CHAPTER V

FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS
AND EDUCATIONAL
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5.0 INTRODUCTION

Education is commonly referred as the process of learning and obtaining knowledge at school, in a form of formal education. However, the process of education does not only start when a child first attends school. Education begins at home. One does not only acquire knowledge from a teacher; one can learn and receive knowledge from a parent, family member and home environment too. In fact, parents represent a considerable role in child’s education. There are stronger evidences that cultural characteristics and parental attitudes effect the educational attainment of children at school level education. If parents adopt good and effective attitudes with children at home, children make better progress in school. Moreover, parental supportive styles and attitudes not only influence child’s attainment level at school but also provide better help to students in the learning process. Furthermore, the parents must be able to supply not only the material requirements but also the psychological needs of the child. The psychological needs however vary from society to society, or from one culture to another. It depends on the
The parent–child relationship is so important that it shapes and moulds the character and personality of a child. The home is thus responsible for the development of human beings of a superior quality. If the home fails or mismanages this aspect, perhaps the products may be harmful to the society.

5.1 ABOUT MEGHALAYA

As suggested by literal meaning of Meghalaya in Hindi – ‘The Abode of Clouds’, this state inaugurated as an autonomous state within Assam on 2 April, 1970. It was declared a state of Indian Union on Jan. 21, 1972. Administratively, Meghalaya consists of seven districts namely, East Garo Hills, West Garo Hills, Jaintia Hills, East Khasi Hills, West Khasi Hills, Ri-Bhoi and South Garo Hills District. These are predominantly inhabited by the Khasis, the Jaintias and the Garos.

5.2 THE KHASIS

The people of Khasi tribal community primarily dwell in the north eastern state of Meghalaya. Amongst several tribes who have built their settlements here, the Khasis who are also known as ‘Ki Khasi,’
stand apart. The major concentration of the Khasi tribal community has been located in the north and eastern regions of Meghalaya constituting 50 percent of the total population of Meghalaya the Khasi tribal community resides along the foot hills of Jaintia and Khasi Mountainous ranges, the Syntengs, or the Pnars.

5.2.1 Language

The present linguistic researches show that Khasi forms a group of the Mon-Khmer language which belongs to an Austro-Asiatic type. J.R. Logan in 1850-57 has brought to light some signifying results of his research. He discovered an intimate relation between Khasis and the Mon-Khmer-Palaung dialects which prevail in Burma an Indo-China and again this group is connected with a larger family which consists of Santal, Munda and Kurku.

5.2.2 Family Organisation

The mother is the custodian of family rites and a family priestess, although the task of sacrifice and other religious celebrations of the house devolve upon the male inmates. She makes ready all the accessories for the religious offerings. The mother, the maternal uncle and the father are revered as the makers of the clan. The maternal uncles
i.e. the mother’s brothers act as preceptors of their nephews. Children, therefore, receive guidance both from the father and the maternal uncle.

5.2.3 The Position of a Man

In Khasi tradition, a man is *U Nongda* (protector) and a woman *Ka Nongri ling* (keeper of the house), the custodian of family property. In his *Kur’s* (mother’s clan) family he has the position of *U Kni* (uncle i.e. counsellor), at his wife’s house, he is the father. The mother’s claims to return all the articles he took, from her to his wife, at the time of or after his marriage, are not so binding although still observed by orthodox villagers. A man also takes a portion of his *Kamai Nongkhynraw* (bachelor’s earnings) to his wife.

5.2.4 Inheritance

Mother kinship is dominant and inheritance is matrilineal. The tribe is conglomerate of clans, each tracing lineage from the ancestral mother, the founder of the clan. The mother is the custodian of family rites and property, she is succeeded by her youngest sister who becomes the keeper of the properly and the organizer of the family rites in which she can improve the pattern of this residence but cannot part it off.
The youngest daughter is strictly the custodian but not possessor of family property. She might dispose of some articles of property but not the ancestral residence. She performs religious household ceremonies. Yet her greater duty is to take care of her aged parents.

5.2.5 Marriage

Elaborate marriage are preceded by betrothals in which the would-be-groom accompanied by close relations from both the mother’s and father’s side, proceed to the bride’s house and in the presence of representatives from the would-be-bride’s side, a ceremony is performed symbolized by the handing over of a ring to the bride by a groom. But cases are reported where an exchange of rings is also practiced at some place. Avuncular representatives from both sides cite mutual addresses as of reciprocal form that no clan taboo persists among the two houses which qualifies the proposed marriage to take place.

