Impact of Mid-day Meals Programme on Enrolment and Retention of Girls in Primary Schools of West Garo Hills of Meghalaya

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Enrolment and Retention of Girls in Primary Schools is one of the major concern of the planners and policy makers in India. Schemes like midday meals has been launched to achieve this objective. An evaluation of such scheme is utmost important for ihe monitoring and decision making.

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CHAPTER-1

Introduction:

The goal of the universal elementary education is a part of our concern to equality and social justice. The Directive principle in Article 45 to the Indian constitution stipulates "The state shall endeavour to provide within a period of ten years from the commencement of this constitution which means Free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of fourteen years". It means the target year was upto 1960. This however, could not be achieved till date.

The education commission (1964-66) which reviewed the situation envisaged that effective universal primary education for all children for five years would be achieved by 1975-76 and for seven years by 1985-86 (A.G. Brahmuhall, 1996, NIEPA). But now in the middle of 1996, we are still facing the same problem.

The National Education Policy, 1986 gave the highest priority to free education for children till they complete 14 years of age and stressed the need for better informal educational facilities for dropouts, but the efforts has not shown the expected results.

The reasons for non-attainment of the goals are because of (1) Rapid increase in population, (2) lack of infrastructural facilities, (3) poverty of the parents (4) social taboos (5) lack of awareness and female illiteracy.

The makers of constitution of India has attached priority to girls education. Notwithstanding the shortfall in comparison to the goals, the increase in the enrolment of girls in primary and middle schools over the different plan periods can be considered impressive; but the overall education of girls however have been lagging behind.

In recognition of the importance of girls education in accelerating socio-economic development, the government of India formulated a variety of measures from time to time to promote girls education. Analysis of facilities for schooling and their utilisation in terms of enrolment and retention in schools shows that the problem is acute in gender. The research studies shows that there are marked disparities among states and within a state especially in respect of gender rural and urban. The studies has emphasised that there is imparative need for augmenting educational opportunities among regions, male female and socio- economic groups.

As a result in the present education system of India, one of the important thrust area is that of girls education. Girls in India are lagging behind in literacy, school enrolment, technical and professional education. Realising the problems of girls education and their development, the decade 1991-2000 has been declared as the decade for the girl child. The girls participation in education remains far from satisfaction at all levels. The research literatures related to problems of girls education clearly indicated the social and economic constraints. Many development programmes and incentive schemes were introduced; despite the fact, the dropout is much higher than the boys. In a poor country like ours, it is not possible to spend money without taking care of the effectiveness.

Some studies revealed difficulties in the planning and implementation of the schemes. They relate to aspects such as absence of specific guidelines from the centre; inadequate preparation while implementing the schemes, limited coverage; lack of mobilisation of funds from other source; delay in release of funds and lack of awareness of the utility of the schemes in the region. Therefore one can not say that the impact of the schemes on girls enrolment is not positive, since there is no proper planning of these schemes, the success is not clearly visable. Secondly the programmes in operation for a short period/duration would not have any substantial or lasting impact.

Special programmes for promotion of girls education were initiated as early as 1957-58 with a plan provision of Rs. 355 lakhs during the second five year plan. The

main schemes initiated were; provision of attendance scholarships for girls students, the appointment of school mothers, construction of quarters for women teachers and payment of stipends for the teacher training courses. At the end of the VIII plan the expenditure on different programmes for girls education has increased enormously. In comparison to the growth of expenditure and targets to be achieved, there is a large gap between the two.

By and large, the programmes for accelerating girls education of which some of these schemes has a mixed success. The findings of the some studies (Pig. Commission 1980) revealed encouraging results in respect of increase in enrolment of girls.

The financial inputs in the from of incentive scheme in girls education can not be considered large considering the magnitude of the problems and the total amount spent on enrolment and retention of primary education of girls. However in order to put the limited money in a right channel an explorative studies on the impact of each scheme is utmost important. These kinds of studies can help the policy makers and planner. Therefore the present study has been taken up. The study is intended to be diagnostic and evaluative in character and try to assess directly the impact of midday meal (Nutrition Support Programme) scheme on enrolment and retention of primary schools girls of W. Garo Hills in Meghalaya State.

As we mentioned earlier in order to help the poor children, they need to be given some incentives and facilities of education. At present in Meghalaya primary education is upto 4th class which is free. As an additional incentive the central government has launched a midday meal scheme from March 1995. The scheme has been in operation in all the primary schools of the state. It is assumed that the operation of the scheme would have positively resulted in the improvement of students enrolment and retention in schools. The details of the scheme has been discussed in a seperate chapter. The present study is intended to study the impact of this scheme on girls enrolment and retention in a district where female literacy is very low and dropout is high i.e. West Garo Hills district of Meghalaya State. The main objectives of the study are as follows :

Objectives of the Study

1. To explore the problems relating to enrolment and retention in primary schools of West Garo Hills with special emphasis on girls.

2. To study the working of mid-day meal scheme in the state.

3. To assess the impact of mid-day meal scheme (N N Programme) in the enrolment and retention of the girls at primary level in Garo Hills.

Sample of the Study

The study is restricted to Garo hills district, West Garo Hills is divided into 9 community development blocks. The study has selected three community development blocks i.e. Dalu, Tura Urban and Rongram. The sample size of the schools was 10 per cent only. The *classification is given below :

Table 1 Sample Schools Classfification

	Name of the Division	No. of Primary Schools	Sample No. of Schools
1.	Tura Urban	51	5
2.	Rongram	150	15
3.	Dalu	169	17+3 =20
	Total	370	40

The selection of the schools were based on random sample.

* According 1996 available data.

Importance of Study Area

Meghalaya ranks 22 in literacy in Indian context. Meghalaya society is materilincal which means their family line is traced through the mother. Girls enjoy better social status here unlike those in the plain areas. The data on this state shows that despite the fact of social freedom, girls are unable to utilise it. The main reasons could be because of the low educational levels of the guardians, extreme poverty and unawareness of their social strengths. As in case of other states, government of India has launched many incentive schemes despite the fact girls are not reaping the benefits. The State of Meghalaya is divided into seven districts.

The names of the seven districts are East Khasi Hills, West Khasi Hills, Jaintia Hills. West Garo Hills. East Garo Hills. South Garo Hills and Ri-Bhoi. The female literacy rate of West Garo Hills (31.32) is less than the other districts, state (44.85) and the Nation (39.29). In comparison to male literacy (46.93) in W. Garo Hills, female literacy was much lesser. The census report of 1991 clearly indicated the gender disparity among the districts. The matrilineal strength of education is proven only in Jaintia Hills as the female literacy (,36.31%) is more than male literacy i.e. 34.37%. According to 1991 census literacy data there are six community development blocks which are in the category of below 35 percent literacy rate of Meghalaya.

* Among the six; four CD blocks are in West Garo Hills; they are Dadengiri, Selsella. Betasing and Zikzak. Therefore it was felt that it is essential to study the impact of govt. efforts on girls education in this district and make suggestions for the policy makers.

Scope of the Study

Keeping in view the time and the financial constraints it is proposed to limit the scope of study to primary schools of three blocks in W. Garo Hills District.

The impact of the NNP has been evaluated in terms of its effect on enrolment and retention of girls students. For this purpose a comparative study of retention rate before and after the introduction of the scheme has been carried out.

Methodology of the Study

It was proposed to undertake this research study in 10% of primary schools of West Garo Hills; thus 40 primary schools from the district were selected on the basis of random sampling. The study was conducted with the help of questionnaires to the school headmasters, parents and guardians of the children, who are attending the schools, and administrators at every layer of the Education Department.

Schedules Used for Data Collection

The schedules for headmaster has covered details about number of registered students in school, number of SC/ST and other community students with male female bifurcation. Proximity of school building from the village, condition of road facility in the village. Date of starting MDM scheme in school, whether advisory committe was formed for the MDM scheme or not. number of members in the committe. the number of times of the committee meetings were held. Difficulties faced by the school authorities in running the MDM scheme, their suggestions to improve the attendance.

The schedule also provided for the collection of secondary data. The items of information collected were students admitted, number of students attending schoolsand number of students discontinued; the school at four points of the time viz July, September December and March for their years 1993-94, 1994-95, 1995-96.

The second schedule was prepared for collection of data from administrators at each level. It tried to scale the other information and other details more than the scheme.

The third schedule was meant for three guardians from each school of the study. The guardians were selected on the basis of their economic status. The selected guardian were asked to furnish information about his occupation, number of children, number of children attending the school, annual income. The schedule also attempted to know the views of the guardian about their preparation for/not continuing to send his/her children

to school in the event of the discontinuation of MDM scheme. Lastly selected guardian were requested to provide their suggestions if any.

Introductory Background of Meghalaya

Meghalaya became a full-fledged State on the 21st January, 1972. when the educational administration in the entire State, including that of Shillong Municipal and cantonment area developed also in the new State. The State has an area of 22547 Sq.K.M. with a population of 18 lakhs according to 1991 census. There are seven administrative districts and 15 sub-divisions. 30 development blocks and about 5100 Villages. The State experiences highest rainfall in the world for about 5/6 months in a year. The State is pre-dominantly in-habited by the tribals with 85% of the population in the rural areas.

The percentage of literacy of the State has increased from 34% in 1981 to 39% in 1991 census, which comes to about 49% by excluding children between 0.6 years, as against all-India rate of 52% in 1991. Despite the overall increase in the literacy of the State there is a wide difference in literacy rates between the districts.

Unlike other States where education has been nationalised, in Meghalaya the community plays a key role in setting up and management of schools. The State Government plays promotional role in assisting the schools with liberal maintenance grant-in- aid system either under deficit or ad hoc system. The Primary Schools which were earlier with the Garo Hill District Council are now under management of the State Government for about a decade.

The State White Paper on Education and the State Programme of Action, 1995 spelled out the policies and strategies formulated within the broad parameter of the National Policy on Education. 1986 has given a new direction as the first policy statement. A number of steps have been initiated to implement the policies.

Elementary Education - Scenario in Meghalaya

The state Government is committed to fulfil the constitutional goal of providing free and compulsory education to all children upto 14 years. However, despite concerted efforts, the goal remains unfulfilled due to various constraints and factors.

Pattern

The Elementary Stage Comprises Primary and Middle School stages roughly corresponding to 6-14 years age-group. The re- structured educational pattern adopted from 1991 session modelled on National Educational Pattern, envisages Primary school stage with 4 Classes-I to IV with attached pre=primary section (in place of A.B,I,II,III) and Middle School stage with 3 classes - V to VII (in place of IV-VI). The re-structured pattern were implemented by phases.

Access

The Primary Schools are available in 63% (3,350) of habitations within habitation themselves and 1 km. distance in another 12% of habitations. Thus, Primary Schools are available to 75% of habitations (4007) covering 89% of rural population, according to 6th Survey out of the remaining 25% of habitations (1122) lacking Primary schools, only 206 are viable to have a school as per population norm (200).

The Middle Schools are available as per 3 km. distance to 49% of habitations covering 65% of rural population out of remaining 2250 un-served habitations, 134 habitations with 500 population and 1019 habitations with 300 population are viable to have Middle Schools.

The position has slighly improved during the period, as assistance have been rendered for setting up of 90% Primary Schools in 90 viable schools less viable villages have about 145 ventured Middle Schools.

Enrolment and Coverage

The present enrolment of 2.03 lakhs children in Primary schools as against estimated / child population shows a coverage of about 80% children in 6-10 age group. In case of Middle Schools, the enrolment of 0.76 lakhs children shows a coverage of about 45% children in 10-14 age-group. Thus the enrolled children in 6- 14 age-group is 2.24 lakhs and unenrolled children 1.32 lakhs. The children in the rural area are 1.83 lakhs and an 20.134 in the urban area. Total girls enrolled are 1.02 lakh. The rural girls enrolment is around 92.000 which is much higher than urban girls enrollment.

