

With special reference to West Garo Hills

Problems of Education in Meghalaya



Uma Roy Bhowmik

About the book

Education is the basic right of every child. It implies that every child must be in school and that no child should work. Nevertheless, millions of children are found out-of-school and as many of them are working. This comprehensive book purports to be useful for those who want to know the educational problems faced by the students of high schools in Meghalaya. Thus, one would look for information on what best can be done to promote child's development to realize his or her potential for full growth and development. In other words, the book should form an interesting reading for all, as all of us are curious about children and are concerned in one way or the other, as parents, teachers, researchers and administrators.



Uma Roy Bhowmik Ph.D (Education) is an Associate Professor and Head, Department of Education, Don Bosco College, Tura, Meghalaya with almost two decades of teaching experience. She is also a visiting faculty in North Eastern Hill University, Department of Education, Tura Campus. She has published several articles in multidisciplinary journals and has been awarded gold medal for securing first position in MA (Education) by NEHU in 1992.

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Fax: +91 361 2519231

Email: info@easternbookhouse.in/easternbookhouse@gmail.com.

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Introduction

Friday, the 21st January 1972 saw the birth of a new State in Indian Union –named as Meghalaya- “The Abode of the clouds.” It is one of the smallest states of the Indian Union.

Administratively, Meghalaya consists of seven districts namely, East Garo Hills, West Garo Hills, Jaintia Hills, East Khasi Hills, West Khasi Hills, Ribhoi and South Garo Hills districts. These are predominantly inhabited by the Khasis, the Jaintias and the Garos. The region spreads over the majestic mountains that receive the heaviest amount of rainfall in India. The village of Mawsynram, in the vicinity of Shillong plateau is known for receiving highest rainfall in India. Mindful of their culture, the Khasis, Jaintias and Garos are jovial and hospitable and they have distinctive traits and ethnic origin. Meghalaya is rich in mineral resources, natural vegetation and biodiversity but its tough terrain makes transport and communication difficult. Transport and communication bottleneck seriously affects trade, commerce and development in the state.

Meghalaya is a predominantly rural state and agriculture is the chief source of income. Settled cultivation is practised in the plain areas and shifting cultivation or *jhumming* is practised in the hilly terrain. *Jhumming* is a primitive agricultural method, very much associated with the tribal social customs. Slashing and burning of forests for this mode of cultivation is causing significant ecological problems in Meghalaya.

Like many of the Indian tribal communities, the tribes of Meghalaya also do not possess long remembered history. By and

large, two factors seem to be responsible for their ignorance in this regard. If not the original, most of them are believed to be the oldest inhabitants of India. They date back to the period when art of reading-writing was completely unknown. Man led a savage life in caves and jungles and sustained himself on wild fruits, flowers, tubers and probably uncooked flesh of the wild animals. At a later stage when they were relatively taking to a settled way of life they were invaded by the alien raiders and invaders who possessed better mental acumen and were also armed with superior war weapons. Consequently the natives were pushed to the inaccessible forests and landlocked isolations. Their seclusion from one another as well as from the comparatively advanced incomers and societies, drowned them in another sea of darkness and ignorance about the outside world. Till recent past many of them had not seen railways, electrical appliances etc and the word urbanization did not exist in their vocabulary. There are even at present some members of these communities living in distantly remote corners who are completely ignorant of the outside world. The Garos, the Khasis and the Jaintias, three principal tribes living in Meghalaya like many other innocent and ignorant communities believe that in the ancient past, their present habitat was the abode of Gods and Goddesses alone.

The state of Meghalaya remained isolated from the rest of India for a long time. Particular efforts to develop the state was made only after Independence. Thus, in spite of abundant natural resources, the state still remained undeveloped. The state has some special problems and issues that are grouped as follows :

I. Natural Problems : The state suffers from the following natural calamities as indicated below :

- (a) *Earthquakes* : Earthquakes are common in Meghalaya and thus prediction and precautions are necessary in this connection.
- (b) *Floods* : Every year there is loss of life and property due to floods in plain belts of Meghalaya and steps taken by the flood control department are not sufficient to control floods.

- (c) *Landslides* : Landslides are very common in Meghalaya. Owing to the landslides, communication and transport come to a standstill for several days and the people face serious problems. In view of foregoing natural problems, steps should be taken to control these natural problems. Some remote sensing techniques can be applied in giving advance warning to avoid natural problems like floods, earthquakes and landslides.

Thus, the state of Meghalaya is prone to natural and man-made disaster. The state is also bordered by an international boundary. The constant threats from across the border leave the people in uncertain future.

II. Economic Problems : The state has remained economically backward for several reasons and they are given below :

- (a) *Inadequate transport and communication* : The system of inadequate transport and communication is a great handicap of Meghalaya. The transport and communication system is a handicap for the movement of finished goods to the marketing centres and import of essential commodity, necessary machinery, raw materials etc. A poor transport and communication system stands as a hindrance in the development of Education too.
- (b) *Problem of land* : Problem of land ownership, shifting cultivation, improper land use etc also contribute to low agricultural production.
- (c) *Lack of marketing facilities* : The proper marketing facilities are not available for the local products of the village and small scale industries.
- (d) *Low per capita income and problem of industrial development* : The per capita income of Meghalaya is very low, and even though there is sufficient potential for setting up small scale industries based on forest and land resources, the industrial development is still in infancy. Transport and communication is a great constraint in supplying life saving raw materials and taking the finished

goods to the market. High cost of transport is another major problem faced by the people of Meghalaya.

- (e) Lack of technical input and lack of proper efforts made to promote and guide the available resources are the other problems of Meghalaya. There is acute shortage of manpower in Meghalaya. The people follow the traditional craftsmanship. There has been no attempt to improve the production processes, to remove deficiencies by providing modification in the existing products, labour cost is very high.

III. Social problems : Social problems like poverty, ignorance and superstitions overlay the body and mind of the masses. About 80% people in Meghalaya live in rural areas. There are bad roads which prevent easy communication, majority of the people are illiterate, and there is no proper facility for schooling in the villages. Agriculture is the main occupation of the people of Meghalaya and women are overburdened with the work. They are workers both at home and in the field.

- (a) *Lack of urbanization and modernization :* About 80% of the people of Meghalaya live in rural areas. The process of urbanization will raise literacy and thus it is desirable to adopt the process of urbanization and this process will provide facilities in various sectors of human life. Thus for the overall progress of the state, improvements should be made in the fields of health, welfare, nutrition, education and agriculture. Thus the conditions of the people need to be improved for the achievement of better human standards.
- (b) *Militancy :* Militancy is a deeply disturbing social problem in Meghalaya which time and again poses threat to education.
- (c) *Neglected Part :* Meghalaya is one of the neglected part of the country. It is different from the mainland India in most of the aspects. This negligency by the rest of the country is also one of the reasons that hampered the progress of education in Meghalaya.

Problems of Education in Meghalaya

In the words of Jawaharlal Nehru, "Education of the boy is the education of one person but education of a girl is the education of the entire family."

(a) The above statement is true but in a state like Meghalaya there is lack of proper social attitudes in the rural and backward areas for the education of girls.

Thus creating proper Social Attitude and Environment in the rural and backward areas of Meghalaya for the education of girls is essential. A thorough research should be taken up by the Institutes of Education and allied Institution in different states and coordinated at the national level. Separate schools for girls should be established where needed. School mothers in co-education schools should be appointed. Public opinion in favour of girls' education should be created. Parental education is essential to eradicate social cause of wastage and thus enlightened parents will send their children to schools.

(b) The process of education is very slow in Meghalaya : The education imparted is not suited to the needs of the people. Here, education has a great role to play in the integration of the Scheduled Tribes with the rest of the population. It is desirable that national education should be imparted to foster national integration and make people think in terms of the nation.

(c) Medium of Instruction : One of the main reasons for the slow progress of the students of Meghalaya is that the medium of instruction is other than the mother tongue of students. It is to be noted that at least at the primary level the medium of instruction should be the mother tongue of the children. The inability to implement this is because –

- (i) The Tribal dialects are innumerable.
- (ii) There is a lot of difficulty to prepare Text book in local dialects.

There are certain dangers of imparting education through other languages, other than the mother tongue, specially when it is imposed against the will of the teachers. After all, the ultimate aim of education

is to train the mind and body, to sharpen the mind of the young people.

Thus, the educational system in Meghalaya suffers from a lack of definite aims and objectives. Thus mushroom growth of schools, without serious planning and need should be discouraged at any cost.

(d) Lack of scientific and Technological Education : The most striking weakness of the education in Meghalaya is the lack of opportunities for scientific and technological instruction and agriculture and industrial training. Most of the students are compelled to study the humanities subjects. That is why there is an acute shortage of specialized manpower in the fields of agriculture, medicine, fisheries, engineering, animal husbandry and post graduate teachers in science and commerce. It is now desirable that education should be related to manpower needs. Thus, the manpower planning in education is required to develop the human resources in the state.

This is the main reason for the failure of students in the Matriculation examination in subjects like English, Science and Mathematics. In the high school, the teaching of subjects such as Mathematics, English, Science which are important subjects, is far from satisfactory. The students do not get a firm foundation in these important subjects.

