



Building Global Competence in Tribal Students: A Model from Telangana Tribal Welfare Residential Degree Colleges (TGTWRDCs)

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Abstract: Internationalisation in higher education drives global exchange of knowledge, sparks new thinking, while pushing inclusive progress. In Telangana, TGTWREIS plays a huge role in giving tribal students access to higher learning opportunities. This work offers a clear roadmap, so tribal youth can build real-world abilities. It draws from NEP 2020, UGC 2021 rules on global links, along with lessons seen overseas. Ideas include teaming up with foreign colleges, using digital tools for cross-border study, updating course content, improving faculty skills, and finding funding through grants. The paper assesses what is currently happening in these institutions. Yet it shows issues such as slow internet or difficulties with language. It suggests ways to include native perspectives in learning for indigenous students. For example, this approach blends beliefs into daily routines. Finally, the idea is to let tribal youth join the global knowledge scene. It raises their chances of landing a job while also growing abilities that help them stay ahead.

Keywords: Global Competence, Tribal Education, Inclusive Development, Virtual Internationalisation, Faculty Capacity Building

Introduction

Internationalisation of higher education means that people add world links, cultural mixes, and broad views into the goals, tasks, and ways of teaching in colleges and universities. These efforts include moves for students and teachers, joint work on research across borders, shared courses, and ways to bring world views into what people study. Across the world, many see this as a main way to ready students for a world that connects everywhere. It brings new ideas. It raises the standing of schools (Deardorff, 2020; European Commission, 2023). India's

NEP 2020 puts a lot of weight on building colleges that compete on the world stage and link up with places abroad (Banks, 2017).

The policy asks for ties with other schools, new branches overseas, swaps for students, and updates to courses that match world standards. The Government of Telangana adds to these goals for the nation. It starts projects to make higher education open to those in need. TGTWREIS shows what one network can do. The group works hard to give quality education to students from tribes. For students in tribes or villages, world links offer a chance to change

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lives and build work paths. Such links can close divides in money and status. They open jobs around the world. They build skills to mix with other cultures. Schools for tribal welfare can add trips abroad, real or online. That raises hope in students. It lifts their aims. It sharpens skills for life as a world citizen. Yet chances like these need changes to fit the ways of life, words, and money matters in tribal groups. This paper sets out a plan. The plan smartly uses world links. It helps students from tribes in Telangana gain skills for the wider world.

Context and Need

Telangana has a significant tribal population of about 9% (31.78 lakh as per the census 2011) associated with remote tribal areas. To cater quality education to students coming from such a background, a robust network of residential schools and degree colleges under TGTWREIS is present. Over the past decades, society has made notable progress in improving access to quality education for first-generation learners from remote tribal areas. Many students from these institutions have entered premier national institutions, proving the effectiveness of this model. However, their exposure to international academic and cultural contexts remains minimal. This gap stems from several structural and systemic challenges (Government of India, 2020). Firstly, there is limited awareness among the tribal students about the international platforms due to the digital divide. Secondly, the language barriers pose a challenge, since the students have their own tribal dialects. This poses a formidable challenge to engage them in the mainstream towards global learning resources. Lastly, there is a very minimal exposure to global issues, academic standards, and intercultural experience among tribal communities.

Amid these challenges, Telangana Tribal Welfare Residential Educational Institutions Society (TGTWREIS) is driving towards bridging these gaps. TGTWREIS caters education to students from Class I to V (mini

Gurukulams), VI to Intermediate (Schools and Junior colleges), Degree colleges (TGTWRDCs), special institutions like fine arts, law college, and armed preparatory colleges have also been introduced to cater for the education as per the modern demands.

To beat back these deep-rooted and widespread hurdles, TGTWREIS starts to build links to the world beyond. The Government of Telangana supports these efforts. Key steps took shape in the TGTWRDCs. The first step came with hiring full-time teachers through TREIRB in 2019 and 2024. Good teachers open doors. Even with the hurdles in place, a real chance waits. World links can offer tribal students fresh routes to sharpen skills, share knowledge across borders, and join talks on the world stage. Online moves, web classes, talks from outsiders, and ties to universities abroad make world views open to everyone. Travel stays out of the picture. People can add world views to what students already study. That builds sharp thought, better talk, and ways to mix across cultures. The change goes beyond dreams. Tribal students must make their way in a world of work and ideas that shifts fast. What we need right now comes down to one thing: a well-planned, culture-aware, and wide-reaching approach. The approach weaves world links into the heart of higher schools for tribal welfare. The approach prepares young people from tribal background to join the world. All the while, it keeps their roots and traditional ways intact.

