

Higher Education among Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes of Kalimpong: A Sociological Study

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To

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In Partial Fulfilment of the Requirement for the
Degree of Master of Philosophy

By

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SIKKIM UNIVERSITY

(A Central University established by an Act of Parliament of India, 2007)

Date: 7/02/2019

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the dissertation entitled “**Higher Education among Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes of Kalimpong: A Sociological Study**” submitted to **Sikkim University** in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of **Master of Philosophy** is my original work. Any content or any part of this dissertation has not been submitted to any other institution or for any academic purpose.

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled “**Higher Education among Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes of Kalimpong : A Sociological Study**” submitted to Sikkim University for the award of the degree of **Master of Philosophy** in the Department of Sociology embodies the result bona fide research work carried out by Shunami A. Lepcha under my guidance and supervision. No part of the dissertation has been submitted for any other Degree, Diploma, Association and Fellowship.

All the assistance and help during the course of the investigation have been duly acknowledge by her.


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List of Abbreviations

AISHE	All India Survey on Higher Education
AICTE	All India Council for Technical Education
BA	Bachelor of Arts
BBA	Bachelor of Business Administration
B.Com	Bachelor of Commerce
BCA	Bachelors of Computer Application
BCI	Bar Council of India
B.Ed	Bachelor of Education
B.Sc	Bachelor of Science
BTTM	Bachelor of Travel and Tourism Management
DEC	Distance Education Council
DOEACC	Department of Electronics Accreditation of Computer Courses
EOC's	Equal Opportunities Cell
GER	Gross Enrolment Ratio
GISHM	Good Shepherd Institute of Hotel Management
GPI	Gender Parity Index
HE	Higher Education
ICAR	Indian Council for Agricultural Research
MHRD	Ministry of Human Resource Development
MOMA	Ministry of Minority Affairs
MPhil	Masters of Philosophy
MA	Masters of Arts
NCTE	National Council for Teacher Education
NPHE	No participation in Higher Education
NET	National Eligibility Test
NUEPA	National University of Educational Planning and Administration
NCSC	National Commission for Scheduled Castes
PhD	Doctorate of Philosophy
RMC	Rockvale Management College
SC	Scheduled Castes
ST	Scheduled Tribes
UGC	University Grants Commission
WBMLLDB	West Bengal Mayel Lyang Lepcha Development Board
WBDDCB	West Bengal Damai Development and Cultural Board
WBKDCB	West Bengal Kami Development and Cultural Board
WBSDCB	West Bengal Sarki Development and Cultural Board

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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

Higher education has always been a prominent feature in the Indian society; its history can be traced back to Nalanda and Takshashila Institution, although the foundation of modern education has been laid down by the British. The first college to impart western education was established in the year 1818 at Serampore Calcutta, later many more colleges were established in other parts of India (Kaur, 2014, pp.1-2). After Independence the structure of higher education system has progressed, Indian higher education system is now the third largest system in the world (Sheikh, 2017, p.39).

Currently, the education system is divided into a pre-primary level, primary level, elementary education, secondary education, undergraduate level and postgraduate level. Higher education includes technical education, professional education, arts, science and commerce colleges, open and distance learning, teacher education college (Virat & Prem, 2006). According to All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) Report 2017, Indian institutes of higher education are classified into three groups viz. university institution, college institution, and stand-alone institution. The university institutions are empowered to award degree while college institutions are not authorized hence affiliated with universities. A stand-alone institution is neither empowered to award degree nor affiliated with universities thus run diploma level programs. And there are 864 universities, 40,026 colleges and 11,669 stand-alone institutions (Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD): Department of Higher Education, 2017, pp.1-4).

Despite progress and expansion, the system has met frequent challenges. One of the major problems is unequal access to higher education, and the disadvantaged group of the society is the victim to the inequality. Thus to fight back challenges, the government has been continually implementing policies and programs, bringing progress in higher education from grass root level. Against the backdrop, the present study entitled *Higher Education among Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes of Kalimpong: A Sociological Study* is an exploratory research in Kalimpong Khasmahal village of Kalimpong district in West Bengal and has interrogated the situation of Scheduled Castes (SCs)/ Scheduled Tribes (STs) communities in higher education. The macro situation in higher education of SCs/STs of India in general and West Bengal in particular is comprehended to contextualize the micro level study in the Village. It has also explored the pathways and constraints of the SCs/STs in achieving higher education.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

It is a universal fact in every society some sections have more shared value resources like property, money, education, bank balance, political power, authority, etc. than others. These capitals all together are social resources; unequal access to these resources is called social inequality, a form of social stratification. Social stratification is an interpersonal and intergroup relation of dominance and submission, rank or hierarchy in a society (Cancian, 1976, p.227). In India, the caste system is the basic form of social stratification which is based on the social hierarchy making a section of society privileged this induces unequal access to social resources resulting in social inequality. Randall Collins postulates higher education qualification as a resource to acquire wealth, power, and prestige in the society and it sets up stratification because

the major beneficiaries of higher education are children from wealthy families, therefore the major problem of education is fundamentally stratification (Wallace & Wolf, 2008, pp.142-143). Accordingly, differential educational accessibility among the marginalized section of society is one result of social inequality and this lead to social stratification. A student from the privileged section of the society has a higher chance of accessing higher education. Factors like; family social position, parental education, and material factors that can access facilities, gender, religion, plays a vital role in accessibility of higher education.

Conceptualizing Higher Education

In the World Declaration on Higher Education espoused by the World Conference on Higher Education in 1998, higher education was defined as institution and universities which provides, training, research, studies at post-secondary level are permitted as a school of higher education by the state (UNESCO, 1998). In India, according to Indian Standard Classification of Education (2014), higher education is outlined as “the education that is obtained once completing twelve years of schooling or equivalent, and is of the duration of at least three years”. Higher Education includes the undergraduate level and postgraduate level. Higher education refers to the post-secondary institution that offers Associate Degrees, Bachelor’s degree, Master’s degree or PhD degrees. Also, there are higher general education and vocational/professional education. The disciplines such as law, medicine and social work and many others are robustly vocational and professional oriented (MHRD: Department of Higher Education, 2014). After independence Indian higher education obtained a huge growth and expansion. Next, to China and United States, India has the third largest higher education system in the world in terms of size and its variety .It also has largest number of educational institutions (Sharma & Sharma, 2015, p.1). However, in spite

of its expansion higher education in India is still a scarce resource and a matter of concern. And the low economic background, caste, religion, and family background of students play an important role in higher education accessibility (Lama, 2017). Also, the access to higher education depends on different factors, people's capability and undertaking of impending, receiving access in a preferential course, overcoming all cultural, gender and social hurdle (Rasak, 2016, p.30).

Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes in Higher Education in India

The Hindu society is divided to four orders viz. the Brahmin who is traditionally priest, the Kshatriya are the rulers and soldiers, Vaishya are the merchants and lastly the Shudra are peasants, laborers and servants. The first three castes are twice born castes while the Shudra is designated as untouchables and outside varna system (Srinivas, 1962). Untouchables belong to depressed castes. They are also referred to as Dalit, positioned in the lowest order in caste hierarchy due to practice of untouchability which made them victims of hierarchical caste system in India. The practice deprived them off the possession of productive resources like land, basic rights of education and equality, and resulted in excessive socio-economic and educational deprivation among these castes. In the past, this caste were acknowledged as Dasas, Shudras, Anaryas *Dalits*, *Pad-Dalitas*, *Harijans*, Untouchables, Depressed castes, backward castes etc. (Dhende, 2017, p.345). Therefore the SCs basically include those communities who were considered as untouchables and occupy lower status in the hierarchical caste structure of Hindu society.

The other groups in Indian context who belong to the disadvantaged position of the society are the Scheduled Tribes. Scheduled Tribes in India are generally considered to be 'Adivasis,' meaning original inhabitants of the country or primitive people. And they have often been isolated physically and socially from the mainstream Hindu

population. The Scheduled Tribe population exemplifies one of the most economically indigent and marginalized groups in India. According to D.N. Majumdar “A tribe is a social group with territorial affiliation, endogamous without specialization of functions, rule via tribal officers, hereditary or otherwise united in language and dialect, recognizing social distance with different tribes or caste without any social obloquy attaching to them, as it does within the caste structure, following tribal traditions, beliefs and customs, illiberal of naturalization of ideas, from alien sources, notably conscious of homogeneity of ethnic and territorial integration” (Brahmanandam & Babu, 2015, p.128). “The long history of interaction among the tribes and non tribes could properly be described as the relationship of unequal and that of the exploiter and the exploited; the tribal’s have gained landlessness, displacement from their parental habitat, poverty, malnutrition, illiteracy powerlessness and so forth and hence after independence many programmes and policies have been advanced like; spreading literacy and higher education programmes had been undertaken for minimizing poverty and homelessness, development in education and employment, health sector and many more”(Roy, 2005, p.1-2).

The two social categories viz. Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes are designated as socially, educationally and economically deprived sections with total population of 16.6% and 8.6% respectively of India's population. As per the National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC), these communities were informed as Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes as verified by provision contained in Clause 1 of Articles 341 and 342 of the Indian Constitution respectively, the term SCs/STs signifies certain constitutional legal status (Government of India: NCSC, 2016, p.3).

With a view to provide safeguard against their marginalization, the constitution made special provisions for their socio economic upliftment. Article 46 and Article 15(4), empowers state to promote and to make special provision for educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people in particular the SCs and STs and are provided with reservation of seats in higher educational institutions including technical, engineering and medical colleges and in Scientific and Specialized Courses (GOI:NCSC, 2016, pp.7-9)

However despite implementation of constitutional provisions, all India literacy rates of SCs/STs indicates comparatively lower percentage of 66.1% and 59% respectively as against 76.1% of non SCs/STs population, therefore showing a gap in literacy achievement (Census, 2011). Similar trend is noticed in higher education. As per the All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) 2017, the total enrolment of students in higher education during the year 2016–2017 is 35.7 million out of which SCs and STs accounts to 14.2% and 5.1% respectively against 46% of general students which is relatively less than their population ratio of 16.6% and 8.6%. The educational indicator like Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) for the higher education in the age group 18-23 years for SCs and STs stands at 21.1% and 15.4% respectively which is lower than GER of 25.2% at national level. The gender wise break up of GER in case of SCs/STs is 21.8% and 16.7% for male indicating a gender gap, as percentage for female of respective category stands at 20.2% and 14.2%. The all India figure indicates higher for male with 26% and 24.5% for female. The Gender Parity Index (GPI) which measures the relative access to education of males and females shows a relatively lower percentage for SCs 0.93 and STs 0.8 as compared to national figure of 0.94 (MHRD: Department of Higher Education, 2017).

In the state of West Bengal the GER for all categories is 18.5%, whereas for SCs/STs it stands much lower with 13.5% and 10.1% respectively. Similarly, the GPI comprises of 0.82 and 0.77 for both the categories SCs/STs which is lower than the state average of 0.87 (MHRD: Department of Higher Education, 2017).

The disparity in educational attainment in higher education by two categories are also supplemented by many studies, for example Kirpal, et al. (1985), Sahu (2016), Aikara (1980) and Rasak (2016), it give insights about growth in the literacy rate of STs and SCs over the years which was made feasible due to ameliorative measures like educational benefits, reservations, social developments programs etc, however despite such measures there is persistence of educational disparity and inadequate successes in higher education. Similarly, Deshpande (2008) and Rao (2008), argues that affirmative action has not reached to all SCs/STs to the fullest and there are extensive gap between the two and others in access to quality higher education. It has been recognized in India that people belonging to the low caste and the people belonging to the tribal minorities suffer the most from poverty and historically it has been there that the tribes and caste were economically weakest and subjected to the discrimination and deprivation and thus they were targeted by government for the reservation policies (Kijima, 2006, p.369). Since independence government has implemented many policies for the SCs and STs to spread literacy and higher education. Reservation policy has been made in all fields like education, employment and democratic bodies (Roy, 2005, p.2).

Suresh (2011) in his study demonstrates the problem faced by the Scheduled castes and the Scheduled tribe's student, while pursuing higher education in rural areas of Tamil Nadu, his study states economic need must be taken care of for the fulfillment

of the STs/SCs student's education. One of his finding also affirmed, female student faces more problem compared to male student in pursuing higher education.

The tribal communities, who live in fringe of society are educationally backward, as the tribal communities have large-scale heterogeneity in tribal languages, culture and their scattered habitations make the task of the planners of policy to work out a uniform development policy difficult because of their small, marginal and scattered habitations often making tribes out of focus in the development process (Roy, 2005, p.2).

The programmes are being implemented for accessibility of higher education to all section of society who are educationally backward, girls and disabled children in rural areas, and other marginalized categories like SCs/ STs, other backward classes and educationally backward minorities. As the education is expanding the level of inequality to access education is also rising, in India the society is stratified based on their race, caste, social class, religion and culture and some section of the society are highly privilege when they come to higher education, and access to it depends upon the economic, social, cultural and educational aspect of the student (Rasak, 2016, p.32). S Srinivas Rao in his study conducted on the IIT's, the premier engineering schools in India, showed that there existed among the teachers a general perception that only SCs/STs students were poor in studies, the reason for academic success or failure and social adjustment of students from Dalit and tribal groups in higher education is strongly dependent on their location within the social structure which identifies them, also stigmatized and assigns them various labels, not only are the castes stigmatized but the tribes are also stigmatized, caste are stigmatized in terms of purity and pollution, tribes are stigmatized in terms of not being civilized, being

rustic ,(words like forest, hill are often used to refer them) and isolated from the mainstream (Rao, 2013, p.200).

1.2 Conceptual Framework

Education is often viewed as an apparatus for empowerment and equalizer of opportunity and is regarded as a major component of the 'Human Resource Development' which focuses on transforming a human into capital by associating education with employment (Atal, 2007, p.94). Sociologically there are various perspectives on education. The functional perspective on Education is mainly based on the work of Emile Durkheim and Talcott Parsons who argues on the positive function of education.

Arguing from functional perspective, Emile Durkheim the French sociologist explicit that the foremost function of the education is a transmission of norms and values, additionally education promotes and maintains the stability of the society, brings social control and social order, school transmits necessary homogeneity for social survival and teaches skills for the future occupation. In the similar vein, Talcott Parsons argues that a school acts as a socializing agents and acts as a bridge between the school and family, the school also prepares the child to obtain universalistic standards and achieved status for future adult roles in the society, it also provides equal opportunity through meritocratic principles (Haralambos & Heald, 2014, pp.206-210). Durkheim held that objective of education is to awaken within the child those physical intellectuals and moral states that are needed of him by his society as a whole. And education is one of the elements of social structure and the vital function of the education is socialization of younger generations and handling of the collective knowledge and skill that prepares him for the future and transmission of culture. Man needs to be educated for a dynamic society (Ottaway, 1968, pp.5-6) .For Durkheim "education was the method via which society could reconstruct the situation of its very existence" (Thompson, 2002, p.161).

A very different perspective to the functionalist school is the conflict and critical theorist who states that schools maintain to replicate unjust and inequality favoring the dominant hegemony of society, Paulo Freire a conflict theorist in his influential work *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (1968) articulates the “Banking education” where the teachers fill up students as the students are treated as passive receptacle and this banking education socializes students to accept injustice and inequality and not question the hegemonic authority, likewise the work of Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis *Schooling in the Capitalist America*(1976) articulates how School socialize students to reproduce unequal labor reproduction, and bourgeoisie controls the workforce through education as the theory of economic reproduction boils to working class, child goes to working class school and does working class job. Labor relations are produced through schooling favoring the privileged section of the society. Similarly the other theorist Pierre Bourdieu developed the concept of Cultural Capital and Habitus to explain the way in which education system reproduces inequality. Robbin (2000) and Harker (1984) apprehended the main argument of Bourdieu’s work, and proposed dominant economic institutions are structured to favor those who already possess economic capital and cultural capital. He defines the cultural capital according to the criteria of dominant hegemony, and the schools take this cultural capital as a natural and only capital preferable for the school and treat all children with this capital, as if all the children have equal access to it. Thus the poor achievement of some section of the society is not because of the differences in cultural inheritance but because of the way in which school operates in biased manner, making success for some section of the society. This concept of cultural capital explains the process of reproduction of inequality by the educational institution and it promotes the unequal level of academic performance and

achievement. Bourdieu's work is one of the few coherent accounts of the central role that schools have been reproducing social and cultural inequalities from one generation to the next generation (Harker, 1984, p.117). Pierre Bourdieu like Althusser gave schools the main component to transmit power and inequality, and his theory of 'cultural reproduction' assumed that these class structures are maintained and given legitimacy by symbolic violence (Barcan, 1993, p.68). The main argument of Bourdieu's work in education is, it enquires the formulation of relationship between the higher-education system and social-class structure, and he also argues that education serves to maintain rather than reduce social inequality. For him the higher education functions to transmit privilege, allocate status and imprint the enduring social order, the education system furnishes to the reproduction of social class structure by reinforcing cultural and status cleavages among classes. Bourdieu affirms that by expansion of a meritocratic system of higher education the interest of the upper class is preserved without violating the democratic ideology and thereby legitimizing the reproduction of the social hierarchies by changing their form into academic hierarchies (Robbins, 2000). Bourdieu's key concept of cultural capital explains the technique of reproduction of inequality through the academic institution. "Cultural capital refers back to the socially inherited 'linguistic and cultural competence' that allows success in education", he additionally points out that most university diplomas in France are held by the upper class and only few are held by the kids of farmers and factory workers and these colleges hold the interest and the ideologies of the upper class and that is how the structural conditions of education encompass class interest and ideologies which results in the reproduction of the unequal distribution of cultural capital and for this reason the academic system itself promotes the unequal stage of educational performance and achievement (Robbins, 2000, p.208).

1.3 Contextualizing the problem in Kalimpong

Kalimpong is a hill station, earlier it was a part of Darjeeling district but on 14th February 2017, it was carved out of Darjeeling and became the 21st district of West Bengal (Sen, 2017). Its total population is 251,642 (Kalimpong district at glance, n.d.).

The original inhabitants of Kalimpong are Lepcha but a majority of the population is ethnic Nepali group (Ramakant & Misra, 1996, p.80). In ethnic Nepali group, the Scheduled Castes includes the communities like Biswakarma /Kami, Damai and Sarki. While the Bhutia, Lepcha, Sherpa and Yolomo were designated as the Scheduled Tribes. Tamang along with Limbu was accorded Scheduled Tribe status in 2002 (Sarkar, 2014, p.1). The population of SCs/STs is 6.52% and 29.77% respectively of the district total population. The literacy rate of SCs/STs is 81.3% and 80.3% correspondingly as against 82.5% of non STs/SCs population (Census, 2011).

Kalimpong has a long history of European education. The educational institution in Kalimpong was first started by the Christian missionaries and the church of Scotland Mission. Education Sector is considered as an important contributor to the town's economy and the schools of Kalimpong attracts a greater number of students from its neighboring countries like Nepal, Bhutan, Thailand, and Bangladesh and also from the State of Sikkim (Norbu, 2008). Kalimpong has a specialty in what is called European Education. The renowned schools in Kalimpong are Saint Joseph's Convent, Saint Augustine School, Scottish Universities mission institution (SUMI), Rockvale Academy, Kalimpong Girl's High school, Kumdini Homes, Saptasri Gyanpeeth, St. Philomenas Girls High School, Springdale Academy, and Gandhi Ashram School (Kalimpong review, 2011). SUMI of Kalimpong is now more than one hundred years old and has spread schooling not simply in Kalimpong however

different regions like Darjeeling, Bhutan, Sikkim. It's a missionary school representing the Church of Scotland and has contributed plenty in spreading education within the hills, Girls High School another Scottish missionary school established in 1906 located in the heart of Kalimpong, has been providing exceptional education for girls, for more than hundred years, Saint Augustine school established in the year 1945 by the Swiss Catholic priests order belonging to the canon regulars, and it is affiliated to the council of Indian school certificate examination, New Delhi. Dr. Graham Homes School is another well reputed school which was founded in 1900 by The Rev. John Anderson Graham, a Scottish Missionary. Gandhi Ashram School was founded in 1994 by Father Ed Mc Guire he was a Jesuit priest from Canada this school was established particularly for the unprivileged children .Maximum number of the reputed schools of Kalimpong are Missionary and Catholic schools (Kalimpong review, 2011). However despite having reputed educational institutions at school level, there are only four degree college's viz. Kalimpong College, Pedong Government College, Gorubhathan Government College and Cluny women's college and two institutes of professional courses. In addition to these degree colleges, the students usually opt higher education outside the hometown mostly in Siliguri, Kolkata, Delhi and Bangalore etc. for quality education. Therefore the present study is an exploratory study in Kalimpong Khasmahal village of Kalimpong district in West Bengal and an attempt to interrogate the situation of SCs/STs communities in higher education. It has also explored how the constitutional provisions have facilitated in bridging their gap in achieving higher education.