(e) Dearth of Trained Teachers in Meghalaya : The success of education to very large extent depends upon the quality of teachers. In Meghalaya, there is dearth of teachers in Science and Mathematics. A large number of teachers are untrained in Meghalaya. The state government should provide the training facilities to the untrained teachers by deputing them to the local training colleges. It is essential to raise the quality of the teaching profession and the standard of education. For this purpose, the programme of in-service training should be followed on a very large scale so that all the existing untrained teachers would be trained. Those who are trained should take advantage of summer institutes, vocation courses and other refresher and orientation courses.

It is observed that there is wide disparity in educational opportunity provided between the state's urban and rural areas. It is

desirable to reduce the educational imbalances in the state and this can only be attained if the educational facilities like improvement in quality of education, increasing the duration of compulsory education and educational facilities and expansion of education are provided to the neglected areas of Meghalaya.

Since teacher education is one of the most crucial components for educational development, it is necessary that important area of education should be revamped in Meghalaya by –

- (i) Clearing the backlog of untrained teachers.
- (ii) Building of a team of would be teachers as new recruits through pre-service training and
- (iii) Training and equipping the existing under-qualified in-service teachers for better classroom management.

(f) Lack of suitable Curriculum : The prescribed courses of study do not pay much attention to inculcate social efficiency and foster right attitude to the students. Curriculum has failed to achieve the real goals in education. It has neither served the interest of the students nor it has been able to serve the needs of the society. The present curriculum is narrowly conceived and theoretical. It is dominated too much by examinations. It is overcrowded without providing rich content. There is no adequate facility for practical and other kinds of activities. The curriculum does not cater to the needs of the students. The curriculum does not include technical and vocational subjects which are in great need for the economic and industrial development of the state. The curriculum does not encourage the originality, intelligent understanding of basic concepts and fundamental knowledge of the students. Examinations in Meghalaya are conducted out of the contents given in the text books. Thus, emphasis is given on learning of factual content without using their insight, ability, reasoning etc. Simply the memorization of the content helps the students to pass examinations.

(g) Lack of revision of curriculum, text and other instructional materials : Knowledge is expanding day to day, so there is a great need to revise curriculum. There is absence of adequate material facilities in the schools and thus no improvement can take place in

the standard of teaching. These ill-equipped institutions thus increase wastage of time, money, energy and unemployment in Meghalaya.

(h) Uneven Educational Growth : In educational growth of Meghalaya, imbalances/disparities between urban and rural areas of the state, enrolment of children of both sexes at different levels and sectors of education has to be reduced. Such imbalances can be corrected by adopting effective educational planning strategy by the Government of Meghalaya. Educational planning is necessary to keep pace with time and to ensure success of educational programmes in the state.

(i) Lack of proper Supervision and Financial Assistance: Supervision is the backbone of educational improvement, says the Education Commission (1964-66).

Grants are not adequate for the construction of school buildings, hostels, for the equipments of library and laboratory and acquisition of teaching aids to improve the educational standards. Lack of finance is one of the major impediments in Meghalaya. The money sanctioned by the Government is not adequate to meet the expenditure. Whatever money is allocated, it is not well spent as well as adequate.

(j) The method of teaching is not flexible : The method of teaching is not flexible according to the local situations in the state. One method is not applicable and helpful for all types of students. Teachers are not trained in the proper method of teaching according to the local needs, the implementation of which is a difficult task.

No proper planning in the field of education – Another major weakness of Meghalaya's educational planning is that it starts from the top, i.e. at the centre and starts to descend downwards. The teachers and inspecting officers have very little to do with educational planning. Thus it is desirable that educational planning should start from below.

Earlier, school education was in the state list. Managing education, therefore, was largely the responsibility of the states. The centre had a very limited role to support actions of the states and to advise them on matters of educational development. For instance, on the recommendation of the Central Advisory Board of Education,

(CABE), the Government of India appointed the Secondary Education Commission (1952-53). The commission recommended the scheme of multi-purpose schools with diversification into seven streams. These streams were in the form of optional groups of courses of study. Later, the Education Commission (1964-66) was appointed by the Government of India to advise the Government on the national pattern of education and on general principles and policies for the development of education at all stages and in all aspects. Recommendations of this Commission formed the basis for the National Policy Resolution on Education (1968).

Education was shifted to the concurrent list in 1976 through a Constitutional amendment. The main implication of this amendment was to develop meaningful partnership between the Centre and the States for pursuing educational development.

(k) Population : The rise in the number of people has affected the quality of life and education. The population of Meghalaya as per the census of 2001 was 2,31,8822 including 1,17,6087 males and 1,14,2735 females. Meghalaya is likely to see a 30% rise in its population after completion of the second phase of census enumeration in 2011. Thus the growth of population has affected the space, teaching learning process, quality and quantity of educational services, effectiveness and uncertainty of the future. Thus population education should be introduced in every institution in Meghalaya.

(l) Tribal Culture : The dominance of tribal culture has hindered the progress and development in Meghalaya. Many of them are isolated from India and from the rest of the world. Many of these tribal communities are traditional, conservative and rigid. They failed in their adjustment and to take up new challenges. Thus Educational Excursions and National Integration camp should be organised.

(m) First Generation learners : Many of the participants in formal learning are of first and second generation learners in Meghalaya. This implies that parents cannot support their learning process. Prejudice and superstitions still prevail among the masses. This means that the seed of education has to be nourished and cared so that scientific thinking and development can take place. Children in Meghalaya come to schools from certain families where there are

no knowledgeable elders to help them with their home task, and hence, they are usually among the most backward students in the class.

(n) Unemployment problem : Every year hundreds of matriculates and graduates are being turned out without any prospect of their getting jobs because they become victims of circumstances. The young students are not provided avenues and incentives to broaden their mental horizons.

(o) Mushroom growth of schools : Mushroom growth of schools in the state needs to be checked. No schools should be established without serious planning and need. No schools should also be established on political considerations. Every school must be well constructed and provided with the minimum requirements based on modern educational practice, well furnished rooms, sufficient furniture, a good library with books, journals, charts and pictures. Sufficient opportunities for games and sports must be available in the schools so that every child gets encouragement to participate in some aspects of games and sports. The schools must be made lively and attractive so that the students and teachers are made free from their monotonous routine.

(p) No importance being given to mass media in education : Mass media are means or instruments of communication that reach large number of people or pupils. The media may be printed like newspapers or may take the form of cinema, radio and T.V. Now new media like Internet and e-mail etc. are also increasingly being used. As observed by Erickson and others, "In recent years technology has swept through society from research laboratories into manufacturing communications, the space age and finally now, into education." Earlier, the teacher was the only medium of communication for children. Now we see new media like radio and T.V. making their inroads into education. A close look at the use of new media of education indicates that they are supplementary to teacher's work. They do not and cannot replace the teacher. However, in a state like Meghalaya, where more than 80% of the population lives in rural areas, the process of inducing the farmers to more productive forms of agriculture itself has been extremely slow, due

to lack of technology, the attitude of change-resistance in the tribal make-up, social and religious beliefs etc.

Thus introduction of mass media is very helpful in spreading literate, social education, to send information to remote places and help in distant learning. It will help in the modification of attitude and values of individuals residing in the different corners of Meghalaya.

(q) Rise in the growth of educated unemployment : One major source for the people of Meghalaya is employment. Banks in the state are trying to provide crores of rupees to create self-employed youths. Hence non-governmental jobs should be the target of the unemployed. The number of educated unemployed is constantly on the rise. The government sector, may be the largest employer in the state is saturated and the centre has warned against further squeezing in of jobs as part of its downsizing policy. This has come as a great shock to Meghalaya.

The Government of Meghalaya is trying to develop tourism to generate resources. Thus there is an urgency of providing to the people education suitable to the regional economy and ecology in order to make them fit for employment in the state. Thus more industrial units have to be set up in Meghalaya as the state is lagging behind in this area inspite of having abundant mineral wealth. Although, immense potential are available for the development of tourism in the state, but it is yet to turn into a following industry.

(r) Lack of Adolescence Education in Meghalaya : In Meghalaya, the population of the adolescents is growing. Sexual activity among the adolescents is also growing. For better guidance, it is important that parents and teachers have the knowledge of the adolescents, their interest, their likes and dislikes. Several research studies have revealed that adolescence develop autonomy with age. Differences in attitude and values begin to appear between parents and adolescents. Adolescence is a period of excitability and turbulent emotion. Social and emotional changes appear towards opposite sex. Change in attitude, feeling, dominated by specific interest are common. Adolescence period is full of imagination. All these factors should be in the knowledge through : Group discussion, debate, counseling, quiz competition etc. During such discussion, parents, community leaders, religious groups, medical doctors could also be invited.

Eradication of illiteracy, improvement in the socio-economic conditions life expectancy and improvement in the birth control technology may influence to limit the growth of population. As per the NCERT report (National Education Project in the Development of Education in Social Science and Humanities). Awareness building is a major priority. Thus in a state like Meghalaya, Adolescence Education in school curricula should be focused on information dissemination.

School dropouts :

This wastage in education in Meghalaya increases illiteracy. A large number of students drop out before completing the primary education. Some of them do not get interested in studies and often leave it because of poverty. Most students are first generation learners. The parents want them to share in the domestic and agricultural work in their spare time. Thus they are unable to attend the schools. The girl child especially is considered as helping hand to parents in various ways including earning.

