Chapter III
CHAPTER III
SOCIAL AND EDUCATIONAL MAPPING OF THE VILLAGES

The chapter describes the socio-demographic and educational profiles of the eight villages selected for the study. The villages are Bhanupur, Bhelpura, Chhatrapur and Betakata in Balasore district and Purunia, Belabahali, Anjar and Dangapani in Keonjher district. An attempt has been made to provide an overall social mapping of each village developed in consultation with the village community and also by personally verifying the map drawn by the community members. The chapter seeks to present the social context of schooling in terms of the location of the school and its access to different caste/tribe groups of the village. Further, it examines whether the location of the school in each of the village has any impact on the way children from different communities attend the school and whether it also affects the participation of the members of all social groups in the School Management Committee.

Bhanupur

Bhanupur village is situated in the Baliapal block of Balasore district. The total population of the village is 1,549, out of which the male and female population is 837 and 712 respectively. The village consists of 335 households comprising of different caste groups. Of the total households, 247 are from the intermediary peasant castes, 46 are from the Scheduled Castes, 37 are from the Other Backward Castes and five are from Brahmin communities. There is not even a single Scheduled Tribe household in the village.

The caste composition of the village reveals that, among the peasant castes, Khandayats, recognised as the state level Socio-Economically Backward Caste (SEBC), are the dominant caste\(^1\) in terms of the numerical strength as well as in terms of the possession of land in the village. However, the peasant castes also include castes such as

\(^1\) According to M.N. Srinivas, a caste is ‘dominant’ when it preponderates numerically over the other castes, when it also wields preponderant economic and political power, and when it enjoys high ritual status in the local caste hierarchy. The number of educated persons and the nature of high occupations people pursue in the caste are also two important elements of dominance (1992: 308). Thus, when a caste enjoys all the elements of dominance (such as numerical strength, economic and political power, high education and high ritual status) it may be said to dominant in a decisive way. Therefore, the notion of ‘dominant caste’ is used in the thesis to mean such castes which are numerically or economically, socially and politically dominant groups in respective villages.
Pradhan, Rout, Nayak, Jena, Biswal, Das and Patra within the village. The Scheduled Castes comprise of two different sub-castes such as Dhobi (washerman) and Keuta (fisherman). The Other Backward Castes include three different sub-castes such as Gopala (milkman), Bhandari (barber) and Kumbhara (potter).

The social mapping of the village presents a unique residential demarcation and segregation in terms of various caste groups, namely, Khandayat, Gopala, Bhandari, Kumbhara and Dhobi, Keuta caste groups (Map 3.1). This represents a clear picture of residential segregation in terms of the Varna model\(^2\) (Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras). Different caste groups live together within their clan as a ghetto. For instance, it is found that the so-called high caste (peasant caste) members try to maintain distance from the low (Dhobi, Keuta) caste members in terms of their residential arrangement. However, the changing social relationships in the village are captured by a respondent, "the social relations between different caste groups in terms of 'jajmani'\(^3\) are gradually waning".

It is found that the practice of untouchability is prevalent in different forms in the village. For instance, a villager noted that "although Dhobis are allowed to take water from the common tube well, they are not entitled to touch the tube well when a higher (Brahmin/peasant caste) member is taking water from it. If he/she unknowingly touches the tube well, then the higher (Brahmin/peasant) caste member empties the filled up water pot and refills the pot again especially if the water is for cooking purposes".

The predominant occupation of the villagers is agriculture and nearly all the members of the village largely depend upon cultivation as it provides a major source of livelihood for them. Further, there seems to be a close link between the caste and occupation. For instance, a majority of the peasant castes are farmers or tenants, a

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\(^2\) Varna is an all-India conceptual frame by which the Hindu society is supposedly divided into four categories, namely, Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras. Sometimes, there exists a misconception that the Varna and caste are one and the same. Caste is tied to locality but Varna functions on an all India basis. Moreover, Varna is a mere conceptual scheme for the Hindu society as a whole, while caste is a description of a real situation in the Hindu society.

\(^3\) Jajmani System is a system of traditional occupational obligations where the specialisation of occupation led to the exchange of services in the village community. For instance, Singh (1973) describes jajmani system as governed by relationship based on reciprocity in inter-caste relations in villages (p.186). Further, he pointed out that each caste has a role to play in the village community as a whole. The role consists of economic, social and moral functions.
majority of those who belong to Gopala caste are engaged in diary related petty business like making sweets, selling milk, curd, butter, ghee, those who belong to Kumbhara caste sell the earthen pots in the nearby market.