1.4 LITERATURE REVIEW

The overview of the associated literature allows the researcher to establish a foundation and provide a theoretical framework for conducting the studies. The review of literature is broadly categorized into four categories; firstly the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes at Glance, Higher education accessibility among the SCs/STs, Review on Affirmative Action and lastly Studies on the education of Darjeeling .The literature provides a theoretical base in understanding about SCs/STs. Secondly Higher education accessibility among the SCs/STs, here the cited literature gives insights about the SCs/STs scenario on higher education. Thirdly Review on policy and program the literature render knowledge about the reservation policies and other constitutional program. Lastly Studies on the education of Darjeeling gives a picture of education scenario in Darjeeling hills. Therefore the present study would be conducted on the basis of the following literature which will provide a foundational framework to the research.

Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes at Glance

Scheduled castes and Scheduled Tribes are officially designated as a disadvantaged group of the Indian society. According to the census of India 2011, the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes comprise about 16.6% and 8.6% respectively of India population. (Kijima 2006) states, it has been recognized that people belonging to the Scheduled Castes and the people belonging to the Tribal minorities suffer the most from poverty and historically it has been there that the tribes and the caste were economically weakest and subjected to the discrimination and deprivation.

Oommen (2011) affirms “Indian castes system is the recognized social phenomenon, where they exercise untouchability and Scheduled Castes groups who belong outside the four-fold society of Hindu principle of caste, they may be subjected to untouchability, and untouchability is taken into consideration more shaming than slavery and racism in human history as it has been sanctioned by means of the religious doctrine” (Oommen, 2011, p.229). C. Parvathamma (1981) highlights how caste system is indulged with social hierarchy and Brahmins are designated in higher position and Scheduled Castes are considered weaker section of the society. The article also highlights the contribution of B.R. Ambedkar , one of the prominent figure in Dalit Movement who played an important role to uplift the socio economic burden of the low castes reproduced by the social hierarchy .

The pattern of historical social inequality of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes has been exclusive. The Scheduled Tribes never belonged to the mainstream Hindu society despite the fact that they have got one thing in a commonplace, both belong to the disadvantaged section of the society and has confronted social inequalities and disparities.

Andre Beteille (1986) depicts the concept of tribes to understand tribal identity the work throws light on the historical to evolutionary approach in the definition and identifications of tribes, tribes are considered a different section of group from the mainstream Indian society because they more or less stayed outside Hindu civilization, thus the India constitution has recognized the Scheduled Tribes as a separate category with specific claims and entailments, the scheduling of tribes in India began during British Rule and which acquired a systematic character from the time of 1931 census. British members of the Indian civil services held that Aboriginal Tribes had a typical identity which made them different from rest of the India society

but the nationalist anthropologist argued that they are part and parcel of the Indian Society, looking into it the constitution formulated a Act, The Government Act of 1935 which introduced provision for the tribal people and today this legal sanction and political interest is preserving and strengthening their identity (Andre Beteille, 1986).

Higher Education among Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes

Here the cited literature Kamat (1981), Kirpal, Swamidasan, Gupta, Gupta (1985), Sahu (2016), Aikara (1980) and Rasak (2016) gives insights about the SCs/STs issues on the differential educational achievement and education accessibility, their work illustrates there is growth in the literacy rate of STs and SCs over the years with the help of policies of ameliorative measures like educational benefits, reservations, social developments programs etc but there is limited success and educational inequalities do persist in higher educational accessibility, the Dalit's, Adivasi's children still have more dropout rate, education discontinuation rate, illiteracy rate etc when compared to the forward caste Hindus. Their work reflects on the roles of parental income, parental education, family size, caste, religion plays an eminent role in higher educational accessibility and educational attainment. Kirpal et al. (1985), in their work they present the academic adjustment of SCs/STs students in Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay. The study reflects that the reservation policies and programs have facilitated the SCs/STs student to get admission, but the students failed to perform well in the competition set up and required extra facilities for tuition and it was reported that the dropout rate of the SCs/STs students was high, as they were not able to adjust with the nature of competition and this created a hindrance in

their achievement of education, the performance of the SCs/STs students was below average compared to the non STs/SCs students, the work highlighted on the background of SCs/STs students like family income, family education, geographical locations, process of preparation for IIT, discriminatory attitudes towards the SCs/STs student in order to explore the reason behind their low performance. The article reflects upon the recommendations and measures to address the problem of SCs/STs which will help them in gaining the educational achievement to the fullest (Kirpal et al., 1985). Dhende's (2017) article throws light on the factors that has influenced the higher education of the Scheduled Castes and the scenario of SCs/ STs higher education. Higher education has influenced the productivity and economic changes, among the Scheduled Castes. It is also observed, there is improvement in the educational standard and are acquiring a better position in the society but there is still room left for improvement in the socio-economic and educational conditions of this group. The dropout rate among SCs/STs is still far above other group and the main source of this negative issue is poverty and unemployment. The chances of SCs/STs being educated beyond higher education is comparatively lesser than that of the other upper castes .The government has been providing different types of financial support for educational upliftment of SCs/STs, but falls inadequate .The article put forward, factors like family background also influence the enrollment, dropout and academic performance of the student. The economic background determines the opportunity of education for individuals, in addition the educational background of parents play a vital part in educational outcome of the children. And in case of SCs/STs student parental academic background is not positively influential, which results in low enrollment, poor academic attainment and high dropout. The work furthermore brings to light how discrimination in education plays a role of obstruction for SCs/STs in

educational institution. The practice of untouchability and casteism exist in school, colleges and universities. It's more severe in technical and professional education in contrast to general degree colleges. The discrimination takes place in a dissimilar form making difficult to attest it as caste based discrimination. Stigmatization, assigning label like 'not skilled for success' 'predestined for failure' all of this gives them inferiority complex and mental pressure affecting the educational achievement of the SCs/STs students. Language and gender disparity is another factor that influences the participation of SCs/STs students. SCs/STs student having poor language background mainly in English language, and SCs/STs student who are taking primary and secondary education in the languages other than English faces various problems to compete higher education which affects their overall academic performance. The other factor gender disparity plays an influencing role in determining the access to higher education. For SC women, early marriages of girls in rural areas, dowry system and illiteracy of the parents are responsible for the stumpy educational outcome in higher education (Dhende, 2017).

Behere (2015) the paper attempts to examine the access to higher education by tribal's in India. Higher education is a means for development of the tribal's but the tribal student have very low participation in higher education. Thus the government should take additional extreme steps, for development in higher education to eradicate the dropout rate and improve the enrollment rate among the tribal student. The paper affirms that India has to enhance its priority for higher education among tribal population. Dalip Kumar's article *Higher Education of Tribal's in India: With special Reference to Jharkhand* (In Sharma & Thakur (2010) edited book) presents the scenario of higher education particularly in state of Jharkhand. The work analysis various facts and figures to understand the status of Indian higher education. Most of

the higher education institutions are located in urban centers, and preponderance students attending the institution are non-tribal. Regardless of the reservation policy numerous seats are taken by non-tribal students, as majority of tribal population dwell in the remote area and this hinders the accessibility to higher education. Also socio-economic constraints cause tribal students' failure in participation into higher education (Kumar, 2010, pp.254-303).

Review on Affirmative Action

Thus the government have taken steps to improve the situation of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, to combat their social inequality, but studies have reviewed that the policy and program have not reached to all the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes to the fullest. In Deshpande's article (2008), argues although the government has implemented the affirmative action plan so that SCs/STs gets positive treatment in allotment of the jobs and access to higher education, but these action are not able to compete the inequality there is substantial gap between SCs/STs and others in access to quality higher education, they still face discrimination in the schools and face certain attitudes of teachers. The article argues, affirmative action in India must be implemented properly and there must be supplementary measures as a integral part of the program like remedial teaching, counseling attempts to lower down the dropout rate and many more, and the supplementary program and the affirmative action must be strengthen as it's a need of the hour for developing country like India to unleash the talent of the suppressed group. Rao's (2008), depicts that the policy affirmative action implementation has been in existence in India for more than half a century, it has been facing many difficulties and twist and turns, though the policy of reservation is a century old the overall condition of the weaker section of the society has not improved to a significant extent there is still a gap

between the disadvantaged section of the society and the advanced group, the other issues is that the advanced group of the society views the reservation policy in negative manner and there are sorts of protest against this reservation and this policy of reservation has gained a strong controversy than any other policy till date, the article highlights that the policy in recent times has been subjected to many pulls and pressure from all direction and its assuming many new directions. Weisskopf (2010) the article highlights on the issue of reservation policies .There can be no doubt that an extensive share of SCs/STs student enrolment in Indian higher educational institutes is owed to Indian reservation policies. The reservation has played a key role in escalating the opportunity for SCs/STs student to carry on their education at the college and university level. However the paper also brings to light the arguments of critics of reservation policies, they have claimed that the reservation policies are inequitable because they make available valuable education opportunities mainly to affluent SCs/STs. The creamy layer is the beneficiaries rather than needy members of disadvantage groups. There can be no doubt that it is indeed a creamy layer of Dalits and Adivasis who constitute the vast majority of beneficiaries of Indians reservation policies in university admission. The critics state that reservation for SCs/STs applicants increase inequalities within these groups. Not just that it also reduce educational opportunities for general entry applicants from other groups who may be worse off than the SCs/STs beneficiaries. The article put forward evidence of various literatures, and argues with much evidence that beneficiaries tend to disproportionately from the better off castes and tribes within SCs and STs Categories and this have created inequality among the SC/ST population. The only constitutional remedy for eradicating inequality becomes the main source for reproduction of inequality.

Studies on Education of Darjeeling

Dewan (1991) the work presents the history of education in the Darjeeling Hills. Dewan (2014) highlights the condition of education during agitation and analysis the problem teachers and students faced during the time of agitation. Rawat and Chettri (2015) the article argues on problem faced in rural education in Darjeeling and has evaluated that there is slow progress in the growth of education however there is a positive effect on education from the government policy of providing free and compulsory education. Lama (2017) the article illustrates how economic backwardness has a huge impact on the aspiration for higher education among the children of Tea Garden laborers.

1.5 Rationale of the Study

Higher Education is one of the important apparatus for social economic development and higher education act as an economic stabilizer (Jayaram, 1977). However, despite constitutional provision for SCs/STs, literature unambiguously states the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes have less positive outcomes over higher education. Contextualizing this in the present study, Kalimpong has been carved as a district in 2017 from earlier Darjeeling district of West Bengal. The ethnic Nepali group comprising the communities like Biswakarma /Kami, Damai and Sarki are the Scheduled Castes communities while the Bhutia, Lepcha, Sherpa, Yolomo, Tamang and Limbu were designated as the Scheduled Tribes. SCs/STs population accounts to 6.52% and 29.77% respectively of district total population with the respective literacy rate of 81.3% and 80.3% as against 82.5% of non STs/SCs population (Census, 2011). Kalimpong has the specialty and past glory of what is called European Education with many renowned Christian missionary schools. However, with very few higher

education institutions, the students often move out to cities for higher education. There are very few studies and scanty literatures available on education in Darjeeling district viz. Dewan (1991, 2014), Rawat and Chettri (2015), Lama (2017), however there is no comprehensive study on higher education among SCs/STs of Kalimpong from sociological perspective; therefore the present study entitled “*Higher Education among Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes of Kalimpong: A Sociological Study*” has attempted to fill up the gap.

1.6 Objectives

1. To assess contemporary scenario of SCs and STs in higher education in India in general and West Bengal in particular.
2. To examine SCs/STs participation in higher education in Kalimpong and make an in-depth sociological analysis.
3. To understand the awareness level regarding Reservation and other amenities
4. To explore the facilitating and constraining factors in achieving higher education.

1.7 Research Questions

1. What is the scenario of SCs and STs in higher education in India in general and Kalimpong in particular?
2. How have the SCs/STs of Kalimpong responded to the constitutional provisions in higher education and to what extent are they aware of it?
3. Does participation in higher education varies across religion and gender among two categories?

4. What are the pathways and constraints experienced by two categories in accessing higher education? Is the constraining factor and inaccessibility in higher education rooted in their traditional social structure?
5. How do the communities perceive about their participation in higher education?

1.8 Methodology

The method for the present study is qualitative in nature while quantitative data is also taken in account in terms of population and literacy rate which is obtained from Census of India. Other educational indicators like Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER), Net Enrolment Ratio (NER) and Gender Parity Index (GPI) etc. is obtained from Educational Statistics At A Glance, Ministry Of Human Resource Development (MHRD): Department Of School Education & Literacy, and MHRD: All India Survey on Higher Education. These indicators is used and analyzed to comprehend the status of higher education of SCs/STs and understand macro situation in India in general and West Bengal in particular.

The micro level study has been done in Kalimpong, which is exploratory in nature and mainly based on primary data which is collected from Sample households using semi structured interview schedule containing both close-ended and open-ended questions. In-depth interview, collection of case study and narratives has helped to understand their experiences, pathways and constraints. To understand the collective perception of the community, group interview and focused group discussion has been conducted with the selected educationally qualified people of the community members. The micro level empirical situation is examined and analyzed within the conceptual framework of sociological theory. The secondary sources like published

books, articles, newspapers, and journals and magazine etc has supplemented the analysis.

Field and Sample Size: Field for the present study is Kalimpong Khasmahal village which is located in Kalimpong-I Block of Kalimpong District in West Bengal, India. The total geographical area is 745.44 hectares with 306235 village code. It has 1833 number of households. Its total population is 8,881 and SCs/STs constitute 9.8% and 37.5% respectively. The literacy rate of the study area is 86.18% higher than literacy rate of State i.e. 76.26%. The male literacy rate is 91.52% while that of female stands 81.11%. The average sex ratio is 1046 which is higher than state average of 950 (Census, 2011).

The study has covered a total sample of 106, taking 2.5% each from SCs/STs population to bring a proportionate representation taking 23 samples from Nepali Scheduled Caste groups comprising Biswakarma (Kami), Damai and Sarki and 83 samples from Lepcha community, the oldest Scheduled Tribe in the region. Aged between 19-30. The total sample size is taken using purposive and snowball sampling which is stratified taking into considerable variables like age, religion, gender and class dimension.

1.9 Chapterization

Chapters are formulated under the basis of the objective of the research.

Chapter 1. The first chapter is *Introduction*, and it includes statement of the problem, conceptual framework that gives a theoretical foundation for the research. A section has been devoted to contextualizing the problem in Kalimpong, literature review, rationale of the study, objectives, research questions, and methodology.

Chapter 2. *Higher Education among Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in India*, This chapter begins with a brief overview of constitutional provision with regard to educational upliftment for SCs/STs, which is followed by discussions on macro situations based on analysis of various educational indicators to understand the contemporary scenario of SCs and STs in higher education in India in general and West Bengal in Particular.

Chapter 3. *Higher Education among SCs and STs in Kalimpong: An Empirical Analysis*. Based on the field work, this chapter focuses to see whether the trend of higher education among SCs/STs is similar or different in Kalimpong, and how differently or similarly the SCs/STs of Kalimpong are responding to the constitutional provisions and reservation policy, highlights their perspective on reservation policy.

Chapter 4. *Higher Education: Pathways and Constrains*, based on the qualitative information like narratives and case study of respondent, the chapter highlights the facilitating and constraining factors in accessing higher education, it also includes how the variables like socioeconomic structures, religion, class and many more, is reflected as pathway and constraining factors, the chapter also include communities role on educational achievement and challenges.

Chapter 5. *Conclusion* this chapter showcase analytical version of field data and suggestions.

Chapter II

Higher Education among Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in India

This chapter begins with a brief overview of history of higher education in India followed by analysis based on secondary data to understand the contemporary scenario of SCs and STs in higher education in India in general and West Bengal in Particular. The chapter looks at the status of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes higher education by analyzing educational indicators like GER (Gross enrolment ratio) GPI (Gender Parity Index), and other parameters of India and West Bengal which provides a macro level trend of higher education status. Since Kalimpong became a district recently therefore there is absence of educational parameters, so field data has been analyzed to comprehend the status of higher education among SCs and STs.

2.1 History of Higher Education in India

Higher Education in Medieval and Ancient period: In India, ancient education was called Gurukul system, where education was provided based on the individuals castes and education had religious and cultural aim. Thereafter, with the advent of the Gupta Dynasty centers of higher education was established at Nalanda, Takshila, and Ujjain in the northern part of India and in the southern region, most of the temples were served as a center for higher education. Also, the advent of the Mughal's in 1526 established many Islamic institution of education in Indian teaching grammar, philosophy, mathematics, and law (Choudhary, 2015, pp.2-4).

Higher Education in Colonial Period: In 1817, higher education begun in India with the establishment of the Hindu College in Calcutta. It was the first Europeanized institution of higher Education in India .The British rule gradually took over the traditional education system and altered the traditional Indian institutes and education system by introducing new language and curricula. The English high schools and colleges replaced the religious and cultural aim of traditional Indian education system to degree granting institution that made students capable to survive in the colonial economic system (Sharma, 2013, p.4). Thereafter, the British in 1857 introduced European system of higher education in India by establishing universities at Bombay, Calcutta and Madras. The education system of the British Raj brought additional division in the already divided Indian society. The society was divided into two; the urban elite who took the privileged of modern education and modern state and the urban elite comprised of so called upper castes of Indian society, and the other group were uneducated rural mass who comprised of dalit's and adivasi's (Choudhary, 2015, pp.24). Sharma (2013) narrated that the higher education in India was not stable and was in a poor condition, therefore Lord Curzon appointed Indian Universities Commission on January 27, 1902 to inquire into the condition of higher education. The western education, forced students to study subject alien to them from their language and culture. Poverty and economic backwardness added additional problem. Students rushed to colleges just for degree to get hold of government services. In 1916-17 approximately 80 % of total enrolment in Indian universities was in general education and the higher education was producing mostly clerks instead of training scientist and technologists (Sharma, 2013, pp. 6-10). The idea for establishing a University Grants Commission was conceived in England which would be responsible for estimating grants from government to universities to supplement their

income. However in 1943, the Sargent Plan focused on national plan of development of education through Inter-University Board restored the idea of 'Central Grants Committee' because they realized the national plan of development of education could not be implemented all alone without the financial aid from center. Further, the idea to set up Indian University Grant Commission as a statutory body which would supervise over the allocation of grants to universities from public funds was needed. Also, grants from central government can be provided through Grants Committee for new development in universities (ibid., pp. 6-15). Later in 1956, the University Grants Commission was established as a statutory body by the parliament (Choudhary, 2015: 25).

Higher Education in Post Colonial Period: After independence, apprehending the significance of higher education, the government of India appointed the University Education Commission 1948 under the chairmanship of S. Radhakrishna to report on the university education of India. The report was submitted in 1949 with number of recommendations on the aspects of higher education. This was the first comprehensive attempt to re organize higher education of India (Nayak, 2002, p.20).

A new constitution was drafted, which embodied new provision relating to development of education in respective states and made education a concurrent subject, a subject on whom both the center and state government could legislate (Choudhary, 2015, pp.2-4). Also, emphasized that higher education is a basic need for all individual. No person of any caste or community in a society has the right to become engineer, professor or doctor instead every individual has the right. Each individual has the right to aspire such status. Higher education is an institution accountable for producing and nurturing intellectual precursor, for the benefit of present and future society (Deshpande, 2006, p.2440). Therefore the constitution

implemented certain provision for the underprivileged groups of the Indian Society. Considering, the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes as the most underprivileged groups of the Indian Society, the constitution grants reservation in various education departments for them.

In all central controlled higher educational institutes 15 % of the seat is reserved for the SCs student and 7.5 % is reserved for the ST student ,some percentage of seats are also reserved for the Other Backward Castes (OBCs) (Weisskopf, 2004, p.4340).

The nodal ministry for education in India is Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD). The MHRD has a department, Higher Education Department which looks into overall development of Higher Education. The main governing body of higher education is University Grants Commission (UGC) who is under the Department of Higher Education in the MHRD, the body aids in maintaining coordination between the center and state, stimulating advice's in regard to education, to the government .However the regulating body is not limited to UGC there are NUEPA (National University of Educational Planning and Administration) accountable for running the education system , NCTE (National Council for Teacher Education) for teacher education, AICTE (All India Council for Technical Education), DOEACC (Department of Electronics Accreditation of Computer Courses), DEC (Distance Education Council), ICAR (Indian Council for Agricultural Research), BCI(Bar Council of India), and many more (Dhanuraj & Kumar, 2015, p.3-4) .

Despite the progress and expansion in higher education, literacy rate, GER and GPI, the Indian higher education system meets frequent challenges like dropout, unequal access to higher education, disparity in educational attainment among the marginalized groups. Various literatures viz. Suresh (2011), Roa (2013), Aikara (1980), Kamat (1981) and many more supplements that higher education system of

India meets with challenges. One pertinent challenge is unequal access of higher education to SCs and STs.

