CHAPTER FIVE

MAJOR FINDINGS FROM FIELD RESEARCH AND DISCUSSIONS

This chapter contains the major findings of the field research in connection with the educational ministry of the BCM. The research questions centered the educational ministry of the BCM in Mizoram. The purpose of the research is (a) to ascertain the key founding principles governing the educational ministry of the BMS and the BCM, (b) to identify the educational methods and strategies of the BMS and the BCM and (c) to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the BCM in the light of the future with a view to making recommendations for the improvement of the BCM educational program in Mizoram and beyond.

The analysis method outlined in Cohen and Manion\(^1\) proved helpful for in depth analysis. The principle guidelines for this purpose are obtained from Spradley\(^2\), Cohen and Manion. The summary of findings and discussions are organized around the main themes of the three major research questions and other sub-sets of the context, corresponding to the research objectives.

I. KEY FOUNDING PRINCIPLES OF THE EDUCATIONAL MINISTRY OF THE BMS AND THE BCM

The findings indicate that there is a close relationship between the educational goals of the BMS and the BCM. The findings revealed that the most important founding principle of educational ministry of the BMS and the BCM in Mizoram is Church planting and Evangelism while Leadership Development and Social Upliftment is recognized principles.

---


A. Education for Church Planting

A majority of the two groups, Executive\(^3\) and Lay leaders\(^4\) had clearly identified that the BMS endeavored primarily that church planting be its educational goal. When scrutinizing the work of the missionaries, the contribution they have made revealed that they were not contented to evangelize only, but demonstrated a profound zeal to establish a real and living church. From the beginning, the missionaries understood that it was not sufficient merely to gather converts, but it was also necessary to build up strong Christian communities that would eventually be self-reliant, if Christianity were to survive.

Imparting Christian education, schooling systems, medicine, the Press and whatever else that the BMS took up in their educational ministry was very important to the planting and building of effective working of the churches. Without these ministries, it was not possible for the church they planted to be self-governed, self-reliant and much less self-propagating. Thus the principal underlying motive for implementing education was church planting. Whatever the BMS missionaries believed to be most directly conducive to the building of the church came within the scope of their educational ministry.

In the final analysis, the first aim of the BMS missionaries was to save the soul of Mizo. Second, the means they employed for this purpose was spiritual, namely, the gospel of Christ. Third, the power on which they relied to give efficacy to these means was divine, namely, the promised aid of the Holy Spirit. Fourth, the task was chiefly carried out among the Mizo through the mission schools, Sunday school and other means of evangelism. Fifth, the influence ascending from thence, was

\(^3\)EG (68.18%)
\(^4\)LG (73.08%)
establishing a local church, which formed a local body of associated new believers and developing leadership for the native church. This was their principle and practice as missionaries and this served as a nucleus for the BCM subsequently. Church planting was the foundational part of the educational work of the BMS. It has been truly effective and has left a lasting impact upon the Baptist Church of Mizoram, as seen in its educational activities.

The basic principle of the pioneer missionaries, the three self's theories, which Lorrain and his colleagues emphatically practiced, continued to be the guiding principle of the BCM in Mizoram. Even though, for the BMS there was no written statement, which expressed explicitly their educational goals, this statement of purpose in their mission marked the guiding principle for the implementation of education in Mizoram. The BMS missionaries were determined that their educational activities reflected this principle. In the process of planting churches, the BMS pioneer missionaries have championed the cause of education, occupying an important place in the development of the BCM and its ongoing ministry.

B. Education for Evangelism

The BMS work was bound up largely with education and evangelism. This was inevitable, necessary and salutary. The mission adopted a policy of evangelism and used education as its strategy as Church planting presupposes evangelism. The ultimate goal of the missionaries' efforts was to evangelize the Mizo.

1. Evangelism, the BMS Policy

Evangelism was one of the most effective methods of bringing men and women to Christ. Direct evangelism appeared to be one of the quickest and most

---

5Vocational evangelists, pastor-evangelists and laymen held meetings, addressing people with the message from the word of God.
effective means employed in planting a church. The way the missionaries operated in Mizoram, it was evident that they gave prime importance to evangelism and to this end; their educational system was directed towards the native Mizo. The leaders of the BCM have identified that evangelism occupied an integral part of the BMS educational activities in Mizoram. The BMS missionaries had a clear concept of education and its implications for evangelism. The pioneer missionaries gave priority to evangelism in their educational operations.

2. Formal Schools as a Key Evangelistic Tool

Establishing schools was the missionary way of evangelism. Having experienced how to make contact with the Mizo in the North through the school system, it was evident that the missionaries would continue the method of formal school education as a key evangelistic tool. For the Mizo were still predominantly in their pre-literary stage.

In the evangelistic work, the BMS followed the principle of self-propagating. They inspired the students to engage in propagating the Gospel of Christ to win their own fellow friends. The student’s participation and contribution in the work of evangelization was noteworthy. The formal school system offered an opportunity to have easy access to the parents for evangelism.

In school the vernacular language was the medium of instruction. This had become the foundation stone for the Mizo society to live in unity and to further advance the cause of Christianity. The establishment of formal schools with its Christian emphasis was an essential tool and continued to be practiced to plant and build up church as one of the policies of the BCM. The importance of the school as an

---

Thangbawnga whose memorial monument erected by the BCM in front of the Church at Serkawn, was a well-known evangelist in his day. He died in 1935 at the age of 65, serving God for 18 years and under his direct evangelistic effort, he enlisted 4,431 names into the Church’s register. Such was the magnitude of a person committed to the work of evangelism.
evangelistic tool is recognized and without this means, it is not possible for the church to be in a proper sense, self-governed; nor without it, will the church be self-supported and much less self-propagating.

Thus, the BCM followed the footstep of the BMS in starting a substantial educational work within and outside Mizoram with emphasis on evangelism. These schools were opened to the pupils of all classes, and efforts were made to provide education in the medium of English, at the Primary and middle school level in several places. Apart from including scriptures in the school curriculum, evangelism became one of the key factors in enlightening the mind of the people.

The BCM missionaries and evangelist teachers were prompt to provide education with Christian emphasis. Everyday, school would begin with instruction from the Christian Scriptures and a word of prayer. The subjects taught in these schools were mostly in accordance with the syllabi prescribed by the school authority. The missionaries prepared lessons for religious instruction and taught lessons from the Christian perspective. Formal schools served as means to evangelize and to promote the moral and ethical standard of the students’ lives.

Today the problem lies in many being educated without being evangelized first. The BCM is likely to have an immeasurably greater task to perform after many have been educated. Education had been a subordinate agency of evangelization and needs to continue to be so in the BCM paradigm. However, the close association between religion and education has been a common phenomenon in the educational ministry of the BMS and BCM, until the predominance of secularization in recent times. As learning becomes more and more secular, education, which involves religious impartation, becomes diverted.
According to many of the leaders today, the educational ministry of the BCM, seems to be more concerned with the secular than the sacred, and serves communitarian objectives rather than the evangelical purpose. But this is a comparatively recent phenomenon. The formal school system has often been the principal agent of evangelism in the activities of the BCM and will continue to be so. The emergence of formal schools as the primary agent of evangelism is still the key principle and practice of the BCM.

C. Education for Leadership Development

One of the key principles of the educational ministry of the BMS and the BCM was to produce leaders. The BMS missionaries realized that securing of leaders was one of the principal reasons for the involvement in educational ministry. Apart from teaching the three R’s (reading, writing and arithmetic) and imparting basic elements of Christianity, the missionaries aimed at producing leaders for the future church. In most cases the teachers combined the function of schoolmasters as well as the local pastors, supervised by the missionaries.

They trained a few of the most able students to be ‘teachers.’ The question of church planting, as well as opening schools as an evangelistic strategy depended on finding native leadership. Therefore, the education of the BMS linked with leadership development of educated Mizo who would be schoolmasters as well as leaders in their respective local churches to fulfill the principle of self-support and self-propagation.

The missionaries were aware that a well-organized and well-trained church under good leaders could extend its influence over a large territory in Mizoram. In such a society as in Mizoram, the direct influence of a native leader could reach hundreds of people within a short time. Therefore, the missionaries were farsighted to appoint suitable native leaders, who would most often be teachers and to presbyter over the Christian
community. Their role of native leadership had a tremendous impact upon the people they served.

