CHAPTER I

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(A) CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

I. Significance of the Study of Student Politics:

Student politics constitutes an important area of research in contemporary social science. Scholarly interest in the role of student-youth in politics—both 'on-campus' and 'off-campus'—has grown immensely since the 1960s, reflecting the political importance of students in all countries. Student political activism has become a global phenomenon. Diffusion of student political activism to most of the countries of the World, developed and developing, liberal-democratic and socialist, since 1964 has attracted the attention of governments, educational administrators and scholars. Lipset succinctly observes: "The concern with factors which affect the development processes—political, economic, and social—has resulted in a major focus on students as emerging elites. Knowledge of the values and activities of students is basic to any effort to evaluate prospects for development."¹

and established governments. Students combine the energy and idealism of the youth as well as the critical faculty and spirit of enquiry of the intellectual. Student-youth constitutes one of the most knowledgeable, dynamic and privileged strata in all societies. "By virtue of their exposure to education and intellectual trends, youthful idealism and unbounded energy, comparative freedom from job and family responsibility and acute political awareness, they present an easily mobilisable compact mass which, when harnessed, has generated considerable force that has produced an immediate impact on society and influenced the pace of social change."

In developing societies, massive and militant student movements have actually brought down governments and forced some of them to revise major policies. In the developed countries, student activism has forced the governments to focus attention on the major problems facing the University system and the broader society. They have dramatized the problems of society and the University and played their part as a dynamic force in educational and political change.

From the Marxist and neo-Marxist perspective, intellectuals and students are not significant independent


social forces. Rather, they have been viewed as vacillating, unreliable, "petit-bourgeois elements" who are inclined to shift with the prevailing ideological winds. Notwithstanding the major role played by students in socialist movements including Soviet Russia and China, the Communist Party and its leaders have tended to play down their role.

Student political role has received greater recognition by many on the Left in the advanced countries of Europe and North America primarily because other social forces including the workers are not always available for support. C. Wright Mills points out that the organised workers of these developed countries have become a conservative force and "trade unions and labour-based parties have been integrated into an institutional system of representation and collective bargaining".

Many developing societies have highly articulated traditions of student participation in political events and movements. They have played a crucial role in freedom struggles of many third-world countries. Student youth have a "magnificent share in the resurgence of nationalism and patriotism and breaking the shackles of colonialism, imperialism in the continents of Asia, Africa and Latin America".

5. Ahluwalia, Sagar, Youth in Revolt, New Delhi, Young Asia Publications, 1972, p. 313.
Most of the present day national and political leaders had a background of student political participation in the national liberation movements. University students have been one of the key-elements which have fostered ideas of patriotism and national unity in largely traditional populations. The tradition of student political participation created during freedom struggles has persisted into independence. Students continue to be politically active despite the advice of their political elites and elders to keep away from politics and confine themselves to the four walls of the campus.

The concern with modernisation and development processes has crucial significance for the developing societies. In such countries, there is an intrinsic conflict between the University and the society thereby creating a fertile ground for student political activism. The University is one of the primary modernising forces in underdeveloped and developing societies and higher education is a critical ingredient in the process of cultural, economic and political development. In such societies, students are one of the few modern, progressive and politically conscious elements. Education prepares the student community to play a vital role in modernising traditional and transitional societies. They have played a vanguard role in exposing the dysfunctions and
deficiencies within the educational system and the society at large. With limited literacy and political awareness among the general population, students constitute a disproportionately large section of the bearers of public opinion in such societies.

Notwithstanding the diversity of contexts of student politics in the developed and developing societies, students, in general, are anti-establishment and usually allied with the political opposition. "The oppositional role of the student political elites has made governmental and educational authorities conscious of the dangers of status-quo and made them responsive to innovation and change".6

Students have acted as a powerful pressure group in almost all countries. Student agitations and movements have attracted immediate attention of educational and political authorities. Students' support for political parties and leaders in electoral contests has proved crucial in some countries. Student participation in cultural movements has also been important. "Student movements and organisations, as carriers of modern, often radical political ideologies have been important in spreading ideological trends in various countries particularly in the developing areas".7 Again, student


protests have forced the universities to examine and reform themselves. For instance, in Latin America, the comprehensive reforms of 1918, which resulted in a metamorphosis of the university, were inspired by student protest politics.

The key-actors in student politics are the student leaders. As prospective members of the elite in their respective societies, their political awareness, orientation and activism have important consequences for the emerging political cultures of their countries. The character of the elites—political, bureaucratic, administrative, professional, academic—in a country is considerably shaped by the nature and orientation of youth and student leadership. As such, the study of student political leaders assumes significance in assessing the quality of leadership in a nation.

Since student politics is increasingly becoming an important variable of national politics, the importance of its study cannot be overemphasized. The impact of campus politics on the wider polity and society has occasioned a massive literature by social scientists and political analysts. Lipset aptly observes: "Any efforts to analyse the future of politics, whether on the domestic or international scene, will ignore the students at the peril of being in error".8

II. Student Politics: Meaning and Scope:

As a generic term "student politics" is not amenable to precise definition. Simply put, it means student awareness and student participation in affairs of the campus and the events of the broader polity and society. The meaning of student politics becomes clear by an examination of its diverse manifestations. Student politics has such dimensions as student perceptions and orientations, student political awareness, consciousness of student power, student agitations and movements and their overall activism, constructive activities of students, student organisations, student leadership and the overall interaction of student political activity with the educational and political systems.

Broadly speaking, student politics has two major dimensions— the 'on-campus' and the 'off-campus'—although issues and involvements in one area necessarily impinge on the other. Despite the difficulty in making a watertight compartmentalisation between the two, it is quite possible to identify student political participation in 'on-campus' arena which affects academic life and the campus and differentiate such participation from participation in 'off-campus' arena which has implication and significance for the polity and society.
The on-campus politics of students primarily revolves round the student union or the college union. There is much to be said in favour of student union politics. It provides students with the experience of elections and of the working of the democratic process. It permits a certain amount of decentralisation in academic administration, since student unions can be entrusted with wide powers to organise cultural and social programmes. It provides vast scope for constructive activities since the unit is small and closely knit. It provides a link between the academic administration and the student community. Trouble starts when the student unions take on a political character and cease to be cultural associations. It is not always easy to distinguish between complaints and grievances of students which are legitimate and those which are not. Generally student activities relating to campus problems and educational issues are considered as the legitimate domain of student politics.

