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Role of college libraries in education special reference to the tribal areas of Jhargram district in west Bengal: a study

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Abstract

College libraries in supporting and enhancing educational outcomes in the tribal areas of the Jhargram district, West Bengal. Education in tribal regions often faces multiple challenges, including limited access to quality resources, socio-economic barriers, and infrastructural constraints. College libraries, as centers of knowledge dissemination and learning support, hold the potential to bridge educational disparities in these marginalized communities.

This research aims to assess the availability, accessibility, and effectiveness of college library services in Jhargram's tribal areas. Through a combination of quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews conducted with students and librarians from selected government colleges, the study evaluates the extent to which these libraries contribute to academic success, skill development, and digital literacy among tribal students.

The findings reveal a mixed scenario: while some institutions have made commendable efforts to modernize their libraries with digital resources and inclusive practices, many still suffer from inadequate funding, outdated collections, and poor connectivity. The paper concludes with strategic recommendations to strengthen library infrastructure, improve resource availability, train library staff, and implement inclusive policies that cater to the unique needs of tribal students.

Keywords: *College libraries, tribal education, Jhargram*

1.0 Introduction

libraries have become a central pillar or a bridge by a user and their cognitive development. It fostering the learning, supporting research, and nurturing intellectual growth. College libraries not just providing access to books and journals but also facilitating a broader learning environment where a every student encourages their creativity, critical thinking, exploration, and innovation.

One such region in India is Jhargram District in West Bengal, where the most of the population is tribal. In these area colleges libraries essential role plays in bridging gaps in education and information access because geographical isolation, cultural barriers, and economic constraints.

1.1 Import ants of college libraries education and special reference

College libraries are essential educational institutions that support academic achievement, provide vast learning resources, encourage research and independent thinking and helped to the hidden creativity to published. College libraries also arranged an extension service to enjoy the user their study. college library not only help to the user it also helps to the professor, clerk etc. The reference section serves as a general inquiries and specialized academic work and it also help to the in depth-research.

1.2 Benefits of college libraries in tribal areas

Tribl areas in college libraries to save their culture and ol chiki or Santali related book other related information service provided for the user. Gives tribal students equal opportunities their gape of knowledge to develop and fulfill their achievement. Libraries can serve as knowledge centers not just for students but for the whole community and change their socio economy. when the local history, Geographical area is to explore or discover then tourist known the area. Teachers benefit from academic resources to improve their teaching methods.

2.0 Literature Review

Dixit Chitransh et al. (2024), Role of academic libraries and information sciences: A study. This paper explores how librarians must constantly evaluate and adapt their services to meet the changing demands of their users in order to ensure the success of college libraries.

Lone Hedyate Ulla (2024), Role of Academic Libraries in Higher Education with Special Reference to Universities of Kashmir a Comprehensive Study. The study examines how well academic libraries in Kashmiri universities meet the evolving needs of students and teachers. Due to limited research in this area, key concerns include the availability of physical and digital resources and the integration of technology into library services, such as online databases, digital repositories, and management systems.

Gayak Jibanbandhu et al. (2021), A comparative study of tribal education development in India: with special references to Purulia district, West Bengal. this paper tries to analyses the educational scenario of tribal people in West Bengal with special references to Purulia district. This paper also highlighted the reasons behind such backwardness in education and suggests some positive remedies for educational development of tribal people in this district.

Ghosh Bonny (2021), The Role of Christian Missionaries in the development of libraries in West Bengal with special reference to college libraries during 19th century a study. The role of the Christian missionaries towards development of libraries during this period in contemporary West Bengal constitutes the core area of the research work.

Pyari Satgur (2019), A Comparative Analysis of Users and Non-Users of ICT Services in Libraries with Special Reference to Higher Educational Institutions of Agra. To find out the problems faced by students in using ICT services in libraries with special reference to higher educational institutions and study the purposes of students regarding use of ICT services in libraries with special reference to higher educational institutions.

Saikia Rikumoni (2019), Role of college libraries in a changing information context for promoting higher education in Assam with special reference to Lakhimpur District a Study. To know users' satisfaction relating to different services provided by the libraries and assess the existing situation and infrastructure of college libraries.

Srikanth Todeti (2019), A study on library and information facility in colleges of education Andhra University area. The notion of library has considerably changed over years and modes and forms of library resources and means of accessibility has drastically expanded over years. Provision of modern libraries and acquaintance with skill to use libraries is unavoidable for students in higher education and academia.

Jain Sunil Kumar (2016), A Study of Library System and Service in College of M P with special reference to Bhopal division. The present study is concentrated on the library system and services in the colleges of M.P. with special reference to Bhopal division. The detailed study was limited to Bhopal division.

Krishna Hajare Baburao (2016), SWOT Analysis of Polytechnic College Libraries in Maharashtra with Special Reference to Information and Communication Technology ICT Environment. The topical scope of the present research work covers the SWOT analysis of the libraries with special reference to Information and Communication Technology (ICT) environment. The geographical scope of the present research work limits to the Government Polytechnic Libraries existing in the state of Maharashtra.