2.2 Over view of Reservation Policy

One of the major problems was unequal access to higher education. Thus to fight back challenges government implemented policies and programs, to bring progress in higher education from grass root level. In India, the age old caste system has lead to gradation in society, and has created social inequality and discrimination which is incompatible with democratic development of nation. Thus, to bring a substantial degree of equality within a democratic line in society and to address the problem of social inequality the constitution adopted “reservation policy” a constitutional remedy. Reservation policy is sometimes denoted as affirmative action, reservation policy have three components viz. political reservation, educational reservation and job reservation, these reservation ensures reservation for underprivileged section of society that encompasses SCs / STs and Other Backward Class (Rao, 2008, p.485). Reservation for marginalized social group at the central and state level has been an enduring policy, and its objective is to promote the access of disadvantaged groups to higher education (Basant &Sen, 2010, p.62). To protect the interest of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, the most underprivileged groups of the Indian Society, the constitution grant reservation in various education departments. In higher educational institution that is under central government, 15% of the seats are reserved for the SC students and 7.5% of the seats are reserved for the STs (Weisskopf, 2004, p.4340).

The articles of Indian Constitution, through which educational provisions are provided for Scheduled Castes & Scheduled Tribes, are as follows;

Article 15(4) “empowers the State to make any special provision for the advancement of any socially and educationally backward classes of citizens or for SCs and STs. This provision was added to the Constitution through the Constitution (First Amendment) Act, 1951. This provision has enabled the State to reserve seats for SCs and STs in educational institutions including technical, engineering and medical colleges and in Scientific & Specialized Courses. In this Article as well as in Article 16(4) the term ‘backward classes’ is used as a generic term and comprises various categories of backward classes, viz., Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Classes, De-notified Communities (Vimukta Jatiyan) and Nomadic/Semi nomadic communities”(GOI: NCSC, 2016, pp.8-9) .

Under Article 16(4) “empowers the State to make “any provision for the reservation in appointments or posts in favour of any backward class of citizens which, in the opinion of the State, is not adequately represented in the services under the State” (ibid., p.9)

Article 46 “The State shall promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people, and in particular, of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes, and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation” (ibid., p.7)

University Grants Commission and Reservation Policy/ Educational Schemes:

The University Grant Commission (UGC) has always given importance to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes student. In 1973, the Ministry of Education had issued guidelines regarding reservation of seats for students from SCs/STs in colleges and universities. Twenty per cent of seats were to be reserved for SCs/STs and in addition concession of 5 percent marks in the least percentage of marks requisite for admission course. It was observed afterward that the seats were still vacant in spite of marks

concession because of lesser eligible candidates (Sharma, 2013, pp.139-140). Also, special cell was formed to look into the implementation matters regarding reservation. Further, twenty per cent of the seats were reserved in hostels. Later in 1982-83, the reservation seats in colleges and university for SCs/STs were revised from 20 per cent to 22.5 percent, 15 percent for Scheduled Castes and 7.5 per cent to the Scheduled Tribes. Thereafter in 1980-81 in junior research fellowships there were concession of 10 per cent reservation and fifty junior research fellowships were created in science, humanities and social sciences for SCs/ STs. Similar reservation were made in post-doctoral fellowships, research fellowships in engineering and technology also in postgraduate scholarship for fulltime L.L.M courses. Furthermore, students belonging to the Scheduled Tribes of border hill areas were to be awarded every year twenty – five scholarships for undertaking postgraduate studies in science, humanities and social sciences (ibid., pp.139-142).

As per to the Report to the people on education 2011-2012, there are several other schemes of UGC supports Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in regard to higher education. They are, remedial coaching at UG and PG level, coaching classes for preparation for National Eligibility Test (NET), coaching classes for entry in services, postgraduate scholarships, and establishment of centers in universities for study of social exclusion and inclusive policy (MHRD: Government of India, 2012, p.54). Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowships for SCs/STs is provided by The Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment and Ministry of Tribal Affairs respectively, and they have assigned and funded the UGC for implementation of the scheme of Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowships for SCs and STs Candidates. The Central Government through UGC provides Research Fellowships for SCs/STs candidates to undertake advanced studies and research leading to M.Phil /Ph.D. degrees in Sciences, Humanities and

Social Sciences including languages and Engineering & Technology. Post-Graduate Scholarships for SCs/STs Students in Professional Courses is also under the scheme, keeping in view the social background of the candidates from deprived sections of the society, the scheme has been initiated to provide them an opportunity to undertake postgraduate level studies in professional courses (University Grants Commission, 2011-2012, pp. 275-279). UGC has also been allocated to execute the scheme of Maulana Azad National Fellowship for Minority students by the Ministry of Minority Affairs (MOMA) from the year 2009-10. The objective of the scheme is to provide integrated five year fellowships in the form of financial assistance to students from minority communities, as notified by the Central Government, to pursue higher studies such as M. Phil and Ph.D. The Commission has been contributing towards social equity and socio academic mobility of the under privileged groups of the society through these various special schemes and minimize the social disparities in the field of Higher Education (ibid., pp.276)

Standing Committee has been established for SCs/STs by the UGC, which supervises the implementation of Reservation Policy for them in Higher Education. The Committee embodies academic Experts, Ex-Vice- Chancellors and notable persons in the field of higher education. Similar to Standing Committee there is Establishment of Equal Opportunities Cells (EOCs). They work likewise, to make colleges and universities more approachable to the requirements and limitation of the disadvantaged social groups, the UGC has commence a scheme viz. Establishment of Equal Opportunity Cell in Colleges and Universities to monitor the efficient implementation of policies and programmes for disadvantaged groups and to grant assistance and counseling educational, academic, economic, social and other matters. The cell also takes up programmes to address problems faced by SC & ST students in

higher education, and sensitizes the university/college community on their issues (ibid., pp.283-285).

2.3 Higher Education in West Bengal

West Bengal is one of the states of India lying on the eastern region of the country. The state's capital is Kolkata, it is a center for commerce, trade, cinema, industry, science and education. The modern education system in West Bengal has its root lead down by British missionaries and social reformist. It was one of the most prosperous regions of British Empire (Sarkar et al., 2004, p.1). It is one of the thickly populated states of India with 91,347,736 populations covering a total area of 88,752 sq.km³ and ranks 4th in population share, the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes population of the state is 23.5% and 5.8% respectively. The literacy rate of the state is 77.02% with Sex Ratio of 947. The sex ratio of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes is 951 and 999 correspondingly (Census, 2011).

Table 2.1 Type Wise Numbers of Universities in West Bengal

Central University	Institute Of National Importance	State Public University	State Open University	State Private University	Deemed University Private	Total
1	6	24	1	8	1	41

Source: All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) Report 2016-2017.

Table 2.2 Course wise numbers of Colleges in West Bengal

Serial no.	Name of course	Number of Institute
1	General	727
2	Arts	10
3	Commerce	1
4	Computer Application	12
5	Education/Teacher Education	231
6	Engineering and Technology	72
7	Fine Arts	7
8	Hotel and Tourism Management	6
9	Law	22
10	Management	27
11	Medical Allopathy	23
12	Medical Ayurveda	4
13	Medical Dental	3
14	Medical Homeopathy	11
15	Medical Others	6
16	Nursing	16
17	Para Medical	3
18	Pharmacy	8
19	Physiotherapy	3
20	Sanskrit	1
21	Science	2
22	Physical Education	2
23	Others	9
	Total	1206

Source: All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) Report 2016-2017.

According to AISHE report 2016-2017, there are 41 universities in West Bengal and 1206 colleges (MHRD: Department of Higher education, 2017). Some of the universities are, University of Calcutta, University of Burdwan, University of Kalyani, University of North Bengal and the Vidya Sagar University they teach and do research in humanities, arts, sciences and commerce streams. While the Jadavpur University concentrated more on science and technology, the Rabindra Bharati University remained dedicated to the teaching of dance, drama, music and visual arts. The other universities are Presidency University, formerly known as Hindu college

(Sarkar et al., 2004, pp.3-5). The science institutions are Bidhan Chandra Krishi Vishwavidyalaya, University of Animal and Fishery Sciences and the Uttar Banga Krishi Vishwavidyalaya, they have taken up the task of teaching and research in the field of agricultural sciences, fisheries and animal husbandry. The state also has Central University, the Visva Bharati University, and a National University of Juridical Sciences. The state has Netaji Subhash Open University, an open university to provide wider access to higher education. The state has set up the West Bengal Technical University in the year 2000, to focus development in technology education (ibid., pp.3-5).

2.4 Literacy Rate of India

Overall educational achievement is one of the important factors for development of a country like India. Government of India has been persuading a lot of effort for equal access to education for all sections of society, considering the importance of education the government of India have introduced, 'The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009', under the Article 21-A which ensures free and compulsory education in the age group 6-14 years. The Act came into effect on 1st April 2010 (MHRD:Department of School and Education & Literacy, 2018)

Studies have highlighted that the education scenario in India is characterized by many negative issues like inequality of educational attainment, low level of literacy rate, gender inequality in education and high dropout. However India has made a considerable progress, despite the challenges. The table 2.3 shows that the literacy rate is rising over the years. The all India literacy rate is 72.98% according to 2011 census. Literacy rate is one major indicator for socio economic development of the nation. According to the Indian census 2011, a person who can both read and write is

considered literate, however children below 7 years are considered illiterate even if they know how to read and write (Census, 2011).

Table 2.3 Category Wise Literacy Rate of India

Year	All Category			Scheduled Castes			Scheduled Tribes		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1961	40.4	15.35	28.31	16.96	3.29	10.27	13.83	3.16	8.53
1971	45.96	21.97	34.45	22.36	6.44	14.67	17.63	4.85	11.3
1981	56.38	29.76	43.57	31.12	10.93	21.38	24.52	8.04	16.35
1991	64.13	39.29	52.21	49.91	23.76	37.41	40.65	18.19	29.6
2001	75.26	53.67	64.83	66.64	41.9	57.79	59.17	34.76	47.1
2011	80.88	64.63	72.98	75.17	56.46	66.07	68.51	49.36	58.95

Source: Census of India, Office of registrar General India

The table 2.3 demonstrates that the literacy rate of the country has increased every year. In the year 1961 the literacy rate was 28.31% and due to progress and expansion of education system in India the literacy have raised to 72.98% in the year 2011 which illustrates improvement in literacy rate.

In the year 1961 the total literacy rate of the country was 28.31 %, with 40.4 % for males and 15.35 % for females. This figures demonstrate wide gender gap of literacy rate between male and female then, women's were excluded from taking part in education, however since then due to progress and development it has brought changes in the society, and has gradually increased the female literacy rate from 15.35% in 1961 to 64.63% in 2011. Also the gender gap in the literacy rate is narrowing down in the year 1961 there was a gap of 25.05% and in the 2011 the gap is 16.25%.

The historically disadvantaged group Scheduled Castes, have climbed up the ladder in the literacy rate. In the year 1961 the literacy rate was 10.27% and in the year 2011 the literacy rate has level up to 66.07% and there is increase of 55.8% over the years. The SCs female literacy rate has increase up to 56.46% (in 2011) from 3.29 % (in 1961). Likewise the male literacy rate of Scheduled Castes has also increased from 16.96% (in 1961) to 75.17% (in2011). Among the Scheduled Tribes the literacy rate has leveled up from 8.53% in the year 1961 to 58.95% in the year 2011. The female literacy rate has increased from 3.16% in 1961 to 49.36% in 2011, and the male literacy has leveled up to 68.51% in 2011 from 13.83 % in 1961.

However the gender gap in the literacy rate of the SCs/STs has not narrowed down in comparison with all categories. The all categories gender gap in the year 1961 was 25.05% and in 2011 it has decreased to 16.25%. However, the gender gap of SCs/STs has worsened over the years. In case of SCs the gap increased to 18.41 % in 2011 from 13.67% in 1961. Similarly for ST the gap has increased from 5.3% in 1961 to 19.15% in 2011.

There is increase in the literacy rate for All Categories, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes over the years. Also, if their literacy rate is compared with their population percentage the result is positive. Among the SCs the literacy rate is 66.07% as against their population percentage 16.6% .Likewise among the STs, its literacy rate is 58.95% as against their population percentage 8.6%(Census, 2011).

A comparative analysis of all social categories reflects that the literacy rate of all categories is 72.98% in the year 2011 which is higher than the Scheduled Tribes literacy rate (58.95%) and Scheduled Castes (66.07%).

Literacy scenario in West Bengal (WB)

West Bengal's literacy rate is very close to national average, India's literacy rate is 74.04% and West Bengal's is 77.08%. The rate is just 3.07% higher than national average and ranks twentieth in terms of literacy among all Indian states

Table 2.4 Category wise Literacy Rate of West Bengal

Year	All category	Scheduled Castes	Scheduled Tribes
1991	57.70	42.21	27.78
2001	68.64	59.04	43.40
2011	77.02	69.43	57.93

Source: <https://www.census2011.co.in>

http://censusindia.gov.in/Tables_Published/SCST/dh_st_westbengal.pdf

The literacy rate of Scheduled Castes in the year 1991 was 42.21% and has accelerated to 69.43% in 2011. Among the Scheduled Tribes, in 1991 the literacy rate was 27.78 %, and in 2011 it has increased to 57.93%. Despite the fact, that there is growth in the percentage among the two groups, however while in comparison to the all category percentage that is 77.02% (in 2011) the SCs/STs fall behind.

Similarly, West Bengal's SCs literacy rate is 69.43% in 2011 which is which slightly more compared to the overall India's SCs literacy rate 66.07%. However the West Bengal's STs literacy rate is 57.93 which is comparatively less with 1.02% than the overall STs literacy rate of India 58.95%.

Although the two disadvantaged group of West Bengal are making progress, however they lag behind if compared with West Bengal's all category literacy percentage (77.02%).

2.5 Higher Education Status of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in India and West Bengal

Gross Enrolment Ratio

Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) is a statistical measuring rod which is used in the educational sector, to determine student's enrollment at different grade viz. primary, upper primary, higher secondary and higher education within the country and is expressed as percentage of the population. In India GER in higher education is calculated for 18-23 years of age group, widely used to show the general level of participation in and capacity of higher education.

The country's GER in higher education has registered an increase from 24.5% in 2015-16 to 25.2% in 2016-17, according to the latest edition of All India Higher Education Surveys(AIHES) launched by union Human Resource Development (HRD) (Chopra, 2018).

Table 2.5 India's category wise Higher Education GER (2010-2017) in Percentage

Year	All Category Male	All Category Female	All Category Total	SC Male	SC Female	SC Total	ST Male	ST Female	ST Total
2010-2011	20.8	17.9	19.4	14.6	12.3	13.5	12.9	9.5	11.2
2011-2012	22.1	19.4	20.8	15.8	13.9	14.9	12.4	9.7	11.0
2012-2013	22.7	20.1	21.5	16.9	15.0	16.0	12.4	9.8	11.1
2013-2014	23.9	22.0	23.0	17.7	16.4	17.1	12.5	10.2	11.3
2014-2015	25.3	23.2	24.3	20.0	18.2	19.1	15.2	12.3	13.7
2015-2016	25.4	23.5	24.5	20.8	19.0	19.9	15.6	12.9	14.2
2016-2017	26.0	24.5	25.2	21.8	20.2	21.1	16.7	14.2	15.4

Source: All India Higher Education Surveys (AIHES) 2016-2017

The figures in the table 2.5 indicate rising GER of higher education in India during the last 7 years. In the year 2011 the total GER in all categories was 19.4% which has elevated up to 25.2% in 2017. In case of the Scheduled Castes, GER has lifted up from 13.5% in 2010-2011 to 21.1% in 2016-2017. In terms of Scheduled Tribes it has increased from 11.2% to 15.4%

during the period. The increase in GER is particularly owing to implementation of reservation policy and special development in welfare packages. Larger section of the SCs/STs population is now participating in higher education. In West Bengal increase in GER values over the years has been observed (Ghara, 2016, p.13).Table 2.6 demonstrates West Bengal's category wise higher education GER of last seven years. The all category total enrolment in the year 2010-2011 is 12.4% which is half percent more compared to Scheduled Castes with 6.9% and Scheduled Tribes with 6% .The relative backwardness of Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes population is established by the lower enrolment figure

However during the last seven years there has been increase in the GER rate among the Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes population of West Bengal. During the last seven years, among all categories the enrolment rate has increase with 6.1% which is comparatively lesser than Scheduled Castes as their GER has increased with 6.6 %.

However the percentage in case of Scheduled Tribes of West Bengal falls behind in comparison as there has been increase by 4.5% only.

Table 2.6 West Bengal's category wise GER during (2011-2017) in Percentage

Year	All category Male	All category Female	All category Total	SC Male	SC Female	SC Total	ST Male	ST Female	ST Total
2010-2011	13.8	10.9	12.4	7.8	5.8	6.9	7.3	4.8	6
2011-2012	15.4	11.8	13.6	10.2	7.6	9	7.7	5.3	6.4
2012-2013	17.1	13.2	15.1	11.8	8.7	10.3	8.7	6	7.3
2013-2014	18.2	14.4	24.3	13.4	10.4	11.9	10.2	7.3	8.7
2014-2015	19.1	15.8	17.4	14.4	11.2	12.8	11.4	8.1	9.7
2015-2016	19.1	16.2	17.7	14.2	11.5	12.8	10.6	8.4	9.5
2016-2017	19.8	17.2	18.5	14.8	12.2	13.5	11.5	8.9	10.1

Source: All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) Report 2016-2017

There could be many reasons for Scheduled Tribes to fall behind in GER percentage, the most common of all is they live in the region where there is little access to resources that grounds an upward mobility in their education. Also, they are economically backward majority of the tribal's are either subsistence farmer or agricultural labour (Kamat, 1981, p.1283). The subsistence living of tribal family compels them to use family labour because of which the children's gets restricted to access education (Roy, 2005, p. 61). In the year 2017, the Scheduled Castes GER of West Bengal is 13.5% and India's GER is 21.1% which is 7.6% less compared to the national (SCs) GER. Likewise in case of Scheduled Tribes, GER of West Bengal is 5.3 % less, as against national figure of 15.4 % for ST. (Table 2.5).

Gender Parity Index

The Gender Parity Index (GPI) in higher education is calculated for 18-23 years of age group. GPI is a parameter which helps in assessing gender differences and that is value of girls divided by that of boys and it is also designed to measure the relative access to education of males and females. The ratio measures the improvement of gender equity and intensity of learning opportunities accessible to women in relation to those accessible to men. It plays an important role in indicating the empowerment of women in society (GPI in Higher Education (AISHE survey), n.d.).

2.7 Gender Parity Index in Higher Education of India and West Bengal

Year	GPI of India			GPI of West Bengal		
	All Category	SC	ST	All Category	SC	ST
2012-2013	0.89	0.89	0.79	0.77	0.74	0.69
2013-2014	0.92	0.92	0.81	0.79	0.76	0.71
2014-2015	0.92	0.91	0.81	0.83	0.78	0.71
2015-2016	0.92	0.91	0.83	0.85	0.81	0.79
2016-2017	0.94	0.93	0.85	0.87	0.82	0.77

Source: All India Survey on higher Education (2016-2017)

GPI of India: As shown in the table 2.7 there is minor increase in GPI for all categories in India. GPI has improved slightly during the last five years, from 0.89 in 2012-2013 to 0.94 in 2016-2017 of all category in India. The GPI of Scheduled Castes is 0.89 and the GPI of Scheduled Tribes is 0.79 in 2012-2013, if compared to the all category the SCs GPI is same whereas the GPI of STs was 0.10 % less. The gap reflects the backwardness of female Scheduled Tribes in higher education participation. However, during time the GPI of Scheduled Tribes has increased to 0.85 in 2016-2017, but increase is relatively slow compared to Scheduled Castes. The GPI of Scheduled Caste is 0.93 in 2016-2017 shows a mere gap of 0.01, if compared with All Categories whose GPI is 0.94 in the same year. The figures reflect the gender gap among SCs in higher education is admirable if compared with STs, this indicates Scheduled Caste's women are participating more in higher education more than Scheduled Tribes women.

GPI of West Bengal: There is a marginal increase in higher education Gender Parity Index in of West Bengal during the last seven years. However the GPI of Scheduled

Tribes population is very less compared to the Scheduled Castes population and all category population. In the year 2012-2013 the GPI of Scheduled Tribes was 0.69, in five years it has increased to 0.77 (2016-2017). The GPI of Scheduled Castes is 0.74 in the year 2012-2013, it has raised to 0.82 in the year 2016-2017. The GPI of Scheduled Castes takes a lead if compared with Scheduled Tribes. However if the GPI of SCs /STs is compared with GPI of all categories (0.87) the SCs /STs lack behind.

Over the years gender gap in education has narrowed down but still there is long way to go, as the gap still persist in GPI of higher education . Some of the problems keeping girls away from school and college/ universities are, generally parents in rural areas perceive that education is not necessary for daughters , there are expressions like “ girls are going to stay at home ,so there is no point sending them to school and colleges” such discriminatory attitude of parents keep girls away from education . Also under security ground, parents don't send their girls to school in rural areas. Poverty is another major reason among the backward groups to keep girls back home and make them contribute to family income (Roy, 2005, p.53). “Other reasons for girls non-attendance encompasses gender discrimination by the parents and society, undervaluing girls education, early age marriage, the burden of household chores and sibling care” (Bandyopadhyay& Subrahmanian, 2011, p.158). Also, the financial investment on girls' education isn't always desired much in some a part of society, because the girls in India are universally expected to get married and women's aren't socially expected to work and earn before or after marriage. In a patriarchal family, the parent are not anticipated to use the income of the daughters, hence are not encouraged to work or pursue higher education, and even if they work it is for a brief period before marriage (Chanana, 2007, p.596).

