

Participation of Tribal Students in Higher Education: A study of Odisha

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Abstract

Background: Higher Education is a powerful tool to build knowledge-based society. Department of Higher Education of centre and state are focused, improve and expand education in all sectors and inclusion disadvantaged section like tribal, women and minorities class in the higher education sector by the help of programme implementation, policy formulation, research and innovation, knowledge management, training and capacity building. This paper analyses students participation in different way such as cultural participation, political participation, leadership participation, sport participation and community participation in the field of Sambalpur University who belong to Schedule Tribe and how far they satisfied or no ?

Objective: the objectives of the paper study the socio-economic background of the respondents and find out the participation of tribal students in institutional activities with specific to ST category of Sambalpur University. **Methodology:** Sambalpur University was selected purposively from Odisha. From Fifteen departments with 30 P.G students were selected randomly. Participatory Observation and Interview Schedule and have been used for data collection. **Conclusion:** This research paper also highlights students' participation in the effective way of higher education and some barriers in their progress of higher educational institution.

(Key Word- Higher Education, Participation, Students, Tribal, University)

Introduction:

Education is the most important instrument for human resource development as well as a very important for his/her life circle. Education is widely accepted as the essential tool for the developmental goals and awareness of constitutional rights and duties among the people of a nation and has a great significance in the context of developing countries. Education is the key that opens the door of human life. It plays a pivotal role in social change and it brings perfect life, radical transformation in outlook an upward mobility in social status, and perception (Soren, 2016). In this study, researcher wants to discuss impact of education in participate of ST community in different activities of Sambalpur University, Sambalpur district, Odisha.

Historically, Schedule Tribes are the original inhabitants of India. They face exclusion from the mainstream society because of their physical isolation in remote parts of the country. Scheduled Tribes have been economically marginal, geographically, and socially isolated group. Generally, The Tribal people reside in isolated places situated in remote areas of forests, islands, hills etc. These communities are not able

to access basic facilities such as educational institution, hospitals and other basic amenities due to their remoteness. All these factors have led to the socio-economic backwardness of the community (Thorat & Senapati, 2007).

According to the 2011 census, In India, Scheduled Tribes constitute 8.6 percent of total population numbering 104.28 million. More than half of the Scheduled Tribe population is concentrated in the States of Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Jharkhand and Gujarat (Census of India, 2011). STs comprise 22.84 percent of the state Odisha. About 45 percent of Odisha is classified as Scheduled Area under Schedule of the constitution, which identifies special privileges for those areas where the majority of the population belong to Scheduled Tribes (ibid).

After independence Indian constitution has take some affirmative-actions for the betterment of tribal's. After 1950s the things started to change. Numbers of affirmative actions were taken to promote social and economic equality. The National Policy on Education in 1968 was a big efforts to equalise educational opportunity more inclusively. The government of India has launched time to time number of schemes and programmes to increase the participation of deprived classes in higher education. The government has now provided 7.5 percent reservation to STs in higher education institutions. The government also provide scholarship to pursue higher education in abroad. Fourteen tribal research institutes have been set up in various states of India. The scheme of girl's hostel for tribal girls started in the Third plan, which is a useful instrument to inclusive higher education. Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship scheme was introduced for pursuing higher education among the SCs and STs. The National Accreditation Regulatory Authority for higher educational institutional bill 2011 provides a national commission for maintaining and determining higher education standard. The UGC has also relaxed norms for giving development grants to colleges located in backward and rural areas. In the beginning of 1970s higher education formed as one of the important section of investment. The First and Fifth Plan was focused on qualitative education. After 1990s the economic reform brings through higher education. The economic growth gowned up under the influence of knowledge as well as education was highly impacted by LPG model. By the end of Tenth Plan period, National Literary Mission was launched. Under this scheme 12 percent students were availed higher education. Now it increased by 17.50 percent. But the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) is low in rural areas as compared to urban areas. At present, India has more than 39, 050 colleges. But the unequal representation of tribal students creates a serious problem in front of the nation (Behera, 2015).

