

AN INTER GENERATIONAL STUDY OF CHILD REARING PRACTICES AMONG THE KHASIS

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CHAPTER - VI

**DISCUSSION AND
SUMMARY**

The present study deals with various aspects of socialization and child rearing practices, over a period of time among the Khasi, with a view to understanding the changes, if any, have taken place over generations. In the present study, a 'generation' refers to time scale, which corresponds to chronological age. To facilitate the study in generational differences, all families, under the present study, have been put into four age cohorts to examine various family situations, in respect of schooling and educational development of children, imposition of discipline and child training, interaction and recreation (sociability), and various other socialization processes of children. With this end in view, the entire study has been conducted among the Khasi, a major tribal population of Meghalaya, widely known and studied by many anthropologists in the past for their well known matrilineal system. For the present purpose the study has been geographically restricted to five urban areas in Shillong.

Keeping the objectives of the present study in view, various techniques were employed to collect data on socialization processes of children in various family situations over generations. Data for the present study have been collected through a structured schedule (appendix A) from the informants. Besides, many case studies have been incorporated in order to substantiate the findings, and

many extended genealogies (appendix B) have been drawn to understand the changes that have taken place over generations.

For the present purpose, a 'generation' length has been calculated, following the method given by Glass. This has been done to avoid many individuals of different ages coming in one and the same generation (Table 2). In the present study the length of a 'generation' is taken as 21 years. 250 households in five areas have been covered to collect relevant demographic data. It may be mentioned here that a 3 per cent random sampling has been carried out to select these 250 households. In the second phase of the field-work a 20 per cent random sampling has been done on those originally selected 250 households, and finally 50 households have been selected for in-depth study on socialization and parent-child relationship.

In Chapter-III a detailed description of the modified methods, adopted for collection of data for the present study, has been given. It is felt that all the existing methods, generally applied for anthropological researches, viz. genealogy, case study, participant observation, etc., are not adequate enough for collection of data on changes/continuities, if any, over generations.

In the present study, the mothers were the main respondents. So, the interviews were focussed on collection

of data on mothers' attitudes and practices towards different patterns of socialization of their children and child-reading processes. Whenever it was felt necessary, additional information were collected from the fathers and children in order to find out the differences in attitudes between the parents and their children.

An introduction to the salient concepts, used in the present study, viz., generation, family and socialization has been given. Of these three concepts, generation and socialization have been extensively discussed in view of their importance in understanding the changes as well as continuities in child rearing practices. In understanding the concept of generation, the present study has relied mainly on Troll's (1970) various concepts of generation. He has conceptualized 'generation' in five different categories, which are as follows : 'development stage', 'ranked descent', 'age-homogeneous group' or 'age cohorts', 'time span' and 'spirit of the age'. Hence we understand that according to Troll, generations may be viewed variously such as a) positions in a chain of lineal descent (lineage model), b) age strata across society (i.e., cohort model), c) developmental levels through which an individual moves (developmental-stage model), d) specific time span, which is regarded as a unit of social change, and e) series of

subjective age-group identifications (i.e., historical-consciousness model).

Although it is true that the 'lineage model' and 'developmental stage model' have mostly guided in conceptualization of the present study, the 'cohort model' is found to be more useful in interpreting the present data in defining the term 'generation'. In other words, the concept of generation in the present study has been adopted as an 'age-homogeneous group' or 'age-cohorts', which refers to the change on age differentiation within the family and its influence on successive generations.

Various concepts of socialization, given by anthropologists like Childe (1960), Benedict (1934), Mead (1946), Herskovits (1957), White (1971) and others, have been discussed in this chapter. All these concepts of socialization essentially lead to the understanding of how a person becomes a responsible member of a society according to the existing norms and values of that particular society. So, it is understood that socialization is a mean of perpetuating and redefining the culture itself.

Compared to these two concepts (viz., socialization and generation), the concept of family assumes lesser significance. The importance of family is mainly in providing a vehicle for inter-play between socialization and

generation in order to carry forward the culture of a society to which the family belong.

So in the present study we have taken into consideration each family individually at the initial stage of analysis and then we have tried to focus what the changes and/or continuities regarding the socialization and child rearing practices are perceptible in the Khasi society.

In this introductory chapter a review of various anthropological approaches to the study of socialization, child-rearing and parent-child relationship has been made, indicating some empirical researches, conducted on various societies - both tribal and non-tribal - by Mead (1928, 1930, 1935, 1954, 1970), Benedict (1938), Dubois (1949), Kardiner (1939-1945), Linton (1936), Whiting and Childe (1953). Also a review of earlier ethnographic researches carried out by the scholars like Malinowski (1922-1935), Read (1959), Fortes (1938-1949), and others has also been made.

As far as the empirical researches on socialization and child rearing practices are concerned, a huge literature is available. But in the present thesis we have focussed mostly on those works, which have been carried out on the Indian populations by scholars like Dube (1955), Minturn and Hitchcock (1966), Raz (1976), Burman (1961), Mazumdar (1962), Desai (1964), Mahale (1987), Goode (1970) etc.. It

may also be noted that the Indian scholars have hardly taken into consideration socialization and child rearing practices from intergenerational point of view. But the western scholars like Frazer (1922), Redfield (1947), Mead (1970) and some others, have done their studies from the intergenerational point of view regarding socialization and child-rearing practices. So in the present study we have heavily depended on their findings. However, it may be mentioned that most of these studies are not concerned with the tribal populations. Nevertheless, their findings and concepts are quite useful in understanding the population under the present study.

It is a common knowledge that family is an important institution, which plays a very significant role in shaping the lives of its members, particularly of the coming up generations. But the question of questions is how exactly this role is performed - Do they operate as initiators or as potentials? The question requires greater significance in a changing society. As already discussed, we are aware that there are significant differences between societies, which mean that families play important and determining roles in maintaining the distinctive identity of each society. Hence in the present study, to understand the role of families in socialization processes, the main thrust has been given to study and analyze how systematically such changes/

continuities, if any, are taking place. Does the family, as a unit of social organization, provide enough ground to understand this situation? And should it not be further classified according to gender and generation? It is to find out the awareness to these broad questions, and that constitutes the basic theoretical objectives of the present study. Besides, the present study also has a number of other objectives, which have been clearly stated in the introductory chapter.

Finally, in the introductory chapter, the limitation of the present study has been stated clearly. The society under the present study is a matrilineal one, but most of the concepts and methods, which have so far been developed, are concerned with patrilineal societies. So we are very conscious about the use of these concepts and methods in a matrilineal society, like the present one, without contextualizing them.

In the second chapter, the land and the people have been described. It further discusses how the contact of the Khasi with the people from other parts of the country and also with the non-Indian populations has developed over the years. It also deals with the spread of education and Christianity among the Khasi. A short description has also been given on family organization, descent and social rules of inheritance.

The fourth chapter deals with the analyses of the data on socio-demographic characteristics of the population. In the present sample, two major religious groups have been taken into consideration. These are the Christians and Non-Christians. Among the Christians there are two major sects, the Catholic and Non-Catholic. Though it is true that the people under the Non-Catholic group belong to various churches, for convenience of analysis we have pooled them together and labelled them as Non-Catholic Christians. In the present sample, it is found that 46 per cent belong to the Catholic Christian group, 45.6 per cent to the Non-Catholic Christian group and 8.4 per cent to the Non-Christian group.

The findings of this chapter have been highlighted and discussed here.

Among the Khasi the mean age at marriage is steadily decreasing over generations. This is true for all the three religious groups, considered for the present study. It is found that age at marriage in the first generation has been found to be 22 years, whereas it has come down to 20 years in the second generation, 21 years in the third generation and 18 years in the present generation, i.e., fourth generation.

In a population study, conducted by the U.S. Bureau of Census (1960), it has been reported that the median age

at marriage among the women has declined from 21.5 years in 1940 to 20.3 years in 1950 and 1960.

Many base-line surveys, conducted in recent years by the Centre for Development Studies (1987), also report a similar trend of such low age at marriage for females in India. For example, in Orissa 44 per cent of females are found to be married before the age of 15 years and 42 per cent before the age of 18 years, while in Maharashtra the mean age at marriage for currently married women in Osmanabad District is 13.70 years and in Parbhani 13.11 years. Another base line-survey (1987) reports that the age at marriage among the Bihari women varies between 15 and 18 years. In the Census of India (1984) it is found that nearly 63.3 per cent of the non-literate women in urban area marry before 18 years of age whereas 18 per cent marry between 18 and 20 years of age and only 8.4 per cent marry beyond 21 years of age. It is also reported that 53.7 per cent of the women, having education below primary level marry before 18 years of age and 34.5 per cent of such women marry between 18 and 20 years of age and 11.8 per cent after 21 years of age. The Census of India (1984) further reveals that 26.8 per cent of women, who are matriculate and not graduate, marry before 18 years of age, whereas 43 per cent and 30.2 per cent of such women marry between 18 and 20 years of age and above 21 years of age respectively. In

case of the women who are graduate the situation, is quite different. Only 10.1 per cent of such women marry before 18 years of age, while 57.2 per cent of those marry after 21 years of age.

On the contrary to these findings, according to the Census of India (1971), the average age at marriage for females in India has increased from 13.2 years in 1901-11 to 17.2 years in 1961-71. In other words, during these seven decades the average age at marriage has gone up by four years in case of females.

Similarly, according to the report of the committee on status of women in India (1971), the average age at marriage has been rising steadily from 15.4 years in 1941-51 to 17.2 years in 1961-71. The national average for 1971 happens to be 20 years in urban and 18 years in rural areas. However, the situation is not the same in the admittedly educationally backward states. The average age at marriage for women in 1951-61 was 14.81 years in Bihar and Orissa, 13.87 years in Madhya Pradesh, 14.22 years in Rajasthan and 14.43 years in Uttar Pradesh, while the national average during that period was 16.3 years. The report further states that the average age at marriage is higher among the tribal women than among the women, belonging to the other communities.

According to 1981 Census, the Christian have the highest mean age at marriage, which is followed by the Sikh and Jain. It is true for both rural and urban areas. However, all religious groups show an increasing trend in age at marriage.

