

**SCHOOL
EDUCATION
In MEGHALAYA**

Catholic Contribution

Pius Varghese

School Education in Meghalaya is an indepth study of the functioning and status of the Catholic Schools in Meghalaya. It gives much information regarding the historical beginning of the educational efforts by the missionaries. The book systematically examines and analyses critically the various pertinent aspects of the school life functioning under the aegis of the Catholic Church and schools managed by various religious societies. Some areas like planning and administration, co-curricular activities, Teacher training are very well discussed here. It reflects the ideas emerging from Heads of Schools, Teachers, parents, education officials, community leaders and Church officials making it a synthesis of convergent and divergent ideas. The book is aiming at the objective presentation of facts and so the book makes number of wonderful revelations regarding various lacunae that may be plaguing whole system. Effort is made to pin point in a very practical way the contribution of the Catholic Church to Secondary and Higher secondary education in Meghalaya. Besides the link between the Government and the Church is also dealt with in this work. It is a brilliant exposure of the Catholic school system.

Definitely, the reading of the book will help one to pause and to reexamine the course of educational policies that may be followed in these schools.

Rs. 1800/-

Dr. Pius Varghese is a member of the Don Bosco Educational Society belonging to Guwahati Region of the Society. He took his post graduate degree from North Eastern Hill University (NEHU), Shillong, Meghalaya and he pursued his Theological Studies in Sacred Heart Theological College, Shillong. Later, while serving as Principal of St. Anthony's Junior School, B.Ed., was completed from IGNOU. In 2008, he was awarded Ph.D., by North Eastern Hill University (NEHU) for his research "Role of the Catholic Church in Secondary Education in Meghalaya". Presently, the author is the Principal of Don Bosco Higher Secondary School (CBSE) Kokrajhar, Assam.

ISBN 978-81-8370-194-5

**SCHOOL EDUCATION
IN
MEGHALAYA**
Catholic Contribution

Dr. Pius Varghese

AKANSHA PUBLISHING HOUSE
NEW DELHI-110002 (INDIA)

AKANSHA PUBLISHING HOUSE

4649-B/21, Ansari Road

Darya Ganj, New Delhi - 110 002

Ph.: 23263193 / 9811582579 / 09435116718

Telefax: 011-23263193

Email: ektabooks@yahoo.com

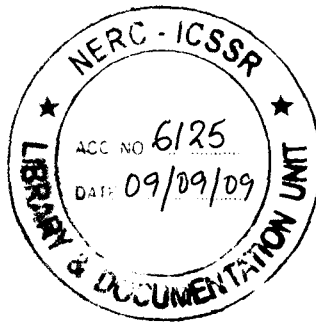
www.akanshapublishinghouse.com

*School Education in Meghalaya:
Catholic Contribution*

© Author

First Published 2009

ISBN 978-81-8370-194-5



[All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted, in any form or by any means, without prior permission of the author. Any person who does any unauthorized act in relation to this publication may be liable to criminal prosecution and civil claims for damages.]

PRINTED IN INDIA

Published by Akansha Publishing House, New Delhi and Printed at Aryan Enterprises, Delhi.

Contents

<i>Foreword</i>	ix
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	xiii
<i>List of Tables</i>	xv
<i>List of Illustrations</i>	xxvii
1. The Problem	1
2. Theoretical Background	13
3. Review of Related Literature	33
4. The Design of the Study	70
5. Analysis and Interpretation of the Data	85
6. Findings and Recommendations	254
<i>Appendices</i>	313
<i>Bibliography</i>	339
<i>Index</i>	354

1

The Problem

Education is essentially a life-long process of developing or bringing out the qualities of a person in accordance with needs and values. As a process it includes all knowledge, experience, skills and attitudes. In the process of education, human potentialities – physical, mental, emotional, social and spiritual - are given maximum consideration. Further, the process of education provides the care and stimulation necessary for actualization of these potentialities. Education also takes upon itself the responsibility for striking a balance while developing these abilities so that a harmonious personality is developed.¹ From a developmental point of view, in the words of Israel Sheffler “Maximal self-realization is what constitutes education, understood as the fulfillment of all of one’s potentials, satisfying every one of one’s potentialities- being all that one can be.”² Education is a process and product. As a product, education is the sum total of what is received through learning, i.e., knowledge, skills, ideas and values. As a process it refers to the act of developing in someone else or oneself the above mentioned qualities.³

As per the National Policy on Education (1986)⁴ education has an acculturating role. It refines sensitivities and promotes independence of mind. Education develops manpower for different levels of the economy. It is also the substratum on which research and development flourish, being ultimate guarantee of national reliance. Further, education is a unique investment for the present and the future.