Teachers

The number of sanctioned posts of Primary Schools teachers in 3 Autonomous districts (Khasi Hills, Garo Hills & Jaintia Hills) during 1991 is 7323 and in Shillong Municipal and cantonent area 398. It is estimated about 60% of the teachers are untrained. There are a substantial number of Non-Matric under-qualified teachers entertained earlier.

In case of Middle Schools, there are 1067 Teachers in 139 Schools under deficit system and 2043 teachers in 539 Schools under ad-hoc i.e. 3710 teachers, out of whi9ch about 70% are estimated to be untrained teachers.

There are 9 Teachers Institutes for Primary and Middle School Teachers (7 for Primary & 2 for Middle) with an annual intake capacity for about 350. The 7 Govt. Training Institutes are residential Service Training Institutes.

The average teacher per school is about 2 teachers and about 17 % (631) Schools are single-teacher school. The total full time teachers in the state are 7,830 and out of them the female teachers are 3,371.

School Buildings

The School building play a crucial role in educational development. The state experiences heavy rain and climatic conditions. Therefore School need durable and strong building to protect the children from rain and storm, as the State experiences highest rainfall in the world spread over 5 to 6 months in a year. The 6th Survey revealed presence of about 4099 thatched/temporary Primary School buildings and 291 thatched Middle School building. So far, about 884 buildings are Puca Primary School buildings. Thus, there are about 3215 Primary School buildings housed in temporary sheds requiring early replacement.

Non-formal Education

The Non-formal or part-time educational centres have been started to cover for dropout/out-of-School children. These centres functioning on part-time basis on the pattern of coaching centres mostly located in schools. These centres are being run with the assistance of the school teachers as Instructors. They are Non-formal in the sense of content and technique of teaching and timing for holding. However, due to lack of qualified Instructors and accommodation, Those centres could not be opened in backward areas lacking formal schools, It is being implemented as an adjust of the Adult/Social Education Offer/Social Education organiser including lady social education organisers at block levels.

Dropout Rate

Though more detailed study would have to be undertaken, yet stage-wise and class-wise enrolment of girls reveal that the rate of drop out is about 39% state data of the primary and about 50% at the Middle School Stage. The reveals that about 46% children are enrolled in class I and remaining 4 classes constitute 54% of enrolled children at primary school stage.

The above analysis reveals that the state has insufficient infrastructural facilities since the majority of the schools are in rural areas the schools should be accessible to the children.

Meghalaya in Comparison to North Eastern States
(including Sikkim)

1. Dropout Problem

After independence many constitutional provisions were made for the development of education. Article 45 of our constitution concerns with free and compulsory education for all children upto the age of 14 years. These provisions has been well reflected in all five year plans of India. But still the achievements are not satisfactory. One of the reasons for the non-achievement of the objectives is because of lack of sufficient funds to meet the necessary problems. In the states of North East of India; the magnitude of the problems of UEE is more. The main aspect of the problem in this region is retention than the enrolment.

In the following table (3) the data shows that dropout rate of children in I-V class in the North Eastern State. In Meghalaya during 1994-95 the dropout rate was 32.06 which is the lowest in comparison to other states but the dropout rate of girls was 34.43; which is much higher than the boys dropout rate of 29.96. One of the reasons for dropouts and for never enrolled are poverty and economic deprivation. Some of the researchers observed that irrelevant curriculum, poor infrastructure facilities and untrained teachers are also one of the main reasons.

Public Expenditure on Primary Education

More than 90% of the children in this region are receiving free education. the major objective of free education is to ensure that, the poverty of people should not prevent people from taking advantage of the available educational facilities. But problem

is unequal distribution of facilities and ability to utilize the facilities. Since the private cost of education is so high despite many incentives it is becoming difficult to retain the children in the school.

The study on public expenditure on primary education of India conducted by K.C. Nautiyal (1996) reveals that the states with the higher per pupil expenditure on primary education are not necessarily the same in terms of literacy achievement, yet by and large all the educationally better of states.

Table below table (2) shows the per pupil expenditure of primary eduction in North Easter states. The per student expenditure of Meghalaya was 1742 during 1993-94 which is considered as much less than in comparison to Mizoram, Nagaland and Sikkim which are considered as better of states.

Table 2

Per Student Expenditure on Primary Eduction 1993-94

S. No.	State	(in Rs.)
1	Arunachal Pradesh	(N.A.)
2	Assam	926
3	Manipur	1225
4	Meghalaya	1742
5	Mizoram	2888
6	Nagaland	2063
7	Sikkim	2502
8	Tripura	1585

However, the disparity in per pupil expenditure may be due to the disparities in the density of population in the hilly areas. All the states in the Eastern Sector have considerably a higher per pupil expenditure on primary education which ranges from Rs. 926 in Assam to Rs. 2888/- in Mizoram.

The eight plan budget figures shows that percentage of budget on elementary education of the state was 69.95 and percentage of budget on education to net domestic products was 8.0 during 1993-94, which means the states effort to develop primary education is high.

Table 3

Dropout Rates in I-V Classes of North Eastern States of India (Including Sikkim) during 1994-95

S. No.	States	Boys	Girls	Total
1	Arunachal Pradesh	54.97	55.22	55.07
2	Assam	39.62	41.57	40.49
3	Manipur	65.02	63.98	64.55
4	Meghalaya	29.96	34.43	32.06
5	Mizoram	62.91	63.05	62.98
6	Nagaland	45.09	37.68	40.09
7	Sikkim	52.88	45.51	49.50
8	Tripura	54.07	57.21	55.51
	India	35.18	37.79	36.27

Annual Report 1996 (GOI) Part – I

Efforts to Support Primary Education in the Region

The eight states of this region (including Sikkim) are grouped under three categories on the basis of the efforts made to support primary education and according to the aggregate ranking results. States efforts are measured with the help of representation index (R1). The states per student expenditure is equated with the countries average per student expenditure, which means higher the value (Results) higher the efforts. The states fallen between R1 results of 3.5 and 2.5 are considered as better off states in efforts to support education.

The states with the R1 results between 1.5 and below 2.5 are considered as average states of group B. The states with the R1 below 1.5 are considered as group C states and as considered are worse off states (see below table 4).

Table 4

Results of Representation Index (R1) in States Efforts to Support Education

S. No.	States	R 1 Value	Group
1	Arunachal Pradesh	2.3	Group A states (better of States)
2	Assam	1.2	Mizoram, Sikkim and Nagaland
3	Manipur	1.4	Group B states (Average States)
4	Meghalaya	2.2	Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh and Tripura
5	Mizoram	3.5	-
6	Nagaland	2.6	Group C states (worse off states)
7	Sikkim	3.2	-
8	Tripura	2.0	Assam and Manipur

$$R1 = \frac{\text{Per student cost of the state}}{\text{Per student cost of the country}}$$

Under the above mentioned criteria, states like Mizoram (3.5) Sikkim (3.2) and Nagaland (2.6) are considered as group A states and group B states are Meghalaya, Arunchal Pradesh and Tripura; under group C states like Assam and Manipur has fallen and considered as worsoff states.

Thus it is clear from the analysis that Efforts to Primary Education Meghalaya is still lagging behind in comparison to other North Eastern State.

The above analysis shows that Meghalaya in comparison to other states of north east stands as average and not fully developed.

Relative Position of W. Garo Hills with other Districts

West Garo Hills is one of the seven districts of Meghalaya state, located in North East of India with lowest female literacy rate. The dropout rate of girls in primary schools in this particular district is higher than the boys. In comparison to the availability of Primary Schools the district is in commanding position as 23.94 percent of Primary Schools are in this particular district.

Chapter-2

Historical Background of the Garos and the Garo Hills

In this chapter we are going to discuss about the educational development of West Garo Hills. In order to understand the other related problems it is essential to understand the historical, economical and political situation.

The Study Area i.e. West Garo Hills

The state of Meghalaya was created on 21st January 1972 Before the inception of Meghalaya, the Garo Hills and united Khasi & Jaintia Hills were the two districts of composite Assam. The district is called Garo Hills as the Garos predominantly inhabit in this district. The name Garo was perhaps given by the British people. But its roots of origin bears different opinion. It is said that the derivation was from the name of a village called "**Gara**" in Bengal. The Garos call themselves as Mande, Mandai or Achic. Traditionally, it is said that the old home of the Garos was Tibet from which they came down in batches along the northern bank of the river Brahmaputra or "Songdu" as it is called by the Garos, through the north-eastern corner of Assam. Some of them could cross over the river. The Chiefs, who crossed the river to Assakm side were Jap-Jalimpa and Sup-Bongipa. They first occupied the villages along the river to Assam side were after wards driven off and they ultimately settled down in the hills and plains of Kamrup and Goalpara districts of Assam. From these places also they were gradually driven off into the rugged hills now known as Garo Hills. These events are evidence to the facts that the Garos are scattered and living in small numbers is almost all districts of Assam.

Considering the linguistic affinities and personal traits some scholars regard that the Garo tribe is only a division of the great bode race of Assam. The Garo tribe was divided into several classes and groups and each class or group was ruled by an influential chief. Some groups of the Garos used to come down the hills and raided the

plains to obtain provisions of life. In these raids they had to take resort to killing also. During the Mughal rules in western parts of Assam, the tract lying in between the Brahmaputra and the Garo hills as well as the western plains of the district were practically under some Zamindars and their exactions were very such responsible for many of the Garo raids of the plain areas in those days.

During the first few years of the British rule in Assam the district of Garo Hills was treated as the part of the Goalpara district. The whole tract was placed under a civil Commissioner.

The Garos are a matriarchal and matrilinial tribe. According to Garo customery law of in-line inheritance only the youngest daughter or the one who has been elected by the parents with full agreement of the "ohras" (male elderly members of the clan) and other relatives, can inherit the property of the family. All other daughters and their husbands are called "Agadi" or out siders.

The Garos have several divisions inhabiting different parts of West Garo Hills and having more or less distinctive characteristics. These divisions or distinctions may also be called linguistic so the languages of such divisions of the tribes are described below in brief.

1. **The Akawas or the Awes** live in the north-eastern hills of the district. Akawas means a plain man while Awes means a plough man. Akawas are widely scattered over the north eastern parts of the district. In this area, there are vast plain fields between the Hills and there are a few rivers valleys, which produce luxuriant paddy and other crops. These people live mainly by plain cultivation though they practice jhum cultivation also; and because of these facts, perhaps they are known as Akawas or Awes.
2. **Abengs:** from the most important group of the Garos. They occupy nearly half the area of the undivided district. Tura, the district head quarters fall within the Abeng lands.

3. **Rugas:** This group inhabit the lower Bhugai or Bhugi valley near Balu in the southern side of the district.
4. **Atongs:** This is also an important group amongst the Garos. They live in the Simsang of Someswari Valley area and above Baghmara and spread ever to Siju. The atongs from the healthiest section of the tribe.
5. In the upper Bhugai valley and upto the Darang or Nitai river live the **Chibok** groups.
6. To the east of the Simsangs or Someswari river live the **Chisaks**. They are distributed over the area lying between the Simsang river and Khasi Hills division differs to some extent with the others. The principal and to the south of the Akawas.

Besides the above major divisions there are some linguistic groups. They are Matehis, Matabengs, Matehi-Duals, gara- ganchings and Megame. The Garo have class and sub clans. Of the main clans each of them has within it some sub-clans. Some of the clans and sub-clans are given below:

	Clans		Sub-Clans
Sangma	…	…	Agitak, Ampang, Bangshall, Banjolgiri, Chisin, Kakshi, Tigedi, Mangsong etc.
Marak	…	…	Chambugong, Balwari, Hangsa, Mrong, Raksam, Ritchil, Nekrek etc.
Momin	…	…	Gabil, Watre, Mrinda, Charan, Matchokgiri, etc.
Shira	…	…	Dalbot etc.
Areng	…	…	Domik, Nongbak etc.

The chief clans are known by the term “Machong” while the smaller or the sub-clans are known by the term “Ghatchi”. The Garo have mainly been converted to Christians. The rest are Non-Christians called songsarek or animists.

