CONCLUSIONS

As I have come to this final chapter, first of all, I would like to draw some conclusions from the major areas of this dissertation. Therefore, this chapter involves the summaries of what has been described in the study. Secondly, I will present recommendations to the leaders and decision makers of the Baptist Church of Mizoram to whom the questionnaire was directed on the basis of the research findings. The conclusions and the recommendations arise from the main themes of the research and the observations and experience of the researcher, an insider of the Baptist denomination in Mizoram. Thirdly, I shall point out future directions that need further research.

I. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

This thesis encompasses the domain of educational ministry of the BCM with particular reference to the work of the BMS, the alma mater of the BCM. Two events took place in the 1890s in Mizoram that changed the shape of the socio-religious and political scenario, a scene, which had not been hitherto recognized. The first was the occupation of the land by the British Colonial power, which was the fulfillment of the interest of the British in subduing the Mizo tribe from their warfare. This became a turning point for the Mizo, in the socio-political arena. The British put an end to the head hunting, as well as inter-tribe and inter-village feuds. In the social systems, the British Government followed a policy of non-interference and had allowed the Mizo chiefs to continue ruling their villages under their own authority.

The second decisive event was the entry of the British missionaries and the introduction of Christianity, which changed the worldview of the Mizo and the foundation of the Mizo society. These two events, a little over a hundred years ago, played a decisive role in changing the history of the Mizo. In aim and plan, the main
objective of the missionaries had been evangelization. To them the gospel alone could restore the Mizo from their age-old beliefs ridden with superstitious practices and fears. In order to accomplish their goal they employed education through the system of formal schools.

Hence, from the inception of the missionaries' arrival into Mizoram, education became the handmaid of Christianity. The missionaries monopolized education, taking charge of general administration, inspection, and management of teachers, appointment of teachers, curriculum setting and examinations. The Government only made grants and offered scholarships. Consequently, in Mizoram education went hand in hand with Christianity, and the progress of Christianity was accompanied by an increasing degree of education. Thus, the missionaries were successful in converting the entire indigenous population of Mizoram and in establishing the self-governing, self-supporting and self-propagating church of the BCM.

The BMS missionaries were pioneers in starting the educational work in Mizoram. This is clearly reflected in their first work in northern Mizoram in 1894. The Duhlien dialect spoken by the majority of the Mizo tribes was transcribed into Roman script and it became the Lingua franca of the Mizo and came to be called as Mizo Tawng (the language of the Mizo). This language brought unity and understanding among the Mizo to a great degree. The BMS missionaries officially began their educational activities in the south Mizoram again in 1903. Winning the native population through educational activities has been the strategy of these early BMS missionaries. The growth and development of education under them showed the urgency and commitment of the missionaries in initiating the educational ministry. The impact of this ministry was so great that their mission schools became the nucleus of enlightenment for the Mizo and the beginning of the formation of the BCM.
The key principles of the educational ministries of the BMS are summed up as:

1. The introduction of Christianity and planting churches;
2. The establishment of institutions as a center for evangelism;
3. Training native leadership for Christian ministry; and
4. Imparting knowledge for the social life of the people.

These basic principles in the education of the Mizo were employed by the BMS to train and delegate the work of evangelism and church planting in Mizoram. The means they employed for this purpose was spiritual, namely, the gospel of Christ. The power on which they relied to give efficacy to these means was also divine, the Holy Spirit. The function was chiefly carried through the mission schools, the Sunday schools and other means of evangelism.

This influence resulted in the establishment of a local church, which served as a nucleus for the accomplishment of their missions. The BMS intended to "diffuse" Christian knowledge through the whole of Mizoram by carrying out a meaningful educational ministry. By this, it can be summed up that the educational approach of the BMS missionaries in Mizoram was a holistic approach.

The beginning of the BMS mission to Mizoram in the later part of 19th century was indeed small and was neither effectively supported by the British government agents nor actively opposed. However by 1904, The Chief Commissioner’s pronouncement for the missionaries to be the official agents of education in Mizoram was a momentous decision. The missionaries’ agenda was largely concerned with religious and ecclesiastical goals in their educational enterprises. They deserve much credit for their contribution in education without allowing themselves to be diverted from the task of establishing an indigenous Mizo Church. The early methods of the BMS apart from educational institutions were the medical services, the running of
orphanages and the printing press. These agencies served as the means through which evangelism was carried out.