The land holding is a prime instrument for determining the social class in the village. The peasant castes occupy the major portion of land holdings whereas a majority of the Scheduled Caste members have no or negligible land in comparison to the other caste members. Apart from this, due to the rich natural resources and fresh water supply throughout the year helps to grow ground nut, cashew nut and paan⁴ (betel-vine) cultivation adds to the earning of the villagers.

The village primary school was established in the year 1985 and it is located in the centre of the village, which is inhabited by the peasant castes. The physical location of the school seems to have an effect on the social access of the school to the disadvantaged group members. According to one of the respondents, “the literacy rate of the village is good. Most of the members of the village have completed their primary or secondary level of education. But, the number of non-literate is comparatively more among the Scheduled Castes compared to the other castes”.

The school is housed in a pucca building, constructed with brick and concrete. There are three rooms for five classes (Class I to V) and an office. The classrooms are provided with a verandah and there is very little space for children to play. There is a tube well in front of the school where the children get drinking water and the school is fenced with wire and green plants. There are three teachers for five classes and all of them are men.

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⁴Paan or betel-vine is grown in a bamboo enclosure of about 6 feet covered on top and is called Paan baraj. Its size may vary between 3 to 16 decimals. The smallest paan baraj of 3 decimals would have from 700 to 1,300 vines which are planted in rows 2 feet from each other. Three times a year vine is buried in the ground after which new shoots emerge and it grows again. Plucking is done in every 15 days except in winter. A small paan baraj produces about 6,000 leaves every fortnight. As a cash crop it has a direct impact on the income of the household.
Map 3.1

Social Mapping of Bhanupur village

- General - yellow
- OBC - green
- SC - red

Symbols:
- Pond
- Well
- Temple
- Tube well
- School
- Yubak
- Sangh

Distances:
- Balsore 35 km

Legend:
- Agricultural land
- Janusuli
- Langeswar
- Panchupali
- Anatodi land
- 7 km
- 5 km

Balisapal
There are 216 children in the school, out of which 116 are boys and 100 girls. The social background of the children revealed that a majority of the boys and girls are from the peasant castes in the village. For instance, there are 139 children from the peasant castes out of which 71 are boys and 68 are girls. Similarly, there are 41 children from the Scheduled Castes out of which 22 are boys and 19 are girls; and 36 children from the Other Backward Castes out of which 23 are boys and 13 are girls. Although there are children from other backward castes and the Scheduled Castes, their number is comparatively less in comparison to the peasant castes. This may be because the number of peasant caste population is high in the village.

The first School Management Committee (SMC) in the village was formed in 1985 when the school was established. The present SMC, however, was formed in 2002. When the school was constructed, all the members of the village community worked together to run the school and they have contributed materials for construction like bamboo and straw as well as the physical labour for which they are not paid. It was in 1990, the funding came from the Government and the community has converted the kuccha building into a pucca building and those who worked for it were paid. At present, there are eight members in the SMC, out of which five are from the peasant castes; two are from the Scheduled Castes and one from the other backward castes.

**Bhelpura**

Bhelpura is adjacent to Bhanupur and it is also situated in the Baliapal block of the Balasore district. The total population of the village is 1,351, out of which the male population (695) is slightly higher than the female population (656). There are 297 households in the village - 170 belong to the peasant castes, 83 to the Scheduled Castes and 44 to the other backward castes.

The caste composition of the village gives a picture of diversity in terms of various castes and sub-castes. The peasant castes include various sub-castes like Jena, Bhuyan, Giri, Pradhan; the Scheduled Castes include Bar, Sethi, Mandal and the other backward castes include primarily Barik and Pagal (weavers) in the village. The village headman belongs to the Pradhan sub-caste which is a dominant caste in the village in
terms of numerical strength as well as ownership of land holdings. The headman is respected in the village as he occupies major portion of landholdings and is highly educated (as per his time). He is also considered as an influential person in the village.

Interestingly, till recently, the village social relationships were governed by the jajmani system and the barter system is prevalent. For instance, it is found that the village barber was paid annually in terms of crop for hair-cutting and other services at the time of marriage ceremonies and the funeral rites and rituals. Further, the barber used to visit the houses of the dominant caste members to offer services. Now, with the changing times, the barber has opened a modern hair-cut ‘saloon’ in the nearby market and accepts only money and not any kind of barter.