Many schools in Meghalaya do not function properly, especially in rural areas. There are about 6 % habitations uncovered by primary schools. The reasons are because they are scattered and thinly populated. At the same time, higher educational institutions are located in big towns and city, which prevent rural students to easy access.

In India in the year 1950, the Indian Constitution was framed and through its Article 45, the Universal free compulsory primary education clause was proclaimed. The Constitution, in 1950, emphatically declared 7 years (from 7-14 years) of free compulsory and Universal education. It was believed that primary education should be Universal (meant for all), free (no fees to be levied), and compulsory (as it is obligatory).

The scope of primary education includes :

- (a) Literacy
- (b) Self-development
- (c) Skill of manual work
- (d) Development of social, moral, national and spiritual virtues.

However, the dream of achieving cent per cent literate citizens is not met even today in the country and so in Meghalaya, because there are many hurdles to the aim of universal, free and compulsory education. But it may be overcome by various ways. The different targets may be reached through proper planning.

The different problems for the high rate of dropouts in Meghalaya are :

- (i) Finance : Finance is needed for the fulfillment of the ideal of compulsory free education. The Government of Meghalaya is progressively increasing the allotment for education. But with the exploding population, there is always a mismatch between the need and the allotment.
- (ii) Personnel : Another problem that baffles the aim of universal education in Meghalaya is the lack of trained personnel. To provide education to all, large number of qualified teachers are needed. Thus recruitment, training and sourcing of teachers require tremendous effort in Meghalaya.
- (iii) Wastage : A large number of young people in Meghalaya join the primary stream of education but many of them dropout before they reach the fourth standard. Thereby, they lose the benefit of education collected in those early years of their schooling. The dropping out cases means wastage of money, energy and time of the individual as well as the nation. Chronic poverty in a family stops children to proceed with their studies in Meghalaya. The parents cannot afford to lose a working member's earning for the family, by sending them to the school. The parents do not value school education because of their socio-economic class, according to which education of a child would not fetch any monetary return for the family. The reluctance to send a girl a child to school is another reason for withdrawal or non-admission of the girl children, who are often considered to be meant for taking care of the younger siblings at home, when their parents go out for work. These social taboos and practices in some rural areas of Meghalaya including early marriage are a preventive for education.

- (3) Organizing school time table according to the needs of the local people by providing part time and own time education.
- (4) Stopping stagnation by a policy of non-detention, and new methods of evaluation and examination.

Education Environment in Meghalaya

Meghalaya is one of the states of North East India and has the literacy rate of 63 % as per 2001 census. Three tribes inhabit in Meghalaya, viz, Khasi, Jaintia and Garo, among these tribes, Khasis are the most literate and educated than the Garos and Jaintias. In the Khasi and Jaintia hills, the educational work was initially attempted by the Serampore Baptist Mission in 1830-33, when Alexander Lewis was sent to work at Cherrapunji. Rev. Mr and Mrs Thomas Jones opened three schools at Mawsmmai, Mawmluh and at Cherrapunji but there was no script and naturally there were no text books. Instructions were imparted orally from the manuscripts prepared by the missionaries. Rev. Thomas Jones introduced the Roman Script for which he was called the Father of Khasi Alphabet.

The Garos were independent people in the early part of 19th century. The history of educational work in this area seemed to have been of irregular fluctuations and development. It was David Scott, the political agent to the Governor General in the North-East who tried to propagate education in Garo Hills. First school was started as Singimari and later on it was Francis Jenkins who established school at Goalpara in 1847. Dr. Miles Bronson, an American Baptist Missionary visited Garo Hills and in the same area, he opened a school at Rajasimla. Shillong is the Capital of Meghalaya. The state consists of Universities, colleges and number of schools. Education has reached every nook and corner of the state although the progress is at slow pace. The problems of education in Meghalaya are mostly similar to the problems faced by the other North-Eastern states. People in the state are mostly rural dwellers and agriculturists. They give less value to education and as a result, number of illiterate people are many. Launching of SSA (Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan) and National Policy of Education comes as a rescuer to some extent but could not be fully implemented throughout the state. Besides these,

universalization of elementary education is reducing dropout rates. The scheme of 'OB' (Operation Blackboard) ensures the provision of two large rooms usable in all weather along with necessary teaching materials and play equipments. Hostel accommodations, supply of free food, safe drinking water, toilets or sanitary facilities are also to be provided.

Only a handful of urban dwellers in Meghalaya are educated as they are accessible to many facilities. Many educational institutions are being set up in recent years so as to facilitate the upcoming knowledge of the people. Setting up of technical institutions and colleges are of urgent need. The students have to study outside the state for higher education year after year, thereby draining out the state exchequer as well as parents pocket. Thus job oriented courses should be introduced at the earliest.

Need for Education

National development, social reconstruction and overall progress and prosperity of the society has ever been quite convincingly recognised to be closely linked with the system of education of the land. Education is an important instrument of human development. It gives a desirable and definite shape to the individual's way of conduct, temperament and character. Briefly stated, education is meant to promote quality in the person educated. In the fitness of things, decency both in the means and ends of education express quality in education. Eventually all these come to be known as the effectiveness of education.

"Education," writes F. W. Thomas, one of the most distinguished Indologists, "is not exotic in India. There is no country where the love of learning had so early an origin or has exercised so lasting and powerful an influence". No doubt, countries like China, Egypt and Babylonia rank with India as being the cradles of ancient civilisations, no other country has left behind such enduring marks of heritage as India. Education emphasises the activities which aim at developing the knowledge and moral values required in all walks of life rather than knowledge and skill relating to only a limited field of activities. Education is organised in acquiring and improving the learner's cognitive, psychomotor and behavioural characteristics. The purpose

of education is to provide the conditions essential for young persons and adults to develop an understanding of traditions and ideas influencing the society in which they live, other cultures and of the law of nature and to acquire linguistic and other skills which are basic to learning personal development and creativity.

The quality of education determines the quality of the citizens of a country. The quality of education, in turn, largely depends upon the quality of teachers in general and schools in particular. The 'quest for quality in education' has been a cry in the wilderness. Quality in education has been conceptualised here in the broad framework of teacher competence. Both the lay public and professional educators generally agree that the *goodness* of an education programme is determined to a large extent by the teaching.

"A teacher affects eternity, he can never tell where his influence stops." - Henry Adams.

The identification of qualified and able teaching personnel, therefore, constitutes one of the most important of all educational concerns. Obtaining capable teachers is an intrinsic interest and obligation of education. If competent teachers can be obtained, the likelihood of attaining desirable educational outcomes is substantial. The quality of teachers moulds and shapes the quality of education.

In this context, we are strikingly reminded of the so often quoted remarks of the Education Commission (1986, p. 46): "Of all the factors which influence the quality of education and its contribution to national development, the quality, competence and character of teachers are undoubtedly the most significant. Nothing is more important than securing a sufficient supply of high quality recruits to the teaching profession, provide them with the best possible professional preparation and creating satisfactory conditions of work which they can be fully effective".

Indian education today is faced with many challenges. The challenge of numbers, the challenge of ever increasing quantum of knowledge, and the challenge posed by the explosion of opportunity are well known and a lot has already been done to meet these challenges. In this fast changing world there is a need for everyone to be educated. Parents, teachers, government and state must tolerate

such kind of students and encourage them for higher education. For those who cannot afford it, it is the duty of the authority in the area where they are residing to find some means for them to be employed, either part time or full time.

Educational programmes will be very much needed and must be suitable to the needs and interests of these youngsters, so as to build them into good citizens of the country. Thus there should be such opportunities and facilities for these youngsters to have a harmonious and well-balanced life. In India, the last fifty years after independence has been the appointment of National Commissions on education. The Radha Krishna Commission on university education was appointed in 1948, hardly a year after independence. Next came the Mudaliar Commission on secondary education in 1952 and in 1964, Pandit Nehru appointed the Kothari Commission with wide terms of reference. Since the adoption of the 1968 policy of education, there has been a tremendous expansion in educational facilities all over the country at all levels. But the 1968 policy did not get translated into a detailed strategy of implementation. In 1986, the National Policy on Education was also adopted envisaging a national system of education. In 1990, the appointment of Acharya Ramamurti Committee was formed for a review of the educational policy.

Education has also been given due attention in our Five-Year Plans, both at the national and state levels. Our main anxiety has been to fulfil the Constitutional provision of having universal and free elementary education. The number of universities, degree colleges, professional colleges, high and secondary schools as well as middle and primary schools have gone up tremendously. The literary percentage both amongst men and women has also shown an appreciable increase during the last two decades.

In short, a new India is struggling to be born. And certainly, it will be the kind of India that the children of today and tomorrow are capable of building. For this great task they have to be properly equipped, mainly through education. Education has to perform the Herculean task of helping the youth to acquire the social vision, the moral stamina, the mastery of self and the skills and technical know-how necessary for the national tasks that will be theirs.