Much student political participation in developing societies is "interest-oriented" because conditions in institutions of higher education are far from ideal. The plethora of deficiencies and inadequacies with which non-professional colleges are beset, generate the resentment and complaints.

which are the immediate reasons for much student unrest. Thus most of the so-called acts of 'indiscipline' are campus-oriented and the demands are directly addressed to educational authorities. Nevertheless, such demands assume a political overtone because these involve the utilisation of scarce resources for their satisfaction. Thus what begins as a pressure on educational authorities builds up into a showdown with the government and political authorities for the satisfaction of complaints and fulfilment of urgent demands. Students act as an interest group for the promotion of their interests.

Controversy is generated as to the role of students in off-campus politics. It is quite natural for young and enlightened minds to react to conditions in the broader society. Campuses reflect the conflicts, tensions and trends of the polity and society. Students look at social, political and economic problems with the analytical apparatus provided by education. They have loaded the educational and political authorities with numerous grievances and demands. They have fought for important social, political, economic, cultural and moral issues. Student political activism in the 'off-campus' arena has ranged from broad societal issues to sporadic outbursts only vaguely associated with concrete demands.  

For a proper understanding of the nature and scope of student politics, it is worthwhile to examine some of its key-ingredients in some detail. It is proposed to examine such components of student politics as, student power, student activism, student leadership and politicisation of the campus.

As the New Left obtained support from student activists on many of the North American campuses, two threatening terms have become identified with their actions; namely, 'student power' and 'confrontation'. "These terms are used, in the main, to refer to their struggle to gain power from their respective university administrations. The goal of the New Left is to achieve enough student power to share equally in all decision-making so that the university will become a really democratic institution". Students began using the slogan 'student power' soon after the black people in the Civil Rights movement made the demand for 'black power'. This demand has affected most of the advanced countries of the capitalist world. They are fighting "for control by the students of the organisation and content of the education they receive". It is alleged by the students that the objective conditions for students' revolt exist

throughout the institutions of higher education. Everywhere education is subordinated to examinations, competition and grading. Social relations between the students and the faculty are usually infected by paternalism, deference and careerism. They resent the passivity which the system seeks to impose on them.

Student power is not primarily a matter of constitutional rights but rather of student’s independent capacity for mobilisation and struggle against the repressive educational system. Hence, "at its base student power must mean the ability of the students’ bloc to inflict, if necessary, sanctions of sufficient economic, social or political magnitude to force its opinions to be heeded. At a more operational level, it implies the participation of students in, or the joint control by students and staff of the internal authority structure". Fonseca defines 'student power' as the ability of students to bring to bear on society, economic, social and political pressures so as to have their opinions heard and their demands satisfied.

The contemporary slogan of 'student power' has an element of legitimacy. Students demand an active share in the decision-making process pertaining to the educational system.


They want the student unions to be completely self-governing. If decisions by political leaders and academic administrators totally affect students' career prospects, they should be given a fair share in the decision-making process. This should necessarily involve students in 'off-campus' politics. 'Student power' is a forthright assertion of the activist students to play their proper part in the decision-making process.

Student political activism has become a global phenomenon. As a concept, it is better understood and experienced and less precisely defined. Student activism is the overt expression of students' dissatisfaction with the imperfections and inadequacies of the existing system. However activism may involve both positive and constructive as well as negative and disruptive implications. "Political activism is meant cognition about and positive or negative feeling towards political objects and a readiness for political participation". Political activism, thus, involves first of all, a knowledge about objects, issues and events which leads secondly to a positive or negative feeling towards these. The third and final stage is actual participation and involvement in issues/events.

Philip G. Altbach analyses the variety of forms of student activism. These include: (1) major riots and

disturbances, (2) student participation in electoral contests as allies of political parties, (3) student participation in cultural movements, (4) student movements and organisations as carriers of modern, often radical, political ideologies and (5) students' efforts to reform the universities. Thus student activism may range from broad societal and academic issues to sporadic outbursts associated with trivial and minor issues. Again student activism may be manifested through peaceful protests like appeals to authorities, silent demonstrations, dharna and may find expression through violent activities like 'gherao', threats, strikes, agitations and protracted movements.

Of all the forms of student political activism, student movements are the most important and lasting. Altbach defines student movement "as an association of students inspired by aims set forth in a specific ideological doctrine, usually, although not exclusively, political in nature. A student movement may be generated by an emotional feeling often associated with inter-generational conflicts, although it may also be motivated by positive goals; the members of a student movement, moreover, have the conviction that, as young intellectuals, they have a special historical mission to achieve, or to correct imperfections in their environment.

A student movement is a combination of emotional response and intellectual conviction.\(^{17}\)

Smelser makes an important distinction between norm and value-oriented student political action. Norm-oriented student movements generally aim at the correction of a specific grievance or at a particular goal; it is unlikely to maintain itself after its goal has been attained. The value-oriented student movement is concerned with broader ideological issues and when it is involved in concrete actions, these activities are usually linked directly to a broader concern. In the student community, a value-oriented movement has more important influence in the long run.\(^ {18}\) Student movements often defy a tight definition of either category and what starts as a limited protest against a specific issue may, in the long run, turn into a sustained movement concerned with broader ideological issues.

Altbach makes a distinction between student movements concerned only with 'campus' issues with little interest in or impact on the broader society. Such movements have been called 'etudialistic' because of their primary student orientation. Contrasted to such movements are society-oriented student movements, which are concerned with societal


issues—usually political, although occasionally social or cultural.  

Lewis S. Feuer, contrasting student movements with labour movements, speaks of the former's 'fitful and transient character'. He defines the "student movement as a combination of students, inspired by aims which they try to explicate in a political ideology, and moved by an emotional rebellion in which there is always present a disillusionment with and the rejection of the values of the older generation."  