In another study undertaken by the Centre for Development Studies in Trivandrum (1986), reveals that between 1941 and 1971, the median age at marriage for females has increased from 15.08 years to 15.64 years in rural areas and from 15.99 years to 17.63 years in urban areas of the country as a whole.

It is well known that age at marriage is always influenced by a number of socio-economic factors. It has often been argued that social-economic characteristics may influence the institution of marriage, and thereby determine age at marriage. Bogue (1969) states, "It has been found almost universally that persons standing in higher socio-economic scale marry at a later age than persons in other socio-economic strata". In the words of Reddy and Krishnan (1976) observe, "Changes in age at marriage are very sensitive, to economic and social change."

A large number of studies, conducted by the United Nations (1961), "have confirmed that the higher the socio-economic status, higher will be the age at marriage of the person and vice-versa". However, all these studies

(especially those in India) have considered the respondents' socio-economic characteristics at the time of survey and not really at the time of actual marriage. Moreover, empirical data in support of this are almost negligible in India, except one micro-level study conducted by Audinarayana (1985) in rural Andhra Pradesh. Hence there may be many other factors, which contribute to differential age at marriage. It can be better understood, particularly in the light of the observation made by Davis (1976:67) on age at marriage in European Societies. He says, "anything that makes marriage less of a fateful decision, less of an economic and social commitment, less of an irreversible step, will tend to lower the age of marriage".

From the above discussion it is understood that the mean age at marriage varies from one state to another as well as one population to other. Though it is true that the mean age at marriage is gradually increasing in this country, it is also a fact that mean age at marriage among the Khasi is slowly going down. But it may be mentioned here that the mean age at marriage among the Khasi in no way violates the spirit of the amended Sarada Act (1974). However, such a downward trend of mean age at marriage among the Khasi may well be explained in the light of the observations, made by Davis among the European populations.

Secondly, from the present data it can be inferred that irrespective of religious affiliation, marriage bondage is getting weakened over generations. It is also seen that marriage is not as stable as it happened to be in the earlier generations. The present study on the marital status of the respondents reveals that among the Catholic Christian nearly 20 per cent of the respondents have married more than once, and this frequency among the Non-Catholic Christian is 18 per cent and 24 per cent among the Non-Christian Khasi. Further, it is seen that marriage used to be considered as a permanent bondage among the people of the earliest generation, and it was by and large true for all the three religious groups. But it is found that as generation advances, the frequency of dissolution of marriages appears to be increasing and this trend is confirmed in all these three religious groups. For example, among the Catholic Christian of the second generation, 18 per cent of the respondents have remarried at least once and 3 per cent more than once. In the third generation, the frequencies of 'once remarried' and 'more than once remarried' have increased to 21 per cent and 4 per cent respectively. Similarly, among the Non-Catholic Christian 16 per cent of all the respondents have remarried, out of which, 3 per cent have remarried 'more than once' in the second generation. But the frequencies of 'once remarried'

and 'more than once remarried' have increased to 18 per cent and 5 per cent respectively in the third generation. In case of the Non-Christian Khasi, 43 per cent in the second generation and 50 per cent in the third generation have married 'more than once'.

The second aspect that has been analyzed with regard to the marital status of the respondents, is the frequency of separated individuals. One remarkable feature is that the frequency of separated individuals increases from the first to the third generation, irrespective of religious affiliation. In case of the Catholic it is found that there is no separated woman in the first generation, but in the second generation the frequency of the separated women is about 18 per cent, which has further increased to 28 per cent in the third generation. In case of the Non-Catholic Christian, the frequency of the separated women is found to be 17 per cent in the first generation, which, in turn, has increased to 22.5 per cent in the second generation and 28 per cent in the third generation. In case of the Non-Christian Khasi, there is no case of separation in the first generation, but the frequency of separated women is found to be 43 per cent in the second generation and 50 per cent in the third generation.

From the above discussion, it is clear that marriage among the Khasis, irrespective of religious affiliation, is

no more as stable as it used to be. It may also be noted that many women, who have been separated by dissolving their earlier marriages, have decided to stay alone only with their children. Hence from the present sample it may be observed that marriage as a social institution is gradually getting weakened among the Khasi, irrespective of religious affiliation. The other fact to be noted here is that unlike the Hindu castes, among the Khasi, irrespective of religious affiliation, there is no social stigma attached to remarriage, once or more than once. It is true for both men and women in the Khasi society.

The third aspect, regarding marital status of the respondents, is the dissolution of marriage by death of a spouse. It is seen that widow remarriage, though being practised in all these three religious groups, is not generally appreciated. By and large most of the widows, in all these three religious groups, prefer to staying with their children to remarriage.

Click (1975) reports that in the United States the divorce rate is highest in the industrialized societies. It is also mentioned that the other societies with high divorce rate are found in the U.S.S.R., Hungary and Cuba, and also in recent time in Japan and Egypt.

Murdock (1950) has compiled systematic cross-cultural descriptive data on divorce in 40 small preliterate

societies in Asia, Africa, Oceania, North and South America. In all but one society (the Incas), there is institutionalized provision for dissolving marriages. In all these societies both sexes have equal rights to initiate divorce. Murdock estimates that the divorce rate (about 60 per cent) in all these preliterate societies is higher than that in the United States. His study reveals that higher divorce rate in preliterate societies does not mean that divorce is associated with social disorganization. The society reintegrates the divorced person into the family and that person is not stigmatized and can remarry. Further, a variety of devices are employed to preserve stability of a marital relationship. Moreover, divorce rate can and often are associated with stable extended family system. Murdock concludes by stating that "high divorce rates do not necessarily mean that family system is being undermined nor is it necessarily associated with societal disorganization. High divorce rates may not reflect family break-down; in fact they may reflect culturally prescribed ways of eliminating disruptive influences."

Jacobsen (1959), in his work on American divorce patterns from 1860 to 1956, reports that at about the time of the Civil War (1860-1864) the divorce rate per 1,000 of existing marriages was only 1.2 per cent. By the turn of the century (1900-1904) the rate had risen to 4.2 per cent

and 25 years later (1925-1929) it become 7.6 per cent and near the end of the World War-II the rate was as high as 13.7 per cent. It is further observed that since the beginning of the 1960's the divorce rate has dramatically risen.

It is generally assumed that marriage is expected to lead to exclusive attainment and fulfillment of an individual's, affectional, personal and communal needs. When it fails meeting those needs, marital unhappiness and often thereby divorce may occur. Increasing sense of independence on the part of men and women, coupled with a sense of lesser social stigma attached to divorce, is the probable reason for the rise in divorce rate.

Based on such assumption, concerning divorce and dissolution of marriage, it may be said that marital status of parent is a resultant of several forces in a family situation, which may have a dominant and direct impact and effect on socialization of children. Moreover, as the present study is concerned with impact of family situation on socialization process of children, the next important question that needs to be examined and discussed, is that to what extent children are being affected in a family in which parents have dissolved their marriage and decided for either remarriage or remaining single. This aspect has been very well discussed by Mead (1970). According to her, "The

larger extended family or clan, which still exists in many societies, has formally defined rights, duties, and obligations over each member of the family grouping, including children." It shows that in case of those children in larger extended family or clan the separation of the parents due to death or divorce of parents is less problematic than in case of those children who live in a situation in which such wider kinship network is lacking. It means that larger extended family or clan can take care of children's psychological well being, in case of disruption in the family due to dissolution of their parental marriage or due to one or the other reason. The situation becomes much more complicated and problematic where such extended kinship network is very much lacking, and consequently, it creates pressure on psychological well being of children.

The Centre for Health Statistics of the United States (1977, 1978) has reported that since 1900 the proportion of children, affected by marital disruption, is varying between 25 and 30 per cent of the total population of children under the age of 18 years. There has been a change, however, in the dominant cause of the disruption. At the turn of the century, the ratio of disruption by death was much higher than disruption by divorce and long-term separation. By 1980 the ratio has reversed.

Bane (1979) has reported that divorce generally brings psychological disorganization to the children and also some other ill effects. Handis (1960) in his study of 295 University students in Cedar, Rapids and Iowa, has found that divorce of parents affects children in various ways, connecting with many factors like age of the child at the time of divorce of his/her parent, his/her attachment to parents, etc.

Longfellow (1979) has suggested that divorce of parents creates an emotional impact on children, and it is more perceptible among the younger children than among the older children. She has further observed that single parent mothers with young children are the most vulnerable group, so far economic instability and mental stresses are concerned.

Foradwin, Brown and Fox (1974), and Schorr and Moen (1980) have pointed out that society is dominated by the assumption that families headed by a single parent, particularly when that parent is a woman is deviant and pathologic. Such families are referred as 'broken', 'disorganised' or 'disintegrated', rather than being recognized as a viable alternative family form. Such families are viewed negatively with emphasis on their alleged weakness and problems rather than being seen as a

solution to circumstances and examined in terms of their strength.

Bohannon (1971) has observed that the customs and conventions of family life are not really applicable to those families in which divorced women has remarried. These include such as everyday activities, discipline of children, authority of step parents, relationship among siblings with step-siblings, etc. All these become problematic to the remarried parents.

In view of Mead's (1970) observation on divorce and its effect on children, it may be pointed out that though among the Khasi divorce and dissolution of marriages are gradually increasing from one generation to the next, the effect of parents' divorce on children is minimal, since it is a society in which kinship ties are still very strong and being maintained to a great extent as found in earlier time.

The literacy rate has increased over generations, irrespective of religious affiliation. For example, in the earliest generation the percentage of literates has been found to be 4.34 per cent among the Catholic Christian, 5.26 per cent among the Non-Catholic Christian and 14.28 per cent among the Non-Christian Khasi, whereas this rate in the third generation has increased to 45.21 per cent among the Catholic Christian, 44.73 per cent among the Non-Catholic Christian and 100 per cent among the Non-Christian Khasi.

