

**A STUDY OF THE EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATION,
SELF-CONCEPT AND INTEREST IN RELATION TO
ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF GIRLS IN THE
SECONDARY SCHOOLS OF EAST KHASI HILLS
DISTRICT IN MEGHALAYA**

**BY
ELIZABETH**

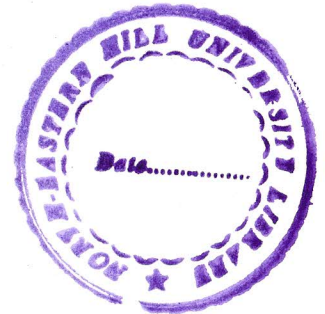
**THESIS SUBMITTED
IN FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT OF THE DEGREE
OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN EDUCATION**

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NORTH-EASTERN HILL UNIVERSITY
SHILLONG - 793 022
2000**

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In loving memory

of

My father Upa (Late) L. Vumgin

The North – Eastern Hill University
October 2000

I Elizabeth hereby declare that the subject matter of thesis is the record of work done by me, that the contents of this thesis did not form basis of the award of any previous degree to me or to the best of my knowledge to anybody else, and that the thesis has not been submitted by me for any research degree in any other University/Institute.

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Elizabeth
4/10/2000
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LIST OF TABLES

Table No.	Titles	Page
1.	Trends in Indian Literacy Figures of Female	5
2.	District – wise population break – up (Meghalaya)	8
3.	Male – Female Literacy Disparity (1971 – 1991)	9
4.	Male – Female Literacy Percentage in Meghalaya (1981 – 1991) District – wise.	10
5.	Distribution of Schools in the Population according to different strata.	40
6.	Number of Schools included in the Sample.	41
7.	Number of Girls included in the Sample (N=558)	42
8.	Number of items in the SBII to measure different Interest areas.	47
9.	Details of Analysis of total Achievement scores for the Different management types of schools.	56
10.	Summary of ANOVA for Total Achievement scores of Girls from government, Deficit, Grant-in-aid, and Unaided schools.	57
11.	Summary of the t-values obtained for the difference between mean total achievement scores of school types.	61
12.	Details of Analysis of Achievement scores in English for the Different Management types of schools.	65
13.	Summary of ANOVA for Achievement scores of Girls in English from Government, Deficit, Grant-in-aid, and Unaided schools.	65
14.	Summary of the t-values obtained for Differences between mean scores in English of school types.	69
15.	Details of Analysis of Achievement scores in Science for the Different Management types of schools.	73

16.	Summary of ANOVA for Achievement scores of girls in Science From Government, Deficit, Grant-in-aid and Unaided schools.	73
17.	Summary of the t-values obtained for Differences between mean scores in Science of school types.	77
18.	Details of Analysis of Achievement scores in Mathematics for the Different Management types of schools.	81
19.	Summary of ANOVA for Achievement scores in Mathematics from Government, Deficit , Grant-in-aid, and Unaided schools.	81
20.	Summary of the t-values obtained for Differences between mean scores in Mathematics of school types.	85
21.	Details of Analysis of Achievement scores in Social Science for the Different Management types of schools.	89
22.	Summary of ANOVA for Achievement scores in Social Science from Government, Deficit, Grant-in-aid and Unaided Schools.	90
23.	Summary of the t – values obtained for Differences between mean scores in Social Science of school types.	93
24.	Details of Analysis of Achievement scores in M.I.L. for the Different Management types of schools.	97
25.	Summary of ANOVA for Achievement scores in M.I.L. from Government, Deficit, Grant-in-aid and Unaided schools.	98
26.	Summary of the t – values obtained for Differences between mean scores in M.I.L. of school types.	101
27.	Details of Analysis of Achievement scores in Health Education for the Different Management types of schools.	105
28.	Summary of ANOVA for Achievement scores in Health Education from Government, Deficit, Grant-in-aid and Unaided schools.	106
29.	Summary of the t- values obtained for Differences between mean scores in Health Education of school types.	109
30.	Details of Analysis of Educational Aspiration scores for the Different Management types of schools.	113

31.	Summary of ANOVA for Educational Aspiration of girls from Government, Deficit, Grant – in – aid and Unaided schools.	114
32.	Summary of the t- values obtained for Differences between mean scores in Educational Aspiration of school types.	117
33.	Details of Analysis of Self - Concept scores for the Different Management types of schools.	122
34.	Summary of ANOVA for Self – Concept from Government, Deficit, Grant–in–aid and Unaided schools.	122
35.	Summary of the t- values obtained for Differences between mean scores in Self - Concept of school types.	126
36.	Details of Analysis of Interest scores in Literary for the Different Management types of schools.	131
37.	Summary of ANOVA for Interest in Literary area from Government, Deficit, Grant–in–aid and Unaided schools.	131
38.	Summary of the t- values obtained for Differences between mean scores of Interest in Literary area of school types.	135
39.	Details of Analysis of Interest scores in Outdoor area for the Different Management types of schools.	139
40.	Summary of ANOVA for Interest in Outdoor area from Government, Deficit, Grant–in–aid and Unaided schools.	140
41.	Summary of the t- values obtained for Differences between mean scores of Interest in Outdoor area of school types.	143
42.	Details of Analysis of Interest scores in Mechanical area for the Different Management types of schools.	148
43.	Summary of ANOVA for Interest in Mechanical area from Government, Deficit, Grant–in–aid and Unaided schools.	148
44.	Summary of the t- values obtained for Differences between mean scores of Interest in Mechanical area of school types.	151
45.	Details of Analysis of Interest scores in Scientific area for the Different Management types of schools.	156