He analyses the basic traits of student movement in terms of 'juvenocracy' as against 'gerentocracy', 'filiarchy' as opposed to 'patriarchy' and 'intellectual elitism'. Student movements arise in the conviction that the older generation has discredited itself and lost its moral standing; it tends to arise where political apathy or sense of helplessness prevails among the people. Moreover a student movement arises from a diffused feeling of opposition to things as they are.

Student movements have occasionally achieved direct political results from their activities. In the developing societies, a number of governments have been shaken or toppled by student movements. Students exercised an important influence.


on the Russian and Chinese revolutionary movements and the nationalist liberation struggles in a number of countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America. Student political activism has focussed attention on basic social and educational issues in the advanced Western countries. Student action has also had impacts, both positive and negative, on the educational process. However, student movements have not always played a progressive role in the community; they have, at times, acted as reactionary force supporting traditional elements in society.

The importance of leadership in any organisation and movement can seldom be exaggerated. Altbach writes: "The leadership of student movements and organisations is a particularly decisive variable, since student movements tend to be rather amorphous. In the student movement, where there is an absence of strong parliamentary procedures and the regular organisational structures, leadership assumes great importance." Leadership influences the group climate which has a significant effect on the behaviour and productivity of group members. They keep the group machinery by maintaining a high level of co-ordination and boosting the morale of the group. In essence, the leader is the group member who exerts

more positive influence over others than they exert over him. According to M.C. Awasthi, "leadership" as it is used in social science literature, has three major meanings. It is conceived as an attribute of a position, as a characteristic of a person or an attribute of a behaviour. These may very well be understood as only different aspects of one phenomenon. In other words, the leader may be understood as a person who gets a preferential position, an office in the group, because of certain personality qualities which are perceived as instrumental in the satisfaction of group-goals.

Leaders can be divided into two categories, formal and informal leaders. In the student community a formal leader is one who is elected by the student body and occupies a position in the student union or in a student political association and influences student behaviour to a considerable extent. An informal student leader is one who does not occupy any formal position of influence in any student organisation but emerges into limelight at crucial moments in the history of the student community. Such leaders influence student behaviour to a great extent in times of unrest.

Altbach makes a useful distinction between 'academic' leadership and 'political' leadership found in Indian campuses.

The academic student leaders lead 'respectable' non-political cultural and social student organisations while the student political leaders provide leadership in direct action campaigns. Hazary makes a distinction between 'student political elites' and 'student academic elites'. He uses the term 'student political elite' to refer to a small group of student leaders who take active part in agitations, movements and political affairs of their locality and the nation. The other group, known as 'academic elites' comprise students who take leadership in cultural, academic, intellectual and social student activities and organisations.

In any analysis of student political participation and activism, it is important to remember that "only a small percentage of the total student body actually participates in them". Studies conducted in both developed and developing societies show that the majority of students in all countries are politically quiescent and moderate in their views and the activist group constitutes a very small minority of student community. There is a sharp contrast between the minority


of highly committed student activists and the mass of apolitical student participants. The student political activists display a radical orientation connected with an 'integrated role image', in the sense that the student role is not separated from the citizen role. Student life is seen as a part of national political life. The active few set the political tone for the whole campus and "they are the ones who give shape to the free-floating frustrations of the mass of students, direct them to activism in the campus".

Student political leaders are politically oriented and politically active. They have close links with political parties and political personalities. They look upon their assumption of leadership role in student politics as a springboard for future political leadership. They fight for positions in the student unions and various student political associations which are student fronts of political parties. They act as spokesmen of the student community on various issues. They organise movements against educational and governmental authorities for fulfilment of student grievances and demands.

Leadership in the student community is characterised by instability and discontinuity. The short duration of student leaders' stay on the campus deprives them of any

27. Ibid., pp.73-74.
long-term perspective with regard to the issues and problems of their institutions. Such a situation is exploited by professional student leaders and outside political manipulators.

"The major problem in organising student movement is that they do not have enduring leadership. ... The student associations are organised or maintained by each new crop of students, and those that gradually learn leadership skills as they move through college are soon replaced by a new group of untrained leaders. Thus leadership is passed on in a very haphazard way." 29

In recent years, it has been difficult to identify student political leaders with any specific ideological stance. In the sixties, student political activists were mostly the leftist radicals. Increasingly traditionalist elements and rightist ideologies seem to have received at least as much support from student activists as have parties and movements with leftist orientations.

A perceptive observer of the Indian educational scene writes: "One of the most important aspects of university life has been the politicisation of many universities in India. This factor has major implications for student activism and indiscipline." 30 Politicization refers to a process by which the orientation, behaviour and actions of the campus

inmates are influenced and coloured by politics. The larger political sphere has affected the autonomy and normal functioning of the institutions of higher education resulting in what is frequently deprecated as the ' politicization of the campus'.

Politici zation of educational institutions is characterized by Rudolph and Rudolph as the appropriation of educational structure and resources and the displacement of educational goals by organised political and community (religion, caste, locality) interests. The purpose of politicization is to "subsume the educational goals and processes of particular educational institutions to those of organised extra-educational interests". Politicization of educational institutions, according to these authors, "is a part of larger process of politicization in India in which an increasing number of actors in various political arenas attempt to maximise political resources and through it political influence and power".

In most of the Third World countries there have never been strong traditions of academic autonomy in the universities. "In a narrow sense, universities are inevitably political institutions. They both affect, and are affected by local, state and national politics". Whether one likes it or

32. Ibid.
not, the influences of governments on institutions of higher education is decisive. The structure of most institutions of higher education in relation to Governments is too political. The lack of university autonomy is primarily due to its dependence on the government for its finance. Various agencies of the government exert great influence on the university in the realms not only of general policy-making but also in day-to-day affairs. This government direction and control over the internal affairs of the university has led to the extensive politicization of the campus. Rudolph and Rudolph, in their analysis of the pattern of interaction between educational and the political system, point out that the political system affects education both through the instrumentality of governmental action and the machinations of political parties, especially, as they influence student bodies and sometimes even academic bodies.

