

A Study on the Language-Related Adjustment Problems of Pupil-Teachers

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ABSTRACT

Adjustment is an age-old concept that helps in maintaining wellbeing of the individual and the society. Pre-service teacher education prepares students towards making a competent individual that can effectively manage the society, hence the pre-service teachers must be a well-adjusted individual. Language often plays a key role in determining the adjustment pattern of any individual. The present study made an attempt to explore the adjustment problems of pupil-teachers with specific focus on the local and official language related issues. The objectives included identification of language-related adjustment levels of pupil-teachers and the difference of adjustment level on the basis of certain demographic variables like gender, locality, area, and age group. The sample of this descriptive survey study comprised of 165 pupil-teachers of Western Odisha region selected through simple random sampling. The data was collected using a self-standardized tool named LBAS (Language Barrier and Adjustment Scale). The findings revealed that there was a significant level of adjustment issues among the pupil-teachers. However, there were no significant differences amongst the pupil-teachers on the basis of gender, locality, area, and age group.

Keywords: *Adjustment, Language, Pupil-teacher, Pre-service teacher*

Education aids in molding human endeavors and character. Education has long been a key factor in the advancement of humanity. From the unskilled to the expert, everyone engages in formal, informal, and non-formal education.

Education is the cornerstone of all fields of study and knowledge. It is essential in forming the framework of the nation. Perhaps the most valued objective of every human civilization that has ever existed or will exist in the future is the education of a person.

The educational process is frequently described as a tripolar process. The three factors that impact education are student, instructor, and learning environment. Achieving academic success depends on the complex relationship between these 3 factors. Any one aspect's impairment or dysfunction can lead to the failure of the educational process. Both the teacher and the student are affected by the learning environment.

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For the educational process to be successful, both the teacher and the students need to feel empowered. The degree to which students are empowered is directly or indirectly related to the effectiveness and competence of the teacher. The study of teacher education is somewhat focused in this area. According to Taylor (2023), teacher education refers to “the structures, institutions, and processes using which men and women are prepared for work in elementary and secondary schools. This includes preschool, kindergarten, elementary, and secondary institutions for children from the age of two or three to 18.”

Adjustment:

The concept of Adjustment is as old as humans existing on this earth. An individual learns to adjust to the ever-changing environment right from his inception.

The term ‘Adjustment’ refers to the extent to which an individual’s personality functions effectively in society. It means the process of adapting to the conditions in a systematic or good manner so that the needs systematically or well stagnation do not arise therein. As we know, humans are social animals, and they work not only to satisfy their physical needs but also to handle the societal pressure faced.

Adjustment is interpreted through two major points of view viz. Adjustment is an achievement and adjustment as a process. According to Strang & Pansegrouw (1948), “Adjustment is a process and not a state ... adjustment is continuous throughout life.” The adjustment process is affected and modified by the individual’s experiences; thus, learning plays a significant role in aiding adjustment. Adjustment is continual in which a person varies his behaviour to produce a more harmonious relationship between himself and his environment.

A few types of adjustment according to Hazard & Carter (n.d.) include academic adjustment, teaching adjustment, social adjustment, financial adjustment, emotional adjustment, and cultural adjustment.

The two major dimensions required in the field of teacher education can be.

- 1. Academic Adjustment:** Academic adjustment refers to how people change their behavior in response to their own needs and requirements in the classroom. Academic adjustments are changes made to a student's method of satisfying the academic demands of a course or academic programme. When it comes to student teachers, the academic adjustment refers to the pupil-teacher's adjustment to both the learning and teaching aspects of their training in a teacher education institution.
- 2. Teaching Adjustment:** The teaching adjustment relates to the adjustment pattern of pupil-teachers and teachers while teaching in the classroom.

