CHAPTER-I

INTRODUCTION

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

The Northeastern region of India comprising of the eight states of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura cover a combined area of approximately 7.7% of the country’s territory. According to a security analyst of the region, Wasbir Hussain, Northeast India is the biggest insurgency hotspot in South Asia. Between 1992 and 2002, there have been more than 12,000 fatalities related to insurgency and ethnic strife in the North East. Four out of the eight states namely, Assam, Nagaland, Manipur and Tripura have been witnessing conflicts that can be categorized as Low Intensity Conflicts (defined as those in which fatalities are over 100 and less than 1000).

In these circumstances, the people in this region have often been caught unawares in the fallouts of the conflict. Women frequently find themselves worse off as victims in a conflict, lying as they are, at the bottom of the ladder of social hierarchy, in a societal framework steeped in patriarchal values. Wars and armed conflicts are cherished symbols of manhood in the social memories of a community. Hence, women are deprived of a rightful place in these narratives by being relegated to the background as mere objects of support, as peripherals rather than as active agents of change.

Peace does not merely imply the absence of war. Instead, it involves the creation of a secure environment by fostering fundamental societal changes focusing on safety and protection, particularly of the most vulnerable segments of a population. In such a scenario, women have been found to play to play a prominent role in rebuilding conflict- ridden societies and social resources. But while the role of a few organizations or their leaders is usually highlighted, the role of the ordinary woman is unfortunately sidelined. Ironically, it is these women in the villages who have to put up a brave front to make ends meet; women who often have to straddle multiple roles, of a mother, a social activist, and a breadwinner in their day to day lives, as they continue to live in a strife torn community.
Apart from their day to day struggle for existence, these women undertake several activities in their efforts to re-build their community. In trying to cope with the fallouts of a conflict, they have to organize themselves to fight against the proliferation of societal evils such as alcoholism, drug abuse, sexual promiscuity, flesh trade and the biggest threat of all, HIV-AIDS. Whether it is through shared economic activities or taking action against anti social elements, the women are the backbone of their communities. In recent years women are claiming a new voice in civil society by spearheading both reactionary as well as egalitarian movements for social change. Women community leaders in many parts of the world have shown exemplary courage in facilitating mediation and reconciliation amongst warring factions, thus laying the foundations of a peace process.

North East India, with its mosaic of entangled ethnic discontents, provides us with several examples of spontaneous women’s initiatives to reduce the impact of conflict, thereby creating spaces for women to give vent to the anger festering within. Women in this region have created several such fields of protest. Symbols of mourning and motherhood, for example, are often used by women as strategies of protest and several women’s organizations have played an important role in an effort to build peace in the region.

**RATIONALE:**

Within such a framework, the proposed work strives to explore the role of women as peace builders who have not only employed the *Motherist* agenda to further their demands but have also, in the process, been able to advance the notion of Motherhood as an agency of peace in North East India. As significant actors in the peace-building process, women in North East India have often articulated their demands through the voice of resistance. They have been able to highlight the essence of motherhood—of being a nurturer, a reservoir of unconditional love and forgiveness, while consolidating their stand on issues relating to the conflict and armed rebels. Using Motherhood as an agency for peace, women often put forth the notions of *Mothers of Martyrs*, mothers as an embodiment of resistance, of being selfless and nurturing, to garner both emotional and political mileage. To this end, the study proposes to focus on the origin, growth and evolution of the Naga Mothers Association (NMA) of Nagaland and the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust of Assam, in the realm of women as peace-builders. A brief overview of the two organizations:
Naga Mothers Association (NMA)

Using Motherhood as an instrument of peace-building, the women in Nagaland established the Naga Mothers Association. The women felt that as mothers, they suffered the repercussions of the violent conflict the most. In 1984, the NMA was established. Each Naga tribe sent its representatives to the NMA. Neidonuo Angami, one of the founding members, served as a General Secretary of NMA from 1986-1992 and later became its president for two consecutive terms. Under Neidonuo’s able leadership, the NMA took great strides and achieved much in their peacebuilding efforts.

Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust (KGNMT)

The Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust was established in 1945 as a result of the national endeavour, led by Mahatma Gandhi, to address the issues of women in rural India. The Trust has its headquarters in Kasturbagram (Indore) and has 22 state branches all over the country. The Assam branch of the Trust was established in Sarania, Guwahati in 1946, during Mahatma Gandhi’s visit to the city. Among its multiple activities, the Trust is running 21 Gram Seva Kendras in different villages of the Northeastern region.

