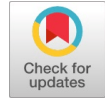


# Civil Society Organization in the Elite Corridors of Odisha: An Empirical Assessment.



Umakanta Mohapatra, Shradha Padhi, Sucheta Priyabadini,

**Abstract:** *Are the elites opposed to NGOs? 'Do the bureaucratic elite see NGOs as threat?' Do the NGOs enjoy confidence of the community? These questions have been raised and approached from the angles of various theoretical perspectives in civil society literature. The answers have often been tinged with ideological and normative orientation of the scholars than that of empirical analysis. The present micro level exploratory study conducted in the state of Odisha has intersected the empirical referents of these queries. The study makes an attempt to assess the discernment of elites about nature and activities of the NGOs along with present GO-NGO equations in the State. The article also tries to articulate the future course of civil society in Odisha on the basis of the present dynamics in the sector. The findings of the study demystify many common assumptions about elite and NGOs and contribute towards development of 'middle range theories' between empiricism and grand theories on State and civil society discourse.*

**Key Words:** 'social space', 'skeptical cooperation', 'elite discernment', 'GSPOs', 'federal collaboration', 'social legitimacy'.

## I. INTRODUCTION

The presence of civil society organizations (CSO) and its concern about 'public good' has been an age old feature of the human societies in both hemispheres of the Globe. Indian society is not an exception to this. Rather, CSOs have been more prominent in this part of the Globe as concern about welfare of the destitute, deprived and dispossessed stands out as a high order 'culturally valued goal' (Merton, 1968). The mention about civil society referred as *prajamandali / prajadhrma / lokadharama / prajakalyana* etc is clearly visible from the ancient works of Kautilya's *Arthshastra* (Kumar and Rao, 1996; Boesche, 2002) in 4<sup>th</sup> century BC to Adam Smith's *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (Sharma, 2019) in 18<sup>th</sup> century AD.

In recent times, the ideals of sustainable development goals (SDGs) bypassing the traditional loggerheads between the Leftist and Rightist political regimes, has also arrived at an agreement that CSOs occupy the crucial "autonomous space" between the State and the Citizenry (Beteille 1999). They play the critical intermediary role in accomplishing the SDGs and augmenting their outcomes towards "shared prosperity". Even the "the three horsemen of global apocalypse" poverty, environmental degradation and population growth" can be dealt through conjunction between Government and NGOs (Fisher, 2003).

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Mighty problems of poverty and unemployment can be reduced to "zero" by activating the civil society through the techniques of 'social business' and 'social banking' (Yunus, 2018). In spite of these realizations, the interaction between the State and civil society actors in developmental space of the Third World nations is still tainted with 'mutual suspicion'. Both the actors keep their 'hands in gloves' against each other. Government and civil society partnership is still at the *ad-hoc* level of 'loose and skeptical cooperation'. The civil society itself is a heterogeneous group comprising of various traditional, transitional and modern associations and institutions. The voluntary and Non-Government Organizations (NGOs), professional associations, corporate bodies, self-help groups, common interest groups, unions and outfits are some of the 'action forums' of civil society in modern times. From among them, NGOs pose themselves as more promising development actors by projecting their "social capital" (Putnam, 1993), niche in social service and nearness to local community. Similarly, from among various 'State actors', the elite stands out as the most protuberant and dominant in policy making and implementation. Elite is a well knitted creamy crust of the society comprising of the persons of dominance in institutional network and power relations (Mills, 1956). The influence and power of this network is independent of electoral mandate. Even in the recent decade there has been a spate of high profile non-political elite in electoral debut. In Odisha alone, around 25 bureaucratic, industrial and academic elites have joined electoral politics in 2019 general elections to 17<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha and 16<sup>th</sup> State Assembly.

The interaction between elite and NGOs and their 'mutual image' has a decisive impact on the effective partnership (Kim, Wang and Johnson, 2018) between the State and civil society in developmental landscape. The present work is a scientific attempt to assess the nature of this 'mutual image' between the two in Odishan context. The researchers have tried to analyze the resonances of NGOs in the elite corridors of Odisha, a State in Indian sub-continent.

## II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY.

The present work is an empirical endeavor for examining the elite perception of NGOs in Odisha, more particularly in coastal districts of the State. The authors have launched the study with the objectives of assessing the discernment of elites about nature and activities of NGOs; delineating the present state of GO-NGO equation; and lighting upon future course of NGOs in the State of Odisha on the basis of present trends in civil society sector.