Teacher Education:

The teacher education, especially pre-service teacher education responsibility in India is jointly managed by the National Council of Teacher Education (NCTE) and the National Council of Education Research and Training (NCERT). These teacher education courses aim to improve students' competency to ensure the professional quality of future teachers. Academic instruction in schools is interconnected with the vital subject of teacher education. The elements of any pre-service teacher education programme are intended to foster the growth of the professional competencies and teaching abilities necessary for a teacher candidate to become an effective teacher.

Professional Competencies of a Good Teacher:

NCTE has identified 10 major competencies that are to be developed in a teacher. (Competency-based and Commitment-Oriented Teacher Education for Quality School Education, 1998, pp. 21).

The development of competencies must begin during the teacher trainee's training period. The first competency is the acquisition of socioeconomic, cultural, religious, and linguistic knowledge of the area in which a person is either receiving their training or plans to teach in the future. Understanding linguistic diversity and the influence of regional traditions and culture on linguistics and language will help pupil-teachers assess and develop themselves appropriately.

Concept of Language:

Language is the "entire complex of phenomena associated with human vocal and auditory communication of emotions and ideas." It is a social phenomenon that undergoes a continuous process of change and growth.

Language is a very complex human phenomenon; all attempts to define it have proved inadequate. In common parlance, it may be said that language is an organized noise used in actual social situations. That is why it is defined as contextualized systematic sounds.

“Language is the inherent capability of native speakers to understand and form grammatical sentences. A language is a set of (finite or infinite) sentences, each finite length is constructed out of a limited set of elements.” (Chomsky, 1957). It is established by the continuous exchange of thoughts and ideas through a verbal medium.

Language learning is an active process that begins at birth and continues throughout life. Students learn the language as they use it to communicate their thoughts, feelings, and experiences, establish relationships with family members and friends, and strive to make sense and order of their world. They may come to school to speak more than one language or learn another language in school. It is important to respect and build upon each student's first language. Experience in one language will benefit the learning of other languages.

Issues for teachers:

The implementation of a three-language policy in a diverse classroom setting with a multilingual setting is a hectic task. The role of the mother tongue at the primary level is crucial role. The teachers of the primary level are competent enough to transact the curriculum in the mother tongue of the learner, but this is not always the case.

A few of the possible issues for teachers may include.

1. Unfamiliarity with the local language of the region of posting.
2. Incomplete knowledge of the local language and dialects.
3. Inability to address multilingual learners.
4. Job posting in a different location with a different culture.

The teachers should be trained in such a manner that they can handle such situations effectively. Training in teacher education institutes plays a crucial role in making them competent in it. The pupil teachers shall be competent enough to teach and learn in a region different from their locality. Most of the time individuals face difficulty in adjusting to different languages, cultures, and traditions.

Rationale of the Study

Adjustment is assessed and checked at various levels in an individual's life. The adjustment problems of learners as well as teachers must be addressed as both play an active role in deciding the future of the country. There have been many studies on the learners based on their language and adjustment-related challenges but very few studies like the studies of Tripathi (2008) and Giri and Singh (2018) have been conducted so far for the teachers. Adding to this, only one study by Giri & Singh (2018) out of the many reviews conducted addressed the pupil teachers' problems in language. The pupil teachers during their teacher training phase must be prepared for their competence so that they can teach effectively without any language barrier. To prepare them as good teachers, all issues and challenges of them pertaining to the local language must be addressed. One of the major challenges of a pupil teacher is language-related problems as they are mostly going to be recruited in a place of different language so they must be prepared in a manner that they can avoid these challenges both in their learning as well as teaching.

This study aims to identify the issues of the pupil teachers according to their language adjustment problems in teaching and academics. This study will address the upcoming challenges of pupil teachers in their course of training and let the administrative body decide the overcoming strategies for their improvement. This study will also help teacher educators in identifying the problems of their learners, i.e., pupil teachers or teacher trainees. And prepare proper remedial plans for them according to their needs

Research Question

What are the problems of pupil teachers adjusting to language transition?

