

Ethnography of Sanitation in Small Towns

A Study of Angul and Dhenkanal

Dr. Ranjita Mohanty
Anju Dwivedi



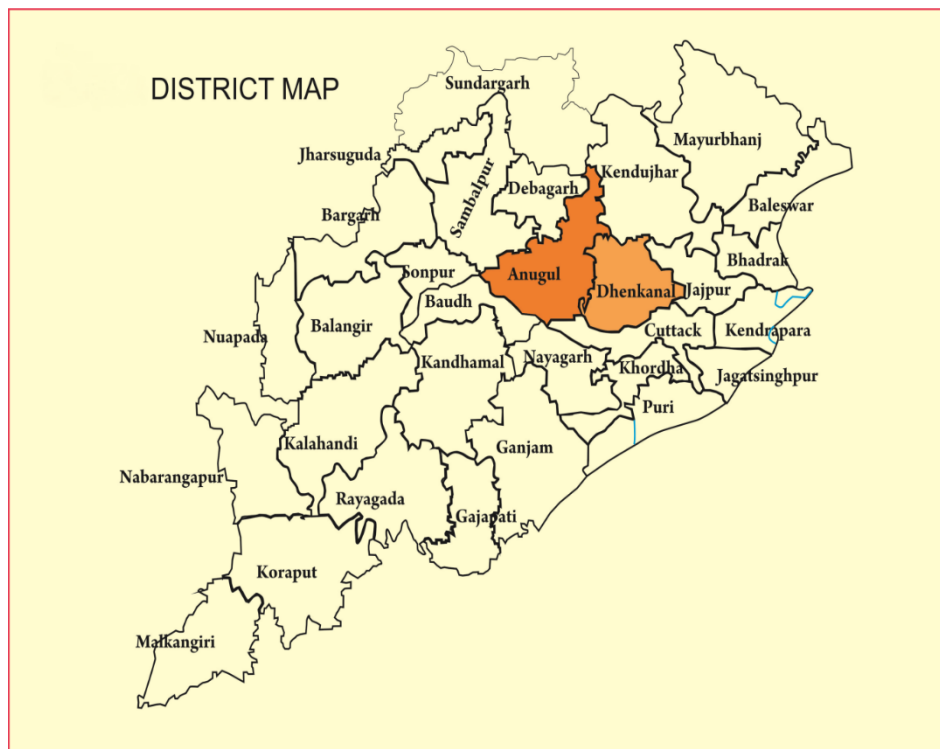
Objective of the Study

- To explore the socio-cultural practices and perceptions among poor urban communities towards sanitation, particularly towards human excreta, in Anugul and Dhenkanal in Odisha.

Socio-cultural aspects in this study include- caste, religion, gender, tradition and custom, ritual and kinship

Odisha: Some facts

- Odisha, though the least urbanised (17%) in the country, has registered a significantly high decadal urban growth rate of 27 percent with the urban population growing from 37 million to 42 million during the 2001- 2011 decade. Population in Urban Odisha stands at 7 million.
- 2011 Census indicates that access to safe drinking water is a major issue for almost half the urban households as only 42 percent have access to treated tap water for drinking and less than 57 percent have sources within their premises.
- 33% of Odisha's urban population defecate in the open.
- In the case of sanitation, more than 35 percent of the urban households do not have access to toilets. Huge dependence on “on site systems”.



	Anugul	Dhenkanal
Number of HHs	9,778	14,908
Urban Population	43,795	67,414
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SC • ST 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5039 • 1473 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11105 • 4095
Municipal Wards	23	23
Slums	27 (13 Authorised)	17 (all Authorised)
Slum HHs	2469	2059
Slum population	10950	7821

Water & Sanitation in Anugul and Dhenkanal (2011 Census)

