to their illiterate counterparts. It shows that education is the best safeguard of parent-child relationship. A comprehensive educational scheme targeting all age groups and covering diverse educational and social needs of tribal population should be implemented to equip the tribal parents so that they can bring up coming generations as self-confident and self-reliant citizens contributing to social development.

27. Parent-child relationship is crucial in contributing to the academic achievement of tribal children. The finding that child rearing dimensions like Protecting, Symbolic Reward, Loving and Object Reward are positively correlated with academic achievement of tribal children impose that the parents should take positive steps to strengthen and promote these components in their dealing with children. The defending attitude overtly expressed by the parents, the symbolic reward of appreciation for emotional security given to children, the expression of fondness and attachment shown to child etc., are all important in promoting their psychological well being
which in turn contributes to their achievement. On the contrary, expression of unconcern and disregard for the child, renouncing the child in aversion, careless slighting treatment towards the child, showing annoyance to child etc., are all damaging to children’s psychological security and adversely affect their school outcome. Tribal parents should be made aware of the role they play to the school achievement of their children by the way of their routine interaction with their children. Orientation and guidance should be given to tribal parents to learn the right way of dealing with children. While planning such an orientation and guidance programme, differential treatment should be given to tribal fathers and tribal mothers as the present study revealed a gender variation in different dimensions of parent-child relationship in contributing to the tribal children’s academic achievement.

28. The finding that tribal parents do not have high parenting skill demands urgent intervention form agencies to promote parenting skill in tribal parents. Since tribal children are lagging behind mainstream children in many areas of development, a parent support programme should be launched as early as possible to minimize the impact of poor parenting on tribal children’s development. Such a programme should aim to give parents the knowledge and skills they need to carry out child-rearing responsibilities effectively and provide their children with experiences and opportunities that promote child learning and development. Since the tribal fathers trail behind tribal mothers in matters of parenting skill, as revealed in the study, the parent support programme should address the tribal fathers more than it maintains the requirements of tribal mothers.

29. Since the tribal fathers and tribal mothers differ significantly in many domains of parenting skill, domain specific emphasis should be given in training programmes to strengthen their parenting behaviour. Tribal fathers trail behind tribal mothers in parenting domains like Nurturing,
Summary & Conclusions

Involvement, and Communication with Child. As such, while planning parenting education for tribal fathers, emphasis should be given to build up responsive and reciprocal communication between parent and child, develop ability to participate in the activities of the child, and to display capacity to identify with and cares about feelings of the child. The parenting education programme for tribal mothers should focus on setting realistic, age appropriate expectations of behaviors of children, and on building capacity to uses positive words and tone in child management.

30. The present study reveals that even a small amount of formal education can have an influential effect on parenting skill of tribal mothers. Steps should be, therefore, taken to provide wide spread formal education to tribal people, side-by-side with measures to attract tribal women to general education.

31. The fact that parents who are engaged in mainstream income generating activities have better parenting skill than those who are involved in traditional food-gathering activities indicate that mainstreaming of tribes will have an influence on parenting skill of tribal people. Socio-economic changes have to bring about in tribal life to attract them to mainstream life and modern ways of parenting. The parent support programmes recommended for tribal parents should be community-based initiatives designed to promote the flow of resources and supports to parents.

32. The study brought in to limelight the significant positive correlation between parenting skill of tribal people and academic achievement of their children. The result of the study clearly indicates that any increase in parenting skill of the tribal parents is attended by a corresponding increase in academic achievement of their children. As revealed in the study, different domains of parenting skill are correlated differently with the educational outcome of tribal children. This implies that domain specific
parent support interventions are needed for tribal parents to optimize the educational attainment of their children. Since the highest degree of relationship is found between academic achievement and parenting skill domain 'Involvement', the parent support intervention for better parenting skill should strengthen interactive, positive, enjoyable participation between parent and child.

33. Since ‘Nurturing’ is the parenting skill domain of tribal mothers which influence the academic achievement of their children most strongly, parent support programmes meant for mothers should be initiated to develop their nurturing skills, learn comfortable ways to express love, build the child's hope and self-respect, learn to listen and hear the child's feelings and ideas, teach kindness, provide for the child's nutrition, shelter, clothing, health, and safety needs, and help the child feel connected to his/her family and cultural heritage.

