A Study of the Social Distance of Santal Students of First Generation Learner from Non-Santal Students of West Bengal

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ABSTRACT

Santal is an Indian tribe. Almost all of the families of this tribe are very poor and their literacy rate is very low. They are much neglected to all the other caste people. The researcher takes a very little step to investigate the social distance of the santal students and non-santal students from six groups of students indicated by Group-1, Group-2, Group-3, Group-4, Group-5 and Group-6. The social distance of the santal and non-santal students from these six respondent groups are measured by Bogardus Social Distance Scale and the difference of the social distance of santal and non-santal students from the six respondent groups are studied. The study shows that the mean social distance of the santal students from Group-1, Group-2, Group-5 and Group-6 are sufficiently higher than that of the non-santal students and the social distance of the santal students is slightly higher than that of the non-santal students from Group-3 and Group-4. The significance of the differences is tested by t-test and it is seen that in all the cases the differences are significant at 1% level of significance.

INTRODUCTION

The term social distance is a very old term. The Chinese Philosopher Mo Ti mentioned and explained this term in fifth century B.C. The French philosopher and magistrate Gabriel Tarde used this term in 1890. Robert E. Park had immense contribution in popularizing this term in sociology in the second decade of twentieth century. But Emory Bogardus is the first person who developed a scale to measure the social distance among different groups of people (1925). This scale for measurement of social distance is called Bogardus Social Distance Scale. Though this scale faced criticism from different angle but after modification of the scale it has now become the most popular scale to measure social distance. It is now established that the social distance between any two groups is not fixed but it changes with time and changes with different factors. There are so many factors which affects the social distance between group of people. These factors are socio-economic status, sex, community size, caste, religion, race, geographical location, contact and information of the object group etc. Social distance has the power to divide a nation. If the social distance between two groups of people exists for long time then it induces hatred in them to the opponent group and it results in strife between the groups and at last fight and division of the nation. So we always expect that the social distance between all groups of people should be reduced. Education has the power to decrease the social distance between any two groups and settle peaceful coexistence of the groups. Thousands of years have been passed the Santal peoples are living side by side with other higher caste people and a huge amount of money is being used by the government for education purpose. So our expectation is that there is decreasing social distance of the Santal people from other higher caste people. But is the social distance of Santal people from other higher caste people really decreasing? It is now time to survey whether the social distance of Santal people are decreasing or not. So the researcher made this small step to survey the social distance of Santal people from other higher caste people. Here six respondent groups were taken. These groups are city dwelling higher caste students of secondary level, city-dwelling higher caste students of college and university level, secondary level non-santal students of village living family residing hereditarily in the district of Malda, college and university level non-santal students of village living family residing hereditarily in the district of Malda, college and university level non-santal students of the village living family settled in Malda in 1971 and later and college and university level non-santal students of the village living family settled in Malda in 1971 and later. The object groups here are the santal students of secondary, college and university level and non-santal students of secondary, college and university level.

HYPOTHESES

The following hypotheses are made

H₀₁: There is no significant difference in the social distance ratings of the santal and non-santal students made by the city dwelling higher caste students of secondary level.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference in the social distance ratings of the santal and non-santal students made by the city dwelling higher caste students of college and university level.

H₀₃: There is no significant difference in the social distance ratings of the santal and non-santal students made by the secondary level non-santal students of village living family residing hereditarily in the district of Malda.

H₀₄: There is no significant difference in the social distance ratings of the santal and non-santal students made by the college and university level non-santal students of village living family residing hereditarily in the district of Malda.
H01: There is no significant difference in the social distance ratings of the santal and non-santal students made by secondary level non-santal students of the village living family settled in Malda in 1971 and later.

H02: There is no significant difference in the social distance ratings of the santal and non-santal students made by the college and university level non-santal students of the village living family settled in Malda in 1971 and later.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology used in this study by the researcher is descriptive survey study. The social distance ratings made by the six respondent groups about the santal and non-santal students are measured by the Bogardus Social Distance Scale. Then the data thus obtained is analysed and t – test is used to test all the six hypotheses.

POPULATION

All the santal students of Malda district of secondary, college and university level comprises the object group population and all the higher caste students of Malda district of secondary, college and university levels comprise the respondent group population of the study.

SAMPLE

In this study there are six respondent groups. A sample of 631 students is taken from six respondent group population. The sample consists of 113 city dwelling higher caste students of secondary level, 108 city dwelling higher caste students of college and university level, 111 secondary level non-santal students of village living family residing hereditarily in the district of Malda, 92 college and university level non-santal students of village living family residing hereditarily in the district of Malda, 112 secondary level non-santal students of the village living family settled in Malda in 1971 and later and 95 college and university level non-santal students of the village living family settled in Malda in 1971 and later.

TOOLS

The social distance of the santal students from the six respondent groups are measured by the Bogardus Social Distance Scale. The minimum social distance according to this scale is 1 and it increases with the increase of social distance as 2, 3, 4 etc. and the highest distance is 7. First the average social distance per item of any object group from each respondent is measured. The data thus obtained are used for data analysis.

DATA ANALYSIS

The social distance of any object group from each of the respondent of six respondent groups are measured by the Bogardus Social Distance Scale and then the average social distance per item of the object groups from each respondent is calculated. The mean and S.D. of the average social distance ratings per item of the santal students made by the city dwelling higher caste students of secondary level are 4.782 and 0.7323 respectively but those of the non-santal students are 1.344 and 0.014 respectively. Which show that the mean social distance of the santal students is sufficiently higher than the social distance of the non-santal students from the city dwelling higher caste students of secondary level. t-test is applied to test the hypothesis H01. It is seen that t-value is 49.67599 and the degree of freedom is 224. Thus t = 49.67599 > 2.59795533 (the critical value of t at 1% level of significance). So, H01 is rejected at 1% level of significance.

