

Role of Legal Services Institutions in Providing Efficacious Access to Justice in the Backward District of Malkangiri, Odisha

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Abstract: *The authors focus on the significant role played by Legal Services Institutions (LSIs) in ensuring effective access to justice, with a special insight into the deprived and most backward district of Malkangiri in the state of Odisha, India. The district of Malkangiri is uniquely characterized by its geographical and socio-economic challenges and limited infrastructure and hence provides a great opportunity to examine the efficacy of LSIs in meeting the legal needs of its residents. Admittedly, the objective of the Legal services institutions can be best served when the people of a deprived and backward district get their due and legitimate rights. The objectives included evaluating the reach and scope of legal services especially in areas challenged by geographical factors, assessing the impact of legal literacy programmes in ameliorating the conditions of the people, addressing financial barriers to justice, exploring community participation in dispute resolution and identifying challenges faced by LSIs especially in the district of Malkangiri. The objective of the findings is intended to improvise the various schemes of the NALSA to reach out to the marginalized and backward class citizens and to contribute valuable insights to policy makers, public administration, legal practitioners and other stakeholders, guiding the development of targeted and clinical interventions to increase the accessibility and effectiveness of legal services in such marginalized areas. The study underlines the importance of legal empowerment in promoting social justice and advocates a tailored made approach to ensure that justice reaches every section of the society, especially in deprived areas like Malkangiri. It is imperative to take care of both courts based legal services as well as other legal services to bring the backward class people to the main stream so as to fulfill the constitutional obligations as enshrined in the Indian Constitution.*

Keywords: Legal Services Institutions

I. INTRODUCTION

Access to justice is the underlying objective of the Legal service institutions in the country and has been recognized as a fundamental human right and a cornerstone of a fair and just society. Legal Services Institutions (LSIs) play a vital role in ensuring that this right is realized for all irrespective of socio-economic background. This study focuses on assessing the role of LSIs in providing effective access to justice, with special emphasis on the backward district of Malkangiri in Odisha, India and to assess how far the avowed objective of the institution is fulfilled.

The district of Malkangiri is in the tribal belt of Odisha and faces many challenges like acute poverty, lack of education and basic infrastructure. The district was often in the limelight for the deplorable conditions of the Aborigines staying in the hill areas which often draws the attention of the nation. The inhabitants of the district not only had to overcome the issue of abject poverty but also were marginalized and relegated being unaware of their basic rights. The institutions of the state govt as well as other organizations seems to have failed in delivering the services as required for their upliftment. These factors often contribute to a greater incidence of legal issues and the need for accessible legal services. The study seeks to understand how LSIs operate in such challenging environments and what impact they have on facilitating access to justice. It is apt to reflect here that on a threadbare comparison of the functioning of the legal

services institution in such backward areas vis-à-vis in the developed district, it transpires that the backward areas have responded in a much better way fulfilling the desired ends. There can be various reasons for that and one being the scope and objecting configuring well with the requirements of the people. The Legal services organizations are Government outfit but being garbed under the Judicial clothing has carved out a unique place in the system.

Evaluate the reach and scope of legal services: Undoubtedly the geographical condition of the district throws open a daunting task in reaching out to the poor and marginalized class people of the district residing mainly in the hill areas in remote location. This paper is intended to assess the geographical coverage and outreach of LSIs within Malkangiri district and to examine their presence in rural and remote areas where legal awareness may be limited. It cannot be overlooked that the district administration is often blamed for having failed to reach out to such marginalized class and have thus eroded the faith of the innocent tribals of the locality. This has also lead to growth of extremism resulting in acts of violence.