34. It is revealed in the study that the tribal fathers and tribal mothers differ significantly in the degree of relationship between their children’s academic achievement and two domains of parenting skill, that is, Involvement and Nurturing. This finding impose that any parent support programme aiming to develop parenting skill of tribal parents should emphasize on these two domains more than on any other areas of parenting skill. Moreover, it also demands differential treatment of fathers and mothers depending upon the degree of relationship of these domains to the educational outcome of their children.

35. The present study revealed the influential role played by parental variables such as attitude towards education, involvement in education, child rearing practice, parent-child relationship, and parenting skill in the academic achievement of tribal students. It was also found that majority of the tribal parents do not have high levels of competencies to discharge their
responsibilities in bringing up their children in tune with the requirements of an emerging society. The findings imply that the role and relative importance of these variables in contributing to the academic achievement of tribal parents should be taken into account while chalking out a comprehensive educational plan for tribal people. The steps presently taken by agencies to spread formal education among tribal children could be made more effective and productive by appropriately manipulating the parental variables which influence the educational outcome of their children. Some of the socio-demographic variables considered in the study were also found to play a decisive role in setting the educational attainment of tribal children. Such factors should also be kept in mind while implementing educational programmes targeting the tribal population. The role of fathers and mothers in tribal societies has to be redefined in the light of present study in order to empower them to play a more responsible and constructive role in the education of their children.

5.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The investigator adopted all possible steps to make the study a reliable one and generalisable as far as possible. However, a few limitations have crept into the study which are listed below:

1. The sample for the study was collected only from 3 out of 14 districts of Kerala due to certain practical difficulties involved in the data collection procedure such as paucity of time, accessibility to samples and the cost involved. However, the three districts selected for sampling cover about two-third of the total tribal population and include more than 90% of all the tribal groups in Kerala.
2. All the tools used for collecting data from tribal parents were administered on the subjects with the help of a bilingual who, though educated and well instructed about the need and scope of the instruments, would not have grasped the true spirit of the items in the tools as envisioned by the investigator. Moreover, the verbal translation of the tools may lead to the attrition of its essence leading to responses bit tilted from the actual one.

3. There are some limitations of the study associated with the types of measures used. All the data, except academic achievement, are based on self-reports, and as such are susceptible to problems of common method error variance. The strength of the study is also limited by the lack of indicators of actual behaviours.

4. Data pertained to family income and level of formal education were taken directly as disclosed by the subjects without any other estimation or cross-checking. The accuracy of these information may have its limitations on the conclusions drawn based on such information.

5. At least few of the tools used for the present study, though claim its validity for the entire population in the state of Kerala, may have its limitations in assessing the psycho-social variables of the tribal groups measured for the study.

6. The investigator was depending on secondary sources (school records) for data pertained to academic achievement of the tribal students. Though the scores of term-end examinations, maintained by the school authorities, were the scores of statewide standardized achievement tests, their scoring were done by teachers of different schools, possibly by considering the achievement level of their students. This may have its impact on the
accuracy of achievement score of the subject, and thus on the findings of the study.

Despite the limitations cited above, the investigator hopes the findings of the study are generalisable to a great extent, and may serve as guidelines for policy makers, administrators, social workers, educationists and teachers in planning and providing best experiences to the tribal parents to optimize the school outcome of their children.

5.5 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

1. A comparative study of the specific roles played by tribal parents in the education of their children in different tribal groups of Kerala can be attempted.

2. The same study can be repeated with larger samples covering all the tribal groups of Kerala so that a more generalizable result could be obtained.

3. A study of the same type can be carried out by incorporating more independent variables (e.g. parenting style, parental support, family education etc.) and more socio-demographic variables (e.g. family size, type of clan, birth order of children etc.) can be tried.

4. Experimental studies investigating the effect of parental involvement and parent-child relationship on the academic achievement of tribal children can be carried out.

5. Studies can be carried out to investigate the effect of school-family-community partnerships on the educational outcome of tribal children.
6. A comparative study of the role played by tribal parents and non-tribal parents in the education of their children can be undertaken.

7. A longitudinal study to investigate the role of parents in the education of tribal children across a school year or sequential years can be attempted.

8. The interactive effect of the various parental variables considered in the present study upon the educational outcome of tribal students can be studied.

9. An investigation to study the effect of various suggested intervention programmes upon the academic achievement of tribal students can be taken up.

10. Similar studies may be conducted on parents and children of other socially and culturally disadvantaged groups in Kerala.

11. The effectiveness of a comprehensive parent support programme on parents’ attitude towards education, parent involvement, child rearing practice, parent-child relationship and parenting skill seems to be a feasible area of further study.