Objectives

1. To identify the level of language-related adjustment issues of pupil-teachers.
2. To compare the level of language related adjustment problems amongst the pupil-teachers of with respect to gender.
3. To compare the level of language related adjustment problems amongst the pupil-teachers of with respect to locality
4. To compare the level of language related adjustment problems amongst the pupil-teachers of with respect to area.
5. To compare the level of language related adjustment problems amongst the pupil-teachers of with respect to age group

Assumption and Hypotheses

Assumption:

There is a significant level of adjustment related problems of pupil-teachers among pupil-teachers of Western Odisha Region.

Null Hypotheses:

H₀₁ There is no significant difference between language related adjustment problems of the pupil-teachers based on their gender at 0.05 significance level.

H₀₂ There is no significant difference between language related adjustment problems of the pupil-teachers based on their locality at 0.05 significance level.

H₀₃ There is no significant difference between language related adjustment problems of the pupil-teachers based on their area at 0.05 significance level.

H₀₄ There is no significant difference between the language related adjustment problems of the pupil teachers based on their age group at 0.05 significance level.

Delimitation of the Study

1. The local communicative language-related problems only.
2. The pupil-teachers who study in the Western Odisha region only.
3. The academic and teaching adjustment-related problems of pupil teachers only.
4. The pupil teachers pursuing their elementary education training in government teacher education institutes only.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Raja & Selvi (2011) studied on the variables like sex, locality, the habit of reading English dailies and the habit of listening to English news into account. They indicated that the environment was the leading cause of problems in learning ESL. Compared to girls, boys perceived more problems. Rural students perceived more problems than urban students. Lack of reading habits and listening tends to confront several problems in learning ESL.

Makwana & Kaji (2014) revealed that the adjustment of secondary school students was not related to the home, school, and emotional adjustment. However, they found that boys were better at adjusting themselves socially than girls.

Kalita (2017) stated that there was a better social adjustment in the girls of the district compared to the boys. However, male and female students were equal in terms of rural and urban backgrounds in social adjustment. Rural students were more emotionally adjusted compared to urban students.

Agrawal (2018) concluded in her findings that the students were dealing with problems like a lack of support from their families, and a communication gap as the students felt shy in communicating with their classmates, and they often felt isolated in the class. Including all these wastage and stagnation came out to be very common problems in rural areas.

Sridhar & Jain (2018) revealed that adjustment to a new city with a different culture is difficult. These issues include language barriers, perceived cultural discrimination, and difficulty in expressing oneself in the classroom.

Ryan (2011) as cited in Sahoo & Kharwar (2021), discussed the relationship between peer interaction and academic adjustment. Motivation, engagement, and achievement decline were the main causes for many children during early adolescence. Peer relationships play a significant role in coping with the above problems. The inability to express their anxiety and stress among peers leads to the development of issues academically.

Jemal (2012) identified the four major adjustment areas, i.e., educational, social, personal, and psychological, among the students. The female students at Jimma University were more sensitive toward social adjustment compared to their counterparts. The level of interest towards the subject and academic adjustment were interdependent in the findings of the researcher.

Ababu et al. (2018) confirmed that freshman students who join the university undergo problems in adjusting to themselves at the university. A few of the adjustment problems include a feeling of homesickness, difficulties in socializing or making new friends, and difficulties in managing time and study skills.

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Singh & Jack (2022) found out that language and culture have a huge impact on the academic and social adjustment of the learners. They analyzed how academic and social adjustment challenges hinder academic success as result of limited or frustrated pathways for students' linguacultural development. In the end, they also recommended that higher education institutes and universities enact policies and reform the existing system to address the cross-cultural, linguistic, and lingua-cultural issues faced by the learners in their academic and social adjustment.

METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

Method: Descriptive survey method was used in this study.