Therefore, the greatest aspect of the educational ministry of the BMS was the development of leadership for church workers, evangelists, teachers and lay-leaders in the society in Mizoram. The educational activities patronized under the leadership of the BMS had developed into an important agency for preparing leaders for the BCM. The "trained students" became the pillars of the Mizo society for a long time in the succeeding years especially in the ministry of the Church. The introduction of training for indigenous leaders marked a significant attempt.

The missionaries have not only given training to the selected few competent students but also made an effort to equip the rest of the students with zeal and enthusiasm for future ministry in several significant ways. Thus Mizo students under the care of the missionaries received good orientation that prepared them to become leaders, fulfilling the principle of the mission in self-propagating. Though education was provided to all students, yet the practice of selecting gifted children and giving extra coaching proved to be effective in enhancing the educational ministry.

These students were given direct appointment to be the village masters, who most often proved themselves quite capable. There were no separate pastors or elders at the village level in the BMS era, and the village schoolmaster performed the dual function of a pastor and that of a teacher and generally, wherever the school existed, there the church came into being or vice versa.

Two kinds of leaders emerged, namely, leaders for the teaching ministry, and leaders for service in the indigenous church in Mizoram. With the growing increase of the demand of schools in several villages, provisional teachers were appointed to shoulder the responsibility of running the school. The educational ministry of the BMS prepared and provided basic requirements to the students to meet these needs. Once
they were appointed as provisional teachers, they needed further training to equip themselves, for whom training was given.

This way, the missionaries made arrangements to make their education mission self-propagating by giving teacher training to the provisional teachers. Thus, the establishment of schools gave an impetus to the principle of indigenous Church for the Mizo and provided needed leadership.

Building up Mizo Christian leadership in the church seemed to be one of the most urgent needs of the growing Mizo society at the time, and an important goal of the educational ministry of the BMS and BCM. Determined to ensure that the educational ministry of the BMS would provide education as well as Christian leadership in the church and society at large, the educational activities were carried on from the beginning.

Thus, the leaders of both the executive and the lay leadership groups have identified that the educational goal of the BMS was developing leaders. Without leadership development, there would be no future progress for the church. Leadership development is a continuous process, and the process went on in a cycle of rallying people of different backgrounds and providing proper ministerial guidance for leadership. Therefore, the mission school started by the missionaries could also be referred to as the training center for Christian leadership in Mizoram.

_D. Education for Social Uplift_7

Social uplift occupied the fourth rank of importance as the key founding principle of the educational ministry of the BMS and the BCM. This does not mean that the BMS missionaries have undermined the significance of the social aspect.

---

7Bhatia and Bhatia, _A Book of Education for Beginners_ (New Delhi: Kalyani Publisher, 1990), 26-27.
Rather the missionaries utilized education as a means of uplifting the people as well as imparting religious influence against traditional superstitions. This has proved to be a powerful means of inviting people to have transformed lives according to the Christian worldview. Soon the missionaries were able to bring about the impact of schools in a social transformation paradigm and education came to be a significant factor.

1. Change of Attitudes

Considerable change has been wrought within a short time in different spheres of Mizo life. The attitude of the Mizo, who once were regarded as “irreclaimable savages” was changed towards Christianity first of all, and to education. Missionaries introduced a new pattern of living in all possible ways by inculcating Christian principles through their education. Without necessarily attempting to introduce western civilization, the missionary taught the native to build better and more facilitated homes. They also helped to improve the living standard of the Mizo and promoted inter-personal relationship, bringing about social change. Many conditions of the Mizo could never be corrected without the help of regeneration through education, which broke the binding cords of superstitions, ignorance, and human credulity. The missionary education has influenced the Mizo people to understand that “educators, and physicians” came to liberate them from their spiritual blindness.

2. Change of Attitudes towards Women

The missionaries had to face the social problems that existed in the Mizo society. They could notice a sharp difference that existed in the attitudes of men towards women and several related problems. They sought to counter attack the then

---

*Ibid., 81.*
socio-religious problems particularly through their educational policy and Christianizing influence. The missionaries believed that institutions in addition to the Church, such as the schools, were the needed agents for social uplift.

The missionaries perceived that women were ignored and took steps to relieve women from their degraded position by introducing education for women. Child infanticide, witchcraft and many other superstitious beliefs regarding women in the Mizo society challenged the missionaries in their educational ministry to take active steps. Consequently, in no detail is the effect of the educational mission more dramatic than in its elevation of woman to a higher status.

3. Education for Unity

The missionaries have made an immense contribution to the spread of education in Mizoram through the medium of vernacular language, by establishing schools for boys and girls. One of the impacts of imparting knowledge in vernacular was the development of the vernacular language. This ultimately developed into a common bond for mutual understanding between the Mizo themselves as well as creating cooperation between the Mizo and the missionaries. The oneness in Mizo language was one of the reasons that helped the BMS missionaries and the Welsh Presbyterian missionaries in the north to develop mutual understanding and cooperation for the development of educational ministry in Mizoram.

4. Education for Socio-Religious Welfare

A notable by-product of educational ministry of the BMS has been the improvement in physical welfare of the Mizo people. Polygamy, infanticide, slavery, witchcraft, costly sacrifices, all of these primitive practices were corrected when scriptural standards prevailed under the educational influence of the missionary education. There was marked restraint of the social evil practices, even when
Christians were in the minority. The missionary education removed social grievances to a great extent.

They had a strong conviction that the gospel was the only solution for the socio-religious, economic context of the people. They took an active role in the society. All their socio-economic and religious activities were centered on one deeply held principle and conviction—the purpose of winning converts and bringing awareness toward physical welfare of the people.

The Mizo did not know the basic laws of sanitation and were without medical aid. The missionaries demonstrated treatment of some diseases and as well as cleanliness and hygiene. Simple instruction in cleanliness and sanitary methods and other preventive measures have saved several of the Mizo from a premature death. Of course these were also affected due to modern methods of treatment and modern technology, but in the Mizo context then, the impact of mission was significant. The death rate was minimized, the average life was longer, more children were born, but more importantly, the average person lived more comfortably and worked with greater productivity. This ethos was evident from the historical fact and experiences of the Mizo in general. To the missionaries, introduction of school, orphanage and dispensaries were the consequences of the felt need for the spiritual and physical welfare of the people. It is an undeniable fact that Christianity and education comes the social uplift of the people. The educational ministry of the BMS was holistic in nature with a purpose to serve the Mizo community.

The study identified that BMS education was seen as a means of raising an indigenous church, leadership development and bringing about social transformation of the Mizo society. The BMS had made an important contribution to education in
Mizoram and in particular a profound influence on the educational mission of the BCM in Mizoram.

II. PROBLEMS OF THE MIZO DURING THE EARLY PERIOD OF BMS EDUCATIONAL MINISTRY.

The findings revealed that there were definitely various hurdles that the Mizo people have encountered with the educational ministry of the BMS in the early period of their activities. The elements of isolation, physical, social, religious, educational and political were the main problems deduced. These were categorized under Religious-Cultural Domains; Spiritual Domain; Socio-Economic and Educational Domains.

A. Religious-Cultural Domains

1. Persecutions and Oppositions

Persecutions and oppositions from the traditional chiefs were seen as the key problems identified by both group of leaders. There was constant tension between traditional leaders and the new Christian converts in the beginning. As Christianity was gaining ground distinct problems associated with the Mizo people hampered the educational ministry to a certain extent. First, persecution was a direct reaction to the revival of 1906. Second, the *Puma zai movement* that swept across the entire Mizoram put great obstacles to the preaching of the gospel.

---

9 The center of persecution was Pukpui in south Mizoram. The chief developed an intense dislike of the Christians, accusing them of disobeying his order when they would not work on Sunday and refused to participate in the annual *Kawngpui Siam* sacrifice. Carter, *Baptist Kohhran*, 45, see also Thanzauva, *Reports of the Foreign Mission of the Presbyterian* 1902-2, v1 and Saiathanga, *Mizo Kohhran*, 14.

10 The Spread of Christianity in Mizoram is often associated with a series of revival movements. Church historians are agreed upon the four dates on which revival waves came to Mizoram on a large scale during the first forty years of Christianity. They were 1906, 1913, 1919 and 1929. In the ensuing years and up to the present day, many more stirrings were found with different impact on the people of Mizoram. In fact, since 1906, one will always find revivals or aspects of them.
The executive leaders and the lay leaders of the BCM identified that this cultural revival in the form of an indigenous song had caused a serious problem for the early Mizo Christians. The song to which the Mizo danced in ecstasy had a considerable popularity among the Mizo throughout the length and breath of Mizoram.