Shegokar Kanchan Kishor (2016), Library Needs of Degree College Students in Tribal Area of Thane District in Maharashtra State. It was found that lot of studies have been conducted by various researchers on tribals, tribal education & students from tribal areas but no study was found where library needs of the college tribal students have been identified / studied. Thus, this study becomes very important in this direction.

Sinha Sudha (2016), Role of College Libraries in Education and Research a study with special reference to the hilly areas of Darjeeling district West Bengal. To find out the present scenario of Darjeeling hill areas of college library in services in terms of their organizations, resources, user's information needs, manpower, finance, governance, space and physical facilities, automation, services and such other relevant factors and evaluation of their effectiveness which is vital for formulation of viable developmental plans for future development.

Bhagyashri Yeshwantrao Keskar (2015), A study the role of college libraries Impact factor on the students of the Osmanabad district. To find out the elements improving for the increasing quality services of libraries and library services and identify demerits of library services.

Handique Madhumita (2014), Role of Public Libraries in Educating the Rural Women of Assam A Study with Special Reference to Dibrugarh District. Result- The study will through a new light on the organization, management and services of public libraries in general and rural libraries in particular and it is expected that the study will be a step forward in removing the drawbacks and shorts falls of the libraries.

Pramod K M (2013), Education and development among tribals in Kerala a study with special reference to Wayanad district. Result- To study the tribal areas Wayanad the socio economics status and role of the education in the development of tribal and identify the barriers of education. **Shankarappa B (2010)**, ICT infrastructure in the first-grade colleges affiliated to Kuvempu University: a study with special reference to library and information services. The aim of the present research is to assess the status of Information Communication Technology (ICT) infrastructure in the colleges affiliated to Kuvempu University in general and its applications for library and information sciences in particular.

3.0 Objectives

- ❖ To investigate the different kind of information according to user needs how the college library full fill the user needs.
- ❖ To find out Ol Chiki or Santali related information how serve the college library in tribal areas.
- ❖ To know the how to support the college libraries in educational development and special reference.
- ❖ To investigated to present scenario of college service in terms of facilities relevant other area evaluation and suggest and recommend to development of college libraries in the region.

4.0 Research Methodology

Research method provides guidelines and title, objective etc. related the available information of the given structured manner. survey method has been used for the survey of libraries census method has been adopted.

4.1 Population

Population refers to the total number of people or organisms in a particular geographic area or within a specific group. The population was selected from various government general degree colleges in tribal areas of jhargram district. The population for survey of users is large and heterogeneous.

4.2 Sample

A sample refers to population selected and study in order to make or draw conclusion about the larger population. 180 student has selected from different college in Jhargram district.

4.3 Sampling

A representative sample has been selected following simple random sampling technique.

4.4 Tools and techniques

Data is collected by a combination of questionnaire, interview and observation.

4.4.1 Questionnaire

It is only for designed and circulate for the selected students in government general degree college in tribal areas of Jhargram district to help the collect data and important information.

4.4.2 Interview method

Semi-Structured Method of Interview was conducted to the selected Librarian or college staffs it is help to collect information according to library related and institution related.

4.4.3 Observation Method

In an observation method observed the college library, user and Librarian activities.

4.5 Scope and Coverage

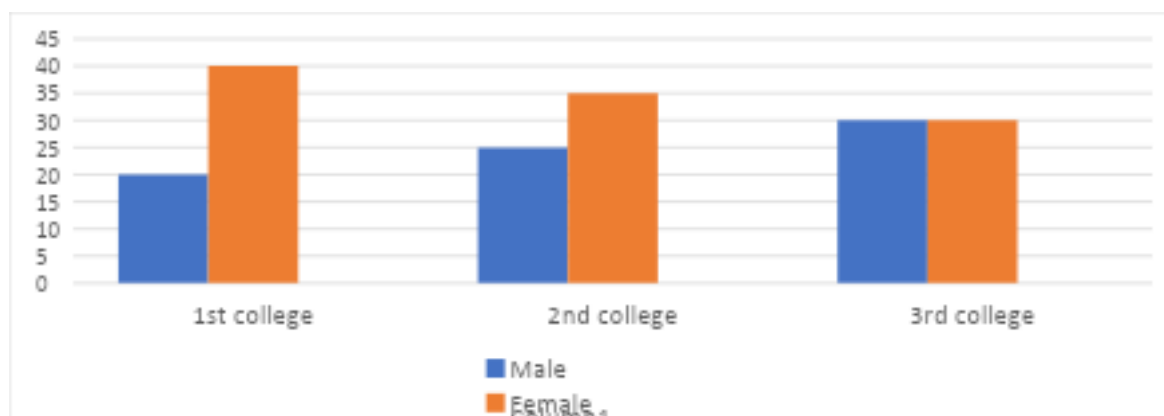
The study is limited to three Government General Degree Colleges located in the tribal-dominated areas of Jhargram district, West Bengal. The three college is Jhargram Raj college, Subarnarekha Mahavidyalaya, Silda Chandra Sekhar college. Undergraduate and postgraduate students (N=180) from various academic disciplines. A majority of participants belong to tribal communities, ensuring that the data reflects the experience and needs of indigenous students. Input was also taken from college librarians and staff through interviews.