The key-actors involved in politicization of the campus are: student groups, faculty factions and political personalities. Their interests range from private and parochial to those associated with the larger political contests.

The role of student political factions and leadership has often been highlighted in the analysis of campus politicization. Student unions, supposed to be primarily cultural associations, have been amenable to outside political influence.

They appear as politically oriented groups and have tended to function like trade unions presuming to represent students' interests against those of teachers and educational authorities. The affiliation of student groups with student political associations and political parties and the student leaders' perception that they cannot become leaders unless they maintain contact with the politicians, provide an easy access to the political parties to intrude into the arena of student politics. "The existence of political factions in the student body representing diverse, even in some cases, diametrically opposed political stances......has undoubtedly been a crucial factor for greater political activism and campus violence. Since there is a competitive tendency among the rival factions to control and dominate the student body, it is understandable that there inherently lies a clash of interests in the power struggle culminating in 'inter-group-rivalry' and 'politics of conspiracy'. Political factionalism on the campus has been a barrier to the emergence of a unified and total student movement. Student leaders are usually pampered by powers that be and their political mentors outside. There is a breed of professional student leaders who have been on the campus for a much longer period than is required and who act as mass leaders using the campus as an experimental workshop to

achieve their ultimate political goal.

In any discussion of the distorted politicisation of the campus, the teacher-politician should not be denied his due share. A teacher politician, characterises Vithal, "can be either a teacher who takes part in outside politics, or a teacher who creates politics within the university out of matters which are purely parochial and are no longer significant".37 "Factional squabbles on the faculty level and the role of the teacher politicians who succeed better in their career than those who devote to teaching and research have had a disastrous effect on the morale of the campus. Like the professional student leaders, the teacher politicians are heavily involved in party politics, crave for cheap popularity and manipulate to achieve influential and lucrative positions for themselves".38

A.K. Singh, in his Ranchi University study, finds a political equation in the teacher-student relationship in which teachers help students to gain political power and students form cliques with teachers to promote their parochial concerns.39 Roy, in his BHU case study, shows that the agitating students are related to faculty factions and the agitations

37. Quoted in Roy, A.B., Students and Politics in India, New Delhi, Manchar, 1977, p. 6.
are used as a means for exerting pressure on university authorities. In India, the role of teacher politicians in politicization of the campus has been documented in some other case studies and in a number of after-agitation commission reports.

By far the most important and serious factor contributing to campus politicization is the interference of the political parties and personalities in educational institutions. "Partisan politics enters the university community as the university seeks support among political factions and political factions vie with each other for control over the university." For the politician, the university is seen as a political platform to be used in the promotion of their political power. Sarkar succinctly remarks: "In the eyes of politicians, the university and its offices are a checkerboard for the group politics of the state and students are fair game for drumming up factional support." Political parties compete to recruit students as a social class and political category in enhancing their partisan interests. The partisan interests are: (i) building up of a student political movement against the party in power; (ii) recruiting future party cadres.

including leadership and (iii) gaining electoral support.

The role of youth organisations and the student fronts of political parties in the politicization of students is of paramount importance. Almost all political parties have their youth and student affiliates on the campuses through which they control the political behaviour and activities of students. Politics of collaboration between political parties and student fronts is the central feature of student politics in many of the Indian campuses. The involvement of extraneous political forces in campus politics has contributed to considerable politicization, activism and destabilization of campus life. Rivalry and animosity among parties and political personalities are reflected on campus electoral battles. M.S. Gore aptly observes: "The politicization of educational institutions is primarily party, faction and personality-oriented. Its ideological thrust is at best superficial".

III. Characteristics of Students and Student Groups:

Students, as a group, exhibit certain common characteristics despite national and regional variations. Studentship is a clearly demarcated stage of life which displays certain unique features.

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46. Gore, M.S., Indian Youth, New Delhi, Vishwa Yuvak Kendra, 1977, p. 70.
There is considerable disagreement among social scientists about the status students enjoy as a social category. Sociologists view students as 'prospective members of the elite' of their countries or as an 'incipient elite'. By virtue of their education and training, they are most likely to occupy the elite positions in their society. In the developing countries, the elites of the modern sector of the society are drawn substantially from the reservoir of persons with university training. A substantial proportion of the political leadership emerges from the ranks of political activists on the campus. In most of the societies, students constitute a distinctive group with high status and with relative immunity from severe repression for their activism. "Their status as kinmen of the incumbent elites, and as prospective members of the elite themselves, affords them a special position among oppositional groups".

One school of the elite theorists assigns students the position of one of the 'sub-elites', the other sub-elites comprising the whole "new middle class of civil servants, managers and white-collar workers, scientists and engineers, scholars and intellectuals. These groups supply recruits to the elite and are themselves a vital element in the government of society". Students, being characterized as 'apprentice

48. Ibid., p. 6.
49. See Bottomore, T.B., Elites and Society, Pelican Book, p. 11.
intellectuals' necessarily belong to the sub-elite group. This interpretation assigns students a privileged status denied to most other strata of the population.

Marxists and neo-Marxists tend to assign a secondary role to students. From the Marxist perspective, intellectuals and students are not significant independent social forces. Rather they have been viewed as a part of the bourgeois establishment. For the Marxists, the proletariat is the only revolutionary class, while students are looked upon either as trivial or reactionary force.

On the other hand, members of the New Left including Herbert Marcuse argue that the proletariat in modern industrial society has been integrated into the system and that the intellectuals including the students alone can be regarded as a potentially revolutionary force.50

C. Wright Mills also suggested that students and intellectuals, rather than the working class, may be an "immediate radical agency of change". As a sociologist, he urged the need "to study these new generations of intellectuals (including university students) round the world as real live-agencies of historical change".51 He was disillusioned with labour and at odds with the middle class and the 'power-elite'. Thus by a process of elimination, he had only the

50. Marcuse, Herbert, One-Dimensional Man, Boston, 1964.
intellectuals to turn to as agents of social change.

There is controversy among scholars in characterising students as a social class. Some hold that "students are not a class but a temporary occupation; they are apprentice intellectual workers, who no sooner become conscious of themselves as a community than they tend to be dispersed and hence, neutralised. But in the brief interlude of their training, they form a compact group, which has shown a tremendous political elan from country after country". Nigam holds that "students are not a class". Whereas the working class or the peasantry as a class have their own demands-economic and political, the case with a multi-class group like students is entirely different. These scholars reject the 'social class' status of students on the ground that students while they are students do not constitute an economic category and they come from diverse socio-economic and cultural backgrounds. This heterogeneity in their socio-economic composition precludes the possibility of a common consciousness for unified action.