46.	Summary of ANOVA for Interest in Scientific area from Government, Deficit, Grant-in-aid and Unaided schools.	156
47.	Summary of the t- values obtained for Differences between mean scores of Interest in Scientific area of school types.	160
48.	Details of Analysis of Interest scores in Persuasive area for the Different Management types of schools.	164
49.	Summary of ANOVA for Interest in Persuasive area from Government, Deficit, Grant-in-aid and Unaided schools.	165
50.	Details of Analysis of Interest scores in Social Science area for the Different Management types of schools.	169
51.	Summary of ANOVA for Interest in Social Science area from Government, Deficit, Grant-in-aid and Unaided schools.	170
52.	Details of Analysis of Interest scores in Artistic & Constructive area for the Different Management types of schools.	174
53.	Summary of ANOVA for Interest in Artistic & Constructive area from Government, Deficit, Grant-in-aid and Unaided schools.	175
54.	Summary of the t- values obtained for Differences between mean scores of Interest in Artistic & Constructive area of school types.	178
55.	Details of Analysis of Interest scores in Clerical area for the Different Management types of schools.	182
56.	Summary of ANOVA for Interest in Clerical area from Government, Deficit, Grant-in-aid and Unaided schools.	183
57.	Details of Analysis of Interest scores in Administrative area for the Different Management types of schools.	187
58.	Summary of ANOVA for Interest in Administrative area from Government, Deficit, Grant-in-aid and Unaided schools.	188
59.	Summary of the t- values obtained for Differences between mean scores of Interest in Administrative area of school types.	191
60.	Details of Analysis of Interest scores in Teaching area for the Different Management types of schools.	196

61.	Summary of ANOVA for Interest in Teaching area from Government, Deficit, Grant-in-aid and Unaided schools.	196
62.	Summary of the t- values obtained for Differences between mean scores of Interest in Teaching area of school types.	200
63.	Details of Analysis of Interest scores in Home – Management area for the Different Management types of schools.	205
64.	Summary of ANOVA for Interest in Home - Management area from Government, Deficit, Grant-in-aid and Unaided schools.	205
65.	Summary of Analysis of the Academic Achievement.	228
66.	Summary of Analysis of the Educational Aspiration, Self- Concept and Interest in Different areas.	229
67.	Summary of Analysis of the Variables correlated with Academic Achievement.	230

CONTENTS

	Page
Candidate's declaration.....	i
Acknowledgments	ii
List of Tables	iii
 CHAPTER – 1 INTRODUCTION	
1.1.0. Importance of Education.....	2
1.2.0. Importance of Women Education.....	4
1.3.0. Study Area	7
1.4.0. Variables Studied	13
1.4.1. Academic Achievement.....	13
1.4.2. Educational Aspiration	14
1.4.3. Self – Concept	16
1.4.4. Interest	18
1.5.0. Problem Under Study	20
1.6.0. Statement of the problem	21
1.6.1. Conceptual Definitions of the Terms Used	21
1.6.2. Operational Definitions of the Terms Used	22
1.7.0. Objectives of the Study.....	22
1.8.0. Hypotheses.....	23
1.9.0. Delimitation of the Study	23
 CHAPTER – II REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE	
2.1.0. Introduction	26

2.2.0.	Studies on Educational Aspiration and Academic Achievement	26
2.3.0.	Studies on Self – Concept and Academic Achievement.....	30
2.4.0.	Studies on Interest and Academic Achievement.....	34
2.5.0.	Other Related Studies.	35

CHAPTER – III METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURE

3.1.0.	Introduction.....	40
3.2.0.	Population and Sample	40
3.3.0.	Sources of Data and Tools used	43
3.3.1	Educational Aspiration Scale (EAS)	43
3.3.2	Self-Concept List (SCL)	45
3.3.3	Sodhi and Bhatnagar Interest Inventory (SBII) for girls....	46
3.4.0.	Try-out of the Tools EAS, SCL and SBII.....	48
3.5.0.	Data Collection.....	48
3.6.0.	Analysis of Data.....	49

CHAPTER - IV. ANALYSIS OF DATA, RESULTS AND

DISCUSSION

4.0.	Introduction.....	52
4.1.0.	Academic Achievement.....	52
4.1.1.	Analysis of Total Achievement	53
4.1.2.	Analysis of Achievement in English	61
4.1.3.	Analysis of Achievement in Science.....	69
4.1.4.	Analysis of Achievement in Mathematics.....	77