The Hanjongs

The Hajongs are the Second majority of Garo Hills, next to the Garos. The origin of the Hajongs is in obscurity. No such study has yet been done to come to a conclusion on the origin of the Hajongs. However, according to some writers it is clained that they have descented from the Surya Bangahiya Shatriyas of Hindu scriptures. Another group claim that the Hajongs belong to the koches of Rangpura, Chchhihar and Assam, who had migrated to Garo Hills and north Mymensingh (Bengal) during the Burmese invasion of Assam (1820-26). The other view is that the Hajongs belonged to the great Bodo race who have been transformed to the present stage through the process of acculturation. In the past they were divided in six divisions, vis, Marangparia, Bhojalu paria. Manik paria, Teporparia. But these divisions are not in vogues at present. All the Hajongs are Hindus at present following the hindu rites and rituals in their social life. Their festivals and worships are admixture of Hindu and traditional tribal customs. Formerly, the Hajongs had some matrilineal customs in respect of marriages but that is now discontinued. They are now divided as Sakta, Baisnavas or Khatals. Their dialet is a mixture of Bengali and Assamese language with dominant influences of Assamese. The Hajongs are comparatively backward than their Garo brother tribes in respect of education and economy.

Geographical and Demographic features of Garo Hills

The Garo Hills is a hilly district bounded by Dhubri of Assam in the north west and north, by Bangladesh in the south west and south and by Khasi Hills in the east. Till the operation of Meghalaya the Garo Hills was an undivided district. Following the principle of bringing the people nearer the administration a civil sub division was established at willianagar (Simsanggiri) in 1973 and the said sub division was upgraded to a new district in October, 1976. Since then Garo Hills has been divided into East Garo Hills and West Garo Hills districts with Head Quarters at willianagar and Tura respectively. Tura was also the district head quarters of the undivided Garo Hills. The sketch map of Garo Hills will show the position of East & West Garo Hills. The

following table will show the population, decinnial growth rate, sex ratio satadal pasia and Hanjiparia and area of the two districts.

Table - 5

Population, decinnial growth rate, Sex ratio and area of East & West Garo Hills

District	T=Total R=Rural U=Urban	Population			Desinnial growth			Sex Ratio	Area in Sq. Km.
		1971	1981	1991	1971	1981	1991	1988	-
East Garo Hills	T	102698	135864	N.A.	31.21	32.29	N.A.	939	2603
	R	102688	131574		31.21	28.12		945	Xxxx
	U	-	4290		-	-		777	
West Garo Hills	T	303917	300139	N.A.	32.74	21.46	N.A.	964	
	R	288428	329880		31.06	14.36		973	5564
	U	15489	39259		74.27	153.46			890

Source : *1981 Census.*

Topography; Climate and the People

The enters areas of the districts are partly hilly and partly plains. Roughly, one-fourth of the area of the district are plain and rest is hilly. the two principal hill ranges in Garo Hills are Tura and Arballa, which runs from south east to north-west. Main peaks are Nokrek (1418 m), is the highest in Garo Hills. Other peaks are Miminram (1184 m), Chitmang (1025 m). Eanggira, Hastang and Balpakram. Balpakram is in the south east corner of west Garo Hills near Khasi Hills border which has been selected as a wild life sanetuary centre and is now being developed. Other beauty spots of the districts are Siju cave, Nomgalbibra coal mine. Tura peak and Thasek lake, which can be developed as an attractive tourist Centres.

The Garo Hills are crisscrossed by a number of swift flowing turbulent and dealing rivers and torrents, which flows through the hills and created so many beautiful waterfalls which is really, swaming to stare at, of these sention amy be made of Mokma dara (waterfall) in Dudnoi or Manda river, Chibok Dara (waterfall) in Chibok river and

Gongia dara (Waterfall) etc. The biggest river in Garo Hills is Simsang or Someswari. The water of all the rivers are very crystal and adobe of palatable fishes.

The climate of Garo Hills is not so extreme. The summer is a bit hot, still it is pleasing, wholesome and salubrious. There are rain fall through out the year. The winter is not so cold.

The density of population of East and West Garo Hills are 32 and 56 respectively according to 1981 census. The different communities who live in Meghalaya, they also live in Garo Hills. Main language need in the districts are Garo, Bengali, Assamese, Hajong, Nepali, Hindi and English.

Agriculture, Forest a Mineral and Industrial resources

Rice, Jute, Cotton, Pulses are the main agricultural products of the districts. The people follow still the primitive method of agriculture jhumming. But now the government has launched Measures to discontinue this type of cultivation by substituting it by terrace cultivation, and the soil conservation department has taken up the cause but progress is not so satisfactory. Other important commercial products are orange, pinapple, banana arecanut, beettle leaf, ginger, and termeric etc. Since some years back coffee, rubber and tea plantation has also been started (Milton Sangma 1985).

The forest of Garo Hills yield valuable timbers of sal, Teek, Titachamp, and animals like tigers, elephants, bears, buffalloes leopards, barking deer and various kinds of rare animals and other species' birds are found in this districts.

Deposits of coal, lime stones and cement are the main in the districts of Garo Hills. The coal deposit at Nongalbibra is now operated in small scales. The other mineral resources have not yet been tapped and operated..

Communication

Postals are the principal means of communication in the districts. The govt. is trying to cover the districts with net work of roads but could not be achieved well yeat and the system cannot be said as well - developed.

Civil administration and Development Blocks

The district is following sub-divisions and development Blocks at present.

1. West Garo Hills:

a) Sub-divisions – Tura, Beghmara, Dadenggiri and Ampati Total-3

b) Development Blocks Rongara, Baghmara, Chokpot,
Dalu, Ziksak, Betasing, Salsella, Dadenggiri and Rongram, Total -9

Development of education and literacy in Garo Hills

Towards the end of 1826 British government started a school in Singimari in the western border or West Garo Hills district. but the project failed. Another attempt was made in this direction by another British officer but this also could not succeed. In the sixties of the last century a new influence and education was brought to the Garo Hills by the American Baptist Missionaries. Their operation was started from Goalpara which was a district of Assam. With the advance of the work the missionarios settle at Tura in 1878 and conversion to christinity was made in to the conversion to literacy.

Upto 1905 the entire administration of primary education in Garo Hills was left almost in the hands of the American Baptist ... But in 1905 the chief commissioner of Assam started opening of a number of state schools. In 1906 middle English School was started at Tura, the district headquarters, on a grant in aid basis. By this time a Deputy Inspector of schools was appointed to supervise the education affairs of the district. For secondary education by 1914 there was a middle English School at Tura as well as one

in the Senegal border area of Mahandraganj by 1941 literacy had progressed in Garo Hills as shown below:

Table – 6

Progress literacy in Garo Hills

1901			1921			1941		
Persons	Male	Female	Persons	Male	Female	Persons	Male	Female
.99	1.71	.25	2.11	3.48	.69	5.47	0.23	2.65

The story of education activities in Garo Hills seemed to have been one of irregular fluctuation. One major problem appeared to have been the transitory nature of the village, which shifted from site to site along with their shifting cultivation. The large villages broke into hamlets. Even if the site or the parent village remained unaltered, yet the fact that a considerable proportion of the villagers lived in the field for months together, would have been bound to affect the schooling of children. This practice is still in vogue in some interior villages but the dimension of practice has been reduced now.

After independence came the five years plans and development programmes to face the challenge of development in every sphere of life of the nation. In the sphere of education also development programmes were formulated and it started expansion and development. As a matter of fact, the literate and percentage of literacy has developed in composite Garo Hills an mentioned below during the years of 1951 to 1991.

Table -7

Literates of W. Garo Hills

Year	Total Population	Total Literate	Percentage
1951	2,47,560	37,710	15.2
1961	3,06,139	61,334	20.3
1971	4,06,615	95,825	23.58
1981	5,05,003	1,37,762	28.82
1991	-	-	39.32

Source : *Meghalaya Education Commission 1977,*

Table – 8

Number of Primary Schools at the time of Transfer to Garo-Hills

Year	Govt.Pry. Schools	Junior Basic Schools	District Council Schools	Total
1961	207	44	200	451
1975-76	--	--	--	1491

Source : Meghalaya Education Commission 1977 and District Council Record

Present Position of Primary Education in West Garo Hills

No data could be collected to show the five year plan wise systematic development for Primary Education in the district of Garo Hills as no such data or statement could be available. In absence of such data the available data for last some years are incorporated here with to indicate the present trend and position of elementary education in Garo Hills districts. As the study in mainly the number of Primary Schools in the district of West Garo Hills.

Table –9

Number of Primary Schools in West Garo Hills

Year	No. of Primary Schools				
	Govt.	Local Body	Private Aided	Un-Aided	Total
	1	2	3	4	5
1981-82	2	1538	50	74	1664
1982-83	2	1538	50	88	1678
1983-84	2	1538	50	87	1677
1994-95	28	926	4	3	961

Source : *Office of the Administrator, Primary Education and Deputy Inspector of School, Tura, Baghmara, William Nagar (Momin, NIEPA, 1986)*

The figures in the above table show that the number of Govt. Local board or District Council, Aided or Village Council Aided Primary Schools remained constant as there was no taking up of new Schools under the administration. There are some purely private Schools whose numbers are fluctuating, sometimes opened and some-times some are closed. The two Govt. Primary Schools we are 1 Junior Basic Training practising and Tura Training practising Schools attached to each of the Training institute.

The Govt. M.E. Schools are directly controlled and managed by the Department. The teachers and staff of the said schools get pay and allowances at par as those of govt. employees with every service benefits.

The aided Schools under deficit system are provided such grants equivalent to govt. scale of pay and admissible current Dearness allowances for all teachers and other staff with contributory provident fund provided by each of the schools managing committee. The Adhoc Aided Middle Schools receive grant in aid ran from Rs. 700/- to Rs. 2000/- per month depending on various considerations. This type of Schools also

receive Fee loss compensation grant and Hindi grants. The purely private unaided Schools receive no grant at all from the government until they are accorded with opening permission. All the Aided Schools including the schools under deficit system are managed by a managing committee approved by the departmental authority.

Table – 10

Year wise Enrolment of Primary Schools in West Garo Hills for Classes A B I to III for 6-11 group

Year	AB	A	B	I	II	III	Total	Total no. of Boys and Girls
1981-82	B	14825	10161	7720	2553	4646	40905	74796
	G	11620	9333	7221	3383	2334	41967	75945
1982-83	B	16897	10672	7858	4476	3066	41967	75945
	G	13300	9074	6018	6398	2179	33978	
1983-84	B	21099	6630	5215	4386	3301	40631	74406
	G	18210	5527	4216	3256	2521	33775	
1984-85	B	-	-	-	-	-	49330	

Source : (Momin NIEPA, 1986) Vand VI All India Educational Survey

Girls Education in W. Garo Hills

Education of girls is a task beset with difficulties in India even among the Garos where the women have liberty and personal rights, it was not easy to convince them of the advantages of female education. From the beginning, however, the girls have been urged to study in the village schools along with the boys and girls have been found in most of there schools. There was evidence to show that girls exhibited a natural bent for learning but the need of the girls help at home and the lack of interest on the part of the presents regarding the education of their daughters mode program in this line very slow.

It was David Scott, the civil commissioner and Agent to the Governor-General, who first proposed for a girls school for Garos later many missionaries has worked for girls education. The number of beneficiaries of midday meals were 1685 at primary level, 20 were in free uniform, the free textbook beneficiaries were 1025. At present overall comparison, the W. Garo Hills district got maximum number of beneficiaries of

all schemes. Contrary to this the girls enrolment was very less in this district in comparison to total enrolment of other district. Despite the fact the schemes were discontinued after 1987.