*Puma Zai*, a cultural upsurge as Kipgen called it, began in 1908. The chiefs who were custodians of the Mizo tradition patronized this song as it represented something of a cultural revival. Kipgen further asserts, "certainly for some of the chiefs, it represented a reaction against the new religion and the translated western songs that were sung by the Christians during the revival." Christians reacted against the rapid spread of the *Puma Zai* movement, and the great excitement associated with it throughout Mizoram. Liangkhaiia commented that, *Puma Zai,* "was the work of the spirit of Satan," and described it as, "a great manifestation of the power of darkness," Lloyd had also opined it as, "a sudden resurgence of heathenism."

---

at work in some parts of the country. Although there were times when the heat of revival cooled down, the fire was never fully quenched.

1Cf., on section under Religious – Cultural Domains chapter four, 207.

2Mangkhosat Kipgen, *Christianity and Mizo Culture,* (Jorhat: Mizo Theological Conference, 1996), 226. See for more details in Kipgen, a detail of its origin and its implication in the Christianity of Zo Culture is given.

3Ibid., 229.

4Ibid. Lalzika killed all types of domestic animals for continuous feasting, and the singing and dancing continued. Other chiefs and rapidly the Puma Zai movement spread until the whole of Mizoram danced to the tune of the song soon followed this act. Hrangthiaua and Lalchungnngua reported an interesting feature of the movement, that all those who gave public feast to celebrate the song were treated with the honor due to only to those who performed the celebrated Thangchhiah Feast of the Mizo. The young people would dress the man and his wife with the Thangchhiah Puan (Traditional shawl) and they would sit on a constructed platform specially designed for the occasion in the middle of the village in front of which the *Puma Zai* would be performed. See Hrangthiaua and Lalchungnngua, *Mizo Chanchin* [History and Culture of the Mizos] (Aizawl: Lalrinliana and Sons, 1978), 344.


The whole revival of *Puma Zai* appealed to the native in comparison with the missionaries' culture. The early church had to cope with this problem. It was a revival of public entertainments so strong in its influence and so widespread in extent that the Christian message and church growth were seriously hampered throughout Mizoram.\(^{17}\) It had certainly had a damaging effect on the progress of Christianity in Mizoram particularly in the north. The movement diverted the attention of the people away from the evangelistic work of the church. Therefore, the Welsh Foreign Mission in 1911 reports the general situation of the church, "on the whole a quiet one," and commented, *Puma Zai* was not altogether anti-Christian in nature.\(^{18}\) The presence of the missionaries and their educational ministry particularly, lessened the degree of persecution and Lorrain reported in 1904, opposition to Christianity had "almost disappeared."\(^{19}\)

Mizo Christians undoubtedly faced problems of persecutions and opposition for their newfound religion in the early period of the BCM era. There was no serious problem however, to stand against the operation of the educational ministry under the BMS missionaries. Moreover, persecution was becoming more intense in the north of Mizoram, which was beyond the supervision of the BMS missionaries.\(^{20}\) When persecution became a serious issue, the missionaries in the north and South adopted a policy to encourage the Mizo Christians to "endure persecutions though great or small

\(^{18}\)Mangkhosat, *Christianity and Mizo Culture*, 232.
\(^{20}\)The main center of persecution was then shifted to Khandaih and Vanbawng in the north under the chief Vanphunga. Khandaih was the largest village of Mizoram at that time and was the location of the first permanent village school. There were also more Christians than in other villages. See Saiaiathanga, *Kohhran*, 22. See also Lloyd, *history of the Church in Mizoram*, 98.
in the name of Jesus Christ who suffered all the reproaches and persecutions to the end.\textsuperscript{21}

Third, there was an occurrence of famine. Each of these problems was interrelated. Poverty, one of the major problems identified by both the leadership groups became a motivating factor for the introduction of missionary education. Illiteracy made people poor and poverty made people illiterate. This poverty had been associated partly, due to the Mautam\textsuperscript{22} (Bamboo famine) that broke out in the whole of Mizoram.

The documented famines occurred in 1862, 1880, 1911, 1929 and 1959.\textsuperscript{23} These famines resulted in widespread malnutrition, epidemics and extensive loss of life.\textsuperscript{24} They caused a continual problem for the Mizo Christians in the period of the BMS ministry in Mizoram. On the other hand, the famine gave a deathblow to Puma Zai celebration, for feasting was no longer possible. It also paved the way for people to turn to God as the attempts of missionaries to kill the disease of poverty through the eradication of illiteracy had increased by means of their educational ministry.

\textsuperscript{22}Mizo economy was and is still based on agriculture and this is being practiced by jhumming (slash and burn system). The constant shifting of villages partly due to this practice has an effect on the economy of Mizo. Moreover, the most important element in Mizo economy was bamboo. Bamboo provides food, materials for household implements, building materials and several other useful purposes for Mizo. Despite its general value, bamboos in Mizoram periodically flower resulting in famine, causing great misery to the people. It is generally recorded that bamboo in Mizoram flower at approximately fifty year intervals. There are varieties of bamboo and since these bamboos do not flower at the same time, it is assumed that there is famine every 18 to 30 years. There were two prominent bamboo flowers, \textit{Thingtam} and \textit{Mautam}. The latter happened in 1861, 1911, and 1959 while the former occurred in 1880, 1929 and 1973. It is predicted again that this bamboo flowering will take place in 2006 for which the Government of Mizoram is taking measures to combat this problem. The reason for famine is the rapid multiplication of the rodent population, especially rats, which feed on the bamboo seeds. These rodents devoured the standing crops and have resulted in the immediate famine. See also Kipgen, Christianity and Mizo Culture, 77. Also K. Zawla, \textit{Mizo Pi Pute Leh an Thlaihe Chan chin} (Aizawl: Modern Press, 1964), 345-6; Lorrain et al., \textit{The BMS Printed Report for 1912 and 1930}.\textsuperscript{23}
\textsuperscript{22}Ibid., 77.
Although the non-Christian Mizo community created difficulties for the early Mizo Christians, the educational program of the missionaries continued. In this regard, the support given by the British India Government official was found helpful.25

2. Narrow Mindedness

The anti-school attitude of the chiefs was one of the problems identified. With the help of the Government and the missionaries, education of the sons of chiefs was encouraged. This narrow mindedness was reflected particularly by the objection to girl’s getting education. The fear of being dominated by the foreigners was expressed. The Mizo soon realized that school ministry gave adequate benefits for them. The benefit of education gave incentive among the Mizo to seek education against many odds and difficulties. They realized that there was ample opportunity to get salaried jobs. The occupation of an individual, whether it was skilled, semi-skilled or a white-collar job, depended on one’s getting mission education. Very soon the Mizo understood the value of education and their worldview changed. They now know that the higher the educational qualification one gets, the better chance one has for placement of a job in the Government service.

3. Fear of Losing Cultural Identity

The fear of losing cultural identity and traditional practices dominated many traditional leaders, who in turn tried to protect their customs and traditional practices. This led to opposing the Christian missionaries on one hand and a general dislike for the other, Hnamdang rulers (other culture, the British agents). The traditional leaders could not comprehend the complete control of the foreign rulers. The Mizo customs

25The Mizo detested the forced labor system and this was fully exploited by the Government when it declared exemption from such physical services on the part of those who passed class IV standard. Many young Mizo went to school. The Government also issued free rations to attract more Mizo to go to the schools opened for them by the missionaries. Such initiatives taken by the government contributed to creating favorable response from the Mizo. Sangkima, Mizos, 167.
and its related religious practices were associated with heavy drinking and this stood against Christianity. They felt the loss of their religious liberty and social freedom which they had exercised freely in the past, being attacked. The issue of drinking is still a big problem to date for many a Mizo, which requires strong conviction, based on the Christian Scriptures.

B. Spiritual Domain

The perception of leaders under the spiritual domain seems to be very consistent. The early Mizo were under the bondage of fears, superstitions, and animistic practices. There was widespread fear of evil spirits being transmitted from one generation to another. Because of this, they struggled endlessly for a pitiful existence and were in constant practice of appeasing the evil spirits. This animistic influence in life and in their worldview had created a significant problem. But these were slowly dealt with the introduction of Christian education and the missionaries reported that, "the Lushai [sic] heathen in many cases were ready to part with the charms" connected with their animistic practice.\(^{26}\) This is true; today no sign of heathen practices is seen in present Mizoram.

