

OPEN ACCESS

Manuscript ID:
EDU-2024-12047982

Volume: 12

Issue: 4

Month: September

Year: 2024

P-ISSN: 2320-2653

E-ISSN: 2582-1334

Received: 14.07.2024

Accepted: 20.08.2024

Published: 01.09.2024

Citation:

Behera, K., Bania, S., Sarangi, H., & Dash, R. (2024). Effect of Organisational Climate and type Autonomous Colleges on Academic Achievement of the Students. *Shanlax International Journal of Education*, 12(4), 70-80.

DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.34293/education.v12i4.7982>



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Effect of Organisational Climate and type of Autonomous Colleges on Academic Achievement of the Students

Kalpana Behera

IMPS College, India

 <https://orcid.org/0009-0007-2276-6452>

Shisira Bania

Rajendra University, India

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1689-2181>

Harihar Sarangi

G.M. University, India

 <https://orcid.org/0009-0005-0904-1786>

Ratnamanjari Dash

Kendrapara Autonomous College, India

 <https://orcid.org/0009-0007-4211-1808>

Abstract

This article examines the independent and interaction influence of organizational climate and the type of autonomous colleges on the academic performance of students. Organizational climate encompasses various elements such as leadership styles, communication patterns, and staff morale, collectively shaping the institutional environment. Autonomous colleges, with their capacity for innovation in curriculum design, pedagogical methods, and assessment practices, provide a unique context for this analysis. To explore the effect, researchers employed a quantitative approach, surveying 480 students across 12 colleges (both government and non-government) in Odisha, India. Questionnaires assessed student perceptions of organizational climate and academic achievement. Additionally, researchers collected student result sheets and surveyed college staff to gain a well-rounded perspective on the college climate. Data analysis using ANOVA and Scheffe tests identified significant effects. Major Findings of the study confirm that a positive organizational climate, regardless of college type, is associated with higher student academic achievement. Interestingly, students in government autonomous colleges achieved higher scores than those in non-government ones. The most significant finding, however, is the interaction effect. Students in government autonomous colleges with a strong learning environment achieved the highest scores, while those in non-government autonomous colleges with a weak environment achieved the lowest.

Keywords: Organisational Climate, Autonomous Colleges, Academic Achievement

Introduction

The quest for academic excellence in higher education is a complex symphony, where individual student talent plays the lead melody, but the supporting harmonies provided by the college environment are equally crucial in creating a masterpiece (Rania et al. 2014). Decades of research have established the learning environment as a powerful conductor, orchestrating a multitude of factors – from faculty-student interactions to institutional culture – that shape student outcomes (Kutsyuruba et al., 2015). A recent wave of research has highlighted the significance of organizational climate, the perceived quality of relationships and overall atmosphere within an institution, as a vital influence on student achievement (Zysberg & Schwabsky, 2021).

Building upon this foundation, this study delves deeper, examining the intricate interplay between organizational climate and another critical factor: college autonomy.

Autonomous colleges, distinct from their non-autonomous counterparts, hold the key to curriculum design and teaching methodologies ([Bania et al. 2021](#)). This autonomy empowers institutions to tailor their educational offerings to the specific needs of their region and student population, fostering a more dynamic and responsive learning environment ([Bania, 2021](#)). However, the potential impact of this autonomy on the interaction between organizational climate and student learning outcomes remains a fascinating, unexplored territory. Does a positive organizational climate, characterized by strong support systems, collaboration, and a sense of belonging, yield the same benefits for student success in both autonomous and non-autonomous colleges? Or do these seemingly independent factors interact in a way that differentially impacts student achievement?

By investigating this interaction effect, this study aims to illuminate the nuanced relationship between college structure and learning environment. Understanding how organizational climate interacts with the level of autonomy held by a college can provide invaluable insights for college administrators. These insights can inform the development of targeted strategies to cultivate a more effective learning environment, one that fosters a sense of community, intellectual stimulation, and ultimately, student success. Imagine an autonomous college with a vibrant and supportive climate – a place where students feel empowered, engaged, and challenged. Could this unique combination be the key to unlocking the full potential of student learning? The findings of this research not only contribute to the existing body of knowledge on student achievement but also hold significant practical implications for educational institutions. By identifying the specific conditions under which a positive organizational climate yields the greatest benefits for student learning in both autonomous and non-autonomous settings, colleges can tailor their approaches to create an optimal environment for academic success. This, in turn, can lead to a more

robust and competitive educational landscape, where all institutions, regardless of their autonomy status, have the tools and knowledge necessary to empower their students to achieve their full potential. Through this deeper understanding of the interplay between organizational climate and college autonomy, we can strive to create a symphony of educational excellence where every student can thrive.