Secondly, it is found that as generation advances, more and more people are becoming literate, and consequently, the frequency of non-literate individuals is dropping rapidly. The other point to be noted is that even today, there is not sufficient number of respondents, who have gone for "higher" education. Majority of them have got upto "secondary level of education". For instance, in the third generation the percentage of literates upto secondary level is found to be 29.56 per cent for the Catholic Christian, 28.94 per cent for the Non-Catholic Christian and 100 per cent for the Non-Christian Khasi. In contrast, the percentage of literates with higher level of education is found to be only 6.95 per cent among the Catholic Christian, 6.14 per cent among the Non-Catholic Christian and 4.76 per cent among the Non-Christian Khasi. So, the overall trend is that mothers are more educated now than what they used to be in earlier generations.

According to the Census of India (1981), the percentage of literates to total population, among females in India, was 0.69 per cent in 1901, 1.05 per cent in 1911, 1.81 per cent in 1921, 2.93 per cent in 1931, 7.30 per cent in 1941, 7.93 per cent in 1951, 12.95 per cent in 1961, 18.72 per cent in 1971, 27.82 per cent in 1981, and 39 per cent in 1991. So, in comparison to the national standard, it

may be said that the Khasi, irrespective of religious affiliation, are not lagging behind.

It is observed that the incidence of divorce is higher among the literate mothers. For example, in the third generation the frequency of the literate respondents, who have married 'more than once', is 8.69 per cent among the Catholic Christian, 8.77 per cent among the Non-Catholic Christian and 9.52 per cent among the Non-Christian Khasi, while the frequencies of the non literate respondents in the third generation who have married 'more than once', are 4.34 per cent among the Catholic Christian and 3.50 per cent among the Non-Catholic Christian. It may be mentioned that there is not a single non-literate woman among the Non-Christian Khasi, who has remarried. So it may be inferred that as generation advances, the frequency of literate, marrying 'more than once', is gradually increasing. It may also be noted that the frequency of 'more than once married' among the non-literates is also increasing, though the frequency of 'more than once married' women is higher among the literates than among the non-literates. This trend is quite perceptible in all these three religious groups. Rons and Sawhill (1975) have observed that with increasing economic independence, better opportunity for education and gradual removal of traditional bars, women like to dissolve their unsatisfactory marriages, and they have become much

more involved in their professional life than in domestic and marital life. Consequently, they dissolve their unhappy marriages. Similar observations have been made by Robert Lynd (1965).

These observations are made on patrilineal societies, where the women are mostly dependent on their male spouses. But in a matrilineal society like the Khasi women are much more economically protected and independent in comparison to their male counterparts. Further, when the rate of literacy and level of education are increasing among the Khasi women, they often feel that their male counterparts are less educated and thereby less worthy of being their spouses. Consequently, the divorce rate is increasing in this society over generations.

We have already described in Chapter-IV, how the occupational status of the Khasi women is changing over generations. It is found that the frequency of working women among the Khasi is steadily increasing as generation advances. This is true for both the Christian and Non-Christian.

The point to be noted here is that the pattern of job among the Khasi women is undergoing considerable change over generations. It is seen that in the earliest generation the respondents were mostly engaged in agricultural work, but as time advances, the frequency of

agricultural work among the Khasi women is steadily decreasing and more and more Khasi women are taking up trade or service or other daily wage earning sundry jobs. This trend is very much perceptible in all three religious groups among the Khasi.

War (1992), in her study on "Status of Women in Traditional Khasi Culture", has stated that since time immemorial the Khasi women have been active participants in supplementing family income by doing various kinds of job. She has also pointed out that the Khasi women are very shrewd traders in the market places. So the present finding by and large agrees with the observation, made by War. In this connection, it may be mentioned that as literacy rate is steadily increasing among the Khasi women, they are being attracted to various kinds of jobs to earn their livelihood and that is making them more and more independent. This observation holds good for all three religious groups among the Khasi.

Rapidly increasing employment of mothers needs to be studied and discussed in terms of its effects on socialization and rearing of children. Stolz (1960), in her work on "What happens to Children whose Mothers Work?", has stated that the employment of mothers is not the universal reason to affect the socialization processes of their children, but there are many other factors, which affect the

socialization processes of children and these factors vary from one individual case to another. In case of the Khasi it has been observed that more and more mothers are taking up employment of one kind or the other and how such employment of the mothers affects the socialization processes of the children, has been discussed in Chapter-V.

It is found that when mother is engaged in some kind of job, she has got comparatively little time to devote for her children than a mother, who is a housewife. Consequently, the children's education is very much neglected in most cases and children become indisciplined in many respects. On the other hand, it is also observed through case studies that the family becomes economically little better off and can afford to spend much more money for welfare of the children. It is also true that the working mothers have higher ambition for their children. So from the present study we agree with what Stolz says that employment of mother is not the sole criteria, which adversely affects children's education and their socialization processes. We, further, agree that socialization processes of the children depend on many other factors and not mothers' employment is solely responsible.

In another study "Child-Reading in Families of Working and Non-Working Mother", Yarrow, Scott, Deheeuw and Heinig (1974) have found that differences between working

and non-working mothers appear in some areas of rearing. Firmer control over children, assignment of greater responsibilities to children, and delegation of the stricter disciplinary role to the father appear more frequently in the families of the working mothers than the non-working mothers.

In the present study among the Khasi it is seen that in case of the working mother the children are being disciplined in much stricter sense, so far their education is concerned. It is found that this sense is gaining more and more ground, as generation advances. But when the question of household responsibility comes, it is found that in case of both the working and non-working mothers, the children, particularly the adolescent sons, are trying to avoid taking up household responsibilities. This trend is very much perceptible as generation advances. In view of these facts we partially agree with Yarrow et al. (1974). It may be noted here that what Yarrow et al. have observed is concerned with patrilineal societies. But in case of the Khasi, which is a matrilineal society, the role of the father in the household, regarding disciplining children, is very limited and mother always plays a dominant role. However, in the present time it is seen that the role of the father in maintaining household responsibilities is undergoing changes towards positive direction.

So far the economic level is concerned, we have restricted our observation only on the present generation. The other earlier generations cannot be considered due to unreliability of data provided to us. In the present generation it is found that 23 per cent, 21 per cent and 19 per cent in the Catholic, Non-Catholic and Non-Christian Khasi respectively belong to the 'high' income group. Similarly, 36 per cent, 40 per cent and 38 per cent respectively in the Catholic, Non-Catholic and Non-Christian Khasi belong to 'middle' income group, and 41 per cent, 38 per cent and 43 per cent belong to 'low' income group among the Catholic, Non-Catholic and Non-Christian Khasi respectively. So it is seen that so far the distribution of income level of the families in these three religious groups is concerned, not very remarkable differences exist. However, the detailed demographic findings on income level have already been given in the Chapter-IV.

In the present study among the Khasi it is quite understandable that economic condition of a family do not have much of an impact on the socialization and child rearing processes since all parents, irrespective of economic condition, believe that some amount of social responsibility should be given to the children, and in reality it is found that parents, irrespective of economic condition, do ask their children to take up some household

responsibilities. It may also be true that those, who belong to the 'high' income group, give comparatively lesser responsibility to the children than those belonging to the 'middle' or 'low' income groups. Another point to be noted among the Khasi of the present generation is that the well to do parents can afford to send their children to better schools and can afford to engage private tuition for their children than the parents, belonging to the 'middle' and 'low' income groups. However, only in future, it could be ascertained how far this practice of the well to do parents will pay for better welfare of their children. At present, it is impossible to evaluate the consequences. However, the above mentioned trend is by and large perceptible in all three religious sections. Another point may be mentioned here that in all these three religious sections only a few well-to-do parents feel that there is no need to put social/household responsibility(ies) on the children. At present we have no opportunity with the present set of data to analyse it further.

Hollingshead (1949) has observed that American children's ambitions for various vocations, are directly influenced by fathers' occupations and economic positions. However, in the present study among the Khasi it is not found.

In a research study, carried out by Mathur (1974) on the effect of socio-economic status and behaviour and achievement of the secondary school students, it is found that socio-economic status is significantly correlated to educational achievement, intelligence and conduct of the students. In the present study such co-relations have not been noticed among the Khasi. It may perhaps be due to the fact that even today the Khasi is a well close knit society for which such aspirations on the part of the children belonging to the 'high' income group, have not yet been reflected in the present study. However, in future we shall have to look into these possibilities as and when education will be better spread and thereby the differences in the economic condition will be wider among the Khasi.

In the present study it has been observed among the Khasi, irrespective of religious affiliation, that the frequency of large size family is slowly declining and the norm of small family size is coming up. Even then the frequency of middle size family is much higher in the present generation in comparison to the earlier generations. However, the fact cannot be denied that even today, the frequency of large size family is very much in existence. In Chapter-IV we have discussed about family size among the Khasi in detail.

In the present study, it is found that family size does affect socialization processes of children. In 'large' family size it is seen that the parents cannot pay equal attention to all their children, and consequently, act of indiscipline on the part of the children is very much glaring. The reason for such indiscipline is mostly due to the fact that in a Khasi society generally the mother plays a dominant role in comparison to the father and in many cases the father has very limited say about his children. When family size is large, it becomes virtually impossible for the mother to pay equal attention to all her children, and when father takes little or no interest in socialization processes of his children, the situation gets worsened. In case of 'medium' or 'small' size family the mother has had better opportunity to look after her children particularly in respect of their socialization process, and in turn the children become better socialized and disciplined.

There is reason to assume that the role of parents in different sized families and the pattern of parent-child relationship, growing out of performance of these roles, are remarkable in relation to emotional, social adjustment and personality development of the children.

The family is composed of a complex of interactional systems, made up of different members of the family, each of whom has bearing on development of personality and behaviour

of other members of the family. The larger the number, the larger is the interactional system. Each relationship as well as the interactional system has its own emotional quality which affects the members of the family, involved in this system. A certain size of family is conducive to a certain way of life, a pattern of attitudes and a complex of values. The comparisons, made in this study, between small and large family systems are in no way intended to suggest that one is better than the other. Each has its own merits which affect development and personalities of children growing within it.