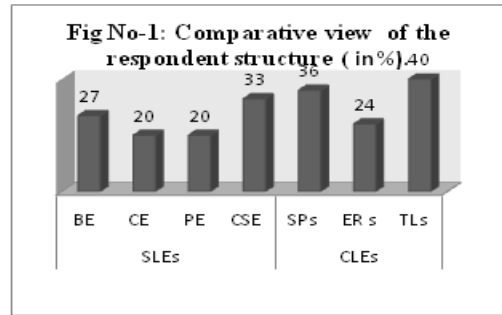


III.METHODOLOGY.

The present study is a micro level endeavor for contributing towards building of ‘middle range theories’ (Merton, 1968) to provide empirical feed to the grand theories of elite and ‘civil society’, ‘social movement’, ‘non-profit and voluntarism based associations’ (Hasenfeld & Gidron, 2005). Because of the paucity of such studies in Odisha, the researchers have designed an exploratory type of study. Both the qualitative and quantitative data have been collected from the respondents with two different kinds of schedules viz. (i) Narrative Interview Schedule with open ended questions; and,(ii) Parameter based Rating Schedule with quantitative rating scale by customizing Likert Scale (Wikipedia, 2019). The data have been collected from cross sections of elites operating at two levels i.e. (i) Elite operating at State and district level mostly engaged in advocacy and policy making; and, (ii) Elite operating at community level mostly engaged in execution and operation. The second type of elites is generally the ‘community opinion maker’; they live in the community, serve as ‘service providers’ and stand as ‘community watch groups’. The community level elite cover the community leaders, grass root officials, electoral representatives, traditional leaders of caste/ clan/religion groups and key functionaries of the leading voluntary organizations and clubs. The elite respondents have been selected through the process of ‘purposive random sampling’. In the first phase, the elites from among politicians, bureaucrats at different levels, academicians, corporate, columnist and social activists were enlisted. At times the ‘snow-ball’ technique was also followed for enlisting the elites. In total 100 such perspective respondents were enlisted. The respondents were grouped into two categories viz. State level Elites (SLEs) and Community Level Elites (CLEs). In total 60 samples were drawn from the population of 100 using the technique of ‘survey system software’ with “confidence level” of 95% and “confidence interval” of 7.88% (CRS, 1982). The respondents were approached as per their availability, convenience and willingness to share their opinion. The following table (Table No-1) presents a synaptic view of the sampled respondent structure.

Table No-1: Composition of the sampled respondents.

Elite Category.	Elite group	Number	Percentage
State Level Elites (SLEs)	Bureaucratic Elite ( BE)	8	27
	Corporate Elite (CE)	6	20
	Political Elite (PE)	6	20
	Civil Society Elite ( CSE)	10	33
Community Level Elites (CLEs)	Service Providers (SPs)	11	36
	Elected Representatives (ERs)	7	24
	Traditional Leaders ( TLs)	12	40
Grand Total ( all groups)		60	60

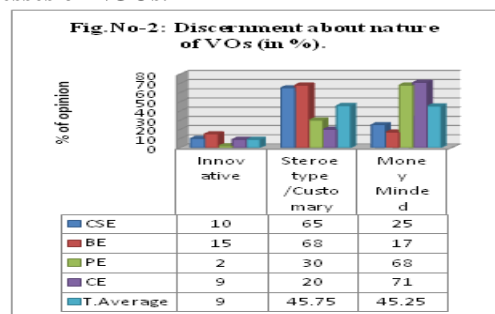


It may be noticed from the table ( No-1) and Figure ( No-1) that the sample drawn from the SLE category covers 4 important elite groups like BE, CE, PE and CSE. The CLE structure shows some new trend. TCLs constitute around 40% of the elites and opinion makers. They include village priests, caste/clan/religion group leaders, landlords etc. The ERs comprising Sarpanches, Panchyat Samiti Members and Ward Members constitute 24% of the respondents. The rest 36% are the new entrants to the spheres of ‘public arena’ in rural community. They are the SPs like teachers, revenue inspectors, anganwadi workers, village level workers, Gram Rojgar Sevaks (village income providers), Gram Sathis (village friends). For all practical purposes, these service providers serve the community as representatives of block, district and state level bureaucracy. Since they deliver the services and work as link between the people and administration in matters of inclusion and exclusion in developmental schemes, their voice and opinion matters for people. Though village teachers have been regarded as traditional community leaders in many sociological studies, the present authors have included them in SP group because the salaried teachers in village schools today are basically different from the traditional *abadhanas* who occupied prestigious position in the social hierarchy by virtue of their charisma and service.

IV.DATA & ANALYSIS.