The above section on Macro level scenario will be followed by a discussion on scenario in a village in Kalimpong district of West Bengal. Since the information's on educational parameters such as GER and GPI is not available, the follow-up chapter presents the higher education scenario in Kalimpong, using secondary and primary information collected from field work and official information .

Chapter III

Higher Education among SCs and STs in Kalimpong: An Empirical Analysis

The chapter gives a general overview of SCs and STs in higher educational institutions in Kalimpong followed by sociological analysis of the trend. Based on the field work, observation and empirical analysis of information collected from 106 respondents, drawing from SCs/STs community in the age group of 19-30, the chapter attempt to see, how differently or similarly the SCs/STs of Kalimpong are responding to the reservation policy and scholarships, and also to understand their perception on policies and programmes. The field work has been conducted in Kalimpong Khasmahal Village of Kalimpong District.

3.1 Brief profile of Kalimpong District

Kalimpong is a district of West Bengal with four administrative units viz. Blocks comprising Gram Panchayat Units (GPU) within it.

- I. Kalimpong- I Block (18 GPU's),
- II. Kalimpong – II Block (14 GPU's),
- III. Gorubathan Block (11 GPU's) and
- IV. Kalimpong Municipality- (23 wards) (Kalimpong District: Administrative Division, n.d.).

The field for the present study is Kalimpong Khasmahal Village, located in Kalimpong –I Block which covers two GPUs (Tashiding GPU and Kalimpong GPU).

Kalimpong: A Historical Backdrop

The historical backdrop of Kalimpong can be traced to the Anglo-Bhutan war in 1864. There is less information on the history of Kalimpong before 1864. Before the British invasion, Kalimpong was under the Bhutanese rule. It was simply after the Treaty of Sinchula on 11 November 1865, Kalimpong was given prominence in history. After the Treaty, the entire location, east of the Teesta River in addition to Doars was annexed by British India and the ceded area become attached to western Doars district (Early history and development, n.d.). At that point, Kalimpong territory was made subdivision called Dalimkot within the western Doars District, and in the next year, it was ingested into the Sardar Sub-division of Darjeeling district. Later in 1916, it became a separate sub-division with Kalimpong as its headquarters. The progress and the development had been set on the track after this Kalimpong became the centre of trade with Tibet through the Jeleppla pass, the pass enabled access to central Tibet. The arrival of the Scottish Missionaries was every another facilitating component for development. They set up many educational institutions. Likewise, the British government introduced development in Kalimpong to make an alternative hill station to Darjeeling (Kalimpong: History of Kalimpong, 2010). In February 2017, Kalimpong sub-division was carved out of Darjeeling and was made the 21st District of West Bengal (Sen, 2017).

Population and Local Inhabitants: Kalimpong was a part of Darjeeling district till 2017 along with Kurseong, Darjeeling and part of Siliguri. The region comprised of people belonging to various ethnic groups viz; Lepchas, Bhutias, Nepalis, plainsmen; consisting of Bengalis, Biharis and Marwaris (Khatun, 2014, p.39). The Lepcha community is considered as the original inhabitant of the region. And, Limbu community was assumed to be together with the Lepchas from ancient times. Bhutia

communities were acknowledged as the immigrants from Tibet, they are not a single tribe but assortment of various tribes. Some of the tribes and castes were integrated in the Scheduled Tribes in West Bengal, during 1950 on dissemination of presidential notification They were namely the Lepchas and Bhutias along with Tibetan, Dukpa, Sherpa, Yolmo/Kagatay, Toto (Khatun, 2014, pp.41-42). Later, Tamang along with Limbu were accorded Scheduled Tribe status in 2002 (Sarkar, 2014, p.1). The other communities of the region are viz. Bahun, Thakuri and Chettri considered as high caste in caste hierarchy of Nepali caste system, they follow Hindu religion and other communities namely Kami, Dami and Sarki was considered the occupational caste and ranked lowest in the caste hierarchy. They belong to Caucasoid race. Among other communities Newar, Rai, Yakha, Mangar and Gurung are also the inhabitants of the district and, belong to a Mongoloid race (ibid., p.47). However, today some of the above community members follow Christianity. According to the Census of India 2011, the population of Kalimpong district is 2, 51,624. SCs/STs population accounts to 6.52% and 29.77% respectively of district total population (Census, 2011).

Educational Institutions in Kalimpong: Kalimpong is known for its magnificent history of the educational institution. The Christian missionaries specifically the congregation of Scotland Mission was one of the pioneers in spreading education in the district and presented European Education. Before, a religious association was firmly connected with educational activity. Christian missionaries have made extraordinary utilization of education to spread Christianity. The principal individual to spread and introduced Christianity was Rev.W.Start who brought Moravian Missionaries from Germany and worked with the Lepchas. In 1870 extensive work scale started in the missionary enterprise as they began giving education the chief part in their main mission work program, it was Mr Willam Mac Farlane who established

the foundation of the primary education. Also, the Roman Catholic Church was concerned in establishing European Schools (Dash, 2011, p.265). The Scottish missionaries have played a very significant role in development of educational institution by opening various schools, viz. The Scottish University Mission Institution (SUMI) established in 1887, Kalimpong Girls High schools, and later in the year 1900 Dr. Graham's Homes was established. A Today these schools comes under the reputed schools of Kalimpong (ibid., pp.271-277). The other reputed Catholic schools are St. Augustine school; St. Joseph's Convent and St. Philomena School. Some of the other prominent non missionary schools are Rockvale Academy, Springdale Academy and many more. These schools make Kalimpong a hub of education drawing students from its neighboring state and country viz. Sikkim, Nepal, Bangladesh and Bhutan.

At present the district has four degree college's viz. Kalimpong College, Cluny Women's College, Pedong Government College and Gorubhathan Government College. Kalimpong College is the oldest college in the district established in 1962, followed by the Cluny Women's College, established in 1998 .Pedong Government College, Gorubhathan Government College was established in 2015. All the four colleges offer undergraduate courses in science, arts and commerce and are affiliated to University of North Bengal (Field work, 2018). Kalimpong has two management colleges' viz. Rockvale Management College (RMC) and Good Shepherd Institute of Hotel Management (GISHM). RMC came into existence in 2012 and is affiliated to Maulana Abul Kalam Azad University of Technology (About Kalimpong Management College, n.d.).GSIHM was established in the year 2002 and it was the first Hospitality Training Institute in the hills of Darjeeling and is managed by Kalimpong Good Shepherd Educational Society which is a non profitable charitable

society registered under West Bengal society Reg. Act 1996 (Good Shepherd Institute of Hotel Management , n.d).

3.2 Social Category Wise Enrolment in Degree Colleges and Professional Institutes in Kalimpong

Since educational parameters was not available in terms of the status of higher education of the district. Therefore the social category wise student enrolment of the four degree colleges and two professional institutions has been collected, to in order to get an insight in the trend of higher education among two categories.

Table 3.1 presents College wise enrolment percentage of the student's according to social category, and demonstrates that Kalimpong College has larger enrolment percentage. The very reason is, the college is the oldest degree college among all. In Kalimpong College, during last three years the percentage of Scheduled Tribes weighs much strength in enrolment percentage compared to the Scheduled Castes, although the general category holds the majority. Likewise in Cluny Women's College, the ST's participation is more compared to SCs, however in comparison with general category the STs percentage is a less but the gap is not much (gap of 6%-7% approximately).

Although among the SCs student of Cluny Women's College, there is slow increase in the percentage over three years. In Pedong Government College, the majority share in enrolment percentage is coming from the STs Category. SCs make the least percentage. In Gorubhathan

College the OBC category makes the majority enrolment percentage. The SC /ST students make a least share of enrolment percentage in Gorubhathan Government College.

Table 3.1 College Wise Enrolment Percentage of the Student's According to Social Category

College	Year	SCs	STs	OBC	General	Bhutan students	Total
Kalimpong college	2015-2016	11.4%	24.2%	25.5%	38.9%	-	1427
	2016-2017	14.4%	33%	29.1%	23.5%	-	1412
	2017-2018	13.2%	23.7%	24.2%	38.9%	-	1264
Cluny Women's College	2015-2016	7.5%	33.2%	18.3%	41%	-	480
	2016-2017	8%	34.3%	17.4%	40.3%	-	562
	2017-2018	8.5%	34.1%	18.7%	38.7%	-	547
Pedong Govt. College	2015-2016	5.2%	57.9%	21%	18.9%	-	95
	2016-2017	6.4%	46.7%	27.1%	19.8%	-	156
	2017-2018	5.6%	46.6%	19.9%	27.9%	-	193
Gorubhathan Govt. College	2015-2016	14.3%	23.9%	20.7%	41.1%	-	188
	2016-2017	10.8%	25.8%	40.1%	23.3%	-	147
	2017-2018	8.2%	27.8%	43.6%	20.4%	-	158
Rockvale Management College	2015-2016	4.2%	4.2%	-	21.4%	70.2%	70
	2016-2017	1.2%	5.1%	-	28.5%	65.2%	77
	2017-2018	2.7%	5.5%	-	30.5%	61.3%	72
GSHM College	2015-2016	-	5.2%	57.8%	37%	-	19
	2016-2017	-	-	53.8%	46.2%	-	13
	2017-2018	-	-4.3%	56.5%	39.2%	-	23`
Grand total	2015-2018	754 10.92 %	1995 28.9%	1667 24.14 %	2344 33.95%	143 2.07%	6903

Source: Field Work, June-August, 2018

Rockvale Management College provides professional courses, there is very less enrolment from the two categories (SCs/STs). The majority of the enrolment percentage is from Bhutanese students. In the year 2017-2018 there was 61.1% of enrolment percentage from the Bhutanese students. Whereas the SCs/STs enrolment percentage was 2.7%/ and 5.5% respectively. In GSHM they provide hotel

management courses, in this institution there is very less enrolment from the SCs/STs category. SCs have nil participation whereas ST has 5.2% participation. The majority of participation in this institution is coming from OBC and general category. This reveals that the participation in professional institution from the SCs/STs category is very less. These professional institutions are private and it's expensive compared to the government degree colleges and this may be a reason for the two disadvantaged categories not having access to the institution.

A cumulative figures of three years (2015-2018) shows that, there is 10.92 % enrolment from the SCs and 28.9 % from the STs (enrolment percentage is taken from all three degree colleges and two professional colleges of Kalimpong district).And against their population percentage (SCs: 6.52%) /(STs:29.77%), the enrolment percentage shows a positive outcome.

Table 3.2 reveals the student enrolment percentage in different courses of the degree colleges and professional college of the Kalimpong district.

Table 3.2 Course Wise Student Enrolment (In %) of Four Degree Colleges and Two Professional Colleges

Course s	Year	SCs	STs	OBC	General	Bhutan Student	Tota l
BA	2015-2016	10.8%	27%	20.7%	41.5%	-	1791
	2016-2017	10.9%	33.5%	26.8%	28.8%	-	1794
	2017-2018	10.3%	28.2%	24.2%	37.2%	-	1929
	2015-2018	10.6%	29.5%	23.9%	36%		5514
B.Sc	2015-2016	11.6%	24.4%	23.2%	40.8%	-	86
	2016-2017	21.3%	25.5%	24.2%	29%	-	145
	2017-2018	19.1%	37.9%	16.3%	26.7%	-	116
	2015-2018	18.1%	29.3%	21.3%	31.3%		347
B.Com	2015-2016	8.7%	30.1%	27.2%	34%	-	308
	2016-2017	14.2%	38%	28.2%	19.6%	-	336
	2017-2018	15.5%	26.7%	24.2%	33.6%	-	116
	2015-2018	12.2%	33.1%	27.1%	27.6%		760
BBA	2015-2016	4.4%	2.2%	-	22.2%	71.2%	45
	2016-2017	-	5.7%	-	22.8%	71.5%	35
	2017-2018	-	6.8%	-	27.5%	65.7%	29
	2015-2018	1.8%	4.5%		24%	69.7%	109
BCA	2015-2016	16.6%	11.1%	-	27.7%	44.4%	18
	2016-2017	8.3%	-	-	83.3%	8.3%	12
	2017-2018	20%	-	-	80%	-	10
	2015-2018	15%	5%		57.5	22.5	40
BTTM	2015-2016	-	-	-	10%	90%	10
	2016-2017	-	6.5%	-	18.7%	75%	32
	2017-2018	-	5.7%	-	22.8%	71.5%	35
	2015-2018		5.1%		75.6%	19.2	78
Hotel Management	2015-2016	-	5.2%	57%	37.8%	-	19
	2016-2017	-	-	53.8%	46.2%	-	13
	2017-2018	-	4.3%	56.5%	39.2%	-	23
	2015-2018		3.7%	56.3%	40%		55

Source: Field work, June- August, 2018

The data demonstrates that majority of the student from all social category has accessed Bachelor of Arts (BA) course. The General category has made the majority

enrolment in BA course with 36% and STs Category makes a fair share in the enrolment percentage in the course with 29.5%, and least percentage of enrolment is coming from the SCs category with 10.6% over three years (2015-2018). The main reason is its less population percentage in the district. If year wise enrolment percentage is considered, there is not much increase in the participation from the entire social category. SC/ ST participation is not just in BA courses but also in other courses like B.Sc (Bachelors of Science), B.Com (Bachelor of Commerce) etc. The table 3.2 shows a good strength of enrolment in B.Sc course from STs with 29.3 % (2015-2018), there is increase in their enrolment percentage over the three years. The SCs also have participated in B.Sc course with 18.8% over three years. In B.com course the STs make a majority share in the enrolment percentage with 33.1% and the SCs make 12.2% (2015-2018). In the BBA course there is less participation from both SCs/STs, the SCs make 1.4% and STs make 4.5% (2015-2018) of participation. The majority of participation comes from the Bhutan students 69.7% (2015-2018). In BCA (Bachelor of Computer Application) course there is 15% participation from the SCs in the year 2017-2018, whereas the STs make 5% share in enrolment percentage (2015-2018). The General category makes the largest share in percentage in BCA course with 57.2% over three years. In the professional course BTTM (Bachelor of Travel Tourism and Management) and Hotel Management the SCs has not accessed the course, although there is a little participation from the STs and the general category, OBC and Bhutan students make a larger share in the enrolment percentage.

3.3 Field Analysis

3.3.1 Brief Profile of the Respondent's Community

Lepchas: Lepchas are the Mongoloid people living in the Himalayas on southern and eastern slopes of Mount Kinchenjunga are considered the original inhabitants of the mountainous land of Himalaya (Gorer, 1996, p.35). Their constitutional status is Scheduled Tribes; they refer themselves as 'Rong' while they identify themselves as Lepchas to those outsiders. They also use their clan name like Karthak, Namchu, Simick etc. as surnames. Like all communities they have traditional beliefs, they were animists and they worship plethora of God and Goddesses. Their ritual specialist is called Mun (female) and Bongthing (male). In the Lepcha society of Darjeeling and Sikkim MunBongthingism and Buddhism co-exists. They are predominantly Buddhist but large of the community are also Christians (Gowloog, 2013, p.19). They have their own script and language. They also have their own traditional dress, male Lepcha wear striped dress (*thokro-dum*) made of cotton and a lower garment (*tomu*).The female wear two-piece dress (*dumdyam*), blouses and a belt (*namrek*) (Doma, 2008, p.43).

Kami, Damai and Sarkis: Their constitutional status of these communities is that of Scheduled Castes. They are the part of Nepalese community. The early Hindu Nepalese rigid caste system designated them as the service castes (Choudary, 2006, p.30). The three groups fall in low status of the Nepali caste hierarchy. "The history of Kamis portrays, that their traditional caste occupation is blacksmith and goldsmith, scattered almost in the hilly district of Nepal, Sikkim, Darjeeling, Assam and Kalimpong and other parts of India. They are also known as Bishwakarma" (WBKDCB: Government of West Bengal, n.d). The Damai's traditional caste

occupation is tailoring and Sarki's traditional caste occupation is doing leatherwork, like making leather shoes or bags (Dhahal, Gurung, Acharya, Hemchuri & Swarnakar, 2002, pp.11-13).

3.3.2 Socio- Economic Profile of Respondents

The socio-economic background of the respondent is significant as their perceptions are influenced by different socio-economic factors. The section presents socio economic background of the 106 respondents.

Table 3.3 Gender Wise Distribution of Respondents

Gender	Male	Female	Total
Scheduled Castes	10 43.45%	13 56.52%	23
Scheduled Tribes	34 40.96%	49 59.03%	83
Grand total	44 41.5%	62 58.49%	106

Source: Fieldwork, June-August, 2018

Table 3.3 provides an insight into the gender wise distribution of the SCs/STs respondents. The data shows that 58.49%, of the respondents are female and male makes 41.5%. This is true in case of both categories, that majority of the respondents are female. 56.6% from SCs and 59.03% from STs respondents are female, whereas there are 43.45% SC male respondents and 40.96% ST male respondents.

3.3.3 Educational Attainment of Respondents

The data in the table 3.4 portrays that all the respondents are literate with different educational level. Among the SC respondents 8.68% have primary level education, 17.3% have attained middle school education, 4.34% have secondary education, and

4.34% have senior secondary education. Majority of the SC respondents have attained Graduate degree (30.43%).

Table 3.4 Educational Level of the Respondents

Level	Scheduled Castes			Scheduled Tribes		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Primary(I-V)	1 (4.34%)	1 (4.34%)	2 (8.68%)	2 (2.4%)		2 (2.4%)
Middle(Vi-Viii)	-	4 (17.3%)	4 (17.3%)	3 (3.61%)	5 (6.02%)	8 (9.63%)
Secondary(Ix-X)	1 (4.34%)	-	1 (4.34%)	1 (1.2%)	4 (4.81%)	5 (6.01%)
Senior Secondary(Xi-Xii)	1 (4.34%)	-	1 (4.34%)	3 (3.61%)	3 (3.61%)	6 (7.22%)
Graduate	4 (17.39%)	3 (13.04%)	7 (30.43%)	19 (22.89%)	21 (25.3%)	40 (48.19%)
MA	1 (4.34%)	2 (8.68%)	3 (13.04%)	4 (4.81%)	5 (6.02%)	9 (10.83%)
M.Phil	-	1 (4.34%)	1 (4.34%)		3 (3.61%)	3 (3.61%)
M.Tech	1 (4.34%)	-	1 (4.34%)	1 (1.2%)	1 (1.2%)	2 (2.4%)
PhD	1 (4.34%)	-	1 (4.34%)		1 (1.2%)	1 (1.2%)
B.Ed	-	-			2 (2.4%)	2 (2.4%)
Nursing	-	2 (8.69%)	2 (8.69%)		2 (2.4%)	2 (2.4%)
Management	-	-	-	1 (1.2%)	2 (2.4%)	3 (3.6%)
Grand Total	23 (100%)			83 (100%)		

Source: Field work, June-August, 2018

The SC respondents also have educational degree like MA (Masters of Arts), M.Phil (Masters of Philosophy), M.Tech (Masters of Technology), PhD (Doctorate Of Philosophy), Nursing and Management. However the enrolment in higher degree (MA, M.Phil, M.Tech, PhD) is comparatively less than enrolment in Graduate degree. Among the STs, all the respondents are literate. Majority of the respondents with 48.19% attained Graduate degree .There are 2.4% respondents who hold primary level

education. And, 9.6% and 7.22% of the ST respondents attained secondary education and senior secondary education respectively. The ST respondents have also obtained higher education degree like MA, M.Phil, M.Tech, and PhD. They also have other educational degree like B.Ed, Nursing, and Management.

3.3.4 Occupational Distribution of Respondents

As per the table 3.5, it is revealed that there are no SC respondents who have a government service occupation. Whereas in STs 7.2% of the respondents have government service, out of them some work in bank sector and some in administrative department. A section of the SCs/STs respondent also own small business (13% from the SCs and 4.81% of the STs). 56.5% (SCs) and 43.37% (STs) are students and some scholars pursuing higher education.

Table 3.5 Occupation of Respondents

	Scheduled Castes		Total For SCs	Scheduled Tribes		Total For STs
	Male	Female		Male	Female	
Government Service				3 (3.61%)	3 (3.61%)	6 (7.22%)
Small Business owners	1 (4.34%)	2 (8.69%)	3 (13.03%)	2 (2.4%)	2 (2.4%)	4 (4.81%)
Engineer	1 (4.34%)		1 (4.34%)	1 (1.2%)		1 (1.2%)
Student(Pursuing HE)	6 (26.08%)	7 (30.43)	13 (56.52%)	15 (18.07%)	21 (25.3%)	36 (43.37%)
Unemployed	2 (8.69%)	4 (17.39%)	6 (26.08%)	6 (8.43%)	8 (9.63%)	14 (16.86%)
Cabin Crew					2 (2.4%)	2 (2.4%)
Teacher				3 (4.81%)	6 (8.43%)	9 (10.84%)
Beautician				2 (2.4%)	5 (6.02%)	7 (8.43%)
Hotel Staff				1 (1.2%)	2 (2.4%)	3 (3.61%)
Driver				1 (1.2%)		1 (1.2%)
Total	23 100%			83 100%		

Source: Field work, June- August, 2018

Some of the ST respondent's occupations are teacher (10.84%) and cabin crew (2.4%). Also, few of them hold occupation like beautician, hotel staff and some are drivers. Amongst the respondents, 26 % from the SCs and 16.86% from STs are not employed.