4.1.5.	Analysis of Achievement in Social Science.....	86
4.1.6.	Analysis of Achievement in Modern Indian Language (MIL)	94
4.1.7.	Analysis of Achievement in Health Education	102
4.2.0.	Educational Aspiration and Academic Achievement.....	110
4.3.0.	Self – Concept and Academic Achievement.....	119
4.4.0.	Interest in Different Areas and Academic Achievement... ..	127
4.4.1.	Analysis of Interest in Literary Area.....	127
4.4.2.	Analysis of Interest in Outdoor Area.....	136
4.4.3.	Analysis of Interest in Mechanical Area	144
4.4.4.	Analysis of Interest in Scientific Area.....	153
4.4.5.	Analysis of Interest in Persuasive Area.....	161
4.4.6.	Analysis of Interest in Social Service Area.....	166
4.4.7.	Analysis of Interest in Artistic & Constructive Area.....	171
4.4.8.	Analysis of Interest in Clerical Area.....	179
4.4.9.	Analysis of Interest in Administrative Area.....	184
4.4.10.	Analysis of Interest in Teaching Area.....	192
4.4.11.	Analysis of Interest in Home – Management Area.....	201
4.5.0.	Summary of Results.....	207
4.6.0.	Discussion of Results	213

CHAPTER – V

SUMMARY

5.1.0.	Introduction.....	218
5.2.0.	Statement of the Problem.....	220

5.2.1	Conceptual Definitions of the Terms Used.....	220
5.2.2	Operational Definitions of the Terms Used.....	220
5.3.0.	Objectives.....	221
5.4.0.	Hypotheses.....	221
5.5.0.	Delimitation of the Study.....	222
5.6.0.	Methodology and procedure.....	223
5.6.1.	Population and Sample.....	223
5.6.2.	Tools Used.....	223
5.6.2.1.	Educational Aspiration Scale (EAS) Form P.....	223
5.6.2.2.	Self – Concept List (SCL)	224
5.6.2.3.	Sodhi and Bhatnagar Interest Inventory (SBII) for Girls..	224
5.6.2.4.	High School Leaving Certificate (H.S.L.C.) Examination Marks.....	225
5.6.3.	Data Collection.....	225
5.6.4.	Analysis of Data.....	225
5.7.0.	Summary of Results.....	226
5.8.0.	Suggestions for Further Research.....	231
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	232
	APPENDICES.....	260

CHAPTER – I

INTRODUCTION

- 1.1.0 Importance of Education
- 1.2.0 Importance of women Education
- 1.3.0 Study Area
- 1.4.0 Variables studied
 - 1.4.1 Academic Achievement
 - 1.4.2 Educational Aspiration
 - 1.4.3 Self concept
 - 1.4.4 Interest
- 1.5.0 Problem under Study
- 1.6.0 Statement of the Problem
 - 1.6.1 Conceptual Definitions of the Terms used
 - 1.6.2 Operational Definitions of the Terms used
- 1.7.0 Objectives of the Study
- 1.8.0 Hypotheses
- 1.9.0 Delimitation of the study.

INTRODUCTION

1.1.0. Importance of Education

The immense potential of education in the development of an individual and in the promotion of a society has been widely accepted. An educated person is expected to be more rational in his thinking and be able to fulfill the political, economic, and cultural functions in a better way. This would help in improving his quality of life. Education has been recognized as a major instrument which societies can use to direct the process of change and development towards desired goals. Education plays a vital role in the programme of nation building. Investment in education has been emphasized a great deal in bringing about meaningful development in any country, more so in developing countries which are trying hard to accelerate the pace of their progress. It is an input for the human resource development where manpower and money have been harnessed to hasten the process of development. In other words, education is the backbone of a nation because it plays a vital role in the development of human potentials and thus, the development of the country as a whole. In a developing country like India, there is an undeniable problem of scholastic underachievement and failure. This is leading to a cause of great concern to educationists, teachers, counsellors, and policy planners, in fact to all who are interested in the promotion of education. According to Foster and Rosenzweig, education contributes to economic and social development through increased national income and individual earnings. Further, apart from the direct

monetary returns, schooling also produces externalities, which benefit society at large. (Tyagi, 1991)

In the recent past the concern of education has shifted from economic development to human development by emphasizing the development of people's capabilities in terms of improved health, knowledge, and skills, besides its contribution towards the growth of income. Schooling has a close link with the development of these capabilities. It enlarges people's choice in terms of the use people make of their acquired capabilities – for leisure, productive purposes or for being active in cultural, social and political affairs. There can be no doubt that the quality and extent of development in these areas are linked with quality and the direction of education at all levels – primary, secondary and higher.

Considering the significant role of education and its importance as a fundamental prerequisite for participation in various developmental activities of the society, it is essential to provide equal educational opportunity for both boys and girls. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) regards Education as one of the basic rights of every human being. As stated by Kalbach (1991) in "Women and Development", the Constitution of UNESCO (United Nations Educational Scientific Cultural Organization) also directs its efforts to achieve "the ideal of equality of educational opportunity without regard to race or sex or any distinction, economic or social". Coming to our country, Article 45 of the Constitution of India makes a provision to provide free and compulsory education for children upto the age of 14 years. It may be expected that this would bring in equal opportunity for all children to get education.

