Dynamics of Social Forces and Public Policy: The Story of Poverty Alleviation in Orissa

The central objective of this chapter is to locate the understanding of public policy in the context of social forces, against the background of complex social structures in which are embedded the relationship between the state and different citizen groups. This chapter however does not discuss the issue in abstract; it explicates the above mentioned relationship through a concrete understanding of the poverty-alleviation policies as they operate on the ground in Orissa. In some sense, the continuing presence of grinding poverty in some areas and among certain groups in the state is not a simple function of ill thought-out policies; it is rather a product of a series of relationships involving the dominant groups, the poor and the state.

The state-in-society perspective is useful in examining state policies, in their visions, articulation and implementation. In postcolonial societies, the social forces play an important role in directing and circumscribing the functions of the state. The state cannot escape the dominant social forces. The state, by using coercive means, can suppress the protest of the weaker section of the society, but faced with the ongoing demands of the dominant groups, its power can be limited. There are occasions when the state is seized by the dominant social forces for their sectional interest. In these circumstances state looses its relative autonomy and becomes an instrument of the dominant groups.

Understanding state’s embeddedness in society is also important to analyse collective action undertaken by vulnerable groups to improve their situation in society.
A state-in-society perspective brings together the themes of state-capacity and the role of social forces in explaining the domain of politics and policy of a country. And striving for a more balanced treatment, in turn, persuades us to reconsider the categories in which we have been accustomed to conceptualize both social structure and social action in third world countries. However it is not productive if we take only a state-centered or society-centric approach to study the domain of public policy and action. An imaginative combination of both is necessary. States in part constitute their societies; and societies in part constitute their states. It dwells deliberately at the intersections of state and society, and focuses on the mutually conditioning interactions that occur between segments of state and of society. Because of the mutual empowerment of state and society and the alliances between state actors and certain social groups, many studies including those in the volume edited by Joel Migdal, Atul Kohli and Vivienne Shue suggest that analysts of social change in low-income countries should stay away from an exclusive state-versus-society framework.

In the process of undertaking action, state organizations come into contact with various social groups. This takes the form of clashes and also accommodation depending upon the nature of interests and group involved in relation to the state's overall capacity and commitment to the concerned action. These engagements, which occur at numerous junctures, change the social bases and the aims of the state.

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1 Kohli, Atul and Vivienne Shue, 'State power and social forces: on political contention and accommodation in the Third World', in Migdal, Joel S., Atul Kohli and Vivienne Shue (ed), State power and social forces domination and transformation in the Third World, New York, Cambridge University Press, 1994, p.309.
2 Ibid., p.321.
3 Ibid., p.323.
In this process the attempts of the state and the efforts of the social forces go on simultaneously. As for example when the state tries to increase tax collection, the affected local figures try to gain control over particular state officers to manipulate the process. Not only this, they also try to capture public offices and resources through becoming a part of it. When the state agencies try to regulate certain behavior, the local strongmen attempt to extend the area of their own dominance. Joel Migdal says that the struggles in these multiple settings end up reshaping both the state and society. In this regard Migdal writes,

Like any other organizations, states have real limits to their power: what they can do and what they cannot do, when they can collect taxes and when not, which rules they can make binding and which not. Ambitious goals for states-aims of actually penetrating throughout the society, regulating the nitty-gritty of social relations, extracting revenues, appropriating resources that determine the nature of economic life, and controlling the most dearly held symbols-have seldom been achieved, certainly not in most of the new or renewed state organizations in the Third World.

In the process of policy implementation the state cannot overlook the social forces. Giving the example of Orissa, Migdal says that a state official implementing birth control policies in Orissa may have to take local landlords, religious leaders, and businesspeople into account at least as much as distant supervisors and parliament, and such consideration of these figures may lead to a distinctively different disposition of program resources from what was conceived in New Delhi. The point is that to glean the patterns of domination, one must focus on the accumulation of struggles and accommodations in society are multiple arenas.

Social forces strive to appropriate resources and symbols at hand to further their goals, and they often have widely different abilities to do that. Different

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5 Ibid., p.10.  
7 Migdal, in Migdal, Kohli and Shue, op.cit., p.9.
elements in an arena—its physical geography, material resources, human resources, forms of social organization, beliefs—are the raw materials with which the patterns of relationships among social groupings are crafted. Patterns of domination come, as social forces, with their already unequal abilities and access to resources, seek to utilize and manipulate these key elements of the arena’s environment. Migdal says that the introduction of new factors into an arena, such as additional capital, compelling ideas, or innovative forms of social organization, or the depletion of old elements, also benefits and harms social forces in very different ways. These new factors set of new and renewed struggles in arenas, ranging from struggles that proceed slowly and quietly to ones fraught with violence and recurring upheaval.  

But the path of domination is not so easy; it is met with opposition by others also seeking to dominate or by those trying to avoid domination. To achieve their goal the social forces form alliance with others. Migdal says that so rarely can any social force archives its goals without finding allies, creating coalitions, and accepting accommodations. Landlord and priest, entrepreneur and sheikh, have forged such social coalitions with power enough to dictate wide-ranging patterns of belief and practice. 

The dominant social forces always try to take maximum benefit out of the state programmes. As they are very diverse in nature and the nature of domination differs in different places, some times they need minute observation to be identified. It would have been easier to identify them if domination would have been similar with the numerical strength. But the size of a community per se does not seem to be an important factor in facilitating power dispersion and widespread participation by its

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8 Ibid., p.22.
9 Ibid., p.21.
members in community decisions. In India those castes which are numerically powerful can act as the catalyst of political power for a political party but their social and economic position keeps them in the same position in spite of having potential to change the electoral outcome in elections. Numerical strength may give a few positions to a few people of a community. In this regard, after studying the rural community power structure in four villages of Rajasthan, T. K. Oommen writes,

The castes which are numerically superior as well as economically dominant are politically the most powerful, if they are not divided into competing factions. Even if a caste is numerically insignificant, its economic importance will facilitate the capturing of a number of positions in the power pool. Sheer numerical superiority of a caste will facilitate the recruitment of at least a few of its members into the power pool, even when the caste is economically underprivileged and ritually depressed.