Incentive Schmes for Girls Education in W. Garo Hills

The 5th All India Education Survey revealed that, there were number of incentive schemes implemented for upliftment of girls education in W. Garo Hills. Among them were, free uniform, midday meals. Free textbooks, and attendance scholarships to girls. (See below Table)

Table – 11

Incentive Scheme in Primary Schools : Number of Schools and Beneficiaries in Rural and Urban Area 1986-87

Sl. No.	Type of Scheme	% of School having Scheme	% of Total are of Bene-ficiarier		% of SC Benefi-ciarier		% ST Benefi-ciarier	
			B	G	B	G	B	G
1.	Midday Meal	28.27	16.8	18.29	23.00	27.54	45.17	44.98
2.	Free Text books	60.69	23.26	25.74	42.74	45.52	47.13	54.38
3.	Free Uni-form	48.57	21.23	17.90	21.90	41.01	16.08	38.35
4.	Attendance Scheme	0.14	0.01	0.06	0.08	0.01	0.07	0.12

5th All India Survey (NCERT)

The literacy rate of the female in W. Garo Hills at present (1991) is 31.32 percent in comparison to male literacy which is 46.93 it is very less.

According to VI survey the girls enrolment in primary schools are 48.22. The enrolment in the rural areas in 47.40 percent the urban female enrolment is 55.05 percent.

The majority of the schools in W. Garo Hills are co- education and only 1.45 percent of the schools are specially meant for girls. Out of the total schools 97 percent of the schools are rural areas.

The female teacher in the primary schools are 27.61 percent only. Out of the total number of female teachers 98 percent of teacher are in local body schools.

Since the dropout of girls are not available we can not talk about the actually retained. However the data shows that the female literacy and enrolment rates are lower in rural areas. Therefore many special programmes were introduced in this area but was discontinued due to non-utilisation of the schemes and lack of administrators interest.

Recently the central govt. has launched National Nutrition programmes to improve the enrolment and retention. How far the scheme has worked positively will be discussed in the following chapters along with the elaborative discussion about the implementation of the scheme.

CHAPTER-3

National Programme for Nutrition Support to Primary Education

(Mid-day Meal Scheme)

The Government of India vide letter No. F-6-2/95-DESK(EE) Dated: 3rd August, 1995 had issued detailed Guidelines for Central assistance under the National programme for Nutritional support to primary education commonly known as Mid-day Meal Programme. The objective of the Programme is to give boost to universalisation of Primary Education, by increasing enrolment, retention and attendance and simultaneous impact on nutrition on Primary School children from class I-V. The main features of the programme as contained in the Government of India Guidelines are as follows: -

The programme which will cover all Government, local body and Government aided Primary Schools in the States/UT(s) will be implemented in three phases. The first phase will commence from 1995-96 and will cover all such Primary Schools located in Revamped Public Distributions System (RPPS)/Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS) Blocks and 40 Low Female Literacy (LEL) Blocks. The second phase will commence from 1996-97 and will cover all C.D. Blocks with Female Literacy lower than the national average. The third phase, which will commence from 1997-98 will cover all the remaining Primary Schools.

- *Department of School Education, Government of Meghalaya*

* The Central Assistance will be made available to local bodies authorities district-wise such as Panchayat/Nagarpalika at the rate of 100 gms. Per student per day, to be lifted from the nearest F.C.I. Godwon free of cost in every quarterly cycle of 3 months period. Such local bodies will have a flexibility to organize provision of cooked/pre-

cooked food by the school through Parent Teacher Committees and other voluntary organizations within a period of 2 years. However, in the interim period as preclude to the provision of cooked/pre-cooked food in the schools, food grains like rice/wheat at the rate of 3 kg. per student per month will distributed to all Primary School children from Class I-V with a minimum attendance of 80%.

* For the First Quarter of the Programme i.e. August-September-October 1995, State and Districts allocation of food grain will be based on the enrolment figures collected during the All India Educational Survey (AIES) 1993. From the Second quarter onward, allocation of food grain will be based on the off take figures received from the F.C.I. the district wise UCs and the enrolment data received from the State Government.

* National Programme for Nutrition Support to Primary Education, Ministry of Human Resource Development, 1995 and

* Based on district-wise allocation made by the Government of India, the Deputy Commissioner/Collector will be responsible for collection from the F.C.I. Godown of the quantity allocated to the district and will arrange transportation and distribution to local bodies/schools based on the entitlement of individual schools to be further allocated by him.

* Government of India will reimburse transport cost @ Rs. 25/- per quintal for moving the food grains from F.C.I. Godown to the School and this will be made directly through DRDA's in rural areas and through Nagarplaikas in Urban areas.

* Central Government's support in the form of fee grains and reimbursement of transport costs will be made available by Government of India to the Districts directly based on district-wise enrolment and attendance furnished by the State Government.

* Allotment of food grain will be valid for the quarter for which it is allotted and such allotment(s) cannot be carried forward to subsequent quarter.

* Committees should be set up at the State, District and village levels with appropriate Membership for over-seeing and monitoring the implementation of the programme for creating awareness and participation at all levels and for achieving convergence of related services like Primary Education, Primary health care ECCE and Nutrition etc.

The scheme has been started in the district since August 1995 in the following C.D. Blocks of the State:

1. **Trikilla C. B. Block of West Garo Hills** to certain urban pockets of C. D. Blocks, which are part and parcel of such C. D. blocks operationally and in terms of area of jurisdiction had been left out earlier but included latter the Government of India has issued some guide lines for the distribution. The text of the guide line details of the programme as given below:-

The objective of the programme is to give a boost to universalisation of primary education, by increasing enrolment, retention and attendance and simultaneous impact on nutrition of primary school children from class I-V. The main features of the programme or contained in the Government of India guidelines are as follows.

The programme, which will cover all Government, local body and Govt. aided primary schools in the states/UT(s) will be implemented in three phases. The first phase will commence from 1995-96 and will cover all C.D. Blocks with female literacy lower than the national average. The third phase, which will commence from 1997-98 will cover all the remaining primary schools.

The central assistance will be made available to local bodies authorition district will such as Panchayat/Nagar Palika at the rate of 100 gram per student per day to be lifted from the nearest F.C.I. Godown free of cost in every quarterly cycle of 3 months period.

2. Meghalaya's Position at Present

* All the 32 C. D. Blocks in the State are covered under RPDS including the Urban pockets. Other urban centers like Shiillong, Tura and Jowai are also covered under R.P.D.S. Therefore, the whole of Meghalaya is covered under R.P.D.S. Hence the National Programme of Nutritutional Support to Primary School will cover the whole State of Meghalaya at the first phase itself i.e. commencing from 1995-96

* The Constitution 73rd Amendment Act, 1993 dealing with establishment of Panchayati Raj institutions does not apply the Meghalaya and Panchayati institutions are not in existence in the State.

* Except for a very small area of the city of Shillong the whole of the State is, however, covered under the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution. Three Autonomous District Councils viz., the Jaintia Hills, the Khasi Hills and the Garo Hills established under the sixth schedule to the Constitutions are in existence in the State. They are local bodies. However, at present, all the Primary Schools of the three districts council have been taken over by the State Government in an enactment. In the urban areas the Nagarpalikas do not exist at present. Hence there is no local bodies' functioning in the State today either at the District level or in the Urban areas, except at the village level where traditional village institutions and authorities are still vibrant. Hence the District Administration neared by the Deputy Commissioner/Collector in each District of the State has to take the Plan of such local bodies.

* According to the structural pattern of Elementary Education in the State at present, the Primary Schools covers classes I to IV and the Upper Primary Schools from Classes V to VII. For the purpose of the scheme however, the enrolment of children from classes I to V will be reckoned as per national requirement, and will be included under the programme. Further the Parent-Teacher Committees are not existing in the Primary

Schools. The State P.O.A. 1995 envisaged setting of Mother-Teacher Council for each Primary School.

* F.C.I, does not have a food supply Depot/Godown in each and every district of the State. The locations of F.C.I, godowns in the State and the districts assigned to such Godown are as follows:

Location of F.C.I. Godowns

F.C.I.	F.S.D.	Shillong	1. East Khasi Hills
			2. West Khasi Hills
F.C.I.	F.S.D.	Jowai	1. Jaintia Hills
F.C.I.	F.S.D.	Khanapara	1. Ribhoi Districts
F.C.I.	F.S.D.	Tura	1. East Garo Hills
			2. West Garo Hills
			3. South Garo Hills

* The State is fully covered under the All India Educational Survey (AIES) 1993 and enrolment figures for classes I to V are readily available. Hence for allotment during the First Quarter of the Schemes, the enrolment data are readily available, block-wise/district-wise.

* The District Rural Development Agencies are functioning in all the 7 districts of the State, and the District administration in each district have developed the necessary expertise to deal with lifting and distribution of food grains under the RPDS.

* Full-fledged offices of Inspector of Schools of the rank of Deputy Director are in existence in 5 out of 7 districts of the State along with the offices of the Deputy Inspectors of Schools at each Civil Sub-Division. In other 2 newly created districts, there are offices of Deputy Inspector of Schools only. Collection of enrolment data will be made through these District and Sub-Divisional level functionaries of the Education Department.

3. Implementation of the Programme

Keeping in view the Government of India's guidelines and the infrastructures and other facilities existing in the State at present, the programme of central assistance of nutritional support to Primary Schools will be implemented in the State as follows:

(i) Nodal Authority

The Education Department, Govt. of Meghalaya will be the Nodal Authority in the implementation of the above programmes. The modos operandi of the programmes will be subject to direction and modification which the Department of Education, Govt. of Meghalaya may issue from time to time to the various functionaries implementing the programme at the State and the District levels.

Since the people of the State are rice eaters, only rice will be required for allotment by the Govt. of India through the FCI to the State Govt. The quantum of allotment of free rice to be made by the Govt. of India through various FCI food supply Depots, will be based on the enrolment figures furnished by the State Govt. to the Ministry of HRD and depending on the enrolment figures, the total quantity of rice to be allotted to different District will be worked out for each quarter by the Govt. of India and place with the Districts through the various FCI food supply Depots as indicated below.

To start with, for the first quarter, the enrolment figures recorded during the 6th All India Educational Survey, 1993 will be made used of and the quantum of food grains to be made available to the various supply Depots. For the second and subsequent quarters the quantum of rice to be made available to each District and to each F.C.I. F.S.D. will be worked out by the Govt. of India based on the enrolment figures to be collected as out-lines at Para 3 (VI) below:

(ii) Lifting of Foodgrain from the F.C.I.

The Deputy Commissioners/Collectors of all the 7 District of the States will make appropriate use of the Whole sellers/stockiests network now functioning under the PDS. They will issue specific authority to one or more members of the network operating in the District. Such authority should also indicate the responsibility for storage etc. copies of such authority may also be endorsed to the Nodal Authority, local Inspector/D.I, of Schools.

(iii) The Distribution of Foodgrains :

(a) To the Primary Schools

The Deputy Commissioners/collectors will make allotment of the above foodgrain to each Primary/Upper Primary Schools according to the enrolment figures made available to him by the Govt., either directly or through the Inspector/D.I, of Schools (as Class V is at present a class of Upper Primary Schools). During the first quarter of implementation of the programmes, the enrolment figures school-wise will be as per the AJES, 1993 which are available also with the respective, D.I. of Schools. Since the entire area of the State is covered under RPDS: the names of the RPDS Blocks, the number of Primary Schools/Upper Primary Schools in each Block and in the Urban areas located therein, classified by Govt./Govt. aided Schools and the number of children enrolled in these Schools in Class I-V are given in Annexure 'A'. In the interim period, the allotment of rice to the Schools should be on the basis of 3 Kg. per month per child as per enrolment figures supplied to him.

For transporting the school-wise allocation of food grain from the Whole-sellers/storage points to the Schools, a number of options are available. Many of the schools may be located in the villages served by a Fair Price Shops under the PDS. There is not objection if the DC/Collectors decides to engage a Fair Price Shops to life the quantity allotted to the village schools. Secondly, all Primary Schools in the State have

Managing Committees. Even Govt. schools have also local Managing Committees. The Committees may be engaged in lifting the foodgrains to the Schools. The last mention body are expected to handle the actual distribution of foodgrains to the Schools children. Many of them nay be capable of lifting the quantity allotted to the School and their service may be conveniently made used of. It is, therefore, left to the respective Deputy Commissioner to select any of the above Agencies or a combination of them as deemed fit and proper.