3.3.5. Family Income Level of Respondents

Table 3.6 shows the family income of the respondents. 21.7% of the SCs and 21.6% of the STs are with family income below Rs.5000. Some sections of SCs (21.7%) and STs (19.2%) have family income of Rs.5000- 15000.

Table 3.6 Family Income of the Respondents

Family Income (In Rupees)	Scheduled Castes	Scheduled Tribes
Below Rs.5000	5 (21.7%)	18 (21.6%)
Rs.5000-15000	5 (21.7%)	16 (19.2%)
Rs.15000-25000	3 (13.0%)	22 (26.5%)
Rs.25000-50000	3 (13.0%)	13 (15.6%)
Above Rs.50000	7 (30.4%)	14 (16.8%)
Total	23 (100%)	83 (100%)

Source: Fieldwork, June –August, 2018

And, 13% (SCs) and 26.5% (STs) have family income of around Rs.15000-25000. There are 13.0% of SCs and 15.6% of ST respondents with Rs.25000-50000 family income. Also, there are respondents in both the community whose family income is above Rs.50000, among the SCs (30.4%) and STs (16.8%).

3.4 Higher Education Status of SC and ST Respondents

A micro level analysis indicated that the higher education status of Scheduled Castes Scheduled Tribes is gradually progressing. The accessibility of higher education has been made easier mainly through the reservation policy for the SCs/STs. The reservation policy has stimulated the participation of the SCs/STs in higher education. However the two communities meet with frequent challenges and still fall behind in participation of higher education if compared with the general category. Following information shows the educational status of sampled population. Table 3.7 demonstrates that 56.52 % SC and 43.37% ST respondents are pursuing in higher education .They are pursuing courses like BA , MA, M. Phil, M.Tech, PhD, B.Ed and Nursing. The most accessed program among the respondents was Graduate degree program (with BA) and very few of them have accessed courses like M.Tech, M.Phil and PhD (the high degree courses).

And 8.6% of the SCs respondents, 31.32 % of the ST s respondents have completed courses like BA. B.Com. B.Sc (Graduate Degree), MA, M.Tech and Management and are now working in different department viz. Bank, Teaching, Engineering, Government services etc. The data in the table also portrays that some section of the respondent from both the community have not participated in higher education due to many constraining factor, this will be explained in the follow up chapter. From the SCs 34.78% of the respondents and from STs 25.29% have not participated in higher education.

A gender wise analysis shows that 70% of total male respondents and 61.53% female respondents of SC category have participated in higher education. This reflects there is a gender gap of 8% in the higher education participation. Among the STs the female respondents are equally participating as the males in the higher education participation. The female STs make 75.51% of participation and male STs make 73.52% of participation. The entire respondents who have participated in higher education have accessed different courses like BA, B.Sc, B.Com, MA, M.Tech, M.Phil, PhD, B.Ed, Nursing and Management. The SCs/STs respondents tend to be under represented in M.Phil, PhD's programmes than at the Graduate level. Weisskopf (2004) narrates that roughly 60% of the SCs students and 75% of the STs students are enrolled in (comparatively low prestige) arts programmes and enrolment in prestigious programmes like engineering, medicines, law, doctor are much lower compared to the general population. Likewise, the field observation shows that ST/SC respondents also have very less participation in the prestigious programmes and majority is enrolled in BA programmes.

Table 3.7 Status of Higher Education of the SC/ST Respondents

	Scheduled Castes		Scheduled Tribes		Combined (SCs/STs)	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
(Pursuing HE)						
Graduate	4	2	12	9	16	11
MA	1	2	3	3	4	5
M.Tech	-	-	-	1	-	1
M.Phil	-	1	-	3	-	4
PhD	1	-	-	1	1	1
Nursing	-	2	-	2	-	4
B.Ed	-	-	-	2	-	2
Total	13 (56.52%)		36 (43.37%)		49 (46.22%)	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Completed						
Graduate	-	1	7	12	7	13
MA	-	-	1	2	1	2
M.Tech	1	-	1		2	
Management	-	-	1	2	1	2
Total	2 (8.69%)		26 (31.32%)		28 (26.41%)	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
NPHE	3	5	9	12	12	17
Total	8 (34.78%)		21 (25.29%)		29 (27.35%)	
Grand total	23 100%		83 100%		106 100%	

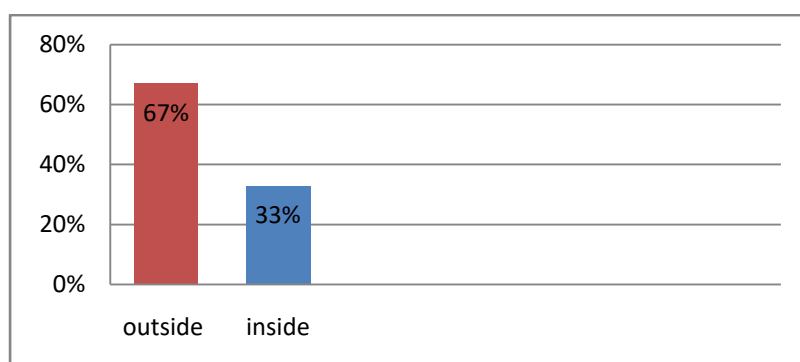
HE – Higher Education, NPHE- No Participation in Higher Education

Source: Field work, June- August, 2018

3.5 Higher Education Within and Outside Kalimpong District

The district has four degree colleges and few management institutes. Despite that the students prefer to go outside cities viz. Siliguri, Kolkata, Delhi, Bangalore etc for higher education. The respondents in majority, who are pursuing and have participated higher education, have opted higher education outside Kalimpong district. Figure no. 3.1 demonstrates that 67% of SC respondents has opted higher education outside Kalimpong and only 33% have participated higher education inside Kalimpong district.

Figure no. 3.1 Percentage of SC Students Who Opted Higher Education Inside and Outside Kalimpong



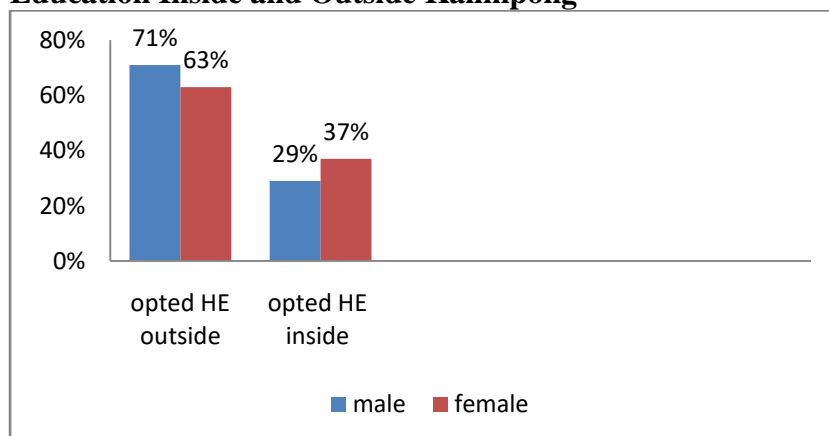
Source: Field work, June –August, 2018

Most of the respondents acknowledged that the higher education of Kalimpong district has not been showing a positive outcome and there is less opportunities in academic carrier. Some opined that the colleges in the district do not meet the expectation of quality. Also, the cities attract a majority of youths by its good education institution and opportunities, such reasons were presented by the respondents for participating higher education outside hometown.

The figure no. 3.2 demonstrates gender wise distribution in percentage of SCs student who opted higher education inside and outside the district. The SC's female percentage that has opted higher education outside Kalimpong is 63% and SC's male

are with 71%. There is a gap of only 8% which shows there is not much gender gap in access to higher education outside hometown and female SC's student are almost given the same opportunities as SC's male students. The picture in which we see the rest of rural India, where female are not given the opportunity to study away from home is hardly followed in Kalimpong Khasmahal village. Very few amongst the respondents who participated in higher education complained on the issue that, being a girl child she was not allowed to go outside hometown to pursue her higher education.

Figure no. 3.2 Gender Wise Distribution of SC's Student Who Opted Higher Education Inside and Outside Kalimpong

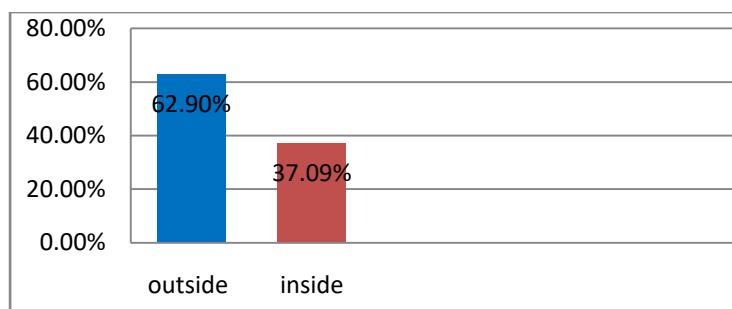


Higher Education (HE), *Source:* Field work, June-August 2018

Like that of the SC respondents, the ST respondents too have opted higher education outside hometown. The figure 3.3 illustrates, 62.90% of the ST respondents have opted higher education outside Kalimpong in cities like Kolkata, Delhi, Siliguri etc. Only 37.09% have participated higher education in Kalimpong. Thus it represents a larger flow of the students into cities. The ST respondents had a similar kind of reasons like that of SC respondents for accessing higher education outside Kalimpong district.

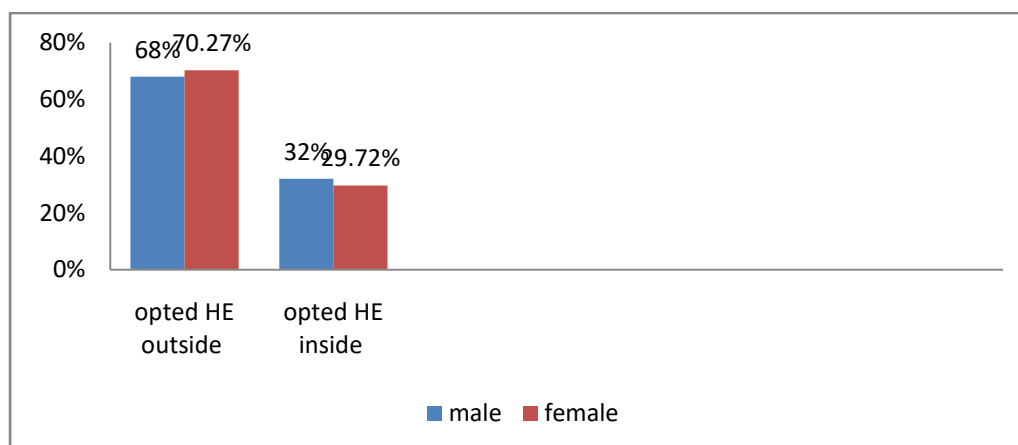
The gender wise distribution on figure no.3.4 shows that 70.27% of ST female respondent and 68% male ST respondents has opted higher education outside. And 32% of male (ST) and 29.72% female (ST) has opted higher education in Kalimpong district.

Figure no. 3.3 Percentage of ST Students Who Opted Higher Education Inside and Outside Kalimpong



Source: Field work, June-August, 2018

Figure no. 3.4 Gender Wise Distribution of STs Student Who Opted Higher Education Inside And Outside Kalimpong



Source: Field work, June-August, 2018

Historically, the participation of women in higher education was very stumpy due to various cultural factors and also education of son was given more preference than the daughters. But in course of time there has been an increase in women’s enrolment in higher education. The information from University Grants Commission of India

(UGC) shows that there has been a predominantly increase of women's enrolment in higher education, since the 1990s. The expansion in enrolment in the recent years can be perceived by two factors: firstly support from the generation of women before who completed higher education to their daughters to seek and pursue higher education; and also, the changing social and cultural norms which are blurring gender disparity across different social classes and castes. (Sondhi, 2015, p.4). Likewise in Kalimpong among the ST respondents, the figures reflect that there is not much gender disparity in access to higher education. Also, the female ST respondents are reported and observed to have given equal amount of opportunities like that of male students to pursue higher education in the cities outside home town.

3.6 SCs/STs Respondent Who Availed Reservation and both Reservation / Scholarships

Reservation policy and Educational related scholarships are playing a significant role among the respondents to access higher education. Table 3.8 reveals, 69.3% of ST respondent and 53.4% of the SCs respondent have availed reservation and 26.6% of the SCs and 22.5% of the STs have availed both reservation and scholarships.

Table 3.8 Percentage of SCs/STs Who Availed Reservation and both Reservation and Scholarships

No. of SCs who participated in HE	Reservation	Reservation /scholarships
15	8/15 53.4%	4/15 26.6%
No. of STs who participated in HE	Reservation	Reservation /scholarships
62	43/62 69.3%	14/62 22.5%

Source, Fieldwork, June- August, 2018

The percentage has been calculated from the total number of SCs/STs respondent who has participated in the higher education.

3.7 Respondents' Perspective on Reservation Policy

Roa (2008) narrates that, the idea of reservation policy for the SCs/STs is to facilitate them to overcome their low position and propagate social mobility. Reservation equalizes opportunities for people coming from the backward socio economic background. However there have been arguments regarding implications of the reservation. It has been attacked on the ground that they benefit the economically stable section of the society and not those who need the most, and producing inequalities among the deprived section of the society. The issue of creamy layer (reservation beneficiaries are the well off section among the reserved category) is propagated by the reservation policy (Roa, 2008, pp.487-90). On this backdrop of the literature, the perspective of SCs/STs respondent are presented below.

Few case studies and narratives have been collected to understand the perspective of SCs students regarding reservation policy and other educational scheme like scholarships. The method comprehends the SC respondent's perception and gives a micro understanding on Reservation policy. An interaction with the sampled population highlighted following perspectives:

I. Reservation - A Mechanism for Upliftment

A section of the respondents feels that the reservation policy is a mechanism for the upliftment of the marginalized group. Some of the cases and narratives are presented to substantiate their perspective. Arati Sunar, 25 years, holds a Masters Degree. She is

raised by a single parent. She comes from a middle class family. She stated that the reservation policy acts as a ladder to participate in higher education for many backward SC students, also the scholarships and many other benefits assist in obtaining higher education. In her words “had it not been for reservation policy it would be difficult for me to get admission in a reputed university. However, once I was looked down by a university lecturer because I got admission through reservation; but in due course of time I worked diligently and proved my admission was worth more than the quota. It was the historical disadvantaged position of SC’s that has made them lag behind but if they are brought up through mechanism like reservation, the group is bound to excel”.

Similar kind of view was presented by Leong Lepcha, 28 years old, who works in a bank as Assistant Manager. He holds a degree in Bachelors of Agricultural Science. His father is a teacher in a primary government school and holds a Graduate Degree. He stated that, since his father was a teacher and was well acquainted and updated with knowledge about scholarships and reservations and other constitutional provisions because of his social networking with his associates who were government employees, he acquired the knowledge about reservations and scholarships from him. He states “I did my graduation from a private institution so it was more of financial support of parents that played an important role in my admission. But when I applied for my job the reservation policy an relaxation in the cut off played an important role, had there been no such mechanism its difficult for the marginalized community to community to compete with the mainstream general community. I would not say that reservation did it all for me to get hold of the job but surely it has played an important role. And such policies are in fact serving for the betterment of the marginalized community”.

Also, Ruchika Das have a similar perspective on reservation policy. She is 25 years old, working as a teacher in a government school. She comes from a well educated family. She is aware about the reservation policy. She opines “Reservations are meant to avoid caste supremacists from absolutely repudiating the unprivileged their right to learn altogether. It gives equal chance to the backward classes and the isolated tribal communities, who have historically been ostracized and marginalized. It has also led to self confidence and self respect among SCs/STs”.

Other respondent’s namely Deep khati 25 years pursuing MA, Nirvan Lohar 20 years pursuing BA, and several other respondents opined that reservation has accurately been the mechanism which has played an important role in upliftment of the marginalized groups. Zeno Lepcha is 25 years old. Her socio- economic family background is stable. She is aware about the reservation polices and scholarships that is provided by the government. In her words “Because my father is in the government service so it is against the rules to take any form of stipend from the government because it is for the people who are really facing economic problems. The reservation policy has become very helpful for the students from backward communities to achieve education in prestigious government institutions. It gives a platform to the ones who cannot afford to take admission in expensive private institutions”.

II. Reservation Should Be Under Economic and Merit Basis

Some few respondents highlighted that reservation should be done under economic basis and merit basis. This has been substantiated by the following cases and narratives. Richa Khati 26 years old pursuing MA in English from North Bengal University, is an economically sound person as her father is a government employee in an authoritative post. Her mother holds a Graduate degree and her father has

Masters Degree. She did not get admission in college via reservation quota, but by her good merits and therefore says “I believe reservation should be done on the basis of student academic merits or economic and not on social category”. she perceives that the reservation policy has made students of her social category more sluggish in education, she says “students thinks since I am SC I have a certain reservation and relaxation in cut-off for examination I don’t need to work hard I can get a certain Cut-off marks that is required, and they built a nonchalant attitude towards their studies”.

Nicole Ghatani, 25 years old .Pursuing MA in a private institution. He remarks “I am a Kami (SC) and Christian by religion. Therefore I don’t get SC certificate which means I can’t enjoy any of the facilities which is entertained by other Scheduled Castes. They say we can’t get certificate because we get other benefits for being a religious minority group but till date I have not received any benefits. In church also if the social network is good you get the benefit and I perceive that reservation should be done on economic basis and maybe merit basis and not on social category. This will provide equal opportunity to all”.

Similarly, Jennifer Singh 24 years, holds a Graduate Degree. She comes from an economically stable family. She is now looking after her mother’s business and is Christian by religion. She holds a view that reservation should be done under economic basis or merit basis. Since she is Christian by religion she cannot avail the facilities that are there.

III. Issue of creamy layer

The critics of Reservation highlights that reservation policies in India are inequitable because they make educational opportunities available mainly to those who are economically sound referred to as the creamy layers- rather to the deprived members

of disadvantaged groups” (Weisskopf, 2004, p.4344). Similar opinion was also reflected while interacting with the respondents.

Marium Lepcha, 23 years is a Graduate student. Her father works in a bank and her mother is a housewife. She has a brother, he studied up to class XI .She was of the view that “reservation policy and other constitutional educational scheme like scholarships is playing a inevitable role for the upliftment of the marginalized community of the society, however the section of the society who need the most are not facilitated by the provisions always . The people who are economically stable are the ones who avail the benefits of the provisions provided by the government because they are aware by their social networkings but those who are socially and economically backward lag behind in awareness, awareness of the important mechanism that will help them in socioeconomic upliftment”.

Similar kind of view was made by Daphine Lepcha 22 years, pursuing BA “awareness about the reservation policy and scholarships is very important, I received scholarships only when my seniors told me about it otherwise I did not know, my mother is a single parent and it is difficult for her to look after my and mine sisters education all by herself. Therefore the scholarships are very important for my education. The needy section of the society should be aware about such important welfare schemes because it is for them and they should avail”.

Lungmit Lepcha, 20 years old is pursuing her Bachelor’s Degree. She is aware about the reservation policy and scholarships. During her schooling she received Post-Matric scholarship annually, but the amount was too less. She holds a view that “economic stability is one of the important things that must be taken care of, because if the economic condition is good, one can send their children to schools and colleges

and when the students reaches colleges he or she can avail the benefit of reservation policies. The main issue here is most of them who are school dropouts, because of the poor financial condition of the family and they are not eligible to avail the benefit of reservation policies .Also the policies and programs are not reaching to the ones who are in need of. The one who are economically stable are the ones who avail the reservation policies and other welfare schemes because they are aware about it and also makes themselves eligible to avail the benefits”.

Similar comment was made by Kutthen Lepcha, that reservation should mainly focus the economically backward people. He is 24 years old, pursuing his B.Com in Kalimpong College Buddhist by religion. His father is a group D staff in Sericulture Research Station office and his mother is a housewife. He was of the view that, there are many STs who are economically backward and they fall back to avail the reservation facilities therefore policy should be framed in such a manner that economically backward tribal people may avail the facilities

IV. Limited seats

Shalu Lepcha 22 years old, pursuing BA. Her father is in army and mother is housewife. She has one younger sister and brother, they are attending secondary school. She wanted to study outside home town in a reputed college; she had also applied but did not get through. Although she had a good percentage in her Higher Secondary examination, she did not make it, because there were many more with such percentage .Therefore she is of the view “ STs seats are very less when compared to eligible candidates, and now that everyone is getting ST status its getting more difficult and competitive for admission in government college”.

Sarah Lepcha 25 years pursuing MA, also had a related opinion that there is less number of STs seat for college admission. “The STs seat are very less, and it becomes very difficult for us to get admission in reputed government college, those who are financially sound can opt for higher studies in private institution but for people like us with low financial stability it is not possible to opt private institution” in her words.