The present authors have produced the data elicited from the elites in their right perspective following three cardinal principles of the social science research (Anonymity, Confidentiality and Informed Consent).Mostly SPSS techniques have been applied for coding and processing of the data. The following paragraphs present a comprehensive view of the opinion of the elites.

4.1. Discernment about nature, activity, strength and weaknesses of NGOs.



The data depicted in the Tab- Fig. No-2 clearly show that (i) around 45% of the elites view the

NGOs as ‘stereotype; (ii) 46% see them as money minded entities’; (iii) Comparatively higher percentage of BE view NGOs as “innovative” than CSE; (iv) Majority of PE and CE consider NGOs more “money minded” and less innovative; (v) Lowest percentage of BE considers them as “money minded”.

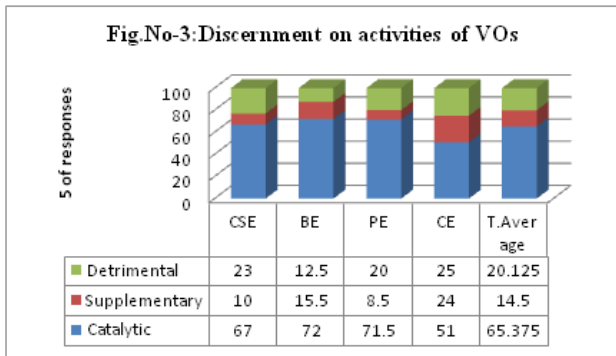
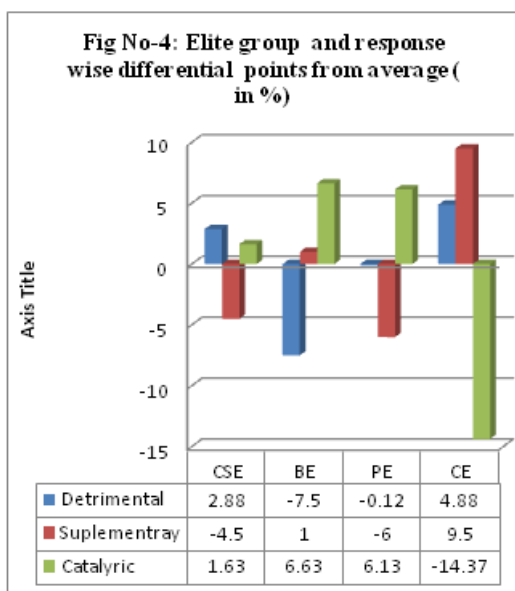


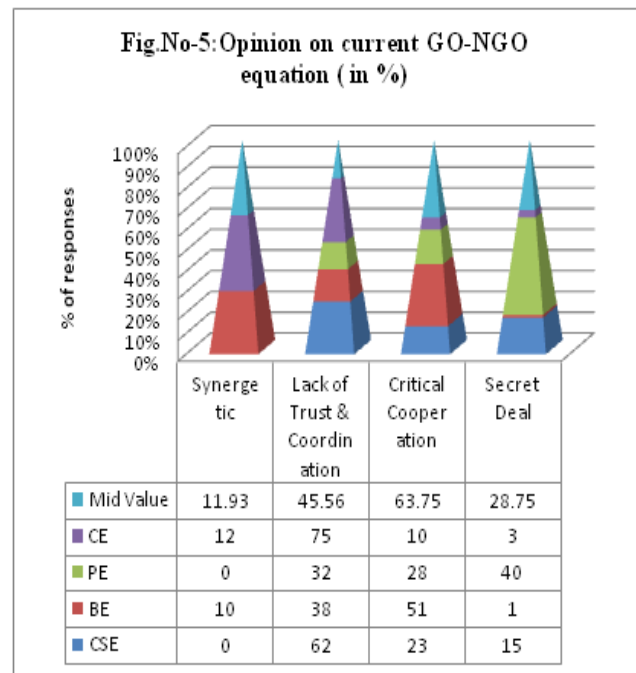
Fig No-3 depicts the elite opinion about activities of the NGOs. The NGOs who mostly implement the projects as per prescribed guidelines with fund from Government or other funding agency have been viewed as ‘catalytic’. The VOs who plan and implement their own community need based projects either with their internal funds’ / people’s contribution or fund support from Government have been viewed as ‘supplementary’; and, the VOs whose activities create bottlenecks in the process of development, community living, social harmony and national interest have been viewed as “detrimental”. Some overlapping opinions have also been noticed (though not reflected in the figure to avoid statistical confusion). Around 7 % of the respondents view some NGOs as detrimental at times and complementary at other times.