Basically the missionaries came to preach the gospel to the people and, after helping them to be the followers of Christ, incorporated them into the churches. Their primary objectives were to win people for Christ and to plant churches. Several methods were used for communicating the gospel. While undertaking different educational, industrial, and medical ministries the missionaries did not neglect evangelism.

The BMS missionaries started primary schools with the vernacular language at the primary level and English at the Middle level. Pupils of both sexes were encouraged to enroll in these schools. Formal school education, as a part of the missionary task, was undoubtedly a successful avenue for approaching the Mizo people with Christian faith. Four kinds of institutions can be distinguished from the beginning of the educational ministry of the BMS in Mizoram, 1. Elementary schools related to church and mission station. 2. A school for girls and 3. The establishment of the Middle English schools and Middle Vernacular School.

Basically, these kinds of institutions formed the largest part of formal BCM Mission education, and the typology helps us to derive some provisional but pertinent conclusions. First, the school was the cutting edge of direct evangelization. The pioneer missionaries used schools as a means of evangelization. They founded and ran schools as instruments of missionary expansion as well as agencies of community consolidation. Schools were used for preaching the gospel to the students as well as to instruct and educate the converted.

Second, the medium of instruction was in the vernacular, especially for religious and primary education. It was later that English was introduced, more for
political than pedagogic reasons. Third, the schools' first concern was to provide adequate teachers and evangelists, although they seldom developed beyond middle school. The nature of the mission schools had a "civilizing" purpose as well.

The very existence of the BCM and its continued involvement in educational ministry is primarily a witness to this task. The principles adopted by the BMS have now come to be regarded as a vested right, or as an unalterable department of the BCM mission program today. The BCM cannot actively involve itself in mission without linking itself intimately with the establishment of an educational center in its fields.

The BCM was convinced that starting formal schools and imparting Christian knowledge brought about a transformational change in the Mizo society. The mission schools served as the right places to sow the seed of truth about the living God and the saving grace of Jesus Christ in the minds of the children who came under their influence. Through the mission schools, they were able to upgrade the moral and ethical standards of the students.

Added to the formal schools was the establishment of the hostels. The residential schools were means by which students could benefit from a secular as well as a religious education. Hostels gave tremendous opportunity for the missionaries to raise students in a good Christian atmosphere. Daily prayers, Bible study and Christian values were incorporated into the daily routine. Through the students the mission established contacts with their parents.

Implementing vocational courses was also a way of teaching pupils to professionally stand on their own feet. The students were taught carpentry, weaving, laundry, basket making and agricultural work. This novel effort developed, in the students a sense of desire to learn new skills. For the girls, the missionaries were
zealous to develop the industrial side of their education. They taught needlework, embroidery, and weaving and related skills, which helped them to contribute to their families and develop self-confidence.

The missionaries gave a strong emphasis to starting Sunday schools. The response to Sunday school Ministry was substantial in terms of the number of children. The Sunday schools definitely strengthened the existing school and church ministry, equipping men and women to be effective witnesses. The importance of Sunday school as an agency of general education cannot be underestimated in the context of the BMS.

The BMS missionaries were pioneers in the field of education for girls. Opposing the prevalent superstitions and societal roles the lady missionaries took it as a challenge to educate the girls and women. They strongly believed that educating the women would improve the general state of the society. The initiative taken by the BMS missionaries in providing education to the Mizo gave a new hope and dignity to Mizo women. Their great objective in the school was not merely to make pupils good learners, but to make them good citizens of the society. Therefore, all the instructions were based on Christian principles and practice. Rarely did missionaries compromise their goal of educating the Mizo with these objectives.

Thus, the main instrument for changing the status of Mizo women was the introduction of education for girls. Women acquired new roles in the church as well as in the society. Gradually the importance of education for women was understood and the girls were sent to schools, resulting in girls joining high schools and colleges even outside Mizoram. Several of them became highly educated. In the last few years women's education has made tremendous progress. As a result, today a number of well-educated women hold responsible positions in the Government and corporates sector in Mizoram and beyond.
One of the fundamental concerns of the BMS was the development of students. For this purpose, right from the inception of their ministry they developed a system of giving special care to potential students for teaching jobs. Leadership development occupied an important place in the early ministry. The mission became successful in specializing in the English language and training eligible leaders. The mission schools primarily existed as means of evangelizing for church planting and the introduction of training of leaders for the indigenous church.

The Mizo traditional system of education lacked the modern system of education and the British government held itself aloof from such ventures. The origin of the present system of education in Mizoram started with the activities of the pioneer missionaries; in addition, they were largely responsible for implementing and stabilizing the model of education with the vernacular as the medium of instruction.

