CHAPTER- V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION
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Child caring and rearing practices are adopted, of course, in varied forms, universally in all human societies in space and time. The philosophy of these practices in the human context centres round the basic need of providing for the continual replacements of a social population, since its continuity is a sine-qua non of the existence of a society, by its new members, this is truly an indispensable precondition in the process of the 'emergent evolution' of human society. And this continual replacement of the old members by the new ones of the population is effected through the conscious medium of fabricated and facilitated contact between the sexes and care of new offspring. Rooted in this vital importance of unions of sexes and cares of the offspring reproduced of the unions, every human society evolves sex lores and child caring and rearing practices to be recurrently adopted in all generations for purpose of its successful perpetual existence. The only thing is that as circumscribed by the varied local ecological (natural and cultural) conditions as well as by the differences of the level of evolutionary attainments of different form of human societies these lores and practices are correspondingly expressed in varied and different ways.

The Moirang of Manipur epitomize the entire Meitei population in the valley of this state in respect of the achievement of considerable high form of cultural traditions, in as much as Moirang was, as has already been pointed out above (vide supra, p.39), anciently the richest cultural centre in the then
whole of the valley of the state. As such, impressive imprints of reckonable cultural interests clearly observable in their practices and the underlying beliefs as regards child care suggest by themselves correspondence of the culture of the people with the fundamental idea of the continual replacement of the old members by the new ones, which is done prerequisitely, consciously or unconsciously, for the perpetual existence of human society. The child caring and rearing practices prevail in human societies almost as an unavoidable component of the total culture history of mankind. These practices are universally culturally institutionalized; these are given cultural expression in all human societies. But, what may be treated as unique of the Moirang society in this regard, is that this society gives an extraordinary symbolic cultural thrust on child care which one observes in their annual performance at the community level of the ritual dance drama, locally called *lai haraoba*, particularly in what is called *laibouchongba* part of this performance. Details of this performance relating to the point in consideration i.e., child care are already provided in the close portion of the third chapter of the present work. It can thereby be deduced now that *lai haraoba* ritual drama of Moirang itself merits to be regarded as the cultural mirror for the cares to be taken in rearing a child, it reflecting at least the idea of the primordial necessity of child care in a social set up. It is here at this point that the historically unique importance of Moirang at the historical beginning in the valley of the Manipur, and also the cultural supremacy of Moirang in the
history of Manipur, all narrated in chapter III of the present work, bear significant relevance to the study of child care and practices.

Aptly corresponding to the people's cultural interest in child care embedded in their symbolic cultural dramatization of the said practices given expressions thereof in their *lai haraoba* community festival, the Moirang people in their actual practices of child care labour utmost cares (both physical and supernatural) in rearing their children right from the pre-natal stage i.e., the time of conception of a child. The first four sections of Chapter IV provides the normative pattern of child care culturally prescribed for all cases of child care.

Section E of Chapter IV throws light on the actual practices of Moirang mothers, as represented by those of a sample of eight mothers, relating to the cares they have taken in rearing their children. This is the thrust area of the whole body of the thesis. It is here that the 'dependent variable' of the phenomenon of variability of the child rearing practices of the Moirang mothers at cross-sectional level can be visualised. Here comes in the roles of the various 'independent variables' working behind the 'dependent variable' of the fact of variations of the actual child-rearing practices at Moirang. It may be called up here that two assumptions have been formulated in the first chapter of the present work as to the working of the two sets of variables 'dependent' and 'independent'. As the analysis of the cases of child care of the selected
eight mothers goes on below the working of the two sets of variables in relation to one another will be observed.

The portion of the Chapter I dealing with analysis of the preliminary socio-economic census has reported that there are 115 mothers in the two leikais (socio-territorial settlements) selected for detailed studies in the work. These 115 mothers live in households that are categorized into three as regards their sizes: small, medium and big; into three in matter of type of family: conjugal, extended and broken; they are in two broad categories of educational status: illiterate (14 in number) and literate which may be again divided into sub categories: standard I to standard X and above standard X; occupationally they may be arranged into three categories: households keeping, employed (in varies ways) and others; and lastly they belong to three income categories: low (below Rs, 20,000/- per annum), middle (Rs, 21,000 and Rs, 80,000/- per annum) and high (above Rs, 80,000/- per annum).