Sample and Procedure

The sample of this study consisted of 165 teacher trainees enrolled in 9 different government elementary teacher education institutes in Western Odisha selected through simple random sampling. Out of 165 pupil-teachers, 86 were male and 79 were female. In terms of area, 97 were urban and 68 were from rural area. In terms of locality, 95 were native (born and live in the Western Odisha region) and 60 were non-native.

Tool Used in the Study

A self-constructed tool, i.e., Language Barrier and Adjustment Scale was developed by the researcher for this study. The scale consisted of 27 items divided mainly into two dimensions of Teaching Adjustment and Academic Adjustment. The scoring was done on a 5-point Likert type scale with a range of maximum 127 to minimum 35. The reliability as established by the researcher through internal consistency was found to be 0.929. Three validities namely face, content and construct validity were established in order to make the tool satisfying the standardization criteria.

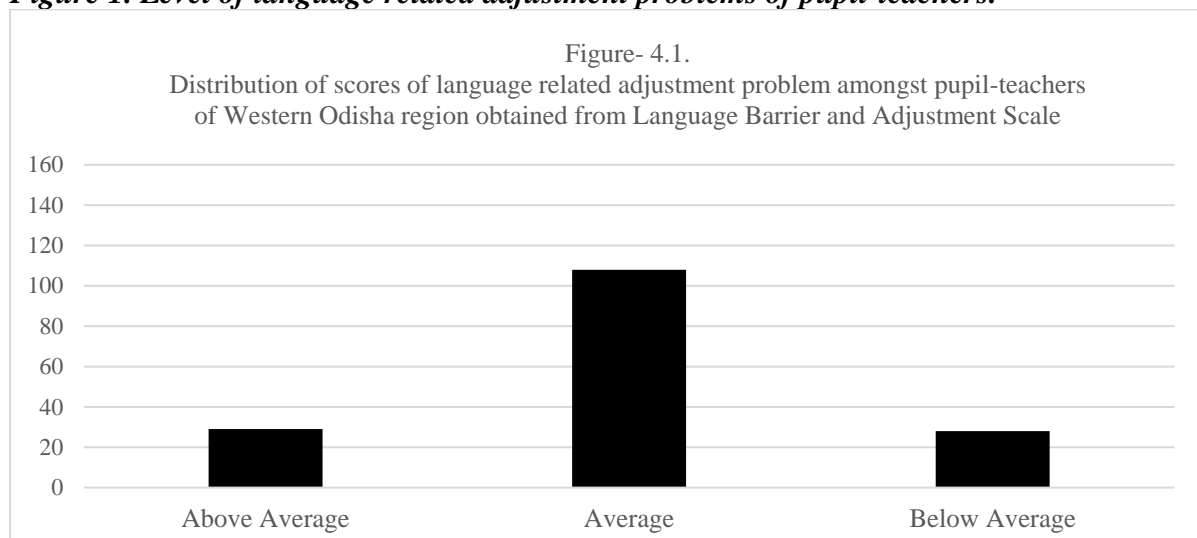
Statistical Formula

The researchers used the statistical formulae of mean, standard deviation, and t-test.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Analysis and interpretation of first objective: To study the level of language related adjustment issues of pupil-teachers of Western Odisha region.

Figure 1. Level of language related adjustment problems of pupil-teachers.



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Interpretation:

From the figure, it is concluded that out of 165 respondents, 16.9% pupil teachers are well adjusted, 65.4% pupil teachers are moderately adjusted and 17.5% pupil teachers are mal-adjusted. According to this survey, the general language-related adjustment level among students and instructors in the Western Odisha region is average.

Analysis and Interpretation related to second objective

To study the level of language related adjustment problems amongst the pupil-teachers with respect to gender.

Table- 2. Language related adjustment score of the pupil-teachers with respect to variable Gender.

