CHAPTER II

SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE OF ORISSA
The territorial waters of India extend to a distance of twelve nautical miles measured from the appropriate base line.
1.1 Socio-economic Profile of Orissa: The name Orissa is derived from the Sanskrit word "Odravishaya" or 'Odra Desha'. In ancient days, especially during Ashokan times, it was known as Kalinga. It had a distinguished past till it lost independence first in 1568 when the present Ganjam district was conquered by Golkunda Sultan and thereafter in 1803 to East India Company. Orissa the land of Oriya speaking people was constituted as a separate province on 1st April 1936. Orissa was a part of Bengal up to 1912 and then a part of Bihar up to 1936. Orissa was constituted a separate province in 1936 by carving out certain provinces of Bihar, Orissa and Madras. At the time of separation it was only a small province with six districts, viz, Balasore, Cuttack, Puri, Ganjam, Koraput and Sambalpur. It was only after independence when the princely states inside Orissa were merged with the state. The merger of the state of Mayurbhanj was delayed by one year and in January 1949 it became a part of Orissa. Orissa was then consisted of 13 districts for administrative purposes. Later on the number of districts increased to 30 for administrative conveniences (Reference Orissa, 1999: 330).

Orissa lies on the east coast of India. It is bounded by the states of west Bengal on the Northeast and Bihar on the North, Madhya Pradesh in the West, Andhra Pradesh in the south and Bay of Bengal in the east. The entire coastline is 480km. The total geographical area of the state as reported by survey of India is 1,55,707 km which accounts for 4.74% of the total landmass of India. There were 30 districts in the state in 1999. For administrative convenience the state has 58 revenue sub-divisions, 147 tahasils, 314 blocks, 5263 Gram Panchayats, 51,061 revenue villages (out of which 46,638 are inhabited) 2 corporations, 29 municipalities and 70 notified area councils (statistical abstract of Orissa 1999).

The state is divided into two broad natural divisions, namely the coastal plains in the east and the inland in the west. The plains consist of the districts of Balasore, Bhadrak, Jajpur, Kendrapara, Jagatsinghpur, Cuttack, Puri, Khurda, Nayagarh and part of Ganjam district and cover a little less than a quarter of the area of the state. It lies as a narrow stripe on the east coast flanked by the Eastern Ghats and the Bay of Bengal. The inland region consist of the
remaining districts and it can be sub-divided into three natural divisions, namely the southern plateau, the Mahanadi river valley and the broken high lands of the north and north-east. Dense forests cover a major portion of this division. A large number of rivers flow crossing this highland area and the valleys of these rivers are suitable for cultivation. The main rivers are: Mahanadi, the Subarnrekha, The Baitarani, The Brahmani, The Rushikulya, The Bruhabalanga, The Vanshadhara, and The sileru.

The state has a population of 316.60 lakh persons-160.64 lakh males and 155.96 lakh females. The percentage of total population of the state to the total population of India is 3.74 (Census Of India, 1991). Orissa is one of the less densely populated states of India as it has 203 persons per square kilometer as compared to the national average of 267 persons per sq.km. In 1991. Only 12 districts out of 30 were above the state average density of 203 per persons per sq.km. The lowest and highest density districts are Malkangiri, with 69 persons per sq.km. And Jagatsinghpur with 583 persons per sq.km. respectively (Selected Socio-economic Statistics, Central Statistical Organization, Department of Statistics, Ministry of Planning and Programme Implementation, Government of India, New Delhi). As per 1991 census 22.21 percent of the total state population belong to Schedule Tribes and 16.20 percent belong to Schedule Castes. Ethnographically, Orissa has an important place in the country because of its 62 tribes (out of which 11 varieties belong to primitive tribal groups) and 93 Schedule Caste communities.

The state has a sex ratio of 971 females per 1000 males. There are 19 districts above the state average of sex ratio. Sex ratio has been deteriorating since the beginning of this century. While in 1901, the number of females per 1000 males was 1037, which has declined to 971 in 1991. The district having highest sex ratio was Gajapati with 1027 females per 1000 males whereas the district with lowest sex ratio is Khurda with 903 females per 1000 males. Orissa adds about 20% to its population in a decade (Statistical Abstract of Orissa, 1996: 6,7,8)

The literacy position in the state has improved from 15.8% in 1951 to 49.09 percent in 1991. The literacy rate among the scheduled castes, as per 1991 census was 36.78% and
22.31% among the schedule tribes. However Orissa remains one of the 10 educationally backward states in the country, as its literacy rate is lower as compared to literacy of the country as a whole. Sixteen out of the total 30 districts are below the state average of literacy (49.09). The districts with highest and lowest literacy rates are Khurda (67.72%) and Nawarangpur (18.62%) respectively.

