# Holistic Analysis of Scheduled Tribe Students

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**Abstract.**

Education is one of the primary agents of transformation towards development. Education is an input not only for economic development of tribes but also for inner strength of the tribal communities helping them meeting new challenges of life. Mixed methodology helps analyzing the students in social, economic and political order. The major findings include the influence of peer, adaptability of students, participation roles, challenges faced, and other components. The suggestions would include the need in institution by working accordingly to the instructions of UGC Guidelines to help build an inclusive discrimination free learning environment.

**Keywords**: College students; Holistic analysis; Scheduled Tribe; UGC Guidelines; Higher Education; Motivation; Challenges of students, Adjustment problems; Constraints.

## 1. Introduction

India has a remarkable culture and is one of the most established and most noteworthy developments of the world. India is a home to a large variety of indigenous people. The Scheduled Tribe population represents one of the most economically impoverished and marginalized groups in India. With a population of more than 10.2 crores, India has the single largest tribal population in the world. This constitutes 8.6 per cent of the total population of the country (Census of India, 2011). Education is one of the primary agents of transformation towards development. Education is in fact, an input not only for economic development of tribes but also for inner strength of the tribal communities which helps them in meeting the new challenges of life. (KabitaKumariSahu, 2014)[1]

The students from this type of background move to cities in order to pursue their higher education. Some of the challenges that are faced by the students may not be known. It is important that the institution provides an inclusive environment for the tribal students so that they are empowered and achieve great heights.

## 2. Literature Review

The ecological principle use unifying themes of basic principle of holism (others include sustainability, diversity and equilibrium). The principle of holism requires that every event or phenomenon must be seen as part of a whole, and that it can be only understood with reference to every other part of the larger system.

The ecological perspective outlined is derived from the Green critique of the current social, economic and political order. (Jim Ife, 1992)[2]. In this study, the holistic analysis includes in analyzing the individual in the learning environment in social, economic and political factors that impact the individual.
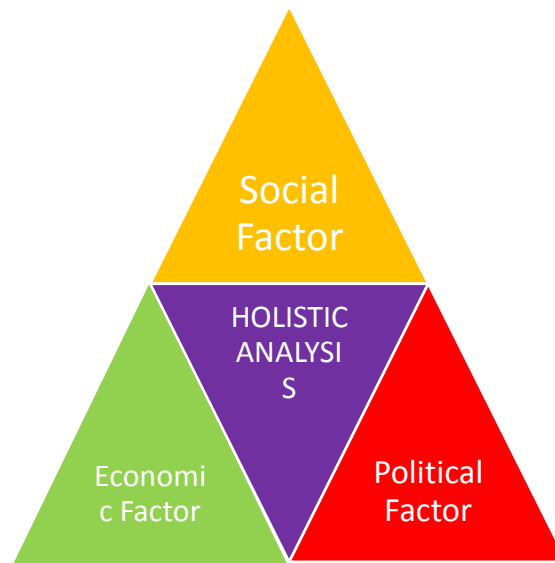
**Figure 1** – Representing the components of holistic approach in Ecological perspective

**Social factor:**

Social factor represents the set of influences through culture, subculture, social class, reference groups and family. (Gordon, 01 October 1947)[3]

In this study, Social factor deals in the way in which the students are able to adapt and perform well in the changing environment. This includes in analyzing the adjustment problems on factors including peer groups, Professors, environment and other related factors.

**Economic factor:**

Economic factors are likely to include: funding mechanisms and streams; business and enterprise directives; internal funding models; budgetary restrictions; and income generation targets (Keyte, 2012)[4]

In this study, Economic factors include the issues related with economic background or the way which individuals cope up with their economic needs. It also includes the intervention of the government policies and the measuring the accessibility in reaching the beneficiaries.

**Political factor:**

Political ecology is defined as "empirical, research-based explorations to explain linkages in the condition and change of social/environmental systems, with explicit consideration of relations of power". (Robbins, 2004)[5]

In this study, Political factors include the leadership roles undertaken by the individuals. It also includes the motivation factor in continuing their education and the inspiration. It also analysis the ability of the student to take decisions and participate in decision making process by voicing out the opinions.