C. Socio-Economic Domain

With regards to the finding concerning the problems under socio-economic domains, the respondents of both leaders had similar opinions. The key problems were poverty, ignorance and lack of communication.

1. Poverty

Poverty was the distinct problem, which denied parents from sending their children to school. Closely related to this, was physical poverty, which includes poor housing, poor health and ignorance. Backwardness in all areas of life was the

---

\(^{26}\) Lorrain et al., _BMS Printed Report for 1914_, 110.
expression used by one of the leaders to elaborate the early problems of the Mizo. Inability to meet the physical needs of children by parents, cultural factors, values and beliefs among the Mizo community sometimes became obstacles for the education of Mizo. Religious indifference was the major problem of the Mizo among whom the missionaries continued to struggle to impart education.

2. Communication and Access

The absence of communication and access due to the physical feature of Mizoram, which is a mountainous terrain with a paucity of good roads amidst dense forest is an identified problem. Another aspect of communication was the cultural and linguistic gap that existed between the BMS missionaries and the Mizo. An overestimate of the Sapte (White people; foreigners) was one of the problems cited.

3. Excessive Drinking

The drinking practice of Mizo in excess and its related consequences were the common problem of the early Mizo. Alcoholism destroyed family bonds and lowered the level of morality among them due to excessive drinking habit. Most of the rice harvested was wasted away for brewing local beer leading to economic poverty. The Mizo Christians were deprived of almost all the social activities in the village due to their resistance to join in drinking and feasting ceremonies connected with sacrifices.

D. Educational Domain

The findings pertaining to educational domain relate to attitude of parents, illiteracy, poor infrastructure, finance, language, Higher Education and limitation of institutions.
1. Attitude of Parents towards School Education

A cultural bias against school education, due to general ignorance, led to parental opposition to sending their children to school. Failure to realize the school as a breeding ground for ideal citizenship was a problem for the early Mizo. They lacked an understanding of the value of education offered by the missionaries. They could not grasp the meaning of sitting in a classroom without doing manual work for a long time. To them it was a waste of time and a sign of laziness. Many parents showed no sign of a desire to change their lives or pattern of living. They were satisfied with their socio-economic, political and cultural values and practice that were fostered in their community life.

Due to the parent's attitude and deep-rooted superstitions, children were prevented from going to school. There were some other problems related to this, (a) the living condition of the family, (b) pressures to do agricultural work (c) recurring famine conditions entailing hunger and starvation, (d) poor health (e) geographical location of the school (f) lack of monetary support (g) the lack of a good communication system (f) limitation of teachers and lack of parents' interest in education. Problems relating to the educational issues highlighted were the role of teacher. Normally the children suffered from irregularity of teachers and they lacked intensive care.

The dearth of teachers, poor infrastructure of schools and the limitations of schools in many villages were some of the outstanding obstacles. Physical limitations such as accommodation and facilities, which require finances were some related problems related to. With the passage of time, the BMS Missionaries gradually solved these problems through proper planning and thoughtful preparations of the

---

curriculum. Following a well-prepared syllabus and making use of available resources, there was a positive response from the Mizo and eventually there was a constant demand for educational ministry in several interior villages.

2. Attitudes towards Education of Girls

The attitude of parents towards the education of girls was particularly noted. The findings revealed that women had a low status in the Mizo society. Hence, education for them was disregarded; in fact they opposed the education of girls in the early period of the BMS ministry. The fundamental belief about education for girls was that it would only result in flirting with boys and they would be misled, ultimately bringing a bad name to their parents and community. The general notion was that an educated girl would not find a husband. The attitude towards education for women became a key problem in the early period of the BMS educational ministry.

Girls did not receive encouragement partly because they were needed to help their mothers at home. Parents' indifference towards the education of girls could be due to the traditional practice of distribution of work between boys and girls. The woman's place was at home and schooling did not have to do anything with it. Moreover, girls who were socially regarded as lower and inferior than that of men, received secondary consideration in the sphere of education too, the general contention being that it was “useless to give education to girls.”

The lady missionaries, Chapman and Clark, in Lunglei faced severe opposition at the beginning of opening a school for girls. While there was strong opposition to girl's education there was practically no whole-hearted opposition from the people

---

against education itself. Gradually, however, some parents took keen interest to educate their children irrespective of boys or girls. Eventually, if the education of girls was taken as a pointer to identify the improvement of a society, then the problem was being solved and the education of women was heading towards progress. Hence, like the wildfire that catches more fire, education of the early Mizo children continued to ‘infect’ other members in the Mizo community. The Mizo accepted that educational qualification was the prerequisite for better opportunity in the society and social mobility.

3. Provisions for Higher Education

There was no provision for higher studies within Mizoram for a long time. Lack of provision to higher education for those who have passed the Middle school was a big problem. Neither the Government nor the missionaries made serious efforts. The absence of high school for the Mizo for a long time was a serious limitation. The study revealed that the then Government had no interest or a policy to plan for the introduction of higher studies for the Mizo. An attempt on the part of missionaries was futile without the support of the government. Lack of understanding about the mission policy pertaining to the educational practice of the missionaries created some misunderstanding between some of the early-educated Mizo. The finding also reveals that the growth of the educational standard among the Mizo was not uniform and educational facilities among them were distributed unevenly.

4. The Problem of Coolie (forced labor)

The practice of Coolie advocated by the Government was one of the problems faced by the Mizo in the early period of the BMS ministry. By this, the Mizo youth

\[29\] Nikunja Behari Biswas, *Education in North East India* (Delhi: Nice Printing Press, 2005), 35.
from each family had to render service, carrying loads from place to place whenever the Government demanded. However, in response to the missionaries’ request, whoever enrolled in school was granted freedom from forced labor. The policy became a means to motivate the Mizo effectively to opt for schooling. Despite these early-reflected problems, the contributions of the BMS upon the Mizo society through educational ministry were immense, especially in the education of Mizo youths.

III. REASONS FOR THE INVOLVEMENT OF BCM IN EDUCATIONAL MINISTRY

The BCM involves itself in educational ministry due to four specific reasons;

A. Biblical Mandate

An overwhelming majority affirms the ultimate reason or aim of the educational ministry of the BCM is the Biblical mandate according to the command of Christ, the “Great Commission” or Great Charter of the Mission, “Go Ye…” (St. Mathew 28: 18-20) from which the BCM draws its motto, “Gospel for all.” The BCM undertakes educational ministry knowing that the real purpose of its educational work is not merely to educate, nor merely to remove obstacles and break down existing barriers, but to win pupils to Christ. Education then is emphatically the “handmaid of religion.”

The BCM is concerned with education and considers education as a means, direct or indirect, towards achieving its Biblical mandate. Therefore, education has been regarded and remains as one of the supremely valuable instruments of the BCM. In the process, the BCM needs to be aware that modern education aims at the balanced development of all aspects of personality in order to develop a program centered essentially on an individual child.
**B. Member Care**

The BCM educational ministry is responsible for nurturing its members. It is true that the purpose is to point Christ to people, that they be reconciled with Him. However, winning of converts is not merely the mission. The converts are to be gathered into churches, which will nourish the members and help them to take up the task of being useful to the church and others. This is where the BCM sincerely participates through educational ministry, where missionaries and evangelist teachers are expected to exert their influence with this end. Other related programs such as, seminars, leadership training, Literature workshops, Bible studies, Prayer meetings, Beirual (a special united efforts to win converts, to nurture), camping and crusades, apart from regular school ministry are the concern of the BCM with an objective of caring and nurturing its members.

**C. Response to People’s Need**

Responding to the need of the people or a particular group of people is an important reason of the BCM involving itself in educational ministry. Due to the financial constraints and lack of human resource, the BCM is not able to open mission schools in its entire dominance. However, the BCM after the practice of Jesus, is using the felt need of a person as a point of contact, is open and tries to respond to the felt-need of a particular tribe or people to venture in educational ministry. With this objective, the BCM seeks opportunities, investigates, surveys and studies the situation after which, on the basis of needs, a response is made.

---

30 This is an annual event of the Mizo Church, generally lasting for a month in the month of September. The whole congregation is aware of this program. The BCM plans and prepares principle guidelines for the success of this program.