The practice of untouchability existed in various forms between the high caste and low caste members in the village. The social mapping of the village substantiates the view that there still exists some sort of social distance between various caste groups (Map 3.2). For example, the Scheduled Castes are separated from the main village by a road or by farm fields. In this context, Basudev Pradhan, a member of the village pointed out,

"Earlier, if a lower caste member had meal in the house of a higher caste member, he/she used to wash the plates by himself/herself. But, now-a-days, there are variations in this practice, like if the Scheduled Caste member is highly educated or in a lucrative job or living in a town, then he may not face this situation. However, his kith and kin in the village are not taken into consideration for this ‘special’ treatment”.

Further, he narrated an instance in which the other backward caste members questioned the traditional authority of the peasant caste members and boycotted the ceremonial participation with them.

"In a marriage ceremony in a peasant caste family of the village, the invitees from the other backward castes (Pagal caste) were told to pick up their own leaf plates, in which they had their feast. It caused a disturbance.

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5 The term Social distance refers to the perceived feelings of separation or distance between social groups.
in the whole caste group. After that incident, the entire Pagal caste community decided not to attend any ceremonial function performed in the houses of the high caste members although they are invited”.

The predominant occupation of the villagers is agriculture and almost all the people depend upon cultivation as a major source of livelihood. In this village also, land holdings determine the class position of a villager within the village. The villagers are engaged in various occupations such as petty businesses like grocery shops, betel shop, tailoring, fishing, poultry etc.

There is a nodal upper primary school (Classes I – VII), which was established in the year 1971 in the village. It is run in its own pucca building. There are six rooms in the building which are used as classrooms and a room is used as an office. The classrooms are provided with a verandah and there is very little space for children to play. There is no toilet facility in the school. However, there is a tube well in front of the school for drinking water facility for the children. The school is well fenced with wire and green plants.

The school profile reveals that there are only three teachers for seven classes in six classrooms. So at any given point of time, three classrooms are without a teacher. There are 202 students in the school out of which the number of boys (111) is slightly higher than the number of girls (91). During the course of investigation it is found that the caste composition of the villagers is reflected in the caste composition of children in the school. In other words, the number of children from peasant castes is more than the other backward castes and the Scheduled Castes. For example, there are 118 children (62 boys and 56 girls) from the peasant castes. But there are only 49 children (28 boys and 21 girls) from the Other Backward Castes which is less than half of the peasant caste children. Moreover, there are 35 Scheduled Castes children (21 boys and 14 girls) which is little less than one-third of the peasant caste children.
The first School Management Committee, which was earlier referred to as the Village Education Committee, was formed in 1971. When the school was first constructed, the then village headman donated land and other members of the village have contributed materials and labour for the construction of the building. The village headman was the Chairperson of the SMC till 2000. He was in the charge of the disciplinary activities as well as the proper management of cultural activities within the school premises.

However, the recent SMC was formed in 2002 when the parents of the school going children nominated the members and the Chairperson in the first guardian meeting. But the parents of the school going children were not satisfied when they came to know that the post of the Chairperson was reserved for the Scheduled Castes. The village headman tried to resolve the problem by convincing the protesting village members and made the nomination of SC member as a Chairperson. Though there is a Chairperson, it is revealed during the researcher’s fieldwork that most important decisions of the SMC are taken by the village headman and not by the Chairperson. For instance, in the words of a respondent,

"The major problem in the school is teacher inadequacy. The village headman tried to solve the problem by appointing an ad-hoc teacher from the village. The salary of the teacher comes from the earnings out of the village pond and the tenancy of the school land which is given on lease annually".

As the village headman contributed land for the school building and provided service for a long time, now his son is inducted into the SMC as a volunteer member. There are eight members in the SMC, out of which three are from Scheduled Castes, three are from the peasant castes and two are from the other backward castes.

Chhatrapur

Chhatrapur village is situated in the Nilgiri, the most educationally backward block in Balasore district. The total population of the village is 1, 887 - 953 males and 934
females. It shows that the female population is slightly less than their male counterparts. The social composition of the village shows that there are all kinds of social groups such as Scheduled Tribes, Scheduled Castes, Other Backward Castes and peasant castes. There is only Santal tribe among the Scheduled Tribes and there is only Pana sub-caste from among the Scheduled Castes. Among the Other Backward Castes, there is only Mahakud sub-caste. The peasant castes comprise of various local sub-castes (State registered Socio-economically Backward Castes) like Pradhan, Nayak, Mohanty, Mohapatra, Jena and Das and each sub-caste lives within its clan habitat.

The village consists of 424 households out of which 341 are from the peasant caste households, 49 from the Scheduled Tribe households, 29 from the Other Backward Caste households and 5 from the Scheduled Caste households. The peasant castes are the dominant castes in the village in terms of their numerical strength and major portion of land holdings, and are comparatively more educated in the village.