Category	N	M	S.D.	df	t-value
Male	79	78.65	18.26	161	0.1545*
Female	86	79.09	17.82		

**Not significant at 0.05 level of significance*

From the table, it is evident that t-value is 0.1545 which is not significant. It reflects that the mean score of language related adjustment problems among male and female pupil teachers do not differ significantly. Thus the null hypothesis is failed to be rejected. It can therefore be stated that the male and female pupil teachers have same level of language related adjustment problems of Western Odisha region.

Analysis and interpretation related to third objective

To study the level of language related adjustment problems amongst the pupil-teachers with respect to locality.

Table- 3. Language related adjustment score of the pupil-teachers of Western Odisha region with respect to variable Locality.

Category	N	M	S.D.	df	t-value
Native	95	78.29	17.01	161	0.4805*
Non-native	70	79.68	19.31		

**Not significant at 0.05 level of significance*

From the table it is evident that t-value is 0.48 which is not significant. Thus the null hypothesis is failed to be rejected. It can therefore be stated that the native and non-native pupil teachers have same level of language related adjustment problems of Western Odisha region.

Analysis and interpretation related to third objective

To study the level of language related adjustment problems amongst the pupil-teachers with respect to area.

Table- 4. Language related adjustment score of the pupil-teachers with respect to variable Locality.

Category	N	M	S.D.	df	t-value
Rural	97	78.91	17.31	161	0.0273*
Urban	68	78.83	19.02		

**Not significant at 0.05 level of significance*

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From the table, it is evident that t-value is 0.02 which is not significant. Thus the null hypothesis is failed to be rejected. It can therefore be stated that the pupil teachers from rural and urban have same level of language related adjustment problems of Western Odisha region.

Analysis and interpretation related to fourth objective

To study the level of language related adjustment problems amongst the pupil-teachers with respect to age group.

Table- 5. Language related adjustment score of the pupil-teachers with respect to variable Age group.

Category	N	M	Variance
17-20	34	80.14	227.34
21-25	100	79.21	333.56
26-30	31	76.45	409.19

Table- 6. Analysis of Variance using Single-factor Analysis

Source of Variation	SS	df	Mean SS	F-value
Between Groups	248.279	2	124.139	0.3808*
Within Groups	52800.532	162	325.929	
Total	53048.812	164		

**Not significant at 0.05 level of significance*

From the table, it is evident that calculated f-value is 0.02 which is less than the tabulated f-value of 3.05 and hence it is not significant. The null hypothesis is failed to be rejected. It can therefore be stated that the pupil teachers of asge groups 17-20, 21-25, and 26-30 have same level of language related adjustment problems of Western Odisha region.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of the study was to identify the language-related adjustment level of pupil-teachers and to determine the significant difference between the language-related adjustment level of pupil-teachers with respect to four demographic variables, namely gender, locality, area, and age group.

The results of the present study indicated that there was a significant level of language-related adjustment issues amongst the pupil-teachers selected from the Western Odisha region. Out of 165 pupil-teachers, 17.5% pupil-teachers had high level, 65.4% pupil-teachers had average level of adjustment issues pertaining to academic and teaching field. 16.9% pupil-teachers showed low level of language related adjustment issues during their training phase in the fields of teaching and academics. Total 82.9% of the total sample had issues in their pre-service teacher education while interacting with local language both formally and informally. In this study, no significant difference was observed in the pupil-teachers' adjustment level based on gender. It was in line with the study of Kalita (2017). However, it contradicted with the studies of Jemal (2012) which showed that gender has a significant influence on adjustment.

In terms of locality, pupil-teachers didn't show any significant difference in their adjustment level. It contradicted with the findings of Wagner (1996) on locality acting as a variable in language adjustment.

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In the variable of area, pupil-teachers didn't have any significant difference in their adjustment level. It supported the study of Kumar (2008), Kalita (2017) however contradicted with the study of Raja & Selvi (2011).

The pupil-teachers didn't have any distinctness in adjustment problems on the basis of language according to their age group. The pupil-teacher aged between 17-20 had the same adjustment level compared to the pupil-teachers aged between 21-25 and 26-30.

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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