32 Cf., under section on the reasons for the involvement of the BCM in educational ministry, in chapter four, 226-230.
D. Political and Economic Reasons

Was the BCM motivated by its desire to get political and economic influence in establishing its educational ministry? The finding strongly discounts the presence of any political and economic motive. This shows that the BCM is keen and cautious to get into this educational ministry purely for realizing the aim of the church. The aim of the BCM is seeking the lost human, viz, conversion, and planting churches. Church planting includes organizing them into churches, giving those churches a competent native ministry and conducting them to the stage of administrating with a plan to involve in propagation of the gospel.

IV. INDEBTEDNESS OF THE BCM

Close to the reason for the involvement of the BCM in educational ministry, its indebtedness to the same ministry was sought. It is found that the BCM also felt indebted for meeting various needs of the people specifically. These include meeting the spiritual needs of the people, educating church members, contributing to social transformation and establishing educational institution in the Government context.

There is a contradictory finding as to the question of meeting the spiritual need of the people and educating church members according to the leaders. While the executive leaders have indicated the spiritual need of the people as priority, the lay leaders affirmed that educating church members is a necessity. The two can be considered as equally important. Similarly divided opinion is expressed with regard to social transformation. The majority of the executive leaders stressed that educational ministry of the BCM for social transformation plays a major role and the lay leaders do not regard it as so. In the context of the Government, there are cases where the

---

33Khanna, History of Indian Education and its Contemporary Problem, 311.
34Ibid.
35Cf., under section on indebtedness of the BCM in Chapter four, 230-235.
Government undertaken schools do not satisfy the need of the people. The BCM is indebted to undertake and the issue is less significant in the opinion of both leaders.

V. EDUCATIONAL METHODS AND PRACTICES OF THE BMS

According to the overwhelming majority of both groups of leaders, it is deduced that the early method and practice of the BMS in its educational ministry was the establishment of educational centers to achieve their educational goal.

A. Model School Extension

"The school has been the principal agent of evangelism." The mission established a school with an object to make it a center for imparting education with evangelism implications. To help the pupils receive Christ, achieve a fully-integrated personality, to make a better society and be a change agent. It was imperative to help the student-converts to be an effective instrument in the church and in the society. The BMS fostered different schools, beginning with the Serkawn boys' school as a model for the propagation of the Christian faith. Reaching the Mizo community in different villages through this model school extension was the target; to this effect training of students was an important part of the ministry. The BMS started this model with children from the primary level to standard VI with a provision of hostel facilities for children from distant villages.

The school produced pioneer services in different walks of life of the people of Mizoram in general and for church ministry in particular. A survey of the school history revealed that the school has had a very rich heritage in the field of ministry,

---

36 Max Warren, Social History and Christian Mission, (London: SCM Press, 1967), 164. 'The school has been the principal agent of evangelism in the modern missionary movement' that began with the colonial expansion of the west, and ended with its decline. Until the very end of the colonial period, Christian education was very much part of the missionary enterprise and could not but be involved in the same controversy and confusion. The tendency was to confound the two distinct discourses and co-opt the secular one into the religious.

321
academics and athletic dimension in the BMS era. Quality and not quantity appeared to be the target of the school. Indeed, this school has become the model for extension to other villages. The missionaries and committed members of the faculty were the source of inspiration for the students who work with an increased sense of devotion and discipline. The educational ministry of the BMS was the fundamental basis for appreciation and acceptance of the missionaries by the Mizo people. The missionaries accessed families and others, both directly and indirectly through this model.

The reputation of the school for its moral and academic integrity and community concern advanced the cause of educational ministry of the BMS. It’s mandated educational mission included transmission of knowledge, the creation of attitudes and skill, the enrichment of individual, corporate life in a spiritual way, and the uplift of the Mizo community. This school played a significant role in the education of Mizo youth. The school has served the people not only of the southern region of Mizoram, but beyond and has been a torchbearer in the field of education and extra-curricular activities. So many eminent leaders, great teachers, important officers, doctors, and politicians of the church and society serving in the state in various capacities in the past and present are the proud products of this institution.

**B. Holistic Education**

The majority of both the leadership groups affirmed that the education of the BMS was holistic in nature. The vision of the pioneer missionaries was the introduction of Christianity through education. Amidst difficulties and obstacles from various dimensions, they fought their way to achieve their goal delivering people from spiritual, mental and social entangles. The holistic education was communitarian, service oriented and evangelical in objective. While the BMS have

---

stressed the latter, all these three principles were present in varying degrees at
different times in their mission. Savidge advocated obedience not as an ordinary
component but as the most essential characteristic. Conquest of fear was the need of
the hour for the then Mizo who were very superstitious in nature. To that end, the
scripture lessons imparted helped them to be confident, and self-independent, an
important foundation in the life of the Mizo. Thus, the characteristic of the model
school was holistic education, a "civilizing" purpose.

Pupils had developed real respect for the teaching of Christianity. Obedience
was a unique characteristic reflected. The socio aesthetic and moral sensibilities
related to every form of thought, word and deed was emphasized and encouraged for
the highest common good of the Mizo endearing human relationship. Generally, the
school preceded the church and in some cases where there is a church, a school also
existed. The missionaries' educational agenda was largely concerned with society and
ecclesiastical goals.

C. Encouraging Girls' Education

For some years the education was confined to men alone. The BMS
missionaries were zealous to encourage education for girls. They realized the Church
could not be developed on sound lines until women were given some basic education.
Therefore, the single lady missionaries Miss Chapman and Miss Clark arrived at
Lunglei to give education for girls.

The Mizo first reacted against the school system where girls spent so much
time indoors at their lessons. To them, this system was impracticable for girls, as they
had to do work related to outdoors. Therefore, the missionaries took note of this and
they did as much as possible to give girls' education out-doors, so that school life

38Khanna, History of Indian Education and its Contemporary Problem, 464.
must not spoil girls from not doing practical work outside. The lady missionaries emphasized the industrial aspect of education, teaching needlework, and weaving related skills, which helped them to be useful at home and developed confidence. The underlying principle was that they should make girls more useful in their homes and in society than they were without education.

The notable women who have completed the Lower Primary Examination in the initial period of girls’ education were only Thangteii, Lalsiami, Lianchhawni, Saithangi, Lianchami, Challiani and Darnghaki. The missionaries adopted the method of educating girls, which had a significant impact upon the status of women. The finding revealed that encouraging education of girls was an important approach that the BMS had undertaken. The education for boys and girls, men and women was specific in their approach.

To quote the first lady missionary teacher, “Our school is showing to the women of the Mizo country the meaning of abundant life, physical, mental and spiritual, which Jesus came to reveal.” Thus, the Mizo women had been introduced to modern education through the educational ministry of the BMS. The primary purpose was not merely reading and writing ability, but to raise Mizo women according to Christian principle. Women were encouraged to attend and participate in regular worship service.

---

40 K.L. Rokhuma, Mizoram Zirna, (Aizawl: BCM Com. Dept., 1998), 120. The general opinion about girl’s education was very low. Instead of appreciating some girls’ enrolling in school, they were mocked at by composing songs to irritate them and discourage the girls from continuation. Thangteii opined that boys were making fun of them so much so that, out of shame and discouragement many girls were compelled to leave the school.
41 Sykes, Mizo Miracle, 23.
D. Residential School and Co-Education School

Added to the mission school was the establishment of a hostel for those who could not afford to commute daily to the school, particularly from distant villages. The hostel facility was built in the vicinity of the school. Sending children to a mission residential school was a means by which the Mizo could get the benefit of education, both secular and religious. The residential school gave tremendous opportunity for the missionaries to raise the students in a good Christian atmosphere. Daily prayers, Bible study, and Christian values were incorporated into the daily routine. The program consisted of weekly Bible classes, weekly Sunday meetings with the missionaries and teachers leading the congregation.

The children heard stories of great heroes of different nations as well as from the Bible stories, which inspired the young minds with adventure, courage and commitment to higher values of life. Several offered themselves for the Christian ministry and others moved into the wider world and rose to positions of leadership and responsibility. Thus the residential school had been preferred through the years for training leaders under the leadership of missionaries.

The residential school provided an opportunity for upward mobility. Those who had completed the Primary course in the village school level became eligible to be admitted. It offered an opportunity to develop physically, intellectually, and spiritually. The missionaries and warden took meticulous care about development of personal cleanliness amongst the young students who learned to mend torn clothes, maintained cleanliness in the campus and the proper use of time. The teachers played outdoor games with the children and taught them to play a variety of games and to take part in Boy Scout and Girl Guide. This hostel became popular and parents...
preferred to send their children to these hostels as they provided much more than what the day schools had offered them.