It is clear from this statement that a small minority may get some high position but it is not enough to change the overall condition of that community. The processes of social domination keep them marginalized and hence in economically deprived positions. In India caste domination is the one of the most powerful domination in the society. Caste position and access to land are also inter-related in India. Being predominantly an agricultural country, land is the most important asset for the rural community. But land holding is concentrated in communities belonging to upper-caste groups in rural areas. It is not a mere coincidence that it is the upper caste groups who have the greatest access to land and most of the landless agricultural labors belong to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. The Other Backward Castes are the share croppers in most of the cases where the land-owners have not been able to cultivate their land. They used to give their land to these peasants temporarily on the basis of sharing of the crops after harvesting.

11 Ibid., p.108.
There is a strong correlation between caste, control over land and social status in society. Therefore, those who are in the upper echelons of the social hierarchy, because of their birth in a high caste, will be the last to part with their land rights. While the rich peasants are mainly from the upper castes, small peasants and sharecroppers are from the middle or backward castes; agricultural laborers from the SCs and STs. In the case of lower castes, the percentage of families owning land is rather small. The percentage of landlessness is high in the case of SCs and STs. There is evidence to suggest that landlessness is increasing among the impoverished peasantry because of selling of land holdings, and one of the main reasons being solemnization of social ceremonies.

According to the 1992 National Sample Survey report, while SCs and STs together form 33.7 per cent of rural households, they represent 94.6 per cent of the total landless and marginal landowners in rural areas. As per the estimate of the Planning Commission, 48 per cent of the population of SCs and 51 per cent of STs are below the poverty line in India. The Rural Labour Enquiry (RLE) 1983 indicated that landlessness among SC agricultural labour households had increased from 48.5 per cent to 49.7 per cent. Traders and money lenders extend loans to tribals having land so that with the mounting debt burden, they can grab their lands. The state governments claim they have distributed surplus land to SC and ST households. But the land distributed are either unsuitable for cultivation or are effectively in possession of powerful people.

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13 Ibid., p.4.
14 Ibid., p.5.
Against the background of depleting assets, the landless are forced to earn their livelihood in conditions that are inhuman and full of indignities. In these situations, the bonded labor system, prohibited by the Indian Constitution, thrive in rural hinterland of India. The SC/ST groups form the largest share of bonded laborers. They are only provided with food in return for their backbone-breaking work. In this context, apart from the issue of status related to landownership, the presence of landless labor is an asset to landowning class. In these conditions the cost of human labour becomes cheap. Since the control over land determines social status and position in society, land reform cannot succeed unless the ‘harsh and disciplining’ social issues hampering the programme are tackled.\textsuperscript{16}

Historically, the SCs have been socially excluded for centuries from controlling resources, mainly land. The STs have been marginalized by the dominant groups from outside, in their own place of origin for centuries. The gender discrimination cuts across all social boundaries. Religious systems, cultural values superstition and too contribute to it. India is currently experiencing a paradoxical situation of hunger and starvation amidst plenty of food stock.\textsuperscript{17} Most of the people dying of starvation belong to scheduled castes or scheduled tribes. Caste location plays an important role in accentuating poverty among the lower caste communities in different parts of India. In this regard R.Barik writes,

\begin{quote}
Poverty and caste discrimination have a close affinity which cannot be underplayed. People belonging to the backwards are suffering as their agriculture is not remunerative. They suffer from the natural calamities. Though the natural calamities do not create poverty, poverty gets accentuated because of the calamities as they suffer from the losses.\textsuperscript{18}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{16} Mathew, http://www.wfp.org.in., \textit{op.cit.}, p.5.
\textsuperscript{17} Ibid., p.2.
In certain parts of the country women from Scheduled Castes are not employed by upper caste families as domestic workers due to the prevalence of 'untouchability'. These factors cause maximum poverty conditions among the women folk and is therefore aptly called feminization of poverty. The paradox is that in some rural areas women contribute considerably to the economic wellbeing of their family through their work in agriculture, household activities and so on but statistically there is no recognition of their economic participation.19

Social Domination and Poverty Alleviation in Orissa

Now let us have a look at the larger context of social forces in Orissa for understanding the state-sponsored poverty alleviation programmes in Orissa. In his seminal essay dealing with class and caste configuration of Oriya society, Manoranjan Mohanty argues:

...a Brahman-Karan middle class dominates society and politics in contemporary Orissa. This class is rooted in the underdeveloped agrarian economy of the state on the one hand and serves the national process of capitalist development on the other. The two Hindu upper castes operating within a primarily patriarchal framework exercise political power from their main base in non-tribal coastal Orissa. The subjects of this process of domination include poor peasants and landless agricultural labourers, most of whom belong to the Dalit castes or tribes and middle or lower castes.20

Mohanty provides a contemporary reading of domination in Orissa through a rich historical lens. His argument is based on a multidimensional view of domination and control: economic, political and cultural. In order to capture his nuanced argument, let me present a longish passage from his essay:

The Middle-class personnel, namely, officials, teachers, professionals and clerks originally came from landlord families but now have a degree of autonomy while maintaining their agrarian roots. During the period of British

colonial rule, upper caste dominance was based upon the zamindari system imposed by the colonial state. Continuation of a generally mono-crop agriculture, frequency of flood and drought and drainage of resources from the region increasingly pauperized the society. After Independence, with the abolition of intermediaries, the phenomenon of large-scale landlords further declined. In the absence of a programme of industrialization the upper class-upper caste elements were the first to take advantage of opportunities for modern education and consequently occupied middle-class jobs. Thus in a way the Brahman-karan middle class was both a cause and also a consequence of the process of underdevelopment of Orissa. Not having generated a dynamic surplus for commercialization of agriculture and industrialization, they share the major responsibility for economic backwardness of Orissa. At the same time, because of the situation of backwardness, other social groups continued their struggle for subsistence and were never able to come up as competing forces, thus leaving the stage free for the two upper castes to dominate.

There have been challenges to this situation of dominance from time to time. Pockets of modern agriculture have pushed to the forefront the middle and rich peasants belonging to the chasa or khandayat castes in the coastal region and the kulta in the inland districts. There are some historical movements of the tribals and the Dalits as well. The operation of the liberal democratic process has generated mild streams of consciousness among various deprived groups. The programmes of economic development which have pumped a lot of money into the countryside have also created new pressures. But the Brahman-karan middle class has adjusted itself very well to the new situation by co-opting potential challengers and expanding its network of legitimation. Thus the challenge to this situation of dominance in Orissa remains relatively weak.  