There are a number of agencies which determine the success of educational processes. In the words of Delors Commission (1996):⁵

The main parties contributing to the success of educational reforms are first of the local community including parents, the school heads and teachers. The countries where the process of educational reform has been successful are those where parents, teachers and local communities show determined and

sustained commitments backed up by continued dialogue and technical and financial assistance. It is obvious that local community plays a paramount role in any successful reform strategy.

Further in the findings of Delors Commission, education in the Indian context is a critical investment in shaping the present and future of India. It is inseparably linked to progress in every aspect of human development and is a major contributory factor in enhancing the quality of life. Viewed in a broader global context, education is one of the principal means available to foster deeper and more harmonious form of human development and thereby to reduce, poverty, exclusion, ignorance, oppression and war.⁶

The work of education is being carried out by many agencies all over the world. Governments, private individuals, societies and trusts, religious groups, corporate bodies are actively promoting education. They all aim at educating citizens to fit in the emerging society. The work is fundamentally same and the basic goals are also comparable. The difference lies in the pattern and approach towards education. The ideals of education also sometimes differ radically.

Voluntary endeavours to transform the society, it is claimed, have been made from time immemorial. The deliberate, systematic and organized attempts at social transformation may be traced to the last decade of the 19th century. The motivating factors for their establishment are many: philanthropic considerations, sense of social responsibilities, religious fervour and commitment to certain philosophies. Voluntary organizations and education have been a subject of great interest to scholars of public administration, sociologists, social psychologists in particular and other social scientists.

In this context, Indian education is unique in many respects. It involves formal and informal agencies in formal and non-formal educational processes. Today, India engages nearly 55 lakh teachers spread over around 10 lakh schools to educate about 2025 lakh children. While 82% habitations have a primary school within a radius of one kilometer, there is an upper primary school within a radius of 3 kilometers for 75% habitations. At least 50% of our children who appear at the school leaving examinations pass out of the secondary school system.⁷ To accomplish such a mammoth task, scores of voluntary agencies and government institutions are at work. Catholic Church is one such agency which is actively involved in education and therefore, it arouses scholarly interest.

The seventh plan emphasized the cooperation of voluntary sectors for rural development. *The Yojana*, the academic organ of Indian planning and the *Indian Journal of Public Administration* of Premium Natural Training and Research Institute brought out special issues highlighting the role of voluntary organizations.⁸

In an essay, "Private Enterprise and Christian Education", M.M. Balaguer rightly points out that there were at least five great objectives achieved by the educational institutions started by the missionaries. First, they taught that human dignity must be

respected. Secondly, they cultivated a social sense in their students. Thirdly, they established the code that one should treat others as one expected to be treated by them. Fourthly, they enjoined upon the authorities of public institutions that they should look upon the power they enjoyed as a sacred trust. Fifthly, they taught youth the need of the rule of law to prevent anarchy.⁹ Men of learning have acknowledged the contributions of the missionaries and their findings are an added inspiration to further explore the present role of the Church in the field of education.

Shri J.P. Naik, Secretary of the Kothari Commission, pays glowing tribute to Christian contribution to secular education. He points out that it was the Christian missionaries and educationists who taught that man's supreme duty is to serve his fellowmen. Those responsible for the management of Christian institutions were men of charity, the teachers who worked there were men of integrity and character, and the education imparted by them stressed human dignity and freedom.¹⁰

As per the draft document of NCERT entitled, *National Curriculum Framework 2005*¹¹, we are in a situation where the system of education which is divided between a fast growing private sector and a larger state sector marked by shortage and uneven spread of resources. Here the issue of quality in education poses complex conceptual and practical questions. The belief that private schools have higher quality treats examination results as the sole criterion for judging quality. This kind of perception ignores the ethos-related limitations of the privileged private schools. The fact that they often neglect the child's mother tongues warrants us to wonder about the opportunities they are able to provide to the child to construct knowledge in meaningful ways. Moreover, the exclusion of the poor from their admission process implies the loss of learning opportunities which occur in a class room with children from diverse socio-economic and cultural backgrounds. Catholic schools as private enterprises are not totally devoid of such controversies.