The BMS integrated academics with a view of spreading the Gospel of Christ. The educational programs were geared to relate to the life and work of the people, oriented in the most appropriate manner to achieve the set objectives of the missionaries. The formal school served as the seedbed for the light of the Gospel with the result that they have turned away from many unnecessary traditional practices. The teaching-learning process has encouraged children to read and memorize scriptures. They became the backbone of the Mizo in the field of secular and Christian education. A disciplined life was cultivated in the mission schools for both teachers and learners. The products of mission schools perpetuate this disciplinary life even till the present day.

There was also a desire on the part of the missionaries to spread the western life style in manner of conversation and living standard, of which they were, for sometimes, the chief interpreters. Mission educational products of men and women
have been creative catalysts for social transformation in Mizoram since the missionary era. Indeed, for a long time, Christian educationists had stood at the top of the educational hierarchy, not only as pioneers but also as leaders in the two principal functions of formal education that of imparting of knowledge and inculcation of Christian values in Mizoram.

The education of the mission opened up new horizon for the students whose knowledge was exceedingly limited. Consequently, they brought the stimulus of a foreign civilization, novelty and prestige among the Mizo. The BMS School has done an indispensable work. The BMS educational center at Serkawn became the model for the BCM in its mission education. We see mission and evangelism at the center of the early church in Mizoram through this model of educational ministry.

The missionaries’ education assisted in stimulating the government to make provisions for an educational system in Mizoram. In helping to tackle the problem of illiteracy, the mission contributed much towards the raising of the general level of education and intelligence among the common people, who had unprecedented opportunities of propagating Christianity. The spiritual contribution that the BMS rendered to the people of Mizoram besides general education or any other social or economic uplift is noteworthy. The moral and spiritual instructions in the schools had a great appeal to the Mizo people and Christianity was virtually spread throughout the length and breadth of Mizoram over half a century. The mission schools were among the best organized and best managed in the country. In all, mission education stood on a pedestal during the missionaries’ regime. The BMS gave the people a strong impulse to renew their thoughts on problems of traditional religion and morals in the light of Christian education.
Missionaries helped the Mizo community acquire a due sense of unity centering on a common religion, and the gap was soon cemented by the common faith and the introduction of Roman script as the common script. The same dialect for religious books and hymns paved the way to solidarity and became the most important factor in the success of the new religion creating a new and integrated community.

A distinct weakness of the BMS education was that emphasis was given only to primary education and middle schools, and no serious efforts were taken for higher education. This neglect led the Government to take positive steps to correct the imbalance created in the 1950s. The rate of growth in the number of schools in Mizoram in the succeeding years has been accelerated in view of the urgent needs of the Mizo. Many primary schools have been raised to middle school and high school levels by the government and the private sectors.

Ironically, by the turn of the 1950s when most of the Mizo become Christians, there began a paradigm shift in the education of the Mizo due to changes in the political arena. First, the educational development in Mizoram underwent changes. In 1952, the Government took the monopoly of direct responsibility of supervision of Primary and Middle schools in Mizoram from the hands of the missionaries. The Christian institutions had been displaced from their crucial position in education by the expansion of government schools. Due to this change, mission schools lost their standing that they once possessed in general education and became part of an educational system with a subordinate role to play. The findings revealed that there was a decline in the number of Christian schools and their effectiveness. In addition to this, the District Council of Mizoram, which came into being in 1954, took up the supervision and general administration of school education from 1961.
However the famine of 1959 throughout Mizoram had repercussions in bringing political disturbance in the 1960s, which had consequences for educational development. A number of villages were grouped for political and administrative reasons and this definitely led to the decrease in the numbers of primary schools. However the enrolment per school increased which had an adverse effect on the quality of education. In fact there has been stagnation in the progress of education.

Second, as a result of the integration of the Mission and Church in 1959, the BMS handed the administration of the church and the church related schools to the native Christian leaders. The educational work, which had been under the mission, became totally the concern of the BCM. Encouraged by this new sense of responsibility, the BCM took its missionary commitment seriously. Consequently, a separate Mission and Evangelism Committee was created and entrusted with specific responsibility to recruit and send native missionaries. Certain measures concerning the policy adopted were:

1. Handing over of educational institutions to the government, which was in effect since 1947.
2. Concentrating on the policy of the church;
3. Introducing a mission high school, culminating in the opening of a Christian high school at Serkawn, which is upgraded to the status of Baptist Higher Secondary School today.
4. Establishing a theological institution;
5. Rethinking the task of educational activity in the creation of English Medium schools meaningfully.