More than 2,500 trainees have undergone training in women welfare, pre-primary education, adult education, health and hygiene, cottage industries, cotton spinning, weaving, tailoring, bee-keeping, farming and smokeless chulha. The Kasturba Trust has regularly organized various programmes, including awareness camps for women.

The Assam Matri Samaj was established in 1997 by the KGMNT. Matri Diwas is celebrated for a week from the 16th to the 22nd of February every year (22nd of February being the death anniversary of Kasturba Gandhi). On April 18th 1991, the Trust initiated a protest march on foot (padyatra) touring the state of Assam for peace (against the ULFA upsurge), for 5 long years (1991-95). The padyatra began in Lakhipathar, a site of mass killings, in Tinsukia. During the course of the protest march, the volunteers from the Ashram interacted with cadres of ULFA and tried their best to convince them to shed the path of violence and bloodshed and adopt a non-violent stance, to attain peace.
REVIEW OF LITERATURE:
A review of literature has revealed that the majority of work in this field of study has been conducted in Latin America, Palestine and Sri Lanka. Not much literature is available on the subject pertaining to the Indian context and especially the North Eastern region.

The literature review illustrates several interesting insights into the phenomenon of motherhood as an instrument of peace-building all over the world—First, cutting across class, caste and colour barriers, women activists have successfully been able to tap the potential of motherhood as an agency for peace and have utilized this space to air their grievances and give voice to their resistance.

In the article, Icons and Militants: Mothering in the Danger Zone (2002), the author, Julie Peteet attempts to theorize the relation between mothering, nationalism and conflict in the context of Palestine. The author looks at the social construction of the notion of ‘women as an icon of the nation’ and how, over the years, the Palestinian women activists have challenged the normative role of mothering to re-create a space for themselves. According to Peteet, maternal activism can at times be generated from an experience of social oppression and states that there are multiple discourses of motherhood through which women negotiate with the cultural representation of mothers, as well as the official, political policies informing the maternal imagery. The notion of ‘Mothers of Martyrs’ is often drawn upon by women activists during a conflict.

In the article, the author has touched upon the vulnerability of being a mother in an armed conflict and the potential space, motherhood can create for itself in the rights and political arena. She explains how women activists have used motherhood as an agency for change and have transformed themselves from a weak and vulnerable position to a potent force to contend with.

In the paper The Role and Example of Chilean and Argentinian Mothers in Democratization (2004), the author Wanda C. Krause, particularly touches upon the Chilean and Argentinian women who through their roles as Mothers in the 1980s played a significant role as actors in the social movements protesting against political disappearances and thereby, facilitated political changes in Chile and Argentina respectively. Responding to the widespread terror from the military regimes, women
in both Argentina and Chile organized themselves as a collective to launch protest movements. According to the author, the practical actions of the Mothers in the two contexts were not only successful in drawing attention to the disappearance of their loved ones but also led to the exposure and denouncement of repressive political actions in the public domain. More significantly, the protests led by the Mothers in the two countries opened up the space for more civil society action once the repressive regimes died down, thus paving the way for democratization.

Secondly, the mothers have been used by the State as well as the opposition, many a times, to further their respective causes. In the paper, *Mobilizing Mothers for War: Cross-National Framing Strategies in Nicaragua’s Contra War* (2004), the author Lorraine Bayard de Volo has employed a feminist approach to address the gendered nature of cultural politics and collective identity and has shown how, in the battle to win the hearts and minds of the people, both the State as well as the opposition have relied primarily on maternal images of women. The author describes how in the context of Nicaragua, the maternal rhetoric was used by both the State and the opposition to not only further their political ends, but also to quell fears regarding resistance by mothers as a collective political actor.

Bayard de Volo has applied the Frame Theory to explain how maternal symbolism and imagery are used during conflict by opposing parties. Framing according to the author can be best understood as, “the conscious strategic efforts by groups of people to fashion shared understandings of the world and of themselves that legitimate and motivate collective action” (McAdam, McCarthy and Zaid 1996, 6).\(^1\) Drawing upon the emotions and maternal virtues of love, patience, protection and forgiveness, mothers were used as a provocative agent by the State. On the other hand, Anti-Sandinistas also used Maternal framing to make emotional appeals. In conclusion, Bayard de Volo’s paper reveals not only how maternal framing strategies emerge as significant instruments in the hands of both the State as well as the Opposition, particularly in times of conflict but also, how they can mould public discourse on the essence of the conflict.