1.2.0. Importance of Women Education

Education has also been considered as the most important factor for determining the status of women in the society. It is found to be both a cause and consequence of the improved status of women. The importance of education of women gets highlighted when one looks into the role to be played by women in nation building. This role goes much beyond the responsibilities assigned to them in tasks related to household maintenance, childcare, etc. But still there are several constraints which the society imposes on a woman, the consequence of it being shown in the field of women education. Some of these social constraints are educational inequalities, restricted job opportunities, unemployment and underemployment, dual responsibilities of home-making and occupational duties (for employed women), cultural prejudices prevailing against women in almost all sections of our society, and so on. These indicate the magnitude of the task if women are to be brought in the main stream of national life in all the spheres and to provide equal opportunities for women.

It is realised that women's education is a single cure for many societal ills and also is a main way to bring about social empowerment of women. If one takes the literacy figures as any indication of how various factors, be they personal, governmental, or societal, have helped the females in getting education, it is noted that over the years the progress is painfully slow.

These figures are shown in table below:

Table – 1: Trends in Indian Literacy Figures of Females

Year	% of literate male to total male population	% of literate female to total female population.
1901	9.83	0.69
1921	12.21	1.81
1931	15.59	2.93
1951	27.16	8.86
1961	40.40	15.34
1971	45.95	21.97
1981	56.37	24.89
1991	64.13	39.29

(Source: Census of India, 1991).

The above figures, though not any creditable for males, reveal that women are lagging behind men quite markedly. This highlights the efforts required to bring the vast majority of women in India under the fold of education. It is rightly said that women and men share many aspects of living together, collaborate with each other in complex and ubiquitous ways and yet end up – often enough – with very different rewards and deprivations.

The significance of the education of women can not be overemphasized. Various Commissions and Committees have studied this aspect and have made recommendation for the educational development of girls. The Education Commission (1964-66) in its recommendation towards equalization of educational opportunity emphasized the need of bridging the wide disparity between the education of boys and girls at all stages and in all sectors of education. Stressing

further the need of women education, the Commission Report also comes out with the remark that the role of women outside the home has become an important feature of the social and economic life of the country, and in the years to come, this will assume large proportions affecting the majority of women. It will, therefore, be necessary to pay attention to the problems of training and employment of women. The National Policy on Education (1986) while dealing with education for equality, states that "The New Policy will lay special emphasis on the removal of disparities and to equalise educational opportunity by attending to the specific needs of those who have been denied equality so far". The policy has identified women as one among the different sections of the society who have been denied equal opportunity for education.

Education 'in favour' of women has been recognized as an urgent need because they are amongst the groups that are 'unreached', a term used in the Jomtein (Thailand) conference on 'Education For All' (EFA) in 1990. Women's equality and empowerment have been incorporated as goals to be worked for through education, in the National Policy on Education (NPE) 1986 updated in 1992. It shifts emphasis from equalization of educational opportunity to education for women's equality.

Despite the Commissions, Committees and other attempts through the policy, education still remains a very weak area for women. The rate of literacy is still very low and seems to be moving very slowly. The socio-cultural prejudices and practices do not seem to break or change perceptibly. Hence, society can not change for better unless girls are educated, and girls can not get educated unless the society changes its feeling towards girls. Ice has to be broken with a firm hand. It needs drastic measures and not slow actions. Chords and emotions have to be pulled to

make a vibrant disturbance in the society necessitating consequential changes. This means to strengthen our efforts in the area of attitudes, that is, to develop positive attitudes towards girls and their education (Padma, 1998)

The present study is undertaken in Meghalaya, one of the seven states comprising the North- Eastern Region of India. The position with regard to the status of education in general and that of girls in particular is not any much different from the rest of the country. To facilitate a better comprehension of the report of the research undertaken, a brief picture of the study area is described further.

1.3.0. Study Area

The state of Meghalaya is situated in the North Eastern Region of India. It attained its full-fledged statehood on 21st January 1972. It is bounded on the north by Goalpara, Kamrup, Nagaon and Karbi Anglong districts of Assam State and on the east by the districts of Cachar and North Cachar Hills, also of the state of Assam. On the south and west lies Bangladesh. Meghalaya lies between 20°1`N and 26°5`N latitude and 85°49`E and 92°52`E longitude

At present, there are seven (7) administrative districts. They are (1) The East Khasi Hills District, (2) The West Khasi Hills District (3) Ri-Bhoi District (4) Jaintia Hills District (5) East Garo Hills District (6) West Garo Hills District, and (7) The South Garo Hills District. The state is predominantly inhabited by the tribes – the Khasis, the Jaintias and the Garos. The district-wise population break-up is given in Table-2.

Table – 2: District-wise Population break-up (Meghalaya)

Sl. No.	District	Headquarters	Area (sq.km)	Population	Percentage
1	East Khasi Hills District	Shillong	2748	537906	30.31
2	Ri-Bhoi District	Nongpoh	2448	127312	7.17
3	West Khasi Hills District	Nongstoin	5247	220157	12.40
4	East Garo Hills District	Williamnagar	2603	188830	10.64
5	West Garo Hills District	Tura	3714	403027	22.71
6	South Garo Hills District	Baghmara	1850	77073	4.34
7	Jaintia Hills District	Jowai	3819	220473	12.42
	Meghalaya		22429	1774778	

(Source: Basic Facts of Meghalaya, Published by The Directorate of Information and Public Relations, Meghalaya).