The limitation of the residential school was that it could only educate a few children while the majority continued to live in villages, illiterate under influence of the age-old traditional way of life within the village communities. Co-Education was introduced when the Mizo had learnt to prize the value of education. Educational ministry and practices stressed the need of understanding the individual children and providing for their individual differences. Therefore, creating a school in which there were opportunities for boys and girls to get education was necessary. Such schools could be an asset to the society and they could cultivate a healthy social spirit, where competition and co-operation between boys and girls were happily blended to create a happy society. Hence, co-education was encouraged and it continues to be the normal practice till today.

VI. WAYS OF BMS PIONEERING EDUCATIONAL MINISTRY

The finding indicates that the BMS pioneered in several ways to implement their educational ministry goal. In this venture, the part played by the Sunday school ministry was highly recognized.

A. Literacy and Sunday School Ministry

The uniqueness of this Sunday school under the BMS was that it catered to a knowledge of reading and writing to the students apart from imparting the word of God. In fact, this basic teaching-learning process and Bible stories have attracted both the non-Christians and the Christians alike. Thus, the Sunday schools in the early days of the missionaries were closely linked with the literacy program of the BMS. The missionaries who asserted that they, “first taught reading and writing in the Sunday school affirmed the importance of Sunday school as an agency of imparting
literacy.” 42 This was also confirmed by a report, “in the absence of Day-schools, the Sunday school has been used for teaching to read, and most of the older people in Lushai [sic] learned to read this way.”43

It was here in Sunday school that Mizo whether Christians or non-Christians learned the basic reading, writing, the gospel of salvation, songs and bible stories and lessons on healthy living, enlarging their Christian worldview. The impact of Sunday school proved to be quite impressive, so that some of the non-Christian chiefs requested the missionaries to introduce Sunday school even where there was no Christian at all.44 Wherever there were Christians, the first consideration of the missionaries was the feasibility of the Sunday school with an object of introducing literacy class. This gave an additional impetus to elementary education. Sunday school ministry has become one of the ways by which the BMS developed its educational ministry in Mizoram. In case of a person unable to attend formal school, feasibility of attending Sunday school made one learn to read the Bible and hymnal.

B. Monitorial System45 of Teaching -Learning and Teacher Training

The practice of the monitorial system for teaching learning process in the school and in the Sunday school was an ideal method pioneered by the BMS. The missionaries could not educate the whole community in Mizoram. Therefore, giving training to students who could be models for schoolteachers was a good practice.

43Thanzauva, Reports of the Foreign Mission, 133.
44Lalarmhluana, “Adult Sunday School”. 68.
45J.P. Naik & Syed Nurullah, A Students’ History of Education in India 1800-1973 (Delhi: The Macmillan Company of India, 1974), 31. The idea of Monitorial system originated in India. It was the Indian system of teaching with the help of monitors- a system that prevailed extensively in the indigenous schools. Dr. Bell, the Presidency Chaplain at Madras, was the first Englishman to realize the value of this system. The main advantage of the system was to enable the teacher to manage a large number of pupils at a time so that the spread of education could be affected at a very low cost. Bell advocated the adoption of this system in England. This Monitorial system was the chief method by which England achieved expansion of primary education at a very low cost between 1801-1845.
Teacher training was emphasized then and this needs to be emphasized within the BCM paradigm even today. What we need at present is interactive teaching methods. A high degree of interaction with the teacher will enhance the learning experience of children.

**C. Extra-Curricular and Missionary Emphases**

An extra-curricular activity was of prime importance in the BMS educational ministry identified according to both leaders. Creating an environment of a loving family was of necessity in the hostel community life and in school life. This was fostered by means of extra-curricular activities. The constant supervision and encouragement of the missionaries in the weak moments of the students proved helpful. A key ingredient in the process of BMS education was missionary emphasis demonstrated in different aspects of education and spiritual exercises.

**D. Value Education**

The respondents are divided as to affirm whether the BMS pioneered in values education in educational ministry. According to the major finding, values education was not an important pursuit of the BMS and particularly more than half of the lay leaders considered that this was the least important. It may be understood that in the early days of the BMS, Christian values were integrated and imparted in all the activities of the school education and that values education was not specifically emphasized. The missionaries have made conscious efforts that pupils were given religious and moral education.

---

47 J. T. K. Daniel, *Value Education Today* (Madras: Madras Christian College, 1990), 4. According to the dictionary the word value means, "the quality of being desirable." Values are terms given to an accepted attitude or behavior of an individual in a society, which has proved beneficial to the individual, and the society.
However, it appears that this has less emphasis in the present generation. Over the years, we see in schools that more stress is being given on gaining factual cerebral knowledge while; children are more exposed to the evils of society today. Due to modern system of media, the children are constantly exposed to so many unhealthy things on the televisions, computers, magazines, newspapers and movies that may be harmful to them. This is the reason why values education needs to be re-enforced to the children today.

VII. EDUCATIONAL STRATEGIES OF THE BCM

The missionaries have not only given the people of Mizo the mandate of education mission but also the methodology. The BCM followed the footstep of the BMS even today giving priority to mission, particularly establishing schools as its strategy.48

A. Medium of Instruction in English49

The two groups of leadership respondents advocated the establishment of an English medium school as an important strategy advocated by the BCM. Education continued to be the main “tool” of effectual means of spreading the light of the gospel. At present the BCM directs its attention to establishing more English medium schools rather than vernacular schools. This spirit is guided by the genuine concern to meet the growing need of the people.

The idea of an English Medium School has become very popular in Mizoram. Many fictitious schools name themselves as “so and so English Medium School.”

---

48 By strategy, the researcher implies those approaches and methods that the BCM has adopted for the purpose of achieving its educational ministerial goal. Strategy is the chosen means to accomplish a predetermined goal. In this respect, it also means that it is a deliberate, formulated and duly executed plan of action, based on the need of the people and conviction of the BCM. Developing a strategy for the educational ministry is of prime importance for achieving the set goal, which is more specific than an objective.

49 Naik and Syed, A Student’s History of Education in India (1800-1973), 337.
They are mushrooming day by day. Even the remote corners of the country are dotted with such “English Medium school- education.” For some this phrase is the way to raise money and quality of their credentials. Today most parents appear to be crazy to admit their children to an English Medium school, where education is directly linked to social status.

In this consumeristic society, English Medium School is the best-selling commodity in this consumerist society. Any one looking for a job or for a life-partner automatically looks for an educated person, preferably fluent in English. May be the church considers the potentiality of these English schools which have come to mean, at least in Mizoram, as the brain nerve that provides the best education to the youngsters. No one can deny the fact that English today has become to mean something more than it meant several years ago. Hence, the BCM is challenged with the implementation of opening several English Medium schools.

Thus, the findings reveal that the most important strategy was the emphasis on the English as the medium of Instruction in the educational ministry of the BCM. The role of an English medium school in comparison with the vernacular one needs to be further studied. It has become a status symbol. Just the word, “English Medium” affixed to the name of the school, is all that is needed to make people come from a long distances for admission.

B. Targeting People for Education

Targeting people for the operation of educational ministry under the BCM is one of the strategies applied. The General Assembly of the BCM chose to target a section of the people or group with which to exercise its educational ministry

---

50 Cf., section on Educational strategy in Chapter four, 245, 253 and 261.
51 Rawat, History of Indian Education, 366.
according to the felt-need. This is being realized through the proper channel on the basis of demand and request made by the people or society in need. The General Assembly, after serious consideration often resolved to appoint a commission for a spot investigation and feasibility study; accordingly, a detailed report is submitted to the General Assembly of the BCM. After a serious consideration, the Assembly used to make the final decision whether to operate as a target project. The resolution is then officially declared and becomes operative with further necessary plans and actions.

C. Financial and Human Resource Investment

Once the BCM’s final decision is taken on an educational ministry for a particular tribe or place, the concerned committee is in full operation for the proposed work plan. All the financial involvement required for the construction of school buildings, construction of quarters for staff, salaries for faculty and staff are budgeted basically from the BCM fund. The BCM invests its financial resources and provides human resources for running the educational ministry to function properly. The BCM’s involvement in educational ministry is not to seek financial gain, but with more of an obligation to advance the cause of Christ, hence it is responsible to give the lion’s share of finance and to provide human resources.

Nonetheless, with a purpose to create a sense of belonging for the parents and children, a minimum school fee is collected from the students wherever it is practicable. Fees collected from the students of the Boarding schools are quite minimal. In these schools the teacher-student ratio is kept low to pay more attention to individual student.