In Orissa, like other parts of India, the caste system remains deeply entrenched. The Brahminical order considers manual labor low and treats manual workers with contempt. Hence craftsmen as well as peasants are treated as Shudras. Their main duty is to serve the upper castes. Historically among the Shudras, the most numerous were the peasants. In the coastal part of Orissa, they are a part of large category called Chasa. In the inland region they are the Kulta caste. Both these castes enjoy a reasonable status in the Oriya society because of their access to land. In relative terms they enjoy a higher social position than the Dalits.

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21 Ibid., p.322.
Two significant institutional mechanisms that remained at the heart of the agrarian relations in Orissa were the Zamindari and the gauntia system. These mechanisms helped the new generation of these families to acquire social status and political power. Both these systems were based on exploitative relationship which was symptomatic of the power relations at the local level. As land is the basic asset in rural areas, the conflicts were also largely centered on it. The pattern of resolving land-disputes in villages was structurally biased in favour of the affluent section of the society. B.B. Mohanty studied the land conflicts and their resolution in the pancha in a village in Sambalpur district. On the basis of his study he writes:

The village panch which is the chief judiciary organ of the village is completely dominated by them. Of the nine positions (excluding the chowkidar who is a landless labourer of Ganda caste), eight are occupied by the upper caste farmers who belong to the landowning group of above 10 acres. The only member who is from lower landholding size (below 3 acres) mostly works as labourer with one of these panch members. The panch does not provide a public forum for free discussion and debate and whatever decision is taken by its members is imposed upon the disputing parties. Anybody who challenges the panch’s decision at the court of law loses further the security provided by the panch. It is reported that most of the disputes relating to land transfer and ownership and water management etc. are resolved by the panch. Analysis of the resolution of some land-related disputes reveals that panch has facilitated the transfer of land from the poor to the rich by giving weightage to latter. The rich, because of their dominance in the panch, turn the table in their favour and remain indifferent to the claims of the poor. Any type of activity that affects the interests of the rich is prevented and suppressed by the panch. For example, in 1985-86 a group of labourers were penalized by the panch when they preferred to work in the paddy market of Godbhaga at a higher wage during the winter harvesting period. As the large landowners found it a little difficult to hire labourers as per their requirement, a resolution was passed by the panch to evict these labourers from the village Gochar land that they were cultivating

Manoranjan Mohanty (1990) writes, “The pre-capitalist agrarian structure in the inland region of Orissa centred around the gaunitia institution. The British allowed the feudatory states to retain this institution which had evolved during the medieval period. This institution operated in the khalsa area (the state controlled lands) whereas the rest of the areas were under zamindars who paid tribute to the king. Gauntia was essentially the local tax collector designated by the king. He was usually the village headman who was responsible for the payment of a lump sum assessed on the village for a period of several years according to a lease. His job was to collect the revenue from the cultivators of the village and transmit the same to the royal treasury. In return, the gauntia enjoyed a part of the village land called bhogra land-usually the best land—for his own cultivation.” pp.331-332.
earlier. Since then land is leased out to a marginal holder who is a panch member and the rent is deposited in the village fund.  

Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Poverty in Orissa

The concentration of poverty among the scheduled caste (SC) and scheduled tribe (ST) population in both rural and urban areas is relatively higher in Orissa. In the rural sector, 62 to 79 per cent among the SC/ST are poor, and in the urban areas 51 to 55 per cent of their population are trapped in poverty as the data for the year 1983 indicates. The incidence of poverty among the ST population was near about two times more than that of the other caste population in the same year. Ten years on (1993-1994), the poverty situation among these groups has not changed much. The percentage of poor among the STs was 38.0 while the share of ST population to total population was 25 per cent in rural areas in 1993-94. In urban areas, the corresponding figures were 19.3 and 11.9.

Orissa is inhabited by a considerable number of tribes. There are 62 tribes speaking 25 languages reside in the state. One-third of the state has been declared as scheduled areas where 56.85 percent STs live. Orissa’s disadvantaged tribal groups have historically shown low literacy rates yet the state in its mechanical replication of all the Central Government schemes to raise literacy levels, has neglected the needs of this group. There has been little attempt to draw in teachers from these groups who have a ready cultural empathy with tribal students.

25 Ibid.
Several studies focusing on the issue of literacy in India have emphasized the presence of female teachers necessary to ensure greater enrolment and retention of girl children in primary schools.\(^{28}\) Against the backdrop of a high drop out rates among girls this suggestion seems to be appropriate. However, there is also need to encourage the parents belonging to the SC and ST communities to send their children to schools. But the reality on the ground is that the level of advocacy on these issues is rather half-hearted and lacks substance.

It is perhaps commonplace to suggest that the scheduled tribe (ST) and scheduled caste (SC) communities live in conditions of great deprivation and discrimination. They are unable to afford the basic bundle of goods and services including food, education and health, which are necessary for sustaining a basic existence. As mentioned earlier the scheduled caste and scheduled tribe communities suffer from multiple disadvantages including that of severe economic deprivation.\(^{29}\)

**Poverty in Orissa**

Orissa’s poverty continues to be proverbial: it is one of the poorest states of India. Even after 58 years of independence, the extent of poverty, even by an Indian standard, continues to be high. Additionally, there exist areas and groups in the state, where the depth of human deprivation is simply alarming. The following table shows the extent of poverty in Orissa.


\(^{29}\) Vaidyanathan, A., 'Poverty and Development Policy,' *Economic and Political Weekly*, vol. XXXVI, no.21, 26 May - 1 June, 2001.
Table 1
Extent, Depth and Severity of Poverty in Orissa in different Years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NSS ROUND</th>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>RURAL</th>
<th>URBAN</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HCR</td>
<td>PG</td>
<td>SPG</td>
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<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>1989-90</td>
<td>39.48</td>
<td>8.454</td>
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<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>1990-91</td>
<td>27.14</td>
<td>5.376</td>
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<td>48</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>36.57</td>
<td>8.195</td>
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<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>1993-94</td>
<td>40.28</td>
<td>8.724</td>
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Note:
1. HCR = Head Count Ratio
2. PG = Poverty Gap
3. SPG = Squared Poverty Gap
Source: World Bank data set on Indian Poverty in internet.\(^{30}\)