Another predominate feature of Orissa is most of its population, nearly 87%, live in villages as compared to all India average of 74%. The urban population of Maharastra (38.69%), Gujarat (34.49%) and Tamilnadu (34.15%) is much higher than that of Orissa. Agriculture continues to be the mainstay of the state economy. The share of agriculture sector in the states income during 1996-97 accounted for 23.55% at constant (1980-81) prices. But the predominance of this sector is also responsible for a good deal of instability in the rate of growth of income due to fluctuation in agricultural production. Natural calamities and fluctuations in rainfall often causes substantial loss in crop production (Economic Survey, 97-98: Vf). The size of the state income depends on the share of growth of the four major sectors, broadly the primary, secondary tertiary and the finance and the service sector. The state income at constant (1980-1981) prices increased from Rs. 3442.69 crore in 1980-1981 to Rs. 5586.48 crore in 1996-1997 registering annual growth rate of 3.07% . Similarly the per capita income for the same period increased from Rs.1314.00 to Rs.1595 at constant prices and Rs.6422 at current prices (ibid: 1/4). Thus the per capita income is not only much lower than the national average but also the gap between the two is widening over a period. Further the per capita income does not show any specific trend over the years. The contribution of state income to the national income has been steadily deteriorating form 3.1% in 1980-81 to 3% in 1995.

Orissa constitutes 4.74% of the landmass, 3.74% of population and 7.4% of forest coverage of India. The forest coverage, which was 43.4% of the total area in 1960-61, has declined to 36% in 1995. But some of the other estimates indicate that it is not more than 20%. Orissa has a long coastline with rich marine wealth which extends up to 480 Km.. It contains a large number of mineral resources, accounting almost 98% of chromites, 95% of
nickel, 70% of bauxite, 26% of iron ore and 24% of coal reserves of the country. The state has
abundance of water resources with a number of large rivers and rivulets. The Central Ground
Water Board has assessed the ground water potential of Orissa at 23,300 c.ft. of which only
0.5% have been harnessed so far. The cultivable area of the state stands at 79 lakh hectares.

The gross cropped area of Orissa is 92.70 lakh hectares of which the irrigated area is
20.88 lakh hectares, slightly more than 1/5th. Rice is the principal crop and rice is also the
staple diet of the Oriya, but its cultivation has to be more productive as the output per hectare
is below the national average. Sugar cane is the main cash crop and the production is of a
substantial level. The dependence on agriculture for livelihood is great with nearly 80%
people in the rural areas living of it. The cultivators, that is people with land in their
possession, constitute 74% and agricultural laborers are quite considerable in number being
28% of the main workers in the state. Orissa also produces some amount of Jute like the states
of West Bengal, Bihar and Assam. In the coastal plains of Orissa particularly the districts of
Cuttack and Balasore, where the soil and rainfall are suitable for jute cultivation, Jute has
been cultivated since independence. With the completion of major multipurpose river valley
projects irrigation has made significant progress. Hirakud was the symbol of India’s
endeavour to utilize all its natural resources in the early years of independent India and it
stood as an index of achievement. However the potential for irrigation is much greater than
what has been realized through major, medium and minor irrigation schemes in the state (The

As already mentioned Orissa has a wealth of minerals and that has led to a substantial
measure of industrialization. There are 33 central and state public sector industrial units in the
state. The stress now a day is on the private sector, as elsewhere in the country and emphasis
is being laid on the development of the leather, Ferro alloys, electronics and plastic industries.
The steel plant at Rourkela, first after independence, drew the nations attention to the great
potential of Orissa in respect of Heavy metal based industries but the potential is yet to be
realized. There are also a number of small-scale units using power and machinery and there
are traditional cottage industries like silver filigree work being done in Cuttack and other
places. At many places there are coir production centers as coconuts are also being produced in the state, though not on the scale of Kerala.