It is observed that, in Chhatrapur also, the practice of untouchability is said to be prevalent in different forms. For example, Rabindra Das, from the peasant caste community, notes that “in the village meeting, the members of different caste groups sit by the side of their own caste members, preferably with their own clan members”.

The social mapping of the village presented in Map 3.3 which shows clearly the residential segregation in the village. One can see that the village is broadly divided into two parts by the village road. The Scheduled Tribes and the Scheduled Castes people live one side of the village whereas on the other side of the village is primarily dominated by the peasant castes and other backward castes. Apart from this, each caste group lives within its clan communities.

The predominant occupation of the village community is agriculture and almost all the people mainly depend on cultivation as it provides a major source of livelihood for

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6 It is not easy to give a clear-cut distinction between a caste and a sub-caste as both have similar attributes. Iravati Karve (1958:125) has accepted the view that sub-castes are either the fissioned divisions of castes or they have an independent origin. She pointed out that the difference in religious practices and techniques reflects the separate existence and history of these entities than serves as cause for their separation from the larger units. However, a sub-caste can be conceptualised as a sub-division of a caste.

7 There are no native words which could distinguish the sociological categories such as clan, lineage and family. The terms like ‘kula’ and ‘vansha’ are used more or less as synonyms to refer to various kinds of kinship groups larger than the household who are believed to come from the common ancestral descent.
them. Apart from this, the villagers are engaged in various small-scale occupations like petty-businesses like grocery shop, betel shop, tailoring, fishing, poultry, etc. In this village also, there seems to be a direct link between the caste and the occupation pursued by the villagers. During the course of investigation, it was found that the land distribution is primarily confined to the peasant castes. Only a few of the other backward castes and Scheduled Castes and Tribes have land to provide a source of livelihood for them. For instance, most of the Mahakud sub-caste members engage themselves in various petty-businesses like selling the milk products, running the small restaurants/dhabas in the nearby market. In this context, a member of the village community, Ajay Mahakud, notes his experience, “If a lower caste (like Pana caste) members open a small restaurant in the nearby market, nobody will come to take food as most of the people in the locality know the caste background of the particular person who runs the shop, they will prefer to take food from other restaurant where the owner as well as the workers are either from peasant caste or from other backward castes”. Further, while the peasant castes occupy a major portion of the landholdings, the Scheduled Tribe and Scheduled Caste families are mainly landless agricultural/unskilled labourers. The tribal members of the village largely depend upon forest for their livelihood and live by the side of the forest.

There is a primary and an upper primary school in the village. The primary school was established in the year 1965. It is run in its own pucca building. There are five rooms in the building, out of which four rooms are used for classrooms and one as an office room. The classrooms are provided with a verandah and there is sufficient space for the children to play. There is drinking water as well as toilet facility in the school. There are three teachers for five classes in the primary school.

Interestingly, both the primary as well as upper primary schools in the village are located within the dominant caste (the peasant caste) locality and the social distance from the school for various caste groups varies in accordance with the caste hierarchy. There are a total of 213 children in the primary school, out of which 114 are boys and 99 are girls. The number of children from the peasant castes is more in comparison to those from the other backward castes and Scheduled Castes/Tribes.
In all, there are 158 children (83 boys and 75 girls) from the peasant castes; 22 children (13 boys and 9 girls) from the Scheduled Tribes, 20 children (12 boys and 8 girls) from the Other Backward Castes, 13 children (6 boys and 7 girls) from the Scheduled Castes. The present SMC was formed in 2002 and there are eight members in all, three are from the Scheduled Tribes, two are from the Other Backward Castes and four are from the peasant castes.

Betakata

Betakata village is three kilometers away from the main road to Nilgiri block (Map 3.4). There is a morum road connecting the village with the main road leading to the town. The village is surrounded by hills and the total population of the village is 320. The sex ratio is interestingly different from other villages. For instance, there are more females (165) than the males (155) in the village. There are 58 households in the village and is inhabited only by the Santals. The houses are scattered throughout the village.

Though all the members of the village are from the Santal tribe, there are various clans like Patra, Madhei, Biswal, Kusumalia, Paniadia, Khandei and Murmu within these 58 households. Interestingly, the members of a particular clan live together maintaining some distance from the members of other clans. The basis of such segregation is found to be their myths and ritual status.

