North East Region (NER) consists of a diverse range of traditions, cultures, religious, linguistic and ethnic groups. Each of these groups has their own distinct identity. After India got her independence in 1947, nation state building in North East Region got into a crucial stage. Mukhim rightly states “Democracy has varied definitions but the most commonly accepted one is that democracy allows the full participation of people in governance.” (Mukhim 2007.p,104). Though the Constitution of a Parliamentary democracy guarantees to all citizens to secure, justice, social, economic, political, equality, right to education and provisions for minorities, the people in NER are deprived of their rights and provisions adopted by the union government. The Founder-Chairman of Infosys Technologies Limited N. R. Narayana Murthy (2009) states, “A democracy work best in an environment of pluralism, where there is respect for the opinion of others and where there is freedom to practice one’s own beliefs. For democracy to prosper, we have to keep an open mind to learn what is worthwhile from others and create a mindset that highlights the commonness of our beliefs rather than difference. A democracy base on such principles will be vibrant and enthuse, energize and encourage citizens to integrate rather than create fissions.” (Murthy 2009.P,73). It happened because the origin, traditions, cultures and structures of the peoples in NER are definitely distinct from the mainland India. In general term, without knowing the history, conditions and livelihood of the people in the NER, the general mainland Indian has the wrong perception that the NER is a conflict region and treated it in a step-motherly way. According to Nayar (2005), “Primarily, it is due to our failure to recognize the peculiar historical, social and cultural factors of each area of the North-East with the common effects of isolation.” (Nayar 2005.p,118). In fact, the NER which consists of eight states are kept aside and denied of educational development. Due to the inequality in educational development in the NER, the population at large in agitated for their rights of equality in education. Only few sections among the societies in NER gained the educational development and opportunities to pursue competitive higher education that can drive socio-economic development in the society. As a result, majority of the region remained educationally backward and they starved for quality of global education. Their wishes are still not yet fulfilled.
The first chapter, ‘Literature Review and Methodology’ narrates about the theoretical framework and methodology of the study. The educational theories which are relevant to the problems and challenges of higher education in the context of Tangkhul community in particular and NER at large are framed. The theories are compared according to the broad policy framework made by the various autonomous educational councils in the country. Specially, it compared the system of imparting education and the root causes of educational inequalities in a plural society within one boundary are explored from the site of the study. The introduction chapter is followed by the methodology of the study of higher education among the Tangkhul in Ukhrul district; problems, challenges and the consequences of migrating within the state and outside the state.

The chapter two, ‘Higher Education in North East Region’, talks about the status and causes of handicapped situation of higher education in NER. Failure of legislative measures to safeguard the right to education, tradition, culture, custom, are analyzed here. All these had negative impact upon the youths in the region. Higher education system is very weak in the NER. The lack of industries and sub-standard education in the region, leads to unemployment. The first college in the NER region was established by private body in Guwahati (Assam), and followed by the Christian bodies in Shillong (Meghalaya) before the Indian Independence. After the independent, many colleges and higher educational institutes were established in the region. Central universities were also established in almost all the states.