On face of the data projected in the Figure No-2 and 3, the researchers propose the inference that (i) Majority of the elites from various categories (average of 65.37%) view activities of NGOs as ‘catalytic’ in developmental process; (ii) Very less percentage (15%) of elites assess NGOs as ‘supplementary’; and, (iii) About 20% of the elites view activities of NGOs as detrimental to developmental process.



It is interesting to note that (Fig No-4) more percentage of CSE, CE and PE view the activities of NGOs as

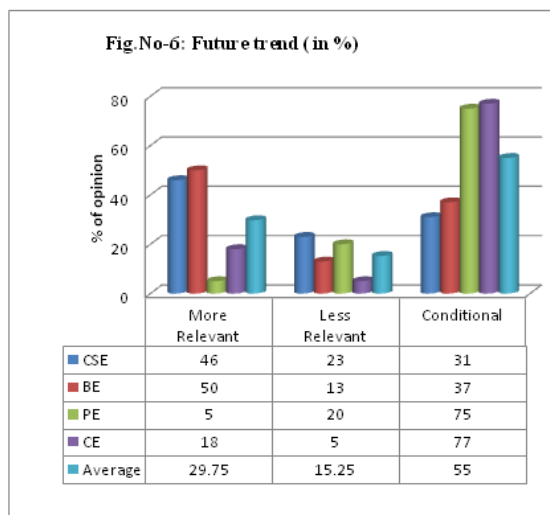
‘detrimental’ than that of BE. On an average, around 20% of elites view activities of NGOs detrimental. The opinion of BE is less than average by 7.5 percentage points where as the opinion of CE and CSE is higher by five and three percentage points respectively. The view of political elite in this matter is almost at par with average percentage.



The data processed in Fig No-5 indicate a new type of interaction between GO and NGOs in Odisha. This has been termed as ‘critical cooperation’ by respondents themselves. In total, highest percentage (around 64%) of elites view the present equation between GO and NGO as ‘critical cooperation’. In this type of equation one cooperates with the other very calculatedly without full trust. There is ‘limited reciprocity’ between the two. Around 46% of the response indicating ‘lack of trust and coordination’ further corroborates the response of ‘critical cooperation’. A similar type of equation has also been reported in the study regarding the environment for civil society in Odisha (Bhagabanprakash and Jagadananda, 2007).

Another striking revelation is around 29% of the ‘secret deal’ response between NGOs and funding agencies. In course of interview with the respondents, the present authors have found that the elites relate this to a kind of corruptive practice in implementation of the projects where NGOs try to satisfy their funding masters through monetary bribe or other lures. Highest percentages of PE (40%) followed by CSE (15%) indicate to such ‘secret deal’.

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The data presented in the Figure No-6 below reflects respondents' opinion about future trend of NGOs 10 years down the line.

As is evident from data ( Fig No-6) on an average 30% of the respondents opine that NGOs will be more relevant, 15% held that they will be less relevant and the majority ( 55%) of the elites opine that NGOs will assume greater importance if 'they put their house in order'. Such responses have been categorized under "conditional". Here also the frequency of "more relevant" response is highest among BE followed by CSE. It is least among PE.

The elites giving "conditional" opinion generally refer to the following strength & weaknesses of NGOs by way of advising them to take corrective measures for overcoming the weaknesses.

**Table No-2: Strength and Weaknesses of the NGOs in Elite Perception**

Elite Category	Weaknesses	Strengths
CSE	(i) Highly centralized and one man show (ii) Lack of commitment for 'people's cause' (iii) Lack of transparency. (iv) High dependence on Government and funding agencies.	(i) NGOs are flexible. (ii) They can take quick decisions. (iii) They are nearer to the community and the reality. (iv) With little efforts NGOs can win confidence of the 'target groups'. (v) Local NGOs can give more time and efforts in a project in comparison to the Government officers.
PEs	(i) Lack of manpower and commitment. (ii) Lack of people's involvement (iii) Structurally weak. (iv) Constituted of the family members and kith and kens. (v) Lack micro level primary data and prepare their projects superficially on the basis of secondary data. (vi) Lack of accountability. (vii) Money grabbing attitude of the NGO owners (viii) 'Secret deal' with funding agencies.	(vi) Since members of the community based NGOs live in the same locality, they are bound by some social obligation for success of the projects and schemes implemented through them.
BE	(i) Weak in Structure and functioning (ii) Lack of innovative project, vision and capacity (iii) They are fund driven (v) Lack of scalability and sustainability in	

	approach.
CE	(i).Lack of long-term work plan (ii) Lack of follow up activities in the programmes implemented by them. (iii) Lack of revenue generation ability

The responses reflected in the table carry the essence of the responses elicited from the narrative interviews with the sampled respondents. The responses have been analyzed following Weber's technique of 'interpretative understanding' (Gerth and Mills, 1948). The strengths of the NGOs as identified by the respondents have been presented in single column because of the similarities of opinion among various elite groups. The weaknesses have been sequenced in different spans of the same column basing on the emphasis laid by different elite groups on various points.