There exists higher incidence of rural poverty in Orissa. There is higher concentration of Schedule castes (17%) and scheduled tribe (22%) population in the state. The state has also many less-accessible pockets inhabited largely by the tribal population and a large majority of them are suffering from acute poverty. The basic needs such as food, education and health care are not available to the poor of the state in general and the depressed classes in particular. In such a scenario for better accessibility of the poor in the interior and less accessible areas, there is a need for promoting a better public health package by intensifying spread of health infrastructure and services. However, it is unfortunate to note that during the years of stat- regulated planning and initial period of the economic liberalization, the infrastructure and service status of public health facilities in Orissa was much lower than the average picture of health sector development at the all-India level. In the post-liberalization years, despite the government’s assurance to put emphasis on social security measures to reduce the vulnerability of the poor under the new market

economy by increasing social sector spending, the health status of the poor in Orissa and the state’s population in general has not shown any marked improvement.31

There is a higher degree (in comparison to the Indian average) of anemia and malnutrition among small children and women in the reproductive age group in Orissa. This is a matter of serious concern as they cause increasing morbidity and reduce life expectancy rate of the population. Due to under-nutrition and anemic problems of women and children, infant mortality rate and pre-natal mortality rate in the state is significantly higher than the all-India level.32

Since the independence, India as a whole has made notable progress in the field of education and spread of literacy across region and communities. But it is a paradox that though India has a large number of technically qualified manpower in the world, it has the largest number of illiterate persons as well. The National Policy on Education, 1986 provides a broad policy framework for total eradication of illiteracy and a commitment to make primary education free and compulsory up to the fifth standard. In 1981, the literacy level of population in Orissa stood at 33.62 per cent as against 43.56 per cent at the all-India level. However, since the 1991 Census the gap has shown a reducing trend. The government of Orissa has the target that by 2011 census, the state will bridge the national level literacy gap of its population. In 1991 the average literacy level of population in Orissa was 49.09 per cent as against 52.11 per cent at the all-India level.33 It shows marginal increase in literacy rate in the state. But the performance is not so impressive.

31 Ibid., p.284.
32 Ibid., p.286.
33 Ibid., p.288.
The poverty alleviation programmes have not met with success in Orissa. As per the latest estimates of the Modified Expert Group of Planning Commission, Orissa has the highest proportion of population living below the poverty line. The report states that in the year 1999-2000, the percentage of people living below the poverty line in the state was 47.15, whereas, it was 42.6 per cent in case of Bihar. On the other hand, the all India average was found to be 26.1 per cent.

The incidence of poverty in Orissa varies across the regions. The southern and northern regions are not well developed as compared to the coastal areas. One of the important reasons for this is the higher concentration of ST population in the above two regions. In 1983, the percentage share of ST population in the coastal region of rural Orissa was 7.2 per cent, whereas, it was as high as 39.7 per cent in the southern region and 34.5 per cent in the northern region. The STs are one of the poorest groups in Orissa. In case of general caste population, the incidence of poverty was comparatively less in the coastal region than that in the southern and northern regions. The poverty ratio was found to be less in the coastal region.

Most of the poor in Orissa are landless agricultural labours or marginal farmers or artisans. Low income from these professions has kept them in perpetual poverty. Out of the total rural poor families in Orissa, 87.36 per cent of rural poor families were agricultural labourers, marginal farmers and small farmers. The rest 12.64 per cent of rural poor families were non-agricultural labourers, rural artisans and others. Districts like Rayagada, Koraput, Phulbani and Ganjam had a little higher percentage of rural poor families of the category of non-agricultural labourers.\(^{34}\)

\(^{34}\) Ibid., p.288.
The 1997 BPL survey data of Orissa reveals almost a similar picture. Agricultural labourers, marginal farmers and small farmers constituted 85.61 per cent of the total rural poor of Orissa. This is 1.75 percentage points less than the 1992 survey. Even then the percentage share of agricultural labourers, marginal farmers and small farmers out of the total rural families are found to be higher. The percentage shares of BPL families of the categories of agricultural labourers, marginal farmers, small farmers and rural artisans to total rural families in the state were found to be 24.91 per cent, 20.90 per cent, 11.02 per cent and 3.24 per cent respectively.\(^\text{35}\) All these data shows that while examining the macro picture of Orissa, it is important to look into the disaggregated picture of poverty and deprivation in the state. The presence of abject poverty within a generalized picture of poverty becomes the central motif of the political economy of modern Orissa. When one looks carefully at a disaggregated picture, then it is clear that the burden of poverty falls more on certain communities than the others. It is certain that the communities belonging to the SCs and STs suffer the most in Orissa.

**Literacy in Orissa**

Literacy rate is one of the important indicators for determining the wellbeing of the people of a region. A study done by Kar finds that the impact of rural literacy rate on the percentage of rural families living below the poverty line is significant.\(^\text{36}\) So, to reduce poverty, education can be a powerful instrument. But the literacy rate in Orissa is not satisfactory. As per 2001 census, the literacy rate of Orissa is 63.61 per cent as against 65.38 per cent at all India level. Compared to male literacy rate, the female

\(^{35}\) Ibid., p.246.

literacy rate was less both in case of Orissa and India. Further, the literacy rate of scheduled tribe population was found to be considerably low in all the three Censuses.\textsuperscript{37}

\textbf{Infant Mortality in Orissa}

It is now widely assumed that better health facilities play a greater role in enhancing the quality of life of the people. The better the health facilities, the better will be the standard of living and the lesser will be the infant mortality rate. Infant mortality rate is one of the most important development indicators of a society. In 2001, the infant mortality rate of Orissa was 81 as against 67.9 in case of India.\textsuperscript{38} Further, the average annual rate of decline of infant mortality rates were less in Orissa compared to that in India, and this trend was observed both in rural and urban areas.\textsuperscript{39}

In Orissa, it is observed that the state is a low income and slow growing state of the country. Because of low income, larger proportions of people are living below the poverty line in the state. The per capita income of Orissa, as measured by Net State Domestic Product per head of population, was about 23 per cent lower than the all India per capita income (Net National Product) in 1980. But, this difference widened during the period 1980-81 to 2000-01. In 2000-01, the per capita income of Orissa remained as much as 50 per cent below that of national average. This is also reflected in the trend of growth rate of per capita real income. During the period 1980-81 to 2000-01, the trend of growth rate of per capita real income of Orissa was 1.39 per cent per annum as against 3.37 per cent per annum at the national level.