Thus, size of the household, type of family, educational status, occupational status and household income are the major parameters of the present study. Lastly but not least, the type personality of the child-rearing mothers (as has been mentioned in the introducing chapter two types of personality of womanhood laid down in the tradition of the people are referred to in the work) is also employed as another parameter in the study of their child rearing practices. All these parameters working as the independent variables of the varying child rearing practices, observed at the actual place of
the phenomenon, are duly taken into consideration in the selection of the eight mothers for purpose of more or less detailed study of the problem. It is also held to be worthwhile to mention that since the role of the husbands of the mothers engaged in their child rearing practices are also factors of certain considerable measure, the educational, occupational and personal temperamental background of the husbands, except in the few cases of broken families are also taken into account in the present study (vide Table No.IV). And in the cases of the few broken families where husbands of the child rearing mothers are missing the actual child rearing practices are observed with reference to the possible roles discharged, positive or negative, by other members of the families concerned.

Now, the following findings may be put forward out of the analysis of the child-rearing practices of the eight mothers in the light of the workings of the aforesaid parameters/independent variable, findings proposed to represent, by virtue of the logic of sampling, the entire system of varied child-rearing practices prevailing in the total universe of study, obviously more pertinently in the context of the two selected localities, sampled cluster, of Moirang, namely Kumam leikai and Moirangthem leikai.

First, the variable of typology of womanhood may be observed, of the eight mothers three, namely, Moirangthem ongbi Anita Devi of household No. 131 (case No. 7) Moirangthem ongbi Damayenti Devi, of household No. 36 (case No. 8) Kumam ongbi Premila Devi of household No. 85 (case No. 5)
may be assessed as approximating more or less the 'Panthoibi type of womanhood'. As per the content of her case study, Anita figures as a woman less bound by the familial duties of serving her husband and children. According to her report, her husband 'is very good, lenient and liberal' to her. Before going to his shop at the local market in the morning he finishes most of the domestic chores including preparation of the morning meal, without waiting for the hand of his wife; he sometimes also cooks for the dinner. He never shows his anger with her, never questions whatever she does and hears all what she says. She deputes her own mother who lives close by to look after her children at her home as in the absence of herself and her husband (both engaged at their shop in the day time) there is none else in their conjugal family to take care of their children. Being engaged in running the shop Anita finds little time to spare for her devotion to the task of caring her children. Obviously her occupation circumstantially keeps her away from her direct involvement in her motherly devotion to the task of the child caring. It is not strange to observe it as such. Her basic personality, however, perhaps suggests the dominating trait in her; this personality trait of hers is seemingly given expression in her relation with her husband. Again, that her husband is most faithful to her may be owing to his weak personality which she takes advantage of to the extent of enjoying the hedonistic pleasure by participating a dance drama show whereof she plays the leading role of the legendary heroine, Moirang Thoibi. But, her very act of participating in such as public show as the dance drama she play in is itself indicative of her innate
self-assertive drive in her personality; it can’t perhaps be ascribed to her professional or amateur love for art (she is not that artist of either category with popular public recognition). Parading in the show in point of a woman of her social standing is quite unusual in the eyes of the Moirang public. No other than the hedonistic urge in her, reminiscent of the characteristic fondness of the legendary Panthoibi herself at public places would explain Anita Devis’ whole personal ploy under discussion. She seems to be seeker of license, a trait of her behaviour which is all the more, manifested in the nucleation of her conjugal family from her in-laws’ family at which instance she expresses her happiness; her own words in this regard reported in the body of the text on the case study on her may appropriately be reproduced here: “You know, when I was with my in-laws I could not do anything. I was not free then . . . . Most of the time I was quarreling with them. Shifted here, now, I am very free, I can do everything freely what I want”. Another expression of Kumam ongbi Damayenti Devi (of household No. 36 and bearing case No. 8), aged 43 years with educational background of being a graduate, and a widow contractress at the time of taking case study on her, is another case of the woman whose activities and outlook would point to her being a proto-type of the Panthoibi model of womanhood. Her profession i.e., contractress is certainly exceptional for her sex. That she adopts this profession on the death of her husband who had been working as a contractor is not an excuse for it. Had she been a woman of the Emoinu model of womanhood she should have had recourse to a more feminine profession.
Necessities that this profession demands apart, she derives pleasure in meeting ministers and officers under the guise of her profession. Damayenti defends herself in this profession of hers; her own words relevant to this stand of hers in running her profession in point may be flashed back upon: "I know that people talk badly of me but I don't care for all these. Who care for me when I am in distress? All what I have been doing, good or bad in the eyes of the public, is for my children's good prospect. In the present day materialistic life money counts above all. All my activities are money-oriented". Despite all her justification of her way of life, the Panthoibi-like hedonistic urges of associating with her male friends can't be overlooked, however; she says: "If I want to talk with my friends, especially male ones over mobile phones to enjoy rest, I tell them (her children) that I want to take rest. Don't come in my room and don't disturb me". During that life time her husband, too, she did not live as a woman of a patriarchal family; she underrated her husband's masculinity, she superseded him in maintaining her household, and she could not please her mother-in-law who openly pointed out the lack in her of the womanly quality of excelling in cooking food.

