

## **Educational Status and Dropout among Tribal woman: A case Study of Naxalbari C. D. Block, Darjiling District, West Bengal**

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**Abstract:** Education is the primary instrument for the improvement of quality of life of every human being. Those who have remained backward and underprivileged over year can be empowered by education to assert their rights and to fulfill their rightful places in the society. Scheduled tribes in India are considered as the weakest section of the society and the truth remains that a large number of tribal women has not acquired basic education. The present paper is designed to analyse the spatial variation in gender disparity, literary status and dropouts among the tribal woman of Naxalbari C. D. Block, Darjeeling district of West Bengal.

**Key words:** Literacy, Disparity, Educational level, Dropout.

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### **I. INTRODUCTION**

Indigenous population is the most marginalised in India. The Constitution of India has recognised certain ethnic groups and named them as the scheduled tribes. Scheduled tribes are predominantly the indigenous population of India that the government has identified as socially and economically backward. Scheduled tribes in India are considered as the weakest section of the society in regards to socio-economic and socio-demographic factors like poverty, illiteracy, lack of healthcare facilities, basic hygiene, etc. These tribes are in desperate need of special protection to fight against exploitation and violation of rights. Despite the protection given to the indigenous population by the Constitution of India in 1950, to this day, the scheduled tribe remains the most underdeveloped ethnic groups in India. (Agrawal, 2010)

The tribal community of India has been subjected to countless forms of impoverishment. This is especially prevalent among tribal women. Although they are isolated from the main stream of national life, they are not always kept away from the impact of new transitions happening in our civilization every day. The truth remains that a large number of tribal women has not acquired basic education. Education is regarded as a potential instrument of every individual. (Panda, 2013). It is mandatory for the national development and is correlated with the productivity and quality of one's life. In an effort to empower them, there should be an urgency to provide opportunities which will enable them to acquire leadership qualities for economic self-reliance and social transformation. The present paper is designed to analyse the spatial variation in gender disparity, literary status and dropouts among the tribal woman of Naxalbari C. D. Block, Darjeeling district of West Bengal.

### **Study Area**

Naxalbari C.D. Block, an administrative division of Siliguri sub-division under Darjiling district of West Bengal, has been selected as the study area. The study area lies between 26° 38' 20'' N to 26° 48' 38'' N latitude and 86° 22' 33'' E to 88° 10' 9'' E longitude. Naxalbari C.D. Block is a part of western Dooars bounded by the Mirik and Kurseong C. D. Blocks on the North, Matigara C.D. Block on the East, Phansidewa and Kharibari on the South. Naxalbari C.D. Block has an area of 181.88 sq km. It has 6 gram panchayats consisting 94 villages and 6 census towns. Gram Panchayats under Naxalbari C.D. Block are Gossaipur, Hatighisa, Lower Bagdogra, Maniram, Naxalbari and Upper Bagdogra.