(b) Distribution of Foodgrain to the School Children

In schools where the Mother-Teacher Councils exits, distribution will be done by such Agency. In other cases, the mode of distribution of foodgrains to the children will be decided by the concerned School Managing Committee. Provided that the Deputy Commissioner/Collector may, in consultation with the Inspector/Deputy Inspector Schools, issue necessary instructions prescribing the manner in which rice should be distributed to the School children.

(v) Claim of Movement Charges

Under the guideline issue by the Govt. of India, an amount of Rs.25/- per quintal on the average will be reimbursed by the Govt. of India as transport cost of movement of rice from the FCI Godowns upto the Schools. The amount of transport cost will be reimbursed to the transporters through the District Rural Development Agency. The following procedure will be followed for claiming the transport cost of foodgrain.

(a) The Deputy Commissioner will decide the cost of transportation on point-to-point basis. Based on the rates approved by the Deputy Commissioner, the Agency which will transport the rice from the intermediate storage points to the School will obtain a Certificate from Mother-Teacher Council or any other Agency decided by the Local School Managing Committee or directed by the Deputy Commissioner/Collector to receive and distribute the foodgrains at the School

level, to the effect that the quantity of rice has been received in the School. The Agency will then submit claim for payment of transport charges before the PD, DRDA or the BDO authorised by the Deputy Commissioner to settle such claim and to make such payment. A copy of such claim should also be made available by the Agency to the Wholesaler/Stockiest from whose custody the Agency draws the quantity from the intermediate storage point.

(b) The Wholesaler/Stockiest or any other Agency authorised buy the Deputy Commissioner to lift the rice from FCI Godowns will submit his/her claim for transport cost to the Deputy Commissioner supported by distribution figures made by him from intermediate storage points and also based on copies of claims made available to him by the Agencies who lifted the foodgrains from the intermediate Godowns into the Schools including Certificate of receipt of quantity by the School concerned.

(c) Based on claims received form the Stockiest/Wholesalers and also the claims made by the carrying Agencies from intermediate storage points to the Schools as received by the PD, DRDA/BDOs, the Deputy Commissioner will determine the quantity lifted by the Wholesalers from the FCI Godowns and also the quantity distributed in the School and place his demand for reimbursement of transport cost directly with the Govt. of India in the Ministry of Human Resource Development with copies to the Department of Education, Meghalaya and on receipt of the fund from the Govt. of India through the DRDA, he will make payment of the foodgrains accordingly.

(d) The name and addresses of the District Rural Development Agencies for each district are given at Annexure 'C'.

(e) The Deputy Commissioner will communicate directly with the Govt. of India with intimation to Govt. of Meghalaya, Educational Department the stock of foodgrains available with the wholesalers/Stockiest on the first working day

immediately following the closing date of the relevant quarter and in no case, lifting of rice should be allowed from any Wholesaler/Stockinet's storage points after the closing date.

(vi) Collection of Enrolment Statistics

In accordance with the Govt. of India's guidelines, only School Children who attended 80 per cent of the school days per month will be entitled to the benefits under the Nutrition Programme. For this purpose and for the purpose of ensuring regular and smooth flow of enrolment statistics on the basis of which the quantum of central assistance is determined, the following procedure will be strictly followed by all concerned.

(a) The Head Teacher/Seniormost Teacher of each Primary School or Headmaster/Headmistress of an Upper Primary School will prepare a report of enrolment of children in classes I – V in the prescribed proforma given at Annexure 'D'. While calculating the percentage of attendance for each month, the number of school days monthly-wise during the current academic year i.e. 95-96 as given at Annexure 'E' should be taken as the basis. This report should also be authenticated by members of the Mother-Teacher Councils where they exist or by the Local School Managing Committee. The enrolment report as per proforma at Annexure 'D' dully filled up in all respect should be submitted at the beginning of each month to the concerned Deputy Inspector of Schools. The Deputy Inspector of Schools will consolidate the attendance report of the whole sub-division for each C.D. Block/Urban area in Annexure 'F' and send the same to the District Inspector of Schools, with a copy to the Director of Public Instructions, Meghalaya, Shillong.

(b) The Inspector of Schools will consolidate the enrolment report in the Prescribed Proforma at Annexure 'G' block-wise for the whole District with rural and urban break-up and submit the same to the Director of Public Instructions, Meghalaya with a copy to the Deputy Commissioner of the District.

(c) The DPI will consolidate all such reports and submit to the Govt. of India in the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Department of Education in the proforma prescribed at Annexure 'A' for release of the requisite quantity of foodgrain to each district, with a copy to the Commissioner and Secretary, Education Meghalaya.

4. Monitoring and Supervision of the Programmes

In order to superwise and monitor the implementation of the programmes the following are being constituted at the State level, the District level and the Village level viz.

At the State level, the following Committee will be constituted to over-see the implementation of the programme and to ensure convergence of Primary Education, Primary Health Care, ECCE Nutrution and other related services, viz;

1.	Chief Secretary, Meghalaya	-	Chairman
2.	Principal Secretary/Secretary C & RD Deptt	-	Member
3.	Commissioner & Secretary, Health & Family Department	-	Member
4.	Commissioner & Secretary, Education Deptt.	-	Member
5.	Commissioner & Secretary,Social Welfare Deptt.	-	Member
6.	Commissioner & Secretary/Secretary, Food & Civil Supplies Department.	-	Member
7.	Director of Public Instructions	-	Member
8.	Director C & RD Department	-	Member
9.	Director of Supply, Meghalaya	-	Member
10.	Director of Health Services (MCH) Meghalaya	-	Member
11.	Director, Social Welfare, Meghalaya	-	Member
12.	Regional Manager, FCI, Shillong	-	Member
13.	A Representative of HRD Ministry	-	Member

At the District level, the following Committee will be constituted to create awareness, facilitate and monitor implementation of the programme and for convergence of services of related programmes such as ICDS, Health & Nutrition, with the following members :

1.	Depty Commissioner	- Chairman
2.	Inspector of Schools	- Member - Convenor
3.	Deputy Inspector's of Schools	- Member
4.	CDPOs	- Member
5.	MLAs	- Member
6.	Chairman/President, Municipalities and Town Committees.	- Member
7.	PD, DRDA	- Member
8.	DPO	- Member
9.	Local Depot Manager FCI	- Member
10.	NGO's	- Member

At the village level, in addition to the existing Managing Committees, a broad-based Village Education Committee will be constituted and will be involved for local supervision of the implementation of the Programme at the grass-root. Besides, School level Body to be known as Mother-Teacher Councils will be established in all Primary Schools, which will act as a core groups for local implementation of the programmes at the School level. The Village Education Committee will ensure universalisation of participation of children in Primary Education and for improvement of the functioning and environment of the Schools.

5. Miscellaneous

As per guidelines issued by the Govt. of India, within a period of 2 years from the date of commencement of the programme, necessary institutional arrangements will have to be made for providing cooked/pre-cooked food. Without the supplement of other

components of a diet, it will not be proper to make arrangements and to distribute cooked food involving rice only. Hence the programme needs further strengthening through provisions of other food items for which separate schemes will have to be made in due course. In the interim period, the scheme on distribution of rice will be implemented as per procedure laid down, above

Table 12

No. of Primary/Upper Primary School and Enrolments

(AIES 1993)

Name of District	Name of Block	No. of Primary Schools		No. of Upper Primary Schools		Enrolment Class (I-V)	
		Govt.	Govt. Aided	Govt.	Govt. Aided	Total Primary & Upper Primary	
West Garo Hills	Rongram	109	37	1	25	173	10264
	Dalu	130	-	1	29	160	6260
	Dadenggiri	189	-	1	12	202	2212
	Selsella	113	76	2	48	239	17088
	Betasing	131	14	-	20	165	5915
	Zikzak	87	56	2	28	173	7068
	Tikrikilla	107	-	1	22	130	7484
		866	183	8	185	1242	56291

Table 13

Primary School and Enrolment 1993
in the District and State

District	No. of	
	Govt.	Govt. Aided
1	2	3
West Garo Hills	910	183
State Total	2637	1607

Table - 14

Food Grain Requirement For 1995-96 Under National Programme Of Nutritional Support To Primary Education

State: Meghalaya

Sl. No.	RPDS/EAS Block Name	Enrolment in Classes (I-IV) as on 30-09-1993 (AIES. 1993)	Rice Requirement (QNTL) TILL 30.10.95
District: West Garo Hills			
1	Betasing	05915	443.625
2	Dadenggiri	02212	165.900
3	Dalu	06220	469.500
4	Rongram	10264	769.800
5	Selsella	17088	1281.600
6	Zikzak	07068	530.100
7	Tikrikilla	07484	566.025
TOTAL C. D. BLOCK AREA		56291	4226.550
E. TURA MUNICIPALITY (RPDS)		08751	656.325
Total District		65042	4882.875

Chapter-4

Impact of the Scheme on Enrolment in the three Development Blocks

The Dalu development block is situated to the boarder of Bangladesh and consisting of wild forests. The roads connecting at the schools are mostly kucha, the Tura urban block is capital of the district. The school facilities of Tura are better than the other blocks and children are comparitively from better economic background. The Rogram block is predominantly rural and forest area and school facilities accessibility is also very scanty. However the enrolment growth rate in these three areas

Table –1

Enrolment Growth Rates in the three (Sample) Development Blocks

Period	Development Blocks		
	Dalu (*Hill Area*)	Tura (*Urban*)	Rongram (*Rural Area*)
Pre MDM Period 1993-95	9.1%	10.99	10
After MDM Period implementation 1995-96	25%	25.30	-19

(*See table-1*) During the pre-mid-day meal programme period i.e. 1993 to 1995 was 9.1 (Dalu) 10.9 (Tura) and 10 in (Rangram) which is considered as a pretty good growth rate. The difference of growth rates between the three development blocks are negligible (see table 2) as the growth rate of Dalu was 9.1, Tura urban was 10.9 and Rongram was 10.

Table – 2

Retention Rates

Period	Dalu (*Hill Area*)	Tura (*Urban Area*)	Rongram (*Rural Area*)
Pre MDM Period			
1993-94			
1994-95	72.65	45	82
After MDM Period			
1995-96	100	60	74

The retention rates had varied from each development block. The data shows that even before the MDM-scheme was implemented the enrolment growth rate was high which means the demand for education was high. The growth rates after the MDM – scheme implementation were rather interesting as the growth rate was 25 per cent in Dalu, 25.30 per cent in Tura Urban and shockingly a negative growth rate in Rongram (-19%) it was because of the Jhuming Cultivation and densly forest areas. Thus the situational problems, potentially in each area are not homogeneous even in one district. This aspect of educational problems need to be addressed for local level planning along with economic planning.

Table – 3
Occupation of Parents (in percentage)

	Occupation	Dalu (*Hill Area*)	Tura (*Urban*)	Rongram (*Rural Area*)
1.	Farmers	39	Nil	9.5
2.	Hawkers	8.3	13.3	Nil
3.	Jhumlo Cultivators	44.4	Nil	90
4.	Labourer	8.3	6.8	0.5
5.	Service	Nil	66.6	Nil
6.	Business	Nil	13.3	Nil

Table 3 reveals that in Dalu majority of the people practices Jhum cultivation, in Tura since it is an Urban area most of them are belonging to the service class. Rongram is dominated by Jhumcultivators.

Thus local area level planning can help to eradicate intro district divergence in educational attainments. The local planning would consider not only the educational problems but also closely related problems like economics social and geographical which generally overlooked by the top level plans.

The economic background of the 99% of the children of the study area seems to be poor. The data (see table 5) shows that except in Trua urban area the remaining parts of the study area majority of them are in the income group of below Rs. 20,000 per annum. Since Tura urban area is dominated by the service class, the economic condition are much better than the other two development blocks. The research data reveals that the demand for the incentive schemes and other related programmes are different for Tura People. The incentive of mid-day meals may not be too attractive for them, as in the case of Dalu and Rongram majority are from below poverty line, gaining some rice by sending child to school finds as some economic benefit and feels child is earning for her self while learning. Therefore parents are interested in sending the other children also to the school since the average size of the family in this study area is big (3 to 4 children per family), parents feel this scheme gives them some economic relief. However due to non-availability of proper data and some technical problems all the children enrolled are not getting the dry ration. The scheme has shown positive impact on girls' enrolment and retention in two of the three development areas. The strong and unavoidable problems, which were identified for high dropout, are listed below (see table 6), their problems can be tackled only by the local area level planning. No matter how much positive impact the scheme has on the enrolment and dropout but the administrative and organisational problems are there which are hampering the way for the smooth functioning. (see table 4).