The main occupation of the village is not agriculture as most of the people do not possess land of their own. Those who have land also do not prefer cultivation due to the hilly terrain. Therefore, all members of the village depend upon the forest for their livelihood. They go to the forest to collect leaves (green sala leaves for thunga and khali construction and dry leaves for fuel), fruits (like mango, jackfruit, jammu, kusum, etc.) and wastage timber. They sell it in the nearby market and purchase their day-to-day provisions. Apart from this, they also produce Handia (local wine) from the water rice, and Mahuli, from the Mahul trees and sell them.
Interestingly, the traditional joint family structure is a rare phenomenon and multiple nuclear families exist in the village. When a villager was asked about this, he replied:

“A son gives his earnings to his father unless and until he is married but when he gets married, he gives his earnings to his wife and within one or two years they separate themselves from their father”.

The literacy map of the village is very dismal. Even today there are very few people who have completed matriculation. There is a primary school in the village which was established in the year 1995. The school is situated in the midst of the village and it has its own building, which is made of bricks and concrete with asbestos roof. There are three rooms in the building which are used as classrooms and there is no separate office room. The classrooms are provided with the verandah. There is little space for children to play and there is a deep well in the school premises but its water is not suitable for drinking due to which the children face problems. The school has no toilet facility. There are two teachers for five classes. Overall, one classroom always remains without any teacher.

When the school was constructed in 1995, the community members provided the physical labour but in return they got their remuneration. Unlike in other villages, their intention was to earn money as it provided temporary employment for them. After the construction process was over and the school started functioning, the community members did not send their children to school, instead they continued to send them to the forest for work. They believe, ‘if the child goes to the forest, the family income will not be hampered. If the child goes to the school, the child will not go to the forest in the future as he/she is not habituated from the early age. How will the child survive in future if he/she is not habituated to the rough and tough life of the forest’.

In this context, the Headmaster of the school played a significant role in bringing the children to school. He along with the other teachers tried to gain the confidence of the community members and involved themselves in various activities such as cleaning the village roads, taking the tribal community members to the hospital, etc. Initially, what the teachers emphasised was on the health and sanitation of the tribal people to gain
confidence as a result of which they started sending their children to the school. After 3 - 4 years, the number of children coming to the school has gradually increased in comparison to the past. As the population in the village is small in comparison to other villages, the number of school going children is also less. There are 71 children in the school, out of which 41 are boys and 30 are girls and all of them are from Santal tribes. The present SMC was formed in 2001 and there are eight members, all are from the Scheduled Tribes.

**Purunia**

Purunia village is situated in the Anandapur block of Keonjher district. The total population of the village is 1, 972, out of which male population is 1012 and the female population is 960. There are 439 households in the village - 312 are from the peasant castes, 53 from the Scheduled Castes, 67 from the other backward castes and 7 from the Scheduled Tribes. The peasant castes include various sub-castes like Bala, Rout, Nayak, Chakra, Biswal, and Parida. The Scheduled Castes include Pana sub-caste which is comprised of Jena, Mallick, Das communities. The Other Backward Castes include Gopala sub-caste. There is only Bhuyan tribe in the village and there are two different clans among them such as Naik and Das.

The social mapping of the village depicts that all the castes maintain social distances from each other in terms of their residential pattern (Map 3. 5). The residential arrangement of each group is a clearly demarcated on the communal lines, in terms of their clan membership. It was observed during the interactions with the community that different caste groups feel superior or inferior in relation to other castes in the social hierarchy. For instance, the Scheduled Caste members feel that they are superior to the Scheduled Tribe members. The peasant castes feel they are the superior in the village as their numerical strength is high, their educational status is high and they occupy major portion of the landholdings which determine their class position.

In Purunia, the practice of untouchability is found to be practiced in some form. For instance, one community member informed that "members of all castes are not
entitled to sit together for dining in a row during a social gathering in the village. Different caste members have different seating arrangements on such occasions”.

The primary occupation of the villagers is agriculture. Most of the villagers depend upon agriculture and those who have large portions of landholdings give some land for tenancy. During the fieldwork, it is found that those who give land for tenancy in turn receive fifty per cent of the crop from the tenants. So, there are farmers, tenants, and landless agricultural labourers in the village. Apart from this, some villagers are engaged in petty-businesses like small grocery shop, tailoring, fishing, poultry farm, etc. Most of the peasant caste members have land and they depend upon agriculture. Most of the Other Backward Caste members engage themselves in small businesses like tailoring, grocery shop, small restaurant, betel shop, etc. along with agriculture. Further, most of the Scheduled Caste members are involved in businesses like fishing, poultry, etc. The Scheduled Tribe families are engaged as landless labourers, tenants, casual labourers and unskilled labourers.