Strategies/Models for Internationalisation in TGTWRDCs

Under the visionary framework of ‘Telangana Rising 2047,’ the state has consistently focused on transforming education into a powerful instrument of empowerment (Zacharia, 2020). TGTWREIS stands at the forefront of this transformation, demonstrating how inclusive institutions can play a global role. Recognising that internationalisation is not a distant

aspiration but an achievable reality, the Society has initiated multiple programmes and partnerships aimed at building curricula that raise global awareness, cross-cultural understanding, and academic excellence among tribal students.

Our strategy is structured across four interlinked pillars: academic collaborations, virtual Internationalisation, faculty capacity building, and scholarship pathways.

1. Academic Collaborations

To give our students and faculty meaningful exposure to global knowledge ecosystems, TGTWREIS has embarked on an ambitious plan to forge strategic partnerships with universities. Under this initiative, the Society is entering into formal Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with reputed higher education institutions, which are globally recognised for their inclusive education models. To understand the current trends in higher education, events like the Indi-Global Education Fest and academic forums like the elets FutureEd summit have been attended by the officers of TGTWREIS (Telangana Academy for Skill and Knowledge, 2024).

These collaborations are designed to create structured pathways for academic mobility, including Student exchange programmes that allow learners to attend short-term courses in premier educational institutions like IIT Bombay and University of Hyderabad under the INSA-NASI-IASc summer research fellowship.

Exposure visits to the students to the educational and research institutions like TIFR Hyderabad, CCMB Hyderabad, and IICT Hyderabad. These exposure visits were conducted through an organisation called Vigyanshaala She for STEM Programme. Faculty development programmes (FDPs) were organised to enrich pedagogical methods and curriculum design. FDPs and induction

programmes for the faculty have been organised under UGC-MMTTC to promote and align with NEP 2020. These collaborations are being positioned as “bridges of opportunity” for first-generation learners, allowing them to step into global spaces with confidence and competence.

2. Virtual Internationalisation

Recognising that not every global learning experience requires physical mobility, TGTWREIS has also prioritised virtual internationalisation as a cost-effective and scalable model. Through structured integration of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) from platforms like SWAYAM. Further, our students are gaining access to world-class learning resources while remaining rooted in their communities through skill development programmes from TASK (Telangana Tribal Welfare Residential Educational Institutions Society, 2024). All the degree colleges are registered under TASK to facilitate the learning process of the students as per the current demand of industry and academia.

At the college level, online workshops and webinars from across the nation now take place. These events link students to the wider world. Consider TGTWRDC (W) Khammam for a moment. The college held a two-day online seminar on Vedic microbiology and science in the Vedas. That event belonged to Indian knowledge systems. Students came to see how ancient Vedic writings link up with small living things and the workings of the body, links that hint at bigger ideas. Links to Indian knowledge systems stretch further. Moves to bring money sense to TGTWRDC students happened as well. Over 8000 students took in pointers on money matters and steps to fit into the wider financial scene. The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) ran the online sessions. The young audience got hold of ideas on managing funds, drawing up budgets, dodging debt pitfalls, and kicking off simple investments. Lessons at the ground level, like those

that hand students the courage to walk into the proper financial setup. They keep clear of dodgy or tough loan sources. The Government of Telangana stands behind other moves of this sort. An RTI awareness week played out at 22-degree colleges. It covered 5th to 12th October 2025. TGCHÉ pitched in with the planning. The week set out to get the RTI Act 2005 known far and wide. It nudged the young toward roles in community matters and calls for honest practices.

These events open doors for TGTWRDC students to interact with far-off classmates in the moment. Know-how with digital means and plain speech builds up through those exchanges. The draw of it broadens school learning and cultural reach alike. Campuses hold them in place all the same. Moves like these fit the larger drive in Telangana toward digital power. They shape a learning world open to everyone, without walls.

3. Capacity building

The success of any internationalisation initiative depends on the strength and preparedness of the faculty. In line with this, TGTWREIS has initiated faculty capacity-building programmes to prepare teachers for delivering globally benchmarked education while maintaining cultural sensitivity and local relevance (Telangana Academy for Skill and Knowledge, 2024; UNESCO, 2018).

The capacity-building strategy includes:

- Training teachers in fresh teaching methods and digital means.
- Urging teachers to join world conferences, workshops, and swap programmes.
- Setting up joint research work with partners from abroad.
- Forming groups within TGTWREIS to keep teacher growth going strong.