Education in the North-Eastern Region

The North-Eastern Region, comprising the seven sister states of Assam, Manipur, Tripura, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram and Meghalaya has a rich cultural and linguistic heritage. So much so, as many as more than fifty dialects are spoken in this region. Cutting across linguistic and racial barriers, each community, tribal or non-tribal (North-East is basically the tribal heartland of India) has a unique rich characterisation of culture, peculiarly unlike each other, a feature not known by the people in other parts of the country. The region is ethnically and culturally very distinct from the rest of India. Geographical isolation, the problems of accessibility and communication and cultural contrasts within the region have resulted in several forms of economic and social imbalances in the region. The region has also special problems like natural, economic, social and educational.

After achieving statehood, the government of Meghalaya enforced its first Act with regard to education called Meghalaya Board of School Education Act, 1973. This Act was passed to streamline the system of examination and to improve the quality of School Education in Meghalaya. The Act presents us the courses of instructions for primary, secondary and higher secondary stages of education and the conduct and supervision of examinations.

In 1981, the government of Meghalaya passed the Meghalaya School Education Act. In its comprehensive approach, it covers all aspects of school administration. It covers subjects like school establishment, recognition, management, school property, terms and conditions of service for employees of recognized private schools, provisions for unaided minority schools, student's admission, fees, school fund, taking over the management of schools etc. (Majumder, 2000, 36-38).

The literacy rate of Meghalaya is 62.06% as per 2001 census. It is still below the national average (65.38%). The following table shows the growth of literacy in Meghalaya during the past 30 years.

The female literacy rate is 60% in 2001. East Khasi Hills is the most literate district in the state with 74.74% literacy. Among the seven states of North-Eastern Region, Meghalaya has the 6th position

Number of Literates and Literacy rate in Meghalaya

Sl. No.		Persons	Male	Female
1	Number of Literates	1157875	614272	543603
2	Literacy Rate	62.06	65.4	59.6

Source : Census of India, 2001, p.20.

in terms of literacy. The main reason for the low literacy rate in the state is due to the lack of awareness among parents regarding education as well as the low socio economic status. The state of Meghalaya also has the highest dropout rate. Students' enrolment in Schools at different levels is also very low. Moreover programmes like the Adult Literacy programmes are not very successful in the state.

Meghalaya, the twenty-first state of India, emerged as a full-fledged state on the 21st of January, 1972. It is a hilly state located in the North-Eastern part of India. The term *Meghalaya* literally means the *Abode of Clouds*. The name Meghalaya was originally coined by S. P. Chatterjee. Meghalaya, a state with a total area of 22,249 sq. km lies between 25°47'N and 26°10'N latitude and 89°47'E and 92°47'E longitude. It has a population (tribal and non-tribal) of 23,18,822 (Govt. of Meghalaya, 2006) which is distributed in the seven districts of the state, namely :

1. Jaintia Hills District, created on February 22, 1972.
2. East Garo Hills District and West Garo Hills District, created on October 22, 1976.
3. East Khasi Hills District and West Khasi Hills District, created on October 28, 1976.
4. Ri-Bhoi District, created on June 4, 1992 and
5. South Garo Hills District, created on June 18, 1992.

However, the major tribal inhabitants of the state are Khasis, Garos and Jaintias. The Khasis including Jaintias (Jaintia is a sub-tribe of the Khasi) are the native inhabitants of the Khasi and Jaintia Hills (Pankynstein 1999) originated from Mon-Anam or Monkhmer family of the Burmese-Malay origin (Gurdon 2002). The Garos had their genesis from the Tibeto-Burman race of Tibeto-Chinese family

(Playfair 2002). People from these communities have different ethnic origins, though they follow the common matrilineal social system.

Shillong is the state capital of Meghalaya. Meghalaya may be physiographical divided as follows :

Sl. No.	Name of the District	District Headquarter
1	East Khasi Hills	Shillong
2	West Khasi Hills	Nongstoin
3	Ri-Bhoi	Nongpoh
4	Jaintia Hills	Jowai
5	East Garo Hills	Williamnagar
6	West Garo Hills	Tura
7	South Garo Hills	Baghmara

West Garo Hills District is bounded by Mymensingh District and part of Rangpur of Bangladesh on the South and South-West, Goalpara District of Assam on the North-West; East Garo Hills District on the North-East and South Garo Hills District on the South-East. Tura is the headquarter of West Garo Hills District. Linguistically and ethnologically, the Garos belong to the Bodo family, who, at one time, occupied a large part of the Brahmaputra valley and were probably pushed out from the plains to the hills by later invaders.

Growth of Formal Education in Garo Hills

The district Garo Hills is named after the Garo tribe. The characteristic feature of their society is the matrilineal system. The condition of Garo habitants in the field of education is noteworthy before the advent of the British. Neither were there any educational institutions nor a regular feature of teachers as it appears today. Traditionally, the Garos trained their children from a young age by means of engaging them in various fields under the guidance of the elders who were actually engaged in the profession. Thus, children gradually learned the art and technique of their work. While actually doing things, they learnt a lot by mere imitation and became expert in their profession by the time they became adults. Moral lessons were also imparted exclusively in the family. In families, elders used

to instruct young ones about their social activities and performance. Under such arrangements, children acquired knowledge either by means of observation or by direct contact. Thus, the whole system of education prevalent in the past was totally informal and the technique applied was either apprenticeship or by mere imitation. But there was no place for initiation that one could get admission to be tested. In other words, it may be said that the system of formal education was not in practice.

The era of formal education in the Garo belt cannot be spoken of without referring to the name of David Scott. It was Scott, the Civil Commissioner and the agent of the Governor General of the North-Eastern Frontier of Bengal, who, soon after assuming his office, understood that the establishment of monopoly trade firmly in the region could not be possible without creating a close contact between the inhabitants and the British Government. To implement his ideas, he undertook a policy of educating the people of the district at large. It was David Scott, who, for the first time, thought of largely in terms of the 3R's for the people who were, at that time, a hostile tribe. He contacted the Serampore Mission in Calcutta and requested them to send some missionaries to work among the Garos as early as 1822. But the mission could not be of much help as they failed to depute anyone to work among the Garos. Scott was not disappointed and he tried again by sending three Garo youths to Serampore Mission. Nothing further is known about these lads except a mention about them in the fifth report of the Serampore College published in 1824 (Carey, W W 1966: 38). Scott's following correspondence with Bayley, W B Secretary to the Government bears, not only testimony to his sincere ideas, but also the ideas he possessed of bringing the inhabitants in contact with them.

"I am satisfied that nothing permanently good can be obtained by other means. I would greatly prefer two or more Moravian Missionaries who, along with religion would teach the useful arts. If the Government would insure them subsistence only, I would be willing to take on myself the expense."

(Carey, W W 1966: 39)

Despite Scott's best efforts to orient the Garos towards formal education, he was not successful in his attempt to bring missionaries to work among the Garos. Nobody was found suitable to work among them. With much difficulty, he obtained the service of Fermie, a junior teacher of English and Geography in the Hindu College at Calcutta. Fermie was asked to work as a teacher cum preacher (Missionary) at a place called Singimari, a village which is at the north-western tip of Garo Hills, bordering the plains of Assam and about 30 km away from Tura town, the headquarter of present West Garo Hills District. He joined his service in July, 1827, but unfortunately died there in November of that year. He probably could not stand the climate of the area. Thus, this initial attempt of David Scott was planted without bearing any fruit. However, his attempts bore fruit twenty years later. In 1847, Captain Jenkins caused a school to be started for Garos at Goalpara, a town in Assam about 50 kms away from the border of West Garo Hills District. Twelve Garo boys came to get education in that school and all of them were accommodated in the school boarding house. Among them, none hailed from the interior villages of the district. In spite of his great efforts and incentives, Jenkins' mission was not fully successful. He also faced the same problems as his predecessor. However, it is remarkable to note that sixteen years later, two of these twelve Garo boys were the first of the tribe who acquired the knowledge of the 3R's. Those two lads were known as Omed and the other Ramke. Both of them were ordained and started their career as teacher cum preachers in two different Garo villages situated in the North-Eastern border of Garo Hills. It was the beginning of a new era in the foothills of Garo Hills bordering the plains of Assam when a normal school was installed at Damra in 1864 by Ramke with the help of one Garo lad named Fakira. But the response from the Garos was not encouraging. It was clear from the statement of William Carey. He stated, "then while a school house was building, they all went up to the hills". Ramke was not disheartened. He persuaded the people with much difficulty and ultimately, he was successful in his mission. Initially, he started his school with three students. None was from within the village. All the three were from other villages. Among them, one was his youngest brother. A few

years later, he was able to manage students from within and around the village. In 1867, the enrolment of students went up to thirty. The work in the normal school at Damra was flourishing satisfactorily to a limited extent confined to the Northern frontier of the district bordering Assam. While the condition of education in the central, eastern, western and southern portions of Garo Hills remained as before Ramke set up a school at Damra. The ongoing dialogue, which began as early as 1822, between the government and the Christian Missionaries regarding education among the Garos came to an end with the establishment of a school at Tura in March, 1878 under the supervision of the American Baptist Mission. Elnathan Philips and Marcus C. Mason were the first missionaries to begin work as teachers in Tura Mission School. It laid the foundation of missionary activity to carry the responsibility of the entire educational work in the Garo belt. Scott's plan to educate the Garos with the help of missionaries was going to be materialised.