Legal Literacy Programme: It is indeed the call of the hour to make no stone unturned in making the marginalized class of the society aware about their rights and entitlements. It is highly essential to examine the effectiveness of legal literacy programs run by LSIs to empower local populations by informing them about their rights and legal remedies. It is felt that the legal literacy programme has played a vital role in bringing out a sea change difference in making the people aware of their rights. The programme is carried out as per the calendar fixed by the NALSA on topics which are tailor made in bringing out a radical change in the approach and upbringing of the next generation. In spite of geographical challenges, the District Legal Services, Authority of the district of Malkangiri has reached out to its people for rendering legal awareness among various stakeholders which includes young students, old age persons, transgenders, women, school dropouts, children in need of care and Protection (CNCP), children in conflict with law (CCL), children and persons with disability, differently abled persons and the list goes on. It has also ensured that proper awareness is also made in respect of Police officers, forest officials, official in charge of Child Care Institutions and its Volunteers, Para Legal Volunteers, Shikha Sahayaks, Anganwadi Workers etc.

Financial Access: There is hardly any difference in opinion with regard to the fact that the justice delivery system have become most cumbersome as well as expensive. In such a backdrop it is essential to analyze the role of LSIs in reducing financial barriers to justice by providing legal aid services to economically marginalized individuals free of cost who cannot afford legal representation. This included both courts based as well as other legal services. Under such premises, it is found that the role of Legal Services institutions have become more significant to cater to the need of the people.

Community engagement and dispute resolution: In tribal dominated areas research has shown that the alternative dispute resolution often overpowers the adversarial system. The reason being the people are innocent and they are not only straightforward but are also clear in their approach towards the litigation which helps the resolution mechanism to easily resolve the issues through amicable settlement. Increasing number of disposal of Pre-litigation through conciliation has helped in a big way to achieve the avowed objective of the institution. It has become the need of the hour to further explore the extent to which LSIs can be engages with the local community, mediate disputes and provide alternative dispute resolution mechanisms to resolve conflicts outside the formal court system.

Challenges faced by LSIs in Malkangiri: In order to better appreciate the role and functioning of legal services institution of the backward districts in providing access to justice, it is highly essential to identify the challenges faced by LSIs in operating in the specific socio-economic and cultural context of the present chosen district of Malkangiri and the findings can very well be utilized of making proposal and recommendations for improvement across the state. The effective application of justice is the cornerstone of a just and equitable society, and Legal Services Institutions (LSIs) play a vital role in clinching its objective in ensuring that access to justice is available to all members of the community. This summary outlines key elements of the role of LSIs in facilitating and enhancing access to justice.

Legal Aid and Support:

LSIs in addition to its multifarious functions, primarily acts as a significant provider of legal aid assistance to the legal aid seekers, providing assistance to individuals who do not have the financial means to access legal representation. In this context, the LSIs have devised user friendly methods to cater to the need of the people. There is a front office in

each district where all the legal aid seekers get free advice by a Legal Aid Retainer who not only provides solution to their problems but also does the role of handholding in meeting their requirements.

Through free services and legal aid clinics, LSIs bridges the gap between vulnerable populations and the legal system, ensuring everyone has the opportunity to claim their rights.

Education and Awareness:

LSIs contribute to legal literacy by conducting outreach programs in far flung areas and taking up educational initiatives. It empowers individuals with knowledge of their rights and responsibilities, and promoting a proactive approach to conflict resolution.

Raising awareness of available legal resources through community workshops and informational campaigns helps demystify the legal process, making it more accessible to the general public.

Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR):

LSIs actively promote and facilitate alternative dispute resolution mechanisms such as arbitration and mediation as efficient and cost-effective alternatives to traditional litigation. Through the process of conciliation, pre litigation is addressed effectively thereby helping in reducing the docket explosion with regard to pendency of cases.

By offering ADR services, LSI contributes to reducing the burden on overloaded court systems, expediting dispute resolution and promoting a more collaborative and consensual approach to justice.

Advocacy of legal reforms:

LSIs often engages in rendering efforts to promote legal reforms aimed at increasing access to justice. They work towards advocating for policies that remove barriers, improve legal processes, and address systemic issues affecting marginalized communities.

Through strategic partnerships with government bodies and other stakeholders, LSI contributes to the development of a legal framework that is fair, transparent and responsive to the needs of the population.

Community Empowerment:

The legal services institutions reach out to the people and in the backward district of the Malkangiri, Legal Services institution empowers communities by fostering a sense of ownership and participation in the justice system. Community-based legal services and grassroots initiatives enable people to effectively address local issues and disputes.