Orissa is facing climatic crises like flood, cyclone, drought, etc. regularly. These cause a lot of loss for the economy of the state. This forms one of the important reasons

\textsuperscript{38} National Family Health Survey (NFHS), 2001, Govt. of India.
for the high incidence of poverty in the economy where such crises occur regularly. Lal defines the above type of poverty as 'conjunctural'. According to him, in organic agrarian economies, climatic crises or political turmoil are the main causes of conjunctural poverty. Because of floods, cyclones and droughts millions of rupees worth of properties are lost and damaged. In these situations the poor who lose their livelihood suffer the most. Lal has cited the example of widows who, for want of social and economic opportunities remain neglected for years and accept poverty as their fate. In Orissa, the number of such poverty-stricken destitutes is quite large.

Implementation of Anti-Poverty Programmes in Orissa

Over the years the Government of Orissa has undertaken various welfare activities for the poor. As a consequence, many anti-poverty programmes are being implemented in the state. Of several state-supported programmes, such as Swarna Jayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY), Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS), Public Distribution System (PDS), Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) and Mid-day Meal Scheme stand out as prominent. All the above schemes are aimed at improving the living conditions of the poor by directly involving the 'target groups'. The anti-poverty programmes include schemes both for self-employment and wage employment. The self-employment programmes include Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP), Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA), Training of Rural Youth for Self-employment (TRYSEM), and Supply of Improved Tool Kit to Rural Artisans (SITRA). Now all these programmes are merged together and named as Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY). The wage employment programmes include schemes such as Jawahar Rojgar Yojana.

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(JRY), Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS), Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY), and Million Wells Scheme (MWS). Now it is known as Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana (SGRY).

_Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana_ (SGSY) has come into operation since 1st April 1999. It aims at establishing a large number of micro-enterprises in rural areas, building upon the potential of the rural poor. In this programme, the beneficiaries may be individual families or Self-Help Groups (SHG). During the year 2001-02, as against a target of 53,755 families, 110% of targeted families i.e. 59,233 family have been assisted. The percentages of SC, ST and women beneficiaries work out to be 23, 27 and 34 per cent respectively. The average per family investment was Rs.22004/- with subsidy-credit ratio 36:64.\(^\text{41}\)

The Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana (SGRY) is being implemented in the state to provide wage employment to the poor and also to create infrastructure in rural areas. At the same time supply of food is ensured by providing food grain as wage in this programme. The basic concept underlying this intervention is to provide food and employment to the rural poor.

Under Indira Awaas Yojna (IAY), now known as Integrated Rural Housing Scheme, families below the poverty line are provided with a grant of Rs. 20,000/- per one housing unit. But invariably, total cost of house now comes to Rs. 30,000/- to Rs. 35,000/- depending upon the geographical condition and the availability of infrastructure facilities. Unless and until, the unit cost is enhanced from Rs. 20,000/- to

minimum Rs.30,000/-, it may not be possible on the part of the BPL families to construct a house of their own.42

Studies undertaken by Misra and Behera (2000) and Kar and Meher (2001) on the impact of various anti-poverty programmes, namely, IRDP, DWCRA, TRYSEM, SITRA, JRY, EAS, IAY and MWS in tribal and backward districts of Orissa such as Mayurbhanj, Koraput and Nabarangpur by the State Government clearly indicate several weaknesses like improper identification of beneficiaries, inadequate and improper supply of assets to beneficiaries, untimely supply of subsidies by government and inadequate supply of loans by banks, inadequate generation of man-days of employment by contractors and their highhandedness in operating the programme, inadequate supervision, monitoring and follow up action either by Block staff or Bank staff to assess the end use of credit, poor marketing and training facilities available to the beneficiaries, etc. As the result of the weaknesses witnessed in the implementation of the schemes, the impact on generation of output, income and employment in the post-assistance period was marginal compared to pre-assistance period.43 Furthermore, the objective of assisting poor people to cross the poverty line through the benefits of the programmes has largely not materialized. The beneficiaries who were able to cross the poverty line were few in numbers. It can be said that the programmes did not have adequate impact on the poor as expected.

In order to tackle the hunger problem of the poorest of the poor, the Government of Orissa intervened by implementing several beneficiary-oriented schemes,

43 Misra, S.N. and M. Behera, An evaluation of Anti-poverty programmes in Mayurbhanj District of Orissa (Mimeo), Nabakrushna Choudhury Centre for Development Studies, Bhubaneswar. And the other study is by Kar, G.C.,and R.K. Meher, An evaluation of anti-poverty programmes in Nawarangpur District of Orissa (Mimeo), Nabakrushna Choudhury Centre for development Studies, Bhubaneswar.
infrastructure development schemes and social welfare schemes. The implementation of these schemes in Laikera block of Jharsuguda district indicate the same sort of weaknesses as revealed from the observation of anti-poverty programmes.\textsuperscript{44}

**Public Distribution System (PDS)**

Public Distribution System is in principle considered as an effective instrument for equitable distribution of essential commodities to consumers particularly belonging to weaker sections. The system operates through a network of Fair-Price shops. In Orissa, OCSC (Orissa Civil Supply Corporation) has been entrusted with the responsibility of distributing rice, wheat, sugar, imported edible oil, which is allotted by the Government of India. As per the government statistics by the year 2001-02, the above essential commodities were distributed through a network of 23,693 retail outlets, 177 Maitri shops and 110 mobile vans in inaccessible areas.\textsuperscript{45}

It is observed that the allotment and distribution of the essential commodities under PDS to the consumers are not adequate and proper in the State. The National Sample Survey 42nd round has reported that at the all-India level rice purchased from PDS formed only 16.7 per cent of the total rice purchased by the households. In case of wheat, it was 12.6 per cent only. Further, a study by Kirit S. Parikh has shown that in states like U.P., Bihar and Orissa where bulk of the rural poor are concentrated, 98 per cent of the rural population did not make any purchase from PDS. The benefits of PDS actually went to richer households in the rural areas.\textsuperscript{46}