Kumam ongbi Premila Devi, (of household No. 85 and case No. 5) aged 48 years, who just crosses over the literacy line, and wife of a farmer, is a wage labour living in a conjugal family of medium size and rearing two daughters and two sons, the last being just five years old. According to the mode of assessment followed in the work her household belong to the high income group by the local standard with an estimated annual income of Rs,
24,000/- (twenty four thousand rupees). Her case may be analyzed first by raising the question as to why she goes to the local restaurant for the daily wage of Rs, 50.00/- (rupees fifty) whereas hers is a high income household, why she does not remain as a household keeper at home looking after her children more consistently or why she does not opt for other occupation which she can conduct at home side by side with looking after household affairs. Does not this choice of her occupation hint at her dislike to keep herself within the pale of her homestead? There is perhaps no other reason behind the choice of her occupation than that she has fondness of exposing and parading herself at public places and enjoys pleasure over it. Held to be true of analysis, it thus reveals the unbridled nature of her gestures, it thereby reminding of the presence of Panthoibi type of woman personality in her in so as at least this particular personal liking of hers in concerned. Premila has apparently revolting impulse, but she tries to subdue it as far as possible in her interactions with her husband who is ferocious and wild and talk all nonsense when he is drunk: Yet, at unguarded moments of normal disposition this impulse assails her, it consequently driving her to grip her husband by the neck at the advent of his nonsensical behaviours, obviously by way of the out burst of her revolting impulse.