5.0 Result

The data collected through questionnaire and personal visit were analyzed and interpreted with the help of using simple percentage. The data have been presented and analyzed by using tables and figures. Jha gram district number of three government general degree colleges was selected to collect the data in tribal areas. In these data given only student.

Table 1: Number of collage wise respondents

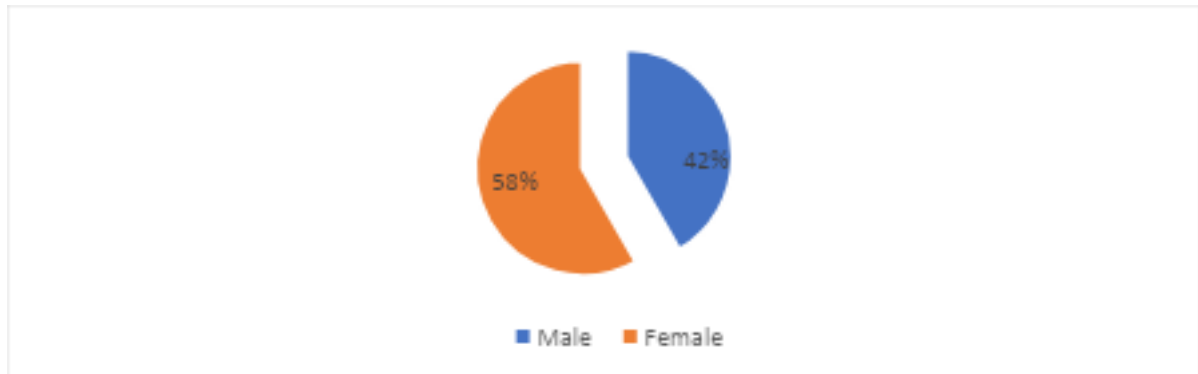
Number of colleges	Male	Female
1) Jhargram Raj college	20	40
2) Subarnarekha Mahavidyalaya	25	35
3) Silda Chandra Sekhar college	30	30



Jhargram Raj college, Subarnarekha Mahavidyalaya, Silda Chandra Sekhar college 3 number of colleges of 180 total sample is collected, every college sample has collected by 60, The first number of college male student percentage is 33.33% and female is 66.67% the second college male student percentage is 41.67% female is 58.33% the third number of college male student percentage is 50% and female is 50%. The total number of student data collected by graduation and post-graduation level.

Table-2: Sex-wise distribution of the respondents

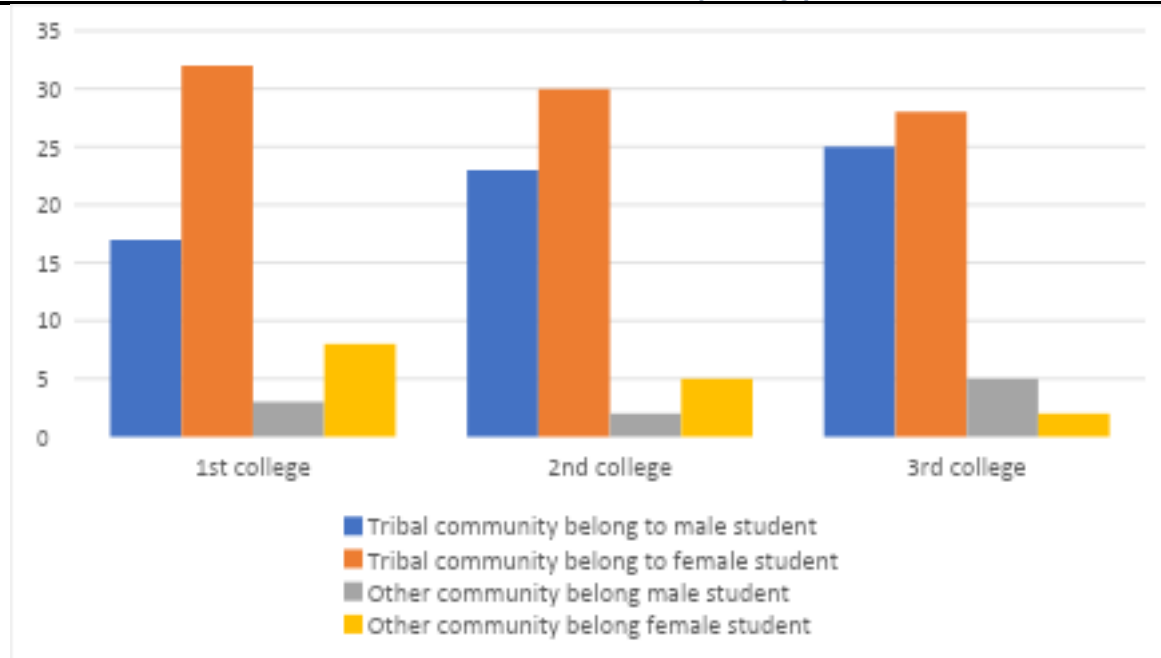
Sex groups	No. of users(N=180)	% of users
Male	75	41.67%
Female	105	58.33%