## LOCATION MAP OF THE STUDY AREA

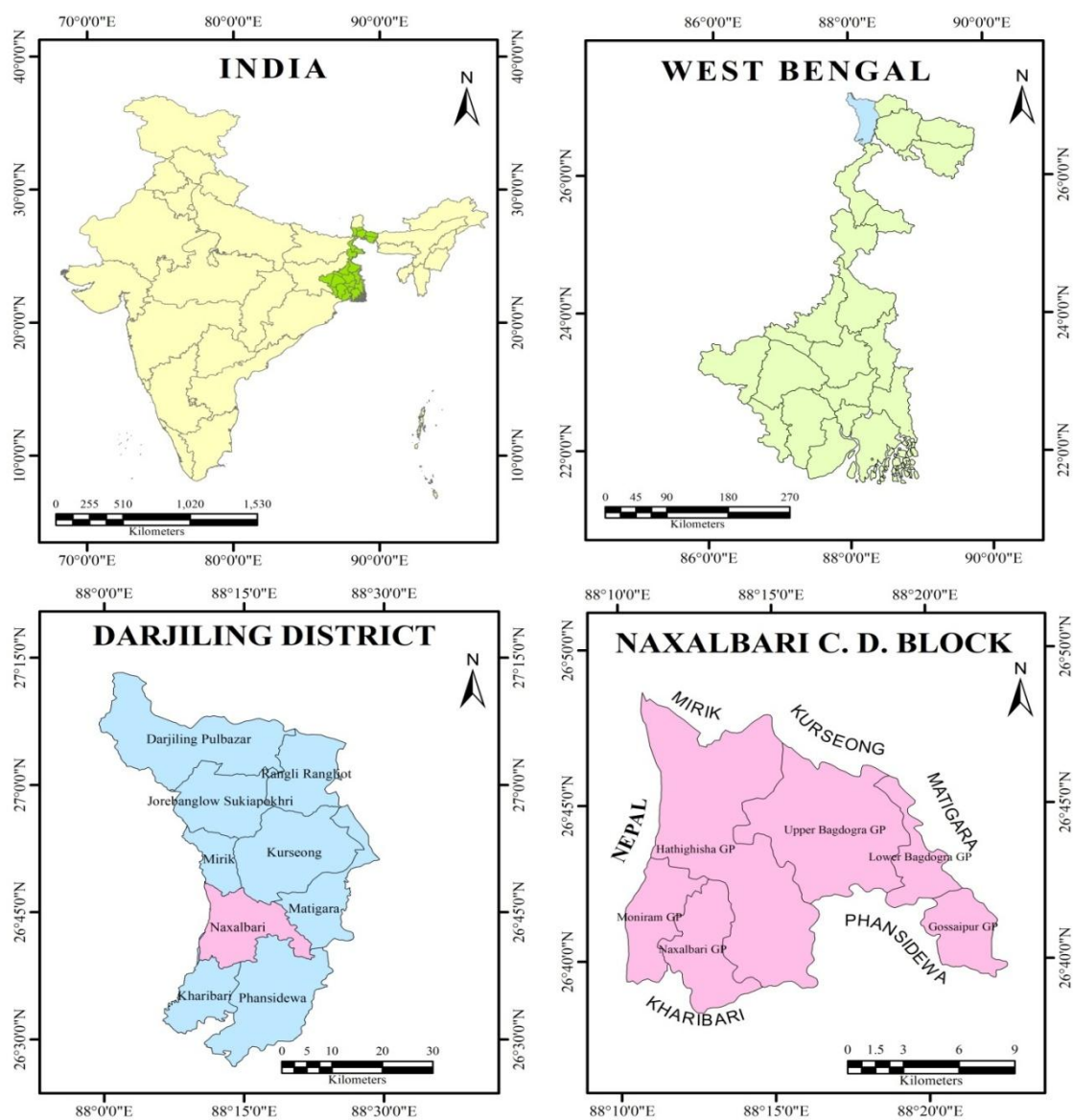


Fig. 1

### Objectives

The basic objectives of this study are

1. To study the literacy rate and gender disparity among tribal.
2. To study the educational status of tribal women.
3. To find out the reasons behind dropout among tribal women.
4. To study the relationship between different educational level and dropout with lower age of marriage among tribal women.

## II. METHODOLOGY

The study is based on both primary and secondary data. Secondary data have been obtained from Census of India 2011 and other relevant published and unpublished documents. Primary data have been collected from a few selected villages through household survey. Out of 94 villages under 6 gram panchayats in Naxalbari C. D. Block there are 78 habitat villages. 10% Sample Villages (8 villages) are considered for Survey and from which 15% Sample Households are selected from each village. Total numbers of 135 Households have been surveyed.

To analyze the educational status, few statistical techniques have been used. Sopher's Disparity index modified by Kundu and Rao has been used to compute Gender Disparity.

$$DI = \text{Log}(X1/X2) + \text{Log}(200-X2/200-X1)$$

Where, DI is Gender Disparity Index, X1 is Male Literacy Rate, X2 is Female Literacy Rate.

Regression Analysis and Scatter Plot have been drawn to show the relation between Educational Level, Dropout and Age of Marriage.

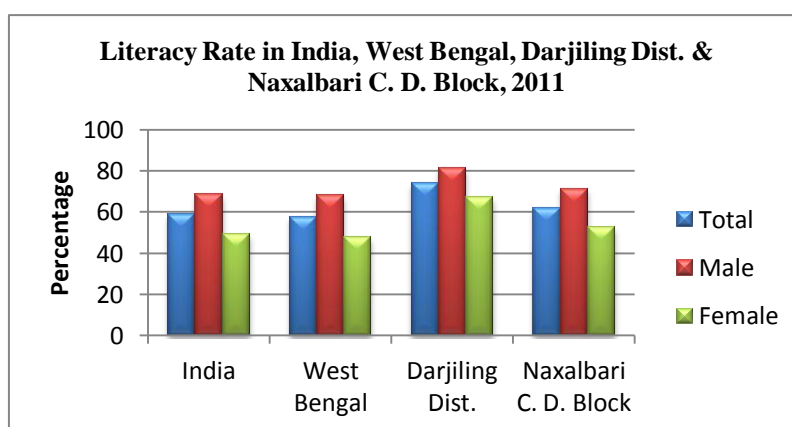
**Literacy Rate**

Literacy rate for tribal population in India is 58.96%, in West Bengal it is 57.92%, in Darjiling District it is 74.69% and in the study area it is 61.97% which is higher than the national and state average but lower than the district average. Table No 1 shows the Male-Female tribal literacy rate in India, West Bengal, Darjiling District and the study area. Gender gap in literacy rate in every level is quite prominent.