Table – 4
Income of the Parents (In Percentage)

Income Range (In Rs. Per Year)	Dalu (Hill)	Tura (Urban)	Rongram (Rural Area)
Below 5000	44.4	13.3	44.7
Rs.5000-10,000	44.4	13.3	48.9
Rs.10,000-15,000	12.2	26.7	6.4
Rs.15,000-20,000	-	6.8	-
20,000 above	-	40.0	-

Table - 5
Reasons for Dropout – Block-wise Analysis

S. No.	Dalu	Tura Urban	Rongram
	1	2	3
1	Due to hilly area and wild forests, parents were afraid to send the children to the school.	-	-
2	Parents were unable to provide food regularly for the children before child-rengo to school.	-	Same as opposite cited in the column No. 1 item No. 2
3	Children generally work with the parents in the fields.	-	Same as in column one item no. 3
4	Lack of proper school facilities make them disinterested in school	Lack of proper facilities.	-
5	Extreme poverty of the parents, they were unable to meet the private expenditure like books cloth shoes etc.	Unable to meet – The Private Cost	Same as opposite in column 1 and item no. 5

6	Lack of awareness among the parents	-	-
7	Lack of job avenues made them disinterested in education.	-	-
8	Since the job opportunities are very less in the area, the desire to send the children to school has reduced	-	-

Table - 6

Problems and Hurdles Faced by the Organisers in Implementing the Scheme

S. No.	Dalu	Tura Urban	Rongrram
1	Money given for loading the rice sacks is very meagre.	As in the column no. 1 and item no. 1	As in the column no. 1 item no. 1
2	The quantity of rice allotted per child is very less.	-	-
3	Secretary of the scheme has spent his own pocket money for lifting the sacks.	-	As in the column no. 1 item no. 1
4	No other facilities are available for successfully implementing the scheme	-	-
5	No labour cost is given by the government	As in the column no. 1 item no. 1	As in the column no. 1 item no. 1

Impact of the Scheme

In this chapter impact of the scheme has been measured in three development Blocks. Viz. Dalu; Tura Urban and Rongram. The impact has been measured by

analysing the trend of enrolment and retention of girl children during Pre-MDM period and after MDM scheme implementation period. The data has been collected from 1992 to March 1996.

Dalu Development Block

Dalu Development Block is situated to the border of Bangladesh and consisting of wild forests. The total population is 45,241. In this development block we have selected 12 co- education primary schools and 36 households were interviewed. In this area 41 per cent of the schools are having the enrolment less than 100 and around 59 per cent of the schools are having the total strength of more than 100. The percentage of girls enrolment was 49.53 and wherein the boys was 50.46 during 1995- 96. The analysis shows that 100 per cent of the roads are Kuchha. The committee members who are incharge of the scheme are eleven in number and they used to meet thrice in a year.

Enrolment Trend

The growth rate of the enrolment of girls during the study period 1993 to 1995 was 9 per cent and the growth rate after the governments incentive schemes (MDM) implementation was 25 percent.

The average attendance rate during the pre MDM scheme (1993- 94, 94-95) was 67%, 77.2% respectively. The average attendance after the MDM implementation was 100 per cent. (see the table below)

Table -15

Enrolment and Detention of Girls during Pre and after

MDM Scheme Implementation

Period	Year	Enrolment Growth Rate	Average (in Percentage Attendance
Pre MDM Period	1993-94	91%	72.65
	1994-95	-	77.2
After Imple-menta-tion	1995-96	25%	100

It is understood from the above analysis that the impact of MDM-Scheme on girls enrolment and retention is very positive despite several problems which are discussed below under different headings.

Economic Background of the Beneficiaries

In the Dalu Development area 36 households were interviewed. According to the occupation of the parents they are grouped under four categories like farmers. Hawkers, Jhum cultivators and labourers. The number of farmers are 39 percent; the percentage of Hawkers are 8.3; Jhum cultivators are 44.4 percentage, and lastly the percentage of labourers are 8.3 only. (see the table below occupation of the parents (in percentage).

Table - 16

Occupation of the parents

Occupation	Farmer	Hawker	Jhoom cultivators	Labourers	Total
Total	14	3	16	3	36
Percentage	39	8.3	44.4	8.3	100

Table - 17

Annual Income of the Parents

	Income range	No. of Households	Percentage
below	Rs. 5000	16	44.4
	Rs.5000-10,000	16	44.4
	Rs.10,000-15,000	4	12.2

The family size in this area is slightly bigger as only 25 percent of people has a family size of 2 children and 75 percentage of people are having more than two children. Thus the analysis reveals that majority of the beneficiaries are from the farmers families with a large family size and low annual income.

Parents Perception

The above analysis reveals that majority of the parents are agriculture labours with low annual income and 75 percentage of people are having more than ideal family size i.e. 2 children. Therefore in a hill area with no higher income occupation it is utmost difficult to send all the children to school. Since the poverty level is very high

they are not in a position to meet the private cost of education. Majority of the parents had expressed, their inability to give one full meal to the child in a day. In such a circumstances, sending children daily to school is rather difficult and to retain the children in the school may not be possible. It may be possible only if Residential Schools are established in the area then the parents does not feel any burden.

The reasons given by the parents for not sending the children to school regularly are poverty; high cost of other educational expenditure and because of Jhooming cultivation. Around 49 percentage of people expressed because of poverty they are unable to send the children regularly, and 16 percentage people expressed that because of Jhooming cultivation they are unable to send the children regularly. Around 35 percentage of parents observed that the private cost of education is very high and they are not in a position to meet the private expenditure.

The different incentives desired by the parents in addition to midday meals were Books (90%) Money (95%) and cooked meals (52%). More than 99% of the parents agreed that after the implementation of the scheme their economic burden has decreased. Many of them has expressed that along with rice, Dal, Vegetables and Milk also should be provided to the children.

Around 90% of the parents experessed their willingness to send their children to school even in the event of MDM discontinues but 10% of the parents expressed their inability to send the children to school if MDM scheme is discontinued.

The data on expenditure incurred on lifting rice sacks shows that an average of Rs. 500/- extra was incurred by each school to life the rice sacks in addition to the money given by the government i.e. Rs. 25 per guintal. Therefore if the transport cost of the rice item is increased it positive effect on girls education despite many lacunas.

Retention Problems

The main reasons for Low Retention of girls as observed by the school Head Masters are given below :

1. Dalu is a Hill area with wild forests so parents were afraid to send the children to the school

2. Parents were unable to provide food regularly for the children before going to school

3. Children generally work with parents in the field

4. Lack of school facilities made them disinterested in school

5. Because of extreme poverty of the parents, they were unable to meet the other private expenditure of education of the the children like books; clothes, shoes, and meals etc.

6. Lack of awarness also the importance of girls education in the parents

7. Lack of job opportunities in area also made the parents disinterested.

Problems faced by the Administrators in running the scheme are listed below:

1. Money for loading the Rice sacks is very very meagre
2. The quantity of Rice allowed to distribute per child is very less.
3. Because of lack of proper communication net work system with the centre, the data regarding the enrolment supplied to the centre at the time of implementation of the scheme was old as a result in a family one child is eligible to receive the rice and the other is not.

4. Secretary appointed for the scheme his own money to life the rice from Tura to Dalu.
5. Rice is too less for a three months as child gets only 3 kg. For 3 months.
6. There is no specific measurement tool for distribution.
7. The administrative work is very tough.
8. No labour charges are paid by the govt.
9. No other assistance is given for lifting the sacks of the rice.
10. No facilities are available in the school.
11. Rice distribution has been done with the own cost of the school
12. Non-availability of transport facilities.

Tura Urban Area

In this area we have interviewed 5 primary schools and 15 households. The analysis of the schools and Economic background of the Beneficiaries and parents perceptions are given below.

School Profile

To the percentage enrolment of girls to boys is 45.70. The road network system is good as 100 per cent of these schools are having pucca roads. The total committee members of the scheme are eleven number. Most of the beneficiaries of the MDM schemes are girls.

Enrolment Trend

During the pre MDM period i.e. 1993-94 to 1994-95. The percentage of girls enrolment was 39.67 during the 1993-94 and 36.97 was during 1994-95 (see below table) and the growth rate was 10.99.

Table 18

Girls Enrolment Trend Before and after MDM Implemented

Years	Period	Enrolment	Growth (in percentage)
1993-94	Before MDM	39.67	10.99
1994-95	Implements	36.97	-
1995-96	After MDM Implements	47.31	25.30

The growth rate after implementation of the MDM was double to the pre MDM period growth rate.

Retention Rate of Girls Before and After Implementation of MDM Schemes

The average attendance rate shows that retention of the girls children was less than 50 per cent before implementation of the scheme (see below table):

Table - 19

Retention Rate Before and After MDM Scheme Implemented

Years	Period	Average Attendance	Retention Rate (in percentage)
1993-94	Pre MDM	45	-
1994-95	-	45	-
1995-96	After MDM Implements	60	-

The attendance rate after implementation of the scheme has increased substantially i.e. 45 to 60 per cent but in comparison to other areas the attendance rate is low since the schools are located in urban and the road transport facilities are

comparatively better than the Dalu and Rongram area given by the school Principal for the low retention of the girl students are given below.

Economic Background of the Beneficiaries

Among the parents who were interviewed were 66.6 per cent of them are in service class; and only 13.3 per cent are in the business class. Hawkers are 13.3 per cent and labourers are 6.8 per cent. The annual income of the house holds has ranged from Rs. 30,000/- (see below table).

Table - 20

Occupation of the Parents

Name of the Occupation	Percentage
Service	66.6
Business	13.3
Hawker	13.3
Labourer	6.8

Income of the Parents

More than 53.3 per cent of the parents are in the group of below Rs. 20,000 income per annum and around 46.7 per cent of parents are in the income group of more than Rs. 20,000 (see below table):

Table - 21

Income Group of the Households

Annual Income in '000	Percentage of Households
Below 5	13.3
5 to 10	13.3
10 to 15	26.7
15 to 20	6.8
20 to 25	26.7
25 to 30	13.3

The Family Size

The house hold survey reveals that more than 70 per cent has a family size of two children and the average family size of the area is 4 children. Even though 90 per cent of the children are enrolled in the school at first instance, they are unable to continue because of the poverty.

The majority of the parents has observed that the MDM scheme has reduced their economic burden. They pointed out that even in the case if MDM scheme discontinued they are willing to send the children to the school.

The other incentives desired by them: more than the MDM are Books; slates and Money. More than 90 per cent of the parents are ready to contribute their service for better implementation of the scheme.

Reasons for low Retention other Implementation

Problems - School Preception

1. Lack of social awareness.
2. No cooperation from parents
3. The other expenditure of education is high therefore the parents feels it difficult to send the children to schools.

1. No sufficient money provision is there for carrying rice sacks
2. Food supply is so meagre, so parents are not satisfied
3. The quality of rice is very bad
4. No community support in implementation of the scheme
5. No provision for keeping the ricesacks.

Suggestions (Parents Perception)

To improve the scheme various suggestion are given by the parents and frequencies are given below in percentages:

Table - 22

	Suggestions	Percentage
1.	Continuity of the Scheme	90
2.	More Money for Lifting such sacks	100
3.	More Quantity of rice	70
4.	Good Quality of Rice	80
5.	Milk should be given alongwith the rice	20
6.	Separate organisers should be reduced	50

Since all the households interviewed are from urban area their suggestion are more towards the better organisation of the scheme than request for incentive schemes.