By tailoring their services to the specific needs of diverse communities, LSIs ensure that justice is not only accessible but also culturally sensitive and relevant.

Legal service institutions have a close proximity with the local inhabitants and hence play an important role in ensuring effective access to justice. Through legal aid, education, ADR, advocacy and community empowerment, LSIs contribute to a more inclusive and equitable legal landscape, where every individual can exercise their rights and obtain redress. Their multifaceted and variegated role is essential to the establishment of a justice system that truly and holistically serves the interests of all members of the society. Article 39A of the Indian Constitution casts onerous responsibility on the State to provide free legal aid to ensure access to justice to all citizens. Free legal aid ensures that every citizen has equal access to justice and a fair trial, regardless of their economic or social status.

Government efforts for legal aid in India

From 1952, the Government of India began considering the proposition of legal aid for the poor in the meetings of various Law Ministers and Law Commissions. In those days the procedural paraphrenias of the courts which are often alleged to be functioning under the colonial garb had made it difficult on the part of the common man to reach out to courts for any legal issues.

In 1960, some guidelines were prepared by the government for legal aid schemes.

Article 39A was added in the 42nd Constitutional Amendment in the year 1976, which states that the State shall ensure that any citizen who is deprived of opportunities to obtain justice due to economic or other disabilities, is provided free legal aid.

In 1980, A national-level committee was formed under the chairmanship of Justice P.N. Bhagwati (then judge).

In the famous case of Hussainara Khatoon v. State of Bihar it was held that the right to free legal services for a person accused of an offence is an essential component of the judicial process under natural justice and must be enshrined in the right under Article 21 of the Indian Constitution. In those days, the concept of legal aid was primarily restricted to the court based legal services providing legal aid to the accused.

In 1987, the Government of India passed the Legal Services Authorities Act (NALSA) to fulfill the constitutional mandate of providing free legal aid to citizens. After some amendments in the 1994 Act, this Act was finally implemented on 9 November 1995.

Role of National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) in providing free legal aid in India:

National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) has been constituted under the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987 to provide free legal services to eligible persons and to organize Lok Adalats for amicable resolution of disputes.

Some of the roles and functions of NALSA are as follows:

- To lay down policies and principles for providing legal services under the Act.
- To prepare effective and cost-effective plans for legal services.
- To monitor and evaluate the implementation of legal services under the Act.
- To conduct legal awareness programs and promote legal literacy among the people.
- To encourage settlement of disputes through negotiation, mediation and conciliation.
- To provide coordination and cooperation with other government and non-government agencies engaged in providing legal services.

NALSA has played an important role in providing free legal aid in India:

Providing legal aid to lakhs of beneficiaries through its panel lawyers and para-legal volunteers across the country.

To settle lakhs of cases amicably by organizing thousands of Lok Adalats at various levels.

In conducting Mega Legal Services Camp in providing benefits of various schemes of the Govt directly to the legal aid seekers under one umbrella.

Launching various schemes and initiatives such as:

- NALSA: Schemes for Legal Services to Disaster Victims through Legal Services Authorities
- NALSA (Legal Services to the workers in the unorganized sector) Schemes, 2015.
- NALSA (Free and Competent Legal Services) Regulations, 2010.
- NALSA (Protection and Enforcement of Tribal Rights) Scheme, 2015.
- NALSA (Child Friendly Legal Services to Children and their Protection) Scheme, 2015.
- NALSA (Victims of Trafficking and Commercial Sexual Exploitation) Scheme, 2015.
- NALSA (Legal services to the Mentally ill and Mentally Disabled Persons) Scheme, 2015.
- NALSA (Effective implementation of Poverty Alleviation) Schemes, 2015
- NALSA (Legal Services to the Victims of Drug Abuse and Eradication of Drug Menace), Scheme, 2015.
- NALSA (Legal Services to Senior Citizens) Scheme, 2016
- NALSA (Legal Services to victims of Acid Attacks) Schemes, 2016.

To organize nationwide campaigns and programs on various topics like access to justice for all and to connect with services.

To organize nationwide campaigns and programs on various topics like access to justice for all, equality in service to one's nation, etc.