The school system has become a long-accepted form as a justifiable method of carrying on the BCM missionary enterprise where education and evangelism go hand
in hand. Therefore, the BCM is continuing its educational ministry, particularly among the non-Mizo, abiding by the principles of the BMS to a certain extent.

There is a close relationship between the educational goals of the BMS and the BCM. The early missionaries have championed the cause of education and mission education has occupied an important place in the development of modern education in Mizoram. They were men and women of discipline and character. After almost fifty years of influence, their principles and practices continued to be a source of inspiration and guidance to the leaders of the BCM in implementing its educational ministry. In pursuing these, they often met with certain problems, but those early problems were carefully tackled and solved.

In the early period, one of the problems the Mizo faced was the indifference on the part of the non-Christian natives, particularly some chiefs. This attitude has disappeared in the present situation and in fact, the BCM education is sought after. The schools were in the vernacular, at least at the elementary level, and religious instruction was imparted to the students. These mission schools were maintained at the expense of the BCM, which paid the educators for their teaching ministry. They continue to render help, with social uplift, having evangelism and church planting.

One living example is the Baptist Higher Secondary School (BHHS) at Serkawn. It is re-emerging as a model school under the BCM sponsorship for the Christian value-based schools. The possibility of this school emerging as a pace setter in the educational field is being observed. The school has the vision of the earlier missionaries to meet the needs of the society and at the same time to fulfill the Great Commission of Jesus Christ. The BHHS churns out a good number of students every year with excellent results. It is the key school that has run with a holistic approach
since its beginning in the southern district. The school has a long and distinguished
history with a bright future for the interest of the people in Mizoram.

The school is a pioneer in many fields and has introduced an innovative
curriculum and courses to give students an all round education that is not just
academics based. Most schools strive to give students the best education so that they
are equipped to qualify for good placements. What makes this school quite unique is
the introduction of a compulsory subject, the Christian principles, human values and
professional ethics.

The ultimate aim of the BCM is to carry on the concern of the Great
Commission principle with the motto “Gospel for every one.” The Government has a
prerogative to provide education. Why then should the BCM itself in imparting
education when the Government is already working to do so? In the present system of
Government education, there is no laid out syllabus, no acceptable textbooks or
guidelines for religious instruction. Children need spiritual awareness in their lives, in
order to deal with life itself. What they actually need is not to know about religion or
religions but an awareness of who God is and what our relationship to this God is.
Therefore, the BCM has a divine call, a Biblical mandate, and responsibility to teach
its members the truth about God. Hence, evangelization through education of other
tribes in and outside of Mizoram is targeted.

The BCM feels obligated to meet the people and fulfill the commission given
by God in the right way, not merely imparting secular knowledge, but the knowledge
of God. It is an awesome responsibility. The BCM believes that education can
illuminate the individual mind, which in turn will arouse conviction in the truth of the
Gospel. Moreover, the BCM feels responsible for the spiritual welfare of its members
and their development towards maturity. The members need to be nurtured, loved and
encouraged. They need to be helped to accomplish and experience success and they need to be guided into the purposes of life meaningfully. That is why, the BCM participates in educational ministry.

The felt need of the people is also one of the reasons for the BCM to feel the need to engage in educational ministry. The BCM has responded to the “felt need” of the people’ group as the point of contact to venture into this area. The principle of “scratch where it itches” has been used consciously. It responds to the needs and demand of the local people, and the method used to achieve its primary objectives has always been determined by the context.

Was the BCM motivated by its desire to have political and economic influence in establishing its educational institution? BCM’s principle behind its educational ministry is purely to realize the mission of the Church, in seeking the lost and not to gain political power or economic gains.

The BCM in order to share the gospel with the people has developed various educational strategies. They not only chose the towns but also villages and when they launched schooling the method, the emphasis was on elementary education. The school initially was primarily meant to provide Christian education and nurturing.

The General Assembly of the BCM chose to target a section of the people or group with which to implement its educational ministry. They appointed young men and women as committed educators, who were capable of giving service in different capacities. It should be recognized that the BCM mission school also trained many students professionally. The information provided gave them an entry into compatible services and equipped them with a sense of values and responsibilities that has made them outstanding in their professions.
It was not primarily the business of the BCM to educate the people; they were concerned with education with only so far as it served their chief purpose— the evangelization and the establishment of an indigenous church. The BCM aims at becoming an influential factor through its ministry to bring change and an impact on the target people group for education, human resource development and social transformation.