Pragati Singh 21 years old is pursuing her nursing in a private institution. Her brother is pursuing his BA Degree. Her parental income is Rs15000-20000 per month. “I always had a desire to go for nursing and I did work hard and got good percentage in HS examination. I had applied in a government institute for nursing but I did not get through because of one percentage, I feel there are very few seats for us. My parents always supported me in what I do therefore they helped me get admission in the private institution, by taking educational loans and all, because the private institution is very expensive and it is very difficult for my parents but they are really working hard on it”.

3.8 Summary

The above case studies provide different perception on the reservation policy and educational scholarships for SCs/STs. Most of the respondents were of the view that reservation policy and other constitutional provisions has been a mechanism for upliftment and is helping them level up and access higher education among the marginalized group.

However, some of the respondents view that the effectiveness of reservation policy and other constitutional provision is not being effective, because most of them are not aware about polices and are ignorant. The economically backward are the ones who need the most but they are not being able to avail the provisions and policies

positively. And those whose socio- economic condition is stable are the major beneficiaries of the reservation policy. Therefore some respondents perceived that reservation policy should be done under economic basis. There were also few respondents who wanted reservation under merit basis. Some opined that there are limited seats in reservation quota.

Overall the case studies and narratives demonstrate different perception of both the SCs/STs respondents on the reservation polices. The perception of the two groups was not different but the perception was different from an individual level. Reservation for some was a tool that is playing an important role in upliftment of the SCs/STs community. While some are of the view that it is a paradoxical tool, where its objective is eroding inequality and it practices inequality.

Chapter IV

Higher Education: Pathways and Constraints

With the backdrop analysis of the fieldwork in the previous chapter regarding the access of SCs and STs in Higher Education in Kalimpong, the present chapter attempts to find out the major pathways and constraints in accessing higher education. Various studies show the positive co-relation between the socio-economic factors and educational background of the parents, with the educational attainment of the students. Hunt (2008) states household income is a key determinant of access to education, as it involves a range of costs: such as school fees, college fees, travel costs, uniforms and many more, economically unstable households tend to have a lower demand for education than households that are richer. (Hunt, 2008, p.7-8). Lockheed, Fuller and Nyirogo (1989) also argue that the higher the standard of parents' education, the higher will be the academic aspirations for their children. Since, the SC/ STs Communities are marginalized communities, they have relatively low literacy rates and enrolment in schools as discussed in previous chapters. The communities resides in the high poverty regions where there is absence of basic facilities like education, the children of these economically unstable families are at educational risk (Nambissan, 2014, pp.3-4). Similarly, the link between; the socio-economic background of the SC/ST respondents and higher educational access is highlighted by the researcher in present study. And it also focuses on the different milestones and challenges of the SC and ST respondents. The different facilitating and the constraining factors are elicited from cases of respondents and narratives which are presented to supplement the quantitative information, to assess the nature of pathways and constraints contextual to Kalimpong.

4.1 Facilitating Factors or the Pathways

I. Economic Stability (Parental income): The socioeconomic condition of the family plays a significant role in access to education of an individual. The economic support is one of the imperative tools to achieve education in today's world. The socioeconomic status of a family relies on; income, education level of the parents and occupation, all these have an effect on the educational attainment of children. This means that children from high socio-economic background often have possibilities of greater success, as they access a variety of resources that facilitate them in their education and development (Kumar, 2016, p.2080). Researchers have pointed out that wealth is one of the fundamental necessities of life and for one to get hold of their children's education there should not be any socio economic hindrance (Marbuah, 2016, p.6). Parents with high socioeconomic status will have high potential to provide basic and supplementary resource for their children's education compared to those parents who have low socioeconomic status (Becker and Tomes, 1986). Parents' socioeconomic background has an impact on whether the child gains educational opportunities and achieves academic success (Bowles and Gintis, 1976). The studies show that the economic factor: parental income has a strong association with educational attainment. Likewise, the data from the table 4.1 illustrates the strong association of parental monthly income and participation of SC respondents in higher education, and also the type of courses they have accessed.

The table 4.1 demonstrates 21.73% of the SC respondents parental income is below Rs.5000, and the respondents with parental income below Rs.5000 have not participated in higher education. The SC respondents who's parental income is from Rs.5000-15000 ; 8.69% have access BA course and 13.04% has not participated in

higher education, here the percentage of non participation in higher education is decreased with the increase in parental income.

Table 4.1 Association between Parental Monthly Income and Types of Courses Accessed By the SC Respondents

Parental monthly income	Courses of higher education / No Participation in Higher Education (NPHE)							
	BA	MA	M.Phil	M.Tech	PhD	B.Ed	Nursing	NPHE
Below Rs.5000								5 21.73%
Rs.5000-15000	2 8.69%							3 13.04%
Rs.15000-25000	1 4.34%						2 8.69%	
Rs.25000-50000	1 4.34%		1 4.34%		1 4.34%			
Above Rs.50000	3 13.04%	3 13.03%		1 4.34%				

Source: Fieldwork, June -August, 2018

The table 4.1 reveals with the increase of parental income there is a decrease in NPHE percentage. Up to Rs.5000-15000 parental income the No Participation in Higher Education (NPHE) is 13.04%, after that there is nil percentage of NPHE. This means as the income increases there is increase in the participation in higher education and increase in the access to different types of courses by the SC respondents. The respondents whose parental income is above Rs.25000, they have accessed courses viz. MA, M.Phil, BA, M.Tech, B.Ed and PhD. This shows a strong influence of the Parental income on the participation of the SC respondents in higher education.

Also, among the ST respondents the table 4.2 represents a significant association of Parental income and participation of students in higher education by accessing different course.

Table 4:2 Associations between Parental Income and Types of Courses Accessed By the ST Respondents

Parental Monthly income	Courses of higher education/ No Participation in Higher Education(NPHE)											
	BA	B.Sc	B.Com	MA	M.Phil	M.Tech	PhD	B.Ed	Management	Nursing	NPHE	
Below Rs.5000	1										1	16
	1.2%										1.2%	19.27%
Rs.5000-15000	10										1	5
	12%										1.2%	6.03%
Rs.15000-25000	12	2	2	3				1	2			
	14.4%	2.4%	2.4%	3.61%				1.2%	2.4%			
Rs.25000-50000	6	2		2	1	1		1				
	7.22%	2.4%		2.4%	1.2%	1.2%		1.2%				
Above Rs.50000	3	1	1	4	2	1	1		1			
	3.61%	1.2%	1.2%	4.81%	2.4%	1.2%	1.2%		1.2%			

Source: Field work, June-August, 2018

With parental income below Rs.5000, only 1.2 % of the respondent has accessed BA and nursing course and 19.27% has not participated in higher education. With the parental income of Rs.5000-15000, the NPHE is 6.03% only, and the percentages of students who have accessed BA course have increased to 12%. As the income level increased to Rs.15000-25000, the NPHE percentage turns nil. And there is more participation in the courses like B.Sc, B.Com, MA, B.Ed and Management. The respondents whose parental income is above Rs.50000, they have accessed to higher

degree courses viz. PhD, M.Phil, and M.Tech. And if compared with the income below Rs.5000, there is no access to such courses instead the percentage of NPHE is more here.

This evidently concludes that parental income is directly proportional to the diversity in opting various Higher Education courses. The stable parental incomes of respondents act as a facilitating factors to access higher education.

II. Level of Parental Education and cultural capital: The other facilitating factor for participation in higher education is high level of parental education. High level of parental education is a facilitating factor and more so, a pathway to access higher education. Parental education plays a determining role in children's higher education participation, and attainment. Burnhill's (1990) article confirms that contribution of parental education to higher education access is vigorous.

Similar argument was given by Vellymalay (2011) states, more the educated parents, higher the involvement in their children's education. Parents with a healthier educational background endow the values that they have achieved from their education in their children which boost the children's confidence and participation in academics, which results more academic success (Vellymalay 2011, p.60). Similar situation with good parental education played an important role in the access to higher education among the SC/ST respondents also. Table 4.3 reflects there is strong association between father's education and types of course accessed by the respondents. The table explains that the parents whose educational attainment is Graduation, their children have opted for courses like BA, MA, M.Tech, PhD, M.Phil. However, parents who are illiterate and or whose educational level is limited up to elementary, their children have not participated in higher education.

Table 4:3 Association between Fathers Education and Types of Courses Accessed by the SC Respondents

Parental education	Courses of higher education / No Participation in Higher education (NPHE)						
	BA	MA	M.Phil	M.Tech	PhD	Nursing	NPHE
Illiterate							
Elementary	3					2	8
	13.04%					8.69%	34.78%
Up to high school							
Up to Higher Secondary	1						
	4.34%						
Graduate	3	3	1	1	1		
	13.04%	13.04%	4.34%	4.34%	4.34%		

Source : Field work, June- August,2018

Table 4.4 Association between Father's Education and Types of Courses Accessed by the ST Respondents

Parental education	Courses of higher education / No Participation in Higher education (NPHE)										
	BA	B.Sc	B.Co m	MA	M.Tec h	M.Phil	B.ED	PhD	Manage ment	Nursi ng	NPHE
Illiterate											9
											10.84 %
Elementary	5									2	12
	6%									2.4%	14.45 %
Up to high school	9	2					1				
	10.84%	2.4%					1.2%				
Up to secondary high school	10	1	1	3					2		
	12.04%	1.2%	1.2%	3.6%					2.4%		
Graduate and above	8	3	1	6	2	3	1	1	1		
	9.6 %	3.6%	1.2%	7.2%	2.4%	3.6%	1.2%	1.2 %	1.2%		

Source: Field work, June- August, 201

In table 4.3 among the SCs, 34.78% respondents who have not participated in higher education, their parent's educational attainment is up to elementary. This is also substantiated by table 4:4, among the STs 25.29 % have not participated in higher education and their parental educational attainment is either up to elementary or illiterate. However, in some cases regardless of low level of parental education, their children have participated in higher education in courses like BA and Nursing among both SC/ST respondents.

Lata (2013), states that the most significant factor that promotes inequality in higher education is cultural capital. Bourdieu (1977) conceived the term cultural capital which is not an economic asset but a noneconomic asset that promotes social mobility. Education and Intellect can be considered as cultural capital. The cultural capital can be acquired by the individuals from the parents or professionals that teach them to find the cultural differentiations; it can also be acquired from educational achievements and cultural goods like artifacts, paintings and books. Lata (2013) narrates that the students who have high cultural capital will have larger opportunities; the opportunities are grounded in the institutions that favor the economic class that have high cultural capital. Therefore these families can provide expensive education to their children and they will also have the knowledge about different educational systems of the institutions which will further increase the privileges of their children. A similar finding was observed among the SCs/STs respondents, whose parental education and parental income is high they are likely to have high cultural capital than their counterparts and it facilitates their access in higher education. But those respondents with parents having low cultural capital they become the victim of inequality, as the cultural capital stated by (Lata, 2013) propagates inequality. There are studies like Sullivan (2001), Davies & Hughes (2009), Hossler, Schmit, & Vesper

(1999) that focuses on the effect of cultural capital on the educational attainment of the students, the student's decision to attend college, and choice of higher education. And they find a strong relationship between the cultural capital and higher educational attainment.

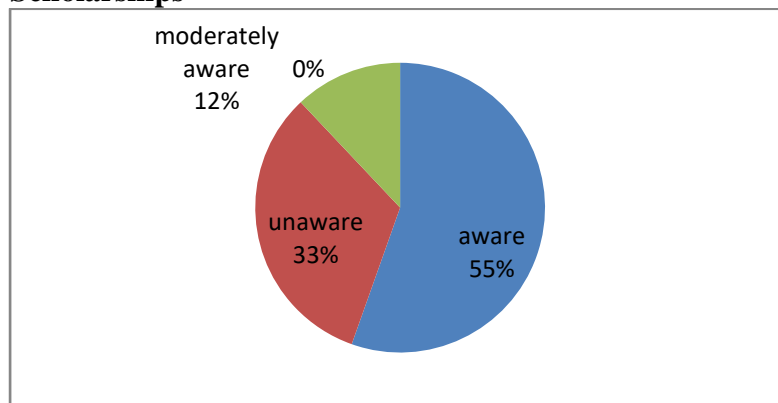
III. Awareness about Reservation Policy and Scholarships

The Governmental facilities like reservation and scholarships play a vital role in accessing higher education among the two disadvantaged groups. Reservation and various scholarships are provided to the students belonging to the SCs/ STs. The scholarships are provided at both Pre-matric and Post –matric and also those who are obtaining higher education in India and abroad¹. There are various educational facilities under educational schemes for the disadvantage groups from the centre and state government like, provisions of scholarships, hostels for school and colleges, provision of coaching for competitive exam, books, clothes, midday meals for school students etc. (Chitnis,1972, p. 1652). Reservation policy is implemented to provide equal opportunity. The SCs/STs members need to be aware of such programs to be effective, and positive attitude towards them is a must. In India, total student enrolment in higher education has been increasing rapidly over the past half- century, also the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes student in higher education enrolment is gradually mounting up. The considerable share of SCs and STs Students enrolment in Indian higher education is attributable to India's reservation policies (Weisskopf, 2005, p.4340).Therefore, awareness of the reservation policy and scholarships is a facilitating factor for accessing higher education among the disadvantaged group.

¹ *Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment: Government of India.* (n.d). Retrieved September 6, 2018, from Socialjustice.nic.in/schemelist/send/27?mid=24541

Figure .4.1 demonstrates that 55% of the ST respondents are aware about the reservation for admission in colleges and jobs and are also aware about the scholarships and this awareness has facilitated them to access higher education. The majorities who are aware are well educated and are economically stable and have participated in the higher education. Education thus has played a vital role in creating awareness of the policies and education schemes of the government provided for the marginalized category of the society.

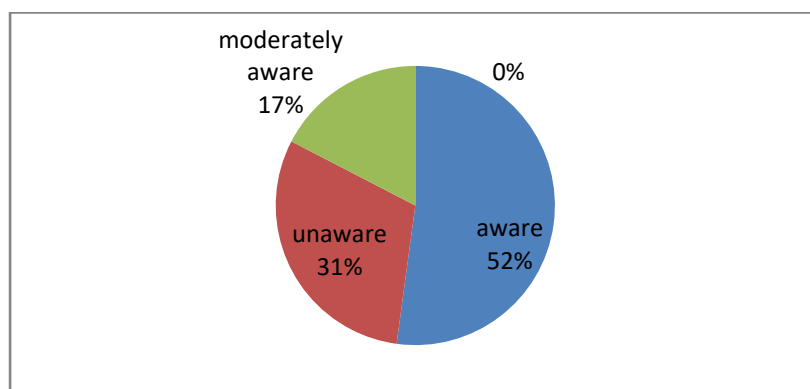
Figure no. 4.1 STs Respondent Awareness Regarding Reservation Policy and Scholarships



Source : Field work, June-August,2018

Figure 4.2 illustrates the SCs respondent percentage of awareness regarding reservation policy and scholarships. It shows that 52.11% of the respondents are aware about the reservation policy and scholarships. Alike the ST respondents, the SC respondents who are aware of the reservation are the ones who have participated higher education and hail from stable economic background.

Figure no. 4.2 SCs Respondent's Awareness Regarding Reservation Policy and Scholarships



Source: Fieldwork, June- August, 2018

A Number of respondents opined on awareness about reservation policy and scholarships, Albina Lepcha, 25 years old is working as a teacher in a missionary school, in her words “Yes, I am aware about the reservation policy, that there are certain quotas for the reserved categories in almost every institution. And it’s helpful for those truly aspiring to study but there are very few seats for ST categories. My uncle works in a backward class welfare department office and he is aware about the scholarships and I learned about it from him”. Leong Lepcha, 28 years old, works in a bank as assistant manager. He holds a degree in Bachelors of Agricultural Science. His father is a teacher in a government school and is acquainted with the reservation policy and scholarships because of his social networking with his associates who were government employees. Leong Lepcha acquired the knowledge about the scholarships from his father.

Bimal Gimirey, 26 years old works as a software engineer. He did his M.Tech from NIT, Trichy Tamil Nadu. His parents are government employees having an economically sound background. He stated “*I am well aware about the reservation policy and other provisions given by the government for the Scheduled Castes. I got the information about the reservation and scholarships from my college seniors*”.

Reservation played an important role for his admission in colleges. During his college he received scholarships. Similar statement was made by Rituraj Khati 28 years pursuing Ph.D, Supriya Rasaily 22 years pursuing BA, Albin Lepcha 28 years and Ethena Lepcha 25 years pursuing B.Ed.

Arati Sunar is pursuing her M.Phil Degree. Being SCs and having low family income she was eligible to apply for scholarship for her higher education. She stated *“I am aware about the reservation policy and scholarships, I did receive scholarship during my college, and the scholarship helped me to meet some of my expenses. I do receive scholarship now also, and it does provide some financial help. But the amount of scholarship is a little less.”* In addition to this, the following case substantiates how awareness of the reservation and scholarships among the SCs/STs respondent helps them to access to higher education.

Meelem Lepcha, 20 years old is pursuing her BA Economics Honors in Visva – Bharati University located in Santiniketan, West Bengal. She dwells in Upper Tanek, Kalimpong Khasmahal Village. She has one elder brother and one younger sister. Her father is farmer and her mother is a housewife. Her mother and father have attained education up to class VII.

Her elder brother is a school dropout and now he is working as a truck driver for his living. Her sister is pursuing BA in Education in Cluny Women’s College, Kalimpong. Meelam always wanted to pursue her higher education outside hometown in a reputed college and university. Her parents were not affluent and could not send her outside hometown to the cities, because cities are expensive in everything from transport, food and lodging etc.

She had some knowledge about the reservation policy and financial educational support of the government for the Scheduled Tribes category. She learned about the reservation and educational schemes from youth service in church. She said “there are many students who study colleges outside hometown in our youth service, all of us in youth services are like brother and sister. They were the one who gave me knowledge about the reputed good colleges and university in the cities. Also, information on; scholarships and reservation, processes and criteria for scholarships etc”. Her parents were not supportive and of the view like “*jaha paryo ni eywtai ho*” (*where ever you study it’s the same thing and same education*). However she was determined to pursue her higher education outside hometown. But she knew that her parent could not afford to send her so she worked diligently for her studies. As, she knew that if she get good percentage in her HS examination, she can get scholarship from government in merit bases also on the basis of her social category and also the church authority supports the meritorious students with scholarship. Therefore, with her determinism she got excellent result in her HS examination and with the help of her seniors from the church she went Santiniketan and got admission in Economics Honors.

During the first year, she faced many problems and it was difficult to adjust in the new environment. The level of teaching was high and it was difficult for her to understand what was being taught. She could not catch up well with her studies and failed in major paper in her first semester. Then, she felt for a need of private tutor but this would add extra expense. So she decided to cut down her personal expense and went for tuition classes. Now she is doing well getting adapted to the studious environment by getting help from the tuition.

She wanted her younger sister to study in the same university. But her parent’s income could not afford to send both the children outside home town. Although she

gets scholarship and free accommodation in hostel but they are not enough because the scholarship is very less, so parents send her some money for her other expenses like food, transport, medicine, and other basic needs.

Her elder brother studied up to class VIII, when he failed in his final examination, lost interest in his studies and he dropped school. Her brother was doing well in his studies until he started hanging out with the notorious boys of the village and started bunking his school and lost track in his studies. Her parents have an emollient and lenient nature. Strict action was avoided then. Now he is working as a truck driver for his livelihood.

Therefore awareness about reservation policy has been one of the facilitating factors to access higher education among the SC/ST respondents. The social networking, parental occupation, religious organization and peer group has played an important role in creating awareness about the reservation policy and scholarships

III. Role of Religious Organization

In 1870 missionary started giving education the foremost part in their mission work programme, it was Mr. William Macfarlane who had laid the foundation of primary education. Not just that, they also engaged themselves in welfare and upliftment of the people. During the period, many people were converted to Christianity and many converts were Lepchas (Dash, 2011, pp.265-279).

The Christian missionaries came to Darjeeling district of West Bengal with the object to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and with charity and development work they reached the native Lepcha tribal community (Lepcha, 2010, p.130). In 1870, Reverend William Macfarlane of the Church of Scotland moved to Kalimpong and

found Lepcha community to be more responsive to the gospel (Lepcha, 2013, p.129). The Lepcha community accepted Christianity, because the tribe was socially, economically and culturally backward then and the Christian missionaries was performing charity and development work which attracted a majority section of the deprived community towards Christianity (Lepcha, 2010, pp.134-135).

Lepcha (2013) opined, Christianity and education walked in a corresponding path as the church supported the youth to opt for higher education. And at present there are some individuals who remembers the way their pastor used to write letter to the Lepcha *kaiya* (Marwari retailers who knew Lepcha language fluently) for borrowing money for college education. This helped many of their generation to complete higher education (Lepcha, 2013, p.133).

Therefore, religion has played a very significant role in bringing educational progress in Kalimpong, and the Lepchas have been the major beneficiaries if compared to the Nepalese SCs (Kami, Sarki, Damai). The Missionaries have laid the foundation of primary education which is essential for higher education.