C.J. Lammers has proposed that students, in modern society, should be regarded as a social class. He follows the usage of Dahrendorf who defines social class not with reference

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to property relations, but rather as a conflict group consisting of people with common interests. Lammers uses the term 'class' as he believes that there are telling parallels between the development of working class movements and those of students.\footnote{Quoted from Pinner, Frank A., "Western European Student Movements Through Changing Times", in Altbach, P.G. (ed.), \textit{The Student Revolution}, Op.Cit., pp.238-239.}

Notwithstanding the diversity of scholarly interpretations pertaining to the status of the student community, it is possible to analyse certain broad characteristics of students and student groups common to most societies.

Students are in their late teens or early twenties—an age often called 'the age of revolt'. They are attracted by the idea of action, for they are "simultaneously at the height of their sexual prowess, physical energy, intellectual curiosity and their rebellion against authority...In sum, they are human dynamite".\footnote{Lipset, S.M., and Seabury, Paul, "The Lessons of Berkeley", p.17.} "University students", as Lipset observes, "live on the boundary between the last stage of adolescence, with its freedom from the burdens of adult responsibility, and the first stages of adulthood, with its complex of pressing tasks and difficult decisions".\footnote{Lipset, S.M., "University Students and Politics in Underdeveloped Countries" in Lipset, S.M., (ed.), \textit{Student Politics}, Op.Cit., p.15.} The physical strength, unbounded energy and comparative freedom from adult responsibility enable the student groups to join...
demonstrations, agitations and movements with comparative ease.

Studentship in institutions of higher education is a transitory phase of life, usually lasting only four or six years, though extended by research activities. While some professional student leaders prolong their stay on the campus by joining different disciplines, for the vast majority of the students, academic life is a short but highly intensive period. This makes the existence of on-going student organisations, continuing leadership and long-term programmes almost impossible. Many students consider student life as a period of preparation for employment and economic security while for others, it is a period of unparalleled freedom. There is a difference in orientation between the generally career-minded and politically disinterested Science and professional students and the more intellectually inclined and politically motivated students of Liberal Arts and the Social Sciences. It is the latter group of students who provide leadership and manpower in student agitations and movements.

Sociological analysis points out that "youth and students in particular, are marginal men. They are in transition between having been dependent on their families for income, status and various forms of security and protection and taking up their own roles in jobs and families. Studenthood
is generally a tension-creating period. They are also marginal because they do not fully participate in the society. Campus life prolongates their social marginality.

One of the major developments that is affecting the lives of students is the new youth culture. A youth culture has arisen in modern societies progressively as the importance of family as a socialising agency has declined. The shared and distinct experience among the students in the campus environment has led to the shared interests and problems, which has led, in turn, to the development of a distinct student sub-culture. One of the effects of this sub-culture is that students gradually are separated from parental authority and the values they represent. They tend to resent the authority of adults and come to rely more and more on their peers. Lipset observes: "the student stratum, as such, tends to create a whole array of age-group symbols which sets it apart from others in society and from adults, in particular. These include unique patterns of personal appearance, peculiar modes of communication and special styles of life. In their desire to demonstrate their rejection of the adult-world, youth rebels have repeatedly engaged in forms

of expressive behaviour which have been noteworthy for their similarity.\textsuperscript{58}

Max Weber, in his great lecture on 'politics as a vocation', observed that youth has a tendency to follow "a pure ethic of absolute ends", while maturity is associated with "an ethic of responsibility".\textsuperscript{59} Following Max Weber's observation of students, Lipset holds that university students evaluate things in absolute terms, right or wrong, good or bad, and just or unjust. Students have the reputation for having greater ideological purity than other elements in society. They are more idealistic than pragmatic. Hence, those events and traditions which point up the gap between ideals and reality, promise and performance, stimulate them to action. They are more likely to offer all-encompassing solutions to societal problems than their elders.

"Righteous in tone, symbolic in content, student politics differs from 'adult-politics' in the sense that it is more often the art of the impossible. This emphasis on style over programme and commitment over compromise is at once the weakness of student movements and their strength.\textsuperscript{60}


Many societies treat radicalism of the youth, particularly of students, as something natural for their age. "They permit students a degree of political freedom, even licence, to violate norms and laws of the society without being punished or with less punishment than is generally meted out to others. Sentences against student revolutionaries are usually mild compared to those given to non-students." This comparative freedom from repression and harsh punishment by authorities encourages greater political activism among students.

Students, being without gainful full-time employment, are the non-established. They are dependent on subsidies from their families, educational institutions or their own part-time work. Altbach writes, "physiologically and psychologically the period of adolescence is one of adjustment and change, and this cannot but have repercussions on the educational, social and political attitudes of the students. The need for independence and self-expression are great during this period, and the tendency toward rebellion against authority, particularly that represented by the father is marked." Students are, as Erikson says, "between the developmental stage of youth, the economic stage of the poor, and

the political stage of the underdeveloped. Sung observes that "to the extent that students are the nonestablished, they are foot loose, and relatively free to engage in activism. From this standpoint, their anti-system or anti-establishment tendencies are not necessarily accidental but closely related to their economic and social status."  

Student community is often characterised as cohesive and homogeneous. Most contacts are within the student community. Students' friends are mostly other students. They are equally young, and in the same stage of the life cycle. The existence of a large number of students at one location, with similar interests, and subject to a common environment, inculcates in them a sense of community. This enables the students to organise agitations and movements with ease and swiftness.