Studies on patterns of large and small families have revealed that they are markedly different in their effects on the child. Nye (1952) has discussed in his study that relationship of family size to adjustment of children shows that though children from large families may be able to adjust to the change of circumstances of a realist world better than those from smaller families, they do not make successful adjustments to people and to life in general like those children, who have been brought up in smaller families. The explanation, given by Nye, is that improvements occur in family relationships as the size of the family decreases. He has suggested the following reasons:

1) Parents of a small family can give each child more attention;

2) Competition is keen among the siblings in a large family, hence there are more chances of quarreling and bickerings;

3) Small families are more often planned than large families and thus more welcome.

Hurlock (1955) points out some of the disadvantages of small families. She advances her argument that in spite of economic and social advantages, the child must sometimes pay the price of this, mainly in the form of problem creating circumstances. These are according to her :

1) The exaggerated opinions he may get of his own importance in group life, by the fact that he has been protected and has been the centre of attention in the small social group of home;

2) Undue pressure, brought on him to succeed may have adverse effects;

3) Emotional problems, which are intensified, are created by the small family situations;

4) In cases of family crisis, it will have a greater impact on children as there are fewer members of the family to share the problem.

But Bossard and Sangner (1956) have upheld the view that small families are more favourable for children's

development, since small families are characterised by planning in terms of size, spacing of children, and child-rearing methods. Parenthood is intensive rather than extensive, and thereby putting emphasis on each child's individual development. They further express that small families can be controlled by democratic methods with cooperation between parents and children as the number of interpersonal processes are few. However, they also point out the unfavourable situation of small families by suggesting that the small family is under stress to achieve and thereby it puts an additional pressure on the child since the number of contacts within the family group is limited and there are likely to be many tensions and resentments.

So it shows that the contrast in family systems indicates certain different influences on children, growing up within them. According to Jersild and Tasch (1961) in the large family the emphasis is upon the group and not the individuals. This causes both deprivation and security. The deprivation is in terms of thinned relationship with parents and lack of opportunity to develop individual potentials. The group cohesion produces security which is interpreted as coming from people and not from material things. In the small family, the emphasis is upon developing the full potentials of the individuals.

The empirical studies reveal that the large size family has been found to be different in almost every way in its pattern of living from the small family and as a result it produces an entirely different type of home climate and has an entirely different effect on the individual members, specifically on the social and psychological development of children.

These studies on parent-child relationship in large and small size families reflect personality development of child. In respect to the present population we have already explained how family size is important in socialization and child-rearing processes. The earlier work on this aspect as mentioned above, only strengthen the present findings.

The demographic findings suggest that hardly any difference exists among these three religious groups in the Khasi. With this consideration in mind we have pooled all data together irrespective of religious affiliation in order to study the socialization of children and child rearing practices among the Khasi over a period of time.

The main theme of this research was to study, continuity and change in parental attitudes in the socialization of children and parent-child relation from the perspective of generation in various family situations. The respondents have been classified into four generations in terms of age. It may also be noted here that the time span

for the fourth generation is not sufficient enough to take into consideration all aspects, as such only a few relevant aspects has been analysed of the present data. In the chapter on Materials and Method (Chapter-II), we have clearly stated how the generations have been classified in view of the fact that in any human population the generations are bound to be over lapping. To understand clearly how over the time socialization processes and child-rearing practices have undergone changes.

The first part of this study attempted to explore the impact and interests of the parents in their children's school education. This aspect of the study has been attempted with a view, that initially the family was the most influential, but development and change have brought a shift in the nature of child training. The emergence of formal system of education has taken up many of the above mentioned functions. Moreover, sending children to school has become a social and economic compulsion making parents depend on these institutions to educate their children. Hence a society like the present one is undergoing some rapid transformation. Such transformations mean that there has been a shift from family to formal institution to considerable extent for the purpose of socialization of children. Thus viewing education as an important process of socialization and parents as the main socializing agents,

this aspect of the study has examined how keen and active interest do parents take in formal education of their children. The other factor that has been taken into consideration, is that, though it is assumed that parents of recent generations largely depend on educational institution to impart education to their children, to what extent parents are responsible to take interest in education as per the parents own desire and ambition.

The investigation has been made on the interest of the parents based on different aspects viz. how much of an active interest do the parents show towards school and its importance; methods adopted by the parents in developing effective study habits in their children; interest of parents in their children's academic progress and towards their activities in school; dropping out of school and studies; parental aspirations about their son's/daughter's future accomplishment in life; reading interest of the children and adolescent apart from text books as viewed by the parents.

Children's regularity/irregularity in attending school and frequency of children's irregularity : The present study reveals that as generation advances, percentage of children's regularity in attending school appears to have increased from 63 per cent in the earliest generation to 92 per cent among children of the present

generation. Sex-wise comparison reveals that though differences are not very wide nevertheless, irregularity in attending school is found to be consistently higher among boys than girls in all the three generations.

Frequencies of irregularity of children in attending school shows that a negligible percentage of children among the present generation are irregular 'occasionally' and 'seldom' while among the first and second generation we find more than 30 per cent children being absent 'quite often'.

The break-up of the attitudes of parents towards children's irregularity in attending school, shows that negative parental attitude of not taking any action towards children's irregularity is found to be totally absent in the third generation. Cent per cent parents apply pressure when children are irregular by adopting the methods suggested to parents viz. spanking, persuading by giving incentives, insisting either by threatening or by giving reasons. In comparison by and large majority of parents among the earlier generations adopted negative attitude, of not taking any action towards children's irregularity.

Secondly parental attitude towards school and its importance has been studied in terms of children's and adolescents habit of studying on the basis of points such as the extent to which children regularly (every day) devote a few hours at home, in their studies to keep up to their

study level at school, to do their home assignments given by the teacher and to revise what is being taught at school.

The study as viewed by parents showed that among the children of the third generation, majority (80 per cent) on the whole have a favourable attitude towards school which is demonstrated by their regularly devoting some amount of time at home to their studies as compared to the negligible percentages in the first and second generations.

The next question then, that needed to be studied and analysed in this regard were the various kinds of pressures, that were being applied to children to see that they regularly dedicate a few hours at home to their studies, and the reasons and causes suggested to parents, that hindered regular study habits.

In earlier generations children's regular study habits were mainly due to prevailing situations and attitudes of the parents such as inability of the parents to help their children with their study or due to the fact that the parents were hard pressed with time the children used to pick up irregular study habit. As the generation advances, it has become very much clear that in most cases the parents pay much more attention towards their children's regular study habit though in some cases it is only children's apathy towards education that brings irregular study habit in them. Further sex-wise analysis reveals that

higher percentage of boys have to be 'forced', and 'insisted strictly' in developing regular study habits than that of girls. Thus it is seen that among the present generation, conditions favourable for children to concentrate in their studies are provided at home.

As regards the extent of interest parents have in the education of their children and their attitudes towards children's academic performance has been studied by the type of action parents take when children do not fair well in school or fail in examination.

The present study reveals that in the third generation, disciplinary action adopted by parents consist of more than 80 per cent (75 per cent 'regularly' and 14 per cent 'at times'). The comparative study brings forth one single trend is that, a very small percentage of parents in the third generation ignore their children 'at times' viz. 13 per cent boys and 18 per cent girls as compared to 80 per cent and 44 per cent children being ignored in the first and second generation.

Secondly, study of the responses of parents for each of the type of method adopted, show that as generation advances, higher percentage (31 per cent) of parents are adopting the method of 'scolding followed by advising children' and a slightly lower percentage (25 per cent) adopting the method of constantly 'nagging and rebuking'

viz. 13 per cent daughter and 17 per cent sons. Another remarkable factor worth observing is that 'ridiculing' children, which has not been of much significance in the earlier generations has been adopted by parents of more than 20 per cent children in the third generation. However, the outstanding fact which emerges is that the parents interest towards their children's schooling has increased remarkably in the present generation.

Hence the study on the whole reveals that as generation advances attitudes of parents towards school and its importance for imparting education to children has certainly changed. It has become more positive. This is further supported by the fact that conditions favourable for children to concentrate in their studies are provided by majority of parents in the present generation.

The next aspect of parents interest in child's education has been studied and analysed by the methods adopted by parents in developing effective study habits. This aspect has been studied from three different angles viz. 1) Assisting children in their studies, 2) Making children and adolescent study, 3) Reasons for assisting and not assisting children in their studies.

The frequency of not assisting children in their studies by their parents is almost same in all generations. But the point to be noted is that as the generation advances

it is seen that children are getting more and more help from 'tutors' which means parents have become much more interested in the studies of their children.

Further reasons for not assisting the children are mainly found to be 1) Parents are not educated enough, 2) Parents are hard pressed with time. But as generation advances, it is found that the latter is much more pertinent than the former. However, inspite of the fact that parents though unable to personally assist children in their studies regularly, for one or the other reason, nevertheless parental interest in their children's education gains support from the fact that parents try to provide tutors for their children and send children for private coaching classes. Hence parental desire for their children's educational achievement is a much remarkable change among the Khasi in the socialization processes of the children particularly in the later generations.

Thus the study on the extent of parental interest towards school and its importance brings out the fact that though a strong desire for the educational success of one's children appears to be the hall mark among the majority of parents of the present generation, nevertheless there appears to be telling differences in the degree of parental ambition, even among parents of the present generation, such differences are partly a question of attitude. Thus, it can

be seen that over the generations, in several ways the role of parents in the educating function of their children are fast gaining differences in attitudes. Several factors could be responsible for such differences in parental attitudes which may influence the child's attitudes towards school and the interest he has in different aspects of school life and such differences in attitudes could be explained in the light of the following observations.

Stendles (1951) in his study on social class differences in parental attitude towards school, observed that social pressure from one's parents is a strong force which creates interest in the child. According to him what his parents think of school and its importance in his life will largely determine the degree of interest the child has.

Chickermane (1976) says that parental attitude towards school, which influences so markedly the child's attitude and degree of interest, vary according to the educational level of parents. He found that generally parental encouragement is positively related to the educational plans of high school students and is considered the critical factor in the child's performance. High educational level of parents is related to certain socialization practices such as providing intellectual activities and pressurising the children into achieving. His study found out that children and adolescents of better

educated parents are more oriented towards a good performance in school education. The value placed on work, the development of effective study habits, the preference for mental work to physical work and preferences for professional occupations, have all been found to ^{be} related to parents education.