Most of the Christians respondents were of the view that the churches provide various supports i.e. moral support, spiritual support and also financial support. They also provide educational loans and scholarships for financially backward people. The role of religious organization has been a facilitating factor and contributes in participation of higher education among the SCs/STs. The church authority/missionaries have been playing a prominent role in imparting education in Kalimpong. Most of the respondents who were Christian were of the view that the church authority provide loans for education, also provides compensation in school fee for those who are financially backward as most of the schools are catholic and

missioners schools. Also, the church provides morale support and spiritual support which some respondents presented as a part of facilitating factor for them. In case of the Hindu or the Buddhist respondent this factor was not mentioned. Although, the church support is not the important facilitating factor for all, but for some few respondents it has definitely been an important facilitating factor in obtaining higher education. The following case study substantiates the claim that religious organization plays a facilitating factor for some respondents.

Reep Lepcha , a Christian , aged 19 , pursuing Bachelor's Degree in Kalimpong. Her father is a farmer and has studied up to class VI and her mother up to class VIII. She stated that her Church provides moral and financial support which in a way helps in their education. In her words "when I got good percentage in my HS (Higher Secondary) examination I was felicitated with a monetary reward in church, and in youth services our youth seniors gave me immense advice for higher education, and I very much needed such support and advice. Such act of felicitation enhances our confidence to perform better". Her sister Meelem Lepcha 21 years old also stated that, in the youth worship services ,there are many seniors who are pursuing their higher studies outside hometown and they give her information about reservation policy and scholarships, and also enlightened her about different courses and institutions. And these small things really helped her to access higher education.

Mary Lepcha, 26 years old is Catholic by religion. She resides in Kalimpong Khasmahal village, Mangbol Busty. She graduated from Cluny Womens College, Kalimpong. And completed her schooling from St. Philomena Girls High School, a Catholic school. Her father had primary level education and worked as a co worker as D group staff in St. Philomena Girls High School and her mother is illiterate.

She has one elder brother and one younger sister. Both the sisters completed their schooling from St. Philomena Girls High School. And her brother did his schooling from SUMI a Scottish missionary school. These are reputed semi government Madyamik Board Schools. During their schooling they never received scholarship and were not aware about it .But she recalls some of her classmate receiving some money from the school and toady she realizes it to be scholarships. To get a scholarship various forms have to be filled and various documents have to be submitted and her parents were not well educated, and that might have created hindrance to prepare documents that are needed for application of Scholarship. She was of the view that maybe because of the above reason they did not receive scholarship. When she reached college, she became aware about the educational support of the government and also about the reservation policy and she had gathered knowledge then from seniors and was acquainted with official paper works and applied for scholarship when she reached BA 2nd year. Her elder brother is a school dropout. She said that her elder brother was very good in studies. But when he reached class IX and X he started getting off the track in studies. He did not take any private tuition then. She was of the view that, had he been supported with private tuition then he would not have failed in Madhyamik examination. After that he dropped school and did not want to repeat. Her parents also did not force his brother to continue his studies; they were lenient on his education. Later, he got married. Her elder sister left home to become nun. She had done her graduation and was teaching in a Catholic school and was instructed to pursue her higher education from the school authority and therefore she is pursuing her Master Degree now and the expense of her education is taken by the church authority.

On being asked “why didn’t she pursue her higher education” she explained her hardship, “my father had great difficulties to look after three of us and the family. His income was very less to meet ends then. My mother used to raise cattle’s and work as a wage laborer (*Khetala*)”. There was some compensation in school fee etc. as her father used to work in the same school; however there were other expenses to run the livelihood. She said “If we were not Christian my father would not have a job and we would not get compensation for our education”. She wanted to pursue her Master degree and had applied for the admission, however because of the sickness in the family, there was increase in the family expense .She said, “there was no one to look after the domestic chores as my mother was aged and had health issues too, so I decided to work as a teacher in a private school nearby and look after my mother and ailing sister in-law and did not pursue my higher education further”.

Zeno Lepcha, 25 years old. She is pursuing her Master degree in Jadavpur University. Her parent’s educational qualification is Graduation. She is Christian by religion. She states “Yes, to me religion is one of the most important things. It helps me to stay away from negativity and keep my focus in studies to achieve my goal it provides spiritual support which is the important thing for me as it give me inner peace which is essential to keep going in life in every aspects be it education or anything. In times of examination the church pray for us this provides a ray of hope and a confidence and eventually somewhere it helps me to keep up the confidence and perform better. Also, the religious teaching in the organization provides a moral and spiritual support, which motivates me to keep going in my educational field”. She also stated that the church authority provides financial support to the people who are in need. Likewise Ethena Molomu and Leeong Lepcha stated that spiritual and moral support plays a very important role and this help them keep going in their education.

The above narratives makes it clear that the religious organization provides not just moral or spiritual support but also provides financial support like providing educational loans, compensation in the fee etc., also there are Christian quota's in Christian missionary colleges that has facilitated some respondents to access higher education. All the positive role of religious organization in regard to education can be traced as a facilitating factor for the respondents who are Christians. Most of the ST respondents are Christians and church network has assisted them to access higher education. And this is true even in the case of SCs Christians also.

IV. State Initiatives and Role of Community Board

West Bengal government has established development Boards for different marginalized communities in hilly regions including Kalimpong for various developmental initiatives and upliftment of the community. The Lepcha community who are the Scheduled Tribes, has a community board named ' Mayel Lyang Lepcha Development Board', established by the governor of West Bengal under the administrative control of the Backward Classes Welfare Department, Government of West Bengal, and came into existence in 5 august 2013. The board is registered under 'West Bengal Societies Registration Act, 1961 (West Ben. Act XXVI of 1961) (Government of West Bengal: Backward Classes Welfare Department, 2013).

The Kami, Sarki and Damai belong to the Scheduled Castes community in Kalimpong, and each have a separate development board. All the three boards is established by the governor of West Bengal under the administrative control of the Backward Classes Welfare Department, Government of West Bengal, on 26 July 2016. The board is registered under 'West Bengal Societies Registration Act, 1961(West Ben. Act XXVI of 1961). The respective boards of three communities are viz;

‘The West Bengal Kami Development and Cultural Board’², The West Bengal Sarki Development and Cultural Board’³, and ‘The West Bengal Damai Development and cultural Board’⁴. The development board is a part of SC and (Kami, Damai, Sarki) ST (Lepcha) communities , with a specialized function and activities, functioning within a specific aim and objective to meet the community’s requirements for socio-economic, educational and cultural development⁵.

West Bengal Mayel Lyang Lepcha Development Board (WBMLLDB): The board came into being in 5th august 2013. Since then the board is effectively working for upliftment of the community. The board’s objective in regard to education is “to promote education among their community”. Although, the boards have been effectively working in the overall development of the community, the researcher have focused on the extent of progress and development the board has brought in the field of education of the community. In the words of Sri. G Namchu, IAS (Retd.) OSD &EO, Secretary, TDD & Member of Secretary of Mayel Lyang Lepcha Development Board, “in the field of education, schools with single room has been opened in more than hundred places in the district, two hostels are coming up for girl students. Support has been given to educational institutions where Lepcha language and culture

² *West Bengal Kami Development and Cultural Board: Government of West Bengal*, (n.d.). Retrieved July 11, 2018, from <http://wbkdcb.com/>

³ *West Bengal Sarki Development and Cultural Board : Government of West Bengal*, (n.d.). Retrieved July 11, 2018 from http://wbsdcb.org/formation_details.php

⁴ *West Bengal Damai Development and Cultural Board: Government of West Bengal*, (n.d.). Retrieved July 11, 2018, from <http://wbddcb.com/>

⁵ *West Bengal Kami Development and Cultural Board: Government of West Bengal*, (n.d.). Retrieved July 12, 2018, from <http://wbkdcb.com/>

West Bengal Sarki Development and Cultural Board : Government of West Bengal, (n.d.). Retrieved July 12, 2018 from http://wbsdcb.org/formation_details.php

West Bengal Damai Development and Cultural Board: Government of West Bengal, (n.d.). Retrieved July 12, 2018, from <http://wbddcb.com/>

West Bengal Mayel Lyang Development Board: Government of West Bengal, (n.d.). Retrieved July 12, 2018 from <http://mllldb.cohesionlogix.com/about-us/>

are promoted; coaching classes and incentives have been provided to meritorious and deserving students” (WBMLLBD: Annual administrative report, 2015-2016, p.4). The development of night school scheme is doing a tremendous work in providing education to the deprived children of the community in remote rural villages. Also, various incentives and coaching classes for the meritorious students have been playing a significant factor for the students to opt higher education in the community. Formation of hostels in town and city is all together adding plus point for the student to participate in higher education. As the hostels are free of cost for the students who are economically unstable, and the hostel also gives a sense of security to the parents to send their children from rural remote villages to the town for further education.

West Bengal Kami Development and cultural Board (WBKDCB): The board was established in the year 2016. The basic objective of the board is, “giving priority to education for the community, providing financial support to the financially backward community, lastly protecting cultural and heritage⁶. Till date the board has implemented the housing scheme for the community, no scheme has been implemented in the field of education, so far.

West Bengal Sarki Development and cultural Board (WBSDCB): Like WBKDCB, the Sarki Board was also established in 2016, with the objective to bring overall progress of the community. The board has a vision to bring socio, economic, cultural and educational upliftement and has started its work with the Ashiyana House scheme, which is construction of the houses for the community people who are

⁶ *West Bengal Kami Development and Cultural Board: Government of West Bengal, (n.d.). Retrieved July 13, 2018, from <http://wbkdeb.com/>*

economically backward. In the field of education the board have establish few night schools⁷.

West Bengal Damai Development and cultural Board (WBDDCB): The board was also established in the same year 2016. In aspect of promotion of education of the community, the board has put forward an objective “our planning is to promote education among the Damai community as well as to provide assistance for developmental activities and to take up social welfare activities for the Damai community”⁸. However, until now not much work on upliftment of education is done and presently they are working on the housing scheme.

A comparative assessment of the community development boards of SCs and STs shows that WBMLLDB (Community Board of Lepcha) can be observed to be performing effectively with a positive outcomes, which can be regarded as one of the pathways and facilitating factor for the participation of the community in higher education, as they have implemented many educational schemes for the community. Whereas, the SCs community boards have so far implemented only the housing schemes for the community. One obvious reason for WBMLLDB’s better performance was its earlier establishment in 2013, which is older than other boards and is well established and organized. Whereas, the SCs developmental boards are of recent origin and yet to function effectively.

⁷ *West Bengal Sarki Development and Cultural Board : Government of West Bengal*, (n.d.). Retrieved July 15, 2018 from http://wbsdcb.org/mission_vision.php

⁸ *West Bengal Kami Development and Cultural Board: Government of West Bengal*, (n.d.). Retrieved July 15, 2018, <http://wbkdcb.com/>

4.2 Constraining Factors

I. Economic Instability and Low Family Income

Low family income is one of the constraining factors for both the SC/ST respondents. The table 4.1 and table 4.2 shows the association between parental income and SC/ST respondents access to different courses, 21.7% of the SCs respondent and 21.6% of the ST respondents have family income below Rs.5000. These respondents have not participated in higher education and all of them are school dropout. The case studies presented below gives the picture of how low income can be a constraining factor in accessing higher education.

Umesh Sarki, 20 years old resident of Purbong Busty, Kalimpong Khasmahal village. He is the only son in the family. His father used to do flower business for livelihood. His father has attained education up to class VI and his mother is illiterate. He did his schooling from SUMI. After his higher secondary he did not continue his higher education. He did not participate in higher education.

The reason why he did not participate in higher education was because of financial instability in the family. Before, the financial stability of the family was stable, until his father became sick with chronic disease and got bed ridden. Umesh's mother stated that, the Mani Trust (an association who look after the needy and poor people) looks after the medical expense of her husband and they have taken her husband to Vellore for medical checkup. After his father got sick the financial condition of the family got down, as the head of the family who was the breadwinner could not work due to sickness. Therefore, Umesh decided to discontinue his education and look for a small job so that he can take care of the family. At present, his mother work as a domestic helper to support the family. Umesh's mother had a deep desire to give her

son a good education that would help him get a good job so that he won't suffer and struggle for living like they did. But unfortunately her husband got sick and she by herself could not take the expense of the house as well as the expense of education.

Umesh did not receive any scholarship during his schooling. He had applied but he did not get it. His mother said "my neighbors sons did receive scholarship couple of times but they never disclosed what scholarship their son got and what was the procedure to get the scholarship, also they are economically stable than us still her son got scholarship, but my son didn't. The one who need the most does not get. The only thing we got from the government is the house that is being built by the 'Sarki Development and cultural Board'".

Sarita Sarki 29 years old, a Hindu married at the age of 19. She did her schooling in St. Philomenas Girls High School, and studied up to class V. She has two younger sisters and two younger brother and all are school dropout. Her brothers Studied up to IV and one of her sister studied up to class VI and the other studied up to class VIII. Her father was a farmer and her mother was a house wife. Sarita dropped her schooling after her father's demise so that her younger sister and brothers could study and she helped her mother to earn for their livelihood. She went Nepal to work. She used to send money home but it would not be enough to meet the educational expenses of her siblings. Thus, they had to drop out. She and her brother and sisters were not aware about the scholarships or any constitutional provisions meant for the Scheduled Castes children. While working in Nepal she got married. And after a year she came Kalimpong and now she owns a small sweet shop in the village. She is of the view that before social discrimination was there and because of which they utterly suffered both socially and economically, but she is glad now things are changing and

her caste group is climbing up the ladder in all the fields. She has a positive attitude towards education and wants to provide a good education to her children.

Sachin Sunar , 25 years of age a Hindu. He is a class IV dropout studied in Saraswati Primary School Kalimpong. His elder sister was also a school dropout she studied up to class V, after failing in the annual examination she did not have interest to repeat so she left school and got married. His father and mother were laborers. His father passed away when he was ten years old. After his father's death their economic stability went down. His mother worked hard to make ends meet. After he finished his primary school, he did not have any interest in studying he wanted to help his mother to earn for their livelihood. His mother was not aware about the reservation policy and scholarships and so was Sachin Sunar.

II. Low Level of Parental Education

Another constraining factor among the SCs/STs respond is low level parental of education. The low parental education is closely associated with lack of cultural capital among the parents this will create a hindrance for their children in their educational achievement. In both the cases SCs and STs, the main factor for no participation to higher education is the low level of parental education and parental income. Dewan (2014) narrates there are considerable numbers of parents who are not so conscious or concerned with their children's education, the very reason is their poor economic condition and low level parental education. There is negligence of parents in their children's education because gambling, boozing and gossiping are their passionate pass-times. The parents and guardians of the present day are only second or first generation learners and can hardly offer tutorship to their children. Educated and economically better off parents send their children to good schools and

colleges but then they do not have time for constantly going after children's after school, there are just little percentage of parents who do keep a constant watch over their children. In Kalimpong hills there is lack of such sort of culture which encourages, helps, supports and builds up the morale in the endeavor of education (Dewan, 2014, pp.76-83). Some of the SC/ST respondents are fortunate to have an economically sound, educated and conscious parents which have been a facilitating factor as well as a pathway to obtain higher education. However some do not and creates limitation in obtaining higher education. Both the group undergoes with above issue in a same plane. The case study below narrates how low parental education creates a constraining factor for the respondent's access to higher education.

Lungten Lepcha, 21 years old. He is pursuing BA in Kalimpong College. He is a resident of Purbong, Kalimpong Khasmahal Village. His father is educated up to class V and his mother did not go to the school. There was time when his father earned enough money from driving. But now his father is working as a farmer and his earning is not sound. He is the eldest son of the family and has one younger sister who is pursuing her BA in Siliguri College. He did his schooling from an English Medium Private school. He wanted to pursue his higher education in Siliguri but could not make it because of the 2017 Gorkhaland agitation. His mother understands the flaw of not being educated and gives utmost importance to higher education. And therefore wants her children to pursue higher education so that they get a good job and not struggle like them. He says "my parents tell us: *par, par, par* (study study and study), but it's sad they can't guide with our studies, for example: what course to take up in higher education, which subject is apt to take for, how to build interest in a particular subject etc. My parents work hard to support me financially but I think that is not enough. My neighbor friend's father is a teacher, he guides' his children by bringing

employment gazette news paper, make him aware about the importance of the trending courses like computer and the educational scheme of the government, does the official paper works that is needed in colleges, builds social network that is needed for supplementary help in for academic help. These are small things but makes huge difference I am studying Political science not because I wanted to but I had to because I had no other alternatives, now after completing 1st year I realize Political science is not for me, I feel lost in the track. Maybe I will make through my gradation but I will never excel in it”.

Coming to the conversation about the development board, he was of the view that the Board was doing a good job by providing incentives, scholarship, and coaching to the meritorious students. But to bring an overall development they should also take care of the dropout students. There are so many dropouts from school and colleges. Also there should be a proper channelization of the resources that the governments are giving through the board. And meaningful educational workshop and seminar should be conducted for students like us, so that we could set our hands on right track. And also enhance our interest in higher education. On being asked why do you want these things, he said there are so many of them in the village who are graduates but jobless, so many are school dropouts, so many have dropped college because they fail in their final exams and this creates negatives vibes and gives me a feeling like, *ahjai parae ra pani k garnu Kam ta pawdaida* (why to study further we won't get job also).

Keren Lepcha 29 years old, and Sharon Lepcha, both working as a teacher in private school stated that only financial support is not enough for children's education. Parent's participation in children's education plays a huge role in their achievement and their participation can come only if they are educated and concerned.

III. Low level of Social Capital and Lack of Awareness about the Reservation Policy

Bourdieu defines Social Capital “as the collective potential resources which is generated by the individuals through membership in an organization and networks, or participating in certain social groups” (Lee, 2018, pp.780-781), his main motive was to explain reproduction of inequality through social capital. For him social capital was a means of coordinating the elite’s assets to maintain their economic superiority. In this regard the researcher traced how social capital played an important role for some respondents to avail constitutional provisions, for example some respondent’s parental occupation was such that it had helped them create a strong social network which had facilitated in generating social capital and added to their pathways in participating in higher education and availing constitutional resources. However, some section of the respondents, especially those who were economically backward, lacked such social capital to generate social network. And this added to their constraining factor to access scholarships and other constitutional provisions. Although the constitutional provisions are for all but to avail them proper paper work is required, some section of the parents were not educated and lack social capital and further lack social networking.

The participation of the SCs/STs in higher education are improving every year, however if they are compared with the general category, they still fall behind in spite the implementation of the reservation policy and educational schemes for the disadvantaged group. The study found one of the important factors for the SCs/STs hindrance in higher education participation was the low level of awareness of the reservation policy and scholarships. 30.43% of the SCs respondent and 33% of the STs respondents, were not aware about the reservation policy and scholarships and

other educational schemes. And, 17.39% of STs respondent and 12% of SCs respondent were moderately aware. The ones who were; school dropout, economically backward, who lacked educated parents and those who did not participate in higher education, were the ones who were not aware about the governmental policies and provision. Some respondents who were college students were moderately aware about the reservation policy and scholarships. Lack of awareness and being ignorant about the educational schemes and reservation has been one of the major constraining factors for the respondents in participating higher education. The level of unawareness for both the group's respondent was almost the same. The one who were aware about the reservation policy and other constitution provisions were the ones who had participated in higher education. When they participated in higher education gradually they become aware about the policies and about their rights .The inadequate information flow and channelization of the resource is also one of the issues opined by the respondents, and there should be proper awareness of government educational schemes like Scholarships and stipend. To substantiate the lack of awareness among the respondent following case studies and narratives are presented.

Shuvina Khati 20 years old, pursuing Bachelors Degree in Kalimpong. Her schooling was done in Gandhi Ashram, which basically caters education to children's who's parental income is very low. She stated that before the Ashram used to provide scholarship for college but now it's not done, so her parents has to bear the expense for her college education. Her father follows the traditional occupation and is a blacksmith and her mother is a house wife. Her father and mother studied up to class I and they are not aware about the reservation policy. In her words "until my college admission I had no knowledge about what Scheduled Castes is, when I got admitted

in college they asked for a SC certificate and I learned about me belonging to a SC community , apart from that I have no Knowledge about reservation or scholarship , my elder brother is moderately aware about the reservation policy”. Her brother is also pursuing his Bachelor’s degree in Kalimpong. Both of them have not received any scholarship that is provided from government for the SC students yet, because they are not aware about it. In the similar manner, twenty one year old Santi Sunar was not aware about the reservation policies and other programs. She got married at the age of 19. She has a nine month old son. Her father is a gardener and is barely literate .Her mother is a housewife .She studied up to class VII in St. Philomenas Girls High School a missionary school. She discontinued her studies after she failed in her class VII annual examination and lost interest and did not want to repeat. Later she got married. Since she was studying in a school run by the missionaries she did not receive any financial support from the government and she is not aware about the scholarships or the reservation for Scheduled Castes.

