Abstract

The current problem was undertaken with a view to exploring the patterns of child-rearing practices adopted by the Chothe tribe mothers during infancy period from 0 to 5 years of age and also examining the differences in child-rearing practices among the mothers in accordance with the difference in their educational levels, i.e., educated, literate, and illiterate. The areas of study included; pre-natal beliefs and practices, childbirth and child care, mother’s foods after childbirth, name-giving ceremony, period of confinement, sleeping, feeding, weaning, walking, talking, toilet training, cleanliness training, children’s play, aggression, responsibility training, sociability training, sex, expectation, identification, attitudes towards sex, sense of belongingness, obedience and techniques of socialization, and role of parents and other members of the family in taking care of children and carrying out family responsibility. Certain measures to be taken up in the light of the findings of the study were also suggested.

The study was conducted on a sample of 250 mothers, having at least one child below the age of 5 years, who were selected out of a total population of 269 mothers through the purposive sampling. These sample mothers were from nine Chothe tribe villages situated in two districts of Manipur, i.e., Bishnupur and Chandel.

The data were collected through a self-developed interview schedule. The schedule consisted of 52 main and 24 sub-items. Besides, observation and informal group discussion were also taken place. The data were analyzed using percentage and graphs, wherever necessary.
The thesis consists of five chapters. Chapter I is the introductory part of the thesis in which there are two sections. Section 1 describes a brief background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, delimitation of the study, and significance of the study. Section 2 deals with the methodology, such as method adopted, population and sample, tools used, procedure of data collection, and data analysis. Chapter 2 reviews the relevant studies conducted in India and aboard. Chapter 3 describes the general background of the Chothe society. Chapter 4 is the body of the work wherein 23 areas of child-rearing practices have been discussed. Summary, the main empirical findings, conclusions and certain suggestions for further research have been given in the last chapter 5.

**Main Empirical Findings**

- The Chothe mothers appear to be superstitious as they generally observe a number of social taboos during pregnancy period.
- More than half of the mother (51.6%) did not consult doctors for safe delivery during pregnancy, of them, the majority were illiterate mothers (72.09%).
- In most cases (84%), delivery took place at home.
- A child was breastfed just after its birth.
- No nutritive foods were given to the mothers after delivery.
- A child was breastfed as long as breast milk was available or till the arrival of the next child.
- 58.4 percent mothers breastfed their children regularly, while the rest did so whenever the child demands.
- Late weaning, irregular feeding, use of severe weaning technique, and indecisive weaning occurred to the majority of the illiterate mothers.
- Providing cleanliness training to the children at the early stage seems to be very poor.
- Play was encouraged by the majority of the mothers (81%).
- Responsibility and sociability training appears to be imparted to the Chothe children at a very low point.
- The infantile sexual repression seems to be very prominent in the Chothe society.
- The educational aspiration of the mothers was encouraging.
- The majority of the mothers preferred male child to female child, but no sex discrimination.
- Most of the mothers used the negative reinforcement in disciplining their children.