In the above table-2 shows the gender-wise distribution of the surveyed respondents. It shows that majority of the respondents are female 105(58.33%) followed by little lower percentage 75(41.67%) of male respondents.

Table-3: Tribal community student respondent

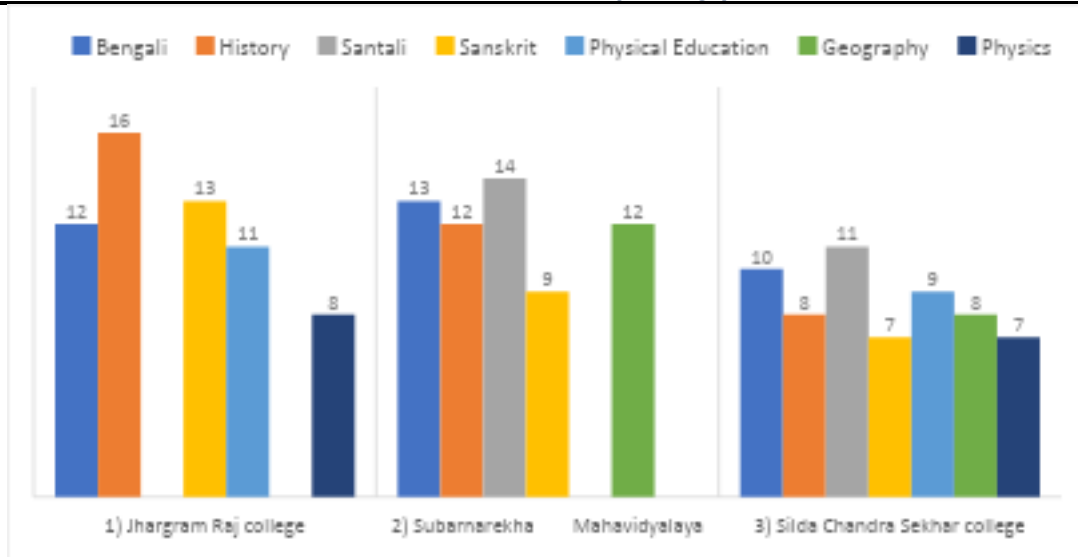
Number of colleges	Tribal community belong to male student	Tribal community belong to female student	Other community belong male student	Other community belong female student
1) Jhargram Raj college	17	32	3	8
2) Subarnarekha Mahavidyalaya	23	30	2	5
3) Silda Chandra Sekhar college	25	28	5	2



The data has been collected graduation and post-graduation students in various subject. 86.11% of students (155 out of 180) belong to the tribal community, showing that the selected colleges primarily serve tribal populations. Female tribal students (90) outnumber male tribal students (65), indicating relatively better participation of tribal girls in college education. Only 13.89% of the total sample belongs to non-tribal or other communities.

Table 4: Department wise student respondents

Number of colleges	Bengali	History	Santali	Sanskrit	Physical Edu.	Geography	Physics
1) Jhargram Raj college	12	16	0	13	11	0	8
2) Subarnarekha Mahavidyalaya	13	12	14	9	0	12	0
3) Silda Chandra Sekhar college	10	8	11	7	9	8	7

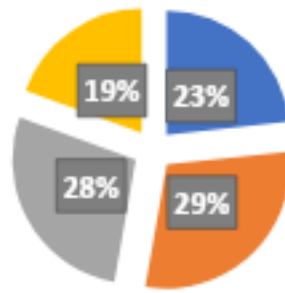


The data reveals both disciplinary and institutional disparities in student response rates. Silda Chandra Sekhar College appears to have the most evenly distributed participation across departments. In contrast, Subarnarekha Mahavidyalaya shows strong participation in specific subjects but notable absences in others, particularly in science and physical education. Jhargram Raj College demonstrates robust participation in traditional subjects like History and Sanskrit but lacks representation in Santali and Geography.

Table-5: Frequency of using the library

Frequency	Number of users(N=267)	% of users
Daily	42	23.33%
Weekly	53	29.44%
Monthly	50	27.78%
Rarely	35	19.44%
None	0	0.00%

■ Daily ■ Weekly ■ Monthly ■ Rarely ■ None



Weekly users are the largest group (29.44%), followed closely by monthly users (27.78%). Daily use is relatively strong (23.33%), which is encouraging in rural/tribal settings. Only 19.44% use it rarely, and 0% said "none" — meaning all students surveyed had at least some library interaction.

