CHAPTER -VII

SUMMARY
MAJOR FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
TITLE OF THE PROBLEM

"Higher General Education in the State of Orissa: The Role of Political Elites".

There is a growing feeling among the intelligentsia of the state that the higher educational system is deteriorating fast and the Political Elites are probably playing a dominant role in this process of degeneration. Besides, the educated class, social scientists, development planners and the Political Elite are equally concerned about the current state of our educational status— institutions, curriculum, teachers' roles, students' involvement etc. Against this background, the researcher undertook a study of the role of Political Elites in the system of Higher General Education in the state of Orissa keeping the following objectives in view:-

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

a) To identify and classify different categories of general higher education in the State of Orissa.
b) To identify and classify different categories of politicians associated in different activities of the general higher education colleges.

c) To analyse and ascertain the role of politicians in the general higher education system with respect to:

i) Foundation of the College;

ii) Students' admission in the College;

iii) Appointment of Staff in the College;

iv) Student Council Election.

v) Different functions held in the College;

vi) Examinations held in the College;

vii) Financial matter of the College.

On a priori consideration and based on general discussion with educationists, administrators, social scientists and some intelligentia and thinkers involved in the educational development process, we identified these distinct groups who have major roles to play in the educational development scene of the state. These groups are (a) the serving M.Ps M.L.A.s and the ex-MPs and Ex-MLAs, who had major contributions in the recent past, (b) the principals / Vice-principals of the colleges and (c) the elected presidents / Vice-presidents / Secretary of college unions.
Resource constaints (in respect of time, finance, manpower support) forced us to adopt a random sampling procedure and limit our sample size.

From the first group of Political Elites we drew a random sample of 50 units. In a similar fashion we sampled 50 colleges imparting Higher General Education in the state and obtained the responses of the principals / Vice-principals and the presidents / Vice-presidents / Secretaries of the sampled colleges. The responses of the sampled units, in well-designed questionnaires, provided, the basic material for tabulation, analysis and drawing conclusions.

SAMPLE! In the present study from the following sample the data were collected.

i) **Political Elites**

50(fifty) elites were interviewed through a pre-prepared interview schedule to get data related to the present study. The political elites were sitting M.Ps and Ex-M.P..s & M.L.As of different constituencies of the State of Orissa.

ii) **Heads of the Colleges**

50(fifty) Principals of different Government and private colleges from the State were interviewed for the purpose of the
present study. Where the Principal's post was laying vacant, the person who was functioning as principal of the institute was interviewed through pre-prepared interview schedule & data were collected.

(iii) President / Secretary of the College Unions

Either the President or the Secretary of the College Union was interviewed to collect data for the study. In total 50(fifty) Presidents / Secretaries were interviewed from different colleges of the state of Orissa.

Fifty colleges were randomly selected & data were collected from the same college from the principal and president/secretary who were interviewed for this purpose. Where the president /secretary were not in the chair due to completion of the session the vice-president or asst. secretary were interviewed to collect data.

A set of schedules (given in Appendix A,B,C)were designed in consultation with experts.

TOOLS

The following tools were used to collect data for the present study.
i) **Interview Schedule for the Political Elites**

The Interview schedule was developed in consultation with the experts in the field.

ii) **The interview schedule has two sections.**

The Section-A deals with the general information about the political elites and the Section-B deals with the different areas in which the political elites interfere in the college, i.e. foundation, administration etc. The interview schedule was prepared in simple English Language.

iii) **Interview schedule for the principal**

The interview schedule for the principals of different colleges was also developed in consultation with the experts. Section-A of the schedule intended to collect different information about the principal / principal-in-charge of the college. The Section-B of the interview schedule was the same as that for the political elites, but with different wordings for reply.

iv) **Interview Schedule for the presidents/secretaries of the college unions.**

The interview schedule used to collect data from the presidents/secretaries of the college union was also prepared in
consultation with the experts. It has two parts. The Section-A collects the general Bio-Data of the president / secretary, whereas the Section-B was just same as that of the political elites with different wordings to answer. The interview schedule was prepared in simple English Languages.

As has been stated earlier, the information collected in the above schedules were tabulated and analysed. Results of such analysis and the conclusions they lead to, have been presented in chapter-VI of this work. Here it will suffice to recapitulate some of the major findings of this study.

It is worthwhile to reiterate in this connection that in all spheres of social development, the Political Elites play a major role. However, in the context of the prevailing levels of social morality, the society in general and the intelligentsia in particular have serious reservations about their involvement in the developmental arena. We have tried to ascertain their views and also we have observed their role right from the stage of conception for establishing a higher educational institution through their foundation, selection of the disciplines and subjects choices, admission criteria, financial support, admission etc. to examinations, performance of students
and recruitment and placement services. Based on our observation, we are firmly of the view that these Political Elites render very critical and beneficial services and the evils generated in the process are more on account of the slackness in the system management and co-ordination. The local political leadership had taken imageriative initiatives in conceiving, organizing workers groups, pressurising decision makers and arranging initial finances in setting up new higher educational institutions specially in the non-Government sector. This has certainly given a big boost to the number of colleges that have come up in the interior area during the last decade and half.