Student groups are characterised by effective communications. Students are the most easily mobilizable stratum. Again student movements and protest politics have a way of diffusing from one society to another through the process of imitation.

Students, especially in developing societies, are subjected to various pressures. As representatives of modern

64. Ibid., p.52.
ideas and western culture, they are alienated from traditional patterns of their societies. There is much vacillation between tradition and modernity in the student community.

The demands of academic life and the uncertain employment prospect put considerable pressure on a large number of average and mediocre students. The pressure of examinations leave little time and energy for extra-curricular activities. With the rapid expansion of educational opportunities, a vast majority of students in the developing countries have come from deprived background. Their maladjustment with the academic milieu and sense of insecurity stemming from prospectlessness of a career create in them sufficient frustration and resentment which constitute one of the major factors of campus unrest.

In some developing countries, government pressure for political conformity, censorship and repressive measures affect adversely the vociferous and politically oriented sections of the student community. The pervasive corruption, nepotism and incompetence of governments in a large number of Third World Countries generate student opposition to the established regimes.

The environment of the individual student is also a source of strain. Students are subject to diverse pressures individually. Many students suffer from financial hardship

which proves prejudicial to their academic pursuits. In many cases, the physical facilities in educational institutions are poor and basic amenities for academic enterprise are lacking. The spectre of unemployment and underemployment haunts many students in the developing societies, and this fear makes their academic experience far from satisfactory.

IV. Typology of Students:

The student community was homogeneous in an earlier era when education was elitist and off-springs from well-to-do families got opportunity to avail the benefits of higher education. Increasingly, an open and mass educational system led to a very rapid expansion of education and destroyed, to a large extent, the earlier homogeneity and the sense of community of the student population. The diversity of the socio-economic backgrounds and the phenomenal increase in the number of student population have led to the corresponding diversity in student perception, attitudes, values and life goals. This calls for the formulation of a typology of students. However, no single typology of the student population is applicable to national and regional variations. Moreover, there are more than one criterion on which students could be classified. It is proposed to analyse certain typologies relating to some national political systems gleaned from the literature on student politics and then formulate a typology generally applicable to the Indian situation.
In 1903, a revolutionary student newspaper—Students—which ran for three issues only—classified the Russian students in terms which Lenin found apt: (a) The indifferent crowd—"persons completely indifferent to the student movement"; (b) The academics—those who favour student movements of an exclusively academic type; (c) "Opponents of student movements in general"—nationalists, antisemites etc.; (d) The "politically minded"—those who believe in fighting for the overthrow of Tsarist despotism. Of these groups, the "indifferent students" constituted the overwhelming majority of the student body, while "the politically minded" were the activist few of the student movement. Among the present day students, Lenin found six political groups: reactionaries, indifferent, academics, liberals, socialist-revolutionaries and social democrats.

Typologies of American College students for the late sixties have been offered by sociologists. Berkeley sociologists Burton Clark and Martin Trow gave a typology in the form of four "sub-cultures"—the vocational, the academic, the collegiate and the non-conformist. S. M. Lipset outlined a model consisting of "eight student types" distinguishable in terms of their dominant value commitment. His types are: vocationalists, professionals, collegiates, ritualists, academics, intellectuals, left-activists and hippies. So far

as the orientation of these groups vis-a-vis American institutions are concerned, the vocationalists and professionals accept, the collegiates, ritualists, academics and intellectuals are neutral and the left-activists and hippies reject the institutions. The names Lipset says, refer to ideal types which mask the huge variability on many dimensions existing within each group.68

Typologies of Indian students in the post-independence period have been attempted by perceptive observers of the Indian educational scene. The elite-mass dichotomy applicable to the general population is also relevant to any analysis of a typology of student population. There are a few student elites/leaders who attain proficiency either in academics or in politics. Altbach distinguishes between two kinds of student leadership, one the 'academic' leadership which leads the 'respectable' non-political, cultural and social student organisations. They have a primary intellectual orientation and usually come from upper class families. The other group consists of student leaders who are "active in direct-action campaigns (and) have come more frequently from the lower social classes. The continuing leadership of leftist student groups, however, is generally drawn from middle class students, who have a political tradition and sufficient free time to devote

Joseph Di Bona examines the elite-mass dichotomy, found among the students in the evolution of the Allahabad University from an elitist to a mass institution. Large number of rural youth from deprived backgrounds have entered the university to seek degrees for their instrumental value. Thus on the criterion of family and social background, it is possible to speak of two types of students, namely, the student from the elite-family and the first generation students. Amar Kumar Singh distinguishes between the 'Collegiate' and the 'political activists' among the students. The collegiate group is more oriented to study and co-curricular activities, while the political activists are oriented to politics and provide leadership and manpower in agitations and movements.

Durgananda Sinha presents a more comprehensive classification of Indian students which includes the academic and career oriented elites, the small band of political activists and the 'silent-aimless-majority'. The academic-oriented body of students generally come down from well-to-do,

higher middle class homes with sound tradition of education. They remain usually uninvolved politically. The political activists are politically involved and active and take an 'anti-academic' and 'anti-elitist' stance. The silent-aimless-majority constitutes the first generation students, mostly from rural and economically poorer background and desperately seek a university degree to get into some job. They provide the crowd during student agitations led by political activists.

Taking into account the foregoing typologies of Indian students, Hazary makes a four fold classification of the Indian student population on the basis of their basic orientation and dominant value-commitment either to academics or to politics: 'the careerist', 'the political activists', 'the professional student' and 'the vast majority of apolitical and academically average students' designated as 'the silent aimless majority'.

The careerist group includes academically oriented students who usually come from well-to-do families. They are highly career conscious and profession-oriented. They take interest in studies, co-curricular and extra-curricular activities on the campus but remain indifferent to politics. At best they engage in drawing-room discussion on politics.


but avoid direct participation in it. This group could also be labelled as the 'academic elites' or the 'collegiates' as opposed to the political activists.