The Gap and Rationale of the Study

The quest to understand what truly fosters student success in higher education has driven a wealth of research. Studies have explored the independent effects of organizational climate, the perceived quality of relationships and overall atmosphere within a college, and college autonomy, the freedom institutions have in curriculum design and teaching methods, on student achievement. However, a crucial gap exists in our understanding of how these factors interact with each other.

A considerable body of literature posits a strong, positive association, suggesting that a nurturing and supportive school environment significantly contributes to student success. Scholars such as [Khan \(1995\)](#), [Singh and Patel \(2012\)](#), [Cheema and Kitsantas \(2014\)](#), [Wang et al. \(2014\)](#), [Benbenishty et al. \(2016\)](#), [Jones and Shindler \(2016\)](#), [Sakiz \(2017\)](#), and are among those who champion this perspective. However, this view is not universally shared. A counter-narrative has emerged from studies indicating either a negligible ([Lawerence & Vimala, 2012](#)) or even negative correlation between these two variables ([Mathur & Khurana, 1996](#); [Bear et al., 2014](#); [Boulifa & Kaaouachi, 2014](#)). This divergence in findings underscores the complexity of the relationship and necessitates further investigation into the factors that mediate the influence of school climate on student academic achievement.

This research gap extends beyond the simple interaction of organizational climate and college autonomy. Existing studies often categorize autonomy as a binary variable (autonomous vs. non-autonomous). This present study delves deeper, recognizing that the specific nature of the autonomy granted to colleges might play a role. For example, perhaps colleges with greater control over budgetary decisions experience a different interaction effect

between climate and student achievement compared to those with more freedom in curriculum design. Additionally, prior research on these factors might have focused on specific student populations or educational contexts. By examining these factors in the context of Indian colleges, this study can contribute valuable insights into the unique dynamics at play within this particular educational landscape.

By addressing this research gap, this study aims to illuminate the intricate interplay between organizational climate and college autonomy. This knowledge will be instrumental in informing strategies to cultivate optimal college environments that maximize student learning and achievement.

Objectives of the Study

- To study the effect of organisational climate on academic achievement of the students.
- To study the effect of the type of autonomous colleges on academic achievement of students.
- To study the interaction effect of organisational climate and type of autonomous colleges on academic achievement of the students.

Hypotheses of the study

- There exists independent effect of organisational climate on academic achievement of students.
- There exists independent effect of the type of autonomous colleges on academic achievement of students.
- There exists interaction effect of organisational climate and type of autonomous colleges on academic achievement of students.

Research Methodology

To unveil the intricate dance between organizational climate, college autonomy, and student achievement, this study employed a quantitative approach. The research design centered on data collection from students attending colleges in Odisha, India.

Method

Descriptive survey method has been used in this study to obtain precise and pertinent information concerning the effect of organizational climate on academic achievement of pupils in the autonomous colleges of Odisha, India.

Population

In the present study, the investigators have covered the students of both Government and non-government autonomous degree colleges situated in the state of Odisha, India as the population of the study.

Sample and Sampling Technique

The researcher intended to collect data through questionnaires to find out the effect of organizational climate of the different 12 educational institutions from 480 students on various dimensions of organizational climate like infrastructure, teaching-learning materials, curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular activities, examinations system of 12 autonomous colleges. Again, the achievement test of the students has been collected from their result sheet of their respective colleges randomly selected from 12 colleges of both government and non-government autonomous colleges of Odisha, consisting 480 students, the details of which specified in table 1.

Data Collection Instruments

The study utilized a multi-pronged approach to data collection, gathering information from various sources to gain a comprehensive perspective.

Student Surveys: Self-reported questionnaires were administered to students to assess their perceptions of the organizational climate within their college. Additionally, these questionnaires captured data on student academic achievement.