\(^1\) McAdam, McCarthy and Zaid (1996, 6) in Bayard de Volo, Lorraine ‘Mobilizing Mothers for War: Cross-National Framing Strategies in Nicaragua’s Contra War’, *Gender and Society*, Volume 18, Number 6, Sage Publications, Inc., 2004, p.717
Thirdly, women have been found to organize themselves into a collective to initiate movements to resist oppression and engage in peace-building. In the paper, *Gendered Revolutionary Bridges: Women in the Salvadorean Resistance Movement (1979-1992)*, Julia Denise Shaye (1999), through her in-depth research in El Salvador and United States, successfully highlights the role played by women in carving a niche for themselves in the revolutionary domain of El Salvador through their active engagement in various capacities in the labour movement (ANDES), as the CO-MADRES in the human rights movement, the women’s movement and the guerilla (FMLN) movement. Subsequently, women not only emerged as an enabling agent but were also able to generate mass political support for their respective causes.

In the paper *While Men Make War, Women Wage Peace* (2001), Swanee Hunt and Cristina Posa, have cited various examples from across the globe (South Asia, Sudan, Columbia and Northern Ireland) of women engaging in diverse initiatives for peace at varying levels of activism. They have illustrated how efforts by women in various capacities has helped bridge gaps between opposing parties, in mediating towards a peaceful end (however temporary they may be).

The book *We Do More Because We Can: Naga Women in the Peace Process* (2004) by Rita Manchanda is a seminal work on the role of the Naga women in peace-building. The book is a study based on the work of the Naga Mothers Association and Naga Women’s Union of Manipur. The study is divided into two sections, the first part deals with the historical emergence and progression of the Naga movement and the second part deals with the Naga women’s role and the impact on the negotiations with the state and non-state actors, their mobilization for peace and reconciliation and the sustained effort to maintain the ceasefire between the warring groups.

The chapter *Social Organizations: From Victims to Actors in Peace Building* by Isabel Coral Cordero (in Moser & Clark, 2001), deals with the activist role of women’s popular movement in resisting the Peruvian armed conflict in the 1980s. According to the author, three years after the armed conflict began; the Peruvian army came into the scene unleashing indiscriminate repression. Trapped in the crossfire, the civilian population took it upon itself to face the challenge head on. They began to organize themselves as alternative networks involving the basic nuclei of the society –
the family, interfamily and community spaces. Women thus organized themselves on two main fronts: as a women’s movement and by linking up with other new social actors. They organized assistance to vulnerable population groups through emergency programmes and led the rebuilding of community organizations. Thus, they achieved dual roles- as women and as activists – in community organization.

The monograph *Role of Women as Peace Builders with special reference to Nagaland*, by Triveni Goswami, (2006) delves into the lives of ordinary women at the grassroots across three locations in Nagaland who have taken up initiatives for the reconstruction of the conflict-ridden community. Through the study, the researcher raises significant questions regarding the notions of peace, linkages between peace and development and critically looks at the nature of empowerment associated with economic activities undertaken through self-help groups.

**Fourthly**, it demonstrates how women as peace builders, although very active at the grassroots have been marginalized in decision-making bodies. In a paper entitled *Put Women at the Peace Table* (Christian Science Monitor, Nov. 13, 2000), Her Excellency Sheikh Hasina stated that despite the effectiveness of women at the grassroots level, women are largely absent from high-level peace negotiations. She cited examples from around the world (for eg., the Arusha Peace Talks, the National Council of Timorese Resistance and the United Mission in Kosovo) as cases in point. She stated how in most of the key decision making bodies, women were excluded and hence, denied their rightful place.

Similarly, in the paper *The Role and Example of Chilean and Argentinian Mothers in Democratization* (2004), Wanda C. Krause has highlighted how women in Argentina and Chile have been given a raw deal by being relegated to the margins of institutional politics and have often been denied the right to exercise power as a decision-maker.