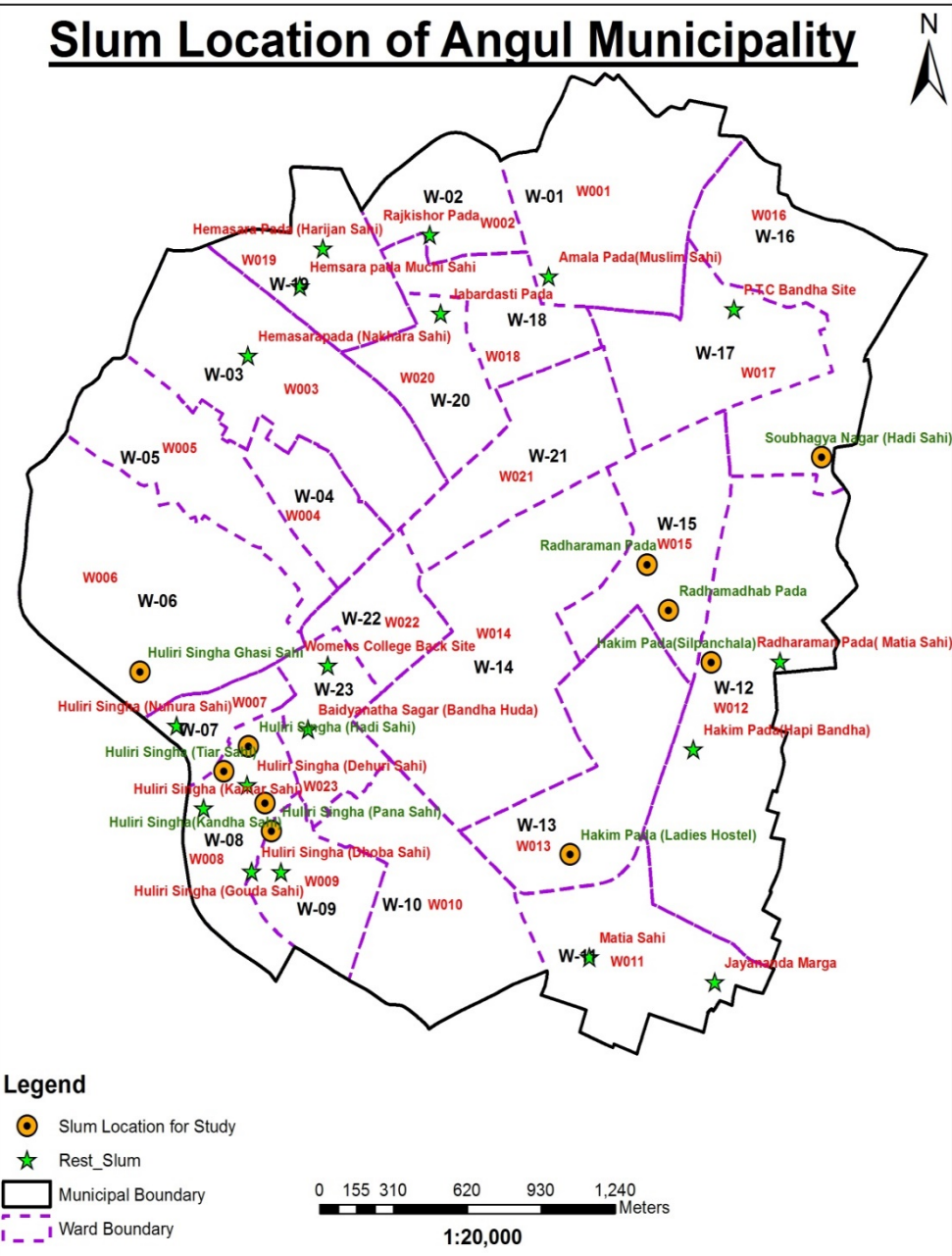
	Anugul	Dhenkanal
Tap water from treated source	42%	22.9%
Drinking water within premise	58%	53.4%
Household having latrines within premise	64%	59.8%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sewer • Septic tank • Other 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16.2% • 40.4% • 2.4% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3% • 46.1% • 2%
HHS having no latrine within premises	36%	40.2%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OD Practitioners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 34.9% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 39%
Waste water connected to		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closed drainage • Open drainage • No drains 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 21.3% • 34.2% • 44.5% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7.2% • 38.1% • 54.7%

Baseline Study reported that OD is the highest in slums

Sample of the Study

- 10 Slums in Angul and 11 in Dhenkanal.
 - Criteria for selection of slums:
 - **Authorised /Unauthorised**
 - **Social Composition (SC, ST, Mixed Caste)**
 - **Locations (Canals, forests in the vicinity)**
 - **Government Interventions (IHSDP)**

Slum Location of Angul Municipality



Name of the Slum	Caste/tribe	Wards
Hadi Sahi	Scheduled Caste (SC)	8
Ghasi Shai	Scheduled Caste (SC)	6
Subhagya Nagar Hadi Sahi	Scheduled Caste (SC)	16
Pana Sahi	Scheduled Caste (SC)	8
Tiara Sahi	Scheduled Caste (SC)	7
Radha Madhav Pada	Mixed-caste- High caste, OBC, SC	15
Radha Raman Pada	Mixed-caste- High caste, OBC, SC	15
Silpanchal	Mixed caste- High caste, OBC, SC	12
Women's Backside	Mixed caste - High caste, OBC, SC	23
Kandha Sahi	Kandha tribe	8