In this context, a casual observation of the education scenario in India will point to the fact that there are scores of voluntary agencies or Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) involved in education at all levels. Kothari Commission (1964) revealed the following data with regard to the role of Voluntary Organizations in education.

Table 1
Private Institutions' Involvement in Education

<i>Stage of Schooling</i>	<i>Government</i>	<i>Private</i>
Pre-primary	29 %	71 %
Primary	56 %	44 %
Secondary	30 %	70 %
Vocational Schools	33 %	67 %
Special Schools	21 %	79 %

As early as in 1967, a survey conducted by National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT) showed that private agencies manage 70% of the secondary schools in the country.¹² There are two obvious reasons for this phenomenon, one being that India's multi-ethnic, multi-linguistic, multi-religious polity. The second follows from the first. The Constitution of India reciprocates this national reality and guarantees the various segments of the pluralistic polity their right to establish and manage their own institutions.

Christians form only 2% of India's population, but they have a strong presence in the field of education. Taking advantage of the constitutional right, Christians have participated actively in education. As a Christian community, although Catholic Church forms only 1.1% of the Indian population; as educators Catholics have excelled both in terms of quantity and quality. Despite being a miniscule minority community, Catholic Church has established educational institutions throughout the country.

The following is a table of educational institutions of the Catholic Church in India as in 2004-2005.

Table 2
Catholic Educational Institutions in India ¹³

<i>Type of Educational Institutions</i>	<i>Total Number of Institutions</i>
Nursery schools	4428
Lower Primary schools	5872
Upper Primary Schools	198
Secondary Schools	372
Higher Secondary Schools	465
Colleges	59
Technical Schools	900
Training Schools	513
Professional Institutions	263
Orphanages	1278
Hostels	2979
Hospitals and Dispensaries	2265
Publications	380
Total	26892

In the state of Meghalaya there is a large number of Catholic secondary and higher secondary schools. In Meghalaya, the Catholic Church runs 70 secondary schools and 24 higher secondary schools (including 3 colleges with higher secondary education facilities). They constitute 15% of the educational institutions of the state at the secondary level. The number of students who pass out of these institutions is also very large.

Table 3
Catholic Church's Involvement in Education in Meghalaya¹⁴

<i>Types of educational Institutes</i>	<i>Total number of institutions</i>
Pre Primary schools	648
Lower Primary schools	978
Upper Primary Schools	180
Secondary schools	68
Higher Secondary Schools	24
Colleges	06
Technical Schools	01
Hostels	151
Nursing School	02
Training Centers	10
Total	2068

These institutions involve a large number of personnel, a very huge financial investment, developing adequate number of quality infrastructure and assurance of competence and produce in general satisfactory output. How far is this gigantic effort successful? What is the quality of student output? What is their educational effect on society at large? These are some crucial questions which need to be addressed.

India as a whole has undergone socio-political and economic changes. Educational changes have also taken place as a consequence. The structure of educational, curricular and administrative changes have altered the face of education and new trends in education appear almost by the day. All these have serious repercussions on the functioning of the Catholic schools. Therefore, the question, to what extent and in what manner these changes have been absorbed into these schools? As it is observed, "The temples of learning" have degenerated into arenas for commerce, controversy and unhealthy competition.¹⁵ These developments make it expedient to scrutinize the role of the Catholic Church in secondary and higher secondary education in Meghalaya.

Many writers on Meghalaya have highlighted the role of the Catholic Church in secondary education. They have seen the Church as an active agency in the field of education. Their observations have been casual and made without research support. This calls for supporting or challenging, as the case may be, such views on the basis of reliable data.

Most Catholic secondary and higher secondary schools show visible commitment to national integration and a concern for the underprivileged sections of the society. They impart value-based education intending to form a holistic personality. Thus Catholic

schools have empowered many students by helping them to discover their potentialities. As a result of this, these schools have been consistently contributing enlightened leadership to the state and the country. A study of this nature will shed light on the extent to which Catholic Church attempts to promote the all round education of students even in the case of the marginalized of the society.