\textsuperscript{44} Samal, K.C., and D. Jena, Freedom from Hunger: A study of Laikera Block (Mimeo), Nabakrushna Choudhury Centre for development Studies, Bhubaneswar, 1998.
The studies of Misra and Meher (1997) and Samal and Jena (1998) identified the following problems in the PDS. They include (a) all the essential commodities required by the poor are not supplied through PDS; (b) the quantities of different commodities supplied to the poor are not sufficient to maintain their livelihood, and even the quality of the ration is not good; (c) physical accessibility of the poor to the fair price shops is less and irregular due to the location of fair price shops at a distant place far away from the homes; and (d) the supply of kerosene oil, the much needed fuel for lighting purposes by the poor is much less compared to the demand for the product in rural areas. Sometimes, unscrupulous activities of dealers prevent the beneficiaries to receive their due share of kerosene quota. The same is true in the distribution of other essential items. For the successful implementation of PDS, the studies made some suggestions which include (a) revamping the Public Distribution System to include the poor persons only, and consumers above BPL are restricted to use PDS; (b) ghost cards be limited and abolished in order to enable only genuine card holders to approach the fair price shops; (c) the dealers need not be appointed on political lines, and unemployed youths having community approach and service mentality be assigned the job of manning the fair price shops; and (d) the fair price shops must provide all essential commodities to the poor like coarse cloths, baby food, matches and edible oils, etc.

**Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS)**

The Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) has been introduced in the state from the year 1975-76. Presently, the scheme is being implemented through 281 ICDS projects in 269 blocks of Orissa. It offers a package of health care services covering supplementary nutrition, immunization, health check up, nutrition and health
education, maternal care, and pre school education to children in the age group of 0 to 6 years. The above services are being delivered to the beneficiaries through 28,612 Anganwadi workers.

In spite of the good coverage of ICDS in Orissa, micro studies made in several parts of the State indicate that the beneficiaries under the programme had not received adequate care. Besides, the Anganwadi workers being untrained and inadequate in strength could not administer the programme effectively. Furthermore, there was absence of coordination and cooperation among different government functionaries on the one hand and Anganwadi workers on the other at the grassroots level.47

**Mid-Day Meals Scheme (MDM)**

In order to increase enrolment, attendance and retention among primary school going children (6 – 11 yrs) by reducing drop out rates, the Central Government launched Mid-day Meals programme on August 15, 1995. In Orissa the programme was started in the same year. In this programme the school children are provided with 100 grams of rice, 15 grams of Dal. Rice is provided free of cost by the Central Government to the State Governments. Even the cost of transportation of rice from FCI godown to the schools is borne by the Central Government at the rate of Rs.25 per quintal for the benefit of the State. Other provisions like dal, vegetables, edible oil, firewood and spices etc. required for mid-day meals are the responsibility of the State Government.48

The scheme was operating in 40,697 primary schools covering 45,03,045 number of students belonging to all the 30 districts of Orissa in 1998-99. The aim of the scheme is

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47 Samal and Jena, *op.cit.*

to benefit the poor and needy primary school going children in the State particularly in rural and backward areas. The total allotment made for Mid-day Meals scheme in 1995-96 was Rs.65.71 crore, in 1996-97 it was Rs.71.21 crore and in 1997-98 this declined to Rs.42.51 crore. However, there is a gap between the allotment and the actual expenditure on Mid-day Meals scheme. In 1995-96 the total expenditure made was Rs.65.66 crore in 1996-97 it was Rs.67.21 crore and in 1997-98 it was only Rs.37.94 crore. There is thus a mismatch between allocation and expenditure on Mid-day Meals programme. This mismatch is more pronounced in the year 1997-98 than earlier years. Taking into consideration the coverage of the programme both in terms of the number of schools and the students, the allocation appears to be inadequate for mid-day meals.49

The impact of Mid-day Meals scheme in Orissa reveals that the programme is more successful in educationally backward districts relatively to educationally advanced districts. In the educationally backward districts, enrolment, attendance and retention of children in schools have gone up considerably with reduction in the dropout of the children. In the educationally developed districts, on the other hand, enrolment of children has shown a declining trend due to (a) non-availability of children in the district in the age group of 6 to 11, (b) preference of parents to educate their children in English medium and private schools. However, there has taken place a significant improvement in percentage of attendance and retention of children with sharp decline in dropout rates after the introduction of Mid-day Meals scheme. The impact of mid-day meals is therefore, more felt in educationally backward and tribal dominated districts of Orissa than in educationally advanced districts.

49 Ibid., p.262.
However, the Mid-day Meals programme in Orissa is confronted with several problems. Based on different studies, the Orissa Development Report of the Planning Commission has pointed out the following problems in the Mid-day Meals Programme.

a. Teacher is the sole manager and organiser of the programme. This has affected the teaching ability of the teachers and study atmosphere in the schools.

b. Infrastructure in the form of utensils, kitchen room and cooking materials is inadequate and scarce affecting the implementation of the programme.

c. There is corruption in the programme affecting the very objective of the programme for which it is meant i.e., to provide nutritional food to school going children at the elementary level.

d. Absence of a separate budgetary provision for the implementation of the programme. Presently, the programme is sustained by the allocation of funds by Department of Women and Child Development, which receives the budgetary grants for several welfare schemes. Mid-day Meals programme is looked upon as one of such programmes.\(^\text{50}\)

The percentage of rural families living below the poverty line is much higher in the State. As a result of higher incidence of poverty in the State, the living condition of the people in terms of the development indicators like literacy rate, infant mortality rate, per capita income, per capita food grain production, is much below the national average. Even within the State there is greater inter-district variation in the living condition of the people. Moreover, the performances of the welfare activities are not satisfactory in the State, and these factors are mainly responsible for the poor living condition of the people.