Academic Records: To verify student-reported academic achievement data and ensure accuracy, official result sheets were obtained from the colleges.

Table 1 Design of the Study

Objectives	Nature of data	Sources of data	Tool	Sample	Data collection procedure	Analysis procedure
To study the effect of organizational climate on academic achievement of the students.	Information on organizational climate autonomous colleges in Odisha, Result sheet of students	Students	Questionnaire for students and result sheet of students	480 students	By administering questionnaire through personal contract and collection of marksheet of students	ANOVA & Scheffe
To study the effect of the type of autonomous colleges on academic achievement of students.	Information on organizational climate autonomous colleges in Odisha, Result sheet of students	Students	Questionnaire for students and result sheet of students	480 students	By administering questionnaire through personal contract and collection of marksheet of students	ANOVA & Scheffe
To study the interaction effect of organizational climate and type of autonomous colleges on academic achievement of the students.	Information on organizational climate autonomous colleges in Odisha, Result sheet of students	Students	Questionnaire for students and result sheet of students	480 students	By administering questionnaire through personal contract and collection of marksheet of students	ANOVA & Scheffe

Questionnaire for the Students

In order to develop the questionnaire for the students, the aspects on dimensions such as organization climate, academic achievement and creativity were identified and appropriate questions were developed in respect of each aspects.

Autonomous College Organisational Climate Description Questionnaire (ACOCDQ) for Students was developed by the investigators for measuring organisational climate of autonomous colleges of Odisha. The table here indicates in detail.

Table 2 Questionnaire meant for the Students on Organisational Climate

Statement	Statement / Dimension	Number of Questions	
		Initially framed	Finally framed
Organizational Climate	Infrastructure facilities	18	8
	Communication	5	3
	Library facilities	10	5
Academic Achievement	Learning environment	10	6
	Curricular activities	10	8
	Co-curricular activities	10	5
Creativity	Reflectiveness	04	2
	Spontaneity	04	2
	Risk taking	02	1
	Total	70	40

Reliability of the ACOCDQ

The reliability of the ACOCDQ was established on a group of 60 pupils selected randomly (systematic sampling) from amongst the 480 pupils on whom item analysis was done. However, the response - sheets of these teachers were, scored this time only for those 70 items which were, finally, selected after item-analysis. The total score and two half-scores (odd- even) were calculated for each teacher. The differences between the odd and even scores for each pupil were also calculated, On the basis of these split-half reliability was computed by using Rulon's formula. The reliability index was found to be .8576 and was considered to be sufficiently high for the purpose of this study.

Validity of the ACOCDQ

Content validity was established by asking the judges to report whether the item described

organisational climate of degree colleges. It was reported that the statements included in the scale had very small Q-values indicating consistency among the judges. On the basis of that it was concluded that the ACOCDQ had sufficiently high content validity.

Academic Achievement of the Students

The academic achievement of 480 students (240 students from Govt. Degree colleges and 240 students from Non-Govt. Degree colleges) were taken from the Final Degree Examination 2013. To assess the academic achievement the marks of the Final Degree Examination were collected from the office records of 6 Government and 6 Non-Government autonomous colleges with high and low organizational climate as provided by the Principals.

The table 3 indicates the information about achievement test item in detail.

Table 3 Academic Achievement of the Students of Autonomous Colleges taken for Study

Class & Examination	No. of Government (Auto) College	No. of Non-Govt. (Auto) College	No. of students taken from each college	Total No. of Students taken for study
+3 Final Degree	6	6	40	40x12=480
	Total 6+6=12			480

The table shows that result sheet of +3 Final Degree Examination were collected from both 6 Government and 6 non-Government autonomous colleges to know the academic achievement of students

Data Analysis

The collected data underwent rigorous statistical analysis using two way ANOVA and Scheffe Tests. To identify statistically significant relationships between organizational climate, college autonomy, and student achievement, a combination of techniques was employed:

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA): This method was used to determine if significant differences existed in student achievement based on college type (autonomous vs. non-autonomous) and organizational climate.

Scheffe Tests: Following a significant ANOVA result, post-hoc Scheffe tests were conducted to pinpoint specific group differences in student achievement across various combinations of college autonomy and organizational climate.