However, most of the government colleges and educational institutes in the region are still in pathetic condition. Lack of financial allocation, lack of infrastructures, lack of teachers, untrained teachers, unqualified teachers, lack of modern laboratory equipments, lack of modern educational equipments, etc. leads in degrading the education system. The lack of professional and vocational training institute in the region also leads to massive unemployment. Though the number of students passing out with humanities is enormous, it has little value in the job market. Due to paucity of education in global value, the students are unable to compete with students from other regions. Though the level of education at the primary level is quite significant, the situation turns awkwardly poor at the higher levels. Mizoram, for instance, has literacy rate next only to Kerala, but the level of higher education is one of the lowest in the entire Northeast.
The third chapter, ‘Higher Education in Manipur’ states about the diverse ethnic groups inhabiting within one boundary. Many educational facilities and steps have been promoted by the Indian constitution to promote the minority people. The state government has the responsibility to solve the socio-economic, educational and political problems of the minorities in the state. Thus, the researcher attempts to study the policy of educational development that has been implemented by the constitution, the allocation of educational resource among the different sections of people in the state and how the state played a role to improve the educationally backward people in the state. State governance is complicated by the fact of the interests of the dominant groups being paramount, with little attention to the minorities. Thereby, increasing the vulnerability of conflict among the groups in the state and where minorities step up the allegation for socio-economic, educational, and social-cultural needs. According to Shimray (2004), “The ethnic politics based on demographic domination and power politics have led to the process of ethnic domination of the majority over the minority.” (Shimray 2004,P,4642). Due to uneasy ethnic relationship, polity formation of state reconstruction is rather weak and a fragile socio-economic system of communities in the state is very much prevalent. The conflict in the state is not simple and acrimonies between dominant section and mutually scribining tribal ethnic formation are ubiquitous. The harsh realities of contemporary division of resource, accentuation of power struggle for benefits and accumulation, unleash forces based on group and ethnic identities forged by dominant group. The hierarchy started from the mainland India to dominant groups in the states and lastly, the minority groups got affected badly. However, the minority sections in the NER faced worse conditions than the other general dominant groups.

The concept deals with different perspective, as to how ethnic conflict has affected education from various directions. It specially concentrates on Manipur state, which has multiple ethnic groups within one boundary, i.e., from Meitei, the larger dominant groups and down to the smallest tribal groups among the society. The research study attempts to explore in Manipur, the complex relationship of conflict and education. Issues of ethnic linguistic and identity, inequalities of educational development, inequalities of opportunities in accessing higher education, impact of excessive presence of government and other militant groups, lack of educational institutes in the hilly districts. This study attempts to examine these aspects in relation to educational development in Ukhrul district. Cultural subjugation of ethnic minorities
by dominant groups leads to an upsurge in ethnic politics and the growth of political movements aimed at the cultural self determination of minorities.

Finally the fourth chapter, ‘Higher Education in Ukhrul’ states about the problems and challenges of higher education among the Tangkhuls in Ukhrul district. This is the focal area of the study that is made by the researcher. This chapter starts with the glimpse of Tangkhul Naga society in Ukhrul district. It first deals about the non-formal traditional education imparted through youth dormitory (Longshim) among the Tangkhul society. The chapter narrates about the genesis of education among Tangkhul society that was introduced by western missionary. It also states about the impact of western education imparted by the western Christian missionary among the Tangkhuls during pre-post independence and after the creation of Manipur as a full fledged state in 1972. In Manipur, the census on India (2001) recognized 29 tribal minority groups with the population consisting of 34.04 percent and the Meitei dominant groups comprising of 65.96 percent. This chapter compares the higher educational development taken up in the minority inhabited Ukhrul district with the Meitei, the dominant group, inhabited in Imphal valley. This chapter will also explore the factors that lead the Tangkhul students to migrate to different parts of the country for further studies. It especially states about the students migrated to Shillong, the capital of Meghalaya, which is the main educational hub in the NER and to Delhi, the capital of the country. The Tangkhul students are also migrated to different parts of the country like Guwahati, Kolkata, Mumbai, Pune, Bangalore, Chennai etc. But the researcher concentrates in two places (Shillong and Delhi) of the country where the majority of the Tangkhul students have migrated. This chapter looks into the pattern of the Tangkhul students following up higher education and the enrollment of students in three different streams Arts, Science and Commerce. It compares the status of higher education and availability of higher educational institutions in Delhi and Shillong. It also narrates about the activities performed by the Tangkhul student union in Delhi, the outcome and status of migrated Tangkhul students in higher education like, appearing competitive examination, working in private and government sectors, etc. Lastly, it looks into the problem of financial incumbents suffered by the Tangkhul parents in order to educate their wards.