

Role of Mising Folk-Tales in Developing Moral Values among Children

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Abstract: *The Misings are one of the major communities of Assam dwelling mostly on the valley of Brahmaputra and her tributaries contributing to the growth and development of composite Assamese culture. The Mising Folk-Tales can contribute towards maintaining moral values among children like any other Folk-Tales. The Misings have a storehouse of folk tales in their custody. As the Misings had no written script earlier, they couldn't record their events and ideas. Therefore, it is said that their history and culture lies in the air as the form of 'A;bangs' (a type of Mising folk song) and 'Leke do:ying' (folk tale). Since the importance has been given in stories, nursery rhymes, songs in the school curriculum, importance should also be given in developing moral values among children of the Mising community through Mising folk tales. The present study aims at finding out the socio-cultural life of the Misings, Mising folk-tales, their moral values and to study the role of Mising folk-tales on children's moral value development in relation to their sex, locality and Socio-economic Status.*

I. Introduction:

The Misings are one of the major communities of Assam, India, dwelling mostly on the valley of Brahmaputra and her tributaries contributing to the growth and development of composite Assamese culture. The Misings were originally hill tribes in the Himalayan mountain ranges. Their folk-literature reveals that they migrated down to the plains of Assam in search of a peaceful and better economic life in comparatively early times. The Misings have got their own tribal traditional beliefs and customs. In every auspicious occasion they utter the names of Do:nyi (Sun) and Po:lo (Moon).

II. Review of related literature

The present study deals comprehensively about —The role of the Mising folk-tales in developing moral values among children. Looking into the nature of the present study, the researcher has reviewed the literature related to Mising community, their socio-cultural life, folk-tales and their role in developing moral values among children. The review of related literature speaks that there are large numbers of studies on the role of folk-tales in developing moral value among children. Sarmah, B.N. (1992) carried out a study on "Folktale and child Education: A study in Pichala Panchayat Area of North-Lakhimpur, Assam". The objective of the study is to understand the relationship between folktale and education. Telling of folktales in Pichala Panchayat not only educate children but also helps in the formation of personality. The findings of the study are- (1) Folktales helps in socialisation of education. (2) Folktales are also a channel for sublimation of pent-up emotions. (3) It strengthens different attributes of children and (4) children can develop imaginative power with the help of tales. Das, Babita (2007) carried out a study on "Role of Folktale in child Education: A study in Patidarrang Area of Kamrup District". It was found from the study that experience gathered from the tales is great education for children. It sharpens their intelligence, results in better adjustment, enhances their consciousness about society, neighbourhood and so on. The folktales amuse the children and help the children in developing thinking and reasoning. Uzir (2008) conducted a study on "Folktales in School text books of Barpeta district: A general study". The findings of the study were (1) the folktales are pure source of entertainment. (2) It helps to improve linguistic skills. (3) Folktales provide psychological training. (4) Folktale helps in understanding spiritual and physiological harmony in human organism. Bettelheim, Bruno (1996) highlighted the modern child's need for folk-tales in his study. He found it is important to provide the modern child with images of heroes who have to go out into the world all by themselves and who, although originally ignorant of the ultimate things, find secure places in the world by following their right way with deep inner confidence. Mota, Moises Tehejica (2009) in the study entitled "The Role of folktales in building personality: The case of the Lunda-Cokwe people of Angola". In this study he found that Lunda-Cokwe use folktales to build personality and transmit their cultural legacy to coming generations, as evidenced by the persistence of their traditions, which have been passed on by word of mouth over the years. Penjore, Dorji in his study entitled "Folktales and Education: The Role of Bhutanese Folktales in value Transmission." It discusses the main functions of Bhutanese folktales which are

about trivial events but embedded with multi-layered meanings of great moral and social importance, with experiences drawn from daily life.

The review of the related literature reveals that a good number of research studies have been conducted regarding the folk-tales and their role in developing moral values among children in India and abroad.

III. Significance of the Study

Moral values are the most dynamic, creative and important driving force behind human action and endeavours. The moral values are co-operation, fellow feeling, friendliness, brotherhood, sympathy, understanding etc. But at present, there is degradation of moral codes among the human beings. The present study is “The role of Mising folk-tales in developing moral values among children”. The Mising Folk-Tales can give a contribution towards maintaining moral values among children like any other Folk-Tales. There is an urgent need to develop moral values like friendliness, co-operation, sympathy, fellow-feeling, etc. among children. Folk stories have always contained a moral. In other words, they teach an important lesson about human nature that is clear and convincing. It is the moral lessons they teach that make them live through the centuries. Parents use them to teach their children important lessons that will prepare them to live well with a deeper understanding of their fellow human beings. The review of literature also reveals that the folk tales contain traditional values, social values and moral values in it and plays an important role in value transmission. As no study has been made so far in the role of Mising folk tales in moral value development, the present work would be a pioneering one. Therefore, it is quite worthwhile for the benefit of the community as well as for the interest of the academics and sociological knowledge.