Table-6: Opinion about Library facilities

Library Facilities		No. of Users (N=180)	% of users
A. College library condition inside and outside	Poor	12	6.67%
	Adequate	23	12.78%
	Good	65	36.11%
	Very Good	55	30.56%
	Excellent	25	13.89%
B. Access to the library	Poor	30	16.67%
	Adequate	42	23.33%
	Good	70	38.89%
	Very Good	28	15.56%
	Excellent	10	5.56%
C. Library service or management	Poor	12	6.67%
	Adequate	25	13.89%
	Good	65	36.11%

	Very Good	55	30.56%
	Excellent	23	12.78%
D. Reading room facility in library	Poor	30	16.67%
	Adequate	35	19.44%
	Good	58	32.22%
	Very Good	42	23.33%
	Excellent	15	8.33%
E. Lighting and air condition system in library	Poor	20	11.11%
	Adequate	31	17.22%
	Good	65	36.11%
	Very Good	36	20.00%
	Excellent	28	15.56%

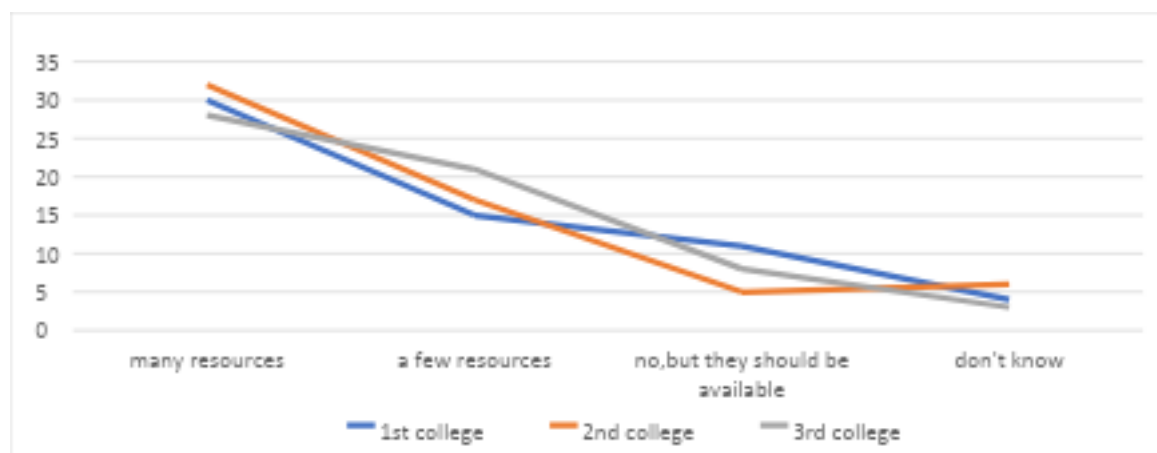
The majority of users (80.56%) rated the physical condition of the library as Good or above, indicating overall satisfaction with its upkeep. While most users (60%) gave a positive rating (Good or higher), 16.67% rated access as Poor, suggesting room for improvement in availability or convenience of access. Over 79% of users expressed satisfaction with the library management, with a strong preference for Good and Very Good ratings. While the overall feedback is mostly positive (63.88% rated Good or above), the 16.67% Poor rating highlights the need for improvements in seating, space, or noise control. A significant portion (71.67%) of students find the lighting and air conditioning satisfactory (Good to Excellent), though 11.11% rated it as Poor.

The highest satisfaction was observed in the physical condition of the library and service/management. Access to the library and reading room facilities received relatively lower satisfaction, with notable percentages rating them as Poor or Adequate. The lighting and air conditioning system was generally well-rated but still showed a need for enhancement.

Students in a week spend in library less than 1 hour 12% student 1-2 hour 18% students, 3-4 hour 25% students and more than 4 hours 45% students. Library opening and closing time is 10/ 10.30 am to 4/5 pm but some college is Saturday half time to open.

Table-7: Ol Chiki or Santali related resources available in college library has respondents