Presently, the BCM has established a system of a child sponsorship program in its educational ministry. This system recognizes and mediates personal relationships between donors ready to pay a regular monthly/annual fees and the
needy children in several BCM schools. The money thus obtained is used to finance students for education. The donors want to support and educate young people from Christian homes, so that in the future they will be able to support themselves and their families, above all, to play a significant role in building the Kingdom of God.

Many committed Mizo people become foster parents for children of impoverished families, who are accommodated in residential schools run by the BCM. The introduction of this facility for the orphans, the poor and the destitute may bring hope for hundreds of children. The only standard for the selection of the children is their need, with an expectation of their being useful for the future ministry.

**D. Evaluation System**

The teachers determine the progress of pupils on the basis of examination.

The teachers determine the progress of pupils on the basis of examination. It provides a basis for evaluation of a pupil’s progress. Moreover, the field director of the mission fields or representatives of the BCM education committee often undertake inspection of BCM schools and this practice checks and enhances the on-going school ministry. This practice gives incentives towards achieving the educational goals of the school. The reports serve as a good feedback for the home authority and sponsors.

Monthly report of evangelist teachers, half yearly reports and annual reports of the schools from the head of the institutions to the headquarters are mandatory for necessary evaluation.

**VIII. OTHER EDUCATIONAL STRATEGIES FROM THE LEADERS’ VIEW**

The leaders of both groups representing the BCM have indicated several other operative strategies within the educational ministry of the BCM. These are grouped

---

53Cf., on section under Educational strategy in chapter four, 245, 250.
under the following domains, Social transformation, Education, Human Resource Development, and Religious Education and Evangelism.

A. Social Transformation

The finding affirms social transformation as one of the important strategies within its educational paradigm. These are categorized under the following two themes

1. Adult Education

The provision of adult education among a selected group of people by the BCM, helped to enlighten the social aspect and spiritual life of the people. A section of people who had no opportunity of availing the formal school had a chance for remedial education through the adult education program. Adult education imparts skills in reading, which helps them to read scriptures and the hymnal, with simple calculation. This provision serves an upward mobility of the community. The need for strengthening adult education efforts is obvious in order to eradicate illiteracy and ignorance.

2. Rehabilitation Center

The BCM with a purpose to cater to the need of alcoholics and drug addicts established a rehabilitation center at the headquarters. This strategy also serves as an important vehicle to reach out to people who are lost and helpless. This center plays an important role to bring the gospel of Christ and His liberating power to save the victims and to help rehabilitate their lives.

---

54Rawat, History of Indian Education, 365.
55Cf., section under social transformation in chapter four, 253.
B. Educational Dimension

1. Formal Education

Giving a formal school education to the less privileged people is a prominent strategy of the BCM as repeatedly indicated. So the utilitarian concept of the school is common to all the leaders and is still considered to be an important strategy. The formal school education enabled people to be enlightened. While this being so, it is time to throw the search light of study upon the place of education in the BCM ministry today. Perhaps much too great an emphasis has been placed upon the efficacy of formal school, and that it is necessary to study the reality of the situation honestly and fearlessly for evangelistic purpose. However, the use of formal schools in the BCM ministry should not be taken for granted.

2. Establishing a Residential School

The need to establish residential schools, starting with primary level to the high school level is seen as an important strategy by the majority of the BCM leader respondents. The concept of sending the child away to a hostel or leaving the child in the care of committed teachers or missionary teachers are becoming familiar among the Mizo parents today. This opportunity has not been available to the parents of the low- socio-economic level. Even though the BCM has introduced this hostel facility for boys and girls in the headquarters and in some of the mission fields, it is not widely introduced within Mizoram.

3. Emphasis on Quality Education

According to the leaders, there is an induction of providing qualitative educational system in the educational ministry of the BCM and this has been one of the

---

56Bhatia and Bhatia, A Book of Education for Beginners, 9.
57Nurullah, A Students' History of Education in India (1800-1973), 491. See also Khanna, History of Indian Education and its Contemporary Problem, 118.
important recognized strategies. Practicing a grading system and giving special emphasis on practical work with implementations of games and sports are being practiced to improve the impartation of quality education. However, some of the suggestions made by the leaders implied that the quality of education was not up to their expectation. The common suggestions are listed-1. Education of the BCM needs to focus on employability of the students, 2. The Education of the BCM needs to be comparatively superior to the Government school and other private schools to be a significant strategy; 3. Apart from being academically oriented, emphasis on spiritual formation for children should be the main thrust; 4. To strive for creating a sense of belonging within the management of the school; 5. Providing opportunities to the promising students for higher studies with financial assistance.

4. Holistic Education

The leaders of the BCM repeatedly mentioned that imparting holistic education for the common good is of prime importance. Hence, the educational ministry involves implementing skill-training programs in crafts, music and extracurricular activities apart from textbook based education. It is however observed that the educational ministry of the BCM needs improvements towards holistic education, giving several suggestions.

Some of the dominant suggestions are, 1. To ensure that efforts are taken to impart holistic education for the highest common good of the students and to organize seminars on various related issues; 2. To ensure a nurturing program for personal spiritual and academic exercise is given; 3. To ensure good relationship between the staff; 4. To give vocational education especially in the secondary school level to meet

---

58 Ibid., 320.
59 Cf., on section under other educational strategies of the BCM in chapter four, 262.
the demand of the complicated and specialized vocations of the present society; 5. To establish an institution for higher studies up to the degree level within the BCM supervision. 6. To remodel the traditional system of teaching methods practiced in the schools, 7. Introduce English medium schools under each pastorate to be financed by the church fund; 8. Empowering students and educators by giving teaching in information technology and providing an access to computers to enhance the strategy of holistic education; 9. Reviving scriptural teachings and inculcation of Christian values and principles to the students is anticipated. It is explicitly mentioned that the BCM has neglected the development of higher intellectual pursuit by failing to open a Christian college.

C. Human Resource Development

The leadership development is an important strategy of the BCM educational ministry. Students involved in diverse activities of the school program are in turn able to discharge different responsibilities to come forward as leaders in the church and society.

1. Teacher Training

Educational theory and practices stress the need of understanding individual children and providing for their individual differences. Therefore training of teachers, in this field is very important so that the teacher is able to better understand the child. The BCM sends teachers for in-service training at the Government training center. This is found to be limited and it has been further suggested that sending teachers to institutions outside of the state rather than the Government center within the state, may produce better results. The quality of teachers enhances the quality of education, which is so much in demand.

60Rawat, History of Indian Education, 389.
2. Emphasis on Job-Oriented Education

The principle of BCM is to be self-supported, self-propagating and self-administering. It is generally expected that this should reflect in the educational paradigm of the BCM. Accordingly, within its limited resources, the BCM emphasized the inclusion of skill training programs, e.g. carpentry, tailoring and crafts in to the educational activities as far as practicable. These strategies are useful for producing self-employment to a certain extent. However, the BCM has to take steps towards placing emphasis on those studies, which will further enhance the potentials of the students to make them employable in various capacities.

D. Religious Education and Evangelistic Implication

Incorporating scriptural teachings into the schools is a vital strategy. There is a strong emphasis on spiritual development in the BCM institutions, enriched by morning devotions, crusades, scripture classes and evangelistic campaigns accompanied by Christian music. Developing a Christian value system through these practices is an important strategy for the BCM educational ministry. The BCM ministry can be both social as well as religious. The social aim being that it should prepare an individual to build a happy, prosperous and disciplined society through the building of young individuals, physically, mentally, academically and spiritually so that they may be capable of adapting to the changing society today.

IX. FUTURE PROJECTION OF THE EDUCATIONAL MINISTRY OF THE BCM

Views, visions and values of the leaders of the BCM concerning the future of the BCM educational ministry were investigated. These were sought in relation to the

---

future of evangelism under the BCM, its contribution towards nation building and their anticipated change and suggestions for concrete improvement.

A. Future of BCM Evangelism

A significant number of both leadership groups affirmed that evangelism is the guiding principle of the educational ministry of the BCM. They did not deny that education is one of the main instruments for evangelism. However, the leaders have expressed that more evangelistic thrust is given in the mission fields outside Mizoram. School education is in practice without much emphasis on evangelism. There is much scope for evangelism outside of Mizoram where the BCM is operating and this is intensified by the constant invitation made to the BCM.