Result and Discussion

Effect of Type of Autonomous Colleges on Academic Achievement of Students

Collapsing organisational climate, Table 4 shows that there is significant independent effect of type of autonomous colleges on academic achievement of students ($F=61.22$; $df=476$; $p<0.01$). Therefore the null hypothesis stating that there exists no independent effect of type of autonomous colleges on academic achievement of students was rejected in favour of research hypothesis.

Table 4 Summary of ANOVA for Academic Achievement of Students studying in Government and Non-Government Autonomous Colleges with High and Low Organisational Climate (N=480)

Sources of Variance	Degree of Freedom (Df)	Sum of Squares (SS)	Mean Square (MS)	F-ratio
Types of autonomous colleges	1	68,831.3	68, 831.3	61.22**
Organisational Climate	1	215,560.63	215, 560.63	191.71**
Interaction	1	86,726.64	86,726.64	77.13**
Within	476	535,233.73	1,124.45	
Total	479	906352.3		

Df 1/476 at .05 level = 3.86; .01 level = 6.70; **Significant at .01 level

Table 5 Summary of the Mean Academic Achievement Scores of Students Studying in Government and Non-Government Autonomous Colleges (N=480)

Government Autonomous Colleges	Non-Government Autonomous Colleges
190.30	166.35

Further, as can be seen in Table 5 it was found out that the academic achievement of students studying in government autonomous colleges (M=190.30) was better than the academic achievement of students studying in non-government autonomous colleges (M=166.35). Therefore, the null hypothesis stating that there exists no difference between the academic achievement of students studying in government autonomous colleges and non-government autonomous colleges was rejected in favour of alternative hypothesis. Thus, the findings emerged from the analysis were (i) there exists significant independent effect of type of autonomous colleges on academic achievement of students and (ii) the academic achievement of students studying in government autonomous colleges was better than the academic achievement of students studying in non-government autonomous colleges.

Effect of Organisational Climate on Academic Achievement of the Students

Collapsing type of colleges, table 4 shows that there is significant independent effect of organisational climate on academic achievement of students (F=191.71; df=476; p<.01). So, the Null hypothesis stating that there exists no independent effect of organisational climate on academic achievement of students was rejected in favour of research hypothesis.

Table 6 Summary of the Mean Academic Achievement Scores of Students Studying in High Organisational Climate and Low Organisational Climate (N=480)

High Organisational Climate	Low Organisational Climate
199.52	157.14

Further, as can be seen in table 6, it was found out that the academic achievement scores of students with high organisational climate (M=199.52) was better than the academic achievement of students score with low organisational climate (M=155.13). Therefore, the null hypothesis stating that there exists no difference between the academic achievements of students score with high organisational climate is better than the academic achievement of students with low organisational climate was rejected in favour of research hypothesis. Thus, the findings emerged from the analysis were; (i) there exists significant independent effect of organisational climate on academic achievement of students and (ii) the academic achievement of students studying in high organisational climate was better than the academic achievement of students studying in low organisational climate.

Interaction Effect of Organisational Climate and Type of Autonomous Colleges on Academic Achievement of the Students

As it can be seen in table 4, it was found out that there was significant interaction effect of type of autonomous colleges and organisational climate on academic achievement of students (F=77.13; df=476; p<.01). Therefore, the null hypothesis stating that there exists no significant interaction effect of type of autonomous colleges and organisational climate

on academic achievement was rejected in favour of research hypothesis.

Further, table 7 showing inter-group comparisons of students studying in two different types of autonomous colleges such as government autonomous colleges and non-government autonomous colleges with high organisational climate and low organisational climate reveals that the academic achievement of students studying in government autonomous colleges with high organisational climate differed significantly from the academic achievement of students studying in government autonomous colleges with low organisational climate ($F=85.31$; $df=476$; $p<.01$) in favour of students studying in government autonomous colleges with high organisational climate. ($M=224.93 > m=155.67$).

Thus the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant difference between the academic achievement of students studying in government

autonomous colleges with high organisational climate and government autonomous colleges with low organisational climate was rejected in favour of research hypothesis.

Therefore, it was concluded that the academic achievement of students studying in government autonomous colleges with high organisational climate was better than the academic achievement of students studying in government autonomous colleges with low organisational climate.