This two-sided aim, one on world reach for teachers, the other on solid teaching for students, keeps the world push alive well past quick projects.

4. Building Ties with Schools Abroad, World Scholarships, and Ways to Move About

TGTWREIS looks past single efforts now. The group sets out to shape a strong base for world ties. Work goes on to plan and line up agreements, or MoUs, follow student trips abroad, handle joint efforts, and check what comes of them. Talks open up with embassies, world bodies like UNICEF, and NGOs known far and wide for work on schooling and open chances. STEM drives link students to top minds from all over. Those links let young people grasp the latest in STEM fields. The drives build know-how. They push students toward paths in STEM work.

This institutional strengthening ensures that internationalisation is not an isolated project, but an integral part of the TGTWREIS vision under ‘Telangana Rising 2047.’ To work in tandem with the current educational policies, NAAC accreditations for eighteen-degree colleges have been completed, achieving good grades, with the top being an A grade from TGTWRDC(W) Medak. TGTWRDCs are the first of their kind tribal welfare and residential colleges to be recognised under NAAC. Such initiatives not only facilitate global outreach and promote internationalisation but also give scope for improvement in the residential degree educational system.

To make these opportunities truly accessible, we are setting up mentorship and preparatory programmes to support students in preparing strong applications, developing language and communication skills, and gaining cultural orientation before their international experience. PG launchpad programme has been initiated across all 22 degree colleges to create awareness about the career options in

their field, and prepare them with communication skills to face the interview. A two-day national conference was organised on the “Role of AI in academic transformation (NCRAIAT-2025)” in collaboration with TGCHS at TGTWRDC (W) Shadnagar. This lays a futuristic roadmap for the integration of AI in the curriculum to enrich teaching learning ecosystem in higher education.

One key part of the plan is setting up clear chances for bright tribal learners to study abroad using overseas grants. TGTWREIS keeps linking pupils with worldwide funding options like joint programmes with allied schools, ICCR aid from the government of India, or Erasmus+ under EU support (UNESCO, 2021; UGC, 2021). These routes are not only about moving across borders—they are meant to help students grow and succeed in foreign classrooms.

TGTWREIS Initiatives

TGTWREIS has already made progress in areas like English language improvement, competitive exam preparation, and leadership training. Initiatives such as sending students to exposure visits within India (e.g., IITs, IIMs, and research labs) can be scaled to international levels. To help students graduate and successfully pursue either higher education or employment, several job melas have been organised at the degree colleges.

These models prioritise cultural preservation alongside international exposure, demonstrating a balanced approach relevant to tribal education in Telangana.

Over the past couple of years, there has been a remarkable transformation in integrating technology and AI into the everyday workplace of TGTWREIS. It has become a venue for digital transformation with the development of new web and mobile-based applications. The health monitoring app has been designed to monitor the well-being of the students on a

day-to-day basis. For degree colleges, an AI-based chatbot has been developed, which can facilitate the students or viewers with the information on admissions, courses, and the nearest tribal colleges available to them. For all the officers in TGTWREIS, a user-friendly inspection app has been designed to ease report-making during their visits to institutions. This app contains all the necessary items to be inspected by default and tagged with the geo coordinates of the institutions. Also, the e-tappal system was introduced, which holds accountability for each application that reaches the office of TGTWREIS. These initiatives are aimed at promoting inclusivity, upholding fairness, and maintaining accountability.

Conclusion

Internationalisation of higher education can change the paths of learning for young people from tribes. The change comes when leaders keep fairness and cultural fit in mind. Skills for the wider world matter for tribal students. The skills go beyond trips abroad. They build learning worlds that tie everyday life to chances far away. TGTWREIS mixes work with other schools, online ties, richer courses, and teacher training. The group can stand out as a leading example of world openness that welcomes all in India.

Young people from tribes gain the courage to join the knowledge economy of the world. That fits the goals of education in the nation. It matches aims for growth around the globe (Battiste, 2013). TGTWREIS model demonstrates that internationalisation is feasible when anchored in cultural relevance, digital accessibility, and institutional capacity building. These findings provide a framework that can be adopted by other state-run tribal and marginalised higher education institutions in India to align with NEP 2020, without replicating exclusionary globalisation practices. The plan laid out here offers a down-to-earth, place-aware path to bring the idea to life. Leaders in policy,

schools, and ties abroad must work together now. They turn the idea into something real.

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