To collaborate with various stakeholders such as judiciary, bar associations, law schools, civil society organizations, media etc. to increase access and quality of legal services.

Accesses to justice

Access to justice being the tagline of the Legal Services Institution is a fundamental principle that lies at the core of any fair and just society. It is a universal principle to bridge the gap between haves and the have-nots. It ensures that every person, regardless of his or her social or economic status, can seek legal remedies, defend his or her rights, and participate in legal proceedings. Access to justice covers a wide range of legal services, including legal advice, engagement of panel lawyers in the court to sue/defend cases, engagement of remand advocates to represent the accused at the time of forwarding before the court at the first instance in a criminal case, representation and assistance in sorting out the complexities of the legal system. It is an essential component of upholding the rule of law, promoting equality, protecting individual rights and to safeguard the constitutional obligations of the state. However, for a significant portion of the global population, access to justice remains an elusive concept. Financial constraints create formidable barriers that prevent individuals from obtaining the legal help they need. Legal procedures are often associated with exorbitant costs, including attorney fees, court costs, and related legal fees. As a result, many individuals, especially those from marginalized and economically disadvantaged backgrounds, find themselves unable to afford or access the judicial system.

Definition and Objectives of free Legal Aid:

To overcome the challenges faced by individuals lacking financial resources, free legal aid services both court based and otherwise have emerged as an important mechanism to promote equal access to justice and to ensure that lack of financial resources would not come in the way of seeking redressal or establishing any right before any court of law. Free legal aid means the provision of legal aid, advice and representation to persons who are unable to afford legal services due to paucity of funds. It works on the principle that access to justice should not be determined by one's financial means but should be made available to all members of the society. Free legal aid programs aim to provide a level playing field, ensuring that individuals facing legal issues can exercise their rights and obtain redress without being hindered by their financial circumstances. The purpose of free legal aid extends far beyond the provision of legal services. It aims to address power imbalances within society, particularly for marginalized and vulnerable populations who often lack the resources to protect their rights. By providing free legal assistance, these services empower individuals, helping them understand their legal rights, navigate legal processes, and assert themselves in legal matters. Furthermore, pro bono legal aid serves as an important tool in promoting social justice, by addressing systemic inequities and promoting equitable outcomes within the legal system.

Court based Legal Aid:

Court based Legal-aid means providing panel lawyers of the Legal Services Institutions to those who are unable to afford fees and legal expenses of any litigation. Legal aid not only means legal representation in court cases but also includes legal advice, counselling, mediation and conciliation, creating legal awareness about their rights, duties and obligations etc. In other words, in addition to ensuring the protection of the legal and constitutional rights of the underprivileged, the poor, the neglected and the indigent, its objective is to make it impossible to deny to any man, woman or child the equal protection of the laws merely because he or she is poor or destitute and not able to afford legal expenses associated with the court proceedings. Legal aid refers to legal assistance provided free of cost to poor persons in any judicial proceedings before a court or tribunal. It is provided to poor people who are not in a position to enforce their legal rights or are involved in court cases. Meaning and objectives of legal aid is clearly explained by Justice P.N.Bhagwati. According to him, legal aid means providing such a system in the society that the machinery of administration of justice becomes easily accessible and is not beyond the reach of those who have to resort to it to enforce the rights given by law.

According to Honorable Justice J.N. Bhatt, Legal aid is not a charity or an opportunity, but a constitutional mandate for the state and a right of the public which is no longer a choice but a constitutional obligation and compulsion. Thus, it is not a project or scheme of the government, but a people's movement. What is the use of a legal system which eliminates the destitute, the defeated, the poor and the downtrodden and which creates a distance between law and justice?

Similarly, according to Honorable Justice P.N. Bhagwati, Legal aid means providing such a system in the society that the machinery of administration of justice becomes easily accessible and is not beyond the reach of those who must resort to it to enforce the rights given by law. The poor and the uneducated should be able to approach the courts and their ignorance and poverty should not come in the way of obtaining justice from the court.

According to Pollock: Legal aid is a means by which the poor can enforce their rights.