1.2 Scope and Objectives of the Study: Eminent sociologist Andre Beteille is of the opinion that, ‘critical understanding of the phenomena and social engineering are the twin purposes of social science research’ (Beteille, 1972: 12). A critical understanding of the nuances of a social phenomenon is rightly the necessary condition to bring about positive changes in the desired direction. Since Panchayati Raj Institutions have caught the popular attention, there has been many an attempt to understand this emerging phenomenon. Therefore it should be honestly acknowledged that Panchayati Raj system has been one of the relatively more explored areas of research. But despite that, it leaves a strong feeling that there is an absence of adequate information and research about it. ‘The available studies are mostly general, covering a large number of problems or very specific coverage of limited aspects of Panchayati Raj System like panchayat structure, finances, control, leadership and Public participation’ (Narain: 10). Many studies on Panchayati Raj are general in nature without going deep into different aspects of its operation. At the same time many other studies concentrate on a few particular aspects of Panchayati Raj System like finance, gender equity, leadership style etc. and therefore miss the opportunity to reflect real content of the operation of Panchayati Raj system in totality. The focus of research on the organizational processes and operational content is largely absent in the existing works. There is, therefore a great dearth of solid information about the operation of Panchayati Raj system as a whole and the functioning of its particular units. Another important characteristics of the available research studies on Panchayati Raj Institutions is the lack of or inadequate application of comparative method between dissimilar Panchayats along the dimensions of geography, economy, culture and political history. The working of PRIs like any other social phenomenon is shaped by multiple interacting factors concertedly acting on the phenomenon in question. This particular aspect has not received adequate attention of researchers working on Panchayati Raj Institutions.

Keeping all of the above in mind it has been the constant endeavor of this study to contribute towards the filling of this knowledge gap. The present study explores deep into the
organization and working of the Panchayati Raj institutions as units of local self-government. It analyses and describes the successes as well as failures in our punctuated movement towards grass root democracy through the vehicle of Panchayati Raj institutions. The study focuses on four aspects in detail which are in line with its four fold objectives: (a) Nature and content of popular participation in the Panchayati Raj system, (b) Financial position of Panchayati Raj Institutions to perform its mandated role, (c) extent of decentralization in planning and decision making process, (d) constraints in the structure and functions of the Panchayati Raj system. Participation of all in the Panchayati Raj Institutions is critical towards actualization of local self-government. The study makes a distinction between the nature and content of participation pertaining to who participates and how participate respectively. Decentralization involves two things: Firstly it focuses on the level of decision making powers that is trickling down to these grass root institutions and secondly, the degree to which the decision making process is decentralized within these grass root institutions. It is also the focus of this study to know the financial health and other strength and weaknesses of the PRI system. The study is empirical in method and diagnostic in nature. A.R.Desai has rightly observed ‘To reconstruct rural society on a higher basis it is urgently necessary to study not only the economic forces but also the social, the ideological and other forces operating in the society’ (Desai, 1961:12). Keeping the above objectives in mind this study intends to provide a critical understanding of the system by building up a reliable body knowledge which may used in the macro studies to help develop social engineering and to find solutions to problems that are identified.

1.3 Methodology: Methods and tools play an important role in deciding the quality of research. This choice of the method is even more critical to the success of research in social science. Social phenomena are so complex that sometimes any single technique fails to meet the desired objectives of research work. In social science where behavior of man is the main object of study and which is being studied by another man, complex factors are bound to influence the study. Human beings again behave differently under same environmental condition as well as diverse conditions also sometimes produce same behavioral consequences. Apart from the individual, at the higher societal level, this complexity is
compounded by high degree of socio cultural diversity underlying our Indian society. India has been a melting pot of diverse races, religion and culture since time immemorial. Each of its constituent units from region to state, district, sub divisions, blocks as well as Panchayats all of them are dissimilar in more than one ways. For instance social system of Dr. Kohn’s Madhopur differs significantly from that of Kathleen Goughs ‘Kumbapattai’ or villages described by M.N. Srinivas and Dr. Dube are quite different from those studied by Dr. Opler and Dr. Lewis. Therefore selecting a particular technique or a set of techniques poses a challenge to the researcher and warrants careful thinking.