The political activists constitute the 'active few' of the student population in all countries. They are politically oriented, maintain close links with political parties and personalities and provide leadership during agitations. They fight for student union posts and act as the most vocal spokesmen of student interests and demands.

There is a typical group of student activists, 'the professional students' who manage to retain their student status not with any academic objective but to build up their future political career. They are older and tougher, some of them continue to stay in one or more educational institutions for ten years or more. They are the veterans of student politics and 'are often the catalysts who agitate lambs into lions'. They capture student unions and student political organisations and make use of strong-arm methods to achieve their objectives. A local Benaras daily identified the following characteristics of professional student leaders: (a) poor academic performance, (b) high verbal ability, (c) familiarity and connection with the politics of the teacher community, (d) political career aspirations and contact with

political parties, (e) desire for leadership and (f) desire for 'hanging around' the University. They have earned the nickname 'permanent students' on many north Indian campuses.

The last group, the vast majority of apolitical and academically mediocre students (also referred to as the 'silent aimless majority') are mostly the first generation students who predominantly belong to rural and economically poor backgrounds. On account of their poor schooling and background, they find the academic atmosphere both unfamiliar and alien. This group suffers from frustration and deprivation and are ready material for the political activists to use and exploit. The activists help them find residence and admission and guide them with a sort of elderly fraternal attitude.

Besides, this group becomes "the source from which the crowd was drawn during speech making, processions and agitations organized by the activists, and also constituted the potential sources of new student leadership."

This four fold typology of the student population in India is an ideal type which admits of considerable overlapping. There are some first generation rural students who shine in academics and display a keen sense of careerism. All students from urban and privileged backgrounds do not necessarily possess either the ability or the temperament to

be academic elites. Political activists and professional leaders may come from any family and socio-economic background. This classification provides a rough and ready guide for a proper understanding of the nature and character of the Indian student population.

With regard to ideological orientations, Indian students today, cover the full political spectrum that ranges from radical to conservative. Radicals generally reject the prevailing institutions and policies of society and seek to establish a new kind of socio-political-economic order through overhauling of the system. In India, student groups, allied with the Naxalite movements and extreme left parties like C.P.I.(M-L) and S.U.C.I., belong to this category. Some of the leftist student political groups take a radical stance on socio-economic and educational issues, but by and large, they have failed to achieve any substantial result. Liberals and moderates belong to the 'centre' of the ideological spectrum. They desire social change including reforms in the educational system through piecemeal, gradual reforms in the prevailing institutions. Student groups allied with centrist political parties like the Congress(I) and the Janata belong to this category. Conservative students believe that society is basically sound and wish to preserve its values and institutions. Student groups aligned with rightist parties and traditionalist groups belong to this category. In
addition to this, there are some students who are aligned with reactionary and fundamentalist forces and as such, pose a threat to India's pluralistic society and democratic polity. It is to be noted that very few students and student groups are ideologically oriented; most of them only pay lip service to ideologies. This is, in large measure, a reflection of the politics of expediency and personality-oriented politics of the larger political sphere.

Analysts of the Indian campus scene have noted with concern the emergence of a kind of 'dual-culture' as a result of expansion of educational opportunities since independence. The earlier homogeneity and cohesiveness of the student community has been adversely affected by the induction of a large number of first generation students with rural, working class and disprivileged backgrounds. The campuses have developed into a kind of "two-culture world"—the intellectual elitists and the non-elitists, with very little communication between them. The former confine themselves to their own world of study and snobbery and maintain distance from the mass of academically average students. They maintain least contact with the student political activists, being repelled by their 'strong-arm' politics and 'rough-guy' culture. Student agitations and movements lack focus on academic reforms partly because the student academic elites choose to remain away from

Again the non-availability of careerist students who have tended to go into the sciences and professional courses has reduced the numbers of students, available for continuing political activity and has lowered the quality of student leadership.78

(B) SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

Student politics represents a pervasive theme in contemporary Social Science literature. Numerous analyses of student politics have been made from the historical, philosophical, sociological and psychological perspectives. The focus of most of the scholarly works on student politics has been on student unrests, agitations, movements and on student organisations. Very little empirical researches concerning the student political activists, the key-actors in student politics, has been carried out. Most of the scholars on student politics in India have generally given a passing reference to and an impressionistic picture of the student leaders.

Joseph Di Bona has acknowledged the importance of limiting studies of student politics to single institutions and his article deals with indiscipline and student leadership at Allahabad University. Following Joseph Di Bona's 'new tradition', a few scholars have confined their studies to single academic institutions and made an attempt to characterise

the student leaders. However, these scholars have delineated the profile and performance of the student leaders in short articles or monographs. Hazaray's most comprehensive work on student politics and leadership in Orissa with reference to Ravenshaw College, the premier educational institution of Orissa, serves as a good model for prosecuting research on student leadership in other regions and in other educational institutions of Orissa.

In this context, an attempt has been made to study 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 the student political activists of the six major colleges of the district of Mayurbhanj, 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. The inclusion of six major colleges over a four years' period provides scope for not only a comprehensive account of student leadership in the district but also a comparative study of leaders in different colleges.

The selection of the Colleges in the district of Mayurbhanj as a case study, has some justification. The district is one of the most economically backward in Orissa although it enjoyed the benevolent administration of Maharaja Sree Rama Chandra Bhanja Deo and his successors as a princely state. The district has a predominantly tribal population which constitutes 57.67% of the total population while the Scheduled Castes constitute 6.58%. Together the Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes constitute two-thirds of the total population of the district. The literacy level is one of the lowest in Orissa with 25.47%. It is against this backdrop that the study of student leadership assumes significance. Whether and how far student politics and leadership reflect and articulate the aspirations of the people is an important question to be probed in the study. It is to be seen whether student politics becomes an instrument for projecting the regional aspirations of the people for the overall modernisation of the district.

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 is the introductory one dealing with formulation of the problem. It begins with

a comprehensive conceptual framework which includes, significance of the study of student politics, meaning and scope of student politics, characteristics of the students and the student groups, and typology of students. It also includes a discussion on the scope and objectives of the study, the hypotheses and the method.