Educational status of Scheduled Tribes

It is clearly seen that all India literacy rate significantly increased along with the literacy rate of Scheduled Tribes from the year 1961 to 2011 but the matter of concern is that, the gap between these two groups is still 14.03 in 2011. The total estimated student enrolment is 3, 66, 42, 378 out of which nearly 52.4 percent are male and rest 47.6 percent are female students. SC student enrolment is 14.4 percent. On the

other hand, students belonging to ST category constitute only 5.2 percent and 35 percent of the total students belong to OBC with 52 percent of male OBC students (ibid).

Educational advancement is regarded as the main catalyst for social development. Statistics show that tribes lag much behind in educational attainments compared to other communities in India as well as Odisha. The important reason for the low level of education among tribes is the peculiar nature of their habitations which are lack of sufficient educational institutions in tribal areas, poor enrolment, high dropout from schools, poverty, lack of nutritional and healthcare programmes are the major problems faced by them (ibid).

The important of higher education policy are include the programmes for general development of universities and colleges, special grants for the construction of hostels for women and SC/ST, scholarships to students, scheme to provide interest subsidy on educational loans for professional courses to ensure that nobody is denied professional education on account of financial wherewithal and making interventions to attract and keep talent in the teaching profession in the higher and technical education (ibid).

Constitutional safe guard on tribal people

Article 46 of Indian constitution lays down that, the state shall promote, with special care, the educational and economic interests of weaker sections of the people, and in particular, of the scheduled caste and scheduled tribes, and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation. Article 154(4) empowers the state to make any special provision for the advancement of any socially and educationally backward classes of citizen or for SCs or STs Article 29(1) provides distinct languages script or culture. This article has special significance for scheduled tribes. Untouchability is abolished under Article 17, and its practice in any form is a punishable offence Article 275(1) provides Grants in-Aids to states (having scheduled tribes) covered under fifth and six schedules of the constitution. Article 350A states that It shall be the endeavour of every state and every local authority within the state to provide adequate facilities for instruction in mother-tongue at the primary stage of education to the children belonging to the minority group. Article 243D, 330, and article 332 provides reservation of seats for STs in gram panchayat, house of people and state legislative assembly. Many other provisions are laid down in articles 15, 16, 335, 338A, 342 etc.

Review of literature

The studies reviewed are mainly on higher educational problems of the tribal students. The available literature on the present research work has been reviewed and presented under two heads viz., 1) Studies in higher education of tribal student (2) Studies in affirmative action policy for tribal student.

Silver (2007) emphasized the large number of people today who have spent some portion in their lives in a period of multiple disadvantages due to transformations beyond their individual control. He focused on the comparative study among poverty and social exclusion. Conversely, social inclusion highlights the importance of social relations and societal support in re-knitting the social bond. Social

researches can contribute to poverty studies which are increasingly taking non-monetary dimension and social considerations into account.

Paltasingh and Paliwal (2014) stated that the socio economic status of tribal communities in different regions in India and know the policy measure with focus on region specific issue. There are multiple reasons for the vulnerable status of STs. In some regions (States like Bihar, Jharkhand, Orissa, Rajasthan, UP and Andhra Pradesh) where the literacy level of STs is low; are not fully aware of the schemes available for them. Such information is not clearly disseminated to them. Their access to benefits is less. The main reason for lesser beneficiaries is the complicated procedure of the sanctioning of the schemes and poor implementation. Awareness generation to avail the existing schemes and programs targeted for tribal community is very much required. They found that the ST in north eastern states is in better position than the tribes residing in the other part of India because Exposure to Urbanization and educational expansion.

Haseena (2014) identified the problem of the regional disparities among tribal communities in the higher and professional educational sector. The educational development in India is lopsided with substantial inter-regional differences and prominent disparities between communities of the society. Tribal literacy rate was 82 percent in Mizoram and 17 percent in Andhra Pradesh in 2011 census. Adivasi are associated with a certain stigma and behaviour, which can be partially, tackled through a change in mindset among non-tribals.

Erigada (2012) described the most disadvantaged tribal student (poor and remote location) would suffer from multiple forms of exclusion and disadvantage. The tribal students are more disadvantaged than SC in terms of educational status. They have lack of community participation in different activities. There is a need for new and innovative policies and programmes to be initiated to bring about inclusiveness for the education of scheduled tribes.