Keeping the implications of the existing diverse conditions in view, it has been the aim of this study although, to conduct the exercise in such a way as to include as many different areas, people, their different conditions of living etc. as possible within the predetermined limitations of this work for degree of Doctor of Philosophy in sociology. The study covers all the 13 undivided district of Orissa. However in increasing the geographical spread of the field study there is possibility of more clashes between the diverse conditions encountered by the researcher and the researchers own socially conditioned subjectivity. Along with taking a relatively larger area for field study which will allow for addition of a cross cultural perspective to this study focused on local self governance, care is also taken to remain open and objective in the investigation and a spirit of parsimony was never compromised.

Thus with the intention of taking large geographical area for field study, community development blocks were selected from all over the state. After the finalization of the scope and objectives of this study an in-depth discussion was done with some key functionaries of the Panchayati Raj Department to take suggestions on the selection of different Blocks and Gram Panchayats from Orissa. After discussion and taking the limitation of time, distance money etc. into account, it was decided to take one block each from 13 undivided districts of Orissa which was the position before April 1993. The sample is fairly representative of the diverse societies in Orissa and sample size is small and limited so that the study could be completed in time. The help of some local volunteers was also availed for data collection process.
This study takes into account all categories of people who are directly or indirectly connected with the Panchayati Raj system at the village level. The respondents are divided into 5 categories for analytical purposes, such as (a) Panchayat functionaries including male/female Sarpanches (GP chairman) Naib Sarpanch (GP Vice chairman) and ward members (b) Key informants which includes informal villages leader, local teacher NGO worker, village resources person or any person who has fair knowledge on village/panchayat affairs (c) people belonging to the weaker sections of society like scheduled caste and scheduled tribe and other socially educationally backward communities (d) Besides female functionaries interview was also conducted with other women in general. (e) From among the respondents of this study other residual category covered was the people in Interview schedules were carefully designed separately for each of the categories of respondents keeping in view their key responsibilities and nature of their stake in the local self-government system.

Given the complexity involved in the study of diverse socio economic factors affecting the working of Panchayati Raj system a need for applying a combination of techniques was felt by the researcher. The field study was conducted by using a set of tools like (a) interview schedule (b) Verification of panchayat records and records of different offices connected with the working of Panchayati Raj system (c) focused discussion in groups (d) personal discussion with key persons in the village (e) a limited number of case studies particularly on women. Interview schedules were pre-tested before the beginning of the field study in Balipatna block of puri district during December 2000. After incorporating the inputs from the pre-testing of the interview schedule, it was finalised for further administration. All the respondents were personally interviewed with the help of interview schedule by going to their home or to their workplace which ever suited them. The interview schedule contained small and simple questions including the right mix of open-ended as well as close-ended questions. Researcher's own field study Programme had to be frequently changed, as it was convenient for the respondent to sit in the evening for discussion. At times also due to absence of electrification or power cut the timing had to be shifted to early morning.
In planning and carrying out his research the investigator has to deal with three distinct entities: the sponsor, the gate-keepers and the citizens (Banners, 1980:8). So far as sponsor is concerned the researcher had to make his own arrangement for the study expenses. However the generous help from a local Voluntary Organisation in sparing some volunteers who helped in data collection and some financial support from READ Foundation, Bhubaneswar did help me to a great extent. There may be a plurality of gatekeepers and there is certain to be diversity of interest among the citizens. The researcher had to deal with them. In getting permission to see panchayat records the permission of the Sarpanch (gatekeeper) is necessary and to interview women the permission of the head of the family is necessary and so on. Some times the respondents (citizens) may not show interest in giving any information. During the field study it was frequently found that in order to talk to women folk, the husband or male family head had to convinced about the purpose of visit, with a lot of patience by the researcher. Some times women in remote areas even ran away seeing people from outside. Even if women dare to sit before the researcher to answer questions, the skill of a social researcher here comes into play in making the interaction feel like a friendly discussion rather than a question answer session. At times also language posed some problem in eliciting a focused response. The local panchayat functionaries voluntarily extended their help in initiating a stranger into their village by-lanes.

Apart from structured interview with people discussions particularly focused on the various aspects of the working of Panchayati Raj system were held with people in groups. After becoming familiar with the villagers, during the interview process, for example, some key figures like educated youth in the village were identified and hints were dropped for a get together. Their suggestion for the time, place and mode of discussion is also taken into account. These educated volunteers than used to help in organising the group sitting. The discussion is open to all the members of the village. The group consists of all people who are willing to come and voluntarily participate in the discussion. These guided discussions were conducted in only some selected villages where it is felt that the picture emerging from our personal interaction is incomplete or giving conflicting impression. Thus focused group
discussions also provided a platform for cross verification of information. Moreover the discussions many a time turned out to be educative for the people. Normally on an average, a focused group discussion would last for 2-3 hours. During the first half an hour people will start coming in trickles and there is more inclination to listen only. As the crowd gradually builds up and discussion become hotter people will start speaking up asking for explanation and hurling accusations at each other. As the discussion worn out, fissures in the socio political fabric becomes more apparent. These had been observed in all the discussions though in differing degree. All discussions were skillfully guided to guard against distractions, remain focused on the theme and maintain objectivity and neutrality.