The general aim of the BCM education is transformation, understanding, tolerance, compassion, brotherhood and goes beyond religious instruction in producing a better human being. For the transformational aspect and the development of a well-balanced personality, the BCM schools are moving ahead with vigor and zeal. They continue to employ formal schooling as a key evangelistic tool. Despite different hurdles, the establishments of formal schools in different areas within and outside of Mizoram are being undertaken. The gift of literature and printing books, engaging missionary educators, giving training in the Government training centers, implementing relief and development work are some of the outcomes. The BCM is indeed a living example of a completely indigenous church involved in missions.

The establishment of English medium schools is advocated as an important strategy for education. Presently, the BCM directed its attention to establishing schools in the medium of English in some of the strategic places with a view to impart secular and religious education. The use of English today has become essential as compared to earlier years; hence the BCM feels it is an important strategy to carry out its mission in English education.

For the sake of convenience and clarity of presentation, "religious education" means the developments taking place in the life and growth of the church in terms of theological education and Sunday schools, side by side with general education.
Particularly, when schools were taken over by the Government, they officially ceased to be places where religious instruction could be given. The church had to strengthen the Sunday school ministry to meet the need of the people. This is another important aspect of religious education the BCM has developed since the inception of the church from the BMS era.

The Sunday school is generally regarded as the place of study for scriptures to make members disciples of Christ. The BCM Sunday school is graded into Adult, Senior, Intermediate, Junior, Primary and Beginners. In addition to this system, the church has also arranged the section of Christian children where religious teachings and training are emphasized.

With an increase in the number of Christians interested in religious education, a question of adequate theological training also arises. Thus the establishment of a theological college was discussed, with Dr. R. L. Hnuni as the founder Principal, who rightly to be considered as the pioneer of higher theological education of the BCM. The college is progressing fast and the Mizo is greatly strengthened by the course of study followed in this institution, especially with its emphasis on academic knowledge with excellent quality. The result bears clear evidence of able tutorship and conscientious study and the institution deserves the gratitude of the members of the Church.

The residential schools provided by the BCM are becoming more and more in demand. The institutions afford an opportunity for spiritual nurturing programs apart from giving a tremendous opportunity for extra-curricular activities. The BCM residential institutions envisage an integrated growth of the human person- the physical, intellectual, social, emotional and spiritual growth of the individual that come to learn under its portal.
The values-based education fostered in these institutions finds meaning and
the students learn to relate to each other responsibly with maturity and the
individual’s growth takes place socially, culturally, environmentally and religiously.

The BCM continues its educational ministry within and outside Mizoram with
the main concern the principle of evangelism and church planting, developing
leadership and helping the people for social uplift. With the spread of the BCM
educational activities and the church, there has been a considerable demand for
literature. Much has been achieved in this, and the missionary educators also did
translation of some portions of the Bible and hymns to the native language. The BCM
missionaries who lived among the local people learn their language and understand
their customs. The Government officials also treated them as their allies in their task
of uplifting the local people. On the whole, the educational ministry of the BCM in
the sphere of education among the non-Mizo is commendable. Had it not been for the
educational work of the BCM, the Bru and the Chakma particularly would not have
become Christians.

It would be appropriate to say that the BMS’ educational principles are not
sufficiently reflected in the norms set up by the BCM. Hence, there is a dichotomy in
the way one approaches the educational ministry in relation to the gospel work. There
are to be missionaries or evangelist educators who confine themselves in spreading
the word of God, through different ways. Ideally, all the activities of the missionaries
centered on the one deeply held principle and conviction, namely to lead people to
Jesus Christ. It has been discussed that the missionaries took an active role in terms of
solving the socio-religious-economic and political problems of the day. That should
not be understood only as a social action, since, it originated from deep conviction
about the welfare of the people.
In the light of the findings from the experiences of the BCM, it is possible to say that education today will continue to be used as a tool to relate to the people’s need for the Christian faith and its principles. Particularly where the access for missionaries with the gospel is difficult. The lesson learnt from the BMS educational ministry is that Christian educational institutions have acted as the center for evangelization as well as contributing to the building of a church, a society and the nation in general and so also with the BCM in future.

The BCM has the pride of being a missionary sending church in Mizoram and this is justified by the fact that out of 183 missionaries, the number of educators engaged in the school ministry are 122, which means 66% of the human resources. The same model used by the parent mission is being faithfully followed. Needless to say, 75% of its financial resources are budgeted for the educational enterprises under the BCM in 2003.