**Table No 1. Tribal Literacy Rate in India, West Bengal, Darjiling District & Naxalbari C. D. Block 2011**

Name	M	F	T
India	68.53	49.35	58.96
West Bengal	68.16	47.71	57.92
Darjiling District	81.5	67.16	74.26
Naxalbari C. D. Block	71.51	52.67	61.97

Source: Census of India 2011



**Fig .2**

There is a difference between rural-urban tribal literacy rate in Naxalbari C. D. Block. Tribal literacy rate in urban area of this block is 77.72% where in rural area it is only 60.02%. In urban area female tribal literacy rate is 70.48% and male tribal literacy rate is 85.14% where in rural area male tribal literacy is 69.82% and female tribal literacy rate is only 50.46%.

**Table No 2. Rural Urban Distribution of Literacy Rate in Naxalbari C. D. Block 2011**

Name	Total	M	F
Rural	60.02	69.82	50.46
Urban	77.72	85.14	70.48

Source: Census of India 2011

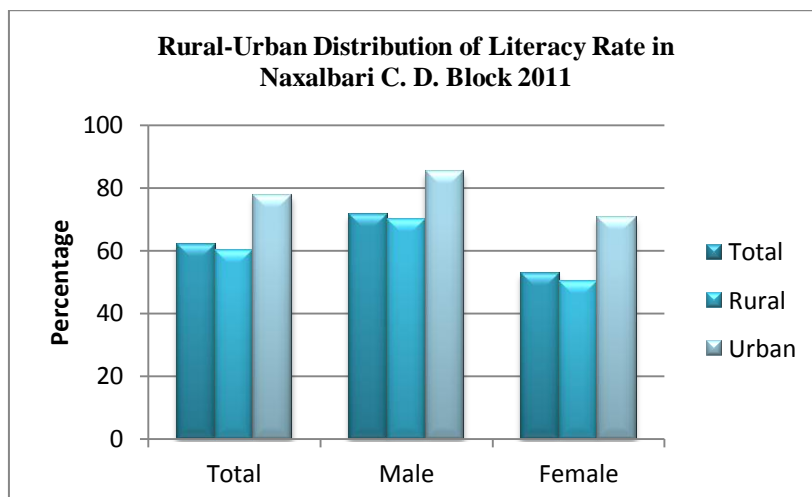


Fig. 3

### Educational Status and Disparity in Naxalbari C. D. Block

The Table No. 3 is showing the gram panchayat wise literacy rate for tribal population. It can be found that tribal literacy rate is highest in Nakshalbari gram panchayat (64.47%), followed by Lower Bagdogra (63.17%). These gram panchayats are nearer to different urban centers.. A large number of schools are concentrated and nearer to the Nakshalbari, Upper and Lower Bagdogra gram panchayats. A large number of communication facilities is also available in these gram panchayats. The lowest tribal literacy rate is found in Maniram gram panchayat (56.82%) and followed by Hatighisa (58.77%). The tribal population of these areas are mostly engaged in the construction and tea sector. These two gram panchayats completely belong to rural areas and does not have any census town. Gender disparity is also present in every gram panchayat. Highest gender disparity is found in Gossaipur (0.300), followed by Upper Bagdogra (0.282) and Maniram (0.277). Lowest Disparity index is found in Hatighisa (0.107) and followed by Naxalbari (0.160).

Table No 3. Gram Panchayat Wise Literacy Rate and Disparity Index in Naxalbari C. D. Block

Name of the GP	Literacy Rate			Disparity Index
	total	M	F	
Naxalbari	64.47	72.15	56.16	0.160
Hatighisa	58.77	63.79	53.57	0.107
Upper Bagdogra	60.51	73.75	46.75	0.282
Lower Bagdogra	63.17	64.71	41.67	0.259
Gossaipur	60.81	74.36	45.71	0.300
Maniram	56.82	75.61	48.65	0.277

Source : Primary Survey 2019-20

Different educational level is an important parameter to know the educational status in different communities. In the study area it is seen that for tribal people percentage of elementary level (below primary to middle level) education is quite high in comparison with the percentage of class 9 to graduation level and keeping parity with this female education level percentage is also high at elementary level. Highest percentage of Below Primary level education for female is found in Gossaipur GP (56.25%). In case of Primary level, highest female education percentage is found in lower Bagdogra (40.00%) and for Middle level the percentage is highest in Maniram (44.44%). Highest Secondary level female education percentage is found in Gossaipur GP (31.25%). From Table No 4 it is seen that the total H.S and Graduation level education percentage is very low for the tribal population under Naxalbari C.D Block. In case of female percentage for the same educational level i.e. from H.S to Graduation the scenario gets even worse. The highest female education for H.S level and Graduation level can be seen in Naxalbari GP and the percentages are only 12.20% & 2.44% respectively. In Lower Bagdogra and Maniram GP the percentage of same education level for female is 0.00%. In five out of the six gram panchayats under Naxalbari C.D. Block the Graduation level education percentage for female is 0.00%. Therefore, it can be said that higher level of education is not present among tribal women.