Campbell (1982) in her study "Academic Achievement of the Adolescents", has found out that educated parents are better able to understand the ability of their children and can guide them to proceed in the right path. The educated parents with sound economic background can keep themselves free to supervise their children's' studies and ^{can} create an atmosphere at home which is conducive to the study habits of their children. These situations accompanied by parental pressure for achievement have led children to work hard to get a good grade in their examinations.

Flanagan and Curry (1972) in their study of 'family size and educational level of parents' found out that though the parents from all the educational level showed general tendency of deep interest in educating their children, a higher percentage of better educated parents showed a constructive attitude towards their children's education and they presented a situation at home that is conducive to the study habits of their children. Their study also indicated a favourable atmosphere in small size families. Smaller the

size of the family, higher was the percentage of parents who have developed a healthy and friendly relationship with their children, thus contributing to their personality development. Their study led them to assume that children and the adolescents coming from small families with educated parents are in a more favourable situation than those who have a background of large families with illiterate or low educated parents for achieving good grades in their academic pursuits.

All these studies show that it is parental attitude as well as the size of the family which is mainly responsible for promoting interest in children in their study habits. In the present research, we have seen that this is exactly the situation with the Khasi. As generation advances it is seen that among the Khasi the parents are not only trying to keep their family size small, but also paying more and more attention towards the education of their children.

How much of active interest do the parents take in their children's academic progress and secondly to what extent do parents keep tab of their children's activities in school. Analysis reveals that though cent per cent of the parents whose children in the present generation are attending school, responded by saying that they keep themselves informed of their children's progress in school,

but further analysis as to the media through which parents' make themselves aware, revealed that less than 50 per cent parents in the third generation, ^(Present generation) keep themselves informed of their children's' progress by 'personally attending to their studies regularly', while the rest of the parents in the present generation either rely on their children's 'regular or periodical school reports' and by 'depending upon and discussing and asking their children' for the information of their progress in school. Another discouraging factor is that the percentage of those parents who contact teachers is very low even among parents of the present generation. They say they contact teachers and school only if there is any necessity or if and when the occasion arises - this may be only when the child fails or does not fail well in examination or when called for by the authorities. Thus by and large majority of parents on the whole, in the third generation (i.e. the present generation), rely on their children for the information of their progress in school.

A further probe into the means adopted by parents to keep themselves informed of their children's other activities, apart from their academic progress in school, had been studied in terms of the extent of parents awareness and reaction towards their children's' punishment, for not keeping up to their level of studies, slackness on part of

the children and any other misdoings which could occur once in a while to any school going children.

Analysis on this aspect too was rather discouraging, as responses of mothers reveals that less than one third parents only, in the present generation 'Question children daily about their activities at school particularly when children are unusually late from school'. Further analysis reveals that higher percentage of parents among the present generation rely on being informed either 'when called for by the authorities' or 'when one or the other of the siblings happen to report to parents', if and when children were punished at school for misbehaviour or for any other misdoings.

When asked on their preferences of children's punishment, majority of mothers of the present generation, said they take into consideration punishment of their children by responding in the positive to either one of the four preferences suggested - to correct the child, perform better in school, instill obedience and spare the rod and spoil the child. However, it is also of much significance to note that difference in attitude has been observed amongst a small percentage of mothers in the third and fourth generations, who responded by saying that they do not take into consideration and do not prefer of children being punished. These mothers responded by suggesting that

children should be treated with more understanding, punishment tends to make a child more rebellious, and far from helping the child in his/her studies it could discourage the child instead. Hence there appears to be an indication among mothers of the present generation, realizing the importance of psychological approach in dealing with children rather than resorting to punishment alone as compared to the earlier generations. Finally, a comparative study on these two aspects reveals that significant percentage of parents of the first and second generation under study have abstained from responding. It may be inferred that parents of the earlier generations, having little or no ambition towards school and studies did not participate or take an active interest towards their children's activities and progress in school. Further, it is generally understood, that in earlier times, the primary function of the school was to instruct children and the school life was co-extensive with academic pursuits, while the above studied aspects can be regarded as a by-product of the regular school activity of recent times. Hence, such activities has become a necessity for the development of such qualities as physical, social, civic and moral. These qualities have a great place in the children's and adolescents' adjustment to the life around and ahead of him and hence the extent of importance of parental interest in

such activities and academic progress of their children and adolescent needed to be studied. Gillispied and Young (1969) are of the opinion that the parents interest in their children's activities and performances in schools are essential for the development of proper attitudes, habits and the proper conduct of their children.

Murray (1966) is of the view that neither the parents nor the teachers can singly succeed in their efforts to help children and adolescent students attain their developmental goals. However, he states that through regular school visits by the parents and through parent-teacher associations and conferences, parents and teachers may, become more understanding of children's problems in school education. He is also of the view that apart from discussing the children's' progress, such programmes may enrich the parents' own lives.

Havinghurst (1953), in his study found out that educated parents are capable of being aware of their child's progress in the school through their reports and by contacting the teacher often. His study concludes, that when children and adolescents are aware that their parents are taking interest in their education, children also would take interest in their school education. In view of the above studies made by Gillispied and Young (1969), Murray (1966), and Havinghurst (1953), it is understood that parental

participation in their children's day-to-day school habits and co-operation with school authorities is very much needed for development of attitude, habits and the proper conduct of their children. In the present study, it is observed that the interest of parents towards education of the children has certainly considerably increased but what is lacking among the parents in the Khasi society is that they have not yet become conscious about their participation in children's day-to-day school activities and progress. So it shows that in this study the ideal situation has not yet arrived.

The attitude and reaction towards children dropping out of school and studies as viewed by parents has been studied in terms of reaction of parents to children dropping out of school; reasons explaining reaction of parents; and action taken by parents in such situation.

The analysis reveals that on the whole, when compared from the earliest to the present generation percentage of children dropping out of school appears to be decreasing. But it can also be discerned that there is a progressive rise in the drop-out rates among children of the third generation in the secondary and higher level. Sex-wise comparison reveals that drop-out rate among boys is consistently higher in all the three generations.

The parental reactions towards their children who have dropped out from the school are of two types 1) parents take serious view and become extremely unhappy. Majority of the parents of the present generation fall in this category. 2) Parents are indifferent towards such happening. However, it is noted that as generation progresses such indifferences on the part of the parents is slowly decreasing and parents are taking an active interest in their children's education. When parents become unhappy about the children dropping out of school they either try to pursue the children to continue with their studies by giving them advices and explaining the benefit of education or they take their children to task by giving them some kind of physical punishment. Such actions being taken is by and large discernible among parents of the later generations.

It has been reported by selected Educational Statistics for 1986-87, in Meghalaya the drop-out rate among the student increases considerably from lower class to higher classes. From this point of view it is found among the Khasi students the drop-out rates are not remarkably different. Since the Khasi is the major population of this State such drop-out rates are quite expected among them. As we do not have year-wise data on drop-out rates, it will be very difficult for us to draw any inference from the present figures, excepting the fact that drop-out rate in the

present generation has come down remarkably among the Khasi, particularly among the children of the educated and economically better off parents. In view of the facts stated above, the present findings are by and large comparable and finds support in the following studies.

According to Moses (1952), of all the driving forces of change in the present day, the strongest are those that show up in economic forms, and those that bear upon the amount ^{of money} that is made available for the education of the youth. The essential needs of a sound education are the same in every society. But the particular form that the education takes, the number of pupils who receive it, the number and nature of schools they attend and the length of time they stay there - all these things are determined by the parental attitude towards school, which influences so markedly the child's attitude and degree of interest, vary accordingly to the education level and economic status of the parents who have schooling children.

Hyman (1956), in his study found out that in financially handicapped families, the older child has often to sacrifice his education to help and support the family or to send younger brothers and sisters to school and college. With great affluence in the family there is at least less economic compulsion on children to drop out of school. In a poor family the adolescent though aspiring for higher

education may have to drop out earlier to earn and contribute to the economic needs of the family which may cause frustration within him. He concludes that the socio-economic status of the adolescents family will influence not only what interests are possible for him to develop but also what shape these interests will take.

Phearman (1949), in his study discusses that there is a direct relationship between the education of the parents and the probability of their children's interest for higher studies. Thus the forces that determine the high school students' interest in education come primarily from his parents.

Campbell (1952), in his study found out that the effects of family size, have an impact on the academic achievement of the children and adolescents. If the family income is limited, the family with fewer children can obviously better afford to feed, clothe and educate them. Limited resources can be more effectively channelized. But if the income level is even less than the subsistence level, the parents may not be able to see to the essential needs of the children even though they have few children. They feel that there is every possibility of their poor performance in their academic pursuits.

According to Stendles (1956), larger the family higher will be the degree of economizing of the family

resources which may create a parent-child conflict. Parents with several children must spread their resources and one must play favourites with their children and thus discriminate among their own children. They, with limited income, are unable to provide each child with best education or with financial assistance. The unfortunate disfavoured child may not take interest in education even at the cost of his own sacrifice. There is every probability of him developing prejudice against parents as well as the favourite sibling of the parents. This may finally not only hinder his academic achievement but also have a set back on the personality development.

Though the above mentioned studies have been carried out in patrilineal situations, the present study very much lends support to those findings.

The expectations of parents of different generations, about the future of their sons and daughters, as viewed by the parents has been studied in terms of four different accomplishments, as suggested to them - 1) be outstanding in chosen life and reach a high social status, 2) do what gives him/her most satisfaction, 3) be a respected and useful citizen of the community, 4) a financially secure life.

The study on the goals of education, revealed that as generation advances higher percentage of parents among

the later generations aspire more of a economically sound life for their children, followed by parents aspiration for the rise in the 'social status of their children by being outstanding in chose life', appears to be gradually increasing particularly among the third and fourth generations, whereas higher percentage of parents among the earlier generations wish a 'respected social type of life' for their children. However, this discrepancy in parental attitude among parents of the earlier and later generations could be attributed to the reason of their placement in society at large.