Organizationally, due to its centralized system of administration, the mission department of the BCM is being managed effectively. This has afforded the opportunity to encourage its members to actively support in terms of raising funds for the missions as well as in giving prayer support. The BCM church has one of the best support bases from its members in terms of prayers and funds.

The BCM, due to its history and nature, has been self-supporting and self-propagating and has been an influence and motivator to understand the meaning of church structure and ministry better, which in turn is helpful for the educational ministry aspects. While having highlighted some of these major strengths in the educational ministry of the BCM, there are also some crucial issues that must be considered seriously that may also be regarded as its weakness. The respondents
disclosed many factors, which have helped me to put forward a few suggestions and recommendations.

II. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are made to the executive and lay leadership groups, representing the BCM leaders who can particularly make a difference in the carrying out of the BCM educational ministry. Future research projects may be built on a variety of these recommendations. Arising from the findings, these recommendations will help us to understand the reality of the BCM educational ministry, its strengths and weaknesses and thereby help to propose a challenge for the future ministry. Here are the most pertinent:

1. Commission case studies for schools located under the BCM, evaluating the problems and survivability, the future potential and contributions to the church and the society.

2. Promote partnership between the BCM and other educational institutions under different organizations with particular reference to educational work through consultations. Form regional associations, exchange programs, and viable inter school networks for the future effective service of the BCM educational ministry. Develop strong liaison and undertake joint projects between the BCM educational board and the native or local church associations, having official agreement, rules and regulations.

3. Plan to establish BCM-owned teacher education equipped with good human resources and satisfactory facilities for pre service and in service teacher training. Today, what is needed in the BCM educational ministry is a program of teacher training run by the church as in the days of the BMS, and a strategy for wider evangelization, in the Indian context at large.
Formulate proposals for creative faculty development programs that take present ground realities into adequate consideration. Presently, the BCM is employing two hundred and twenty four teachers, out of which one hundred and fifty three have undergone training. Since the BCM has no training center of its own, it has to depend on the Government training center, which may not be best for the BCM ministerial context.

There are not sufficient programs for teachers and students such as, games and sports, camps, moral classes, and many cultural activities for the all round development of children with Christian formation of the students. There is a lack of adequate teachers with essential qualifications to teach specific subjects, especially in math, science and English, leading to very low scholastic achievement.

4. Establish more residential schools to facilitate future response to the needs of people. Modern techniques of communication and education remain a dream to the children studying in the BCM institutions. The advanced audiovisual equipment that must be brought into the classrooms of these institutions to enhance the learning process has not been tried significantly. There is no professional management and planned development.

5. Investigate the culpability of the BCM administration, faculty and students in case of failure in evangelism. Based on the research finding, the evangelism prospect through the schooling system is grim and hence strong measures may need to be taken to encourage and revitalize the spirit of evangelism in both the educators and the recipients in order to fulfill the purpose of its existence. The majority has emphatically admitted that education of the BCM should not be an end, but a means to evangelism.
Aggressively pursue the religious implications upon the minds of the students. Develop ways to systematically secure the services of the graduates of the mission schools in favor of the educational ministry and affirm their vocational commitment. Affirm the vocational commitment of the students through strategies that strengthen the practical dimension of the BCM educational programs.

Empower teachers and students for evangelism. Explore ways and means to significantly involve students in the work of evangelism and emphasize giving practical training for evangelism. No serious effort is made to teach the importance of this aspect. Discovering strategies to sincerely involve teachers in the work of preparing and influencing students to be responsible citizens is strongly suggested.

6. Introducing a quality assessment organization is a necessity. A glimpse of how the missionary schools have fared in the past in imparting quality education can be observed in the quality of the alumnus. To improve the quality of school education, the BCM need to have an assessment team, which will start functioning in the near future. Every student in the BCM schools should be benchmarked for quality based on the assessment modules developed by the organization. Student learning needs to be measured through standardized achievement testing. The BCM may gauge school functioning through an opinion survey of parents as primary stakeholders, besides school development and management committees and headmasters. The team needs to weigh the highs and lows of our schooling system.

Clarify criteria that would define the standard of “quality education” so that the ministry may progress towards this dimension. Strict adherence to quality and education with a human face are what set the BCM schools apart from others. In today’s competitive world where only winning matters, irrespective of ethics or
values, the BCM philosophy comes like a breath of fresh air, holding out a promise of skilled and responsible future citizens. This should be optimized.