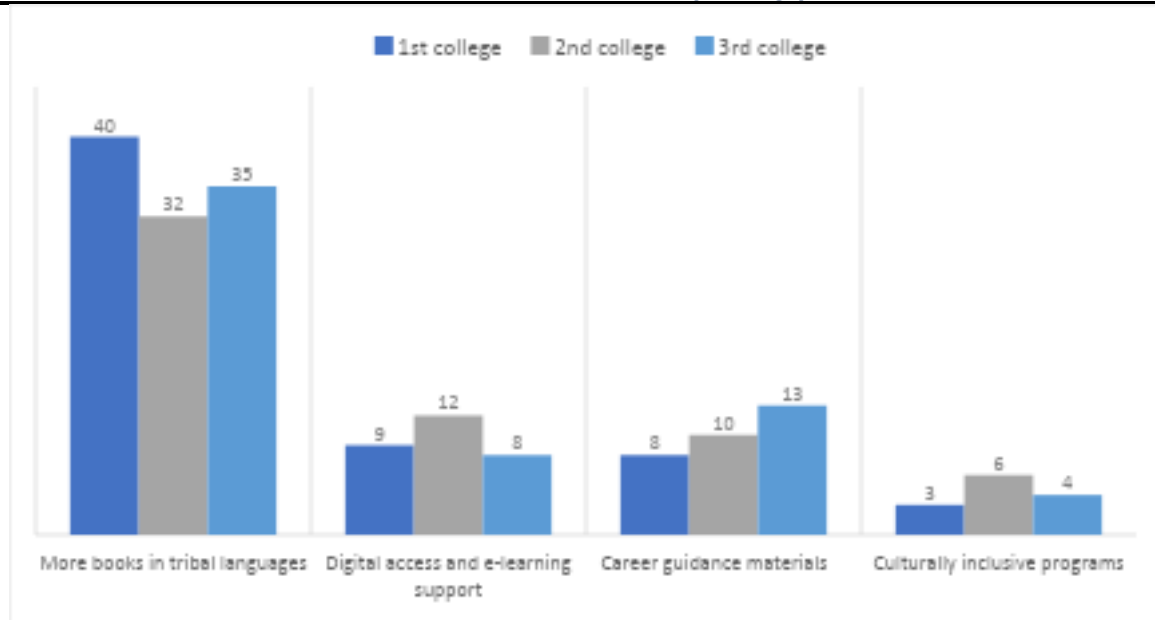
Number of colleges	many resources	a few resources	No, but they should be available	don't know
1	30	15	11	4
2	32	17	5	6
3	28	21	8	3



50% of respondents across the three colleges reported that many resources related to Ol Chiki/Santali are available in their college libraries — a positive sign of indigenous language representation. An additional 29.44% acknowledged limited availability, showing partial support. 13.33% expressed a need for such resources, indicating gaps in some institutions. A small portion (7.22%) were unaware of the presence or absence of these materials, possibly due to lack of engagement or communication by the library services.

Table-8: Improvements would help make the library more useful for tribal students' respondents

No of college	More books in tribal languages	Digital access and e-learning support	Career guidance materials	Culturally inclusive programs
1	40	9	8	3
2	32	12	10	6
3	35	8	13	4



The highest demand (59.44%) is for more books in tribal languages, clearly showing that language access is the most critical concern among tribal students. Digital access and career guidance materials are also important, though less frequently mentioned — about 16–17% each. Only 7.22% mentioned culturally inclusive programs, which may indicate: These programs are either already present, underprioritized, or not well understood by students.

Table-9: Opinion about Library facilities

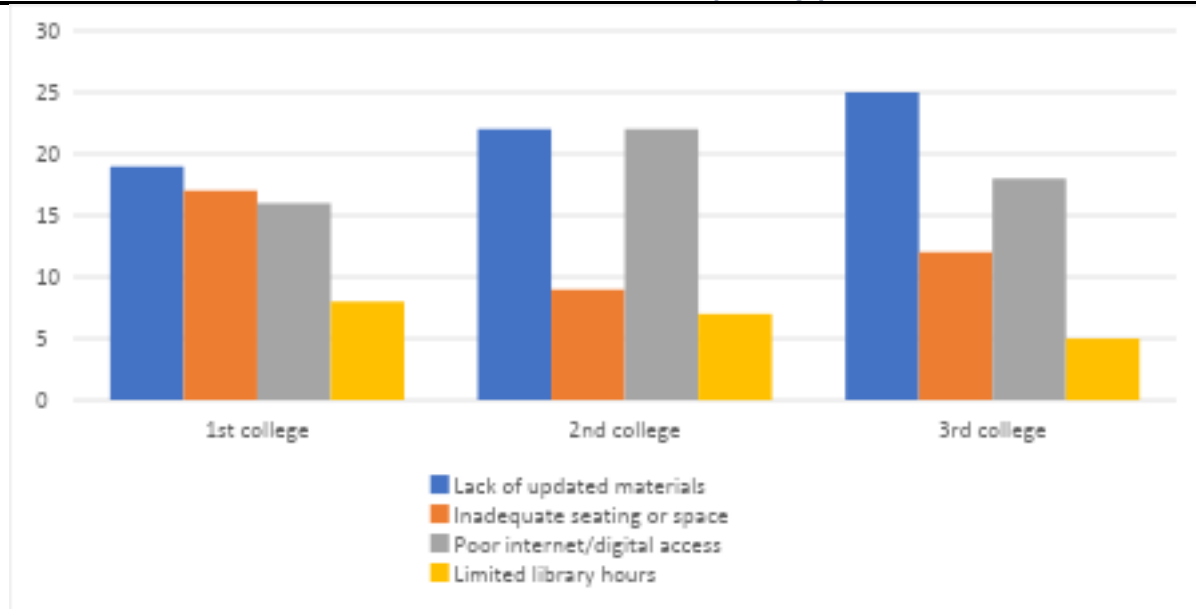
Library Facilities		No. of Users (N=180)	% of users
A. Library cleanliness	Yes	120	66.67%
	No	60	33.33%
B. Class wise book or other reference book provide	Yes	145	80.56%
	No	25	19.44%
C. College library developed condition day by day	Increase	171	95.00%
	Decrease	9	5.00%
D. Library staff cooperative and helpful	Yes	122	67.78%
	No	8	4.44%
	Sometimes	50	27.78%
E. College library meet fulfill information needs	Yes	173	96.11%
	No	7	3.89%

