

## **Abstract**

Tribal students in Higher Education (HE) face several pedagogical, social, and cognitive challenges that significantly influence their academic advancement. They also get support from peers, teachers, and institutions related to pedagogical, social, and cognitive support. This study explores the significant pedagogical, social, and cognitive challenges and supports tribal students face in their HE. The study also investigates various demographic factors associated with the pedagogical, social, and cognitive challenges and supports of tribal students in HE. Furthermore, the study examines the pedagogical, social, and cognitive supports that independently and collectively effect and predict overall challenges among tribal students in HE.

This study was a cross-sectional survey conducted among 531 tribal HE students who studied higher education (UG and PG). Data were randomly collected from colleges and universities in West Bengal. Data were collected by administering a Participant's demographic Profile, the 'Perceived Pedagogical, Social, and Cognitive Barriers Scale (PPSCB scale) and The Perceived Pedagogical, Social, and Cognitive Supports Scale (PPSCS Scale) constructed by Dr. L.L. Mohakud, A. Kisku, and S. Khan (2023). Collected data were analysed using parametric statistical techniques such as Pearson correlation, t-test, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), and regression analysis through SPSS.

The study findings revealed that most tribal students face pedagogical, social, and cognitive challenges in HE. The results also revealed that most tribal students are not supported by their peers, teachers, and institutions. Additionally, various demographic factors significantly influence pedagogical, social, and cognitive challenges among tribal HE students. Similarly, the demographic factors also influence the pedagogical, social, and cognitive support of tribal students in HE. The study also revealed the relationship between pedagogical, social, and cognitive challenges and pedagogical, social, and cognitive supports among tribal HE students. Finally, the study found the effect of pedagogical, social, and cognitive support on overall challenges among tribal HE students.