3. **Research Methodology**

**3.1 Research Design:**

This study uses mixed methodology. It is defined as the type of research in which a researcher or team of researchers combine elements of qualitative and quantitative research approaches. The researcher used Explanatory Design (also known as Explanatory Sequential Design) is a two phase mixed method design. (Creswell, Plano Clark, et al, 2003)[6] The overall purpose of the design is that qualitative data helps explain or build upon initial quantitative results. The design starts with the collection and analysis of quantitative data. The first phase is followed by the subsequent collection and analysis of qualitative data. The second, qualitative phase of the study is designed so that so that it follows from (or connects to) the results of the first quantitative phase. The field of study was a college in Chennai, Tamil Nadu. Purposive sampling technique was used to collect the data.

**3.2 Data Analysis:**

The researcher used Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25 (IBM) for analyzing quantitative data. The researcher analyzed the qualitative data using methods of coding, iteration and observation. The data coding was done was using open coding and axial coding.

## 4. Findings and discussion

### 4.1 Socio-demographic profile of the respondents:

The socio-demographic details give the important characteristics of the population such as age, sex, socio-economic status and other components associated with it. Less than two third of the respondents were female and less than half were male. Less than two third of the respondents were from under graduation pursuing arts and science. Considering the socio economic status, Less than two third of the respondents belong to upper middle class with an overall monthly income of above Rs. 30,000. From the findings, it proves that the North east respondents have a higher level of socio-economic status than that of the South India respondents. (Demographic Status of Scheduled Tribes Population in India, 2014)[7]

Considering the geographic distribution, one fourth of the population native is Mizoram and the distribution of the Scheduled Tribes is high in the state of Mizoram which is similarly seen in the statistical reports of Mizoram having a population of 94.5% of tribes in the state. Likewise, vast majority of the respondents belong to North eastern part which also gives the similar result of Scheduled Tribes highly populated in the North eastern part of India according to the statistical reports. (Demographic Status of Scheduled Tribes Population in India, 2014)[7]

### 4.2 Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups:

The Dhebar Commission (1960) introducing the Particularly vulnerable tribal groups as a special category for primitive tribal groups in India is identified by three characteristics: (i) Pre- agricultural level of technology, (ii) Very low level of literacy (iii) Stagnant or declining population.

A considerable proportion of respondents belong to the PVTG category who are distributed in South India namely Paniyar, Konda Reddis, Irulas, Kurumans and Todas. The respondents belonging to the PVTG Category have a lower socio economic status compared with that of other tribal groups which also relates with that of the statistic report released by the Ministry of Tribal affairs. (Demographic Status of Scheduled Tribes Population in India, 2014)[7]

### 4.3 Adapting to the college environment:

Adjustment is the process of establishing satisfactory relationship between individual and his environment. According to (Shaffer, L.S., 1961)[8]"Adjustment is the process by which living organism maintain a balance between his needs and the circumstances that influence the satisfaction of these needs". If a person is well adjusted to his circumstances, then only he can survive without psychological stress resulting from maladjustment. The respondents had a change in their personality development in the environment in the college. This is expressed by means of feeling confident, supportive, encouraging, able to make friends, focused with the life goal, etc. Respondents have highlighted the personality development by highlighting "There is a great change in my personality…..The personality development that I have undergone helped to learn certain things that I have never learned in school". This proves the definition of "institution which contributes to the total educational and socialization process directed to the development of personality of an individual". (W., 1974)[9]

More than one third of the respondents feel comfortable in the environment which is supported by the qualitative study, which proves that the theory of the person who is able to adjust more will tend to have less psychological stress. (Shaffer, L.S., 1961)[8]

However, this is also proved as more than two third of the respondents are not able to adjust to the environment and not being comfortable in the new environment resulting in high rates of stress experienced by the respondents which is supported by the qualitative study highlighting, "I feel stressed about the responsibilities I have which makes me feel tired mentally".

### 4.4 Guidance given by Professors:

Educational environment includes relationships among and between administration, teachers, parents, students and the community that overall development through the academic demands of formal curricula and through exposure to teachers who emphasize academic achievement, motivation to learn and self-improvement (Newman, Otto, 1986)[10]

An absolute majority of the respondents have mentioned that they get proper guidance from the Professors which supports the findings of the qualitative study highlighting, "My professor for my department, organizes research club. I was one of the very few people who was a part of it. So it felt lucky by getting appreciated" which proves the concept of the relationship between the teachers and students which emphasizes the self-improvement and motivation to perform better. (Newman, Otto, 1986)[10]

A less than two third of the male respondents were able to make friends and this influence of peer also has an impact on the individual. The respondent quoted, "Sometimes because of my peer groups I would not submit my assignments on time….. I don't submit the assignments on time and when it's time to approach the Professors I hesitate", which represents the impact of negative influence of the reference group. The individual can be evaluated based on the reference group which proves the concept underlying the reference group. (Hyman, 1942)[11]

## 4.5 Challenges faced by respondents:

Tribal communities continue to lag behind the general population in education. The reasons for this can be categorized as external, internal, and socio-economic and psychological. External constraints are related to problems and difficulties at levels of policy, planning, implementation, and administration. Internal constraints refer to problems associated with the school system, content, curriculum, medium of instruction, pedagogy, academic supervision, monitoring, and teacher-related problems.