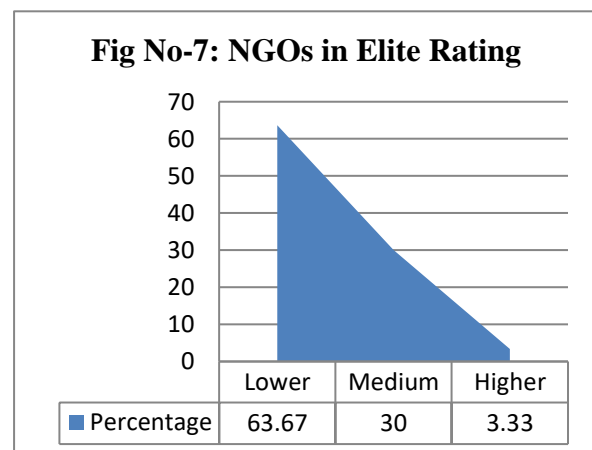
It may be noticed from the table that CSE and PE have nearly similar opinion like lack of transparency, structural weakness, lack of micro-level real data, lack of people's involvement and lack of accountability as the chief weaknesses of the NGOs. The BE and CE have similar opinion like lack of vision and long term plan, lack of sustainability, lack of revenue generating ability, fund driven activities and lack of capacity as the fallout points of the NGOs.

## 4.2. Elite Rating of NGOs

For a comprehensive assessment of the elite image of NGOs, an attempt has been made to look into rating of NGOs by the elites operating at State and community levels. For the purpose, nine definite parameters have been identified. A rating scale of 1-10 has been devised. The respondents have also been given the option of negative rating below zero as per their observations.

### 4. 2.1.Rating of NGOs by elites operating at advocacy level.

As pointed out earlier, this category of elites is mostly engaged in advocacy of civil society issues and policy matters. They mostly operate at state, nation and



international levels.

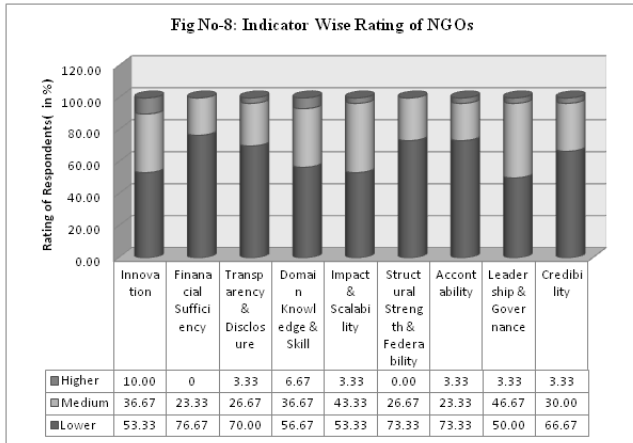
The rating (Fig No-8.45) has been assessed against nine pivotal indicators of voluntary sector. These are:

- (i) Innovativeness.
- (ii) Financial Sufficiency.



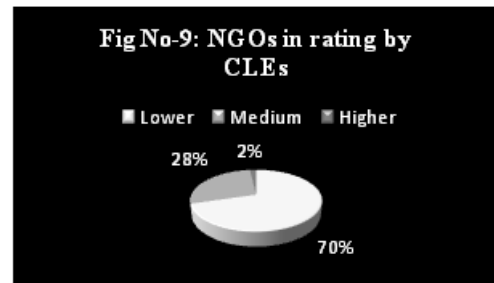
- (iii) Transparency & Disclosure.
- (iv) Domain Knowledge & Skill.
- (v) Leadership & Governance.
- (vi) Impact & Scalability
- (vii) Structural pattern & Federability
- (viii) Social Accountability
- (ix) Credibility.

The ratings in the range of 0-4 have been categorized as 'Lower', 5-7 as 'Medium' and 8-10 have been categorized as 'Higher'. As the data show ( Fig No-7) the rating curve sharply falls from left-top to right-bottom thereby showing that majority of elites (around 64%) rate the NGOs at the lower grade. The higher grading of NGOs is only around 3%. This shows that the image of the NGOs in Odisha in perception of the elites is not very inspiring.