**Fifthly**, women have used several different forms of strategies of protest to put forth their demands. In the article, *Motherhood as a Space of Protest: Women’s Political Participation in Contemporary Sri Lanka* (2008), the author, Malathi de Alwis has written about the origin and growth of the Mothers’ Front in the political landscape of Sri Lanka. Employing their emotive potential to full advantage, the strategies used by the Mother’s Front included amongst others—weeping, cursing, indulging in religious
rituals, holding mass rallies etc. Through their actions, they were able to touch an emotional chord with the people and stir up passions like never before. The actions of the Mothers’ Front were met with strong counter resistance efforts from the State. The State machinery employed tactics that were in the form of counter-rallies, counter-rituals and counter-rhetoric.

The article provides the reader with a succinct overview of the evolution of the Mothers’ Front and the mechanisms used by it to consolidate its political space, in Sri Lanka. Several issues revolving around the notions of Motherhood and sense of agency, concerning the women activists, were brought to the fore through this article. In conclusion, it drives home the point that no matter what the fallout is, women activists have the potential to make them heard in the cacophony of political voices in Sri Lanka.

In the article, *Icons and Militants: Mothering in the Danger Zone* (2002), the author Julie Peteet provides an overview of the armed struggle in Lebanon (1968-82) and states how the women activists made use of maternal imagery to voice their resistance and created a space for them in the political arena.

Wanda C. Krause’s article on *The Role and Example of Chilean and Argentinian Mothers in Democratization* (2004) provides an overview of the strategies of protest used by the mothers in Chile and Argentina. Among others, the strategies included exchanging information, silent marches carrying candles and photographs of the relatives who had disappeared and wearing white scarves on their heads embroidered with the names of those who had disappeared. These women came to be known to the world as Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo.2

Other than these a number of books on maternal theory, Gandhi’s notion of peace building, the origin and growth of the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust and a paper on the history of women’s collectives on Assam were also reviewed. The book *Maternal Theory: Essential Readings*, Ed. By Andrea O’Reilly, Demeter Press, Canada, (2007) is an anthology of perspectives—theoretical and otherwise on the construction of motherhood and the notion of mothering, by individuals who are

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2 Krause, Wanda C. ‘The Role and Example of Chilean and Argentinian Mothers in Democratization’ in *Development in Practice*. Volume 14, No.3, Taylor and Francis, Ltd on behalf of Oxfam GB, April, 2004, p.371
considered stalwarts in the field of motherhood study. The book provides the readers with a rich canvas of evolving perspectives on motherhood as an experience, as an institution and as an identity and touches upon issues such as territorializing motherhood, motherhood and nationalism, radical motherhood, mothering amongst sexual minorities, motherhood as a cultural artifact, feminist mothering etc. Each of these views has played a significant role in shaping maternal theory and has allowed it to evolve in the manner it has, today.

The book *Maternal Thinking: Towards a Politics of Peace, Sara Ruddick, Beacon Press, Boston, (1989)* is a seminal piece of work carried out by Sara Ruddick, a philosopher and a feminist on the social construction of motherhood. She introduces the notion of the ‘care ethic’ as a fundamental element in shaping the process of mothering and argues that “when mothering is construed as work rather than as an identity or a fixed biological or legal relationship, people can be seen to mother with a different expense of time at various periods in their lives and in various and often changing sexual and social circumstances.”

Ruddick also speaks of a political motherhood—the transformation of maternal values such as protectiveness, non-violence, treasuring individual life to political action. Maternal politics can often transcend barriers and move from an engagement at a local level to a global stage. Therefore, according to Ruddick, maternal politics is a very active rather than a passive form of politics.

The book *The Politics of Motherhood: Activist Voices from Left to Right, Alexis Jetter, Annelise Orleck and Diana Taylor (Eds), University Press of New England, Hanover, (1997)* is a compilation of essays on the interplay between the construction of motherhood and diverse forms of activism—at the local, grassroots level as well as the global stage. There are sections on environmental activism, subsistence struggles, mother’s resistance against the state, nationalist motherhood, redefining motherhood and reflections on feminism and motherhood. The book delves into the question of the politicization of motherhood and situates the concerns of an emerging notion of motherhood in the ever changing value systems of power, patriarchy and domination embedded within the societal framework.