Justice Krishna Iyer: Rightly said that legal service is not a charity for the poor, but it is the paramount duty of the state.

Meaning and Definition of Para-legal Services

The Legal Services Authorities Act 1987 and the General Clauses Act 1897 are silent with respect to the definition of para-legal services. During the year 2009 the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) launched a scheme called Para-Legal Volunteers Scheme, the objective of which was to provide legal training to volunteers selected from different walks of life to ensure that legal aid is available to all sections of the society. The Para Legal Volunteers are the workforce of the Legal aid institutions. They reach out to the people representing the institution and ensure that the fruits of the services rendered by the institution reaches out to them. They are considered as the backbone of the LSIs. Many of the PLVs have been recognized all over the country for their relentless efforts and contribution in the field of rendering legal services and thereby ultimately removing barriers to access to justice. Para-Legal Volunteers (PLVs) are expected to act as intermediaries bridging the gap between the common people and legal service institutions. Ultimately, the objective of this process is to deliver legal service institutions to people at their doorsteps rather than people having to contact legal service institutions.

Tier system of Legal Services Institution

The National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) has been constituted under the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987 to provide free legal services to the weaker sections of the society and to organize Lok Adalats for amicable resolution of disputes.

In each State, State Legal Services Authorities have been constituted to give effect to the policies and directions of NALSA and to provide free legal services to the people and to operate Lok Adalats in the State.

District Legal Services Authorities have been constituted in each district to implement legal services programs in the district. The District Legal Services Authority is located in the District Court premises in each district. At the Taluka level, Taluk Legal Services committee is constituted to take care of the legal services of the people at the Taluka level.

Introduction to Malkangiri district of Odisha: Its socio-economic and legal landscape

Geography:

Malkangiri is a district located in the south-western part of Odisha, India. It is bordered by Chhattisgarh state in the north-west and Andhra Pradesh state in the south. The district is known for its hilly terrain, dense forests and the presence of major rivers like Sileru and Saberi.

Demographics:

The district is home to various tribal communities, and the majority of the population belongs to the Scheduled Tribes. Major tribes include Bonda, Koya and Kondh. Due to its remote location and geographical challenges, Malkangiri has faced issues related to accessibility and development.

Socio-Economic Scenario:

Livelihood:

Agriculture is an important source of livelihood for the people in Malkangiri. However, agricultural practices are often traditional and face challenges such as lack of irrigation facilities and dependence on rainfall. Given the rich biodiversity of the district, fishing and collection of forest produce also contribute to the economy.

Education:

Education indicators in the district have historically faced challenges, including low literacy rates and limited access to quality educational facilities. Efforts have been made to improve education infrastructure and promote literacy.

Health care:

Health care infrastructure and services may be limited in remote areas. The district has faced challenges related to health care access, especially in tribal areas.

Basic infrastructure:

Due to its hilly and forested terrain, development of infrastructure, including roads and transportation, has been a challenge. Connectivity is vital for economic growth and social well-being.

Extremism

Due to the underdevelopment of the district and inaccessible areas, the district had witnessed various Naxal and extremism activities in the past. The menace of the extremism has further accentuated the naxalism in the district.

Legal Scenario:

Tribal Rights and Forest Law:

Given the significant tribal population, the legal scenario often involves issues related to tribal rights, land ownership and implementation of forest laws. Balancing conservation efforts with the rights of tribal communities has been a focal point.

Land Rights and Tenancy Laws:

Land-related issues, including land rights and tenancy laws, are important in terms of agricultural practices and the livelihoods of the local population.

Social Welfare Schemes:

The implementation of various social welfare schemes and programs by the government for the upliftment of marginalized communities is an integral part of the legal framework in the district.

Conflict and Security:

The district has faced internal security-related challenges, including the presence of left-wing extremism in some areas. This has implications for legal and governance structures.

Importance of access to justice in marginalized areas

Access to justice assumes tremendous significance for protection and realization of fundamental human rights especially in backward areas. Nowhere is the importance of access to justice more evident than in marginalized areas, where vulnerable populations grapple with unique challenges and systemic inequities. In these areas, various social, economic, and cultural factors combine to create barriers that prevent individuals and communities from fully participating in legal processes. This introduction provides an overview of the profound importance of access to justice in marginalized regions, highlighting its role in protecting rights, promoting equality and promoting sustainable development.