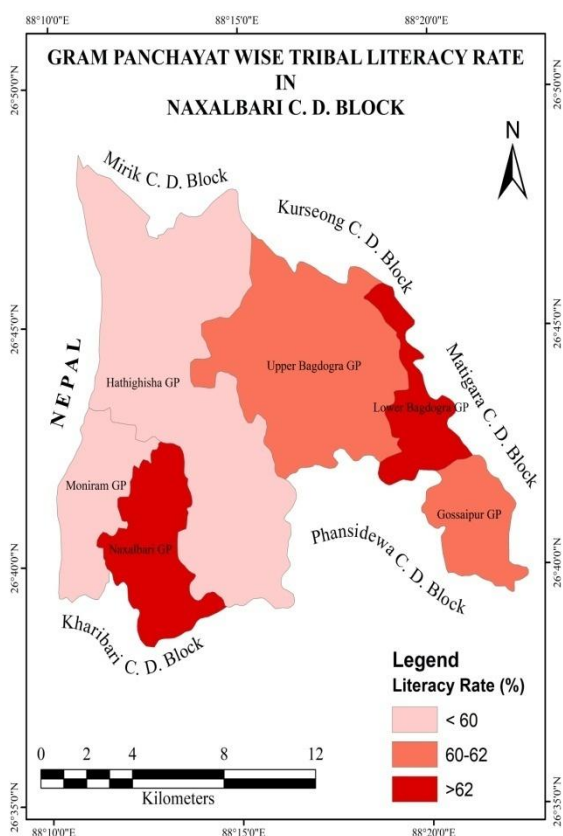


Fig.4

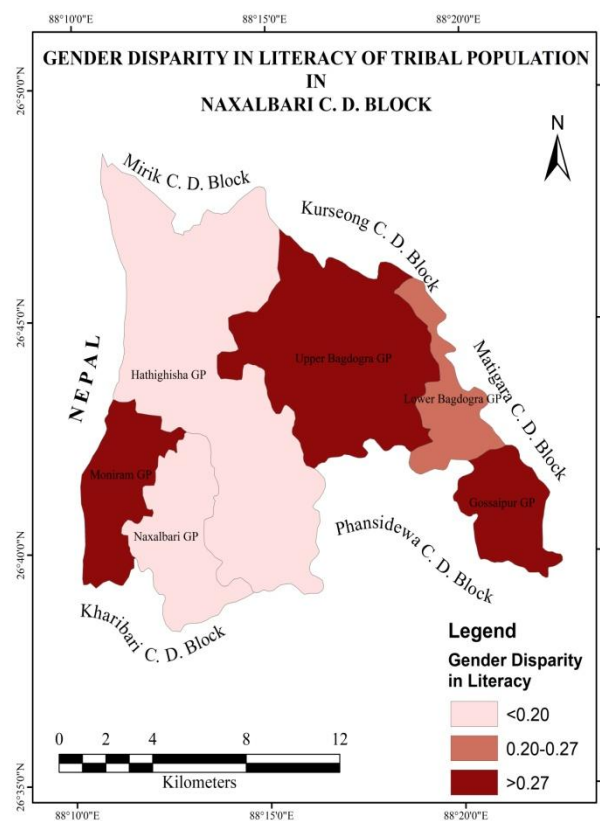


Fig.5

Table No 4. Gram Panchayat Wise Educational Level in Naxalbari C. D Block

Name of the GP	Below Primary %			Primary %			Middle %		
	total	M	F	total	M	F	total	M	F
Naxalbari	14.14	17.54	9.76	21.21	19.30	24.39	24.24	19.30	31.71
Hatighisa	30.43	32.43	30.00	24.64	21.62	30.00	23.19	24.32	23.33
Upper Bagdogra	22.11	20.34	25.00	20.00	25.42	13.89	18.95	16.95	22.22
Lower Bagdogra	25.00	27.27	40.00	25.00	18.18	40.00	37.50	45.45	20.00
Gossaiपुर	33.33	20.69	56.25	28.89	24.14	25.00	24.44	20.69	18.75
Maniram	16.00	9.68	27.78	26.00	32.26	27.78	30.00	22.58	44.44
Name of the GP	Secondary%			HS %			Graduate %		
	total	M	F	total	M	F	total	M	F
Naxalbari	20.20	26.32	12.20	15.15	17.54	12.20	3.03	3.51	2.44
Hatighisa	17.39	13.51	23.33	5.80	8.11	3.33	1.45	2.70	0.00
Upper Bagdogra	16.84	22.03	8.33	10.53	11.86	8.33	1.05	1.69	0.00
Lower Bagdogra	12.50	9.09	20.00	6.25	9.09	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Gossaiपुर	20.00	13.79	31.25	8.89	10.34	6.25	0.00	0.00	0.00
Maniram	16.00	22.58	5.56	6.00	9.68	0.00	2.00	3.23	0.00

Source : Primary Survey 2019-20

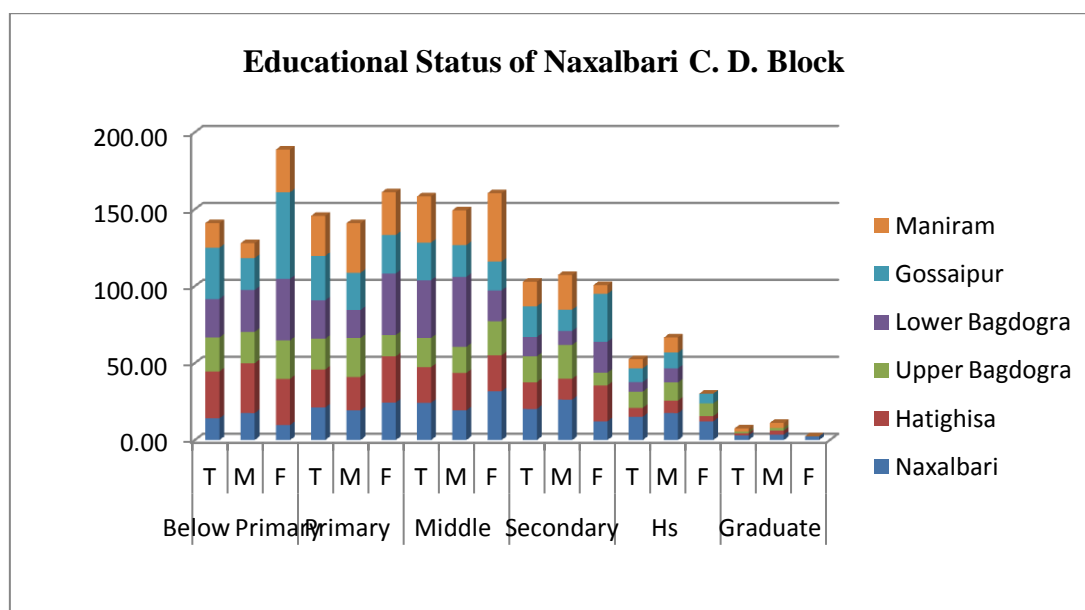


Fig. 6

**Dropout among Tribal Women in Naxalbari C. D. Block**

From Table No 5, it is seen that the Lower Bagdogra GP among the six gram panchayats under the study area has the highest dropout percentage (68.75%) and Naxalbari GP has the lowest dropout percentage (42.42%). Though in case