Undoubtedly, this has created a number of problems for the state administration. However, to tide over the problems the state Government had taken a number of political short-sighted decisions like taking over private institutions, supporting private colleges through grants in-aid and teachers’ salaries and other benefits which have not solved the problems, but have aggravated them, even more by inducing local political aspirants to go in for more number of sub-standard institutions.
Our study, therefore, leads to the conclusion that stringent principles having bearing on quality should be laid down and rigorously applied and the future initiatives should be critically monitored in future, while encouraging higher educational institution development.

In this connection, it may be worth while to casually touch the present thinking of encouraging institutions to develop self financing, courses. Undoubtedly this is a promising development. But there is apprehension that this may go contrary to our avowed goal of growth with social justice through development. These are being introduced in already advanced centres and pupils from prosperous backgrounds are able to take advantage of such facilities. Sometime, they are falling in the clutches of unethical entrepreneurs who make a quick buck out of the large fees statutorily allowed to them.

In regard to Political Elites who influence higher education in the state we have analysed some of their characteristic in chapter-VI which have a bearing on the subject of our study.
MAJOR FINDINGS:
The Following are the major findings of the present study.

(i) 80% of the political elites were above 35 years of age.

(ii) 60% of the political elites had worked more than 10 years in the political field.

(iii) 96% of the principals were above 35 years of age.

(iv) All(100%) the presidents and secretaries of the college union were below 20 years of age.

(v) 78% of the presidents and the secretaries had no previous experience in the similar posts.

The political elites interfere or put pressure maximum in case of foundation of the college, college election and college administration as per the views of the principals and vice-principals, presidents and secretaries. These views were almost corroborated with the views of the political elites.

It is interesting to note that political interference which has usually negative connotations for education has not been glaringly brought out by our study. As we have stated earlier, Political Elites interference is least in pure academic areas like (i) curricular activities, (ii) examination and evaluation and (iii) admission of students. These aspects have bearing on the qualitative aspects of...
education. If they interfere in area like (I) foundation of the college, (ii) college election, (iii) administration, (iv) co-curricular activities and (v) finances, this does not, perhaps, pose such serious problems for higher education as these could easily be tackled by streamlining the guidelines and instructions issue from higher educational authorities. The local political leadership must have some private interest to work for the development of higher education and these interests are reflected in their deeper interference in areas like (i) college elections (ii) co-curricular activities, (iii) improving college financial status and to some extent in college administration. The colleges provide a support base for their political activities and so long as this interference does not affect the quality of education it does not pose serious problems for development.

The study has thrown light on a number of issues and suggest in-depth research on specific aspects of higher education in the state. Our recommendation touch two sides of the same coin viz (a) those arising from our studies and (b) those where more deeper investigations have become necessary in the light of our past experience in Higher General Education.

In the light of our findings, the following recommendations are made.
RECOMMENDATIONS:

The recommendations can be made in two directions (i) recommendations in the light of the findings and (ii) recommendations for further research.

RECOMMENDATIONS IN THE LIGHT OF THE FINDINGS:

In the light of the findings the following recommendations may be made.

(a) As it was found from the responses of the different respondents that the political elites were interfering in different aspects of the functioning of the college and utilizing the young presidents, secretaries of the college union for their personal or party interest, it is recommended that the young students should be made aware of, by the different agencies the effect of such interference in the educational system and be strongly advised to remain away from such interference. The political elites may also be requested through their party or Election Commission not to interfere in the functioning of the educational institutions.

(b) Higher level education administrators may advise and encourage the principals to strictly follow the instruction and guidelines issued by them from time to time and specially not
to act on advice and orders given to them by local politicians which are not in conformity with the instructions of higher education authorities.

(c) Regular recruitment boards should be constituted and appointments should be made strictly according to the recommendations of such boards.

(d) College union elections should be made a simple and guided affair. Every attention should be paid to make such elections inexpensive so that the contestants and their groups do not fall easy prey to outside politician's support.

(e) As far as possible only intellectuals who have made contributions in any field of social life may be invited to address student groups on special occasion like college Foundation Day, Valedictory Functions Sports Meets, Social Service Foundations etc.

(f) Government may lay down a streamlined Education Policy in conformity with the National Policy for guidance of all persons interested in the development of education.

(g) The Policy stated above should cover inter alia the conditions for taking over of private institutions, sanction of grants-in-aid, payment of teachers' salaries, admission and monthly fees limits etc. No doubt, guidelines in such areas do 

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exist. But the loop-holes in them and the weak links are being taken advantage of by Political Elites which should be plugged.

(h) Although this work does not claim to have gone very deep into the reservation policy in Higher Educational Institutions, the researcher is firmly of the view that Higher Educational Institutions should produce young intellectuals who would take over the future development process. The present system of reservation in faculty as well as in promotional posts, students admission, recruitment to middle level administrative posts like registrar, controller of examination, financial advisers may be partly responsible for deterioration of the higher educational system in the state.

(i) The researcher, therefore, suggests further study in the following areas:-

(i) Role of political Elites in secondary Education and in technical Education in the state of Orissa.

(ii) The system of self-financing courses sponsored by Higher Education Institutions.

(iii) Vocational Education and creation of employment after Higher School Education.

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