\(^{50}\) Ibid., p.262.
Despite the adoption of several anti-poverty programmes in the state, a large number of people are still living in abject poverty in Orissa. If we take the example of much talked about Kalahandi we can find that it has become a symbol of recurrent poverty, a dismal failure of the Government policy. Kalahandi is still in the grip of heart-rending news about child-selling and starvation deaths. Many anti-poverty programmes are being implemented in this area but without any substantial results. S. C. Kumar, Nilanjan Das and B.B Malik studied the implementation of these programmes in Kalahandi. Their analysis clearly provides ample evidence to establish the fact that various poverty eradication programmes have failed miserably in reducing the incidence and severity of poverty in the district of Kalahandi in Orissa.\textsuperscript{51}

The situation of Kalahandi has not improved. Instead it has worsened. The elite of this area along with the government officials are exploiting the poor as well as the resources meant for the poor. In this regard Gail Omvedt writes,

\begin{quote}
The primary looter of this region which has been plundered so extensively over the last century appears to be the government of independent India. However the “state” as an abstract entity cannot be blamed—it would be more accurate to say that the beneficiaries of the low price labour provided by the poor of Kalahandi are the bureaucrats and politicians who control the state agencies, the merchants who get monopoly rights, the industrialists who get cheap raw materials and cheap labour. To go further would involve a longer analysis of the distribution of surplus among government employees and urban residents who benefit from the subsidies, etc.\textsuperscript{52}
\end{quote}

Bob Currie’s study of the politics of hunger in Kalahandi points towards a multiplicity of factors responsible for the dismal state of affairs in the district. For him the rent-seeking behavior of the state can be understood as a function of the people who manage it as well as the vested-interest which seeks to use it for private ends. He writes:

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\end{flushright}
Further, the government’s capacity to improve quality of administration in its welfare programmes was limited by a number of significant constraints. First, The Government of Orissa has experienced considerable difficulty in persuading skilled administrators to work in western Orissa. In the opinion of a number of OAS or IAS officers interviewed in the course of this study, Kalahandi is felt to be a “punishment posting”, requiring them to live in remote and uncomfortable conditions well away from centers of power and economic activity in coastal Orissa. Second, limitations on standards of education and training in western Orissa have perpetuated a situation where the majority of key positions in government and administration are filled by persons from coastal Orissa or other regions. The absence of local personnel in important positions has done little to encourage a local sense of ‘ownership’ in development programmes and has reinforced local opinion that de facto levels of ‘voice’ and ‘participation’ remain limited. Third, the state government has faced financial constraints in enhancing welfare support in Kalahandi. Hunger and poverty have persisted in this region, despite large sums spent in government programmes. Problems of high expenditure have been exacerbated by the avenues for rent-seeking and wastage created in relief and development works, particularly in ‘partnerships’ between government and private agencies in project management.\(^5\)

Several cases are reported from poverty stricken districts of Kalahandi, Balangir and Koraput that the poor in these districts are mortgaging their ration cards to the rich peasants. In many cases the rich peasant households are buying food grains from PDS shops showing the ration cards belonging to the poor. In some areas, it is reported that even the BPL households see little advantage in purchasing food from ration shops rather than from the market, because the price differential is too small to compensate for the quality differential.\(^4\)

In other parts of Western Orissa, the story of poverty-alleviation programmes is no different. Kishor C. Samal in his study of the implementation of anti-poverty programmes in Laikera Block of Western Orissa concluded that the average annual income at constant price (at 1991-92) of the sample household beneficiaries under

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IRDP has declined from around Rs. 9959 before the assistance to Rs 9,228 after the assistance implying negative effect of the IRDP programmes.\(^5\)

Modified Area Development Approach (MADA) has been implemented in the Block since 1985 to achieve objectives similar to IRDP, but exclusively for the tribals. But the available funds for these programmes have not been fully utilised during 1991-92 to 1995-96. The average income of sample MADA beneficiaries has increased marginally from Rs 8650 before the assistance to Rs 8668 after assistance, but they still remain below the poverty line.\(^6\) The available funds have not been fully utilized under the Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY) and its implementation in the Block has been, in comparison to the other parts of the state, tardy and half-hearted. The man-days of employment per beneficiary household through JRY is only about 17 days constituting 6.51 percent of the total employment from all sources which is far below the stipulated 100 days of employment. The implementation of Million Wells Scheme (MW), a sub-scheme of JRY in drought-prone area, in the Laikera Block was far below the popular expectation. But neither are the available funds fully utilized nor the physical target achieved. Similarly neither the extent of poverty nor its intensity has declined after the assistance under MWS.\(^7\)

Finally, Kishor C. Samal concluded that the entire rural development programmes in the block have failed to achieve their primary objective viz. alleviation of poverty. The study also observes that the extent and intensity of poverty as far as

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\(^{6}\) Ibid.

\(^{7}\) Ibid., p.1848.
the most vulnerable groups are concerned has increased despite the operation of the anti-poverty schemes of the Government.\(^{58}\)

While reviewing the tribal development programmes in Orissa, S.N.Rath laments that the achievements of the Government policies are insignificant and greatly uneven. But in many cases the differences in the level of development of tribal areas and the remaining regions in the state of Orissa have even accentuated. He suggests that the tribal development strategy should not be treated as a mere bureaucratic goal, but it should be related to the organizational values of the tribal community, environment and the community resources.\(^{59}\)

The persistent backwardness of Western Orissa has prompted the leaders of the region to accuse the Government of Orissa of prejudice and biased treatment. For example, Premlal Dubey, Chairman of Koshal Party told *Frontline* that the Orissa Government’s main concern is with the coastal region and the Western region has been largely neglected. There is no doubt that a large number of people belonging to this region are victims of acute poverty and deprivation. A high rate of infant mortality, large scale destitution, and deaths due to malnutrition are major features of life in western Orissa.\(^{60}\) In 1998, the Orissa government formed the Western Orissa Development Council (WODC), an advisory group whose main role is to suggest developmental alternatives for the western districts of Orissa. It is a pity that WODC cannot itself undertake development projects in Western Orissa. Although in recent

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\(^{58}\) Ibid.


times, the Council has been reconstituted, its agency as a pressure group and as an advisory body is seriously limited.\textsuperscript{61}

**Conclusion**

The preceding discussion raises the fundamental question: how do poverty and deprivation persist in several districts of Orissa despite the formal presence of anti-poverty measures undertaken by the Government? In an obvious sense one can see this as a glaring failure of public policy, a dismal admission that huge gaps exist between the intents of policies and its translation on the ground. Failure of public policies such as anti-poverty programmes can be due to multiple reasons. Often the media highlights the inadequate nature of the anti-poverty programmes. It is true that lack of efficacy of public policies can be due to its faulty conceptualization. However, field work evidence suggests that weak implementation of policies is not simply due to technical reasons, but largely due to social and political factors that mediate the process at different levels. Otherwise it is difficult to explain as to why despite political changes from time to time at the state-level, there is very little change evident in the lives of the poor in Western Orissa.