Padhi (2016) critically analyzed the educational status of tribal communities in A.P and exploring the constraints in enhancing the educational level of marginal section and to seek to map out inclusive approaches in education as a strategy to achieve the goal of Education for All.

Jangir (2013) explored the reservation policy in India. There are 33 percent voting which is done by SC and ST so now if they make any change in the reservation policy against the SC and ST then they have to suffer a lot for the same. So they are not taking any steps against the reservation policy. The weaker sections of society protect discrimination in various articles, including Article 15(4). This clause empowers the state, notwithstanding anything to the contrary in Articles 15(1) and 29(2) to make special reservation for the advancement of any socially and educationally backward classes of citizens or for scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. His paper looks at some of the more important chronological, constitutional and lawful moments in the development of a reservations procedure in India. In 1982, the Constitution specified 15 percent and 7.5 percent of vacancies in public sector and government-aided educational institutes as a quota reserved for the SC and ST candidates respectively for a period of five years. The supreme court of India ruled that reservations cannot exceed 50 percent. Prime Minister V. P. Singh announced that 27 percent of government positions would be set aside for OBC's in addition to the 22.5 percent already set aside for the SCs and STs in 1990.

Thorat and Senapati (2007) examined the reservation policy on the employment sector, the education sector and the legislature. They argued that availability of assessments about the impact of reservation in higher education is limited.

Theoretical Framework

There is no single theory of sociology of education that has dominant and diverse theoretical perspective remain relevant and useful today. However, four broad sociological approaches have been influential in the sociology of education: structural functional theories, interactionist theories, conflict theories, feminist theories.

The structural functional theories of sociology of education propounded mainly E. Durkheim and T. Parson. These theories tell us something significant about education system in the society. Education provides individuals with the skills and knowledge that needed to participate in societies. Thus, functionalists see education systems as serving several functions for society as a whole. Conflict theories point out that education system which supports them must also highlight those inequalities (Gidden and Sutton, 2017, pp.806). Marxian view that how does the educational system produces the kind of workforce required by capitalism? This theory argues that educational power vested on the capitalism.

From interactionist theories, individual actively constructs social reality. An individual action is not simply shaped by social forces that act upon him/her. This perspective tells that man becomes the author of his own action rather than passively responding to external constraints. (Haralambos and Heald, 1980, 1981, and 2004, pp.207-208).

Feminist theories aim at establishing, defining and defending equal educational, political, economic and social rights for women. This theory focus on how gender inequality shapes social life.

Statement of the Problems

Odisha is stills backed as underdeveloped so as to the tribal education is concerned. A verity of issues and concerns related to affirmative action policy in the state. But these concerned and issues the planned strategies and invention will never work properly. However, in order to develop and raise their level of aspiration, adequate higher educational opportunities are to be provided so that the tribal students get motivated to participate in the mainstream of higher education system. Even those who have chosen higher education they face number of following; low economic condition, inadequate scholarship system, language barrier, difficult to get constitutional right, lack participation in the mainstream society.

Research Questions

The research questions of the present study are:

1. How the socio economic background is affecting the higher education of the tribal student.
2. What is the key participation of tribal student in institutional activities?

Objectives

1. To study the socio-economic background of the respondents.
2. To find out the participation of tribal students in institutional activities with specific to ST category.

Methodology

To articulate the above objective the present study would like to use both primary as well as secondary sources for data. For collecting primary data from the field Sambalpur University, Jyoti Vihar, Burla, a comprehensive questionnaire prepared keeping in mind the study's objectives. It has collected by personal interviews with presented to the age group 20-29 years. Basically, the primary data collected on the facility & their participate, demographic information of the student (age, gender, literacy level, community background (tribal), scholarship, reservation and extra-curricular activity availability in higher education). To enrich the present work, secondary work also collected from different sources like Administrative Office, different books, journals. It falls under the descriptive survey Category of education research. 30 respondents from Sambalpur University were selected for study. Data were analyzed by the percentage of respondents.