of female dropout percentage, Hatighisa tops the list with 56.67% and Gossaipur is at last with 43.75%. It is also shown in Table No 5 that except in Hatighisa, male dropout percentage is higher than the female one for all the gram panchayats under the study area.

**Table No 5. Percentage of Dropout in Naxalbari C. D. Block**

Name of the GP	Drop out %		
	total	M	F
Naxalbari	42.42	51.22	48.78
Hatighisa	57.97	43.33	56.67
Upper Bagdogra	58.95	52.78	47.22
Lower Bagdogra	68.75	54.21	45.79
Gossaipur	57.78	56.25	43.75
Maniram	54.00	55.56	44.44

Source : Primary Survey 2019-20

The Table No 6 is showing the dropout percentage in different educational levels. Dropout percentages in Primary and Middle educational levels are higher for female than that of the male dropout percentages. Highest female dropout percentage in Primary level is found in Lower Bagdogra that is 56.67% and lowest is found in Maniram and Nakshalbari GP (25% in each GP). In case of Middle level, highest female dropout percentage is found in Upper Bagdogra i.e.41.18% and lowest in Gossaipur (28.57%). In Secondary level, dropout percentage of male tribal population is higher than the female one. From Table No 4 & Table No 6 it can be seen that though the percentage of Secondary level education for female in Hatighisa, Lower Bagdogra & Gossaipur are higher than that of the male percentage, the Secondary level education dropout percentage for female in those same GPs’ are lower than that of the male one.