It is in this context that ‘dynamics of social forces’ acquire explanatory salience while explaining the state’s welfare and redistributive actions. Dreze and Sen\textsuperscript{62} have made a compelling case that governments that are caught in the process of democratic legitimacy through competitive elections cannot afford to ignore the needs of the poor, particularly when the needs are basic such as food, shelter and health. This assertion is undoubtedly true, particularly when one looks at the Government of Orissa’s repeated

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\textsuperscript{61} Ibid., pp.49-50.
responses towards the incidence of starvation deaths in its western districts. In the past, pressure from media and the political opposition had forced the Government to take immediate action to address the problem of intense food-insecurity among the poor in the state. However, the state-responses have always been ad hoc, temporary and never structural. Hence the story repeats itself no matter which political party or parties is/are in power in the state.

Against this background the important question to ask is as to why responses to acute poverty do not exhibit any variation across political parties. One of the explanations is that the social forces that control state institutions including the ones responsible for service delivery for the poor are the same no matter which political party/parties is/are in power at the state-level. Similarly, the dominant sections of the society are deeply entrenched in local societies that seriously undermine anti-poverty measures in the districts. The propertied classes still exercise a great deal of control over resources and institutions in several parts of Orissa. In the poorest districts of the state, their control is truly deep and over-powering. The landlords, contractors, local politicians, and local businessmen have a vested interest in maintaining the status quo in the region. It is because, this provides them the locus to exercise their influence over the society. It is in this sense that the failure of anti-poverty measures in Western Orissa is symptomatic of the power relations obtained in societies at different levels.

The failure of anti-poverty programmes in Orissa can also be seen as a function of state’s interaction with citizen groups belonging to the marginalized communities. Even though poor constitute a majority in the poorest districts of Orissa, their voices are rarely heard; even heard, they rarely acquire the influence within the system. The theoretical idea that a group of people can overwhelm a democratic system by their
sheer number appears to be simplistic in the case discussed above. This constitutes the central paradox of the practice of democracy in several parts of India including the poorest districts in western Orissa. One of way having a purchase over this paradox is to explain the ways in which the collective voices of the poor get fragmented, and the impediments because of which they could not contest the entrenched interest of the dominant classes in the region. As evidence suggests, the poor in Western Orissa do not work as a single power block, nor do they undertake collective action at a scale that can alter the power relations in the area.

The role of bureaucracy as the implementer of anti-poverty programmes has to be a significant part of the explanation. According to a dominant, although conventional, view the bureaucracy is conceived as an autonomous agency of the state responsible for administering welfare measures for the poor. On this view, it has to remain distant from the messy world of power politics and the unequal social relations. Over the years, however, this view has been contested by scholars working on the politics of development in India. The Indian bureaucracy does not fit into the Weberian ideal type. Perhaps no actually existing bureaucracy ever is. The argument is not so simple. Scholars working on this theme suggest that the bureaucracy in India is itself deeply implicated in the power relations itself. The people who staff bureaucracy carry their interest into the process; and also on occasions work directly as an instrument of the powerful classes in the society.63 Evidences from field work suggest that the insensitivity of local bureaucracy towards the plight of the poor is not merely a product of their inefficiency, but an outcome of their deliberate bias against the marginalized communities. The rent-seeking behaviour of the local bureaucracy

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has always gone against the interest of the poor, and has also helped the dominant classes and caste groups to perpetuate their control over local resources and institutions. Unless one focuses attention on the political economy of collusion between the dominant social forces, it is not easy to explain the failure of anti-poverty programmes of the Government. The important methodological lesson from the field work is that one has to put politics and power at the centre if one were to understand the dynamics of development in localities in India.

The unequal power relations do not reside only in the interaction between the state and the poor; it is also reflected within the communities. Seen from a gender lens, one can see the impact of patriarchy on the status of poor women. Here the vulnerability is multiplied, and cumulatively they become further marginalized in the process. The basic social tradition involving inheritance of parent’s property has deprived women of their right to resources. Women’s ownership of landed property is still largely a matter of grace not of right. As a result, it is observed that the landless women-headed households in rural areas are suffering from acute poverty.\(^{64}\)

The dimension of caste inequalities also plays a significant role in the process of anti-poverty programmes. Experiences from the field suggest that the members of the upper caste enjoy greater access to the local bureaucracy in Western Orissa. In comparison the dalits suffer from exclusion and neglect. The implementing officials, which are often belong to the upper castes, do not visit the dalit households for the fear of pollution. Hence, poor household belonging to dalit communities are left out of the welfare measures undertaken by the Government. When the survey for preparing Below-Poverty-Line list is conducted, it is mostly the dominant caste groups

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those who put their names in the list. It is therefore not surprising that the list of beneficiary prepared by the local administration is itself gets mired in controversies. The combination of class and caste disadvantages negatively influences the outcome of anti-poverty policies of the state.

In recent times, revival of the Panchayati Raj Institutions has added a new dimension to the implementation of welfare policies at the grassroots. It is particularly evident after the enactment of the 73rd Constitutional Amendment of 1993. By constitutionalising the participation of women, dalits and adivasis and ensuring some degree of devolution of power to the panchayats, this constitutional intervention created new opportunities to address poverty and deprivation at the village level in India. However, twelve years on, the story of Panchayat’s impact is rather mixed. At some places in Western Orissa, the entry of women, dalits and adivasis into the Panchayati Raj Institutions have sown the seed of a new kind of politics at the grassroots level. Social activists in the region feel that in time these seeds will germinate a different kind of interaction between the marginalized communities and the institutions of the state. However, one also came across several stories of elite capture of panchayats in this region. The influence of the landed elite and of the upper castes has not diminished in local governance. In the Gram Sabha deliberations, it is the same social forces who dominate the meetings. Their demands often trump over the ones put forward by the marginalized communities in panchayats. Particularly in faction-ridden panchayats, the elected representatives belonging to the upper class and caste share the benefits of the welfare provisions only with their supporters.\(^{65}\) In this context, the price for dissent or resistance can be quite high; the poor are forced to sacrifice their welfare entitlements provided by the state as a price for challenging the existing power relations.

\(^{65}\) Ibid., p.7.
at local levels. The dominant forces, though rooted in local power structure, have the
capacity to influence the public institutions at the state and national levels. The resultant
outcome is often determined by this ongoing struggle between the dominant groups and
the marginalized communities.

Finally it is reasonable to argue that in several poor districts of Orissa, the
implementation of anti-poverty measures is circumscribed by the interaction of social
forces at local levels. This holds the key to an explication of the 'policy world' that
the poor struggle to control and use.