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The book *The Shanti Sena: Philosophy, History and Action*, by Thomas Weber, Orient Blackswan, New Delhi, (2009) looks at the historical legacy of the origin and growth of the Shanti Sena and its significance as a strategy of non-violence in practice. Weber provides a succinct account of the Gandhian ideals framing the birth of the Shanti Sena and its evolution as a conflict resolution method over the years. He further explores the weaknesses plaguing the institution of Shanti Sena from within and raises the significant issue of its relevance in the political context of India today.

The book *Amalprava Das*, by Samiran Das and translated by Hiranmoyee Devi, published by KGNMT, Guwahati, Assam, (2011), traces the life of Amalprava Das under whose able leadership, the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust (KGNMT) at Sarania in Guwahati Assam was born. It provides an insightful account of Gandhi’s visit to Assam, his interest in setting up the training school for Gram Sevikas at Sarania and the growth and expansion of the activities of the Trust.

In the paper *Women's Collectives in Assam: A Short History of their Status and Present Day Realities*, Monisha Behal, (2001) takes us through a brief history of the women’s collectives in Assam. She focuses on the origin, growth and the subsequent decline of the Mahila Samiti and delves into the prevalent systems of informal collectives amongst the women at the village level. The paper is based on extensive research carried out by Behal and her personal experiences with the Tezpur District Mahila Samiti (TDMS). She critically engages with the question of stagnancy taking over the once vibrant Mahila Samitis and explores how the absence of women’s organizations from various levels of decision making in local governance, have contributed to their decay and subsequent decline as a potent civil society actor in Assam.

From the above, it seen that no work has been carried out in the area of Motherhood as a space of protest in the North Eastern region. The present study, therefore, attempts to fill this void.

**OBJECTIVES:**

The objectives of the present study are:

1) To document organizations that have been set up using the Motherist agenda to put forth their demands in North East India.
2) To understand why neither the civil society nor the state have capitalized on the potential of Motherhood as peacemakers.

3) To examine the strategies of protest utilized by the organizations with a Motherist agenda.

**METHODOLOGY:**

Adopting the Qualitative Research methods, the researcher seeks to explore the notion of motherhood as an agency for peace in North East India. To this end, the researcher has used the Feminist perspective.

**Feminist Methodology:**

Although there is no consensus on a unified Feminist Methodology, some of the basic principles of feminist research are, first, it looks at women as *agents of change* rather than as mere victims of oppression. Secondly, it recognizes the participants as ‘experts’ and ‘authorities’ of their own experiences and takes that as the starting point of research and thirdly, feminist research takes women’s situations, concerns, experiences and perspectives as the basis for research.\(^4\) Feminist research methodology, usually, incorporates several Qualitative research methods with the aim of going beyond mere statistics—to recognize and acknowledge the ‘voice’ behind the numbers. Feminist Research is Participatory Research. The aim in feminist research is to understand and delve deeper into a woman’s experiences in the social world, through the lived experiences that she brings to the research process. In such research, there is a collaborative relationship between the researcher and the researched. It is phenomenological (taking the experience ‘as it is’), experiential and responsive. Putting it simply, Yoland Wadsworth states that Feminist Research is ‘research for and by women’.\(^5\) Some of the commonly used techniques within such research are ethnographic methods, in-depth interviews, case studies, dialogue, oral history, textual analysis etc. Feminist Research also incorporates the theory of Deconstruction, to deconstruct the power differentials prevalent in the society, in its aim to truly understand and know the actual position of women in the society.


Qualitative Research Methods

Qualitative Research is the process to understand the subjective meanings of an individual’s experiences by empathically entering the inner world of the researched. It is based on the premise that the respondent’s narrative reflects the attitudes and beliefs held by him/her, which in turn represents his or her Identity. Qualitative analysis recognizes the significance of the central role of language and is concerned with individuals rather than mere statistics. It seeks to give voice to the person behind the number rather than the number itself. Qualitative research is viewed as a dynamic interaction between the researcher and the participant. In such a method, researchers often make use of *semi-structured interviews* in order to gain a more detailed picture of the respondent’s beliefs, attitudes and perceptions about a particular topic. In a *semi-structured interview*, there is a set of questions that merely guides rather than dictates the course of the interview. The advantages of such an interview are that it facilitates rapport building with the respondent, allows a greater flexibility of coverage and enables the interviewer to explore, hitherto unexplored areas to gather more information. In this way, Qualitative Research makes an attempt to understand the psychological world of the participants. Qualitative research refers to the collection and analysis of material that seeks to uncover meaning and understand experience. Qualitative research methods include, among others, ethnographies, fieldwork, participant observation, content analysis, interviews and oral histories (Berg 1995).⁶