The literacy map of the village substantiates the view that most of the community members are literate as they can read and write with understanding in Oriya language. But it is not evenly distributed in terms of the social category. The educational situation of the peasant castes and Other Backward Castes is better than the Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes. There are 302 children in the school out of which 155 are boys and 147 are girls. There are 235 children from the peasant castes out of which 120 are boys and 115 are girls; there are 33 children from the Other Backward Castes out of which 20 are boys and 13 are girls; 30 children from the Scheduled Castes community out of which 13 are boys and 17 are girls and there are only four children from the Scheduled Tribes out of which two are boys and two are girls.

The perception of a member of the community, on why there is a lack of interest among the disadvantaged sections of the village, captures the way the communities perceive each other. For instance, Harishchandra Biswal from the peasant caste community noted,

“Most of the parents from Scheduled Tribes are non-literate, so they do not understand the value of education in day-to-day life. They have more
children to serve the economic interests of the parents. They deliberately do not send their children to school as it goes against the self interest of the father and the mother. This has a direct relation with the family structure of the Scheduled Tribes. For example, you will find more number of nuclear families among them. This happens due to the fact that when the child grows, he understands the selfish interests of the parents and after the marriage he separates himself from the parental family”.

The statement is interesting in the sense it presents the way community members perceive each other. It also reflects the deep rooted stereotypes among the groups cohabiting in the same village. Particularly, these stereotypes are at play when the general castes and the other backward castes had to accept the leadership of the SC/ST members. Further, such a world view of the community members about their immediate neighborhood presents a kind of reasoning that is prejudicial about the other caste/tribe members. For instance, it is difficult to understand that the prevalence of nuclear families can be linked to the selfish interests of the younger generation or the older generation. It may be too simplistic to explain a sociological trend that requires deeper investigation. However, such a viewpoint is presented here to show how the stereotypes and prejudices are at play within the community.

The primary school in Purunia was established in 1917, the first school in the entire block. It is a beautiful school located at the centre of the village, run in its own building. There are eight teachers for seven classes, so teacher inadequacy is not a problem in this school. There are seven classrooms and a separate office room. The classrooms are provided with a verandah. There is a playground, drinking water facility, toilet facility for the children in the school. The school is well fenced with wire and plants.

The present School Management Committee was formed in 2003. The distribution of the SMC members reveals that there are eight members in it, out of which five are from the peasant castes and two are from the Scheduled Castes, and one is from the Other Backward Castes.
Belabahali

Belabahali village is situated adjacent to Purunia village. The demographic profile of the village shows that the total population of the village is 4,865, out of which the male population is 2,515 and the female population is 2,350. The village is clearly big in comparison to the other villages in the sample. There are 937 households in the village comprising of various caste groups - 445 are from the Other Backward Castes, 373 are from the Scheduled Castes, 119 are from the peasant castes. Thus, the number of Other Backward Caste households is significantly higher than any other caste in the village. They include various sub-castes like teli (oilman), tanti (weaver), gopala (milkman) and bhandari (barber). Further, they are segmented on different clan communities like Sahoo, Bai, Nath and Barik. The second predominant group in the village is that of the Scheduled Castes and more especially Pana and Dhobi sub-castes. Besides, there are a few Brahmins and peasant caste members in the village.

Just as the other villages, the primary occupation of the villagers is agriculture. The Other Backward Castes are the dominant caste group in the village in terms of their numerical strength and material possession in terms of landholding in the village. The villagers grow paddy, sugarcane, jute, rabi crops like mug, biri, etc., vegetables like potato, tomato, onion, cabbage, bitter guard, etc. Other than this, some have petty-business like grocery shops, restaurants, fish shop, poultry farm, tailoring shop, artisans, carpentry, goldsmithery, etc.

There is both a primary school as well as a high school in the village. Interestingly, there are separate high schools for boys and girls in the village. So, after the completion of middle level of education, the boys go to the boys’ high school and girls continue in the girls’ high school and the students from the nearby villages also join them.

Belabahali nodal upper primary school was established in 1982 and it is located in the midst of the village. There are six teachers, two women and four men, for seven classes. There is a dearth of one teacher in the school. However, compared to some other schools the teacher inadequacy is a not a serious problem in Belabahali village. There are seven classrooms and a separate office room.
There is a playground, beautiful garden, drinking water facility, toilet facility for the children in the school. The school has a permanent boundary in the form of a wall.

The school profile reveals that there are 335 children (174 boys and 161 girls) in the school. As the number of Other Backward Castes is high in the village it is reflected in the social background of the children in the school. There are 182 children (93 boys and 89 girls) from the other backward castes. There are 133 children (70 boys and 63 girls) from the Scheduled Castes. There are only 20 children (11 boys and 9 girls) from the peasant castes.