Further Table 7 shows that the academic achievement of students studying in government autonomous colleges with high organisational climate differed significantly from the academic achievement of students studying in non-government autonomous colleges with high organisational climate ($F=45.95$; $df=476$; $p<.01$); in favour of students studying in government autonomous colleges with high organisational climate ($M=224.93 > M=174.1$).

Table 7 Summary of F-value for Intergroup Comparisons of Students on Academic Achievement using Scheffe Test (N=480)

Groups	Mean Score	F-ratio
Govt. autonomous colleges with high organisational climate (vs) Govt. autonomous colleges with low organisational climate	224.93 155.67	85.31**
Govt. autonomous colleges with high organisational climate (vs) Non-Govt. autonomous colleges with high organisational climate	224.93 174.1	45.95**
Govt. autonomous colleges with high organisational climate (vs) Non-Govt. autonomous colleges with low organisational climate	224.93 158.6	78.25**
Govt. autonomous colleges with low organisational climate (vs) Non-Govt. autonomous colleges with high organisational climate	155.67 174.1	6.05
Govt. autonomous colleges with low organisational climate (vs) Non-Govt. autonomous colleges with low organisational climate	155.67 158.6	0.16
Non-Govt. autonomous colleges with high organisational climate (vs) Non-Govt. autonomous colleges with low organisational climate	174.1 158.6	4.28

Df 1/476 at .05 level = 3.86; .01 level = 6.70; **Significant at .01 level

Therefore, the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant difference between the academic achievement of students studying in government autonomous colleges with high organisational climate and non-government autonomous colleges with high organisational climate was rejected in favour of research hypothesis.

Further, table 7 shows that the academic achievement of students studying in government

autonomous colleges with high organisational climate differed significantly from the academic achievement of students studying in non-government autonomous colleges with low organisational climate ($F=78.25$; $df=476$; $p<0.01$) in favour of students studying in government autonomous colleges with high organisational climate ($M=224.93 > M=158.6$). Therefore, the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant difference between the academic

achievement of students studying in government autonomous colleges with high organisational climate and non-government autonomous colleges with low organisational climate was rejected in favour of research hypothesis.

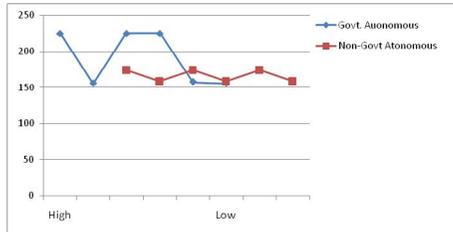


Figure 1 (Ref. Table 7): Interaction Effect of Types of Autonomous Colleges and Organisational Climate on Student's Academic Achievement

In addition to it, table 7 shows that the academic achievement of students studying in government autonomous colleges with low organisational climate differed significantly from the academic achievement of students studying in non-government autonomous colleges with high organisational climate ($F=6.05$; $df=476$; $p<.05$) in favour of students studying in non-government autonomous colleges with high organisational climate ($M=155.67 < m=174.1$). Thus the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant difference between the academic achievement of students studying in government autonomous colleges with low organisational climate and non-government autonomous colleges with high organisational climate was rejected in favour of research hypothesis. Therefore, it was concluded that the academic achievement of students studying in non-government autonomous colleges with high organisational climate was better than the academic achievement of students studying in government autonomous colleges with low organisational climate. Further, table 7 shows that the academic achievement of students studying in government autonomous colleges with low organisational climate did not differ significantly from the academic achievement of students studying in non-government autonomous colleges with low organisational climate ($F=0.16$; $df=476$; $p>.05$). Thus the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant difference between the academic achievement of students

studying in government autonomous colleges with low organisational climate and non-government autonomous colleges with low organisational climate was accepted and the research hypothesis was rejected. Therefore, it can be concluded that academic achievement of students studying in government autonomous colleges with low organisational climate and academic achievement of students studying in non-government autonomous colleges with low organisational climate were similar.