Slum Location of Dhenkanal Municipality



Name of the slum	Caste/tribe	Wards
Kathagada Juang Sahi	Juang tribe	1
Kathgada Saar Sahi	Saar/Sabar tribe	1
Banamali Prasad Juang Sahi	Juang tribe	9
Korian Juang Sahi	Juang tribe, SC, OBC	23
Alasua Saar Sahi	Saar/Sabar tribe	22
Murudangia Danda Sahi	Scheduled Caste (SC)	7
Murudangia Parbatia Sahi (Godi Sahi)	Scheduled Caste (SC)	7
Murudangia Harijan Sahi	Scheduled Caste (SC)	7
Banamali Prasad Hairjan Sahi	Scheduled Caste (SC)	9
Alasua Dam Sahi	Scheduled Caste (SC)	22
Khamar Bila Sahi	Scheduled Caste (SC), OBC and Sabar tribe	10

Methods of Data collection

Ethnography

- Group Discussions in all slums
- Individual interviews with slum leaders, Sweepers, IHSDP, ULB officials and manual scavengers
- Observation: OD Spots, Physical Infrastructure (toilets, drains, water resources)
- Case Studies

Duration of field work -
Jan 2016-Sept 2016





Key Findings of the Study





Purity and Pollution

- Dirt- Physical and Ritual
 - Human excreta as physical and ritual dirt
- Space- Inner and Outer Space
 - Inner space is pure and outer space can be impure
- Body - site of pollution
 - Death, birth, menstruation, caste
- Caste – Pure and Impure
 - ‘Polluting’ caste deals with human waste, dirty clothes, human hair, skin of dead animals
 - Lowest of the low (untouchable) deals with human excreta and dead bodies

Purity and Pollution in Angul and Dhenkanal

- Norms and behaviour of purity and pollution are relaxed to a certain extent due to physical space as well as due to technologies and imbibing notions of sanitation.
- Certain practices of purity and pollution are followed more strictly than the others
- Physical dirt and ritual dirt influence sanitation behaviour in urban spaces.
- The tribal communities residing in the slums of Angul and Dhenkanal practice the Hindu cultural norms of purity and pollution, though not as rigidly as Hindu Castes
- The untouchable castes are considered physically and ritually dirty, and are employed for unclean occupation



Open Defecation

- Widely prevalent in both towns
- OD sites are government land, private land, bank of canal, ponds, privately owned wasteland, field of a government institute, forest, road sides (highways), agriculture fields, and land belonging to the temple.
- OD spaces are gender segregated but challenging for women, old and sick people
- People don't perceive OD as a cause of serious environmental pollution until they are close to a source of drinking water or human habitat.
- OD is based on the understanding of open /outside spaces as communal, accessible to all, and which can be used without any regulation.
- OD does not imply that people do not want toilets or do not use toilets.





Infrastructure

- Majority of slum households use pit toilets (insanitary).
- Some households have connected their toilets directly to drains /canal.
- Selective use of toilets
 - Small Size pits getting filled up fast,
 - Desludging cost
 - constraints of water
 - physical space
- Construction of toilets is a low priority for majority of the HHs
 - Top priorities are dwelling unit , livelihood and health (Women expressed need for HH toilet more than men)
 - However, when OD sites get closed , people come under pressure to construct toilet, though they mostly consider insanitary toilets.
- Poor infrastructure leads to social conflicts







Infrastructure

- Toilets under IHSDP
 - Physical space is too small to accommodate the impure with the pure
 - Boundaries of physical and ritual dirt are blurred
 - Toilets are used as storage





Governance

- There is a high demand for toilets under SBM and it contradicts the popular myth that people prefer OD or do not want to use toilets.
- Caste plays a significant role in maintenance of municipal sanitation services.
 - All municipal Sweepers are from untouchable castes
 - Widespread manual scavenging
 - Existing Policy initiatives are yet to address this issue (IEC campaign is targeting behaviour change for toilet use only but not on these issues)
- Lack of community consultations on design, space preference, financial resources

Conclusions

- Culture is considered as a major determinant of toilet use. However, this study indicates that culture doesn't operate in isolation. Physical space in urban areas and cost effective technology that people can access also influences the sanitation behaviour.
- Policy initiatives to be more effective need to understand that specific sanitation practices and choices are made in certain context. (Space, resources, technology).
- Certain aspects of culture can not be compromised but some can be adapted in a changed environment. Until policies take into consideration these, there will be assumptions about behaviour and pre determined technology choices.
- Caste practices are followed not only by individuals and groups, Caste is also reinforced through the services provided by the municipality.
- Women are burdened with sanitation responsibilities as family members and as community members but their choices and their views remain largely unaddressed in the governance.