Student politics represents a pervasive theme in contemporary Social Science literature. The focus of most of the scholarly works on student politics has been on student unrests, agitations, movements and student organisations. Quite a few empirical researches concerning student political activists, the key actors in student politics, have been carried out. Most of the scholars on student politics in India have generally given a passing reference to the profile and role performance of student leaders in short articles and monographs. The paucity of empirical studies on student leaders has motivated us to undertake the study of student politics and leadership in Orissa with special reference to the district of Mayurbhanj which is one of the most backward in the State with a predominantly tribal population. The focus of the study is on the student political activists of the six major colleges of the district of Mayurbhanj.

The study entitled "Student Politics and Leadership in Orissa: A Case Study of the District of Mayurbhanj" has a broad scheme with ten chapters. Chapter I provides a broad conceptual framework on student politics and leadership. Besides, it examines the scope and objectives of the study, the hypotheses and the method. Some of the important hypotheses tested in the study are as follows:
1. Student leaders come from middle class and lower-middle class families;
2. Student leaders belong to the upper brackets of the caste system;
3. Student leaders are academically average;
4. Student leaders come from politicised family;
5. School is the most important agency for the political socialisation of student leaders;
6. Political parties primarily contribute to the politicisation of the campus;
7. Student politics is primarily 'interest-oriented';
8. Student leadership does not reflect the aspirations of the people in the region;
9. Student politics in the district of Mayurbhanj is characterised by the absence of on-going movement; and
10. Student leaders aspire for a career in politics after completion of studies.

The study has utilised the methods of survey research. It includes content analysis of available literature, interview schedule and observation.

Chapter II, "Student Politics in Comparative Perspective" describes the global nature of student politics in three parts, namely, student politics in the advanced capitalist countries, in the socialist countries and the developing societies of the Third World.

Chapter III, dealing with student politics in India, examines the evolution of the student movement, the sources and causes of student activism and a brief review of literature.
on student leadership in India.

Chapter IV deals with the setting which includes a profile of Orissa, an overview of student politics in Orissa, a profile of the district of Mayurbhanj and of the six major colleges under study, namely, M.P.C. College, Baripada, M.P.C. Evening College, Baripada, Rairangpur College, Rairangpur, Karanjia College, Karanjia, Udala College, Udala and Mayurbhanj Law College, Baripada. The Study covers student leaders, both formal and informal, of four academic sessions from 1984-85 to 1987-88 and some informal leaders since the early eighties.

The primary focus of the study is on student leaders who are politically oriented and politically active. In attempting to present a profile and the role performance of the student leaders, various facets of leadership have been studied.

Chapter V presents the profile of the student leaders by analysing their socio-economic status, political patrimony, subject of study, place of residence during studentship, primary source of maintenance and academic record.

Chapter VI deals with the political socialisation process through which student leaders have passed before the assumption of activist role in college unions and student political associations.

Chapter VII entitled, 'Political Recruitment', deals with the process of selection of student leaders. It includes a discussion of the motivation for contesting College Union
elections, factors contributing to victory, factors contributing to defeat, sources of finance for electioneering, linkage with student political associations and with political parties.

The perception and orientations of the student leaders is an important element of their political culture. To ascertain their attitude towards student involvement in politics, some basic, though controversial, questions have been asked. In addition to this, their perception of student unionism, local/regional issues and problems and problems of the country have been ascertained. The results of such discussion are embodied in chapter VIII captioned as 'Perception and Orientation'.

Chapter IX entitled 'Role Performance' of the student leaders is, by far, the most important element of student politics and leadership. This chapter analyses the issues involved in student activism, role in agitations and movements, techniques of student protest, participation in off-campus elections, participation in community welfare schemes and the strains and stresses undergone by the student leaders during assumption of leadership roles.

The final Chapter is the concluding one which includes a brief summary of the core chapters and the findings of the study. The study has led to the affirmation of
certain hypotheses and qualified support or refutation of others. It is hoped that an indepth analysis of the nature of student politics and leadership in a tribal setting will contribute to the understanding of some aspects of student politics in India and other developing areas.