**Table No 6. Gram Panchayat Wise Dropout in Different Educational Level in Naxalbari C. D. Block**

Name of the GP	Primary			Middle			Secondary		
	total	M	F	total	M	F	total	M	F
Naxalbari	21.43	18.18	25.00	21.43	13.64	30.00	38.10	40.91	35.00
Hatighisa	35.00	30.43	41.18	32.50	30.43	35.29	17.50	21.74	11.76

Upper Bagdogra	23.21	20.51	29.41	32.14	28.21	41.18	32.14	35.90	23.53
Lower Bagdogra	36.36	25.00	56.67	27.27	25.00	38.33	18.18	25.00	5.00
Gossaipur	23.08	15.79	42.86	26.92	26.32	28.57	26.92	31.58	14.29
Maniram	18.52	15.79	25.00	37.04	36.84	37.50	40.74	42.11	37.50
Name of the GP	HS			Graduation					
	total	M	F	total	M	F			
Naxalbari	16.67	22.73	10.00	2.38	4.55	0.00			
Hatighisa	12.50	13.04	11.76	2.50	4.35	0.00			
Upper Bagdogra	12.50	15.38	5.88	0.00	0.00	0.00			
Lower Bagdogra	18.18	25.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00			
Gossaipur	23.08	26.32	14.29	0.00	0.00	0.00			
Maniram	3.70	5.26	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00			

Source : Primary Survey 2019-20

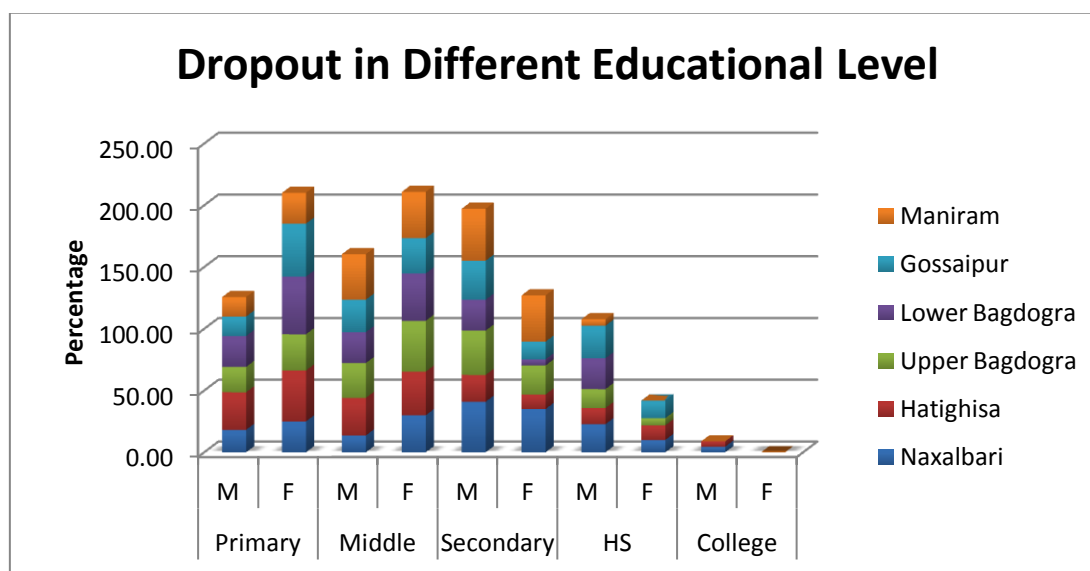


Fig .7

**Reasons of Dropout**

Reasons of dropout are quite different for tribal male and female. Where for male the prime reason of dropout is requirement of an extra person to earn for the family, for female the main reasons are marriage and requirement of an extra person to look after the household work. Female dropout percentage on marital ground is highest in Lower Bagdogra (66.67%) and followed by Maniram (50%) & Gossaipur (42.86%). In addition to that from Table No 6 it can be seen that in Lower Bagdogra, Maniram & Gossaipur, percentage wise highest female dropout occur in Primary, Middle & Secondary Educational level. Therefore it is quite obvious that Marriage before 18yrs of age is a major problem in those three GPs'. In the remaining three GPs' i.e. in Naxalbari GP, Hatighisa GP & Upper Bagdogra GP under Naxalbari C.D Block, the main reason for female dropout is requirement of helping hand to look after the household work as the elder female members of the family go out for work to earn for the family. The highest percentage of dropout due to this reason can be seen in Hatighisa (41.18%) and followed by Upper Bagdogra (35.29%) & Naxalbari (35%).