Personal discussions were also held with people some times in the form of informal chat with those who were curious and feel cornered in a group. Normally they come to ask some anxious question when the researcher is alone or after a casual encounter. These voiceless people were patiently talked to and many useful information were recorded from them.

Apart from collection of primary data through personal interaction secondary data have also been collected from the official records of the panchayat in matters like attendance in Gram Sabha, the panchayat sitting, internal and external resources coming to the panchayat, names and number of beneficiaries etc. Collecting secondary information from the panchayat office is really challenging in many instances, data were not continuous, incoherent and lack in systematic recording. Sometimes the researcher had to rely on the information provided by the secretary from his memory.

1.4 Sampling: The study uses the multi stage sampling method and samples were selected in different stages. At the first stage all the 13 undevided districts were chosen for the study keeping the socio culture diversity in view. Orissa presently has 30 districts, which were carved, out of the then existing 13 districts through a government order in April 1993. In an
effort to combine geographical spread of the study area with limited sample size all the 13 undivided districts were taken up for this study.

Orissa presently has 314 community development blocks divided into 5262 gram panchayats with 86338 representatives elected to these bodies in 1997. One community development block from each of 13 districts were randomly selected for this study. Out of a total of 5262 gram panchayats 26 gram panchayats were selected in such a manner so as to one gram panchayat is located in the block HQ itself and the other gram panchayat located furthest from the block HQ. Two villages from each of the selected GP were randomly selected for the purpose of the study.

### AREA OF STUDY

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>District</th>
<th>Block</th>
<th>Gram Panchayat</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Ganjam</td>
<td>Mohana</td>
<td>Mohana, Pindiki</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Koraput</td>
<td>Baipariguda</td>
<td>Chandrapara, Ramgiri</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Kalahandi</td>
<td>Thuamulrampur</td>
<td>Kaniguma, Thuamulrampur</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Phulbani</td>
<td>Kantamal</td>
<td>Kantamal, Kultajore</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Bolangir</td>
<td>Khaprakhol</td>
<td>Khaprakhol, Dhandamunda</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Sambalpur</td>
<td>Naktideul</td>
<td>Naktideul, Girish Chandrapur</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Sundargarh</td>
<td>Sabdega</td>
<td>Sabdega, Karamdihi</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Mayurbhanja</td>
<td>Jashipur</td>
<td>Jashipur, Gudgudia</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Keonjhar</td>
<td>Bansapal</td>
<td>Bansapal, Kuan</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Balasore</td>
<td>Oupada</td>
<td>Talkia, Ishwarpur</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Dhenkanal</td>
<td>Bhuban</td>
<td>Ektali, Mahakargola</td>
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<td>Cuttack</td>
<td>Mahakalpara</td>
<td>Mahakalpara, Tikhiri</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Puri</td>
<td>Nuagaon</td>
<td>Badagota, Singarpali</td>
</tr>
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</table>

1.5 The Area of Study: Four out of 13 districts of Orissa, prior to April 1993, lies in the east coast. The coastal blocks selected for this study are Mohana, Oupada, Mahakalpada, and Nuagaon. Oupada block is spread over an area of 169.78 Sq. Km. with 162 villages. It has 10 panchayats in addition to the two panchayats, i.e., Talkia and Ishwarpur, selected for his study. The block has a total population of 29,830 out of which majority are Hindus except 31 people
who are from the Muslim community. The block has a small concentration of SC (16\%) population. Majority of people are literate (53\%) but only 14\% of tribal people are literate. Mahakalpapada is one of the 9 blocks of Kendrapara district, which was a part of Cuttack district prior to 1993. The block has a geographical area of 469.64 Sq.Km. having second largest number of villages (224) in the district. The block is the biggest in size with 1,62,591 population of which 16\% are SCs and a small 1.46\% are from ST community. In addition to the two selected Gram Panchayats Mahakalapara and Tikhiri, there are 24 other Gram Panchayats in the block. In addition to agriculture, fishery (mainly marine) dominates the economy of the block. Nuagaon. of undivided Puri district is spread over an area of 385.24 Sq.Km. With 16 Gram Panchayats and 234 villages. Mohana block of Gajapati district is one of the 7 blocks, which is most densely populated with 484 villages and 20 Gram Panchayats. Another predominant feature of the block is its high concentration of Schedule Tribe population (56.87\%). Hindus and Christians dominate the religious space of the block. The block has overall low literacy rate (24.44\%), however literacy among Schedule Tribe is relatively better due to presence of Christian Missionaries.