The marriage is performed at the bride’s place.

5.2.6 Traditional Systems of Education

Before the arrival of the Christian missionaries, there was no formal education among the Khasis. However, every Khasi home is an
informal agency imparting moral education through folk songs, pastoral melodies, proverbs, maxims and so on. Traditions, beliefs and know-how were handed down from one generation to another by words of mouth only.

5.2.7 Perception of Home life

The perception of home life by Khasi boys and girls as identified in the study of Warjri (1987) showed significant results. The Khasi girls usually possess a strong sense of belongingness with the family as compared to boys. In other words, girls showed a positive tendency towards belongingness with the family while boys on the other hand are negatively thinking about it. It was also found that Khasi boys did not possess and enjoy the same status at home as girls did. Parents preferred to delegate family responsibilities to daughters than to sons65.

5.3 NEED OF THE STUDY

Education could be seen as wings for the progress of the human being. It helps the individual to attain intellectual, physical and spiritual

or emotional progress. The Khasis does not have any formal education before. It was during the British rule when Rev. Thomas Jones believed that the best way to achieve his mission of converting the people to Christianity was by teaching them to read the Bible and other Christian literature in their own language.

The Khasis being the long surviving matrilineal society may have different viewpoints in educating their children, it may be assumed that girls in such a society are getting more advantages than boys in every sphere of activity. Therefore, in the matter of upbringing the children, girls are placed on a different footing specially treated with affection which is not so with the boys.

As property and family responsibilities are given to the girls, differences would arise in the perception of the parents towards their sons and daughters. Due to this biasness, parents would have different attitudes towards educational requirements of sons and daughters.

Therefore the present study attempts to find out the provision of educational opportunities of the Khasi parents to their sons and daughters.
5.4 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

"Provision of Educational Opportunities to Boys & Girls in Khasi Society - A Study"

5.5 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the present study were:

5. To find out the educational opportunities provided by Khasi parents towards boys and girls.

6. To find out the perceptions of Khasi boys and girls on the parental attitudes towards them.

7. To find out the difference between the perceptions of Khasi boys and girls on their parental attitudes regarding their educational needs.

8. To offer suggestions.

5.5.1 HYPOTHESIS

H1: There is no significant difference between the perceptions of Khasi boys and girls on their parental attitudes regarding their educational needs.
5.6 METHODOLOGY

The present research study is the Descriptive survey of the provision of educational opportunities to boys and girls in Khasi society.

5.7 TOOLS USED IN THE STUDY

In the present study, the investigator used questionnaire as a tool to collect the necessary data for the study.

5.8 POPULATION

The population of the present study comprises of various households located in the four localities of Shillong - Nongthymmai, Laitkor, Mawlai and Laimer.

5.8.1 SAMPLE

For the purposes of the study and considering the circumstances of the distribution of the questionnaire, it was impossible to apply a systematic type of sampling method. Therefore, random sampling was used.

The sample of boys and girls from different families was drawn randomly from different localities. It consisted of fifteen families from Lawjynriew (Nongthymmai), fifteen families from Nongdaneng
(Laitkor), ten families from Nonglum (Mawlai) and ten families from Nongkseh (Laimer).

From each selected family, one boy and one girl who were related as brother and sister studying in Class VII to XII constituted the respondents.

5.9 PROCEDURE OF DATA COLLECTION

This study conducted a survey of students, in their respective homes. The questionnaire was distributed amongst boys and girls from each family in the selected locality.

The investigator personally to the selected households in order to collect the information and using the questionnaires prepared by the investigator.

The investigator sought the permission from the headmen of the various localities to undertake the study. Selecting ten or fifteen families from each locality was a very challenging job as the investigator had no knowledge which family could provide the needs of the investigator. Locating a family which had brothers and sisters that could be used for data collection was very difficult. Some clues were provided by the headmen regarding the families with brothers and sisters while the
investigator managed to collect the sample mainly through the help of the participants, that is the brothers and sisters.

The investigator distributed the questionnaires to the participants directly with a request to give their free and frank responses. Before the commencement of the task, the participants were first assured that the responses will be kept confidential and that personal identifying information will not be revealed at all, except as part of the study's results.

The participants are made to answer the questionnaires without the any supervision of the parents except a brief explanation from the investigator at the beginning. A twenty to thirty minute's time was given to the participants to answer all the sixty questions.