7. Establish higher studies up to the degree level, equipped with modern information technology. One of the ways the BCM needs to explore and be faithful is in the mission of establishing a college. It is now time to seriously consider the involvement of the BCM for continuing its mission in this aspect. The Biblical foundation enables us to chart our course for mission in higher education in this twenty first century and beyond. The awareness of our present situation leads us to ask ourselves about the social relevance of the mission schools and about the ways to make it more real. Therefore, the church needs to involve herself still more fully in social relevance, reaching out especially to the poor and the underprivileged, committing herself to the work of justice, and enlightening the conscience of human beings with her message of brotherhood and love.

8. Based on the principle of self-support, self-propagation, and self-administration, the BCM educational ministry is strongly advised to emphasize education on employability. The BCM should stress the importance of entrepreneurship, as there are not enough jobs today. That is why there is a need to encourage students to become entrepreneurs. They have knowledge but not courage. The BCM School should focus on giving students confidence and courage; with this objective in mind, the center for entrepreneurship can be set up.

9. Giving emphasis on the importance of nation building and inculcating Indian national values with the right perspective is highly recommended for the BCM educational centers. The BCM education should not be just academics, but should emphasize the importance of value-based education. The BCM schools should
become proactive; the attitude of doing something for society is very important. This positive mind should be projected with ability.

Related to this need for implementing proper planning is an evaluation system for the ongoing BCM ministry. It should be understood that on several occasions, a high-powered committee had been set up by the Assembly of the BCM to study and evaluate the overall operations of the mission wing in general. However, it appeared that the main focus or concern of the BCM Assembly Committee has often been the administrative aspect rather than looking into the intricate educational policies and strategies which guide the practical operations in the educational centers. Hence the crucial lack is in the area of a proper planning and evaluation system.

The annual report simply states the number of students, staff; pass percentage and general information about their difficulties and joy. The church reports give the number of Christian percentage and the increased number of new converts. This does not specifically identify to what extent has the school contributed to the individual student conversion. Over the years it has been taken for granted that the church and its related schools have worked together for evangelistic purposes. Specific plans of action and strategies laid out for evangelistic programs and their impact need to be seriously considered and recorded for evaluation to see if the ministry is fruitful or not.

10. The BCM is involved in cross-cultural missions. Therefore developing appropriate strategies before contemplating a center for school education in the field is important. Different fields require different strategies, and though the general principle of education applies to all the schools, the BCM needs to study carefully where school ministry should be incorporated in terms of availability of resources, infrastructures and ministry scope. The need for developing appropriate strategies
based on research for goal-oriented mission is keenly felt for progress. New methods, tools and strategies need to be generated in the present global mission movement.

11. Provide adequate educational facilitates. The findings reveal that the growth of the educational standard among the Mizo was not uniform and educational facilities among them were distributed unevenly. This implies also that the mission schools and the provision of English schools were not evenly distributed under the BCM area. There is a heavy concentration in the headquarters at Lunglei, and at a peripheral level at other places.

The Mizo people saw English not only as a positive gain for employment opportunities, but also as a subtle though effective means of transmitting the gospel and social values. The obsession with the English Medium School has gone to such a crazy extent that in several remote corners of the country, anyone and everyone starts a primary school with these popular names. Hence a provision of English medium schools is a crucial demand of many from the BCM.

Encouraging the medium of instruction in English from the primary level. The BCM School needs to guarantee their wards proficiency in the English language that is pre-requisite for educational progress as well as for professional teaching ministry in particular. Such proficiency helps to acquire employment also in other top institutions within and outside the country and to outshine in many other ways.

12. Maintain a focused vision on the Objective of the Mission School. The findings show that there was a decline in the effectiveness of the mission schools. Owing to lack of clear vision, the manifestations of worthwhile service and conduct are lacking.

Devise curriculums with the purpose that students might attain maximum knowledge during the course of studies. Apart from the regular syllabus, moral
teaching based mainly on Christian principles should be emphasized, keeping in mind the three basic principles behind this curriculum, (1) to lead the individuals to the worship and service of God (2) to enlarge the minds of the students in general, and (3) to make the life of the students holy and useful for the service of the society and the nation. The BCM must make an attempt to make education to this standard a top priority in its agenda to be a model to others.