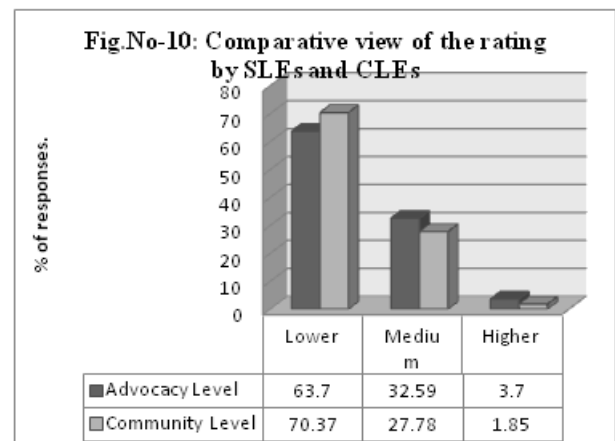


Indicator wise analysis of the elite responses as projected in the Tab-Figure No-8 shows that majority of the respondents (ranging from 50 to 76 percent with average of around 64%) award lower rating to the NGOs against all nine parameters in the scale. However, an observable degree of medium level grading is seen against five parameters like 'impact & scalability', 'leadership', 'domain knowledge & skill', 'innovation' and 'credibility'. On an average, around 39% of the respondents award medium rating to NGOs in these matters. In other four parameters, less than 30% of the respondents award medium rating to the NGOs. Higher rating is awarded by 10% of the elites only against the parameter of 'innovation'. No respondent awards higher rating against the parameters like 'financial sufficiency' and 'structural pattern & federability' with other horizontal organizations. Only around 3% of the respondents award higher rating to NGOs in other six parameters. Around 10% of higher rating against the parameter of 'innovation' has fascinated the present authors to intersect the responses further. It is an interesting revelation that out of this 10% of the respondents, 8% are from BE group and 1% each are from CSE and CE group. This further corroborates our earlier findings that power elites, particularly the BE do not have very aversive opinion about the NGOs.

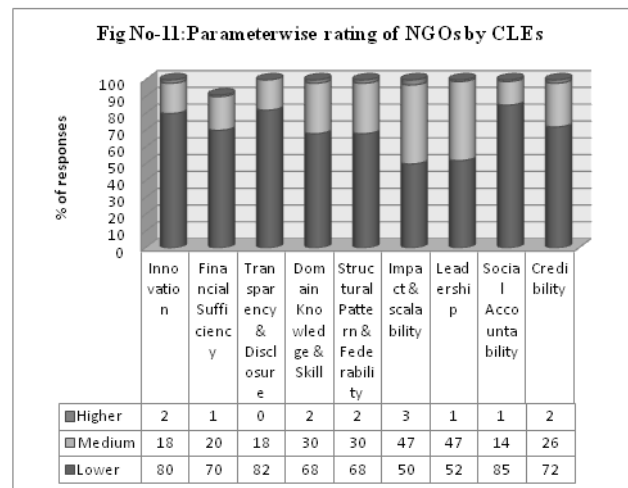
**4.2.2. Rating by elites operating at service delivery level**



It may be inferred from the data projected in the Fig.No-9 that NGOs have a very low image in the minds of the community level elites. A large majority (70%) of the CLEs in the study area have awarded lower grading to NGOs. Individual wise data base shows around 50% have awarded '0' against many indicators.



As the Tab-Fig No-10 shows, the elite operating at higher level of advocacy and policy making award comparatively higher rating to NGOs than that of the elites engaged in service delivery, execution and operation at community level.



Intersection of the parameter wise rating of the CLEs (Tab-Fig No-11) shows that a large majority of the respondents (on an average 70%) award lower rating to the NGOs in all the nine parameters. A noticeable degree of medium level rating is found against some parameters viz. 'impact & scalability' of their projects, 'domain knowledge & skill', 'structural pattern & federability' with other organizations and 'leadership'.



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It is interesting to note that more than 30% of both the SLEs and CLEs have awarded medium level rating to NGOs against the parameters of 'impact & scalability', 'knowledge & skill' and 'leadership'. In difference from the CLEs, around 30% of the SLEs have awarded medium rating against the parameters like 'innovation' and 'credibility'.