Parents today have realised the need of educating their children for their future career which suits this industrially developing country. Schools and colleges have multiplied and the urban parents are in touch with the educational system which can give their children necessary qualifications for their aspired career. However, the new economic order that has evolved has not been able to supply enough jobs for the educated youth. Thus it can be inferred that one of the major problems faced by the youth and their parents is the fear of their future unemployment. This could result in extreme pressure being put on children to obtain good educational degrees which are thought of as gateways to jobs. So this could be the reason as to why majority of parents among the present generation, consider

that the goal of education is to provide economic security. Further, it is generally understood, that every parent today, holds high aspirations for the rise in the social status of their children, which they can achieve only through education. This pressure coupled with that of the growing ambition of the parents to raise the standard of living of the family may make them view the goal of education is to achieve higher status in society. Whereas, differences in parental attitude among parents of earlier generations could be attributed to the fact, the view that culture of a person and his popularity of being a respected and useful citizen as they observe in the community may have strengthened majority of the parents views of the earlier generations on the goals of education.

A comparative analysis of the views of parents on different goals of education, further reveals that parents wanting children to have a financially secure life is found to be higher for sons than for daughters. It also revealed that higher percentage of parents for daughters than for sons expressed that the primary purpose for education, should be to develop attitude and values to make them aware of their obligations and responsibilities as members of the community. It is, therefore, quite reasonable to assume that higher percentage of parents among the present generation wanting sons than daughters to have a financially

secure life, could be that when sons get married and go to their wives homes, the responsibility of parents ceases; but parents today wants their sons to be educated persons capable of earning and establishing their status in their respective home.

Data on aspiration of parents for future accomplishments and prosperity of their sons and daughters, from any other matrilineal society are lacking. So it is not possible to find out the kind of changes which other matrilineal societies are undergoing in this respect, as such we cannot make any comparative statement. However, it may be pointed out that some researchers like Austia (1980, 81, 83), Bachman and Johnstone (1979), 1981), Hollingshead (1949), Singh and Mitra (1972), Mahale (1977), Davis (1949), Campbell (1952), Moses (1956), Bossard (1953), Ogburn and Nimkoff (1940) and others have worked on such topic in some patrilineal societies which are not comparable with the situation existing in the matrilineal societies like the Khasi etc.

The next dimension on which the parent-child relationship has been studied is the mode of parental control and discipline and the role of children in the household duties and activities, in terms of generational change and continuity.

Every family requires certain conduct for its

members, viz. developing work habits through household duties, setting limits to their freedom and enforcing the conduct by giving punishment or by extending rewards. The aspirations which parents hold for their children apparently affect the ways in which parents would deal with their children, the various methods of control and discipline adopted by parents to get the desired result. So the study on the various methods that is being adopted by parents, in different situations, over a period of time has been found necessary to study, with a view to understanding the parent-child relationship. The investigation of children's participation and attitude of parents has been based on four different aspects - Role of the children and adolescent in household duties and activities and the attitude of the parents towards their children's participation; age, reason and method adopted by parents for inculcating and inducting responsibility training in children; the method and mode of disciplining and control in the family; and finally the methods adopted by the parents for rewarding children.

The study on the role of children in household duties and attitude of parents towards their children's participation has been studied in terms of age from when children assist their parents and reaction of parents when children do not comply by parents' request; types of household tasks allotted and participation of their

adolescent children; extent of adolescent children's participation and entrusting adolescent children with household duties and domestic chores; attitude of children in complying by these tasks and attitude and reaction of parents towards household responsibilities and task performed by their adolescent children.

Study on the age from when children assist parents with light chores and errands reveals that irrespective of generation, by and large higher percentage of parents ask children to assist with light chores and errands from the age of eight onwards. However, it has also been observed that as generation advances, more and more children at this age are being asked by parents to assist with light chores and errands from a comparatively later age when compared from the earliest to the present generation.

Further, the study on the reaction of parents when children at this early age do not comply and respond to the call of their parents, reveals that higher percentage of parents among the later generations 'abuse and curse' the child for not responding/complying, as compared to the earliest generation. But it is also of much significance to note that highest percentage of parents among the present generation are of the opinion that 'child at this stage do not understand the meaning of punishment so there is no point in punishing'. Whereas such responses among the

earliest generation is found to be totally absent. Thus it can be inferred that children of the earlier generations were expected to help parents with their extensive duties and task at a much earlier age, whereas responsibility requirements in early years among the later generations are moderate and probably parents expect less from their young children.

Secondly, the study on the role and extent of adolescent children's participation in various household duties viz. (outdoor and indoor activities and the day to day household marketing) assigned to the children by the parents, parental attitude and interest entrusting their adolescent children with household responsibility and extent of adolescent children's ^{comp}lying as viewed by parents, reveals that consistently higher percentage of daughters than sons in all the generations shoulder the responsibility of domestic chores and household work. The study also reveals that by and large, majority of parents even in the third generation do entrust adolescent children with household chores and tasks. However, a comparative study reveals that adolescent children entrusted with household tasks to 'some' and 'little' extent appears to be increasing as generation advances.

Further a sex-wise comparative study reveals that difference between adolescent sons and daughters in

participating with household activities, is significantly wide particularly ^{as} in the present generation, compared to the negligible differences in percentage among the earlier generations between adolescent sons and daughters. It has also been observed that adolescent sons among the present generation appears to have developed a weaker sense of responsibility in shouldering household duties though responsibility is emphasized on both adolescent sons and daughters. It could also be a fact that the parents may entrust the duties to only those children who are happy to undertake. This fact gains further support from the study on "the attitude of adolescent children complying with the household tasks (Table 5.9) and "attitude and reaction of parents towards their adolescent children's household responsibilities and tasks (Table 5.9). Finally the figures throughout the study on household duties and activities show a good percentage of "no response" group for adolescent sons in the present generation. Hence, it could be inferred that, this group of parents may have abstained from responding as their adolescent sons may not be happy to cooperate in attending to the day-to-day routine of household duties and thereby parents not wanting to reveal their son's unwillingness in helping out.

No comparable data from any matrilineal society are available. So it is difficult for us to make any definite

inference from the present findings. However, it may be pointed out that many researchers like Desai (1964) and others have worked on such topic in the patrilineal societies. It is quite well-known that in patrilineal societies the boys generally get little favourable treatment than the girls by their parents. But in a society like the Khasi's though the situation is apparently reverse, it may be mentioned that in such society till the age of adolescence both boys and girls by and large are treated equally, at least as found in the present generation. It may further be pointed out that even in the Khasi society the boys are less obedient than the girls particularly when they reach the age of adolescence.

During the course of the present study we have tried to find out how the parental attitude towards inculcating responsibility and training to their children have undergone changes over the generation (Section-II of Chapter-V).

The present study shows that irrespective of generation, a considerable number of parents inculcate responsibility and training to their children when the children are comparatively young. It is true that a higher percentage (42 per cent) of the parents in the present generation (in this particular issue, the third generation has been considered as the present generation) express the view that when the children reach the age of reason they

should be taught to assume responsibility and training. It is also noted that even in those families who are economically well off and can afford to hire helping hands for their household work, the children in such families are also assigned household tasks and responsibilities. It may be noted that so far assignment of household task and responsibilities are concerned no remarkable difference is noticed from one generation to another and also from one economic condition to another.

In spite of the similarities, as mentioned, over the generations, towards inculcating training and responsibility in children, significant changes that has been taking place over generations has been noticed in parental attitude. In the earliest generation, it is seen that almost equal number of parents were of the opinion that their children should be good citizens meaning they should be respected and responsible members of society, and another view was that children should not only be respected and responsible members of society but also they should be economically well placed in future. In the next generation, i.e. in the second generation a remarkable change in attitude of the parents has been noticed. It is found that in little over 20 per cent of the parent economic security of the children was the first and foremost consideration and along with this majority still used to think that their children should be

good citizens. When we come to the third generation this trend becomes much more glaring. Majority of the parents are of the opinion that their first and foremost consideration is to see their children should be economically secured in future. It is also true that still a good number of parents still consider that children should be good citizen but also be economically secured in future. The point to be noted here is that there is not a single parent in this generation (third generation) who only consider that their children should be good citizen and do not give stress or consideration on economic security of their children in future. So from the above discussion, it is quite understandable that how the attitudes of the parents towards their children have been undergoing remarkable changes over the generations. Unfortunately, we do not have sufficient data on fourth generation at present, but we may suggest that this is a very important area of study which should be taken up in future to evaluate the changes that have been taking place in the parental attitude in the Khasi society.

In this connection, one can recall the findings of Caplow et al. (1982), Klein (1965) that the old value of seeing children as responsible and good members of the society is gradually being replaced by the value in which parents wish to see that their children should be

economically well placed in future. Though all these researches have been carried out in patrilineal societies unlike the present society of the Khasi, it may be stressed here that the same trend in change of old values is very much perceptible even in the matrilineal societies.

The next dimension on which the parent-child relationship has been studied is the mode of parental control and discipline. The study on the various method of punishing and rewarding children in different situation by the parents with a view to understanding the parent-child relationship, has been studied in terms of the following : Discipline and controlling authority at home; reaction of parents against aggressional behaviour of the children and adolescent; when children are disobedient; for fighting with peers and siblings; when other complain; and the purpose for punishing children.

Among the variables in the parent-child relationship that assume importance are those relating to the degree to which the child is accepted and made to feel secure in his family relationships. This relationship between the two parents may occupy different places in the home situation. The study reveals that irrespective of generation, in majority of families mother controlling families is at a higher level. However, father controlling and disciplining children, appears to be increasing when compared from the

earliest to the present generation. Further, a definite tendency of both parents controlling and disciplining children is slowly coming into existence in the present generation.

It has been reported by many researchers (Nye 1952; Goldberg 1958) in patriarchal societies, in which mothers normally stay at home and the fathers are the bread earners, the mothers play the major role in disciplining and controlling their children and the fathers have more remote services in controlling and disciplining the children. As already pointed out in the matrilineal Khasi society the mothers even today play the major role in disciplining and controlling the children, but in the present generation the father's importance in such matters is becoming perceptible. So at present, both the mother and father have very distinctive role in disciplining their children, even though mothers enjoy little greater responsibility.