Sample Size and Saturation in Qualitative Research

The sample size for qualitative research studies are comparatively smaller than those that are used in quantitative studies. In a study on *Sample size and Saturation in PhD Studies using Qualitative Interviews*, Mason states

> There is a point of diminishing return to a qualitative sample—as the study goes on more data does not necessarily lead to more information. This is because one occurrence of a piece of data, or a code, is all that is necessary to ensure that it becomes part of the analysis framework. Frequencies are rarely important in

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⁶ Berg, B.L. *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences*, Allyn and Bacon, Boston, 1995, p.3
qualitative research, as one occurrence of the data is potentially as useful as many in understanding the process behind a topic.\(^7\)

Very few sources providing guidelines on the actual sample sizes for various disciplines are available. Guest, Bunce and Johnson have cited the following—

- **Ethnography and ethnoscience**: Morse (1994, p.225) 30-50 interviews for both; Bernard (2000, p.178) states that most studies are based on samples between 30-60 interviews for ethnoscience;
- **Phenomenology**: Creswell (1998, p.64) five to 25; Morse (1994, p.225) at least six;
- **All qualitative research**: Bertaux (1981, p.35) fifteen is the smallest acceptable sample (adapted from Guest et al., 2006).\(^8\)

A content analysis of one hundred articles that utilized grounded theory and interviews as a data collection method was carried out by S.B. Thomson. The findings reveal that the point of theoretical saturation can be affected by the scope of the research question, the sensitivity of the phenomena, and the ability of the researcher. However, the average sample size was twenty-five, but it is recommended to plan for thirty interviews to fully develop patterns, concepts, categories, properties, and dimensions of the given phenomena.\(^9\)

The average sample size of all one hundred studies was found to be 25. The range for the entire set was between 5 and 114. According to Thomson, “thirty-three of the studies used sample sizes between 20 and 30, thirty-two used between 10 and 19, \(^7\) Mason, M ‘Sample Size and Saturation in PhD Studies Using Qualitative Interviews’. *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, Volume 11, No. 3, Art. 8 – September 2010 Accessed on April 15, 2012 from the website [http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/1428/3027](http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/1428/3027)


Accessed on April 15, 2012 from the website [http://joaag.com/uploads/5_1__Research_Note_1_Thomson.pdf](http://joaag.com/uploads/5_1__Research_Note_1_Thomson.pdf)
twenty-two used more than 31, twelve used under 10 and one used more than one hundred (114).”\textsuperscript{10}

According to Strauss and Corbin, theoretical saturation in data can occur when, “No new or relevant data seem to emerge regarding a category; the category is well developed in terms of its properties and dimensions demonstrating variation, and the relationships among categories are well established and validated.”\textsuperscript{11}

**TOOLS OF RESEARCH**

The researcher has used qualitative research tools to collate and analyze the data. Both primary (for eg., interviews with the members of various organizations as well as the civil society; manifestoes of organizations; pamphlets etc) as well as secondary sources (for eg., newspaper archives, books, records etc) of data collection have been used for the study. The tools of research for the present study have been the Case Study method, Purposive sampling technique, Narrative Analysis, Thematic Analysis, Open-ended Questionnaire and Semi-Structured Interview.

**Case Study Method:**

The Case Study method was used to carry out an in-depth study into the chosen organizations (NMA and the KGNMT). The Case Study method is an in-depth investigation of a single individual, group, or event. It emphasizes on the detailed contextual analysis of a limited number of events or conditions and their relationships. They may be descriptive or explanatory. A key strength of the case study method involves using multiple sources and techniques in the data gathering process. Data gathered is normally largely qualitative, but it may also be quantitative. Tools to collect data can include surveys, interviews, documentation review, observation, and even the collection of physical artefacts.\textsuperscript{12}