Result

In the present investigation, the study area is considered as Sambalpur University, Jyoti Vihar, Burla, Sambalpur District, Odisha. Through the study I have taken the sample 30 students from different discipline.

Table No-1 List of the selection of sample

Sl. No	Particular	Respondents	Percent
1	P.G	75	75
2	M.PHIL	25	25
3	Total	100	100

(Field Work -2017)

Note- P.G-Post Graduate, M.Phil-Master of Philosophy

In the above table mention that maximum 75 percent sample were chosen on the basis of stratified random sampling and those who belong from post graduate students from different discipline. There were 25 percent of sample who belong from M.Phil scholar.

Sex Composition

Sex is another important indicator of the research work. I have divided into male and female students from the university.

Table No-2 List of Sex composition of the respondents

Sl. No	Particular	Respondents	Percent
1	Male	50	50
2	Female	50	50
3	Total	100	100

(Field Work -2017)

The table shows that the total male students constitute 50 (50 percent) and female students are 50 (50 percent) out of 100 student.

Age Composition

Age plays an important role in determining the interest towards doing jobs. I have taken interviews from 100 respondents. The age group have taken at the age 20 to 27.

Table No-3List of Respondents of Age Composition

Sl. No	Particular	Respondents	Percent
1	20-23	50	50
2	23-26	40	40
3	26-29	10	10
4	Total	100	100

(Field Work -2017)

In the above table shows that age group of selected university that 50 percent of 20-23 years of P.G students. The age group 23-26 years of P.G students were 40 percent. The next age group who 25-27 years of the students Sambalpur University were 10 percent that belongs M.Phil Scholars. The highest number of students were taken from at the age group of 20-23 years. But in the age group 26-29 is low.

Religion

Table No-4 List of Religion wise respondents

Sl. No	Particular	Respondents	Percent
1	Hindu	50	50
2	Christian	50	50
3	Total	100	100

(Field Work -2017)

In the table shows that the percent of Hindu is 50 percent and Christian is 50 percent. The 50 percent tribal students converted into Christian religion due to uplift their educational status and they belong from Sundargarh district of Odisha.

Income distribution of sample tribal student's family

Income is the key indicator to educational mobility in the society. It has important challenges to human development. The study have taken income distribution of tribal student's family that the following;

Table No-5 List of income distribution of the respondents

Sl. No	Particular	Respondents	Percent
1	Below Rs.50,000	27	27
2	50,000-1,00,000	23	23
3	1,00,000-1,50,000	33	33
4	Above 1,50,000	17	16
5	Total	100	100

(Field Work -2017)

The above table shows that 33 percent of parental annual income of the tribal students. This is highest percent which is 1, 00,000-1, 50,000 rupees. The second highest parental income group students are 26.66 percent which is below 50, 000. Other 23 percent students belong to 1, 00,000-1, 50,000 income group family. Rest 17 percent is above 1, 50,000. From the analyses from the above table, maximum students belong from middle and poor class family. Therefore, they demanded monthly scholarship in the institution.

Participate in kind of academic and non-academic discussion

Student Participation is a judgment of a student's performance in a course outside of their assessments. Items that might be evaluated in student participation are engagement in class discussions, engagement in online discussions and student behaviour in group settings. Academic participation means the extent to which students participate or involve themselves in a class, course, etc(Collins English Dictionary).Non academic participation refer to the students also go on field trips, and join school sponsored clubs, sports teams and eat lunch together with the teachers.

Table No-6 List of the Participator in kind of academic and non-academic discussion

SL NO	Particular	Respondents	Percent
1	Academic participate	27	27
2	Non-academic participate	23	23
3	None	50	50
4	Total	100	100

(Field Work -2017)

In the above table shows that only 27 percent respondents were participate in the academic and 23 percent were participation in non-academic involvement. 50 percent of the students were participating neither academic nor non academic discussion. They said that they did not get to chance to participate in

different activities. It also argued that the organisation and definition of knowledge in the educational institution must be seen in terms of the distribution and nature of power in society as a whole. The dominant groups in society have the power to define what counts as knowledge in the educational system. Here, if institutional knowledge is based largely upon the knowledge of dominant groups, better education will automatically favour the children of the powerful and discriminate against those from lower strata. Bourdieu claims that a major role of the educational system is 'the social function of elimination. Finally, Bourdieu concludes that the underprivileged position of the lower classes is legitimated by educational failure (ibid, pp.215-217).