The remaining five mothers other than the above three mothers in the sample for case studies may be characterized as woman whose behaviours, temperament and life-style approaching more or less the 'Emoinu model' of womanhood: Kumam ongbi Hemolata Devi (a household-keeper) of
household No.10 (bearing case No.1), Salam ongbi Bidyapati Devi (a high salaried employee) of household No. 24 (case No. 2), Salam ongbi Bimola Devi (vegetable seller) of household No.67 (case No.3), Salam ongbi Bala Devi (a house wife) of household No. 83 (case No.4) and Salam ongbi Sumila Devi (a weaver) of household No. 87 (case No.6) are all women submissive to their respective husbands and other senior members of their families; they avoid confrontation with their husbands, revere their in-laws and deal check by jowl with their younger relatives in the families. Even the well-educated Bidyapati Devi who is an M.A and holds a high salaried job as a librarian at a local Higher Secondary School behaves in the necessary spell of modesty, never reciprocating her husband's scolds on her and taking all her husbands' reproaching as corrections of her wrong doings. She respects, too, her in-laws, and regularly performs domestic religious services for the welfare of the household. That a helper is hired to cook food for her family does not disqualify her to be a woman of her type; the sound economic background of her family, her engagement in a salaried job, the large size of her household and her business in other household duties including the cares she takes for her children, in particular all justify her inability to cook food for the household. And, the vegetable seller Bimola Devi is found so committed and unswerving to maintaining livelihood of her poor household at the face of her drunkard husband who is a rickshaw driver and who scarcely contributes to the household economic pool, completely irresponsible to the upbringing of his children and beating her off and on at his drinking bouts. Against this
background of several oddities Bimola struggles very hard to pull on to provide the bare necessities of livelihood with her hopeless husband and three children (two daughters and a two and a half year old son) at the cost of illiteracy of her two daughters; the elder daughter only 10 years old is engaged whole time in doing all the necessary household works in the daily absence of her mother throughout the day time from home as she goes out to the market early in the morning and comes back home in the evening around 7 O’ clock. On many occasions she, unable to adjust herself with her notorious husband and thereby bereaved of the charms of life, leaves for her parental home. But in consideration of her children she comes back home. In the light of these expositions on the fate of her life, the challenges of life, she has been faced with and the struggles she is destined to confront in giving her children education. Bimola Devis’ image of womanhood is reminiscent of “Khamnu model” which is a variant of ‘Emoinu model’ in which case modesty is the cornerstone of woman’s behaviour, a womanly quality, yet tested under the trial and tribulations of the adversities of life.

Now, against the backgrounds of the select eight mothers as regards their different independent variables of socio-economic lives, such as their economic standings, educational attainment, size and types of the households/families they live in, as well as the types of their womanly personalities, the impact of these variables on their child-rearing practices may be observed.
Above in the introduction of this piece of work it has been pointed out that the affectional relation of an infant with his or her mother, father and other members of the family form the core area of the study of the process of socialization. And another equally important matter in the core area of child-rearing studies relate to the techniques employed in the process of child rearing right from their infancy stage. Now, attention is drawn to the observation of the two important matters of the core area of the study of child rearing practices adopted qua socialization of the children in the context of Moirang.

When their children misbehave, disoblige and disobey the Moirang mothers mostly punish them by beating as well as scolding. This technique of socializing their children seems to have little correlation with the type of personalities of the mothers. Even the mothers of 'Emoinu' type of personality adopt this technique. But again, this form of punishment is never driven by the uncontrolled impulse of anger on the part of the mothers: here they have a saying that 'a potter beats the pot he or she makes not to break it down'; it is a creative beat. Similarly, a mother beats her child only to mould it in the desired form. The Moirang mothers share the universal affection and love for their children; but they subdue and do not show this affection. A few fathers, of instance Kumam Raja Singh, husband of Hemolata Devi of household No.10 (case No.1), are in favour of employing this technique in dealing with their children; here Raja Singh's statement may be quoted; "I love my son but I do not want to show my affection to them. We should love our children in our
heart. When I was young, I spoiled myself. So, I do not want that my child should grow like me. I am afraid of that; that is why I am beating him so that he may become a good and responsible person”.

