



Institutional Distinctiveness

PRSU situated in Chhattisgarh has a significant tribal population and this offers a unique opportunity for integrating historical wisdom and contemporary needs for sustainable development. Recognizing the inherent social, cultural, and economic capital residing within these diverse tribal communities, PRSU has embarked on a multi-faceted approach:

Documentation and Research of Indigenous Knowledge Systems:

The documentation of the rich indigenous knowledge systems of Chhattisgarh's tribal communities including the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) encompasses rigorous research aimed at facilitating tribal development, preserving invaluable tribal art and cultural heritage, providing critical inputs for evidence-based interventions, and building essential capacities to effectively bridge historical understandings with present-day needs. Additionally, acknowledging the dynamic evolution of medical anthropology and the increasing interdisciplinary engagement within the institution, several departments are involved in the exploration of ethnomedicine and ecological practices to integrate with the current needs and modern healthcare approaches.

Financial Empowerment and Inclusion Initiatives:

PRSU's commitment to tribal development extends to fostering financial literacy and inclusion through innovative, technology-driven projects. The

University is involved in four interdisciplinary Projects sponsored by the IIT Bhilai Innovation and Technology Foundation (IBITF) that directly targets specific beneficiaries including tribal youth, entrepreneurs, women and SHGs members. The “AI-Driven Financial Empowerment - FinTech for All project serves as a compelling example of this thrust in action to improve financial literacy and inclusion in tribal community and development of an AI-Based mobile application. The successful execution of 47 three-day Financial Literacy Workshops across 10 tribal-dominated districts, reaching over 3000 individuals, demonstrates a significant commitment to on-the-ground impact on financial management including income-expenditure, savings, borrowing, investment, insurance, banking and prevention of financial cyber fraud. These workshops aimed to empower the tribal community to manage their finances effectively, encouraging saving and investment as pathways to an improved standard of living. The positive impact of these workshops is evident in the continuous demand for similar programs in neighbouring areas. Other Fintech-based projects focusing on the traditional knowledge of medicinal plants and economic upliftment through their cultural heritage, showcase a multi-pronged approach to economic empowerment.

Promotion of Tribal Languages and Culture:

The university prioritizes studies on under-researched tribal languages of Chhattisgarh, seeking to uncover valuable insights into script and language evolution. This interdisciplinary academic endeavour investigates both the historical and contemporary forms of these languages, analyzing their similarities, diversity, and cognate relationships. Oral narratives and traditions of the regional tribes are being documented through collaborative research. Some of the departments of the university are also conducting annual

participatory fieldwork and linkages with governmental and non-governmental agencies to support the holistic development of these communities.

Community-Based Participatory Research:

PRSU has taken a step towards fostering responsibility and community engagement as Community Based Participatory Research (CBPR) Hub through a tripartite agreement with the State Planning Commission, Raipur and PRIA, positioning PRSU as a global hub. As part of the K4C Consortium, the University contributes to an international training initiative focused on building research capacities for academics and communities to collaboratively address UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The focus of the CBPR Hub is:

- The co-construction of knowledge and its application to the solution of community issues is linked to at least three of the UN SDGs (indigenous development, water governance, poverty and inequality, climate action, gender equality, and violence against women).
- Contribute to strengthening the trainees' employment and career opportunities
- Enhance the institutional capacity in CBPR at HEIs and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs)
- Generate contextually and culturally relevant learning materials in local languages, which will be accessible to students, academic researchers and other stakeholders

PRSU's National Resource Centre in Psychology under SWAYAM-ARPIT:

National Resource Centre (NRC) in Psychology, PRSU received recognition from the Ministry of Human Resource Development, New Delhi for its Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCS) developed under the Annual Refresher Program in Teaching (ARPIT) using the SWAYAM platform. A comprehensive 40-Module online refresher course, employing a four-quadrant approach, for in-service teachers was designed during for 2019–20 and 2020-21. This nationwide program garnered participation from educators across the country.

PRSU's Leadership in NEP 2020 Adoption:

PRSU has spearheaded the implementation of National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 in both the University and across the state of Chhattisgarh. Demonstrating its leadership, PRSU played a key role in implementation of NEP in the state. In addition to its role in the Task Force for the Implementation of NEP in Chhattisgarh, it also conducted “Train the Trainers Programme” for training the teachers from HEIs across the state at district/divisional levels to facilitate NEP implementation within their institutions.

In alignment with the NEP 2020, several initiatives have been taken by the University to facilitate smooth and effective introduction of various components into the education ecosystem like the development of interdisciplinary programs and courses that integrate knowledge from multiple disciplines have been developed. Students have the option of electives, enabling them to tailor education to their individual interests and career goals. The curriculum is being revised to enrich the academic disciplines by integrating the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) to connect modern knowledge with India’s rich intellectual heritage.

Conclusion:

PRSU through its research initiatives, community-based interventions, focus on financial inclusion and commitment to preserve tribal languages and culture demonstrates a deep understanding of the unique context of Chhattisgarh and its tribal communities. The interdisciplinary approach adopted by the University coupled with its collaborations with governmental and non-governmental organizations, positions it as a key institution in bridging historical wisdom with contemporary needs for sustainable and equitable development. The positive impact of fintech projects and establishment of the CBPR Hub underscores the University's success in translating its strategic priorities into tangible outcomes for the tribal communities of Chhattisgarh. Moving forward, continued commitment and expansion of these initiatives will further solidify PRSU's role as a leading institution in fostering tribal empowerment and the preservation of invaluable indigenous knowledge.