Children's aggressive behaviour has been studied in terms of younger children's aggression when at times they give vent to their resentment and anger against some action of their parents and elders, secondly aggression directed at adults by adolescent children.

By and large the study reveals that irrespective of generation, majority of parents discourage outbreaks of anger and aggressive behaviour even among children in their

childhood 'which is at once stopped sternly', if there is any positive tendency in this direction - i.e. if repeated often. It is further seen that 29 per cent of the parents in the present generation tend to be moderate in dealing with aggressive behaviour of young children - 'to some extent, by trying to reason with the angry child and teach him to control their feelings as far as possible'. It is followed by a small percentage (23 per cent) of the parents in the present generation who responded by saying that 'to some extent such behaviour may be ignored if the child does not repeat it often'. Such responses expressed by the parents of the earlier generations appear to be by and large absent.

Similarly, aggressive behaviour or display of anger and resentment against elders by adolescent children is disapproved. This is expressed by majority of parents irrespective of generation, who stated 'they teach children not to argue and speak back whatever may be the cause of anger or situations. Further, the study reveals that 20 per cent in all generations consider aggression directed at adults by adolescence as a grave offence'. However, it is also of much interest to note that more than 28 per cent parents in the present generation have stated that 'to a little extent severity with which such behaviour is punished depends on the status of the person against whom the

aggression is directed'. It can thus be inferred that by and large irrespective of generation parents in general do not favour aggressive behaviour of any kind by children and adolescents. Therefore, it may be inferred that the tendency of strongly discouraging aggression among children and adolescents is a highly functional socialization practice. Deliberate aggressive behaviour is prevented by bringing strong pressure on the children, thus all these attitudes are impressed on children and adolescent and they are taught to dread and remain aloof so that by the time children grow in age, these attitudes are so fixed that they begin to consider aggression of any kind very bad. Nevertheless, flexibility in parental attitude being moderate towards their children and adolescents aggressive behaviour is slowly gaining ground in the present generation.

Landis in his study "Adolescence and Youth : The Process of Maturing" (1952:151), stated that the matter of rendering respect and obedience is dependent on circumstances, especially as the child approaches the period of adolescence and youth, society recognizes his obligations to obedience only to the extent parent is worthy of obedience and exercises a reasonable authority. He further states that in some early societies the penalty for disobedience to parents was death. In the modern family institution not only has severe penalty for disobedience

disappeared, but even the parents' right to demand unquestioned obedience is challenged by the youth whose bent is towards a democratic pattern in the family system.

The study on the mode of parental control and discipline adopted by parents when children are disobedient, when children fight with peers and siblings and when others complain, the study on the whole brings forth one common pattern, ^{that} _< irrespective of generation, parents deal severely with children's disobedience by resorting to beating and spanking. It may thus be assumed that parents having to discipline a large number of children may adopt the method of punishing children by either spanking or beating, so that when one child receives such punishment, the other children take care not to be disobedient. This could be one of the method of disciplining the whole group. The study further reveals that in the other two circumstances, viz. 1) non-compliance by household duties and tasks' and does things 'you disapprove of' and 2) 'fighting with others' and 'when other complain', higher percentage of parents in the later generations have adopted the method of 'vehemently scolding by ridiculing', 'abusing' and by severely threatening children to instill control and obedience in children. This may be due to the fact that repeated scolding and beating make children stubborn and also ignore, thereby children and adolescents do not heed to the scolding

and beating of parents. This may be one of the reasons why higher percentage of parents among the later generations as compared to the earliest generations has adopted the method of punishing children by abusing and ridiculing and by severe threats to instill fear. This fact gains further support and insight from the study on 'purpose for punishing children'.

In the present generation, preference for punishing children followed by advising, is being adopted by near about one-third of the parents under study in all the three different circumstances described above. Thus it can be inferred that irrespective of generation by and large though families are still traditional in their outlook, but nevertheless there is an indication of families adopting the method of advising their children by giving reasons. This may be attributed to the fact that parents may not spank the child as the child thus punished may feel that injustice has been done to him. He may create more problems than yield to the punishment. Hence this may be the reason that advising children by giving proper reasons and suggest ways to improve is being adopted by a small percentage of parents in the present generation. It, therefore, appears that among the present generation, urban parents are realizing the importance of democratic pattern in ^{the} socialization process of their children.

If the parents punish their children when they are wrong, they would also reward them when they show good behaviour and perform well in the examination. Thus the last aspect on parental control and discipline studied, are the various methods adopted by parents for rewarding children. The study reveals that, irrespective of generation 'praising' is the much practised method of rewarding children by most of the parents in situation where children are obedient, when they behave well and when they pass in their examinations. Further a break-up of the study, in terms of generation reveals that the simplest and yet most effective reward being recognised in the form of praise being adopted by majority of parents among the earlier generations for rewarding their children for being obedient and for behaving well. Whereas apart from 'praising', other modes of rewarding children by 'satisfying children's wants' and 'celebrating children's success' is being adopted by nearly 50 per cent in the present generation. Nevertheless, attitude of parents even in the present generation, including large size families, whereby higher percentage of parents recognize children's success in the form of praise and by not ignoring, may influence the other children of the family to follow the footsteps of the rewarded child. In this way, the parents who have more children may discipline the whole family.

Mahale (1988) in her study have pointed out that though the common method of disciplining children in most household in India is to spank the child when it misbehaves, many more methods are in use, some proving to be more effective than others. Some of the disciplinary methods that are common in a normal home are corporal punishment, advising the child by giving reasons, scolding, and ignoring the child by withdrawing affection.

Sagner (1952) in his research reported that the mothers of large size family are usually more concerned with the younger children than with the adolescents. The immature younger children who are prove to mischievousness and quarrels need to be controlled by mothers. So they may not have enough time and energy to exercise control over elder siblings of the family. Further, he also reported that when there are few children the mothers and fathers have a tendency of protecting the children even though the children grow into adolescence and are capable of looking after themselves. In large families as they grow they try to be independent. The birth of the younger siblings give them early maturity as thus they overgrow their age, leading to less of parental control.

According to Garrett and Carlson (1970), in large families the siblings bickering and quarreling are more than in small families because of the increase in the

interactional processes. The parents while dealing repeatedly with the quarrels of the children may unconsciously adopt the harsh method of corporal punishment or withdraw completely by ignoring the situation.

Hence the size of the family plays a definite role in the disciplinary actions of the parents towards their children. It may thus be inferred that size of the family has a relevant relation to the method of disciplining children by parents. It could be a fact that parents of different sized families have to deal with different types of indisciplinary behaviour of their children which needs appropriate action on the part of the parents - this can best be understood in the light of discussion by Carlson and Garrett (1970), - 'the parents with more number of children, when controlling and disciplining their children have to be impartial and use the same yardstick to impose punishment without any discrimination. They are of the opinion that if there is any discrimination though not intentionally, it may lead to the displeasure of the child concerned, and the child may develop a hostile attitude towards the parent.

Though the above mentioned studies have been carried out in patrilineal situations, the present study very much lends support to those findings. It is seen that characteristically patrilineal societies are different from the matrilineal societies but in respect of punishment and

rewards the children thus are very much akin to each other. It may be further pointed out that in the matrilineal society like the Khasi the mother plays a major role in punishing and rewarding children.

Having analyzed the parent-child relationship on various dimensions the next area studied is the norms and practices, related to children's and adolescent interactions and recreations.

The analysis on the extent of celebration of festivals reveals that irrespective of generation festivals of religious nature are favoured by highest percentage of families followed by observing of death rituals and anniversaries.

A comparative analysis of the families reveals that as generation advances celebration of festivals of social nature particularly of birthdays and marriage anniversaries followed by community festivals appears to be favoured by a higher percentage of families in the present generation. It shows that functions, pertaining to religion, are favoured by all in the Khasi society irrespective of generations, whereas social types of function such as, celebrations of birthday, wedding anniversaries, etc. which are concepts of western culture, appear to be totally absent in the earlier generations, have by and large been adopted by the families in the present generation to a considerable extent.

The participation of children and adolescents in the social activities of the family along with their parents and the parents responsibility to create situations for such get together and activities of the family develop into a healthy parent-child relationship.

The study on the extent of children and adolescents participation in the social activities of the family reveals that as generation advances, families participating together in various social activities of the family appears to be gradually increasing when compared from the earliest to the present generation. It has also been observed that children (particularly adolescents) do participate though not always. A comparative study reveals that with the exception of activities such as going for and attending 'social functions' and shopping, the other social activities of the family discussed in the present study do not appear to be routine activities. It is also disappointing to note that irrespective of generation, in all types of activities nearly 50 to 60 per cent of families have not responded to the questions. This may be attributed to the fact that the families which may not programme such activities have abstained from responding. It may also be inferred that irrespective of generation social activities may not be a regular event in many families because of physical inconvenience caused by non-availability of regular

conveyance including certain other restrictions. So far all types of social activities are concerned it is observed that the sons participate in considerably lower frequency than the daughters. However, as the present study deals with parents relationships with children and adolescents, it is found that the parents like to keep the company of their children, particularly the daughters. Nevertheless, if the question was asked to children particularly the adolescents and their responses were analysed it would have given a better picture in understanding the participation of children in the social activities of the family.

Basically cultural values are related directly or indirectly to religious concepts, beliefs, forms of expression and extent of influence upon individual, group attitude and behaviour. Hence the third type of social norm of the family studied has been based on the family attending church and service as it is a form of expression of one's attitude towards the religion he follows.

So far the religious habits like attending church services, etc. are concerned, it is observed that the children of the present generation are more regular in attending such services than their counterparts in the earlier generations. The reasons for such regular habits of attending church services by the children are mostly (1) parents are trying to be closely associated with their

children, (2) Parents like to see that their children should get good moral advice from the church and (3) Parents are of the opinion that if children attend church regularly, eventually this habit will pay them to become good moral Christians. It is also found in some cases children do not attend church services regularly, and the reasons for not attending regularly are as follows : (1) difference of opinion between parents (Case No.47+48) and (2) Parents do not find time to take their children to the church regularly. However, taking the above mentioned reasons for the children not attending church service regularly together one may infer that parental indifferences towards the children and some reservations on the part of the parents are the root causes for developing irregular habits of not attending church services by the children. However, it can safely be said that in the present generation the parents are much more conscious about the well being of their children than the parents in the earlier generations. This is a remarkable change in parent-child relationship in the Khasi society particularly among the Catholic and Non-Catholic Christians.