The state of Meghalaya has a total area of 22,429 sq.kms. with 7(seven) Districts and a total population of 17.75 lakhs of which 18.69 percent live in towns and 81.4 percent live in about 5500 villages, according to the 1991 census. As many as 85.5 percent of the total population belong to scheduled tribes, 0.51 percent to scheduled castes and 14 percent belong to other categories. The principal languages in Meghalaya are Khasi and Garo with English as the official language of the State. Over the years the literature in the Khasi and Garo languages has developed. These

languages have emerged in the list of Modern Indian Languages. Now both Khasi and Garo languages are taught as one of the subjects of study upto the postgraduate level (Basic Facts of Meghalaya).

Meghalaya is basically an agricultural state with about 80 percent of its total population depending entirely on agriculture for their livelihood. The state is unique in being the only state in the region with a predominantly matrilineal culture. All the three major groups are governed by the matrilineal principle of descent and inheritance. A woman enjoys high status and is accorded high respect in the state. Women are the custodians of the family property and of the rites and ceremonies. Thus women in the society of Meghalaya enjoy a high status as compared to their sisters in patrilineal societies.

Even with the high status being enjoyed by women in the society as said earlier, the percentage of literacy could be taken into consideration as an indicator of the disparity between the two sexes in the field of education. The following Table-3 provides a picture of the disparity between the two sexes in Meghalaya with respect to their literacy.

Table-3: Male-Female Literacy, Disparity (1971-1991) Meghalaya

Year	Male	Female	Disparity
1971	34.12	24.56	9.56
1981	37.89	30.08	7.81
1991	53.12	44.85	8.27

(Sources: (i) Statistical Handbook, Meghalaya, 1987.

(ii) Statistical Handbook, Meghalaya, 1993)

Considering the three decades between 1971-1991, it is evident that though male and female literacy rates have increased over the period, there is an undeniable continuance of gender disparity as shown in the table above.

Taking literacy at the District level, the Male-Female literacy percentage in Meghalaya (1981 and 1991) is provided for consideration in Table.

**Table-4: Male – Female Literacy Percentage in Meghalaya (1981 and 1991)
District-wise**

Sl. No.	District	1981			1991		
		Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
1	East Khasi Hills District	43.73	46.95	40.30	64.57	63.13	61.86
2	Ri-Bhoi District	-	-	-	39.92	43.88	35.72
3	West Khasi Hills District	31.97	34.08	29.74	50.52	52.98	47.94
4	East Garo Hills District	33.50	39.01	27.66	48.36	54.70	41.70
5	West Garo Hills District	25.91	32.04	19.55	38.64	46.10	30.31
6	South Garo Hills District	25.04	31.31	18.74	42.88	51.28	34.02
7	Jaintia Hills District	24.50	24.63	24.39	35.32	34.37	36.31
	Meghalaya	39.95	44.26	35.41	49.10	53.12	44.85
	India	43.67	56.50	29.85	52.21	64.13	39.29

* *Ri-Bhoi District was a part of East Khasi Hills District.*

Source : (1). *Census of India, 1981, Series.14 – Meghalaya, Part-II A&B Groups, Population tables & Primary census abstract.*

(2). *Census Data Collected by NIC, Planning Commission, GOI (Data Computed by the SRC, NEHU).*

It may be seen that the East Khasi Hills District stands out to be having highest total literacy percentage as well as female literacy percentage when compared to all other districts.

With regard to urban - rural literacy rate, Meghalaya was found to have high literacy rate in the urban area (81.74%) than in rural area (41.05%) as per 1991 census. This clearly indicated that there is a distinct variation between the rural - urban structure of population in Meghalaya. The State was found to have the highest literacy percentage in the urban centre of Shillong (83.68%). The importance of the East Khasi Hills District is also being highlighted in its having headquarter Shillong which also serves as the State Capital.

Recently, the National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) published its findings on the literacy rates of the country including its states, furnishing statistical data upto December 1997. As per the report of NSSO, Meghalaya's literacy rate in 1998 December was 77 percent, i.e. an increase of 27.9 percent from 49.1 percent (1991). This increase of 27.9 percent (1991-1998) is the highest increase registered among all the states of India.

The community plays a significant role in setting up and in the maintenance of schools in the State. Some secondary schools are self-supporting schools and others have sprung under the local organizations and some are sponsored either by Missions or local churches. A good number of schools are raised on the initiative of the people themselves. The State Government plays a promotional role in supplementing the efforts of community by extending liberal maintenance grants to the recognized schools either under Deficit or Ad-hoc Grant-

in-aid system. At present, there are four types of secondary schools in Meghalaya. They are (a) Government schools, (b) Deficit schools, (c) Grant-in-aid schools or Ad-hoc schools, and (d) Unaided schools. The main responsibilities of framing the curriculum and conducting of Board Examinations lie with the Meghalaya Board of School Education (MBOSE).