IV. Statement of the problem

The Misings have a storehouse of folk tales in their custody. As the Misings had no written script earlier, they couldn't record their events and ideas. Therefore, it is said that their history and culture lies in the air as the form of ‘A;bangs’ (a type of Mising folk song) and ‘Leke do:ying’ (folk tale). Since the importance has been given in stories in the school curriculum, importance should also be given in developing moral values among children of the Mising community through Mising folk tales. Therefore, the importance of the role of folk tales has been realised and selected the topic “The role of the Mising folk-tales in developing moral values among children.”

Objectives of the study:

- i. To reflect the socio-cultural life of the Mising tribe.
- ii. To find out Mising folk-tales and their moral values.
- iii. To study the role of Mising folk-tales on children's moral value development in relation to their sex, locality and Socio-economic Status.

V. Hypotheses of the Study

The following hypotheses have been formulated in view of the 3rd objective of the research study:

- i. There is no significant difference between the mean of moral value scores of the students of Experimental group and Control group.
- ii. There is no significant difference between the mean scores of male and female students of Experimental group.
- iii. There is no significant difference between the mean scores of male and female students of Control group.
- iv. There is no significant difference between the mean scores of male students of Experimental group and Control group.
- v. There is no significant difference between the mean scores of female students of Experimental group and Control group.
- vi. There is no significant difference between the mean scores of rural and urban students of Experimental group.
- vii. There is no significant difference between the mean scores of rural and urban students of Control group.
- viii. There is no significant difference between the mean scores of rural students of Experimental group and control group.
- ix. There is no significant difference between the mean scores of urban students of Experimental group and control group.
- x. There is no significant difference between the mean scores of HSES and LSES students of Experimental group.
- xi. There is no significant difference between the mean scores of HSES and LSES students of Control group.
- xii. There is no significant difference between the mean scores of HSES students of Experimental group and Control group.

- xiii. There is no significant difference between the mean scores of LSES students of Experimental group and Control group.

VI. Delimitations of the study:

The study has been delimited to:

- i. The Misings of Dhemaji, Lakhimpur and Jorhat districts of Assam.
- ii. 6th standard School children of Dhemaji district of Assam.
- iii. The study of moral values among children.
- iv. Variables like sex, place of inhabitant and socio-economic status.

VII. Methodology

To study the socio-cultural life of the Mising people, the researcher collected data from both the primary and secondary sources. For collecting secondary data, the researcher had gone through some important historical books, articles, magazines, newspapers, journals, periodicals etc. on socio-cultural life of the Misings, their folk-tales. To authenticate the data collected from the secondary sources, the researcher visited the field selected for the study and observed the socio-cultural life of the Misings. The researcher also interviewed the aged persons and tradition bearers of the Misings to know about folk-tales and their moral values.

To know about the influence of teaching of folk tales on moral development of children, an experiment was conducted on children of 6th standard of school. To conduct the present experiment, the following procedure had been employed:

(a) Area of study

The area of the study was selected by the researcher on the basis of the concentration of the Mising population. The three districts: Dhemaji, Lakhimpur and Jorhat of Assam were selected as the area of present study. The researcher had selected three (3) villages from each district to study the socio-cultural life and folk-tales of the Misings. Apart from interviewing the aged persons and tradition bearers of the study area on folktales, the researcher also interviewed the people knowledge with Mising folk-tale. Sometime, the researcher told the collected tales to the respondents and obtained the morals in it. The researcher had selected three villages (1) Mainapara village (2) Bijoypur village and (3) Tajik Dolung (Village) under Dhemaji district. Similarly, the researcher had selected three (3) villages (1) Lakhimi (2) Borpomua and (3) Jengrai Chapori from Jorhat and (1) Horioni Kumbang (2) Rupohi Pam Mising dolung and (3) Patrichuk Maz Gaon from Lakhimpur district.

(b) Selection of Sample:

To investigate the role of Mising folk-tales in developing moral value among children, the researcher selected 200 students of 6th standard from the different schools of the three (3) districts of Assam. The 200 sample students, representing the sex, locality and Socio-economic status, selected from 10 different schools from the three selected districts. The selected schools for the present study were (1) Swarnasiri High School, (2) Jonki-Panoi High School, (3)Gogamukh Girl's High School (4) Jorhat Govt. Boys M.P. School (5) Pragati High School (6) Patirichuk High School (7) Dhemaji Higher Secondary (8) Jonai Balika Bidyalaya (9) Boginodi Higher Secondary School and (10) Rupohi High School. Out of these 10 schools, 100 students from five (5) schools were considered as Experimental group and other 100 students from other five (5) schools were considered as controlled group. The experimental group was given a treatment of six (6) months with folk-tales of the Misings. For this purpose, the researcher contacted the class teachers of the schools of the Experimental group. An orientation was given by the researcher to the assigned teacher to take moral class through the folk-tales of the Misings in every Saturday. Altogether 22 Mising folk-tales had been selected for the teaching. The appointed teacher taught the selected Mising folk-tales to the experimental group. On completion of the six months of treatment with Mising folk-tales, the researcher administered a test on moral value scale on both Experimental group and Control group developed by Dr. A. Sengupta and Prof. A.K.Singh.