Further, it is observed from table 7 that the academic achievement of students studying in non-government autonomous colleges with high organisational climate differed significantly from the academic achievement of students studying in non-government autonomous colleges with low organisational climate ($F=4.28$; $df=476$; $p<.05$) in favour of students studying in non-government autonomous colleges with high organisational climate ($M=174.1 > 158.6$). Hence, the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant difference between the academic achievement of students studying in non-government autonomous colleges with high organisational climate and non-government autonomous colleges with low organisational climate was rejected in favour of research hypothesis. It is concluded that academic achievement of students studying in non-government autonomous colleges with high organisational climate is better than the academic achievement of students studying in non-government autonomous colleges with low organisational climate. Conclusion: Cultivating a Thriving Learning Environment

This study investigated the combined effects of organizational climate and college autonomy on student academic achievement. The findings confirm that a positive organizational climate, characterized by strong support systems, collaboration, and a sense of belonging, is associated with higher student achievement regardless of college type. Interestingly, students in government autonomous colleges achieved higher scores than those in non-government autonomous colleges. However, the most significant result lies in the interaction effect. Students in government autonomous colleges with a strong learning environment achieved the best

results, while those in non-government autonomous colleges with a weak environment achieved the lowest.

These findings highlight the crucial role of fostering a positive learning environment for student success. However, the advantage observed in government autonomous colleges with a strong climate necessitates further exploration. Future research could delve deeper into the specific aspects of organizational climate that contribute most to student achievement in these institutions. Additionally, investigating the factors that differentiate government and non-government autonomous colleges in terms of their learning environments could shed light on the reasons behind the observed disparity.

Overall, this study underscores the importance of a multifaceted approach to fostering student success in higher education. By prioritizing the cultivation of a positive organizational climate and strategically leveraging the autonomy granted to colleges, institutions can create a thriving learning environment that empowers students to achieve their full academic potential.

Avenues for Future Research

Future research could focus on conducting longitudinal studies to assess the long-term effects of organizational climate and college autonomy on student academic achievement. Exploring additional mediating and moderating variables, such as faculty development, socioeconomic factors, and technology integration, could offer deeper insights into how these elements influence academic outcomes. Comparative studies across different regions or countries would also provide valuable information on how cultural and policy differences affect these relationships. Examining specific forms of autonomy, like curriculum design and administrative freedom, and their distinct impacts on academic performance would offer a more nuanced understanding of what drives student success. Researchers could further expand the scope by investigating how organizational climate influences co-curricular and extracurricular activities, along with their contribution to holistic student development. Employing mixed-methods approaches that include both quantitative and

qualitative data, such as interviews or focus groups with students, faculty, and administrators, would provide a more comprehensive view of how these dynamics affect academic outcomes and student well-being.

Additionally, future studies could delve into the role of leadership in shaping organizational climate and how different leadership styles impact student achievement in autonomous colleges. Understanding the interplay between leadership and climate could reveal key behaviors that foster positive academic environments. Another critical avenue for research is examining the integration of technology in education and how it interacts with organizational climate and autonomy to influence learning outcomes. With the increasing reliance on digital tools, this area is particularly relevant for modern education. Finally, research could investigate the policy implications of these findings, focusing on how educational policies at various levels influence the relationship between organizational climate, autonomy, and academic performance. This could lead to valuable recommendations for policymakers aiming to enhance educational quality and student success.

Conclusion

The study highlights the significant role of organizational climate and college autonomy in influencing student academic achievement. The findings underscore that a positive organizational climate, characterized by supportive leadership, collaborative practices, and a conducive learning environment, directly contributes to enhanced academic performance. Additionally, college autonomy, particularly in areas such as curriculum design, administrative processes, and decision-making, empowers institutions to tailor educational experiences to the needs of their students, further promoting academic success.

The research suggests that fostering a balanced relationship between organizational climate and autonomy can lead to more effective educational outcomes. However, these dynamics are complex and influenced by various factors, including leadership styles, policy frameworks, and the integration of modern educational technologies. By creating supportive climates and granting meaningful

autonomy, educational institutions can optimize their environments to better serve students, ultimately improving their academic achievements and overall development. The study paves the way for future research to explore these relationships more deeply, with an emphasis on long-term impacts, policy implications, and cross-cultural comparisons.

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Author Details

Kalpana Behera, IMPS College, India, **Email ID:** shisirabania@gmail.com

Shisira Bania, Rajendra University, India

Harihar Sarangi, G.M. University, India

Ratnamanjari Dash, Kendrapara Autonomous College, India