The study was conducted in the East Khasi Hills District of Meghalaya. The earlier East Khasi Hills District was bifurcated in 1992 with the formation of Ri-Bhoi District being carved out of it. The present East Khasi Hills District has an area of 2748 sq.kms. and a population of 5,37,906. It is a hill district and is predominantly inhabited by the scheduled tribes. It may also be noted that usually girls in the region do not get discriminated in getting education. A large number of girl students appear every year in the High School Leaving Certificate (HSLC) Examination conducted by the MBOSE. Though the number of students appearing shows an increasing trend, the number of successful ones does not seem to be in proportion. It is also felt that the gaps in this regard between the schools in urban and rural areas are not getting narrowed down. This calls for a closer look into the situation.

Several variables influence the academic achievement of students. Some of the important ones are educational aspiration, self-concept, and interests that one has. A look into all these variables along with educational achievement seems to be of importance to all those who are concerned with education in general, and education of girls as well as tribals, in particular.

Before going further, a brief presentation is made regarding each of these variables.

1.4.0. Variables Studied

The present study has dealt with four variables, namely, Academic achievement, Educational aspiration, Self-concept, and Interest. Each one of these variables are discussed below.

1.4.1. Academic Achievement

In general usage of the term, academic achievement refers to the level of educational accomplishment of a person in various subjects taught in educational institutions. The term has been defined by different persons in various ways. Some of the definitions are given below:

Any Dictionary meaning of the term 'achieve' would be 'to accomplish', 'to attain successfully' and so on. This is true in the field of education as the term is referred with respect to the success in the school subjects. According to Micheels and Karnes (1950), the term 'achievement' means relative accomplishment in a specific area or work. Both Stagner (1962) and Strangin (1963) define achievement as the degree of proficiency or progress made by pupils in the mastery of school subjects. A similar idea is given by Crow and Crow (1969) that achievement refers to the extent to which a learner gets profit from instructions in a given area of learning, i.e., achievement is reflected by the extent to which skill or knowledge has been acquired by a person from the training imparted to him.

Saxena and Dwivedi (1979) consider that the term 'scholastic achievement' refers to the attainment or accomplishment (what a person has done) in the field where a subject receives some instruction or training. It is personal motive as well. In the words of Verma and Upadhyay (1981), 'Achievement is the

attainment or the accomplishment of an individual in some or particular branch of knowledge after a certain period of training. The achievement score of a student indicates towards the future success of the individual'.

Analysing the definitions mentioned above, we can conclude that academic achievement refers to the level of proficiency attained in academic work or as formally acquired knowledge in school subjects which is often represented by marks obtained by students in examination. It reveals the level of educational accomplishment in various subjects taught in educational institutions. Besides, being the criterion of promotion into the next classes, academic achievement is an index of future success in life and determines the pattern of one's living. In view of this, the factors which play an important role in determining an individual's academic achievement need to be studied.

As Singh (1976) has pointed out, academic achievement is a very complex variable, a resultant of diverse factors of different kinds, both intellectual and non-intellectual, acting and interacting in a variety of ways. Educational aspiration, self-concept and interest are some of these factors which are considered to be having an influence on academic achievement. These get promoted in an individual as a result of various influences, which a subject is exposed to. In view of this, it will be of importance to undertake a systematic search into these three variables in relation to academic achievement.

1.4.2. Educational Aspiration

Aspiration refers to the goal a person sets for himself in a certain task. It denotes how a person expects or aspires to perform on a given task and how actually does he perform. It is the goal setting behaviour as well as the process of attaining,



and it involves the capacity to pursue the goal in difficult task and circumstances.

There are various explanations of the term 'aspiration' as given by different persons.

A compilation of some definitions is given below.

the goal an According to Hoppe (1930), level of aspiration represents a person's expectations, goals, claims, or his future achievement in a given task. Frank (1935) opined that level of aspiration is the level of future performance in a familiar task which an individual expects to achieve knowing his level of past performance in that task. Sharma and Gupta (1980) express that the 'level of aspiration' is a psychological construct, which reflects a cognitive type of motivation in the individual.

includes a In defining aspiration, English and English (1958), Good (1959), Oxford Dictionary (1972), Webster's Dictionary (1976), Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary (1983), A Concise Psychological Dictionary (1985) focus similarly on aspiration as 'a desire to achieve' or 'accomplish something'.

persons has Hurlock (1973) describes aspiration 'as the goal the individual sets for himself or herself in a task which has intense personal significance for him/her or in which he/she is ego-involved'. According to Encyclopedia of Psychology (Volume 1, 1972), "the level of aspiration is the possible goal (score) an individual sets for himself in his performance". In the International Dictionary of Education (1978) it is said that 'aspiration refers to ambitions of an individual, in educational usage seen as academic, social and occupational, and concerned with performance, prestige and status'. It also defines level of aspiration as standard of achievement, which a pupil sets for himself/herself in academic, social and other aspects of behaviour. The same definition is given in Dictionary of Education (1989). Stacy and Demartino (1958)

and Eysenck (1972) share a similar view as level of a possible goal which an individual sets for himself and attempts to achieve it.