The present School Management Committee was formed in 2004 and there are eight members in it – five from the Other Backward Castes and three from the Scheduled Castes.

**Anjar**

Anjar village is situated in Banspal block, the most educationally backward block in the Keonjher district. The demographic profile reveals that the total population of the village is 323 including 156 male population and 167 female population. The geographical setting of the village represents a most splendid sight of Sanghagra waterfall (well known tourist spot in the district) and a lime stone mine near to the village. Other than this, the village is surrounded by the forest and the houses are scattered throughout the village. The residential structures are well furnished with wood and beautifully painted with different colours on the mud walls.

The social composition of the village depicts that there are 72 households in the village out of which 56 are from the Scheduled Tribes, 11 from the Other Backward Castes and 5 from the Scheduled Castes. The social composition of the village clearly shows that the number of tribal households is more in comparison to the other groups. There are various tribes inhabiting the village such as Bhuyans, Bathudis, Mundas, and Kohlas. Among the Other Backward Castes there is only Gopala sub-caste and among the Scheduled Castes there is only Pana sub-caste. The social mapping of the village is presented in Map 3.7.
The primary occupation of the villagers is not agriculture as it is a hilly area and the irrigation facility is scanty. Even if the crops are grown, they are destroyed by the wild animals like elephants. So, almost all the people entirely depend upon forest for their livelihood. The tribals collect forest products for their subsistence, mostly collect the Minor Forest Products (MFP) like fruits, roots, leaves, mushrooms, etc. Particularly, they collect seasonal fruits like mango, guava, jackfruit, tamarind, black berry, dumri, papaya, kolta koli, char koli, sindhi koli, khojur koli, bon bhalia, kendu, siadi, amla, harida, bahada, mahula and khojuri rasha and salpi rasha; the jungle roots such as pit konda, targa konda, serenda konda, etc.; seasonal vegetables like koylari sag, majurchendi sag, kordi (bamboo-shoot), etc. and different types of mushrooms, namely, balisora chotu, manaya chotu, baunsa chotu, bidam chotu, bitak chotu, jam chotu, etc. Thus, throughout the year, the tribals depend on these forest resources.

Further, the tribals of the village prepare different traditional edible items from the forest products like, takupita (mango kernel), peg (liquid edible item), amsoda (pickle from mango juice), amta (mango bark), amilchol (rasom), pej (liquid edible item from its seeds) by tamarind. From the mohul, they prepare wine and kordi for the curry. Thus, each and every forest product, namely, juice, bark, seeds etc, is useful for their food preparations. Interestingly, irrespective of their social background everybody goes to the forest to collect Minor Forest Products, but those who belong to other backward castes have domesticated cows and they sell the milk as well as milk products in the local market whereas the Scheduled Castes people are engaged in the process of local wine/arrack production in the village.

There is a primary school in the village which was established in 1991. There are four rooms in the pucca school building, three of them are used as classrooms and a room is used as an office. The school has no playground but there is drinking water facility and toilet facility. There is adequate furniture for the teachers but not for the students. For instance, during the course of field investigation it was found that all the children come with their schoolbags and personal seats (which is made up of cocoanut/palm leaves). The school has a permanent boundary and a beautiful garden in the front portion.
There are three teachers, two of whom are women, for five classes in three classrooms. Thus, both teachers and the classrooms are inadequate to meet the requirements of all the classes in the school. There are 98 enrolled children in the school out of which 51 are boys and 47 are girls. The social background of the school going children reveals that 75 of them belong to Scheduled Tribes out of which 42 are boys and 33 are girls. There are only 10 children from the Scheduled Castes community out of which three are boys and seven are girls. There are 13 children from the Other Backward Castes out of which six are boys and seven are girls.

The present School Management Committee was formed in 2003 and there are eight members at present - four from the Scheduled Tribes, three from the Other Backward Castes and one from the Scheduled Castes.

**Dangapani**

Dangapani is adjacent to Anjar village. The demographic profile of the village reveals that the total population of the village is 284 out of which the female population (153) is slightly higher than the male population (131). The geographical setting of the village is splendid, just as Anjar, with the sight of Sanghagra waterfall. Like Anjar, Dangapani is also predominantly a tribal village surrounded by forests and the houses are scattered in the village.