Lynd and Lynd (1976) in their study of 'Religion and family' found out from the responses of two surveys conducted 54 years apart were uncannily similar in tone. Their study suggest that there has been a resurgence of

religion, families are more involved in religion today than were their predecessors in the 1920s. They further report that in 1924 habit was the most common motive for church attendance. Compared to the 1924 respondents, the 1978 respondents mentioned benefits to their children as most important. The observation of Lynd (1976) lends support to the present finding regarding children's regular habit of attending church services.

Parental attitude towards children's interaction and recreation has been studied in terms of restriction and permissiveness in children's interaction with friends; children's spending leisure time; and attitude and reaction of parents when children and adolescent fight and quarrel with friends and peers.

The study on parental attitude towards restriction and permissiveness in their children's interaction with friends and peers brings out the fact that among the later generations patterns of neighbourly interaction and recreation with peers and friends allowed by parents are not arbitrarily but rather selectively chosen and allowed. Further the sex-wise study reveals a wide difference between sons and daughters. Daughters interactions are more closely supervised and curtailed as compared to that of sons. This gains support, showing consistently higher percentage of sons than daughters in all the generations being allowed to

play 'to a greater extent - with all children alike of the locality' and permitted and allowed out in the neighbourhood and beyond to play and interact.

The study on the kind of activities children participate and are engaged in during their leisure time reveals that in the present generation highest percentage of responses consist of children "keeping to themselves by engaging in various individual activities." It has also been observed that among the earliest generation, children's spending of leisure time by engaging themselves in individual activities is found to be totally absent.

A comparative study reveals that apart from 'children's engagement in individual activities' being favoured by majority of children among the present generation, the responses of parents to the other activities viz. 'spend time with other family members and elders' and 'spending time by playing with friends show that children's participation in such activities too is gradually decreasing when compared from the earliest to the present generation.

Finally, the study on parental attitude and reaction when young children and adolescent fight and quarrel with peers and friends, reveals that though a child's aggression towards his playmates, especially for boys is not taken very seriously and adult interference is generally regarded as undesirable 'as long as nobody is hurt, but by and large the

population under study are generally peace-loving is obvious from the kind of behaviour training they give to their adolescent children for being non-aggressive as responded by majority of parents stating that 'they make children behave in a manner acceptable to neighbours. Nevertheless, certain amount of flexibility in parents handling adolescents children's aggression towards their friends and mates could also be discerned among a small percentage of parents in the present generation.

Parental attitude and reaction towards their children's and adolescents interaction could be better understood in the light of the following studies.

According to Bronfenbrenner (1970), many behaviour patterns learned in the family are reinforced and strengthened through interactions with peers. The power of peers as socializers varies from culture to culture and from one historical era to another. In their study they found out that contemporary American culture seems highly peer-oriented; children are strongly encouraged to interact with peers and are, therefore, inevitably influenced by them. Whereas in general European children are less likely than American children to rely on peers for opinions and advice and more likely to rely on adults.

In the present study it is seen that parents selectively allow their children to mix with their peers and

friends unlike what is found in the American societies. It may also be noted that in the earlier generations among the Khasi the parents used to allow their children very much arbitrarily to mix with their friends and peers; so it is a change which one can easily perceive in the Khasi society. However, how this alteration in parental attitude will bring about changes in the Khasi society is a matter for study in future.

Regarding the behaviour of adolescent children it is seen that in the earlier generations the adolescents could not afford to take any liberty with the parents to decide for themselves, but as generation advances the situation is changing very fast. In the present generation, the adolescents boys and girls, can afford to decide for themselves and the parents mostly do not interfere. Perhaps this is the universal trend (Kerr, 1958; Hyman, 1953; Hurlock 1955; McClelland, 1962; Moser, 1952). It shows that the present day Khasi society is no way exception to what is happening in this country and all over the world, so far independence of adolescent children are concerned.

In respect of familiarising children with social customs and practices it is seen that there is considerable flexibility on the part of the parents to teach such behaviour to their children in the present generation; whereas in the earlier generations, the parents were much

more rigid regarding such practices and used to take all trouble to let their children know and teach their children about these.

It is generally observed in other studies (Carlson and Garrett, 1970; Klein, 1955; Lynd, 1976) this trend is very much perceptible in other populations, so it may be inferred that in no way the present day Khasi population is different from other population in respect of familiarising children with standard social practices.

Among the variables in parent-child relationship that assumes important are those relating to the degree to which the child is accepted and made to feel secure in his family relationships. This affectional relationship with two parents occupy quite different places in the home situation which are determined by various factors. Even though there is a definite tendency for mothers to be preferred, irrespective of generation as observed in the present study. It further reveals that to 'some extent' the degree of attachment to father appears to be increasing gradually. Similarly children's attachment to both parents also appears to be increasing particularly in the present generation. Further analysis show that children's attachment to other members of the family (grand-parents/Auntie/Uncles etc.), apart from parents which was of

much significance in the earlier generations appears to be declining in the present generations.

Thus it may be inferred that though it is true that preference for mothers results from her fairly constant presence in the home and the major role she plays in meeting the needs of the child. But as the child reaches the age of adolescence and passes the stage of childhood dependency they may be expected to see things differently. We do not know if father keeps away from their children or the burden of providing leaves him no time for seeking his children's company. But nevertheless the gap is there. Another trend that appears to have surfaced and gradually making its presence felt seems to be a change away and shift from materialistic attachment and control (authoritarianism), towards a more companionable, co-operative families where both parents are affectionate and nurturant.

To understand how this transformation is taking place among the Khasi we have examined how the fathers spend their time with the children. It is very clearly seen that in earlier generations whenever father used to spend time they used to spend time with their children in connection with various activities mostly outside the house. But in the recent time it is seen that the fathers spend at least some time with their children at home and take interest in their day to day studies and other activities. So it shows

that gradually the father is gaining more importance in children's life particularly the adolescents, by participating with the children and taking interest in their daily activities. This is a very notable departure that is noticed in the Khasi life in the present generation and it indicates how parent-child relationship is transforming from one generation to the next.

In the present study it is consistently found that the children, irrespective of generation keep more contact with their relatives on the mother's side by frequently visiting their places. These trend is still persisting very much though, a negligible percentage of the present day children are also trying to keep regular contact with the relations on the father's side. However, it is difficult for us to accept it as a change in the Khasi way of living. Only a future study can confirm this finding and perhaps can also find out the reasons for such transformations if it really takes up in future.

Unfortunately, no similar study has so far been made in which it shows change of children's relation with relatives on the mother's side as well as those on the father's side. However, it may be made clear here that though, as mentioned earlier, it cannot be taken for granted that such change is taking place in Khasi society, yet it may be suggested that if it really happens it must be due to

the influences of patrilineal societies (which are mostly around) on the matrilineal Khasi society.

The last dimension on which the socialization of children has been studied is based on the child training methods of toilet training, breast feeding and supplementary food given to infants. However, while studying this aspect of socialization we have concentrated mainly on the respondents as such (i.e. as a mother only).

The study on breast feeding infants reveal that though the duration of breast feeding infants has decreased in the present generation, the traditional habit of breast feeding is very much prevalent in the Khasi society. So no remarkable change in respect of this habit is noticeable. It has been observed that even the present day, Khasi women have not developed any apathy against traditional breast feeding habit. So from this point of view one can safely say that the Khasi women, even today are very much particular about their infants and show no sign to do away with the traditional practice. They still take all possible care about their welfare of their infants.

In this connection one may recall Population Report (1981) in breast feeding, fertility and family planning, reported that in the last four decades, the practice of breast feeding seems to be declining in many developing countries throughout the world even though in most of them

almost all women breast feed their child initially. However, the Population Report (1981) on breast feeding further reports that in the recent past, a reversal of trend is visible in the developed part of the world. For instance, in the United States, Sweden and Australia, the practice of breast feeding is becoming more prevalent after several decades of decline especially among educated women, although length of breast feeding remains short.

In the present study we have very carefully looked into how toilet training is given to children (details about toilet-training given in Chapter-V). What emerges from this study is that the Khasi mothers even today are very conscious like their counterparts in the early generations to give proper toilet training to their children, and they start it when the child is about 18 months old. So it is seen there is no difference among the mothers of various generations in giving proper toilet^{er}-training to their children.

In this connection, one may point out what Roy Burman (1961) has observed among the Waromung belonging to one Ao Naga village. He has said that in that population toilet^{er}-training starts when the child is above the age of one unlike the population of Chitlat island in Arabian sea in which the mother starts giving toilet-training to their infant when after six months.

In the present study we have tried to find out the attitudinal changes and continuity of the parents over the generations in the socialization of children and child-rearing practices among the Khasi urban dwelling people.

The parameters considered were parental interest in the education of their children and adolescents, parental discipline and control, sociability (interaction and recreation), breast feeding, weaning and toilet training. The responses on these parameters as can be expected were varied. But by and large it becomes very clear that the Khasi society is on the throes of a classical dilemma - is concerning to retain the traditional structure of the society or over haul it. This dilemma is not only reflected between the responses of different persons (in terms of percentage), but also reflects the dilemma which undergoes within the same individual's non-consistent responses and behaviour. This dilemma is obviously co-related on one side with the new aspiration getting precedence over the traditional ones. It is not possible that such issues would get resolved easily because on one side is the issue of the ethnic identity of the community which is highly crucial for political reasons and on the other trying to gain a higher rank in the modern order of things.

However, these changes in turn are making ^{an} impact on the various aspects of the Khasi life. The case studies

aptly illustrate the general trends and certainly give an idea of the changes that have been taking place. The results certainly need to be tested and compared with the different segments of the Khasi and other matrilineal populations.