The other nine districts belong to interior Orissa. The blocks choosen for the present study are Boipariguda, Thuamul Rampur, Kantamal, Nakti Deul, Subdega, Jashipr, Banspal and Bhuban. Sambalpur has 9 blocks in total now, Nakti Deul constitutes the second largest block of Sambalpur district in terms of geographical area which is spread over an area of 522.09 Sq.Km. Significant portions of its population are from Schedule Tribe community (26\%). Nearly 22000 hectare of the block is covered with forest. 16\% of the tribal population is literate. Khaprakhol Block of Bolangir district has a population of 38,327 out of which 36\% belong to tribal community. While 50\% of male are literate, majority of women (82\%) are illiterate. Only 7\% of Tribal women are exposed to functional literacy. Just 29 Km. from district HQ, Subdega block of Sundergarh district consists of 75 villages with a population of 26,886. Subdega block is mostly dominated by tribal people (71.34\%). 6,500 hectare is covered by forest, which has some bearing on the economy of the block. Though the block average literacy is below the state average, 50\% of tribal males are literate possibly as a consequence of some missionary intervention. Of the 13 blocks in Kalahandi district Thuamul
Rampur constitute one of the remotest blocks situated at a distance of 73 Km. from the district HQ. It consists of 27,522 people of which more than half are from tribal community. Thuamul Rampur has one of the highest incidences of illiteracy. Nearly 85% people are illiterate. Only 0.77% tribal females are literate. Jashipur block of Mayurbhanj district is dominated by the presence of tribal population (67%). Jashipur block has 16 Gram Panchayats in total covering an area of 442.32 Sq.Km. and 229 villages. 21% of tribal population are literate against the block average of 34.27%. The block has one of the highest forest cover of the district which amounts to more than 5000 hectares. Bhuban Block is one of the 8 blocks of Dhenkanal district. It has a population of 42,229 of which 8.91% are tribals. Majority of the people in the block are Hindus and the percentage of literacy is higher (57%) than the state average in the block. Banspal block of Keonjhar district is the largest in geographical area covering 1,191.07 Sq.Km. Tribal concentrations in the block is very high (79.29%). The Banspal has been very famous for it being the home for fast disappearing “Juang “ tribe. The topography of the block being hilly, the soil is not suitable for cultivation. The economy of the block is largely forest dependent. Bounded by Anugul district to the south, the literacy record of the block has been very low (17%). Kantamal block of Phulbani district is a large block consisting of 23 Gram Panchayats and 408 villages. Greater part of the block is covered under forest (17000 hectares). 15.77% of its population belongs to tribal communities. Little more than one third of the population is literate and majority of the population belong to Hindu Community.

1.6 Limitation of the study: Social phenomenon is very complex in nature. Therefore no single social research initiative is adequate enough to look into either all types of phenomenon or all aspects of a particulars phenomenon. So it is in the interest of producing a body of useful knowledge that social science research must be very specific in its focus and spell out its limitations.

The present study in its attempt to understand the dynamic working of Panchayati Raj system in Orissa also suffers from a few limitations. Firstly the study does not cover the functioning of local self-government in urban areas. India is a country of villages. In a poor...
state particularly like Orissa, more than 80% of people live in rural areas. So the working of local self-government in rural areas is of particular interest here.

Secondly Orissa has a three tier Panchayat Raj System in place i.e. the Zilla Parishad at the district level, the panchayat samiti at the block level and the gram panchayat at the panchayat level. The present study specifically focuses on the lowest tier of local self-governance. The study particularly delves deep into the different aspects of the working of the gram panchayat including participation of people, decentralized planning, and transparency in decision-making etc.