Also, Evanjaliya Lepcha, 20years of age, was not aware. She did not continue her higher education and studied up to class XII. She has an elder brother who also did not continue his higher education after Class XII. Her father and mother works as wage laborers. And her parental monthly income is below 5000 and her parents are barely literate. She and her brother are not aware about the reservation policy or scholarships provided by the government for the ST students. Till now she has not receive any scholarships. She feels pity about herself and stated “we could not study, so we are left without any option but to sit back home (*Hami ta parnu sakaena k garnu abo ghar mai*)”.

Umesh Sarki, Twenty years old, Hindu by religion. He recently gave his HS (Higher Secondary examination) states that he want to pursue higher education but his father

is bed ridden due to chronic illness and the financial condition is not stable. He has not receive any scholarship till now, while some of his friends did receive but due to some reason which he is not aware of, he did not receive scholarship that is provided from the government to financially backward SCs. Her mother was of the view that those who are already well off get the financial help because of the social networking, she said so because her neighbor's son who was economically sound had received the scholarship but her son did not. She also complained about how she was not well acquainted with official work and his husband who knew a little was bed ridden.

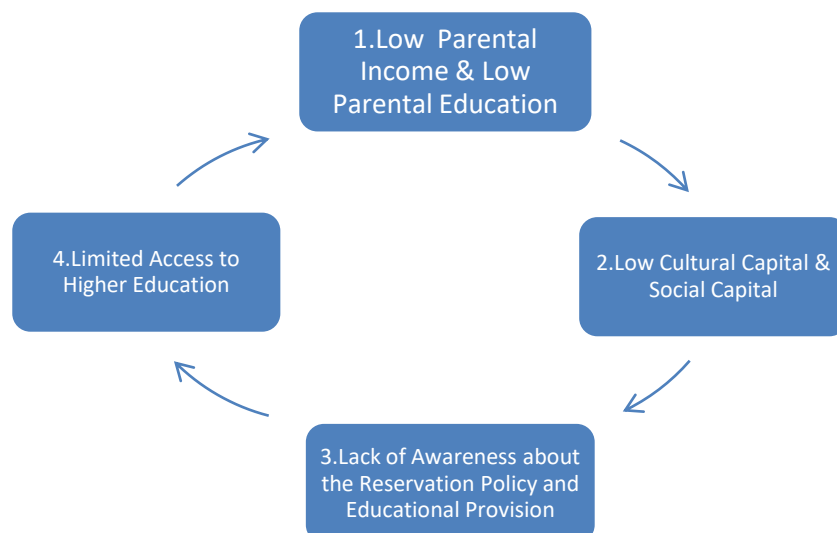
Rubina Lepcha, 25 years mother of one year old daughter. She is a school dropout, after failing VIII annual examinations. Her brother is also a school dropped out after studying class eleven. She was moderately aware about the scholarships and governmental support for education of tribal's student. Her mother stated that "when Rubina Lepcha's father was alive, he used to do the official paper works that was needed for applying scholarship like income certificate etc and once Rubina's brother did receive a stipend from government for education, and after his death there was no one I could not do because I am illiterate, *Laaj pani lagcha office janu* (I also feel shy to go to the office) to make certificates that are needed for applying scholarships like ST certificate, income certificate and many more. Also I am ignorant of all the paper works and *zizo lagcha paper haru ko kam* (I use to get irritated with paper works), because of which my children could not apply for scholarship during their schooling. Rubina and her brother is moderately aware about the scholarships but are not aware about reservation in jobs and colleges for the ST students.

Divya Lepcha, 26 years old. Both her parents are illiterate and economically not stable. Her father is a farmer and her mother is a housewife. She have two younger sisters one elder brother and two younger brother, all of them are school dropout.

When she failed in class nine annual examinations she left school and later gave her class ten final exam from open school and cleared the class 10 examination. After that she gave class XII finale examination but failed to clear. She is the most educated among all the siblings. She is ignorant about the reservation policies and scholarships that are provided for the economically backward tribal's. Till now she has not received any stipend or scholarships neither did her brothers and sisters. She is of the view that “no one will help people like us (poor people) unless we help our self for our survival. I have no idea what government is giving”.

The study reveals that the parents who have less educational and financial potential can only channel a limited amount of cultural and social capital to their children, which further leads to the lack of awareness about the reservation policy and educational provision in them. This again limits the access to higher education, and these children end up taking jobs having low income and less education as the parents. And the wheel of this vicious circle keeps rolling on as illustrated in figure 4.3.

Figure 4.3 Interrelation between Socio-Economic Background of Parents and Children’s Access to Education



IV. Lack of Proper Channelization and Dissemination of Information about the Educational Facilities

Lack of proper channelization and dissemination of the information about the governmental resources in regard to education is one of the constraining factors for both the SCs/STs respondents. They have no clarity about their rights like reservation policy and other education for SCs/STs students. The respondents are not aware about the reservation policy and scholarships because there is no proper body that can circulate the information to the local people. Most of the information is available in websites and internet and there are people who are not equipped with the smart internet technology as a result of which the information and the awareness becomes inaccessible to mostly the weaker sections amidst them all.

Some of the respondents opined that there should be a proper publication and easy access to these resources. The publication should be done in such a manner that it reaches to all and bring awareness from the grass root level. And this can help the weaker section and accelerate active participation in higher education which will bring betterment among them and eradicate inequality.

V. Structural Constraints

According to Andre Betiele (1969), caste system generates social stratification. Caste system not only determines the unequal ritual status, but also dominates the economic and political spheres. Therefore the social life of the individual is structured on castes lines (Irshad ,2013,p. 59). Caste acts as a determinant factor for status attainment. A study in Nepal by Stash & Hannum (2001) states that Brahmin and Chhetri castes generally tend to possess an economically advanced position because of the historical caste hierarchy system. They hold more resources and are prized with education.

Alternatively, the low castes (SCs) have a tendency to benefit less from education and other advances (pp.359-360). However since independence, a section of the backward castes are climbing up the ladder and have availed the benefit of education. The empirical findings also portray that a handful of the SCs are now in an economically advanced position, and they no longer earn their livelihood via traditional occupation. But there are SC respondents whose parents are still involved with traditional occupations and are economically backward, this has limited economic gain and has affected the access to higher education. While, some section of the ST's still practices subsistence farming in rural areas. These occupations are not potent enough to yield economic stability, as well as they're deprived of educational culture and awareness. This deprivation limits the access to education. This is true in case of some of the SC and ST respondents. Although, the caste system in terms of social discrimination was not found to be very strong and rigid in Kalimpong as compared to the other parts of India. Nevertheless, some handful SCs respondents expressed that they sometimes did face social discrimination in a subtle manner in colleges. Among the STs such instances were not seen.

4.3 Summary

The above empirical findings demonstrate the different pathways and constraining factors of the SCs/ST respondents. Respondents with low parental income and low level of parental educational attainment acts as a constraining factor. The Low economic stability and low educational attainment hinders transferring of cultural capital and social capital .These capital are crystallizing agents, which opens the door in accessing higher education and it increases awareness about the constitutional provision in regard to education, interest in different higher education courses, and

helps get assistance from valuable networks. However, respondents with stable economic background and high level of parental education possess these capitals and have assisted them to participate in higher education. The socio economic structure of the respondents is the determining factor and directs the respondents in accessing higher education. This is found to be true in both the groups. While the high socio-economic resources of the parents have a positive impact on the high level of access to higher education among the children in addition to this the religion organization and networking and the community boards also acts as the facilitating factor for access to higher education.

Chapter V

Conclusion

I

Education is often viewed as an essential catalyst for development of an individual, community and nation. It is regarded as a basic human right and important component of human and social development. The sociological approaches to education can be viewed from varied perspectives. The functionalist's views education system crucial in retaining social solidarity and value consensus. By creating functional relationship between education and economic system, it facilitates the integration of the whole society and maintains the social system. In contrary, the critical perspectives postulated by different sociologists, viz. Pierre Bourdieu (1986), Bowles and Gintis (1976) and Paulo Freire (1968) hold different perspective which is critical of functionalist views on education. They argue that the education system is organized to fullfill the requirements of repressive and capitalist society. And the education system reproduces labor forces that meet the needs of capitalist economic system which is viewed as the base of inequality. Also, the education system encourages inequality by favoring the interest and cultural capital of high class people. Therefore children from these classes possess the cultural capital and achieve higher success rate as compared to the working class students, because they are not closer to the dominant culture (Haralambos & Heald, 2014, pp.216-258)

II

The goal of any welfare state and government has always been to achieve equity in education quality and equality in educational opportunities. However, educational development measures have often been unsuccessful and result in unexpected outcomes thus producing varied form of inequalities (Holsinger & Jacob, 2008, p.9). Income disparities, opportunities differences available to dominant and minority races and ethnic groups, and other disabilities continue to restrict educational progress in rural and urban settings (ibid. p.13). In access to education, there are different sorts of inequality for example regional inequality, gender inequality, inequality by caste etc. , inequality is also created by unstable parental income, and lack of parental education (Tilak, 1979,p. 419).

In India, the issue of educational inequality is viewed as a central theme of educational research, and it's gaining social significance. The individual's historical relationship between caste stratification and education, have condemned the disadvantaged groups (Velaskar, 2013, p.103).The Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes are the social groups that belong to this disadvantaged section of the society. While, since ages, the practice of untouchability in Indian caste system has taken away the right to possess productive resources like basic rights of education and equality which led to excessive socio economic deprivation of SCs, the STs remained economically backward and marginalized groups isolated from the mainstream society. Therefore, the Indian Government implemented various policies and provisions for educational and socio-economic upliftment of these social categories. An analysis of educational indicators at macro level indicates that, with the expansion of education and various policies and programs, there has been considerable increase

in the literacy rate of both SCs/STs categories over the years. However, when compared with the literacy rate of general category, there is remains a gap. Similarly the educational indicators like GER and GPI of higher education although indicates a significance increase, the gap between SCs/STs and all categories still exists. Various studies show that despite the reservation polices and other programmes, the percentage of enrolment in higher education of the SCs/STs is relatively less in comparison to the general trend.

III

Against this backdrop, the present study entitled “Higher Education among Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes of Kalimpong: A Sociological Study” has been conducted in Kalimpong Khasmahal Village of Kalimpong district of West Bengal. The basic objective of the study is to assess the contemporary scenario of SCs and STs in higher education in India in general and West Bengal in particular; the main focus being to examine the macro level trend in Kalimpong and make sociological analysis. The study also attempts to make an in-depth analysis of facilitating and constraining factors in accessing higher education.

Cumulatively, using purposive and snowball sampling 106 respondents were selected aged between 19-30 years for the study which comprised of 23 respondents from the SCs group and 83 respondents from the ST group which is proportionate to their population ratio. The enrolment data of the students was also collected from the four degree colleges and two professional institution of the Kalimpong district in order to see their participation.

The data from the study reveals that in colleges and institutions of Kalimpong district, there is enrolment of 10.92% from SCs while the percentage is higher with 28.9% from the STs. If compared with the district population of SCs (6.52%) and STs

(29.77%), the enrolment percentage of both the categories show a positive participation in higher education. The course-wise enrolment of SCs and STs during the period of 2015-2018 also shows their fair representation in BA course with respective figure of 10.6 % and 29.5% for SCs and STs. Similarly, B.Sc. with respective percentage of 18.9% and 29.3% and B.Com with 12.2% and 33.1% have also shown a considerable and fair number of enrolment of two social categories. However, in professional courses such as BTTM/Hotel Management their enrolment is relatively less.

Taking the educational level of respondents collected during the field work, 56.52% of the SC respondents and 43.37% of the ST respondents are pursuing higher education, while 8.6% (SC respondents) and 31.32% (ST respondents) have already completed different higher educational degrees like Graduate, MA, M.Tech etc.

The data from the study categorically reveals that, the trend of studying outside hometown (Kalimpong district) for higher studies in the quest of quality education was found to be common in Kalimpong Khasmahal Village among both the group. Majority of the SCs/STs have opted higher education outside hometown in cities viz. Siliguri, Kolkata, Delhi, Bangalore etc. The data highlighted that female students are also given the equal opportunity like that of male students to pursue higher education outside and not much gender gap has been noticed in this regard. Also there is no gender gap in overall access to higher education both among the SCs/STs of Kalimpong.

The finding revealed that reservation policy, scholarships and stipend etc. provided by the government to facilitate the marginalized group has been playing a vital role among the SCs/STs of Kalimpong Khasmahal. From the SC respondents who have participated in higher education 53.4% have availed reservation and 26.6% have

availed both reservation and scholarships. Among the ST respondents the percentage is 69.3% and 22.5% respectively. This demonstrates that majority of the respondents who have participated higher education have availed reservation policy and it shows that reservation has provided assistance to access higher education among them. On the other hand, the percentage of those who availed scholarships from both the groups is relatively less.

Despite a fair scenario, 34.78% of SC respondents and 25.29% of ST respondents have not participated in higher education. And they are the ones who are not aware about the reservation policy. Low level of awareness has been one of the constraining factors for them to access higher education.

The field data concerning the respondent's perspective on reservation policy reveals that a certain section of the respondents has benefitted from the reservation policy and consider reservation policy to be a mechanism that has helped the marginalized group to level up in socio economic and educational field. However, it also illustrates that the reservation policy and other programs have not reached to all the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes of the village, and has not been able to compete the inequality. The needy and deserving member of SCs/STs are not the beneficiaries of the reservation policy and other programs, they are mostly school dropouts and are not eligible to avail reservation. Also, they have not availed scholarships during their school education due to lack of awareness. The ones who are availing the reservation policy and scholarships are the ones who are in advantaged position and they make themselves eligible for reservation in college admission and jobs. As there are limited seats allotted by reservation, the candidates who get the seat are mostly the affluent and privileged SCs/STs.

The country has seen decades of planned progress in development. However it also witnessed dysfunctional consequences to use Merton's terminology of class differentiation. This internal class differentiation has crept into the SCs/STs communities which contributed to creamy layer formation, although the majority of SCs/STs population is outside development process and still below poverty line. Therefore, implementing a uniform constitutional criterion on all the SCs/STs community may bring troubling consequences because one size cannot fit all classes.

The findings of the present study also revealed that there are various facilitating and constraining factors to access higher education among the SCs/STs. The respondents whose parental education and parental income is relatively high, they have been participating in higher education. The data evidently demonstrates there is strong association between parental education and respondent's participation in higher education. The students with high cultural capital acquired from parents are privileged enough to join good educational institutions, and they draw success in educational attainment. It was observed from the findings those respondents who have participated in higher education possess high cultural capital from their educated parents. Because of which they had the privilege to avail larger opportunities, make better choices in higher education courses and opt for quality education.

The finding shows that the groups have participated in higher education and have accessed degree like BA, B.Com and B.Sc. However, there is less participation in higher degree courses viz. MA, M.Phil, M.Tech and PhD etc. Those who are socially and economically secure are the ones who have participated in such courses. Therefore a stable economic background and good parental education is a pathway that assists their access to higher education. Whereas the respondents whose parental income and parental education is low, have not participated in higher education and

all of them are school dropouts. Thus the respondents with unstable economic background and low level parental education proved to be constraining factor and limit their access to higher education. Thus the wheel of vicious circle perpetuates in the next generation also. Also, the awareness level of respondents about the reservation policy has close relationship with a stable social economic and educational background of parents. The low economic stability and low educational attainment hinders transferring of cultural capital and social capital .These capital regulates accessing higher education and it regulates awareness about the constitutional provision in regard to education, various higher education courses and help to get assistance from valuable social networks.

The community development boards initiated by West Bengal government have been playing a major role to bring socio-economic and educational development in their community. The West Bengal Mayel Lyang Lepcha Development Board of Lepcha community has been working effectively to bring educational development of the Lepcha community by providing coaching, scholarships, and night schools. The effective working of the board can be considered as facilitating factor. Since the SCs development boards are in preliminary stage, they have not implemented educational programs yet. The study also derived that religious organizations like Church provide social capital in the form of network which acts as a contributory factor to get information about higher education policy and programs, thereby raising the awareness level.

Overall assessment of the higher education among the SCs/STs of Kalimpong reveals that there is a positive participation in higher education from the marginalized groups. Reservation policy enabled them to access higher education. There is almost equivalent percentage from both the groups. However, the combined figure of 27.35%

taking both categories has not participated in higher education. This reveals that the century old reservation policy has not fetched significant improvement among all the disadvantaged groups, there is still room left for improvement in the socio-economic and educational conditions of this group. The prevalence of school dropout has led to NPHE (No Participation in Higher Education) among both the groups. The financial support for educational upliftment of SCs/STs has not reached to the people who are in need, because they are not aware about the policy and welfare programs.

The study also revealed that although the practice of social discrimination exists in subtle manner. Although, ideally such discrimination is not prevalent in schools, colleges and universities among the respondents today, the issue of stigmatization assigning of labels such as “Quota -Dependent success” has been reported, which affects their morals of individuals as it provides negative vibes.

IV

Based on the findings of the study, the following measures can be suggested for improving the participation of SCs/STs in higher education:

- The current reservation policy may be reviewed, so that all sections of the disadvantaged group can benefit from the government's policies and programs. Changing the socio-economic background of all SCs / STs is not an easy task, but equal educational opportunities can be offered to everyone.
- Taking cue of respondent's perspective, conducting awareness by the community development board through seminars and workshop on reservation policy and welfare schemes which are provided for educational upliftment of SCs/STs can help.

- The information dissemination on scholarships should be effective enough to reach all. Therefore, Gram Panchayat units and Non government organizations can play a vital role to disseminate information to the disadvantaged group on reservation policy and other related educational welfare schemes and measures.
- Effective implementation of educational programs by the state and local government can reduce dropouts in schools which can have chain impact in higher education.

Summing up, it can be safely concluded that SCs/STs of Kalimpong Khasmahal village have been responding positively and availing reservation policy and other programs in accessing higher education. However, as has been substantiated by the other studies, the issue of internal inequality and rising class differentiation and lack of awareness among a significant percentage of population among both categories are the issues which needed intervention so that real and deserving candidate within the category can avail the benefits of constitutional measures.

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Appendix

Higher Education among Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes of Kalimpong: A Sociological Study

Name of the surveyor: Shunami A. Lepcha

Name of the Supervisor: Dr. Sandhya Thapa

Name of the programme: M.Phil, Department of Sociology, Sikkim University, Gangtok, Sikkim, India

1. Basic Information

1.1 Name:

1.2 Address:

1.3 Age: 19-25 25-30

1.4 Gender: Male Female

1.5 Social Category: SC ST

1.6 Religion:

2. Information Regarding Family

2.1 Family Structure: Joint Family Nuclear Family Semi- Joint Family

2.2 Monthly Income of Family:

Below Rs.5000 Rs. 5000-15000 Rs. 15000-25000

Rs. 25000-50000 Above Rs.50000

2.3 Parental Occupation

Father's Occupation:

Mother's Occupation:.....

2.4 Parental Educational Qualification

Father's educational attainment:

Illiterate Elementary Educated Up to High School

Educated up to Higher Secondary Graduate and above

Mother's educational attainment:

Illiterate Elementary Educated Up to High School

Educated up to Higher Secondary Graduate and above

3 .Information regarding Respondent's Education

3.1 Education Qualification:

3.2 Type of School Attended

Government Semi-Government Private

3.3 Type of College Attended

Government Semi-Government Private

3.4 Name of college/University:

i. Address of college/University:

ii. What is the distance of your college or university from home (in meter/
kilo meter?)

iii. Why did you opt higher education outside home town? (If outside hometown)

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.....
.....

3.5 Why did you discontinue higher education? (If discontinued)

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.....

3.6 Why didn't you participate in higher education? (If no participation)

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.....
.....

3.6 What are the facilitating factors for your participation in higher education?

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.....
.....

3.7 Why did you pursue higher education? (Reason)

.....
.....
.....

3.8 What was the level of parental involvement in your higher education?

.....
.....
.....

4. Information about Respondents Occupation

4.1 What is your Occupation / or are you a student?

.....

5. Information regarding awareness of Reservation Policy and other Educational constitutional provisions

5.1 Are you aware about the reservation policy and Scholarships?

Aware Moderately Aware Unaware

5.2 Did you avail Reservation for accessing higher education?

Yes No

5.2 Did you avail both Reservation and Scholarships?

Yes No

5.3 What is your Perspective on Reservation Policy?

.....
.....
.....

5.4 From where did you learn about the Reservation Policy?

.....
.....
.....

5.5 Do you receive Scholarships? If yes, where did you learn about scholarships if No why?

.....
.....
.....

5.6 Is the scholarship plentiful?

.....
.....
.....

5.7 Are you satisfied with the reservation policy and other provisions provided by the government? Do you want to assert suggestions?

.....
.....
.....

6. Information Regarding Community Board

6.1 Is there any help from community board in access to higher education? If Yes what kind of help?

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.....

7. Information regarding Social Discrimination

7.1 Have you faced any kind of discrimination in class/college/hostel? If yes what kind of discrimination?

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.....

7.2 Has such Social discrimination hindered your access to education?

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.....
.....

8. Information regarding role of religion in higher education

8.1 Has your religion played any role in access to higher education?

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.....