Most Catholic schools in the urban area excel. Many take this as the image of all the schools of the Church. But there are schools in rural areas which struggle to excel. These schools are overshadowed by the urban schools. Therefore, it is justified that all these schools are taken as a single unit of study to present a realistic and complete picture. It is in this background that the present study has been undertaken.

Need and Justification of the Study

Secondary and higher secondary education in India has undergone phenomenal changes in many aspects. Different Commissions constituted by the Government of India made recommendations which radically changed the nature of secondary education.

The Secondary Education Commission of 1952-53, visualized the objectives of secondary education for an emerging democratic social order in India. It implied vocational efficiency for the economic prosperity of the country. Secondary education also caters to the development of artistic and cultural interests which form the basis of human personality.¹⁶

The Education Commission of 1964-66 realized that the destiny of India is being shaped in her classrooms. In a world based on Science and Technology, education determines the level of prosperity, welfare and security of the people. To realize this broad aim, the Commission suggested the inclusion of science, education, work experience, vocationalization of education, book banks, scholarship, identification of gifted students, residential facilities, guidance and counselling and moral and religious education. All these factors help students to expose themselves to the education of science, humanities and social sciences. This is an appropriate stage to instill in children a sense of history, national perspective and give them opportunities to understand their constitutional duties and rights as citizens. Conscious internalization of a healthy work ethos and the values of a humane and composite culture will be brought about through appropriate functional curricula.¹⁷

The National Policy on Education (NPE), which was formulated in 1986 and revised in 1992, clearly outlines the role of secondary and higher education with specific goals. Within this framework, higher secondary education is seen as a bridge between primary and secondary education. It is expected to prepare young persons of 14 – 18 age group for the world of work and for pursuing higher education. It envisaged action plans to

prepare young people for the 3rd Millennium. In this perspective, secondary schools have an enormous responsibility towards building the country.¹⁸

Thus we see that India has placed paramount importance on secondary and higher secondary education. It is often said "the purpose of any country can be best measured by the quality and quantity of its secondary schools."¹⁹ Keeping in mind the above mentioned goals and priorities of secondary education, the study will probe whether these concerns are integrated into the Catholic secondary and higher secondary schools of Meghalaya. Some of the other reasons are enlisted below:

- (i) There is a need to ascertain the magnitude of the work that is being accomplished by the Catholic Church in secondary and higher secondary education. The public at large does not know the volume of work being carried out by the Church in this sector because reliable information is not available.
- (ii) A number of authors, Karotemprel (1990)²⁰, Jayaseelan (1996)²¹ Verghese (1997)²² Crescensius (2005)²³ have referred to the contributions made by the Catholic missionaries to education in North East India but no indepth study could be located with respect to Meghalaya which highlights the role of the Catholic Church in running secondary and higher secondary schools in the state.
- (iii) It is observed that there is usually a rush for admission in the schools run by the Catholic Church. The reasons have not been identified so far. A detailed study will bring out the significant features of Catholic secondary and higher secondary schools which set them apart and will shed light on the overall functioning of these schools.
- (iv) It is seen that in Meghalaya, the Catholic Church invests personnel, money and material in education. Very often government's support is limited to salary grant when its support is there, while support to infrastructure is minimal or absent. Therefore, through investment, the Church contributes towards the development of the state. But the role of the Church is unclear in various aspects of education. It is also not certain how much monetary investment is made for schools.
- (v) Institutions in general face problems of understanding their own weaknesses because there is no or little provision for self-evaluation. Therefore, they are left in the dark as to their relevance in the present context of the society. Any institution needs timely assessment for its improvement. Time and again one needs to evaluate the effectiveness of an institution. Such an evaluation of schools includes all aspects. A comprehensive study will bring out the objectives, planning, administration and policies of these institutions. The result of these studies will serve as an agent for the betterment of the schools. Besides the knowledge generated through this study will cause greater interest in all those who are interested in secondary and

higher secondary education in Meghalaya. It will be an asset to Catholic educationists for better planning and administration. The study will also investigate the problems plaguing the Catholic secondary and higher secondary schools.