**Table No 7. Gram Panchayat Wise Reasons of Dropout in Naxalbari C. D. Block**

Name of the GP	1.Transportation Problem			2.Required for Household Work			3.Required for Income Generation		
	total	M	F	total	M	F	total	M	F
Naxalbari	7.14	4.55	10.00	21.43	9.09	35.00	28.57	45.45	10.00
Hatighisa	2.50	0.00	5.88	17.50	0.00	41.18	35.00	52.17	11.76



Upper Bagdogra	3.57	5.13	0.00	14.29	5.13	35.29	37.50	48.72	11.76
Lower Bagdogra	0.00	0.00	0.00	18.18	12.50	33.33	27.27	37.50	0.00
Gossaipur	0.00	0.00	0.00	11.54	0.00	42.86	38.46	52.63	0.00
Maniram	0.00	0.00	0.00	11.11	5.26	25.00	33.33	47.37	0.00
Name of the GP	4.Not interested in Studies			5.Repeated Failure			6.Marriage		
	total	M	F	total	M	F	total	M	F
Naxalbari	11.90	18.18	10.00	19.05	22.73	10.00	11.90	0.00	25.00
Hatighisa	21.25	34.78	5.88	13.75	13.04	11.76	10.00	0.00	23.53
Upper Bagdogra	17.29	20.51	17.65	16.07	20.51	5.88	11.28	0.00	29.41
Lower Bagdogra	18.18	25.00	0.00	18.18	25.00	0.00	18.18	0.00	66.67
Gossaipur	23.08	31.58	0.00	11.54	10.53	14.29	15.38	5.26	42.86
Maniram	18.52	26.32	12.50	19.53	21.05	12.50	17.51	0.00	50.00

Source : Primary Survey 2019-20

### Relation between Literacy Rate, Educational Level, Dropout & Married below 18 yrs.

#### Literacy Rate and Dropout

The relation between female literacy rate and female dropout is positive. It can be seen that where the literacy rate is high, dropout percentage is also high. This is because, most of the female students who go to school, are dropped out from schools in Primary, Middle and Secondary level. And it is obvious that where the number of illiterate is high, automatically the number of being dropped out will be lesser. The 'r' value for female literacy and female dropout is 0.62.

#### Dropout and Married below 18 yrs

There is also positive correlation between female dropout percentage and married below 18 years. It can be seen that where the dropout percentage is high married below 18 years is also high among tribal woman. It implies Child Marriage is an important factor among tribal female students behind being dropped out. The 'r' value for dropout and married below 18 years is 0.67.

#### Educational Level and Married below 18 years

Fig. 8 to Fig. 14 are showing the relationship between different educational level and married below 18 years among tribal women. It is showing in Below Primary the relation is positive and with the higher educational levels the relations become negative. It definitely indicates that with higher education, the percentage of marriage below 18 years goes down.