Gradually, as time passed, education expanded all over the Garo Hills under the influence of Christian Missionaries. No consistent effort was made by the missionaries to impart education from the secular point of view. The educational endeavour of these missionaries was just a means of popularising the principles of Christianity among the Garos through the media of school. A few lines from the report of Mason, one of the pioneer teachers of Tura Mission School in 1892, highlighting the activities of missionaries in the field of education is quoted below :

"It is through these schools, or rather the teachers of these schools, that work is begun and churches planted in the heathen villages. The ingathering of a large number of the converts is, in the main, through the work of these teachers."

Carey, W 1966:241

The above statement signifies that the neglect of secular education was not unnatural. This was a major setback to the development of education in the Garo belt during the British rule.

The advancement of formal education in Garo Hills was nominal

considering the fact that the effort of the British government and the missionaries was started as long ago as 1878 and up to 1903-04. Only 91 primary and 3 upper primary schools were established and the number of persons made literate during those periods was only 1027 out of the total population of 1,38,274 according to the Census Report of 1901. The percentage of literate people was being 0.74, which is not very impressive one. Nevertheless, the scope of education during the colonial rule was confined to the primary levels. No consistent effort was made to establish secondary schools within the school periphery of the Garo belt. It is worthwhile to state here that formal education had a little impact in the life of the Garos till independence.

The real beginning of formal education from the secular point of view has been flourishing in the districts since post-independence days. The following figures indicate that the rapid growth of literacy in the Garo Hills began from 1951. Up to 1951, the advancement of formal education among the people was not very impressive, considering the fact that the mission schools in Garo Hills was started long back.

The advancement of formal education in Garo Hills was nominal considering the fact that the effort of the British government and the missionaries was started as long ago as 1878 and up to 1903-04. Only 91 primary and three upper primary schools were established and the number of persons made literate during those periods was only 1027 out of the total population of 1,38,274 according to the Census Report of 1901. The percentage of literate people was being 0.74, which is not very impressive one. Nevertheless, the scope of education during the colonial rule was confined to the primary levels. No consistent effort was made to establish secondary schools within the school periphery of the Garo belt. It is worthwhile to state here that formal education had a little impact in the life of the Garos till independence.

The percentage of literate persons in the rural areas of the districts of the state is highest in East Khasi Hills District with 63.72% and lowest in West Garo Hills district with 46.09%.

Table : 1.1
Growth of Literacy in Meghalaya during 1971–2001.

Particulars	Years			
	1971	1981	1991	2001
1	2	3	4	5
Rural	23.40	27.45	41.05	57.00
Urban	65.22	64.12	81.74	87.19
Total	29.49	34.08	49.10	63.31
Male	34.12	37.89	53.12	66.14
Female	24.56	30.08	44.85	60.41

Sources: *Census of India, 2001, p.21.*

Table : 1.2
Growth of Educational Institutions and Literate Persons in
Garo Hills Districts
 (Covering the figures of Three Districts of Garo Hills)

Year	Total Population	Literate	Literacy Rate (%)	Institutions				
				P	M	H	S	C
1901	138274	1027	0.74	83	2	Nil	Nil	Nil
1951	242075	17706	7.31	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
1961	307228	61334	19.96	943	51	8	1	1
1971	406615	95825	23.57	1233	97	39	1	1
1981	505003	137762	27.28	2483	134	65	Nil	2

NA – Not available

Sources:

1. Figure based on the *Gazetteer of the Khasi & Jaintia Hills, Garo Hills, Lushai Hills* by B.C. Allen, 1980, Gian Publications, Delhi.
2. Figures based on *Census of India, 1951.*
3. Figure based on *District Statistical Abstract, Garo Hills, 1971-72, 1978.*
4. Figure based on *East Garo Hills District Census Handbook, 1981.*

Need and Importance of the Study

The West Garo Hills District being an under-developed district, its need for education is great. Any effort to industrialise the district and to exploit the natural resources will need high level technology and trained personnel, which is not available now. It is only through

a well organised programme of education, i.e., right from the school, can the manpower needs of the entire state can be met. The students in Garo Hills are backward or under-developed economically and socially. The community is facing quite a lot of problems and difficulties, and special efforts are needed to spread education among them and to raise their standard of living. It is important that more knowledge about the educational problems of these sections of the population should be available. It is desirable that if this important section of the population is to join the mainstream of activity in Meghalaya, problems, obstacles and handicaps placed in their way be alleviated. Thus the educational problems encountered by the students must be studied. This study, while confined only to West Garo Hills District, may help to some degree to fulfil this need.

Major Areas of Educational Problems

The major areas in which educational problems arise for the students may be categorised below :

- (a) **Academic or Educational** : Problems relating to difficulties in learning institutions, in various school subjects, examination system, students' relationship with teachers, teachers' attitude towards the students, unavailability of prescribed books, library facilities as well as the amount of satisfaction he achieves from his curriculum.
- (b) **Financial or Economic** : Economic problems arise out of economic background of the family. Problems concerned with payment of school fees, uniforms, personal expenditure, payment for textbooks, transport and communication charges and miscellaneous expenses, etc.
- (c) **Family** : It includes his relation with his parents, siblings, his other needs like facilities for study and help in his study. Problems with regard to lack of proper conditions for studying at home, worry due to lack of education of the parents and difficulty due to the family's economic condition.
- (d) **Personal and Health** : Problems encountered by students in the area would include transportation, lack of leadership qualities, poor memory, loneliness, etc. Health problems include poor health conditions, suffering from acute diseases, etc.

- (e) **Language** : Problems of communicating freely in English or Hindi, difficulties encountered in the study of vernacular as a second language, etc.
- (f) **Social** : Problems pertaining to interference of politics with studies, adjustment with other students in their schools, problems of integration with the society.
- (g) **Problems Connected with Facilities in School** : Problems encountered with regard to school facilities such as drinking water, provisions for games and sports, toilet facilities, fear of examination, etc.

D. S. Kothari, Chairman of the Education Commission (1964-66) said, "in the rapidly changing world of today one thing is certain, yesterday's educational system will not meet today's and even so the needs of tomorrow". Any system of education must cater to the needs and aspirations of the people. Today's needs are different from the past. Therefore, the old system must give way to a new system. As the country is marching ahead towards economic progress, education can play an important role so as to reach the gap between the world of work and the world of learning. Taking this into consideration, the 10+2+3 system has been evolved by the government.

In order to make education attractive and meaningful, all the unfavourable conditions should be removed. The atmosphere should be good with physical comforts where the classes are to be held. The literate adults must be motivated by making the educational programme meaningful. The students must be taught to create leisure and to employ it fruitfully. Materials should be provided to them. Reading materials as well as audio-visual materials should be provided. Reading materials consist of books, pamphlets, daily newspapers, charts, graphs and maps. But they must contain topics of interest to the students such as health, agriculture, industry, sports, wit and humour with good illustrations. Audio-visual aids include models, blackboard, bulletin board, pictures, film, radio, television, tape recorder, dramas and even puppet shows. The educational institutions must have capable, enthusiastic and sympathetic teachers.

No system can work well if it is not properly organised and

administered. Suitable bodies should be established at all levels to look after the entire institution, and eradicate illiteracy bearing in mind that illiteracy is a curse to the individual and society. In a country like India which has adopted a socialistic democratic pattern of life and which has determined to achieve economic development, it is very important that the entire population be functionally literate.

The most difficult problem which faces us today is the production of books for the neo-literates such as the Garos and Khasis. It must also be emphasised that the changed political and social context in the country, which calls for qualitative and quantitative programme, cannot be achieved without effective and flexible administrative machinery. The need for modernising and strengthening the administration of education has been emphasised by a number of committees and commissions including the Kothari Commission. While education has expanded considerably, the administrative bodies have been more or less unchanged. Streamlining the machinery for educational administration, therefore, has become urgent in view of the changing frontier of education and pedagogy as well as the significant developments that are taking place in the field of science and technology as well as in the socio-economic set up.

According to the 6th (Sixth) Schedule of the Constitution, special provisions had been made for the administration of tribal areas through District Council which were confined with certain powers. Very often there is a high rate of wastage and stagnation in the District Council schools. The system is made more difficult by a system, which prevails in Garo Hills where a village shifts along with the practice of shifting cultivation. Therefore, in setting up schools in the interior of Garo Hills, the District Council has to take this into consideration, which also require a keen vision, imagination, as well as a flexible approach.

Concept of Organisational Climate

The studies pertaining to Organisational Climate deals with either the classification of institutions or deciding the nature of climate for a particular institution or institutions. The determinants of climate have to be studied in order to improve or modify the existing climate

of the institution by making necessary changes into the factors deciding the climate. Hence, it is imperative to study the factors affecting climate rather than to study the nature of climate.

The establishment of an appropriate Organisational Climate has been recognised as one of the functions of administration, perhaps because it is the Organisational Climate of a school which determines, to a large extent, its tone and performance. Indeed the overall quality of school is greatly affected by its Organisational Climate. Accordingly, empirical data about the possible climate alternatives and the kinds of climates that are valued needed to give direction to administration so that the administrators may establish appropriate climate in their schools to ensure good teaching-learning. Therefore, the new concept of Organisational Climate has attracted the attention of administrators as well as research workers. Individuals spend most of their lives in some form of Organisational membership.