Some of the respondents had personal constraints such as prejudice on others that they will discriminate them. A considerable proportion of the respondent feel that their classmates discriminate them which is supported by the statement highlighted in the qualitative study, "In South India when you tell that you belong to a tribal caste the people will look down upon you. So I felt that it would make me feel separated if I reveal my caste to others. So I have hided the information to others and maintaining it as a secret". The personal constraints thus forms a negative attitude towards others which is also proved by the concept given under personal constraints. (Panigrahi, S.C. Menon, G.S. and Joshi v. , 1987)[12]

A considerable proportion of respondents have felt their classmates discriminating, ragging and teasing. This has also been supported through the qualitative study by highlighting, "I have faced discrimination just because of not professors, but because of the students…… one guy from in front of us, he turned around and he was like "ching chong ching chong", "It was hurtful, insulting, and so racist. It is also a common feeling that the tribal students have of being rejected".

Less than two third of respondents feel left out. The cultural difference plays a major role which is quoted by one of the respondent, "We follow matrilineal style. Basically, I'm the youngest, and the youngest has to look after the parents, be the one who gets the property and when people get married, the guy has to go to the girl. My college gave me a broader mind set to think about how I would want to live my life and how I would want to earn my living. But back at home. It's not easy to just leave my parents behind". The culture is one of the component that makes the respondents feel left out as the respondents come from a matrilineal society and when there is a change in the culture that has created an impact on the individuals which supports the definition given for subculture. (Gordon, 01 October 1947)[3]

## 4.6 Motivation level of the respondents:

The underlying causes for increase of motivation level and decrease in motivation level of the respondents. Increased motivation is seen in respondents with increased academic performance, participation in extra-curricular activities and academic achievements. While the cause of low level motivation includes, low socio economic status, feeling inferior and language barrier.

Less than half of the respondents feel motivated in which motivation being the key factor to participate in different activities including academics and extra-curricular. This is supported by the qualitative study by the respondent highlighting, "I am interested to study literature, and I want to study more and change the views of others as many think it is subject with vowels and grammar but I want to broaden my knowledge with my subject". This proves the motivation key factor definition which affect directly on the academic performance, other elements affect only through motivation. (Francis, A., Goheer, A., Haver-Dieter, R., Kaplan, A.D., Kerstetter, K., Kirk, A.L., 2004)[13]

The participation level in sports, NSS, NCC and club activities are higher in male respondents than of female respondents. However, the respondents have also been a part in nomination and taken responsibilities of being conveners for clubs and able to develop leadership skills which is quoted by the respondent, "I was able to develop my leadership skills. And then through my Professors support, I was able to develop my communication skills" which also proves the political ecology theory. (Robbins, 2004)[5]

The findings also reveal that the respondents which low socio economic status show low academic achievement motivation which varies accordingly of feeling confident, supportive and motivated. This proves the study that also represents similar finding of children with low socio economic status showing low academic achievement motivation. (PV, 2017)[14]

More than half of the respondents prepare their own notes for the exams and majority of the respondents are able to follow the curriculum especially with that of the under graduation. This is also supported by the quote highlighted from the qualitative study, "I was a part of the research club which my Professor motivated me to participate and

also appreciates my opinions" The academic achievement being an intrinsic motive is hence proved. Academic achievement motivation is used to mean the pupil's need or drive towards the achievement of success in academic work (Amalaha,Moen and Doyle, 1977)[15]

### 4.7 Coping strategy of the respondents:

Coping strategies involves in investing one's effort to solve the personal problems in order to minimize the stress. More than two third of the respondents coping strategy was spiritual well-being which had a positive effect on the thoughts and behavior. This is highlighted through the qualitative study, "I read the bible when I feel confused and I think that it has helped me to cope more with my challenges" which also proves the study of spirituality as a coping mechanism (Hadzic, 2011)[16]

### 4.8 Implementation based on UGC Guidelines:

According to the UGC Guidelines and findings in the college, the college does not have ST Students cell which should be implemented according to the UGC Guidelines. The population of ST Professors is also comparatively very less as 0.01% (one ST Professor) of ST professor are working in the college which should be 5% of SC/ST Professors. (UGC, 2018)[17]

### 4.9 Recommendations

The study will allow possible solutions to the research question to be presented and developed, and will also provide recommendations to the institutions in building an inclusive learning environment.