On the basis of the above facts and discussion, it seems justified to undertake the present study. Moreover, no comprehensive study exists on the present topic under study and the findings will be of help to the Church as an Organization. It also will shed light on many unexplored areas in the education provided by the Church. A proper study can provide a typology of education in general with regard to administration, efficiency and curricular and co-curricular management.

Operational Definitions of the Key Terms Used

- (i) **Role:** In this study the word 'role' is understood as functioning of the education system and thereby making contribution to education.
- (ii) **Catholic Church:** It is understood as the Christian Church which accepts the Pope, as its spiritual leader and whose center is situated in Vatican City, Rome.
- (iii) **Secondary Education:** In the present study secondary education means high school education consisting of classes VIII to X. The term high school means a school or department of the school giving instruction in school education and preparing students for matriculation or High School Leaving Certificate (HSLC) examination.
- (iv) **Higher Secondary Education:** The current study uses higher secondary education to mean the two year course of study after matriculation or Plus Two level education provided both in higher secondary schools and colleges consisting of classes XI and XII.

Objectives of the Study

The following are the objectives of the present study:

- (i) To study the contribution made by the Catholic Church to secondary and higher secondary education in Meghalaya with regard to:
 - a) Status and Objectives of the School
 - b) School Building, Equipment and Facilities
 - c) Administration, Planning and Finance
 - d) Teachers' Recruitment, Training and Development
 - e) Library and Laboratory Facilities
 - f) Co-curricular Activities, Sports and Games

- g) Examination and Evaluation
 - h) Admission and Scholarship
 - i) Social Activities and Value Education
 - j) Discipline, Guidance and Counselling
 - k) Computer Education
 - l) Hostel Facilities
- (ii) To locate the shortcomings in the functioning of the Catholic secondary and higher secondary schools in Meghalaya and
- (iii) To suggest measures for the improvement of education at the secondary and higher secondary levels in Meghalaya.

Questions Posed

The study will answer the following questions:

- (i) With regard to Status and Objectives:
- a. What is the status of Catholic Secondary and Higher Secondary schools with regard to recognition and reputation?
 - b. What objectives are being achieved in Catholic Secondary and Higher Secondary schools?
- (ii) With regard to School Building, Equipment and Facilities:
- a. What type of infrastructure facilities are provided by these schools?
 - b. How adequate are the equipments provided for the daily functioning of the school administration?
 - c. What basic amenities are provided in these schools?
- (iii) With regard to Administration, Planning and Finance:
- a. In what manner administration is being carried out in schools?
 - b. What type of planning is being practiced in these schools?
 - c. How do they manage the schools financially?
- (iv) With regard to Teachers' Recruitment, Training and Development:
- a. How are the teachers recruited?
 - b. What are the service conditions of teachers?
 - c. What are the facilities provided for the training and development of teachers?

- (v) With regard to Library and Laboratory Facilities:
 - a. How adequate are the libraries?
 - b. How well maintained are the laboratories?
- (vi) With regard to Co-curricular Activities, Sports and Games:
 - a. To what extent do Catholic secondary and higher secondary schools promote co-curricular activities?
 - b. What sports and games facilities are provided in these schools?
- (vii) With regard to Examination and Evaluation:
 - a. What type of evaluation system is followed in these schools?
 - b. How competitive are they in the Board examinations?
- (viii) With regard to admission and Scholarship:
 - a. What is the admission policy that is being followed in these schools?
 - b. What type of scholarship facilities are offered to students?
- (ix) With regard to Social Activities and Value Education:
 - a. What are the social activities being organized in these schools?
 - b. How is value education being imparted in these schools?
- (x) With regard to Discipline, Guidance and Counselling:
 - a. How is discipline ensured in these schools?
 - b. How is guidance and counselling provided?
- (xi) With regard to computer education:
 - a. To what extent computer education is being provided in these schools?
- (xii) With regard to Hostel Facilities:
 - a. What kind of hostel facilities are being provided in the Catholic secondary and higher secondary schools?

Delimitations of the Study

- (i) The present study is limited to Secondary and Higher Secondary schools owned by the Catholic Church. It also includes the secondary and higher secondary schools owned by the Catholic Church but not run by the Church personnel.
- (ii) The study is delimited to the principal, teachers and selected parents, education officials, Church officials and selected community leaders.

(iii) It does not include secondary schools which do not have classes till the Xth standard.