The mean and S.D. of the average social distance ratings per item of the santal students made by the city dwelling higher caste students of college and university level are 5.447 and 0.685 respectively but those of the non-santal students are 1.287 and 0.0122 respectively. These also show that there are huge difference of the social distance of the santal and non-santal students from city dwelling college and university level higher caste students. t – test is applied to test H02. The value of t is 62.80956 and the degree of freedom is 214. Since t = 62.80956 > 2.59899798 (the critical value of t at 1% level of significance). So H02 is rejected at 1% level of significance. Similarly The mean and S.D. of the average social distance ratings per item of the santal students made by the secondary level non-santal students of village living family residing hereditarily in the district of Malda are 1.436 and 0.0522 respectively but those of the non-santal students are 1.325 and 0.0131 respectively. These also shows that the social distance of the santal students is slightly high compared to the non-santal students from secondary level non-santal students of village living family residing hereditarily in the district of Malda. t – test is applied to test H03. The value of t is 21.63148 and the degree of freedom is 220. Since t = 21.63148 > 2.59836092 (the critical value of t at 1% level of significance). So H03 is rejected at 1% level of significance. Also The mean and S.D. of the average social distance ratings per item of the santal students made by the college and university level non-santal students of village living family residing hereditarily in the district of Malda are 1.382 and 0.0471 respectively but those of the non-santal students are 1.308 and 0.0123 respectively. These shows that the social distance of the santal students is slightly high compared to the non-santal students from the college and university level non-santal students of village living family residing hereditarily in the district of Malda. t – test is applied to test H04. The value of t is 14.50126 and the degree of freedom is 182. Since t = 14.50126 > 2.60311204 (the critical value of t at 1% level of significance). So H04 is rejected at 1% level of significance. The mean and S.D. of the average social distance ratings per item of the santal students made by the secondary level non-santal students of the village living family settled in Malda in 1971 and later are 3.847 and 0.263 respectively but those of the non-santal students are 1.308 and 0.0123 respectively. These also shows that the social distance of the santal students is high enough compared to the non-santal students from secondary level non-santal students of the village living family settled in Malda in 1971 and later, t – test is applied to test H05. The value of t is 96.38022 and the degree of freedom is 222. Since t = 96.38022 > 2.59815628 (the critical value of t at 1% level of significance). So H05 is rejected at 1% level of significance. Lastly, The mean and S.D. of the average social distance ratings per item of the santal students made by the college and university level non-santal students of the village living family settled in Malda in 1971 and later are 4.186 and 0.245 respectively but those of the non-santal
students are 1.281 and 0.0128 respectively. These also shows that the social distance of the santal students is high enough compared to the non-santal students from college and university level non-santal students of the village living family settled in Malda in 1971 and later. \( t \) – test is applied to test \( H_{06} \). The value of \( t \) is 114.8027 and the degree of freedom is 188. Since \( t = 114.8027 > 2.60223295 \) (the critical value of \( t \) at 1% level of significance). So \( H_{06} \) is also rejected at 1% level of significance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responder Groups</th>
<th>Mean of social distance of santal students</th>
<th>S.D. of social distance of santal students</th>
<th>Mean of social distance of non-santal students</th>
<th>S.D. of social distance of non-santal students</th>
<th>Sample size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group-1</td>
<td>4.782</td>
<td>0.7323</td>
<td>1.344</td>
<td>0.014</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group-2</td>
<td>5.447</td>
<td>0.685</td>
<td>1.287</td>
<td>0.0122</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group-3</td>
<td>1.436</td>
<td>0.0522</td>
<td>1.325</td>
<td>0.0131</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group-4</td>
<td>1.382</td>
<td>0.0471</td>
<td>1.308</td>
<td>0.0123</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group-5</td>
<td>3.847</td>
<td>0.263</td>
<td>1.438</td>
<td>0.0133</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group-6</td>
<td>4.186</td>
<td>0.245</td>
<td>1.281</td>
<td>0.0128</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Where Group-1 means city dwelling higher caste students of secondary level. Group-2 means city dwelling higher caste students of college and university level. Group-3 means secondary level non-santal students of village living family residing hereditarily in the district of Malda. Group-4 means college and university level non-santal students of village living family residing hereditarily in the district of Malda, Group-5 means secondary level non-santal students of the village living family settled in Malda in 1971 and later. Group-6 means college and university level non-santal students of the village living family settled in Malda in 1971 and later. The above table also shows that the college and university level city-dweller higher caste students is have more social difference from the santal students than the secondary level city-dweller higher caste students have. That is, the education has a little effect on diminishing the social distance of the santal students from the city dweller higher caste students. Similarly more the educated more the social distance is maintained by the students of the village living family settled in Malda in 1971 and later.

**CONCLUSION**

The study shows that the mean social distance of the santal students are sufficiently higher than that of the non-santal students from four respondent groups Group-1, Group-2, Group-5 and Group-6 and the mean social distance of the santal students is slightly higher than that of the non-santal students from two groups Group-3 and Group-4. The significance of the differences are tested by \( t \)-test at 1% level of significance and it is seen that the differences are significant in all the cases at 1% level of significance. That is there is a significant difference of the social distance of the santal and non-santal students from all the six respondent groups.

**REFERENCES**