Schools represent a common denominator for man's experience with organisations in that most members of society has inhabited schools at one time or other. The schools' mission is one of forming, freeing, developing and assimilating its young clients so that they may function better as individual personalities and as sustained contributors to our society. Because of their unique effects on children, the importance of their mission in society, and their common denominator quality schools need to become more persistent focus of study for those in the field of Organisational theory and Organisational behaviour.

School organisations are :

- (a) high performers in terms of achieving meaningful schools' purposes,
- (b) generous in providing Organisational members (staff and students alike) with rewards rich in self-fulfilment and
- (c) dynamic, adaptive and creative in structure, in belief, and in orientation, in order to sustain themselves against uncertainties in the future.

Organisational climate has been defined by different authors differently. Organisational climate may be defined as patterns of

social interaction that characterise an organisation. The main units of interaction in this concept of climates are individuals, the group as a group, and the leader. Organisational climate as defined by Halpin and Crofts (1963) and as measured by the Organisational Climate Description Questionnaire (OCDQ) is the *Personality* of the school as seen by teachers and principals in individual schools. Analogously, *personality* is to the individual what Organisational climate is to the Organisation. Sharma (1971) after analysing the definitions given by different authors, came to the conclusion that, though different authors use different terminology in defining this complex concept, almost all agree that Organisational climate could be defined in terms of interaction that takes place between members of the organisation when they fulfil their prescribed roles while satisfying their individual needs. Furthermore, to operationalise the concept in the context of a *school*, he specified that it is the resulting condition, within the school, of social interaction among the teachers and between the teachers and the principal. According to Halpin and Crofts (1966), Organisational climate runs from openness at one end of the continuum to closedness at the other. Organisational climate is the global assessment of the interaction between the task - achievement dimension and the needs - satisfaction dimension within the organisation, reflecting a psycho-social flavour.

Organisational Theory

Organisational theory is the study of the structure and functioning of organisations and the behaviour groups and individuals within it. It is an emerging inter-disciplinary quasi-independent science drawing primarily on the disciplines of Psychology and Sociology, but also on Economics and to a lesser extent on Production Engineering. Most people spend a considerable portion of their time in formal organisations and at the same time, these organisations have to respond to the pressure impinging on them from the society they exist in and change in different aspects of the society affecting Organisational climate.

The most significant development in the study of administration in recent years has been the apparent shift of focus from theory of administration to Organisational theory. Although some writers like

Dwight (1961) sense in this shift a down-grading of the value involved applied orientation, it seems to represent merely a change in the strategy of inquiry. Instead of attempting a direct assault on administration, the newer approach involves first a study on the whole organisation and then the application of this knowledge in a purpose oriented context. Thus, what began in a somewhat value interdisciplinary approach to administration appears to be converging into social science in its own rightful place drawing upon these traditions of the existing social sciences for its study of Organisational behaviour. As such it becomes the first stage of the new approach forming the basis from which the applied administrative theory springs. This theory was the result of the strong influence of the system theory (Scott, William 1963) model upon current approaches to the study of organisation.

Concept of School Climate

School climate is regarded as the environment providing network of forces and factors, which surround, engulf and play on the individual. Dewey(1938) stated that learning is dependent on experience and the nature and quality of educational experiences are largely determined by the characteristics of the learners' environment. Bloom(1968) characterises environment as follows –

“... we regard the environment as providing a network of forces which surround, engulf and play on the individual. Although some individuals may resist this network, it will only be the extremes and rare individuals who can completely avoid or escape from these forces. The environment is a shaping and reinforcing force which acts on the individual”.

Bayley(1957), Pace, Stern(1970) and others also view environment as a powerful determinant of behaviour. Sharma(1969), Sharma, Buch and Rai(1971), Mubayi and Sharma(1971) found that schools differ in terms of their climates (environment). The book, *Diagnosing the School Climate* by Sharma(1978) gives details about development of School Organisational Climate Description Questionnaire (SOCDQ). Studies referred above have indicated that school climate is related with student performance, teacher satisfaction, school and headmaster effectiveness, leadership behaviour

of the headmaster and many such other variables. Results have indicated school environment warrants our immediate attention.

School Organisational Climate Description Questionnaire (SOCDDQ) is a tool which can be used for diagnosing the school environment and furthermore with little modifications it can help in studying the environment of other organisations like hospitals, industries, military organisations, etc. This tool is an Indian adaptation of Organisational Climate Description Questionnaire (Halpin and Crofts 1963).

Climate is considered to represent the emotional tone which is a concomitant of interpersonal interaction. It is a general *emotional factor* which appears to be present in interactions occurring between individuals in face to face situation of groups. This has some relationship to the degree of acceptance expressed by members of a group regarding each other's need or goals. Operationally defined it is considered to infer :

- (a) the inner private world of each individual,
- (b) the Esprit de Corps of a group,
- (c) the sense of meaningfulness of the group, individual goal and activities,
- (d) the objectivity with which a problem is attended and
- (e) the kind and extent of inter-personal interaction in a group.

In a school there can be a centripetal organisation or a centrifugal organisation. In a centripetal organisation, there is a perfect give-and-take attitude and co-operation among the members. As opposed to this, in a centrifugal organisation, all the power is vested with the headmaster and he alone wields the authority in the school. This system has the characteristics of autocracy while the open system has the characteristics of democracy. Thus every school has its own specific pattern of organisation. The effectiveness and importance of an institution depends on the efficient way of administration and operation.

Classroom Social Interaction and Classroom Climate

Socio-emotional climate of the classroom has been defined in

terms of the classroom pupil-teacher interaction as perceived by the students. Socio-emotional climate of the classroom can be considered as phenomenon consisting of the feelings and perceptions of the students about what goes on in the classroom. Different types of climates have been found to be, markedly, affecting the pupil classroom behaviour.

Connor(1960) concluded that classes with good climate had more social contracts. In them the children interacted more socially and expressed themselves more freely in the classes than the children of classes having poor climates. Well-adjusted classes were found to have closer teacher-pupil relationships and rapport. When the pupils' role was clear in the class, they showed more co-operative and warm behaviour. Good climate has, often been found to have resulted in eradication of confusion and tension from the minds of the pupils. In short, more desirable behaviour is shown in the classes where the climate is conducive. Wodtke and Wallen (1965), in a study, tried to test the validity of some of the generalisation that have been made about students and the effects of classroom climate on pupil classroom behaviour. In the classes where the climate is poor, children were found to be more distant from the teacher, and more disconnected as a social group and having poor attitudes towards school as a whole.

Flanders(1957), in a study, classified teachers into three categories – most indirect, average and direct teachers. Flanders, in this study, concluded that the most direct teachers had more indiscipline problems in their classes and found it necessary to interrupt giving directions in order to criticise students three times more often than did the most indirect teachers. Walberg and Anderson(1968), using pupil perception technique to study classroom climate, concluded that different perceptions of classroom climate are associated with different kinds of classroom activities. Students who enjoyed classroom participation, perceived their classes as unstratified, democratic in policy settings, having a clear idea of class goals and satisfaction. These students felt more personal intimacy with their fellow classmates, less alienated and less strictly controlled.

An attempt by Cogan(1953) was made to find out the

relationship between the behaviour of teachers defining different kinds of classroom climates and the productive behaviour of their pupils. Cogan found that the warm and friendly teachers who tend to make children central to classroom decision and who use techniques that integrated the group, inspire and motivate pupils to produce the most and the best work.

The researches mentioned above, all argue in favour of good climates in the classrooms in order to expect desirable behaviour shown on the part of the students. There is high correlation between good climate and desirable pupil classroom behaviour.

Development of the Concept of Classroom Climate

The concept of psychological environment of classroom climate was imported into the field of educational and psychological literature from the field of industrial research. Fritz and Dicson (1939) in their most carefully planned study at Hawthorne plant of the Western Electrical Company concluded that group atmosphere was one of the most single factor in increasing industrial production. Similarly, McGregor considered the atmosphere prevailing in a work situation to be a central factor affecting the security of individuals which, in turn, affects standards of performance.

Sociologists stole the idea of psychological environment or *climate* from industrial research and applied it to leadership-style studies in other fields, particularly in the field of education. In the field of education, the earliest systematic studies of this kind that are available were those of Anderson (1939), Anderson and Helen (1945), Anderson and Brewer (1946) and Anderson, Brewer and Reed (1946). These researches made a very good start in the direction of classroom climate as a variable of school learning, but they probably failed to give any clear and objective definition of classroom climate. It was Flanders (1970) who, for the first time, gave a more precise and objective definition of the classroom climate. To him, "classroom climate refers to the generalised attitudes towards the teacher and the class that the pupils share in common insight of individual differences. The development of these attitudes is an outgrowth of classroom social interaction. As a result of participating in classroom

activities, pupils soon develop shared expectations about how the teacher will act, what kind of person he is, and how they like their classes. These expectations colour all aspects of classroom behaviour creating a social atmosphere or climate that appears to be fairly stable, once established. Thus, the word climate is merely a shorthand reference to those qualities that consistently predominate in most teacher pupil contracts". The type of classroom climate is determined by the interpersonal behaviours of both the teacher and the pupils in the class. It sets the emotional tone of the class. It is a concomitant of interpersonal interaction.