Chapter II "Student Politics In Comparative Perspective" describes the world-wide nature of student politics and activism. It has three parts, namely, student politics in the advanced capitalist countries, student politics in the socialist countries and student politics in the developing societies of the Third World.

Chapter III deals with student politics in India. It includes a discussion of 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, student politics in Orissa, a profile of the district of Mayurbhanj and of the six major Colleges under study. Student politics in Orissa provides a general background to the understanding of the role of student leaders in the district.

The primary focus of the study is on student political activists or student political leaders who are politically oriented and politically articulate. Student academic leaders
have been precluded from the purview of the study. In attempting to present a profile and the role performance of the student leaders of the six colleges in the district of Mayurbhanj, various facets of leadership have been studied.

Chapter V, VI, VII, VIII and IX covering the various aspects of student leadership constitute the core chapters of the study. 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 career.

Chapter VI deals with the political socialization process through which student leaders have passed before assuming leadership role in College Unions and student political associations.

The process of selection of leaders is an important aspect of politics in any context. The VII Chapter entitled 'Political Recruitment' includes a discussion of the motivation for contesting college union elections, factors contributing to victory, factors contributing to defeat, sources of finance for electioneering, membership of student political associations and of political parties etc.

The perception and orientation of the student leaders is an important element of their political culture. To ascertain their attitude towards political involvement,
certain basic, though controversial questions have been asked. In addition to this, their perception of student unionism, local/regional issues and problems and of 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 ingredient of student politics. Students fight for both campus-oriented issues and societal ones. Again, their political participation may be both constructive and disruptive. 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 relating to the profile and the role performance of the student political leaders and the findings of the study. The study has led to the affirmation of certain hypotheses, qualified support or refutation of others. An indepth analysis of the nature of student politics and leadership in a tribal setting would contribute to the understanding of some aspects of student politics in India.
(C) HYPOTHESES:

The study of relevant literature on student politics and leadership has thrown up a number of hypotheses which have been empirically tested in the study. An exhaustive questionnaire personally administered to the respondents has been the main instrument for testing the hypotheses on various aspects of student political leaders.

1. Student leaders come from middle class and lower middle class families.
2. Student leaders come from rural background.
3. Student leaders belong to the upper brackets of the caste system.
4. Students in the Social Sciences and Humanities are more politically involved than their colleague in the Sciences.
5. Student leaders are academically average.
6. Men students are more politicised than women students.
7. Student leaders come from politicised families.
8. School is the most important agency in the political socialization of student leaders.
9. Motivation of contestants in fighting college union elections is to prepare a base for future political leadership.
10. Political patronage contributes to the victory of the contestants.
11. Sectarian politics contributes to the defeat of the contestants.
12. Political parties primarily contribute to the politicization of the campus.
13. Student politics is primarily "interest-oriented".
14. Student leadership does not reflect the aspirations of the people in the region.

15. The techniques of student protest are mostly extra-legal.

16. Student leadership is subject to diverse strains and stresses.

17. Student politics in the district of Mayurbhanj is characterised by the absence of on-going movement.

18. Student leaders aspire for a career in politics after completion of studies.

(D) THE METHOD:

The study makes an attempt to analyse and evaluate student politics and leadership in the district of Mayurbhanj empirically. It has been based on methods of survey research which has the following components.

1. Content Analysis:

The study makes use of all relevant literature on student politics and leadership both in its national and international dimensions. This has included books, monographs, dissertations, journals and articles. Reports of the various Education Commissions, prepared under the auspices of University Grants Commission and Ministry of Education of Government of India, Report of the Commission of Enquiry: Orissa Students' Agitation in 1964, Government of Orissa Home Department, 1966 (popularly known as the Barman Commission Report) and Report of the Committee of Enquiry: Orissa Students' Disquietude, 1967-1968, Education Department, Government of
Orissa, have presented a wealth of information on student activism. Data was collected on the incidents of student political activities through newspaper, records, periodicals and records available in the offices of the student unions.

2. Interview Schedule:

An exhaustive interview schedule was the main instrument for eliciting information from the respondents, namely, the student leaders. The respondents include the formal office bearers of the student unions of different colleges - the Presidents, the Vice-Presidents, the Secretaries and the Assistant Secretaries - of four academic sessions, from 1984-85 to 1987-88, and also the contestants to those posts who were defeated but had secured the second highest number of votes in the college union elections of the above mentioned academic sessions. In addition to the formal leaders, the sample included leaders of the various student political associations and all those students who have played an activist role despite their non-assumption of any formal office. Out of a total population of 192 formal leaders of the four academic sessions in the six colleges under study, 137 were available for administering the interview schedule. In all 58 informal leaders were covered by the study. Thus the total number of respondents covered by study comes to 195. The respondents were covered by face to face
interview and such a method was useful for collecting detailed information from them. We moved to the different colleges several times to locate and interview the respondents directly. On the whole, the respondents readily agreed to such interviews and were young men of zeal, vitality and cordiality. The interview generated in them a visible sense of pride and exaltation.

The interview schedule covers the important dimensions of student politics and leadership. It has five main parts: The Profile of Student Leaders, Political Socialization, Political Recruitment, Perception and Orientation and Role Performance. The questions were furnished with possible alternative answers (close-ended and multiple choices) to facilitate quantitative treatment of the responses. A few open-ended items were also included to allow greater depth in understanding students' views and provide more descriptive material to the study.

Empirical data collected from the respondents through the interview schedule have been processed and tabulated scientifically. Analysis of the various aspects of the study has followed these data, hypotheses have been tested and conclusions have been reached.

Some of the old student leaders of the colleges under study, principals, teachers associated with the College Unions
and eminent public men were also interviewed informally. They gave useful information relating to the evolution of student politics and leadership in such colleges and the possible trends.

3. Observation:

The researcher has taken keen interest in student problems and activities from his college career. As a teacher in one of the colleges of the district of Mayurbhanj since 1978, he has observed student leaders and their activism from close quarters. Such observation has been a key factor in imparting an insight into and making a realistic appraisal of student politics and leadership in the district of Mayurbhanj for about a decade.