Marginalized areas include a variety of communities, tribes, sects including ethnic minorities, Indigenous groups, and economically disadvantaged populations. These sectors often face specific challenges such as discriminatory practices, limited resources and inadequate legal infrastructure and more so regarding deprivation of the benefits of the welfare schemes of the government. In such contexts, access to justice becomes a link to the empowerment of marginalized individuals, providing them with an avenue to confront injustice, seek redress, and actively engage in the socio-legal landscape.

One of the primary functions of access to justice is the protection of rights. Marginalized populations often face violations of their basic human rights, whether in the form of land dispossession, discrimination or denial of essential services. There seems to be hardly any forum on their part to air their grievances. Access to justice acts as a safeguard, providing these individuals with the means to challenge injustice, hold wrongdoers accountable, and secure legal remedies.

Furthermore, the concept of access to justice extends beyond the courtroom. This includes legal empowerment, in which marginalized communities acquire the knowledge and tools they need to navigate complex legal systems. This empowerment, in turn, addresses power imbalances and promotes a sense of agency, enabling individuals to actively participate in civic life and advocate for their rights.

The importance of access to justice in marginalized areas is also underlined by its role in promoting equality and non-discrimination. By ensuring that legal avenues are open to all regardless of socio-economic status or background, access to justice contributes to the establishment of a more just and inclusive society. It becomes a catalyst for social cohesion, breaking down barriers that perpetuate inequality and promoting a legal framework where justice is blind to distinctions of wealth, ethnicity or gender.

Result Analysis

Empirical research is necessary to examine and understand the implementation of various legal aid programs at the grassroots level. To analyze the qualitative and quantitative aspects of legal aid programs and understand the methodology of conceptualization and implementation of legal service programmes, especially outreach programmes, in providing effective access to justice and the role of District Legal Services Authorities in the backward district in the context of the pilot district of Malkangiri in the state of Odisha. The role of the Jail Legal aid clinic is also vital in ensuring legal services to UTP. The functioning of front offices, legal services clinics inside jail, hospital and JJB is vital for the DLSA in Malkangiri. The legal empowerment camps and legal awareness programs have also yielded great result.

Understanding the dynamics of LSI in a district like Malkangiri is important for policy makers, legal practitioners and stakeholders involved in promoting access to justice. The findings of this study can ensure development of targeted interventions and policies aimed at increasing the effectiveness of LSI in addressing the unique challenges faced by communities in deprived areas.

By highlighting the role of LSI in Malkangiri, this study contributes to the broader discussion on improving access to justice in marginalized areas, promoting social justice and strengthening the importance of legal empowerment in promoting a just society. Legal Services Authorities have been constituted with the objective of removing barriers to access to justice as well as legal services to achieve the objective of "Legal Services Institutions in providing effective access to justice for all". Legal aid is provided by Legal Services Authorities to legal aid seekers who fall within the eligibility criteria mentioned in Section 12 of the Legal Services Authorities Act. Apart from the Act, states have their own rules designed for the specific needs or requirements of their people. For example, the Odisha State Legal Services Authority Rules came into existence to supplement the implementation of the provisions and guidelines of NALSA. Apart from providing court based legal aid, the scope of work of Legal Services Authorities has increased manifold. Legal services clinics have been opened for Malkangiri, a backward district of Odisha. Front offices have been opened at the district and sub-division levels to provide legal services. Legal awareness is also considered an integral part of legal aid and legal awareness camps are organized. In addition, Lok Adalats, which are an integral part of the legal aid delivery system, are also being organized. Permanent Lok Adalats for public utility services have been established to resolve disputes related to public utility services. Mediation as an alternative dispute resolution mechanism is also initiated and promoted by legal services authorities. Victim compensation schemes for victims of certain criminal offenses are also being implemented by the Legal Services Authorities. The delivery based Mega Legal services camp conducted in pursuant to NALSA's guidelines had a gigantic success in the district of Malkangiri where more than 17,000 legal aid seekers participated, and thousands got their entitlement at the spot. In the scenario of expanded operations, legal service authorities are required to ensure quality legal services and effective outreach to the weaker