Indicator wise **comparison of the average rating score between state and community level elites** (Tab.Fig.-12) has been done customizing the "paired comparison of comparative scales" (Subudhi, 2018). The figures as depicted in

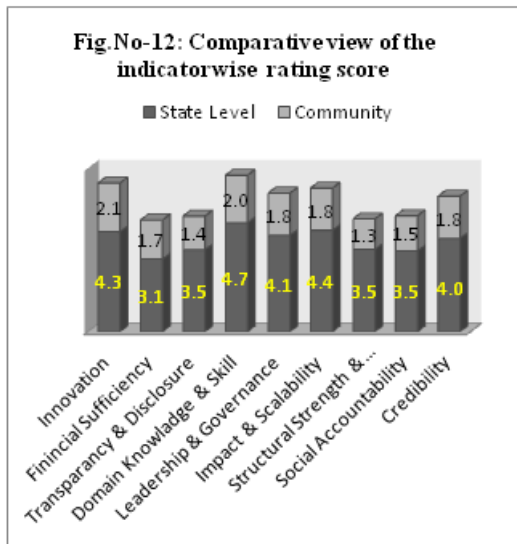


Fig No-12 show that there exists a wide gap between the rating of the elites operating at advocacy and community level. The image of NGOs in perception of the CLEs is far low than the perception of SLEs against all parameters. This is mostly because of two observable reasons. The SLEs mostly operate at state, nation and international level. The CLEs mostly operate at panchayat, village and even household level. They have a vital role in shaping of the 'public opinion' and 'mass mobilization'. The community level elites have a 'regular and closer observation', deeper appreciation and firsthand experience of the grass root level reality. Another important cause of difference lies in SLEs' engagement with civil society issues. Recently the state level elites in Odisha are mostly engaged in advocacy of civic issues and 'more space to NGOs' in developmental scene for which their rating of NGOs is comparatively higher.

### V.FINDINGS.

The empirical data reveal that on an average around 20% of elites view activities of NGOs 'detrimental' to developmental process and 45-46% view them as 'stereotypes and money minded'. Taking into consideration 95% confidence level of the sampling, the responses spread in the range of 15-25% (for 'detrimental'), and 40-51% (for 'stereotype & money minded'). On face of this hard data, the authors are inclined to infer that around 75-85% of elite do not see NGOs as threat to national interest; and, around 60-49% of elites do not observe them as 'money minded'. This implies that elite perception of the nature of NGOs in Odisha is not quite negative and aversive.

Intersection of the responses elicited from different elite groups show that more percentage of civil society,

political and corporate elites view the activities of NGOs as 'detrimental' than that of bureaucratic elite. Comparatively higher percentage of bureaucratic elite views NGOs as 'innovative' than other types of elites. Another striking revelation is more percentage of political and civil society elites indicate about 'secret deal' between NGO and funding agency than that of bureaucratic and corporate elites.

A special type of GO-NGO equation is found emerging in Odisha. This has been termed as 'critical cooperation' by the respondents themselves. This is further substantiated by suggestion of bureaucratic elite that both the GO and NGOs should contribute towards 'trust and partnership building' between the two.

It is found that a large majority of elites operating both at state and community level rate the NGOs in the lower grade against nine pivotal parameters *viz.* innovation, financial strength, transparency, knowledge & skill, impact, federability, accountability, leadership and credibility. It is further found that there exists a wide gap between indicator wise rating of NGOs by the elites operating at State and community levels. The image of NGOs in perception of the community elites is far low than that of state level elites. Majority of the elites opine that NGOs will assume greater importance if they 'put their house in order'.

Majority of elite from non-bureaucratic civil society group emphatically suggest that a self-regulating federal body in line with Press Council of India (PCI) and National Broadcasting Standard Authority (NBSA) should emerge in the civil society sector. The Government should help the process by bringing legislation for according a legal status and regulatory powers to such federations. In the similar vein, the bureaucratic and corporate elites suggest that NGOs should federate among themselves, each by acquiring specialization and expertise in one or other aspect of developmental process. The Political elite mostly suggest that (i) there should be proper check and balance to assess the performance of NGOs; (ii) third party audit of NGOs; and, (iii) enlisting of NGOs by Government as per their ability and credibility.

The non-bureaucratic elite further recommend that Government should also legislate a uniform Act for registration, deregistration and regulation of the NGO sector. There should be one specific government department for collaboration and synergy with civil society sector. Government should enhance the capacity of NGOs through training, orientation and skill building. The non-profit NGO sector should be brought under the provisions of regular social audit.

### VI.CONCLUSION

The present study outlines an empirical answer to the questions-Are the elites opposed to NGOs? Does the bureaucracy see NGOs as threat? (Nandey, 2017) Do the NGOs enjoy the confidence of the local community? The common belief that bureaucratic elites are basically opposed to NGOs is not an empirical fact. However, the NGOs face more skepticism, criticism and suspicion from non-bureaucratic elites. No bureaucratic elite in Odisha sees NGOs as 'detrimental'.