The total time taken for the collection of data was one month. Finally, the questionnaires were collected by the investigator for analysis.

5.10 STATISTICAL PROCEDURE USED

In the case of boys and girls, their responses were given in scores. Appropriate statistical methods were used.

Descriptive statistics such as percentage, mean, standard deviation and graphical representation were used.
Inferential statistics such as t-test were used to find the significant difference between the means of scores of perception of boys and girls in the educational opportunities provided by their parents.

5.11 MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The major findings of the study were:

i) 77 percent of the Khasi boys stated that they were provided with time for studying as compared to 88 percent of the Khasi girls. This finding revealed that the Khasi family provided the girls with more time to study than to the boys. This might be due to the family setup in the Khasi society whereby the girls were given more opportunities to study.

ii) 97 percent of Khasi boys stated that they were provided with text books by the parents as compared to 98 percent of the Khasi girls. This finding revealed that the Khasi parents showed a little more preference to the girls in terms of education.

iii) 41 percent of Khasi boys agreed that they were provided with uniforms by the parents as compared to 63 percent of the Khasi girls.
This finding showed that the Khasi parents favoured the girls more in terms of education.

iv) 72 percent of the Khasi boys and girls agreed that they were sent to good and expensive schools by their parents.
This finding revealed that the Khasi parents provided equal opportunity to both boys and girls in sending them to good and expensive schools.

v) 57 percent of Khasi boys and girls agreed that they were provided with enough pocket money by their parents.
This finding showed that the Khasi parents gave equal pocket money to both boys and girls.

vi) 70 percent of the Khasi boys agreed that they were sent to tuitions by their parents as compared to 74 percent of the Khasi girls.
This finding implied that the Khasi parents provided a little higher opportunity to the girls for taking tuitions as compared to the boys.

vii) The means of scores of the Khasi boys was 17.16 and 17.8 of the Khasi girls on attachment with parents.
This finding revealed that the Khasi girls perceived that they were a little more attached to their parents as compared to the boys.

viii) The means of scores of the Khasi boys was 16.88 and 17.62 for the Khasi girls on sense of belongingness. This finding signified that the Khasi girls perceived that they had a higher sense of belongingness as compared to the boys.

ix) The means of scores of the Khasi boys was 14.06 and that of the Khasi girls was 14.68 on parental aggression. This finding showed that the Khasi girls perceived that their parents were a little more aggressive to them than to the boys. This might be because the parents of the Khasi family do not want their daughters to forget their responsibilities.

x) The means of scores of the Khasi boys was 17.96 as compared to 18.52 for the Khasi girls on their status in the family. This finding implied that the Khasi girls perceived to have more status at home than the boys since Khasi society is a matrilineal society where girls are given more importance.
xi) There is no significant difference between the Khasi boys and girls on their perceptions towards parental attitudes regarding their educational needs.

5.12 SUGGESTIONS

The investigator provided the following suggestions based on her study:

i) For the betterment of the society and for the good of both boys and girls, the Khasi parents should provide equal time to study to both boys and girls so that they can excel in their studies.

ii) The Khasi parents should try to provide the required school textbooks equally to both the boys and the girls.

iii) The Khasi parents should provide the necessary school uniforms to both the boys and girls so that both can attend school regularly and become literate.

iv) Both boys and girls should be allowed to take tuitions and the parents should not try to create any biasness towards their children.

v) The Khasi parents should not try to ignore the boys in their family because they might end up getting frustrated and might
end up sharing their feelings, ideas, thoughts and emotions with the wrong people.

vi) The Khasi parents should try to make sure that the boys feel that they belong at home and that they should also feel comfortable otherwise they might end up sleeping out most of the time.

vii) The boys should also be given equal responsibilities at home as the girls so that they can feel that they are needed and that they are wanted at home. Important family matters should also be consulted with them.

5.13 EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

The following are the educational implications of the study:

i) This study would help the Khasi parents to change their attitude towards the education of their children.

ii) It would encourage the Khasi parents to provide equal educational opportunity to both their sons and daughters.

iii) It would help the Khasi parents to understand the importance of education.

iv) It would bring about the change in the attitude of the parents towards boys with regard to education.
5.14 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

i) A study can be conducted to enhance learning in boys.

ii) Various studies can also be conducted to motivate the boys and girls to pursue higher studies.

iii) A study can be conducted on the impact of home environment on the education of both the boys and girls.

iv) A study on the effect of attitude of parents and the achievement of boys and girls in school & colleges can be conducted.