Different Participation of tribal student

Student participation in different category divided into five categories such as cultural participation, political participation, leadership participation, sport participation and community participation.

Table no-7 List of students Participation

Sl. No.	Particular	Respondents	Percent
1	Cultural participation	83 (Out of 100)	83
2	Political participation	33 (Out of 100)	33
3	Leadership participation	17 (Out of 100)	17
4	Sport participation	50 (Out of 100)	50
5	Community participation	100 (Out of 100)	100

(Field Work -2017)

In the above table represent the view of student participation in sometimes is high for community participation which is 100 percent because of all the tribal student of this university organized a S.T community. This group organized different cultural event with regard their culture. They did not want to assimilation with mainstream culture. 83 percent of respondents participated in different cultural events; dance, song, and drama etc of the institution. But they did not participate like Ganesh Pooja, Saraswati Pooja and Diwali etc, at that time they participated among their own culture and satisfied it. 50 percent of respondents involved in sport activities. The entire sport person was boys not girl. The girls were not allowed to participate due to less time. The girl hostel have been closed at 5.30 P.M so that they did not take participate to sport. 33 percent of respondents were participated in politic with athletic secretary other than president and secretary. 17 percent of respondents were participated in leadership position. Here, it arises a question, why tribal students are not participating in higher position in student politics and leadership? Because of the educational system is successful in maintaining the power of the dominant classes.

Extra-Activities of the University Students

From my field work in Sambalpur University that the participation of the tribal student in extra activities of educational institution which is inequality. Here, extra activities means to activities on sports, student discussion, social work etc. The respondents respond Strongly Agree, Agree, Somewhat Agree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree of their extra activities.

Table No-8 List of the Participator in Extra-Activities

Sl. No	Particular	Respondents	Percent
1	Strongly Agree	13	13
2	Agree	33	33
3	Somewhat Agree	17	17
4	Disagree	20	20
5	Strongly Disagree	17	17
6	Total	100	100

(Field Work -2017)

The study exposes 33 of respondent agreed to participate in social work and they taught freely to the primary and secondary students of Oram Para and School Para. 20 percent of the respondents disagree with extra activities work and 17 percent of the respondents both somewhat agree and strongly disagree with their extra activities. Finally, only 13 percent respondents said that they were fully engaged in different activities in the university label that are sports, cultural activities etc.

Special Position held by Tribal Student

There are some special positions held by the tribal students in the university level which are political leader, community leader, department (G.S/C.S), hostel (G.S/C.S).

Table no-9 List of students held special position

Sl. No.	Particular	Respondents	Percent
1	Political leader	17	17
2	Community leader	33	33
3	Department (G.S/C.S)	27	27
4	Hostel (G.S/C.S)	23	23
5	Total	100	100

(Field Work -2017)

Note: G.S-General Secretary, C.S-Cultural Secretary

The special position of respondents divided into four categories. The above table shows that 33.33 percent respondent held the community leader. 27 And 23 percent held departmental and hostel seminar

secretary and cultural secretary. 17 percent of respondent viewed that they participated in political leader but not higher post like president and secretary in university level.

Communicating with their friends in the university

Communication is important factor to communicate among the individual. The following respondents said their satisfied nature of communicating with their friends circle in the university.

Table No-10 List of respondents who communicating with their friends in the university

Sl. No.	Particular	Respondents	Percent
1	Satisfied	50	50
2	Not satisfied	50	50
3	Total	100	100

(Field Work -2017)

In the above table represented that 50 percent respondents are satisfied with their friends in relation to communicating by language or any other mode. Another 50 percent respondents are not satisfied with their friends because of the barrier of the language. Most of the tribal students of Sambalpur University speak Sadri language so that they faced difficult to communicating with others students.