\textsuperscript{12} The article ‘The Case Study as a Research Method’ accessed on Nov 30, 2010 from the website [http://www.ischool.utexas.edu/~ssoy/usesusers/l391d1b.htm](http://www.ischool.utexas.edu/~ssoy/usesusers/l391d1b.htm)
Purposive Sampling:

It is a type of non-probability sampling technique and it relies on the judgement of the researcher in selecting the units that are to be studied. Thus the focus is on the particular characteristics of a population that are of interest to the researcher.13

Narrative Analysis

Narratives represent life stories. Stories mould personal identities and construct lives. The narratives of the women in conflict are threaded in an emotional bind. In Narrative Analysis, the story is the object of its investigation. In narrating their personal experiences, narrators revisit their past, in an attempt to create an ordered mosaic for the listener.

Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns (themes) within data. This type of analysis is highly inductive, that is, the themes emerge from the data and are not imposed upon it by the researcher. In this type of analysis, the data collection and analysis take place simultaneously.

Open-ended Questionnaire and Semi-Structured Interview

An open-ended questionnaire encourages meaningful answers using the subject's own knowledge and/or feelings. A semi-structured interview is flexible, allowing new questions to be brought up during the interview as a result of what the interviewee says. The interviewer in a semi-structured interview generally has a framework of themes to be explored.

SAMPLE SIZE AND DATA COLLECTION

A total number of seventy eight (78) respondents were chosen for the study. In order to capture the extent of diverse opinions across the locations of Assam and Nagaland, the Purposive sampling method was adopted. There were four categories of respondents: members of the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust (KGNMT, Guwahati) and key informants; civil society respondents from Guwahati; members of the Naga Mothers Association and key informants (Nagaland) and civil society

respondents from Nagaland. The data was gathered both through both in-depth personal interviews as well as interview schedules.

Open-ended questionnaires were framed for the four categories of respondents and they touched upon issues such as what constituted motherhood, peacemaking, role of mothers in the peace process, interaction between motherist organizations and the State apparatus etc. In Nagaland, a separate questionnaire was framed for the functionaries of the NMA to trace its origin and growth over the years. In Guwahati, in-person interviews (face to face interaction) were conducted with the members of the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust (KGNMT, Guwahati) and key informants. In Nagaland, personal interviews (telephonic and over email) were conducted with members of the Naga Mothers Association and other key informants. For the civil society respondents in both Guwahati and Nagaland, information was gathered through open ended interview schedules. During analysis, except for the names of the key informants, to maintain a degree of confidentiality, the names of the respondents of the civil society have been marked by their initials. The profile details of the respondents are given below:

**TABLE 1: Total Respondents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>List of respondents</th>
<th>Number of respondents</th>
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<td>Ghy Civil Society</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nagaland Civil Society</td>
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<td>Ghy KGNMT and Key Informant</td>
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<td>Nagaland NMA and Key Informants</td>
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Table 2: Gender

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<tr>
<td>Nagaland Civil Society</td>
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<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghy KGNMT and Key Informant</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nagaland NMA and Key Informants</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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### Table 3: Educational Qualifications

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<th>HSLC</th>
<th>HSSLC</th>
<th>Graduate (BA BCom/ BSc/LLB/ BTech/BE)</th>
<th>Post Graduate</th>
<th>MPhil</th>
<th>PhD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ghy Civil Society</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nagaland Civil</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Society</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghy KGNMT</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nagaland NMA</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and Key Informants</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
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</table>

**GRAPH 4: EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS (CIVIL SOCIETY, ASSAM)**
Table 4: Occupation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Ghy Civil Society</th>
<th>Nagaland Civil Society</th>
<th>Ghy KGNMT And Key Informant</th>
<th>Nagaland NMA and Key Informants</th>
<th>Total</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Educationists (Teacher/Professors/ Active and Retd)</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td><strong>43</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Lawyers</td>
<td></td>
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<td><strong>1</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accountant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineer</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Activists</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td><strong>11</strong></td>
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<td>Journalists</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self Employed</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5.13%</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Student</td>
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<td>2.08%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Associate</td>
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<td>1.04%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Maker</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.04%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Govt Officer</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.12%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bank Officer Retd</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.04%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security Specialist</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.04%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Officer in Pvt.Co</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.04%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed with NGO</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.04%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Child Rights Commission</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.04%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>78</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.00%</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**GRAPH 6: OCCUPATION (CIVIL SOCIETY, ASSAM)**