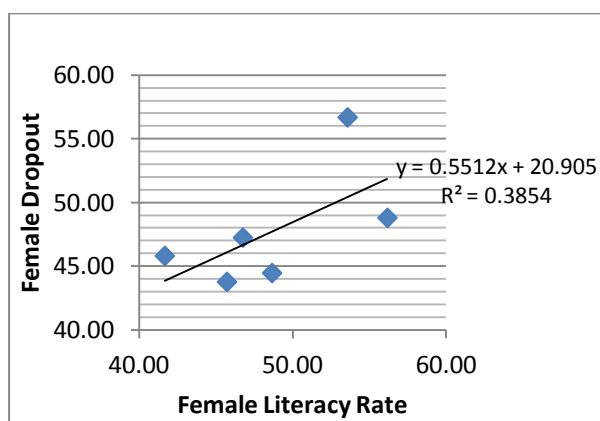


Fig.8

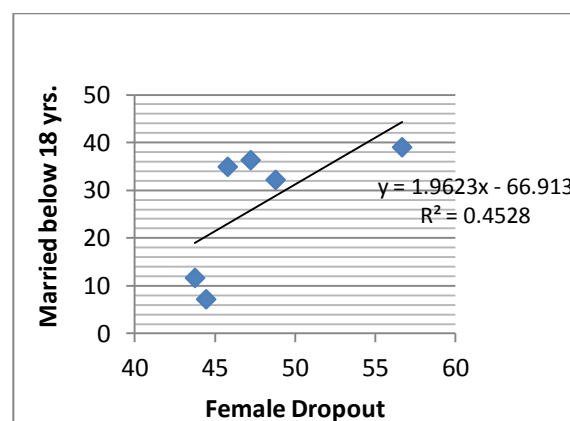


Fig.9



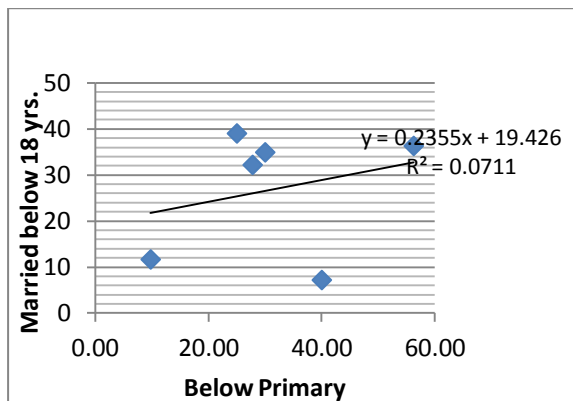


Fig. 10

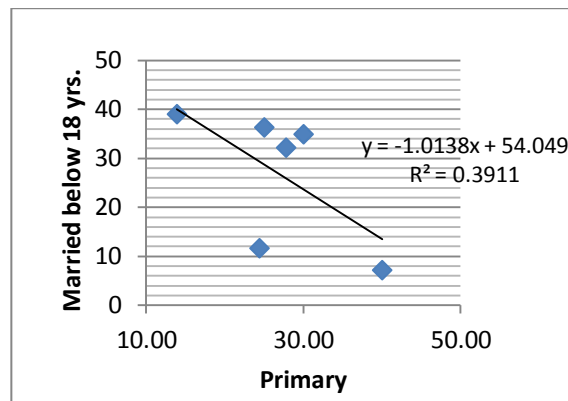


Fig. 11

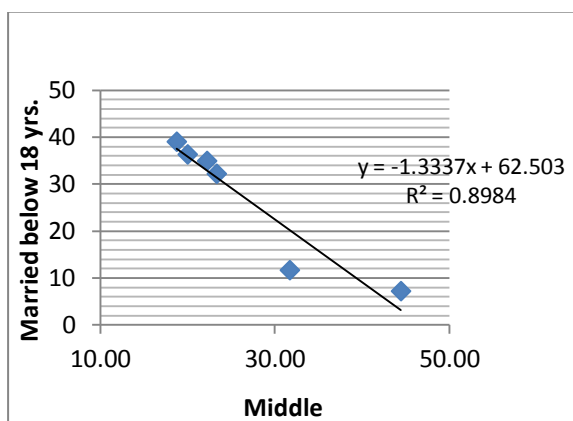


Fig. 12

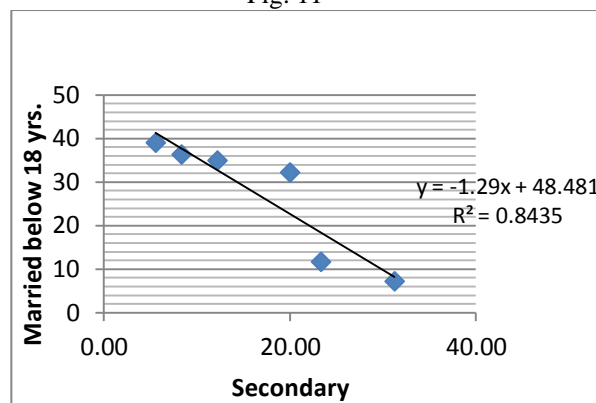


Fig. 13

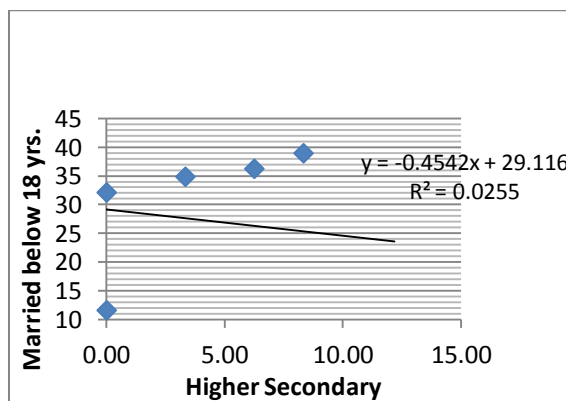


Fig. 14

### III. CONCLUSION

Status of women varies in different societies. Literacy percentage among tribal women, as women in all social groups, is lesser than the tribal male counterpart. The present study examine the educational status and dropout issue among tribal women of Nakshalbari C. D. Block. The study finds that like any other community, gender gap in education is also present in tribal society in our study area. It is also found that almost in every GP the dropout percentage of female is lesser than that of male among tribal population. The data reveals that where the major factor associated with male dropout is poor economic condition specifically need of engagement in work to earn money, for female dropout it is due to engagement in household work and lower age of marriage. It is not simply a result of academic failure, but rather often results from both social and academic problems. For reducing dropout and gender gap in literacy it will require a comprehensive approach to help students for their social and academic problems that they face in their lives.

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