and marginalized sections of the society. The legal aid delivery system in India is one of the most comprehensive and vast in the world, but it suffers from several implementation and outreach barriers. Sector-specific and issue-specific schemes designed to target relevant beneficiaries have still not been effectively rolled out on a large scale. Also, information and awareness about alternative dispute resolution mechanisms such as arbitration and Permanent People's Courts (PLAs) need to be disseminated more efficiently and effectively to utilize their full potential. These are the issues that have to be investigated in research.

In Malkangiri, a backward district of Odisha, legal service institutions are adopting several innovative methods to increase reach and perform expanded scope of functions to ensure access to justice for the weaker and marginalized sections of the society. Qualitative evaluation studies are important for every legal services institution to know the impact of its legal aid programs. At present, evaluation studies by legal service institutions and social audits of their various legal aid programs are inadequate or missing altogether. There is almost no scrutiny, review and evaluation of various legal aid programs and activities to judge their quality. If in the scenario of expanded scope of work the legal service institutions do not effectively deal with the barriers to access to justice and fail to fill the gaps in the implementation of various schemes for the weaker and marginalized sections of the society, its credibility will be greatly reduced in the long run. The result analysis of the Legal Services Institutions in Malkangiri seeks to address the specific challenges faced by marginalized communities, with the aim of creating a legal landscape that is accessible, fair and empowering. Through this study, we aspire to provide valuable insights that can guide policy recommendations and promote positive changes in the legal infrastructure of this backward district, which will ultimately further the objective of justice for all.

II. CONCLUSION

Under the above backdrop it can be held that there is a need to further promote legal aid in districts and ADR mechanism in remote districts on priority in the light of discussion of the pilot district of Malkangiri which dealt in detail the court-based services rendered by Legal Services Authorities. Analysis has been done to assess the actual implementation of the programme and to identify the gaps and the areas which need further strengthening in court-based services. It also delves into the ADR mechanisms being implemented by the State Legal Services Authorities including the State of Odisha. This chapter is based on Empirical research. Investigates the implementation and effectiveness of legal aid programs in Malkangiri. Analyzes the impact of legal aid in addressing the unique challenges faced by the local population. Case studies and testimonials provide practical insights into the role of legal aid in Malkangiri. Explores the adoption and effectiveness of ADR mechanisms in resolving disputes. Analyzes the acceptance of ADR within the local cultural and legal framework. Evaluates the potential for ADR to alleviate the burden on the formal justice system. Legal Services Outreach and Awareness programmes covers the research about the legal services outreach programmes. It examines all the tools of outreach programmes including its implementation aspects. It also analyses the various legal outreach programmes held across the country and in Odisha. Examines the role of LSIs in promoting legal literacy in Malkangiri. Assesses the impact of educational initiatives on empowering the community. Discusses culturally sensitive approaches to legal education in the context of Malkangiri. Conclusion, Recommendations and Policy Implications summarizes the findings of the research and also highlights the various gaps in the legal aid programmes and policies. It also gives recommendations for plugging the existing gaps and improving and strengthening the conceptualization and implementation of legal aid programmes including the basic units. Presents a set of recommendations for improving access to justice in Malkangiri. Discusses policy implications at the local, state, and national levels. Highlights the potential for replication of successful models in other backward regions. Emphasizes the significance of LSIs in the context of Malkangiri. Suggests avenues for future research and development in the field of access to justice. The study examines the role of legal service institutions in facilitating access to justice, with a special focus on Malkangiri, a backward district in Odisha, India. It evaluates the effectiveness of these institutions in ensuring legal aid and support to marginalized and disadvantaged communities. The research highlights challenges such as geographical barriers, lack of awareness about legal rights and socio-economic disparities that hinder access to justice in remote areas such as Malkangiri. It suggests improved outreach programmes, legal

literacy campaigns and better coordination between legal aid providers and local communities to effectively enhance access to justice.

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