The village consists of 66 households including 54 tribal households and 12 Other Backward Caste households. The tribal composition of the village shows that all of them are from Bhuyan tribe. Within the tribe, they are divided into various clans like Naik, Mallick, Padhan, Paribar and Behera. Among the Other Backward Castes, there is only gopala sub-caste. There are two different clans like Mahakud and Palei within gopala. However, the two social categories of people are residentially segregated from each other and live within their clan communities. The residential segregations between different caste groups and within the same caste group is due to the landholding factor and their forefathers have been staying within their clan (Kula/Vansha) communities.
Though it is predominantly a tribal village, the practice of untouchability is prevalent in which the numerically larger tribal group members are discriminated by the Other Backward Caste members who themselves are lower in the caste hierarchy. The most striking form of the practice of discrimination is found in the school itself. For instance, Sudarshan Dalai, the Headmaster of the school noted,

"When the mid-day meal was first introduced in the school, both the cooks were from the Bhuyan tribe. So, the children of Other Backward Castes did not take food as it was cooked by the tribal people. Then, in the SMC meeting, it was decided that, out of two cooks, one should be from the Other Backward Castes and after that all the children took meals in the school".

The primary occupation of the villagers is based on the forest products such as collecting leaves, fruits, wastage timber, etc and sells them in the nearby markets. Major portions of income also come from local wine/arrack production. The tribal people not only use the forest products for the purpose of food but also depend on it for their household requirements. First of all, for construction of their houses, they collect deli and patia (timber), baunsh (bamboo), chhora (thatch) and siadi daudi (siadi rope) from the forest. They also use wood for making nangol and jaudi (hand plough), koten, musil (traditional paddy mill) and sogod (cart). The bamboo mostly used for making baskets of different shapes and sizes to carry on stone various goods. For the firewood they depend on forest. They not only use the firewood for cooking but also for warm themselves in the winter as well as for the light inside their house.

There exists a division of labour between men and women. For instance, women collect jhati (brooms), badni, siadi leaves to stitch kholi and dona (leave plate) and siadi bark to make siadi rope. They also extract oils from the seeds of kusum, karanja, tola, joda and chil.(shikakai) for using as shampoo. For fodder, the tribal people depend on forest and also take their cattle to forest for grazing. The men collect wastage timber, dry leaves and sell them in the nearby market. The social mapping of Dangapani village is presented in Map 3.8.
Dangapani primary school was established in 1998 and it is located at the entrance to the village. It has its own pucca building and there are three rooms which are used as classrooms. The classrooms are provided with a verandah which is used as an office by the teachers. There is sufficient space for the children to play. The school has drinking water facility, but no toilet facility. There is furniture for the teachers but not for the children. Children sit on the floor without even a mat. The school is fenced with iron wire and green plants. There are three teachers for five classes. The students of classes I and II sit in a single classroom, the students of classes III and IV sit in another room whereas class V students sit in yet another room.

There are 91 children in the school. As mentioned earlier, the small tribal village is characterised by the number of women is more than its men population is also reflected in the profile of the school going children. For instance, there are 55 girls and 36 boys in the school. The social background of the school going children is contingent on the social composition of the village. Out of 36 boys, only three belong to the Other Backward Castes and the rest belong to the Scheduled Tribes whereas among the girls, out of 55, only seven belong to the Other Backward Castes and the rest are from the Scheduled Tribes. The present School Management Committee was formed in 2004 and there are eight members, six are from the Scheduled Tribes, two from the Other Backward Castes.

Summary:

Thus, the social and educational mapping of the villages shows that they are socially and educationally diverse, characterising elements of both continuity and change. Certainly, the traditional hierarchical caste/social structure continues to exert its influence on the members of the villages, though the social relations appear to have become based more on the professional ties rather than the obligatory jajmani relations. The villages are more or less economically backward, though some are more backward than the others. Particularly, the villages where the SCs and STs are numerically in majority, there is a clear sign of poverty and lack of development. Where the peasant and other backward Castes are numerically dominant, the villages are somewhat prosperous. The practice of
untouchability and the deep rooted caste/tribe stereotypes and prejudices are also found to be prevalent in the villages.

Educationally, some villages have slightly better enrolments in the school compared to the others. The villages where the schools were set up long ago had better enrolments compared to the villages that have acquired a school recently, mostly with the launch of programmes like District Education Programme (DPEP) and Sarva Shiksha Abhijan (SSA). The SMCs are also new in some and old in some other villages. In sum, the villages cover a diversity of rural landscape of both the districts of Balasore and Keonjher as well as the entire state of Orissa.

The next chapter focuses on the socio-economic background of the respondents, namely, the parents of the school going children and the SMC functionaries, who were interviewed to understand the processes and practices of community participation in the villages.