[Pie chart showing occupation distribution]
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK:

The theoretical framework within which the basic questions of the research are structured is the notion of Political Motherhood, as introduced by Jennifer Schirmer, in her article on motherist movements in Latin America. According to Schirmer, motherist movements based on the notion of political motherhood, first, “valorize maternal qualities—caring, compassion, responsibility for the vulnerable—as encompassing and anchored in democratic values.” Secondly, “political motherhood is a process of unfolding consciousness, as women progressively move into the public sphere”. Thus, political motherhood is a form of political consciousness that creates conditions whereby women can move into the public sphere and engage with it more actively. Elaborating on the political action initiated by the mothers in the repressive regimes of Guatemala, Argentina and Chile, Schirmer states that “Using the language of sacrifice and the traditional values associated with

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14 Werbner, P ‘Political Motherhood and Feminization of Citizenship: Women’s Activisms and the Transformation of the Public Sphere’ in Nira Yuval-Davis and Phina Werbner (eds) Women, Citizenship and Difference, Published by Zubaan, India, 2005, p.221
15 Ibid
motherhood as both political protection and political tools”\textsuperscript{16}, the women have been able to create new forms of resistance. Thus, Political Motherhood allows women to use the experience of motherhood for dual purposes—as a political tool to counter resistance as well as a protection against oppression. The women have made use of symbols from the Catholic Church as well as motherhood to launch non-violent forms of resistance and have over the years taken their protests to the streets, to emerge as a visible and potent entity to silence the repressive measures enacted upon by the State. \textsuperscript{17}

**HYPOTHESIS:**

The hypothesis is:

Neither the civil society nor the State has capitalized on the potential of Motherhood as peacemakers

**SUB-HYPOTHESIS:**

Mothers / organizations with a Motherist agenda are being used by the State or the opposition or other non-state actors to push forth their respective agendas

**CHAPTERIZATION:**

The work has been divided into seven chapters, namely,

1. **Introduction**
   - Statement of the problem
   - Rationale
   - Review of literature
   - Objectives
   - Methodology

\textsuperscript{16} Schirmer, Jennifer G. ‘Those Who Die For Life Cannot Be Called Dead:’ Women and Human Rights Protest in Latin America. \textit{Feminist Review} No 32, Summer 1989, pg.4

\textsuperscript{17} Ibid,pp.20-29
II. Growing Ethnicity in Northeast India

- Ethno-political movements in North-East India
- Ethnic Conflict
- Nation, Social Memories and Quest for Identity
- Constitutional Provisions and the Question of Autonomy
- Conflict: Nature and Types
- Protracted Social Conflict
- Armed Conflict

III. Women and Armed Conflict in Northeast India

- Evolving trajectory of Armed Conflicts in the North Eastern region
- Armed Conflict and its Impact (Psychological effects and Physical manifestations)
- Women’s rights as human rights— Evolution of the human rights perspective
- The position of women within the Armed Conflict—victim/perpetrator/women as peace builders
- Women and Peace building down the ages in North East India

IV. Motherhood: Perspectives, Politics and the Nation

- Perspectives on Motherhood
- Gender, Nation and Motherhood
- Women’s Resistance and the State

V. Mothers Organizations: Appropriating Motherhood and Strategies of Protest

- Naga Mothers Association (NMA) : An Overview
Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust (KGNMT): An Overview

Assam Matri Samaj

Matri Diwas

Mothers as Activists and Strategies of Protest

NMA and their Strategies of Protest

KGNMT and their Strategies of Protest

VI. Analysis and Discussion

Collectives and Social Transformation in North East India

The Construction of Motherhood: Influence of Social and Religious Discourses

Political Motherhood and Resistance

Absence of Leaders, Fragmentation and Scepticism: The Curious Case of the Civil Society in Assam

Influence of the Church on NMA and Peace building in Nagaland

Are Mothers organizations a pawn in the hands of the State and non-state actors?

Has the State or civil society capitalized on the potential of Motherhood as peacemakers?

Role of Mothers or Mothers Organizations as peacemakers

Weaving: The significance and symbolism within a context of conflict

Documentation of Mothers Organization in North East India
VII. Conclusion

- Summarization of themes
- Status of Hypotheses
- Recommendations

Bibliography

Annexure

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