Here an observation may be made that the parental punishment of children by beating/scolding occurs in families of lower income, of conjugal type and less education of the parents. At the individual level the phenomenon of punishing a child may perhaps be correlated with wild nature and temperament and occupation of the father: Salam Samungou Singh, husband of Bimola Devi of household No. 67 (case No. 3) is a father of this brand: he is a rickshaw driver, wild particularly when he is drunk, irresponsible to his wife and children, and a source of terror, for his children. Samungou and Bimola live in conjugal family living from hands to mouth. None else is there in their family to look after and encourage their children. Under these socio-economic circumstances the children are apparently very obedient, but it seems that they are timid and voiceless, never complaining and protesting to their parents; they all have given up studies at school, and at home they play only among themselves without mixing with neighbouring children under the dictate of their father. Their father is truly a source of their fright to the extent that when they tend to misbehave their mother warns: ‘Your father is coming. He is drunk. Don’t shout, don’t make noise, go and sleep; otherwise he will beat you all’.
Parental beating of children can not be generalized of the eight select cases, however. Some fathers and mothers do not beat their children. Observation may be made now of the socio-economic factors working behind this phenomenon. Salam Romen Singh, husband of Bala Devi of household No. 83 (case No. 4) never beats his children. He rather scolds his wife for beating the children. His liberal attitudes towards his children could perhaps be attributed to his socio-economic background: his is of a high income family, himself running a lucrative business though not of impressive educational qualification, thereby having less interest in the cares for the children, his is a big extended family having both of his parents alive who shoulder due share of responsibility in caring his children. Salam Surjit Singh, husband of Bidyapati Devi of household No. 28 (case No. 2) follows suit in this regard as he never scolds and beats his children, he also belongs to a high income family of medium size and extended type, and his mother, in particular, assists the helper of his family and his wife in taking cares of his children.

Among the select eight mothers the case of Damayenti is exceptional; instead of motivating her children by scolding, beating, threatening and warning, she deals with them rather by leading, instructing and demonstrating them; she advises, particularly her last son to study hard by telling that if he is good in his study he will become an officer and people will respect him. She further employs the technique of praising and appreciating him on points of his achievements; on one occasion this boy of hers got first position in a mathematics competition on which she was exceedingly happy to the extent
of rolling down of tears on her cheek, encouraged him saying that if he can get highest position in his class X examination he will be at the zenith of her happiness and she further rewarded the boy by giving a gold ring for his achievement.

Damayenti’s adopting of these enlightened techniques of socializing her last son may be ascribed to her good educational background (she is a graduate in qualification) and, in addition, to her wide world-view that she has earned out of her social exposure as a contractress; what is more, she has no financial constraints at present, a condition that ekes out her ambition of seeing her son is a successful career.

Motivation of the child by warning also works as a technique of socializing it; Bala Devis’ (case No. 4 household No.83) approach to socializing her naughty son who is fond of playing water and not attentive to his study aptly illustrates adoption of this technique. Bala frequently beats the boy, but she reports that beating is sometimes ineffective; so, when her son does not study attentively she warns him that she will report his misconduct to his school Miss. The boy responds to the warning; on this warning he pays attention to his studies. Bala is not of high educational profile (she complete only VIII standard), but she belongs to a well-to-do family of high income with which background she sends her son to an English school with the hope of carving out a good educational foundation for her son’s career. Her use of warning technique is incidentally striking as it exemplifies the necessary
contributions to be made by parents of school-going children at home to supplement the service of teacher at school in the educational training of small children.

Leading by moral instructions is another technique of child training among a few Moirang mothers. The name of Bidyapati Devi of household No. 28 (case No. 2) stands out in this respect; she advises her children; "Look, your father and your uncle always obey your grandfather and grandmother. So, you must obey us and your elders. If not, you won't become a good boy and god will punish you", and sometimes she also threatens them by saying ". . . . . . . If you disobey me, then I will leave you and go to my parental home". In her case this technique works as her small children immediately responds that they will oblige her; so, please do not leave us. These designs of educating children are becoming of this lady, she being educationally a well-qualified one (she is an M.A. degree holder) and possessing the basic qualities of the 'Emoinu' model of womanhood; the economic background of high profile of her family plus her own personal income earned out of her well-paid salaried job also probably enables her to adopt such soft and enlightened techniques of rearing her children.

Thus far observations of the findings have been going on of the role of parents, mothers in particular, in rearing children at Moirang. Above in the introduction of the present work it has been pointed out that in as much as family is universally the basic unit in all forms of human society child-rearing
practices also should be studied in the full context of this basic human group of family life; this means to say that the mothers and the fathers apart, the roles played by other members of the families should also be necessarily taken into account of the study. Herebelow is now presented a reprisal of the roles in point.