Benefited the Tribal Students from University

The basic facilities in the university which provide to the students that are the following in the below table;

Table no-11 List of the respondents who get facility from university

Sl. No	Particular	Annual Scholarship	Stadium(Playground)	Hostel Environment	Library	Internet	Hospital
1	Satisfied	20	50	25	80	30	100
2	Not Satisfied	80	50	75	20	70	00
3	Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

(Field Work -2017)

In the above table shows that 80 of the respondents (tribal students) were not satisfied regarding financial facility from the institution. They got annual PRERANA post-matric scholarship from the state government. Amount of annual scholarship is 17.000 rupees that is little amount in higher education's student. And only 20 of the respondents satisfied to annual scholarship and told that it is better to get this amount rather than not get. RGNF was introduced in the year 2005-2006 with the objective to encourage the students belonging to ST community to pursuing higher education such as M.Phil and Ph.D by providing them financial assistance. University Grant Commission (UGC) took the responsibility to implement this

scheme on the behalf of Ministry of Tribal Affairs but nobody received this scholarship out of 8 M.Phil scholar have taken as the sample in the study.

50 students (respondents) replied that they satisfied indifferently because of it has a small playground which is not sufficient for playing and they demanded the Indoor playground. Other 50 students (respondents) kept view that they were not satisfied and these category students were girls. They could not get to chance to play. Similarly hostel environment were not so good condition, the maximum 75 students (respondents) were not satisfied their hostel facility. The bathroom facilities of all boys and girls hostel were bad condition. Only 25 students (respondents) satisfied their hostel facility.

The Library of Sambalpur University established in the year 1970, Prof. B. Behera Central Library aims at selecting, acquiring, storing, retrieving and disseminating information for the benefit of academic community of Sambalpur University. To achieve this aim the Library acquires books, national and international periodicals, reports and theses etc and also builds up information services for its users. Access to well library facility makes it a lot easier to complete the assignments. 80 students (respondents) were satisfied the library facility from the university. 20 students (respondents) were not satisfied and demanded digital library. In order to reduce dropout rate among ST students from universities, funds are allotted for purchase of books under a scheme but this facilities are not provide by Sambalpur University. The girl viewed that they were not allowed after 5.30 to the library so that it was very difficult problem for them. Computer labs are a must for completing assignments and research.

Sambalpur University aims at delivery of Government services and information to its various constituencies using powerful electronic means such as E-Governance model. We believe that use of Information Technology (IT) in Government should facilitate efficient, speedy, transparent and proactive processes for disseminating information to the public, businesses, employees and other agencies. It is a powerful medium for the Government to deliver services and perform day-to-day administration activities. Some obvious applications to find popular acceptances are shown graphically. All PG Departments, Hostels, peripheral establishments like DCE, Guesthouse and administrative buildings are covered with network including residential quarters. Internet is being given to all officers, faculties, research scholars, class-III staffs and students. The connections are being given who apply for internet and rooted through proper channel. All such users are being managed by e-Governance Nodal Centre through Cyberoam. Wireless Local Area Network (WLAN), Wi-Fi enabled to all Hostels (Boys/Girls), Administrative Building including PG Council Office. But 70 students (respondents) argued that they could not get proper internet in the digital era. They told that they could access internet two three days within the week that was not sufficient for them.

The institution provides free general medical facility. The University Health Centre was established in the year 1972. Now Dr. Netra Nanda Dora is working as Medical Officer on Full time Contractual basis since Dt. 01.04.2012. Sri P.C. Prusty, Pharmacist of the Health Centre remains over all charges of the Health Centre. 100 percent students (respondents) were satisfied by free access medical check up. The students told

that they check up their ill-health freely but medicine was not avail in the hospital, they have to purchase other private medical store.

Conclusion

From the above analysis, the study explores the socio, economic condition of tribal students in Sambalpur University. They still are lagging behind the participation in different activities e.g cultural participation, political participation, leadership participation, sport participation and community participation. The study found that maximum students satisfied their participation such as community leader, departmental and hostel seminar secretary and cultural secretary but not satisfied the whole student's union leader because they did not get chance. The majority of tribal students were not satisfied which the university provide such as financial assistant (scholarship), Hostel environment, playground, and internet facility and they demand monthly scholarship, clean hostel facility, playground for both boy and girl, and digital library with 24*7 internet facility.

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