Concluding from the various definitions, aspiration can be defined as the goal an individual sets for himself or herself in a task which has intense personal significance for him/her or in which he or she is ego-involved. It deals with the degree of performance a person expects of himself in a specific situation. It is a strong desire or determination in choosing goals and undertaking some particular activities.

1.4.3. Self-Concept

A person's self is the sum total of all that he can call his. The self includes a system of ideas, attitudes, values and commitments. Self-concept is the way one sees himself and the set of characteristics he associates with himself. It is important for understanding and predicting the many facets of human behaviour, which is a vital component in the process of education. A compilation of how some persons have viewed self-concept is put forth further.

According to Raimy (1943), self-concept is the map that each person consults in order to understand himself, especially during moments of crisis or choice. The self includes all that a person embraces in words, 'I', 'me', 'mine' and 'myself'. It is within each person, the core and substance of his experience as human being. An individual self-concept according to Coleman (1969) is his picture or image of himself, his view of himself as distinct from other things and persons. The self-image incorporates his perception of what he is really like (self-identity) and his worth as a person (self-evaluation) as well as his aspirations for growth and accomplishment (self-ideal). Self is an individual's material possession almost in the

same category as his worldly goods. Shavelson et al. (1976) refers self-concept in broad terms to a person's perception of himself or herself. The characteristics of self-concept according to Shavelson are: (i) it is structured and organised; (ii) it is multifaceted, i.e., several different categories may be formed, viz., school, workplace, social acceptance, physical attractiveness, peer group, intellectual ability; and (iii) the categorical structure of self-concept can be described hierarchically on a dimension of generality. International Dictionary of Education (1978) defines self-concept as the term used in studies of personality to describe in simple terms, the picture or image a person has of himself or herself. According to the Encyclopedic Dictionary of Psychology (1983) self-concept is one of many terms (self-identity, self-ideal, perceived self, phenomenal self) relating to self-perception. International Dictionary of Psychology (1989) defines self-concept as the way some one sees himself. All these definitions emphasize on self-perception or how one sees himself or herself in explaining self-concept.

In another definition Jersild (1954) defines that self-concept is a composite of thoughts and feelings which constitute a person's awareness of his individual existence, his perception of what he has, his conception of who he is, and his feeling about his characteristics, qualities and properties. Individual self-concept according to Copersmith (1967) is the personal judgement of worthiness that is expressed in the attitudes the individual holds towards himself. Mouly (1973) defines self as the sum total of all that he can call his. The self includes, among other things, a system of ideas, attitudes, values and commitments. According to Byrne (1974), self-concept is the total collection of attitudes, judgements and values which an individual holds with regard to his behaviour, his ability, his body, his worth as a

person; in short, how he perceives and evaluates himself. The Concise Psychological Dictionary (1985) defines self-concept as a relatively stable and more or less conscious phenomenon, emotionally experienced as a unique system of the individual's ideas about himself, basing on which he interacts with other people and develops an attitude towards himself. It is an attitude towards himself involving the cognitive, emotional and the evaluative aspects.

Deo (1985) conceives self-concept as a system of attitudes towards oneself. Just as a person forms attitudes as a result of experiences which he organizes into a self-consistent system and defends against threats and attacks, so the person also forms attitudes towards himself. Self-concept consists of all the perceptions, fillings, attitudes, aspirations and values of oneself concerning oneself.

Deo's explanation encompasses the views expressed by various psychologists and seems to be comprehensive in nature.

1.4.4. Interest

Interest is an innate or an acquired feeling which prompts an individual to spontaneous activity. It is the driving force that causes us to react in selective ways to various aspects of our environment. It determines the stimuli to which we pay attention and the situations in which we like to operate. The quality and intensity of behaviour in any situation is largely determined by the nature and strength of our interests relevant to that situation. The term 'interest' has been defined and explained in many different ways. Some of these are given below:

Berdie (1946) has viewed interest as factors that attract individuals to or repel them from objectives, persons or activities. Expressing a similar meaning, the Encyclopedia of Psychology (1972) puts interest as the term used to designate a

concept pertaining to factors within an individual which attract or repel him from various objects, persons, and activities within his environment.

Ross (1955) says that 'a thing that interests us is just something that concerns us or matters to us'. William James (1976) discusses interest as a form of selective awareness or attention that produce meaning out of the mass of one's experiences. Strong (1976) speaks of 'interest' as 'likes' and labels 'dislikes' as 'aversions'.

In the words of Bingham (1937), 'interest is a tendency to become absorbed in an experience and to continue with it, while an aversion is a tendency to turn away from it to something else'. In the opinion of Collins and Drever (1948), when certain objects or certain lines of action have a special appeal for an individual, we speak of the individual as having an interest in such objects or lines of action. According to Gates (1958), 'interests are based on one or more needs which have become associated with certain kinds of expression and are directed towards certain objects which satisfy the need'. Klausmeier (1971) describes interest as 'the tendency to give selective attention to one activity or activities rather than to others'. Sawrey and Jelford (1977) have expressed that interesting objects and experiences are those which have satisfied or which promise to satisfy motives. According to International Encyclopedia of Education (1990), the doctrine of interest in education is a shorthand expression for a number of different motives which focus in the recognition of the necessity of discovering points of genuine and intimate contact between the subject matter of instruction and the vital experience of pupils, an experience that exists and operates independently of attempts to master the subject matter. The Encyclopedia and Dictionary of Education (1991) writes that

the fundamental quality of interest is conative – the impulses towards the fulfillment of desire, the reaching forward to some purpose.