One of the key findings is the decline of evangelistic efforts in the BCM school education within Mizoram and the future of evangelism with the educational ministry of the BCM is vague. The reason cited for this is the lack of commitment on the part of the missionary educators as well as the people concerned. Some of them portrayed clearly that the work of evangelism is a failure in some areas and there is danger that the BCM simply runs schools neglecting evangelism. Some of them are very skeptical about the success in the future for evangelism. They have emphatically reminded in their responses that education itself is not an end, but should be a means to evangelism.

Despite this pessimistic view of the future of evangelism, the majority of the leaders have confirmed the positive aspect of the educational ministry of the BCM in evangelism. They indicated that evangelism would continue to be an indispensable part of the BCM education and hence will continue to play an important role especially in the mission fields. To this end, an overwhelming majority suggested several significant points to be implemented in the educational system of the BCM to improve the evangelism aspect.
The variety of suggestions to be incorporated with the perceived future of the prospect of evangelism indicates that certainly the future of evangelism of the BCM in relation to educational ministry is not very sound. One of the lay leaders went further to say that unless more stress is given on evangelism, there is a danger that evangelism and education would be separated.

Furthermore, one of the executive leaders opted that educational ministry which is more expensive be surpassed by direct evangelism as it is less expensive. It is highly imperative the BCM recognize that the time has come for a greater concentration on the direct preaching of the gospel, which means getting back to the basic, direct-evangelism. As the prime task of the BCM is planting a real church of Christ, there is an indication of curtailing the customary educational activities. The general fear indicated repeatedly is, however necessary schools may have been vital to the development of the indigenous church, unless strong measures are taken, it may no longer serve the purpose of its existence.

**B. Contribution towards Nation-Building**

The educational ministry of the BCM is assumed to have made a great contribution to the individuals, church, and society and to the nation at large. With an objective of finding how the leaders perceived this toward the nation, their views were sought. The finding reveals that youths of today are the future leaders of tomorrow and therefore by imparting quality education will prepare the students to contribute for the nation. By imparting Christian principles coupled with impartation of Indian national values and good deeds no subject will surely contribute for nation building in different dimensions. By participating in the national education policy, such as eradicating the problem of illiteracy, including an additional awareness for Drugs and HIV, and by

---

promoting human potentials and national integrity, the BCM will contribute towards nation building.

The government made provisions for the BCM in terms of providing in-service teacher training in its training institutions; by giving grant in-aids to the institutions and giving official recognition in the Board examination. These facilities greatly accelerated the progress of the BCM, which in turn served for national progress.

Several suggestions are obtained to enhance nation building:

1. By providing holistic education with integrated curriculum.
2. By producing educated, dynamic and accountable scholars/theologians to challenge or give constructive advice to national leaders.
3. To bring about social, political and economic transformation and also national integrity among the neglected and backward classes of the people by means of the BCM educational ministry.
4. By introducing values-based education to bring about a healthier society.
5. By establishing learning centers to promote science and technology with an aim to train and produce potential leaders.
6. By giving equal opportunity to men and women.

C. Anticipated Change in the Overall Educational Ministry of the BCM

The leaders anticipated significant changes in the educational ministry of the BCM. The key focus being, change in a curriculum that does not meet the need of the people sufficiently. The need to re-examining the relevancy of the curriculum for the educational ministry of the BCM is expressed. General practice of an examination-oriented system of education needs to be looked into and the need for a paradigm shift to employability-oriented education anticipated. Exchange of teaching ministry between the schools is anticipated by some of the educationist leaders for exposure and
teaching-learning purpose. Organizing exposure tours for both the teachers and students is anticipated to enhance the educational process.

One significant anticipated change is the change in BCM educational policy with regards to establishing schools. Generally, priority is given to mission fields outside of Mizoram to run an educational center. It is suggested that more emphasis should be given within Mizoram, where the medium of instruction is English. Change to English Medium is also anticipated to be in operation in the Primary and middle schools among the non-Mizo groups (the Bru and Chakma).

The findings indicate that there has been a deterioration demonstrated over the past years in the quality of education, and this has to do a lot with both the spiritual and academic dimensions. Hence, improvement for quality education with emphasis on moral guidance and academic progress is anticipated. Change in educational approach with the basic understanding of education and its implications needs to be re-emphasized. One of the executive leaders has mentioned that there should be a change in approach from mission/evangelism centric to social transformation. This indicates the need to strike a balance between evangelism and education. Giving an equal importance in educational activities both within and outside Mizoram is an anticipated change.

One of the key issues is the idea of having central schools in a few selected places with better infrastructures, trained teachers and modern facilities, so that the educational goals of the BCM in evangelism, church planting and towards nation-building, which are holistic in nature, will be able to be implemented. Appointment of well-trained, dedicated and committed teachers towards the cause of the Gospel of Christ and to education itself with a capability of building good relationship for the all
round development of the students is an anticipated change relevant for the ongoing educational processes of the BCM.

A highly qualified-educational expert to supervise and look after the functioning of the educational ministry of the BCM both within and outside Mizoram is envisaged. Up-grading the educational program from the Higher Secondary School to the degree level is an anticipated change for the future BCM educational ministry, with an emphasis on technical education. These anticipations, in the final analysis, will result in consolidation of the BCM educational ministry, affecting Mizoram with socio-economic, political and religious transformation.

**D. Concrete Ways to Improve For Future Educational Ministry**

Any futuristic projection can be highly speculative. However, on the basis of their observations, the leaders of the BCM were approached to project concrete ways for the improvement of the BCM. Establishing a quality teacher-training institute appears to be the most significant aspect for improvement. Here more stress should be given to the training in English language. With the medium of instruction in English in demand, it is necessary to have teachers professionally trained for teaching language skills. Moreover, having all teachers under the BCM undergo training at the theological college of the BCM (AICS) is also mentioned specifically.

A provision of a teacher-theologian in the BCM schools for religious instructions is suggested. This would facilitate the need of students in counseling. Educating church members on the importance of education and its implications is seriously considered, and communication of the objectives and plans of the school ministry need to be clearly informed.
A staff development program is seen as an important project to be incorporated. Organizing a Refresher Course and arranging consultation meetings and seminars for teachers are envisaged.

Re-evaluation of the educational program as well as the overall curriculum of the BCM is the prime task. The overall educational programs of the BCM need to be undergirded with a Biblical world-view.

The establishment of a central school as a model is more strongly opted for than having schools in several places with poor infrastructure. Provision of better infrastructure and an increase in the annual budget for finance to meet the growing demands of the educational system is found to be the concrete way of improvement.

Conversion of all the schools under the BCM to an English Medium standard is noted as an important step to be taken. The overwhelming suggestion that came up is the impartation of quality education and re-vamping the exam-oriented method of teaching.

Affiliation of the BCM Secondary Schools to the prominent central Board, such as ICSE and CBSE are suggested as a step for concrete improvement of the BCM educational ministry. Establishing a Christian college for Arts and Science. A significant improvement was predicted and an increased strength was advocated by most of the leaders provided the following suggested short-lists are implemented by the BCM.

1. To let the BCM pay all expenses of the BCM institutions in order to stop any outside interference.
2. Implementing more Biblical subjects.
3. Establishing more Residential schools for boys and girls.
4. Improving the physical condition of the schools with modern equipment for the teaching-learning process.

5. Close supervision is required and the formation of education board for the same.

6. Having stated goals and purposes clearly.

7. To install educationist, integrated personality with dynamic leadership for the post of the head of the institutions.

8. Engaging more theological graduates in the BCM schools.

9. A change in educational approach from evangelism-centered to social-transformation oriented is also suggested in contrary to the suggestion for the enforcement of evangelical emphasis.

10. A quantitative to qualitative approach needs to be the focal point.

11. A good financial management and administrative system in the school re-emphasized.

12. Giving importance to holistic education.

13. Providing committed teachers and staff with a clear vision of the objectives of the BCM.

14. Making arrangements with other schools for exchange programs, which will enhance the learning process in the BCM educational ministry.

The research shows that a number of contemporary church leaders are of the view that there is a need for drastic change in the educational structure of the BCM to make a genuine impact on the Mizo and other tribes. Apparently there is a sense of frustration over not being able to minister effectively, partly because of lack of specialized training. The evidence clearly indicated a need for assisting the ministry with specialized training in education. There is definitely inadequacy in the educational
ministry of the BCM, as the major findings indicated, and these were good indicators of the need for different approaches to be undertaken by the BCM for its future development in educational ministry.