Significance of Socio-Emotional Climate

The socio-emotional climate of the classroom is not always the same, nor is it the same for all the classes. Depending upon various factors, it varies from class to class. A number of factors determine the uniqueness of the socio-emotional climate of the class. But the styles and characteristics of the teacher's interaction with the students in the classroom have been considered its most important determinants. Whatever be its determinants, the classroom climate is regarded as one of the most important variables entering into the effectiveness of the classroom teaching and pupil learning. As pointed out earlier, the general tone of the classroom, the interaction pattern and the teacher classroom behaviour (both verbal and otherwise) produce a unique kind of socio-emotional climate of the classroom. This classroom climate as found in several studies (Lewis, 1964; Johns, 1968; Shumsky, 1968; Walberg and Anderson, 1968; Snider, 1969; Hall, 1970; Sharma, 1974) affects the quality of classroom teaching learning process considerably, determining, ultimately, the effectiveness of the classroom teaching.

The knowledge of classroom climate as an element in pupils' learning is important for the teacher under training, and hence, for improving teacher education. This knowledge is helpful in developing skill in teachers to manoeuvre classroom influence differently in different classroom situations and thus create different kinds of socio-emotional climates so as to establish more appropriate pupil learning in the classroom. The teacher who is aware of the impact of the classroom climate on pupil learning, is more likely to control

the situational and behavioural factors that create classroom climate while more conducive to learning. Classroom climate is thus an important element in teacher teaching.

Importance of pupil-teacher interaction releasing a corresponding type of socio-emotional climate has been sufficiently realised for democratic teaching. As held by Shumsky (1968) "the democratic process in learning with its emphasis on pupil-teacher interaction, is one of the most valued ideals of modern education". A good classroom climate is one of the basic outcomes of democratic teaching. Democratic teaching is more effective because it produces a kind of climate in the classroom which is conducive to pupil-learning. A good classroom climate in addition to free and adequate communication in the classroom, calls for some factors also, such as active participation of the students in various classroom activities, acceptance of students, due recognition of pupil status and fair treatment given to the students. Factors like these are essential for democratic teaching also. An important factor of democratic teaching is pupils' task involvement which makes pupil learn subject matter because knowledge in that case is intrinsically meaningful for them. The greatest challenge for the teacher is to make subject matter meaningful and encourage pupils' task involvement. Through a kind of socio-emotional climate which is characterised by warmth, trustfulness and fairness, it may be possible to promote pupil task involvement and render knowledge more relevant. Democratic teaching implies considering individual worth of the pupil and giving due place to every child. By democratic teaching and by creating a special kind of classroom climate, a teacher can minimise the number of disapproved pupils. The teacher can create a climate in which every pupil feels secure, free and dignified. Through the teachers teaching behaviours, a teacher can generate a classroom climate which is more suitable for democratic teaching-learning. It is widely claimed these days, that a good socio-emotional climate of the classroom is a potent facilitator of school learning. The linkage between classroom climate and pupil learning is perhaps so intimate that an understanding of the phenomenon known as classroom climate would seem important if the process of learning is to be understood adequately. In several studies, classroom climate is found to be a

very good predictor of pupil scholastic attainments. Establishment of proper socio-emotional climate in the classroom help to reduce the wastage and stagnation and also to minimise failures and under achievements.

Dimensions of Organisational Climate

The School Organisational Climate Description Questionnaire (SOCDDQ) can be administered individually as well as in a group. Ideal situation would be to collect all the members of the school in a room and administer the tool to all at a time. Head of the institution may be requested to remain absent from the group while administering the School Organisational Climate Description Questionnaire (SOCDDQ). While explaining the instructions given in the booklet, it may be emphasised to always report the first reaction which comes to their mind after reading each question. Respondents must be cautioned not to discuss with other members while answering the questionnaire. In case the questionnaire is individually administered, or mailed to individuals, besides the above instructions, it should be made clear that all the questions given in the questionnaire must be answered in one sitting. In order to get reliable results about the climate of a school, at least 75 per cent of the faculty members must be given the SOCDDQ. In all, there are sixty four Likert type items distributed over eight dimensions (sub-test). The respondents are asked to indicate the extent to which each statement characterise his/her school. The scale against which the respondents indicate the extent to which each statement characterises their schools are defined by four categories – (1) Rarely occurs, (2) sometimes occurs, (3) often occurs, and (4) very frequently occurs. For scoring, these four categories of responses are assigned four successive integers, viz, 1,2,3, and 4 respectively. Then each respondent's eight sub-test scores are calculated by simple summation of each respondent's item scores, sub-test by sub-test, and dividing each of the eight sums by the number of items in the corresponding sub-test.

These items are assigned to eight sub-tests, of which four refer to the characteristics of the teachers as a group and the other four refer to that of the Headmaster as a leader.

The eight sub-tests are :

Characteristics of the Group (Teachers' Behaviour)

- (a) Disengagement,
- (b) Esprit,
- (c) Intimacy,
- (d) Aloofness or alienation

Behaviour of the Leader (Head-master's Behaviour)

- (e) Production emphasis,
- (f) Humanised thrust,
- (g) Psycho-physical hindrances,
- (h) Consideration or control.

(a) *Disengagement* :

Disengagement refers to the teachers' tendency to be "not with it". This dimension describes a group which is "going through the motions", a group that is "not in gear" with respect to the task at hand.

In short, this sub-test focuses upon the teachers' behaviour in a task oriented situation (Halpin 1969, p.150).

(b) *Esprit* :

Esprit refers to morale. the teacher feels that their social needs are being satisfied, and that they are at the same time enjoying a sense of accomplishment in their jobs (Halpin 1969, p.151).

(c) *Intimacy* :

Intimacy refers to the teachers' enjoyment of friendly social relations with each other. This dimension describes a social needs satisfaction which is not necessarily associated with task accomplishment (Halpin 1969, p.151).

(d) *Aloofness or Alienation* :

Aloofness refers to the behaviour patterns of the Head-master which is characterised as highly impersonal and informal. It reveals the degree to which the Headmaster *goes by the book* and adheres to policies rather than dealing with the teachers in an informal, face

to face situations. It also indicates the emotional distance between the group and the leader, and at the same time, among group members. The Headmasters behaviour in brief, is universalistic rather than particularistic, nomothetic rather than idiosyncratic. To maintain this style, the Headmaster keeps himself at least “emotionally” at a distance from the staff (Sharma 1973, p.199).

Leader Behaviour Characteristics

(e) *Production Emphasis :*

Production emphasis refers to the behaviour of the Headmaster which is characterised by close supervision of the staff. The Headmaster is highly descriptive and plays the role of a “straw-boss”. The Headmaster’s communication tends to go in only one direction, and the Headmaster is not sensitive to feedback from staff (Halpin 1969, p.151).

(b) *Humanised Thrust :*

Humanised thrust refers to the behaviour of the Headmaster which is marked by the Headmaster’s attempts to motivate the teachers through personal example. The Headmaster does not ask the teachers to give themselves any more than they willingly give of themselves. The behaviour of the Headmaster, though unmistakably task oriented, is at the same time characterised by an inclination to treat the teachers humanely and tender-heartedly. The Headmaster attempts to do something extra for them in humanistic terms, and consequently the Headmaster’s behaviour is viewed favourably by the teachers (Sharma 1973, p.209)

(g) *Psycho-Physical Hindrance :*

Psycho-physical hindrance refers to the feeling among the group members that the Principal burdens them with routine duties, management demands and other administrative requirements which they consider as unnecessary. At the same time, they perceive the Principal as highly dictatorial in his behaviour. The Principal is not adjusted to feedback from the staff, the Principal’s style of communication tends to be unidimensional (Sharma, 1973, p.204).

(h) *Controls :*

Controls refers to the degree to which the Principal’s behaviour

can be characterised as bureaucratic and impersonal in nature, although task-oriented in behaviour, the extent to which the Principal tries to raise the degree of effectiveness and efficiency by helping the group work towards the common goal by providing adequate operational guidance and secretarial services (Sharma, 1973, p.205).

Sharma (1973), using both the R-Technique and the Q-Technique identified six types of climates. One more significant difference between Sharma (1973) and Halpin and Crofts (1963) which may be noted here is that Sharma has reported "Familiar Climate" as belonging to open type climate group and "Controlled Climate" as belonging to closed type climate group, whereas Halpin and Crofts reported just the other way round. They identified six Organisational climates which can be arranged along a continuum defined at one end as open climate and at the other end as closed climate.

Different Types of School Climate

(i) Open Climate :

Open climate refers to the state of an environment in which the members of the group enjoy high *morale* in general and high *esprit* in specific. The teachers work as a strong unit with respect to the task without bickering and griping. As such disengagement is low. Members of the group feel emotional association with the group and organisation. Emotional distance between the group and the leader as well as among the group members is very small, often feel themselves as a part of the whole. Open climate refers to an environment in which teachers obtain social needs satisfaction as well as job satisfaction and enjoy a sense of accomplishment in their job. They perceive their Principal (leader) as highly considerate and democratic in behaviour and hence the group members as well as the Principal feel *all of a piece*. So the group enjoy a high degree of integration and authenticity of behaviour.