F. College library supports academic success	Yes	160	88.89%
	No	20	11.11%
G. Are you satisfied with the resources available in your college library	Very satisfied	140	77.78%
	Satisfied	33	18.33%
	Dissatisfied	7	3.89%
H. Oldest book materials condition in present time	Good	58	32.22%
	Bad	122	67.78%
I. Does the library provide access to digital resources (e-books, online journals)	Yes	90	50.00%
	No	15	8.33%
	Not sure	75	41.67%

High satisfaction with book availability (80.56%) and staff support (67.78%). Nearly universal agreement on library's developmental progress (95%) and academic support (88.89%). 96% say the library fulfills their information needs. Most users are satisfied or very satisfied with library resources (96.11%). Cleanliness needs attention (33% unsatisfied). Condition of old materials is poor, requiring restoration or replacement. A large proportion of students are unaware of digital resources – better communication or digital literacy programs are needed. Staff interaction could be more consistently helpful, as 28% say it only happens "sometimes".

Table-10: When using the college library What are the challenges have to face student's respondents

No of college	Lack of updated materials	Inadequate seating or space	Poor internet/digital access	Limited library hours
1	19	17	16	8
2	22	9	22	7
3	25	12	18	5



Lack of Updated Materials (66 responses) The most reported challenge across all colleges. College 3 reported the highest number (25), suggesting a serious gap in resource renewal. Indicates a need for regular updates to books, journals, and reference material.

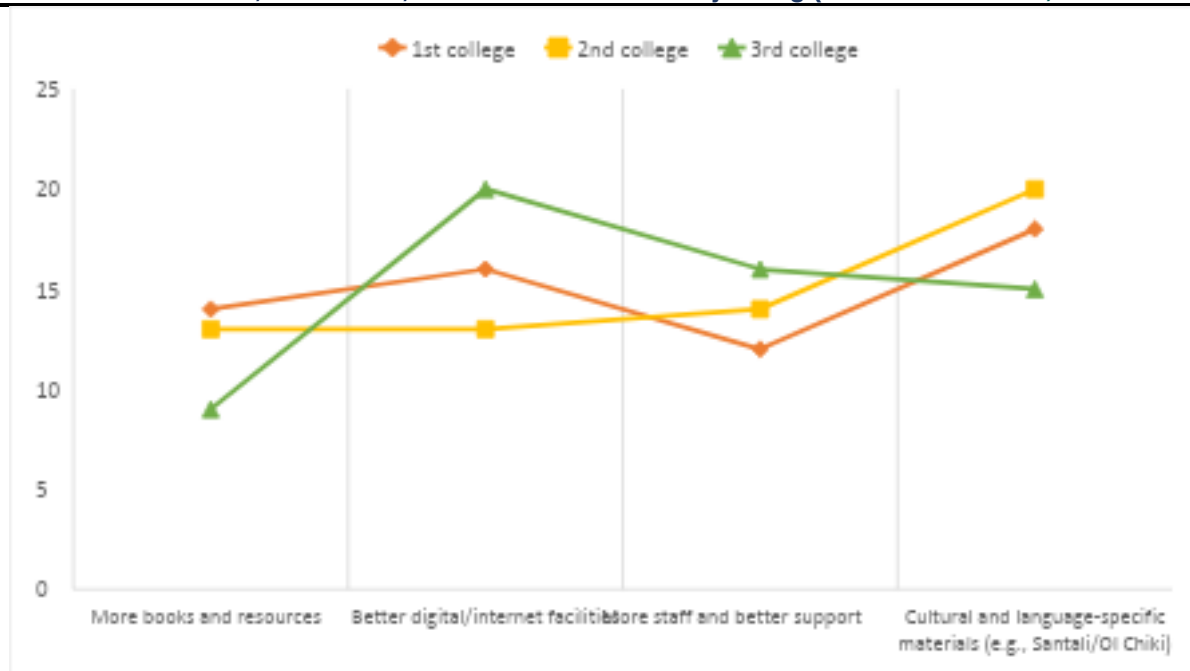
Poor Internet/Digital Access (56 responses) Second most common issue, especially high in Colleges 1 and 2 (16 and 22). Suggests many students are struggling with digital learning needs, which are increasingly essential.