On the reverse, highest percentage of bureaucratic elite views NGOs as 'innovative' followed by civil society and corporate elites. Least percentage of political elite views NGOs as innovative. There is more disapproval of NGOs by the political elites. On face of this empirical truth, it appears that since the bureaucratic elite execute the desire and dictates of the 'political masters' in matters of partnership with NGOs, the bureaucracy becomes visible as opposed to the NGOs.

The theoretical and empirical insight gained from the study prompts the extant authors to conclude that **recently two different trends are visible in NGO sector** in this part of the country. Odishan voluntarism, unlike voluntarism in India, emerged from social and secular issues like spreading the prominence of Kaingan art and bringing wealth to *Kalinga* (ancient name of Odisha) through maritime foreign trade, mitigating effects of natural calamities, protecting the territory of mother land from aggression through 'voluntary militarism', scripting the modern Odia literature *etc.* (Mohapatra, Pryabadini and Rath, 2018). Voluntarism, promoted by "bonding social capital" (Swain, 2000) has been deep rooted in "common consciousness" (Durkheim, 1893) of Odishan society since ancient times. Presently, the voluntary organizations and NGOs are rapidly losing their credibility as service organizations in people's mind at community level. The newly formed and Government sponsored peoples organizations (GSPOs) like women self-help groups (WSHG), common interest groups (CIGs), producer groups (PGs) *etc* are gradually entering to the 'social space' between State and the people which traditionally was monopolized by the NGOs. For all practical purposes these GSPOs are working as 'communities connect' channels for Government. The WSHGs with a wide spread base across rural community are emerging as 'game changer' in civil society space including electoral politics (Senapati, 2019). On the other hand, at State level there are in-house efforts in NGO sector towards building of 'federal collaboration', 'capacity enhancement', specialization and quality improvement. Organization of Odisha Development Conclave in the years 2016 and 2018 (CYSD, 2018), civil society platforms placing development priorities before political parties for inclusion in their election manifesto (SNS, 2019), organization of regional conferences by pan Indian organizations like the Society for Participatory Research in Asia, Charity Foundation India, Society for Service to Voluntary Organizations, Credibility Alliances, CIVICUS during last couple of years are some such instances. Besides, Odisha based NGOs like Center for Youth & Social Development, Inter Agency Group, Yes We Can and PDC Network have also provided platforms for networking, knowledge sharing and alliance building among the CSOs. Presently around 58 NGO supporting agencies are operating in Odisha to promote civic engagement (PDC Network, 2006). NGO coalitions and civil society outfits joining State efforts for eradication of malaria, malnutrition, child labour and human trafficking are other concrete examples. The elites from bureaucracy and other civil society groups have also extended their helping hand in these endeavors. Recently the new 'developmental governance' is changing its focus towards reconciling the old challenges of 'distributive justice' with new issues of 'sustainability' which has further reinforced the need for roping in the CSOs.

In this context the future trend of civil society in Odisha depends to the extent that (i) NGOs infuse the principles of 'autonomous civil society impulses' into newly formed GSPOs; (ii) the internal differences among NGOs and other civic bodies are resolved in-house towards formation of federations and alliances; (iii) NGOs regain their 'social legitimacy' in community perception; (iv) both the State and NGO actors build mutual trust among themselves; and, (v) the existing power structure give space to NGOs in the core tasks of developmental planning and implementation.

## 7. Recommendations as Way Forward

The outcomes of the study have academic, policy and practical implications for all those interested in NGO sector. It ratifies many common assumption about elite and NGOs in Odishan context. The findings outline **further study** about declining social image of the NGOs at community level. Is it a part of the general decline of faith in credibility of the public institutions or the internal dynamics of NGO sector have any causal relation with such decline? Another study about external environment of the NGOs, particularly the 'existing power structure in developmental landscape' will be an interesting topic of research in explaining the different 'perceptual patterns' about NGOs among various groups of elite. The studies on the yielding of presently ongoing *ad-hoc* cooperation between GO and NGO in Odisha will help the process for regular GO-NGO coordination.

**The policy makers and planners** can take up the findings as a frame of reference in bringing about legislations and guidelines for utilizing the 'voluntary social force' in nation building. **The funding agencies** can refer to findings of the study as a guide point while framing their strategies of operation. **The civil society groups** may also use findings as a frame of reference to 'set their own house in order' and regain their social legitimacy.

**N.B.** - *This paper has been presented and deliberated in the UGC Extra Mural Lecture series held at Kendrapara Autonomous College, Odisha India on 28 January, 2019. The paper has been enriched with scholarly suggestions from the participants.*

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