**Role of clubs:** The Anti-discrimination club should create awareness among the students on addressing fellow mates with worth and dignity. As it is difficult to monitor the unofficial meme pages of the college in social media, it is important to sensitize the students about treating each other with respect and safeguarding the student's dignity. The other clubs in the college should orient the students about the activities of the club and encourage effective participation of the students.

Organize cultural fest which serves as a common platform for the students to represent their culture and to educate others about the diverse culture of the students which makes the students more recognized and participative.

**Role of counselling center**: The counselling center should encourage student's participation in making use of the counselling center. Awareness workshops should be conducted at regular intervals in creating awareness of the importance of mental help. Virtual workshops should also be conducted and tele-counselling should be facilitated to the students.

**Role of institution:** The role of the institution would be to implement the UGC Guidelines of establishing the ST Student's cell. The ST Cell should comprise of regular meetings, awareness programs, and all other information regarding the scholarship can be posted in the cell. The ST cell should also serve as an enquiry platform where students can put forth their enquiries in which necessary actions should be taken. In order to facilitate the services in online mode, a separate ST Cell enquiry box can be included in the college website, where students can post their queries online.

ST Professors should be appointed considering the population of ST students and also following the 5% reservation under the UGC guidelines. The institution should monitor the resident halls and bring in changes of the hall traditions creating a friendly environment among the students. Students should be encouraged to spend time in library by reading books. The library must invent new methods to sensitize the students about the importance of reading and developing one's knowledge.

**Role of Professors:** The Professors should orient the students about North eastern culture and also encourage the students to address and treat one and other with respect and dignity. The Professors should orient the students during the first orientation in order to sensitize the students about the seriousness of the addressing the fellow mates. Professors should also consider the language barrier with that of the North eastern students and be able to converse that they able to follow the curriculum.

**Role of Individuals**: Each individual should voice out and support each other if they feel any discomfort or discrimination against the fellow mates. Each individual should strive to create an inclusive environment which is friendly and bringing in sustainable development.

## 5. Implications on social work

The following aspects includes the various role of social work in this research. The implications also highlight the scope of this study.

**Facilitating roles:** The social worker should supervise the effective functioning of the institution and develop recommendations through proposals that can be facilitated to the college to create a better learning environment for all the students.

**Research:** There should be studies conducted to analyze the student's needs and assess the students at regular intervals. The web of hypothesis that is emerged in the study can be tested in the future which can also serve as a great scope for this study.

**Target-group centered activities:** The social work students in college can organize target centered activities in spreading awareness by collaborating with the clubs in the college and bringing effective outcomes.

**Conducting awareness campaigns**: The social work students can be a part in conducting awareness campaigns of educating the students about the diverse culture, preventing discrimination by treating each other with worth and dignity, etc.

**Monitoring roles:** The monitoring of quality of the services such as implementing the provisions can be an effective role of the social worker. Implementing of services such as online portal can be monitored for effective functioning.

**Mental help:** The social worker can mediate and encourage individuals who are in need of mental help. Many interactive activities and workshops can be conducted collaborating with the counselling center for its effective functioning in the institution.

## 6. Conclusion

Education being the base of development and the institution providing the education not only provides a degree but also creates a learning environment for the students especially that of Scheduled Tribe students who are less in population. The study reveals that most of the students are able to adapt and learn in the changing environment but there are still constraints that are existing either internally or externally. The external constraints can be solved in creating a friendly environment for the students which automatically removes the internal constraints. However, the internal constraints can be solved through counselling center and seeking mental help if needed. Participation should be encouraged among the Scheduled Tribe students which helps them to get motivated and have a good rapport with others. The institution should strive in creating an inclusive friendly learning environment. The role of the individual is the most important as the other fellow mates should encourage each other and voice out. Regular analysis should be done which creates a sustainable and Holistic development in the institution among the students who will excel and reach great heights.

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