Inadequate Seating or Space (38 responses) Reported by all colleges, with college 1 having the highest count (17). Reflects overcrowding or poor infrastructure, especially during peak study times.

Limited Library Hours (20 responses) Least reported issue overall. While less critical, it's still significant for students who need extended study time. College 1 had the most concern in this area (8), while College 3 had the least (5).

Table-11: Recommendation by students to improve college library Respondents

No of college	More books and resources	Better digital/internet facilities	More staff and better support	Cultural and language-specific materials (e.g., Santali/Ol Chiki)
1	14	16	12	18
2	13	13	14	20
3	9	20	16	15



Cultural and language-specific materials (Santali/Ol Chiki) are the most requested (29.4%), suggesting a strong demand for regional or tribal language content. Better digital/internet facilities are next (27.2%), indicating students value improved access to online resources and connectivity. More staff and better support (23.3%) is also significant, reflecting the need for improved human resource support in libraries. More books and traditional resources (20%) had the lowest number of suggestions, possibly due to increasing digital usage or already sufficient physical collections.

6.0 Discussion

The data collected from 180 students across three government general degree colleges in the tribal areas of Jhargram district sheds light on both the strengths and challenges of college libraries in supporting higher education among tribal communities.

6.1 Demographic and Community Context

A large proportion (86.11%) of the respondents belong to tribal communities, highlighting the importance of libraries as inclusive educational hubs in tribal-dominated regions. Significantly, female tribal students outnumber male tribal students, indicating a promising trend toward gender inclusiveness in education among tribal groups.

6.2 Library Usage Patterns

The frequency of library usage is fairly encouraging: 29.44% use the library weekly, and 23.33% use it daily. This level of engagement is notable in rural and tribal areas where accessibility can often be a constraint. The fact that 19.44% use the library only rarely suggests barriers that prevent full utilization.

6.3 Facilities and Satisfaction Levels

The majority of respondents expressed positive opinions about library infrastructure: 80.56% rated physical condition as *Good* or better. 96.11% felt their information needs were being met. 88.89% said the library supports their academic success. There are clear areas for improvement: 33.33% were not satisfied with cleanliness. The condition of old materials is poor (67.78% rated them as "Bad"). A notable portion (41.67%) of students are unsure about digital access, indicating a gap in communication or digital literacy.

6.4 Language and Cultural Representation

The findings show strong demand for tribal language materials, especially in Santali and Ol Chiki: 50% reported many such resources are available. Another 29.44% said a few resources exist. 13.33% said these resources are missing but needed. This underscores the library's cultural and linguistic role in preserving tribal identity and supporting mother tongue-based education.

6.5 Challenges Faced by Students

The most significant challenge is the lack of updated materials (66 responses), which affects the quality of academic work. Poor digital access (56 responses) also hinders modern learning, especially for students who rely on online resources. Inadequate seating and limited hours, while less reported, still point to infrastructure limitations.

6.6 Recommendations and Student Preferences

Students most often recommended the More tribal language resources (29.4%) Better digital/internet facilities (27.2%) More library staff and support (23.3%) Interestingly, general book availability ranked lowest, suggesting that students prioritize culturally relevant content and modern learning support over just physical collection size.

Libraries in Jhargram tribal colleges are actively used and appreciated, especially in terms of supporting academic needs. However, modernization and cultural inclusion remain critical gaps. There is a clear need to strengthen digital infrastructure, update reading materials, and expand tribal language content. Student satisfaction is generally high, but continued improvements are essential to make libraries more equitable and impactful.

7.0 Conclusion

The study highlights that college libraries in the tribal areas of Jhargram are critical enablers of education, especially for tribal students. They play a central role in academic success and are actively used and appreciated by students at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

Despite visible progress in library development, several challenges persist: Insufficient digital access, Lack of updated academic materials, Poor seating and cleanliness, Underrepresentation of tribal languages in some colleges.

A substantial number of students are unaware of digital resources, pointing to the need for orientation programs, digital literacy training, and more proactive library communication.

To improve impact, library policy and planning must prioritize tribal needs, including: Strengthening indigenous language collections, enhancing digital infrastructure, upgrading facilities for comfort and access, Increasing staff support and student guidance

Investing in these areas will not only boost academic outcomes but also empower marginalized tribal students with inclusive and modern educational support, thereby reinforcing the larger goal of equity and quality in higher education in rural India.

8.0 Future scope

- The research can include further their study University, B.Ed., I.T.I. college.
- The researcher can conduct the study on various district of West Bengal.
- The researcher can conduct the study on Government and private school.
- The researcher can be using different method.
- The researcher can include further their study librarian, teaching staff, non-teaching staff.

- The researcher can conduct the study various community.

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