Scope of the Study

The present study is comprehensive in as much as it covers all major aspects related to secondary and higher secondary education. It is designed in such a manner that all essential elements of school functioning have been dealt with in its various sections.

The analysis of the data will reveal the objectives and status of Catholic secondary and higher secondary schools. It will also bring to light the infrastructural facilities and administrative efficiency of these institutions. Special attention is paid also to staff status and co-curricular activities of the school. Other areas covered by the study are admission, scholarships, discipline, value education, guidance and counselling, computer education and hostel facilities.

Thus, the findings of the study will reveal with some measure of accuracy the nature of the education being given in these schools. The study will manifest the intricate elements that are special to Catholic schools.

In this way, the investigation will give fresh ideas to educators and planners. It will also indicate problems faced in these schools at different levels. To the Church in question, it will provide vital insights for future educational strategy.

The study conducts interview of education officials, parents, Church officials and community leaders. Therefore, the study is aimed at providing a complete picture.

No study on this topic has been conducted in the state. At the same time a study in this area will yield enormous data which will help administrators and planners of the state. It will be also useful to other private agencies which run similar schools. So there is an urgent need to explore this area.

REFERENCES

1. *Education and Society, Understanding Education*, (2002), New Delhi: IGNOU, School of Education, pp. 8-13.
2. As quoted in *Education and Society, Understanding Education*, (2002), New Delhi: IGNOU, School of Education, p.8.
3. *Ibid.*, pp. 8-13.
4. K.K. Bhatia, B.D.Damral and others, (2005), *Development of Education System in India*, New Delhi: Kalyani Publishers, p.164.
5. As quoted in *Education and Society: Understanding Education*, op cit., p.29.
6. *Annual Plan of Tamil Nadu Government*, (2003), Source:http://www.tn.gov.in/spc/annualplan/ap2004-05/ch4_1.pdf, p.5.
7. NCERT, *National Curriculum Framework*, (2005), New Delhi: NCERT, p.1.

8. R.N. Safaya, (2000), *Development, Planning and Problems of Indian Education*, New Delhi: Dhanpat Rai & Sons, p.45.
9. M.M. Balaguer, (1972), "Private Enterprise and Christian Education", *Educational Perspectives in Modern India*, New Delhi: Vikas Publication, p.240.
10. J.P. Naik, (1972), "Private Enterprise in Education", *The Christian College and National Development*, New Delhi: Sagar Publication, p. 135.
11. NCERT, (2005) *National Curriculum Framework, op cit.*, p.7.
12. M.A. Muttalib, (1989), *Voluntary Action in Education*, New Delhi: Sterling Publishers Private Ltd., pp. 15-21.
13. *The Catholic Directory of India* (2005), Bangalore: Claretian Publication, p.110.
14. *Catholic Arch-diocesan Directory of Shillong*, (2005), Shillong: Arch-diocesan Publication, pp. 55-55.
15. Paulson Mundanmany, (2003), *Manager or Visionary: Leadership of Salesian High and Higher Secondary Schools in India*, Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, San Francisco: San Francisco University, pp. 1-24.
16. J.C. Aggarwal, (2002), *Landmarks in the History of Modern Indian Education*, Delhi: Vikas Publication Pvt. Ltd., p. 94.
17. *Ibid.*, pp. 94-96.
18. P.D. Shukla, (1989), *The New Education Policy in India*, New Delhi: Sterling Publishers Private Ltd., pp. 13-14.
19. U.S.Mathur, (1973), *Wither Secondary Education: Training and In service Education*, New Delhi: Oxford Publishing Company, p. 190.
20. Sebastian Karotemprel, (1990), "Some Specific Contributions of the Salesians of Don Bosco to the Church in North East India, *Indian Missiological Review*, Vol.12, No. 3, pp. 28-30.
21. L. Jayaseelan, (1996), *Impact of the Missionary Movement in Manipur*, New Delhi: Scholar Publishing House, pp. 167 – 180.
22. B.G. Verghese, (1997), *India's North East Resurgent*, New Delhi: Konark Publications, pp. 22-23.
23. Crescensius Khongwir (2005), *Development of Higher Secondary Education in Meghalaya: An Analytical Study*, unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Shillong: NEHU, p. 341