(c) **Selection of tool:** The following test was used to assess the moral development of children through folk tales:

- i. Moral Value Scale-SS, developed by Dr. A. Sen Gupta (Patna) and Prof.A. K. Singh (Patna).

(d) Tabulation and Organization of Data

The researcher collected the data from a selected sample of 200 school-going children from the Experimental and Control group of the selected schools of the Dhemaji, Lakhimpur and Jorhat districts of Assam. The collected data were tabulated and organised systematically.

(e) Analysis of data

The objectives of the study were to reflect the socio-cultural life of the Misings of the Dhemaji, Lakhimpur and Jorhat district of Assam and to have an idea of their folk-tales and its moral value. For this purpose, the researcher has adopted descriptive analytical method. Further, the objective of the research was to study the role of Mising folk-tales on children's moral value development in relation to their sex, locality and SES. For this purpose, the researcher used the measures of central tendency, variability and t-test.

VIII. Findings and Discussion:

1. The Misings have their traditional custom, beliefs, dress, housing pattern, traditional pattern of marriage system, festival, handicraft, language, Murong, folk-songs, folk-tales, folk-dances.
2. Mising folk have a rich storehouse of folk literature specially the folk-tale and folk-song. It was found that The Mising folk tales are told to the small children for entertainment and giving amusement as other community do. It is also found that all the Mising folk-tales which have been selected for the study, bears some moral values honesty and loyalty, self-control, fortitude, truthfulness, trustworthy, courage, togetherness etc. in it.
3. The study reveals that Mising folk-tales reflect the beliefs and traditions of the Mising society apart from entertaining and amusing the children. Through the simple Mising folk-tales, the Mising traditional rituals, beliefs, dress, ornaments, social system, their housing pattern, their ancestors and their clan can be found.
4. Further, the study reveals that each and every Mising folk-tales posses moral values in it. All the Mising folk-tales which have been selected for the study, bears some moral value in it. It was found that the Mising folk-tales have moral values like honesty and loyalty, self-control, fortitude, truthfulness, trustworthy, courage, togetherness, righteous conduct, conscience, love, affection, understanding, compassion, co-operation, brotherhood, helpfulness, sincerity, perseverance, feeling of gratitude, thankfulness, gratefulness, feeling of equality, politeness, leadership quality, bravery, togetherness, honesty, faithfulness, self-discipline, self-control, consistency etc. So, it can be interpreted that the Mising folk-tales are still relevant for imparting moral value among children apart from entertaining and amusing the children. Similar results have been found in the studies of Dorji, Borah (2008), Singh (2011), Hussain. et.al. (2013) etc.
5. The findings of the study reveal that there is significant difference between the Mean Scores of the control group and Experimental group. Hence, it may be interpreted that the student's of Experimental group are better in moral development than the students of control group. In view of the above results, it is understood that the students treated with Mising folk-tales are better in the development of moral value.
6. The female students of experimental group are better in moral development than the male students.
7. It is found that there is significant difference between the Mean Scores of the male students of Experimental group and control group. Hence, it may be interpreted that the male student's of Experimental group are better in moral development than the students of control group.
8. It is understood that there is significant difference between the Mean Scores of the female students of Experimental group and control group. Hence, it may be interpreted that the female student's of Experimental group are better in moral development than the female students of control group.
9. There is no significant difference in the moral value scores of rural and urban students of Experimental group. Similar study had been conducted by Kulsum (2012) where he found that urban and rural boys and girls from different types of home environment possess varied types of moral values.
10. There is no significant difference in the moral value scores of rural and urban students of Control group.
11. There is significant difference between the Mean Scores of the rural students of Experimental group and control group. Hence, it may be interpreted that the rural student's of Experimental group are better in moral development than the students of control group.
12. There is significant difference between the Mean Scores of the urban students of Experimental and Control group. Hence, it may be interpreted that the urban student's of Experimental group are better in moral development than the urban students of control group. In view of the above results, it is understood that the urban students treated with folk-tale and folk-song are better in the development of moral value.
13. There is no significant difference in the moral value scores of HSES and LSES students of Experimental group. Similar study had been conducted by Singh (2011) where he found in case of convent background schools, students of low S.E.S. group have shown better moral judgment than the students of high S.E.S. group. There exists no significant difference in the moral judgment of high and low S.E.S. group students of Nagar Palika background schools.
14. There is no significant difference in the moral value scores of HSES and LSES students of Control group.

15. There is significant difference between the Mean Scores of the students of HSES of Experimental group and control group. Hence, it may be interpreted that the HSES student's of Experimental group are better in moral development than the HSES students of control group.
16. There is no significant difference in the moral value scores of LSES students of Experimental group and Control group.

IX. Conclusion

The study reveals that each and every Mising folk-tales possesses moral values in it. It was also found from the study that the students treated with folk-tales are better in moral development than the other group who were not treated with it. So, in order to develop moral values among children, more and more numbers of Mising folk-tales should be included in the school curriculum.

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