The definition given by Crow and Crow (1979) is as follows: “Interest may refer to the motivating force that impels us to attend to a person, a thing or an activity or it may be the effective experience that has been stimulated by the activity itself”.

In conclusion, it may be said that the term interest designates a concept pertaining to factors within an individual, which attract or repel him/her from various objects, persons and activities within his/her environment.

1.5.0. Problem Under Study

Promotion of academic achievement is one of the important aims of an educational system. Teachers, parents, schools, in fact all those who are linked with the educational system in one way or the other make every effort to see that students achieve more and more. This has drawn greater attention as the world is becoming more competitive and global.

Achievement of girls is of a greater concern to educationists as the importance of education of girls is being realised and attempts are made by the concerned authorities to see that girls achieve to their optimum level. Apart from external efforts, factors like aspiration to achieve, and their own judgement of what they are capable of also contribute towards achievement. Since the knowledge and vocations are getting diversified, the interests in different fields or areas in students also promote them to achieve higher. Though several other factors may also contribute towards achievement, it was felt that the variables – educational aspiration, self-concept and interest in different areas play a significant role in one's

academic achievement, particularly of girls in the tribal region of North-East India in general, Meghalaya in particular. Since no work was done in this direction, it was felt that a study has to be undertaken to fill the research gap, and hence the present study.

1.6.0. Statement of the Problem

The problem under study reads as: "*A Study on the Educational Aspiration, Self-Concept and Interest in relation to Academic Achievement of Girls in the Secondary Schools of East Khasi Hills District in Meghalaya*".

1.6.1. Conceptual Definitions of the Terms used

- (i) **Academic achievement:** It is the level of proficiency attained in academic work or formally acquired knowledge in school subjects which is often represented by marks obtained by students in examination.
- (ii) **Educational aspiration:** It is the goal an individual sets for himself or herself in a task which has intense personal significance for him/her or in which he/she is ego-involved.
- (iii) **Self-concept:** It is a system of attitudes towards oneself. It consists of all the perceptions, feelings, attitudes, aspirations and values of oneself concerning oneself.
- (iv) **Interest:** The term designates a concept pertaining to factors within an individual, which attract or repel him/her from various objects, persons and activities within his/her environment.

1.6.2. Operational Definitions of the Terms used

- (i) **Academic achievement:** It is the marks obtained by students in the H.S.L.C. Examination (Class-X) conducted by the Meghalaya Board of School Education (MBOSE).
- (ii) **Educational aspiration:** It is the score obtained on the Educational Aspiration Scale (EAS) Form P developed by Sharma and Gupta (1980) to measure the educational aspiration.
- (iii) **Self-concept:** It is represented by the score obtained on the Self-Concept List (SCL) developed by Pratibha Deo (1985) to measure the self-concept
- (iv) **Interest:** It is represented by the score obtained on the Sodhi and Bhatnagar Interest Inventory (SBII) for girls (1985) to measure interest in different areas.

1.7.0. Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study are as follows:

- (i) To study the academic achievement of girls in the secondary school final examination.
- (ii) To find out the educational aspiration of secondary school girls and its relationship with their academic achievement.
- (iii) To find out the self-concept of secondary school girls and its relationship with their academic achievement.
- (iv) To find out the interest of secondary school girls in different areas and the relationship of each with their academic achievement.

1.8.0. Hypotheses

The following hypotheses have been framed with reference to the objectives (ii), (iii) and (iv)

- (i) There is no significant relationship between educational aspiration and academic achievement of secondary school girls
- (ii) There is no significant relationship between self-concept and academic achievement of secondary school girls.
- (iii) There is no significant relationship between each of the different areas of interest and academic achievement of secondary school girls.

The above three are the major hypotheses tested in the study. But the sample was further split as rural - urban, tribal – non-tribal, girls studying in co-education schools – girls studying in girls only schools, urban tribal – rural tribal, and girls from the schools belonging to four types of school management. Also achievement was considered as total marks, as well as the marks in different school subjects. For testing the differences with reference to all the above classifications, suitable separate hypotheses were framed. These hypotheses are provided while presenting the analysis of data in Chapter – IV

1.9.0. Delimitation of the Study

In Meghalaya, the secondary schools are affiliated to different Boards like the Meghalaya Board of School Education, Central Board of Secondary Education and others. But except a handful of secondary schools, all are affiliated to MBOSE and hence, they send their students to the H.S.L.C. Examination (Class-X)

conducted by MBOSE. Since the study use (class X) Examination marks as an indicator of achievement, the study is delimited to only schools affiliated to MBOSE.