In open climate, the behaviour of the Headmaster can be characterised as genuine, production emphasis is average, psycho-physical hindrance is low. The behaviour of the Headmaster, though task oriented, at the same time, it is characterised by an inclination to treat the teachers humanely, trying to do something extra for

them in humanistic terms. Thrust is high in this climate. Thus, open climate refers to an environment in which teachers obtain social needs satisfaction as well as job satisfaction.

(ii) *Autonomous Climate :*

Autonomous climate refers to an environment in which the teachers enjoy a friendly relationship and a high degree of group morale. They satisfy their social needs to a great extent moderate and enjoy a degree of job accomplishment. Absence of active leadership mixed with average controls on the part of the Headmaster is perceived as an element of psycho-physical hindrance. Autonomous climate depicts a situation in which the Headmaster gives complete freedom to the teachers. Production emphasis and humanised thrust are low. The Headmaster exercises average control over their activities and their Organisational behaviour. The behaviour of the Headmaster is characterised as high on psycho-physical hindrance. The morale of the teachers is high. Social needs satisfaction stems largely from the extremely high intimacy which is the distinguishing feature of this climate. Esprit is high and the group enjoy quite high job satisfaction. Disengagement is low. Alienation is average and the aloofness on the part of the Headmaster leads to average controls.

(iii) *Familiar Climate*

Familiar climate is characterised by the conspicuously friendly behaviour of both the Headmaster and the teachers. The teachers have established personal friendship among themselves, and socially, at least everyone is a part of a large happy family. Social needs satisfaction is extremely high. The Headmaster exercises leadership in an indirect manner and tries to keep production satisfactory. The Headmaster's behaviour is job oriented, but does not hinder the social needs satisfaction on the part of the teachers. Hindrance is low. Esprit is average which mainly emanates from social needs satisfaction. The Headmaster's behaviour is characterised by the group in terms of high production emphasis. Thrust and disengagement are low.

(iv) *Controlled Climate :*

Controlled climate refers to an environment, which can be

characterised as highly task-oriented at the cost of social needs satisfaction of the members (teachers). Leadership acts stem from only one side and in a dictatorial manner. Group involvement is never encouraged. The human aspect of the individual is neglected and communication is always one-sided. Teachers get little job-satisfaction out of task accomplishment. Therefore, the teachers perceive the behaviour of their Headmaster high on production emphasis and aloofness dimensions, respectively. Group morale is average which emanates from task accomplishment (average esprit). There is an excessive amount of busy routine work and general hindrance, which get in the way of the teacher's task accomplishment (average psycho-physical hindrance). Teachers get rare chances for socialisation and establishment of friendly relations among themselves. There is no scope for genuine warmer relations among teachers (low intimacy). Disengagement is low. The Headmaster attempts to keep himself emotionally at a distance from the teachers (average aloofness). The Headmaster never tries to satisfy the group members' social needs. Thrust is also low.

(v) *Paternal Climate :*

Paternal climate refers to a situation in which there is very little scope for the members to satisfy their social needs and derive job satisfaction. The faculty has to work in the way the Headmaster wants, but at the same time the Headmaster, as a paternal guardian of the school faculty, does not ignore the individual's interest, and hence his behaviour is perceived as highly considerate. Paternal climate is characterised by the ineffective attempts of the Headmaster to control the teachers as well as to satisfy their social needs. Disengagement is high in such a climate. Control is perceived to be low. Headmaster's behaviour is perceived as highly dominated by psycho-physical hindrance which does not encourage socialisation among the teachers' group and therefore the members cannot satisfy their social needs (low intimacy). Headmaster's behaviour may be designated as monitoring in character. The Headmaster tries to be away from the group in terms of emotional distance (average aloofness). Group morale is always low (low esprit), but thrust is high.

(vi) Closed Climate :

Closed climate is characterised by a high degree of apathy on the part of all members of the organisation. The organisation is not moving. This climate lacks authenticity of behaviour. The Headmaster constrains the emergence of leadership acts from the group. The group members secure neither social needs satisfaction nor job satisfaction stemming from task accomplishment.

In closed climate disengagement is high. Esprit is low and as a result, group morale is low. This results in high degree of aloofness which depicts a situation in which behaviour of the Headmaster is formal and highly impersonal. The Headmaster's behaviour is highly task oriented (low thrust). The Headmaster burdens the teachers with unnecessary busy work and never tries to facilitate teachers to accomplish their task (high psycho-physical). The Headmaster believes in giving dictatorial directives to get the work done. The Headmaster does not encourage socialisation among the group (low intimacy).

Diagrammatic Description of Organisational Climate is given in Table 1.3.

Table : 1.3
Diagrammatic Description of Organisational Climates

Climate	Group Behaviour Characteristics				Leader Behaviour Characteristics			
	Disengagement	Alienation	Esprit	Intimacy Hindrance	Psycho-physical	Contents	Production Emphasis	Humanised Thrust
Open	L	L	H	M	M	L	M	H
Autonomous	L	M	H	M	M	L	M	H
Familiar	L	H	M	H	L	M	H	L
Controlled	L	M	M	L	M	H	H	L
Paternal	H	M	L	L	H	L	L	H
Closed	H	H	L	L	H	H	M	L

L = Low; M = Moderate; H = High

It can thus be concluded that open climate is an ideal type of climate and autonomous climate is more desirable in order to improve the school personality, teaching efficiency and also for reducing the drop-out rate or the problem of wastage and stagnation. In the North-Eastern Region, various attempts are in progress for planned social change, modernisation, development, etc., and these will be

possible only through education. The performance of a teacher is the most crucial input in the field of education. Whatever policies may be laid down in the ultimate analysis, these have to be interpreted and implemented by teachers through teaching-learning process. The quality of education is therefore linked with the teacher. Thus, to improve education, there is a need to prepare efficient and effective teachers. The former education minister, M.C. Chagla, have said in this connection, "no education system can thrive without the help of trained and competent teachers. A country with competent teachers is a country with a bright future". In order to develop education in healthy manner, there is a need to evolve a detailed plan for preparing teachers of quality and standard which may ultimately pave the way for developing national system of education in the country. The Headmaster is the keystone of the arch of school organisation. Therefore, the Headmaster, is the Director, Co-ordinator, Evaluator, Organiser and above all, the Administrator of the whole school system. Thus the teaching staff, the non-teaching staff, the learners and the parents are affected by the Headmaster's personality.

Therefore, in order to produce more job satisfaction in teachers and for efficient administration, environment of the institution should be such in which teachers obtain social need satisfaction and enjoy a sense of accomplishment in their job. There should be friendly relations among group members and a high degree of group morale. Teachers should perceive their Principal as highly considerate and democratic in behaviour. The human aspect of the individual should not be neglected. More emphasis should be given to academic activities and to appropriate discipline.

Definition of the Terms Used

(i) *Problems* :

According to the Oxford Dictionary, *Problem* is a question of difficulty propounded for or in need of solution. It is also defined as "a proposition in which something is required to be constructed, not merely proved as in a theorem" or a problem is hindrance that disrupts the continuity of processes within the individual or in a group.

In the present study, problem means difficulties confronted by the individual child and feels it to be an obstacle in achieving the desirable goal the child aims at to acquire through the school.

(ii) Educational Problems :

In the present study, educational problem is conceived of as any difficulty or worry faced in the field of education, by the student which hinders him in the attainment of his objectives. The problem of the pupil is studied from the child's point of view.

(iii) Organisational Climate :

Organisational climate refers to the feeling which exists in a given school or institution and to variability in the feelings as one moves from one organisation to another. In one school, faculty members appear to be relaxed and at ease with each other. In another school, we find greater tension and tears show in their faces, the manner of speech and how the teachers supervise the students.

(iv) Garo Hills :

This is the name given to the land of the Garos. Garo came in here because the tribe called the Garos has occupied this entire area of the district. Hills is added because the district consists mainly of hills, the highest being the Nokrek Peak which is 1,457 metres high. Except near the border areas, the district is hilly in nature and therefore the whole area is named Garo Hills or the home of the Garos. Garo Hills having less literacy rate has much to depend on the existing educational institutions to eradicate illiteracy.

Conclusion

As more and more students from the economically and socially backward families are joining the schools, they are not in a position to take studies seriously as their home environment hardly permits them to pursue studies with concentration. Studies also reveal that the home background of the youngsters bring to schools is more important to their academic achievements than anything the schools do.

Most adults are illiterate and they are not in a position to provide guidance to their children. As one educationist sadly admitted, "By

and large, the rich parents are too busy getting richer, and often they set only bad examples by their own vices. The time of the middle class parents is mostly occupied in adjusting the monthly budget and aping the richer sections. The poorer ones are too ignorant and too frustrated to be of any help and guidance to their children". Deprivation of affection and security in the home and school are the prime causes of maladjustment for children. The health standards are poor because of grinding poverty. Poor health prevents the students from concentrating on studies. Besides, bearing the direct cost of education in the form of fees, books, stationery, school uniforms, etc are the major educational problems faced by the students.