13. Re-emphasizing evangelism. BCM education seems to be passing through a critical period. The BCM should seriously consider the need to reemphasize evangelism as the vitalizing spirit permeating and directing all their policies and activities at home and in the fields seriously. It has become the common observation that during recent years, many missionary teachers have pushed direct evangelism more and more into the background in favor of a more popular program of education. The truest criterion of BCM’s success is the measure in which the seed of the living truth in Christ was sown in human hearts. The leaders are convinced that in the mission educational program of latter years’ educational work has been stressed. Has our passion for well-rounded education become such that we are in danger of losing sight of our objective?

14. Ensure that the BCM Student Development programs reach a high level of performance at the most crucial stage of academic life. Seeking the affiliation for the ICSE, CBSE, and SSLC can do this. Introducing contemporary teaching methods such as multimedia presentations and study notes, interactive teaching through audio-visual aids and the plays way method, and having high quality-trained and experienced teachers for all levels.

15. The main emphasis of the leaders regarding education was the improvement of curricula and methods of education. The current emphasis on passing
examinations, and on looking at degrees as a passport for better salaried jobs needs to be replaced by an education that focuses on the improvement of skills and personalities. Job recruitment should be based on skill, which needs to be emphasized. Knowledge, expertise and commitment rather than degree holders and recommendations from “big” people should guide the principle and practice of the BCM education as it continues for several more years.

An overview of the educational scenario of Mizoram: first is the mushrooming of the privately owned educational institutions mainly with a profit motive. The fees are high and these schools are normally beyond the reach of the poor people. These elitist English Medium schools perform quite well as far as results are concerned. However, imparting the knowledge of Christian ethical values and basic Christian teachings are overlooked, and emphasis on academic performance is supreme. Thereby the basic commandment of Jesus Christ to preach the Gospel is compromised in these schools.

Second, there are also educational institutions run by different churches and societies. Even though they are Christian schools, some of these institutions are government aided and the system is often examination oriented and display a lack of personal interest for integrated personal development.

Third, institutions run by the Government make no serious effort to teach religious or ethical and moral education to the students. They are also liable to become undisciplined and for spreading vices commonly seen among modernized young men and women.

The control of these institutions by limited staff has greatly affected the quality of management. The interference of politics in recruitment and transfer procedures, and the management of the institutions further has deteriorate the vision
for which the institutions were created. The government in most villages introduced schools up to the middle school level. However, the irregularity of teachers and students does not make this a very solid base.

Against the prevailing circumstances, the BCM is faced with a huge challenge to pursue its educational ministry and to be a role model for the institutions in and around Mizoram. With a commitment to quality education and a passion for excellence, the future of the BCM educational ministry is bright and full of promises.

The principles outlined in this research, if taken seriously, will surely bring about a major paradigm shift resulting in a new day for the BCM educational ministry in Mizoram and beyond. This tiny state of India possesses so much potential for the nation. Certainly it is a rich environment in which to be at work for God. And the BCM can claim a vital share in all that God is doing.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Throughout the study, many issues have been mentioned without giving a detailed analysis. While they are important to that extent, these issues need further research and detailed study. Among the pertinent ones are,

1. The need to evaluate the role of English as the medium of instruction in the educational ministry of the BCM, where the majority of the schools are at the primary level. Subsidiary concerns include the desirability of bilingual education, the effects of language on ministerial lifestyle and the spiritual implications for the students.

2. More research is needed to prove scientifically the place of education in missions with special reference to the BCM in today's context. The long established policy of academic missionary education practiced by the BCM needs to be studied from different dimensions.
3. Related to the above are the need for research on the study of the
relationship between the teachers and the students of the BCM educational institutions
and the spiritual relevancy to the students.

4. There is a need to compose selected profiles of the graduates, the faculty
and the BCM educational department and assess the contribution of the faculty
towards the success of BCM education.

5. It is important develop criteria to holistically evaluate the student’s
readiness for ministry from the selected BCM schools.

6. The curriculum followed by the BCM needs detailed investigation. During
the research the curriculum was referred to, but not identified.

7. The characteristics that make mission schools unique, as compared to
private and government-sponsored schools, need to be researched.

The intersecting views and visions of those influential leaders who have
become and remained church leaders and educators represented in this research
should be taken seriously. Although the BCM education has definitely played a
significant role in the historical past, this does not guarantee its effectiveness in the
future in this fast moving and competitive world. The challenge to the BCM is to
make itself and its operations relevant to the changing scenario of our world. Often
times, the private schools seem to produce better results than the mission schools,
because of their efficiency and ability to adapt quickly. Intelligent planning for the
future of the BCM educational ministry by the leaders requires trajectories and data
generated by research. The fervent hope is that second and third generation research
will be stimulated by this work.