The case study on the Kumam (O) Hemolata Devi (case No.1) has shown that despite the financial damage caused by her husband her family does not suffer much of the financial burden of educating her children as her father-in-law backs up in this sphere of her household affairs, who meets all the expenses of her children's education, such as payment of their dresses, giving them daily pocket money, etc. He gives them informal education in their daily lives; he teaches them what to do and what not to do. He teaches the last boy how to do toilet, how to swim and how to eat. He instructs him also to clean his hands before and after eating, and further narrates this boy stories of moral values. Consequently the boy is very much attached to him; since the fourth year of his age the boy stays most of his time with his grandfather. The grandfather is also very protective of his grandson; he scolds Hemolata for beating her son. Hemolata receives assistance and help from her husbands' dead elder brothers' wife in rearing up her last son.

Salam (O) Bimola Devi (case No.3) belongs to a small conjugal family having none at the periphery of the triangular relationship of herself, her husband and her three children, to assist her in caring her two and a half
years old last daughter. Moreover, her household is a low income one which she alone manages to subsist by selling vegetables at Moirang market; her husband is a hopeless rickshaw puller destitute of responsibly for his wife and children. While running her occupation Bimola is out of the door most of her daytime. Under these circumstances her ten years old daughter shoulders all the responsibility of undertaking the minimal cares of bringing up her junior siblings.

Salam (O) Bala Devi is another house wife who is lucky enough in getting helping services from her parents-in-law. Since herself and her husband are deeply engaged, most of their time at the shop they are running, caring of her last son is left under the entourage of her parents-in-law at home. Her last son ever sleeps at night with them. In her category may be put also the case of Salam (O) Sumila Devi (case No. 6) in whose case the chief relative who renders utmost help in rearing up her one and a half years old son is her sister-in-law while her father and husband's younger brother are no less resource persons in this regard. Bala's five years old elder son is naughty and pays little attention to his studies; he pretends to be obedient and attentive to his studies in presence of his father and father's younger brother, and the grandfather of the boy quite often scolds Sumila for beating this boy of hers when he misbehaves. And in the case of Moirangthem (O) Anita Devi (case No. 7) her own mother who lives close by takes full responsibility of caring her five years old last daughter as herself and her husband are busy at
their shop at Moirang bazar, and she herself also being indulged occasionally in rather hedonistic pleasure of participating in dance dramas.

In this way in Moirang child rearing practices are, by and large, joint enterprises involving most members of the household, most visibly in the cases of extended families and in the conjugal families having relatives at the fringe of the trio of husband, wife and children, and in the cases of small conjugal families with no such extra relatives the elder children are in the picture in rearing and caring younger children. In most cases the mothers get cooperation and understanding with other members of their respective families in this respect of their household affairs under discussion, except perhaps in the case of Kumam (O) Damayenti Devi (case No. 8); she reports that she had no cordial relationship with her mother-in-law who, before her death, reportedly all the time found fault with her, and that way she did not get any help in her child-caring affairs, and she is fully happy after the death of her mother-in-law as she is now completely relieved of all the old constraints and conflicts which circumstances leading her to venture out in her new life style of earning as a contractress, an occupation much sophisticated and not becoming and appropriate of a woman by the local standard of more rural-like social setting like Moirang.

Sharing by the close relative in upbringing a child eventuates detachment of the child from the arms of the mother; and this detachment of the child lessens, on the one hand, the burden of the mother and at the same
time it, on the other hand, probably serves the social value of imbibing socio-centric trait in the personality of the child, a trait that certainly helps the child in its becoming a truly and fully social and sociable member of its larger society when it is fully grows up. This point of analysis is candidly, a socio-psychological assumptive reflection. It, however, be observed that probably because of this general background of socialization, the people of Moirang are found by and large collective-minded in their day-to-day practical interactional life.