The above analysis reveals that majority of the parents are from below middle income group with big family sizes. Therefore even though they have a desire to send the school regularly, their economic poverty is preventing them. The desire for Books and Money reveals the intensity of the problem. A better micro level planning and implementation of the incentive scheme will help us to achieve the target of universal retention in this area.

Rongram Development Block

Profile of the Sample Schools

In Rongram area 15 primary schools were studied and 45 parents were interviewed. The total number of schools in this area are having no-education system. The total strength of the schools is 1,530. The percentage of girls enrolment is 57.5 which is much higher; than the boys i.e. 42.2. The total number of schools are connected with the kutcha roads. The total number of committee members were eleven in each school and the total percentage of beneficiaries of the scheme are mainly from class one female children.

Enrolment Trend

The female child participation in these three years was 50 per cent. The growth rate from 93-94 to 94-95 was 10% and surprisingly the growth rate from 94-95 has shown negatives growth rate i.e. -19.

Retention rate: During the pre-MDM period the retention rate was 74 per cent (1993-94) and 86 per cent during 1994-95. The retention also shown declining trend after MDM period i.e. 74% which is very shocking (see below given table):

Table - 23

Rongram - Enrolment Rentention Rate

Year	Period	Enrolment	Retention
1993-94	Pre MDM Period	10%	82%
1994-95	-	-	82%
1995-96	After MDM implementation	-19%	74%

During the period 1993 to 1995, the enrolment trend and retention rate has shown positive trend. After 1995 there was a serious problem in retention and enrolment; therefore there is a need to explore the reasons at the grass root level in this black. However, through our study some of the economic problems of the children are studies and they are discussed below:

Economic Background of the Beneficiaries

The socio-economic conditions of the 45 number of guardians were surveyed. The data shows that 99.5 per cent of the people are farmers by profession and only 0.5 per cent are labourers. The annual income of the 44.7 per cent of the people are in the income group of less than Rs. 5000/- per annum and 48.9 per cent of people are in the income group of 5 to 10 thousand rupees per annum. Around 6.4 per cent are between 10 to 15 thousands rupees per annum, (see below):

Table 24

Number of Parents in the Income Groups

in Rs.	In Percentage
Less than Rs. 5000	44.7
5-10	48.9
10-15	6.4

Family Size

The data shows that the family size of this area is normally very high. More than 90 per cent has more than 2 children. The interview schedule reveals that the main reasons for dropout was extreme poverty, large families and girls child normally was looking after younger sibling. Since the private expenditure on education is so high they are unable to send the children to school regularly. The incentives desired by them in addition to the rice are Books, Slates, and Money.

However, more than 85 per cent of the parents feel that supply of rice has reduced their economic burden. Only 15 per cent of people has disagreed for that.

Community Involvement

The interview schedules revealed that 100 per cent of the community shown interest to help the government voluntarily to make the scheme success.

Suggestions given by the Community for Retention

There are number of suggestions given by the Community to increase the enrolment and retention. Some of the suggestions are given below:

1. Good quality of rice: Around 80 per cent has suggested that the rice should be of good quality.
2. Total private cost of expenditure should be met by the government, like free supply of books, slates, uniform and some money should be given apart from the rice.
3. Remunerations to teachers.
4. Dal, vegetables and milk was desired by around 2 per cent.
5. Remuneration for lifting, stocks should be increased.

INCIDENCE OF POVERTY ON GIRLS EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION:

Poverty, which is a social phenomenon, is a strong characteristic of the third world countries. It deter not only in the way of development but at the same times stands as a stumbling block in the implementation of all types of strategies to uplift the economic system from the low-level equilibrium trap. A country is said to be grabbed by the spectrum of poverty when a section of population is unable to full fill the bare necessity of life. When a substantial portion of the population persist only with or without the subsistence in the country is said to be plagued with mass poverty.

MEANING OF POVERTY IN INDIAN CONTEXT:

A yardstick called "*Poverty Line*" determines how much poor are living in India. Generally, a poor country like India poverty line may be defined as a minimum level of income, which is just sufficient to buy the bare means of subsistence. The Planning Commission has defined poverty on the basis of per day nutritional requirement of 2400 calories in rural sector and 2100 calories per person in the urban areas. When the calories intake expressed in the monthly nominal terms, it turns out to be Rs.228.90 in the rural areas and Rs. 264.10 in the urban areas, when discounted at 1993-94 prices. On an annual income basis a rural house hold (consisting of five family members) is said to be living below the Poverty Line if it's annual family income is less than Rs. 13734/= and for an urban house hold it is estimated at Rs.15846/-(I.C Dhinjra, Evolution of the Indian Economics, 1997).

The incidence of poverty also differs amongst the states of India. It is less than 20% in the state like Punjab and more than 50% in the states like Orissa, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar in Uttar Pradesh and some North Eastern states of India as well. Mainly, the poor in India comprise of Small Land Lords, Agricultural Labour, Households and Villege Artisans.

To remove poverty a great deal of efforts are needed. It is only due to the low productivity as propounded by R. Nurkse, is the root cause of underdevelopment. To break the "*Vicious Circle of Poverty*" a high level of capital formation and investment not only on physical quantity but also on human capital is needed.

CONTEXT OF POVERTY IN EDUCATION:

Education may be one of the vital factor in building the human capital of a country. Lower the level of education lesser will be the productivity and development and vice versa. Earning are directly related with increase in the level of education. The earnings of graduates of all streams are nearly six times more than the illiterates and 3.5 times more as compared with those with persons having primary level of education.

Education as such for an underdeveloped country like India may be the cause or the consequence of underdevelopment and poverty. It is due to lower income of the people, failed to afford for education and due to their low level of education their percapita earning remains low and succumb to poverty for ever. Here the role of the Govt. in subsidising education comes in to prominence.

The goal of the universal elementary education is a part of our concern to equality and social justice. The Directive principle in Article 45 to the Indian constitution stipulates "*The state shall endeavor to provide within a period of ten years from the commencement of this constitution which means Free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of fourteen years*". It means the target year was upto 1960. This however, could not be achieved till date.

The reasons for non-attainment of the goals are because of (*1*) Rapid increase in population, (*2*) lack of infrastructural facilities, (*3*) poverty of the parents' (*4*) social taboos (*5*) lack of awareness and female illiteracy.

GIRLS EDUCATION IN INDIA:

In recognition of the importance of girls' education in accelerating socio-economic development .The makers of constitution of India has attached priority to girls' education, therefore the government of India formulated a variety of measures from time to time to promote girls' education. Even though girls in India are lagging behind in literacy, school enrolment, technical and professional education. Realising these problems of girls' education and their development, the decade 1991-2000 has been declared as the decade for the girl child.

As a result in the present education system of India, one of the important thrust area is that of girls education. The girls' participation in education remains far from satisfaction at all levels especially in remote and rural areas. Remote areas in the Indian context includes the mountains in the north west and north east India; desert areas in the western part of India.

The areas are characterized by weak interaction with the outside world and poor communication means. Economically these areas are underdeveloped areas with low agricultural potential. Economies are at a very low level of inter-sectors or intra-sectoral diversification. Large number of people living in the interior are still of pre production stages as a result poverty is also at a higher rate. Poverty in the third world countries in general and in the case of India particular, differs from the poverty that appears in the developed countries. The advanced countries are facing a negligible quantum of relative poverty only. Where as India is facing not only poverty in relative sense but in absolute terms as well? In such a situation it is not possible to spend money without taking care of the effectiveness.

INCENTIVES SCHEMES FOR GIRLS' EDUCATION:

The research literatures related to problems of girls' education and cost effectiveness of the incentive programmes clearly indicated the social and economic

constraints. Many development programmes and incentive schemes were introduced; despite the fact, the dropout is much higher than the boys. Special programmes for the promotion of girls' education were initiated as early as 1957-58. The main schemes initiated were; provision of attendance scholarships for girl students, the appointment of school mothers, construction of quarters for women teachers and payment of stipends for the teacher training courses. The recent and latest incentive programme introduced for the improvement of enrollment at the primary level is *National Nutrition Programme* (*NNP*) famously called as *Midday Meals Programme*. By and large, this programme for accelerating enrollment has mixed success on girls' education in many parts of India. In order to understand the problems at in-depth level, the present study has been taken up in a Hilly remote area of India i.e. some parts of West Garo Hills district of Meghalaya state of North East of India.

STUDY AREA:

The present study is intended to examine the impact of this Economic incentives on girls' enrolment and retention in a hilly remote district where female literacy is very low and dropout is high i.e. West Garo Hills district of Meghalaya State. Meghalaya State is situated in north east of India. The main objectives of the study are as follows:

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

To explore the problems relating to enrolment and poverty in primary schools in a remote hilly areas especially on girls.

To measure the changes in girls enrolment after implementation of an economic incentive programme i.e. National Nutrition Programme (Midday Meal Programme).

To asses the impact of poverty on girls enrolment.

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY:

It was proposed to undertake this research study in 10% of primary schools in three backward blocks of West Garo Hills; thus 40 primary schools from three Development Blocks were selected on the basis of random sampling. The three blocks are titled as Dalu, Rongaram,and Tura. The study was conducted with the help of questionnaires to the school headmasters, parents and guardians of the children, who are attending the schools, and administrators at every layer of the Education Department. The statistical techniques used in this study are simple percentage, ratios, frequency table and correlation coefficient. The indicators used in this study are both related to poverty and education like income level, literacy level, occupation, dependency ratio, enrollment and retention rates.

Historical Background of the Garos' and the Garo Hills:

The state of Meghalaya was created on 21st January 1972. Before the inception of Meghalaya, the Garo Hills and united Khasi & Jaintia Hills were the two districts of composite Assam. The district is called Garo Hills as the Garos predominantly inhabit in this district. The British people perhaps gave the name of Garo.

The Garos are a matriarchal and matrilineal tribe. According to Garo customary law of in-line inheritance only the youngest daughter or the one who has been elected by the parents with full agreement of the "*ohras*" (*male elderly members of the clan*) and other relatives, can inherit the property of the family. All other daughters and their husbands are called "*Agadi*" or out siders.

The Garos have several divisions inhabiting different parts of West Garo Hills and having more or less distinctive characteristics.

The Garos have mainly been converted to Christians. The rests are non-Christians called songsarek or animists.

GEOGRAPHICAL AND DEMOGRAPHIC FEATURES OF GARO HILLS:

The Garo Hills is a hilly district bounded by Dhubri of Assam in the north west and north, by Bangladesh in the south west and south and by Khasi Hills in the east. Till the operation of Meghalaya the Garo Hills was an undivided district.

TOPOGRAPHY; CLIMATE AND THE PEOPLE

The district is partly hilly and partly plains. Roughly, one-fourth of the area of the district is plain and rest is hilly. The two principal hill ranges in Garo Hills are Tura and Arballa, which runs from south east to northwest. Main peaks are Nokrek (1418 m), is the highest in Garo Hills.

AGRICULTURE, FOREST A MINERAL AND INDUSTRIAL RESOURCES

Rice, Jute, Cotton, Pulses are the main agricultural products of the districts. The people follow still the primitive method of agriculture Jhumming. But now the government has launched Measures to discontinue this type of cultivation by substituting it by terrace cultivation, and the soil conservation department has taken up the cause but progress is not so satisfactory.

The forest of Garo Hills yield valuable timbers of sal, Teak, Titachamp, and animals like tigers, elephants, bears, buffalloes leopards, barking deer and various kinds of rare animals and other species' birds are found in this districts. Deposits of coal, limestones and cement are the mains in the districts of Garo Hills. The coal deposit at Nongalbibra is now operated in small scales. The other mineral resources have not yet been tapped and operated.

COMMUNICATION:

Postal is the principal means of communication in the districts. The govt. is trying to cover the districts with net work of roads but could not be achieved well yet and the system cannot be said as well - developed. The Geographical problems and lack of good net work of roads have shown an impact on the education of girls.

The district has lack of proper employment opportunity level, Economic and organisational development. The people of this area are still practicing the Jhum type cultivation, which is an indicator of underdevelopment. In the following section, girls education in the district in general and problems of retention particularly in three development Blocks is discussed.

DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION AND LITERACY IN GARO HILLS (*HISTORICAL BACKGROUND*)

Towards the end of 1826 British government started a school in Singimari in the western border or West Garo Hills district. But the project failed.

Another British officer made another attempt in this direction but this also could not succeed. In the sixties of the last century the American Baptist Missionaries brought a new influence and education to the Garo Hills. Their operation was started from Goalpara, which was a district of Assam. With the advance of the work the missionaries settle at Tura in 1878 and conversion to Christianity was made in to the conversion to literacy. Upto 1905 the entire administration of primary education in Garo Hills was left almost in the hands of the American Baptist ... But in 1905 the chief commissioner of Assam started opening of a number of state schools.

In 1906 *Middle English School* was started at Tura, the district headquarters, on a grant in aid basis. By this time a Deputy Inspector of schools was appointed to supervise the education affairs of the district. For secondary education by 1914 there was a middle English School at Tura as well as one in the Senegal border area of Mahandraganj and by 1941 literacy had progressed in Garo Hills.

The story of education activities in Garo Hills seemed to have been one of irregular fluctuation. One major problem appeared to have been the transitory nature of the village, which shifted from site to site along with their shifting cultivation. The large villages broke into hamlets. Even if the site or the parent village remained unaltered, yet the fact that a considerable proportion of the villagers lived in the field for months together, would have been bound to affect the schooling of children. This practice is still in vogue in some interior villages but the dimension of practice has been reduced now. After independence came the five years plans and development programmes to face the challenge of development in every sphere of life of the nation. In the sphere of education also development programmes were formulated and it started expansion and development. (*See the tables below*).

Table -II

Literate of W. Garo Hills

Year	Total Population	Total Literate	Percentage
1951	2,47,560	37,710	15.2
1961	3,06,139	61,334	20.3
1971	4,06,615	95,825	23.58
1981	5,05,003	1,37,762	28.82
1991	-	-	39.32

Source : Meghalaya Education Commission 1977&1991 Census Reportsof India.

PRESENT POSITION OF PRIMARY EDUCATION IN WEST GARO HILLS

Table -3

Number of Primary Schools in West Garo Hills

Year	Number of Primary Schools				Total
	Govt.	Local	Private	Un-Aided	
	1	2	3	4	5
1981-82	02	1538	50	74	1664
1981-83	02	1538	50	88	1678
1983-84	02	1538	50	87	1677
1994-95	28	0926	04	03	0961

Source:Office of the Administrator, Primary Education and Deputy Inspector of School, Tura, Baghmara, William Nagar (Momin, NIEPA, 1986)

The figures in the above table show that the number of Govt. Local board or District Council, Aided or Village Council Aided Primary Schools remained constant as there was no taking up of new Schools under the administration. There are some purely private Schools whose numbers are fluctuating, sometimes opened and some-times some are closed. The two Govt. Primary Schools were one Junior Basic Training practising and second Tura Training practicing Schools attached to each of the Training institute.

GIRLS EDUCATION IN W. GARO HILLS

Education of girls is a task beset with difficulties in India even among the Garos where the women have liberty and personal rights, it was not easy to convince them of the advantages of female education. From the beginning, however, the girls have been urged to study in the village schools along with the boys and girls have been found in most of their schools.

There was evidence to show that girls exhibited a natural bent for learning but the need of the girls help at home poverty of the parents and the lack of interest on the part of the parents regarding the education of their daughters due to low employment apart unites very modern educational development very slow due to low employment apart unites very modern educational development very slow.

It was David Scott, the civil commissioner and Agent to the governor-general during British time, first proposed for a girl's school for Garos later many missionaries has worked for girls education. After the independence number of schemes were introduced to subside the private cost such as midday-meals, free text books, free uniforms and attendence scholarship. The W. Garo Hills district got maximum number of beneficiaries of all schemes. Contrary to the girls' enrolment was very less in this district in comparison to total enrolment of other districts. At present, the nationwide implemented incentive scheme i.e. National Nutrition Programme (Mid day meals scheme) has shown positive impact on the economically underdeveloped Blocks and economically poorer people. In the following section it is discussed briefly.

National Programme for Nutrition Support to Primary Education

(*Mid-day Meals Scheme*)

Introduction

The Government of India vide letter No. F-6-2/95-DESK (EE) dtd. 3rd August, 1995 had issued detailed Guidelines for Central assistance under the National programme for Nutritional support to primary education commonly known as Mid-day Meal Programme. The objective of the Programme is to give a boost to universalisation of Primary Education by increasing enrolment, retention and attendance and simultaneous impact on nutrition on Primary School Children from class I-V.

The programme, which has covered all Government, local body and Government-aided Primary Schools in the States/UT(s), will be implemented in three phases. The first phase has commenced from 1995-96 and covered all Primary Schools located in Revamped Public Distributions System (RPPS)/Employment Assurance Scheme has (EAS) Block and 40 Low Female Literacy (LFL) Blocks. The second phase has commenced from 1996-97 and covered all C.D. Blocks with Female Literacy lower than the national average. The third phase which has commenced from 1997-98 and covered all the remaining Primary Schools.

The main feature of the programme as contained in the Government of India Guidelines are as follows:

The Central Assistance will be made available to local bodies authorities district-wise such as Panchayat/Nagarpalika at the rate of 100 gms per student per day, to be lifted from the nearest F.C.I. Godown free of cost in every quarterly cycle of 3 months period. Such local bodies will have a flexibility to organise provision of cooked/pre-cooked food by the school through Parent Teacher Committees and other voluntary

organisations within a period of 2 years. However, in the interim period as a preclude to the provision of cooked/pre-cooked food in the schools, foodgrains like rice/wheat at the rate of 3 Kg per student per month will be distributed to all Primary School Children from Class I-V with a minimum attendance of 80%.

After the implementation of the schemes in the three development blocks of the hilly district i.e. West Garo Hills, positive impact has been notice in the economically poorer families in the hill and rural areas than urban. It is discussed in detail in the following section.

Impact of the Incentive Scheme on Enrolment and Retention on Three Development Blocks:

The Dalu development block is situated to the boarder of Bangladesh and consisting of wild forests. The roads connecting at the schools are mostly kucha, the Tura urban block is capital of the district. The school facilities of Tura are better than the other blocks and children are comparitively from better economic background. The Rogram block is predominantly rural and forest area and school facilities accessibility is also very scanty. However the enrolment growth rate in these three areas

Table –1

Enrolment Growth Rates in the three (Sample) Development Blocks

Period	Development Blocks		
	Dalu (*Hill Area*)	Tura (*Urban*)	Rongram (*Rural Area*)
Pre MDM Period			
1993-95	9.1%	10.99	10
After MDM Period implementation			
1995-96	25%	25.30	-19

(*See table-1*) During the pre-mid-day meal programme period i.e. 1993 to 1995 was 9.1 (Dalu) 10.9 (Tura) and 10 in (Rangram) which is considered as a pretty good growth rate. The difference of growth rates between the three development blocks are negligible (see table 2) as the growth rate of Dalu was 9.1, Tura urban was 10.9 and Rangram was 10.

Due to non-availability of proper data and some technical problems in estimation of the eligibility of the children some of the children enrolled are not able to get the dry ration. The scheme has shown positive impact on girls' enrolment and retention in two of the three development block areas. The strong and unavoidable problem which were identified for high dropout are listed below (see table V), these problems can be tackled only by the local area level planning. No matter how much positive impact the scheme has on the enrolment and reduction of dropout but the administrative and organisational problems are there which are hampering the way for the smooth functioning.

Changes in Retention Rates:

Table –1V

Retention Rates of the Three (Sample) Development Blocks

Period	Dalu (*Hill Area*)	Tura (*Urban Area*)	Rongram (*Rural Area*)
Pre MDM Period 1993-95	72.65	45	82
After MDM Period 1995-96	100	60	74

The retention rates had varied from each development block after the implementation of the scheme. The data shows that even before the MDM-scheme was implemented the enrolment growth rate was high which means the demand for education wa high. The growth rates after the MDM - scheme implementation were rather interesting as the growth rate was 25 per cent in Dalu, 25.30 per cent in Tura urban and shockingly a negative growth rate in Rongram (-19%) it was because of the Jhumn cultivation. The retention rates of the blocks after the implementation of the scheme were very positive as in Dalu it has increased from 72.65 per cent to 100 per cent. In Tura urban 45 per cent to 60 per cent and in Rogram it has decreased from 82 per cent to 74 per cent. The potential reason for the 3rd impact is becomes the primitive method of cultivation low economic status of the parents and lack of income generating opportunities in the block. Majorities are of the opinion that even if you give one meal to the children to attract to school, they are not in a position to make use of it. Firstly as the private cost is so high, parents are not in a position to meet that cost. Secondly because of the Jhum cultivation (*Shifting Cultivation*) children more with the parents from one place to another, no moving with the parents. Thirdly, since Rangaram block is rural hilly and underdeveloped in infrastructure facilities parents are afraid to send the small girls to school in fear of wild animals. At the time they are able to protect them selves, parents get them married (*approximately at the age of 13 to 14 years*).

Therefore, un-development of the block poverty of the people and overall illiteracy has a severe impact on the education of girls. Therefore we feel the MDM scheme does not have any impact (*zero impact*) on this block as this local area has different types of problems like lack of school accountability; Jhumn Cultivation and densely forest areas. Thus the situational, problems, in each area are not homogeneous even in one district. These aspects of educational problems need to be addressed in local level planning along with economic planning.

The poverty is much higher in Rangaram as the data shows majority of the people are in the income range of below Rs.10,000 per annum (*$ 50 to 100 per annum approximately*).

Reasons for Dropout – Block-wise Analysis

Table No. -V

SL	Dalu (Hiill Area)	Tura (*Urban Area*)	Rongram
	1	2	3
1	Due to hilly area and wild forests, parents were afraid to send the children to the school.	-	Same as opposite cited with column no. 1 item 1.
2	Parents were unable to provide food regularly for the children before child-rengo to school.	-	Same as opposite cited in the column No. 1 item No. 2
3	Children generally work with the parents in the fields.	-	Same as in column one item no. 3
4	Lack of proper school facilities make them disinterested in school	Lack of proper facilities.	-
5	Extreme poverty of the parents, they were unable to meet the private expenditure like books cloth shoes etc.	Unable to meet – The Private Cost	Same as opposite in column 1 and item no. 5
6	Lack of awareness among the parents	-	-
7	Lack of job avenues made them disinterested in education.	Lack of Job Opportunities	Same as opposite cited in column 1 item 7.

Analysis of Poverty and Economic Background of the Dropouts

The Dalu development block is situated to the boarder of Bangladesh and consisting of wild forests. The roads connecting at the schools are mostly kucha, the Tura urban block is capital of the district. The school facilities of Tura are better than the other blocks and children are comparatively from better economic background. The Ragaram block is predominantly rural and forest area and school facilities accessibility is also very scanty. The poverty in these blocks are also visable since there is no economic development in the District.In the following few indicators of povert are analysed to assess the relationship with dropout and importance of economic incentive schemes for accelerating the enrollment.

Income of the Parents of the School children.

The economic background of the 99% of the children of the study area seems to be poor. The data (see table V1)shows that except in Tura urban area the remaining parts of the study area majority of them are in the income group of below Rs.20,000/- per annum ($*465 approximately*). Since the service class dominates Tura urban area, the economic conditions are much better than the other two development blocks. The research data reveals that the demand for the incentive schemes and other related programmes are different for Tura people. The incentive of mid-day meals may not be too attractive for them, as in the case of Dalu and Rongram. In theses two blocks majority are from below poverty line, so gaining some rice by sending child to school finds as some economic benefit and feels child is earning for her self while learning. Therefore, parents are interested in sending the other children also to the school since the average size of the family in the two blocks are big (*3 to 4 children per family*), parents felt that the scheme has given them some economic relief.

Table -V1

Income of the Parents (In Percentage)

Income Range (In Rs. Per Year)	In $* (approximatley)	Dalu (Hill)	Tura (Urban)	Rongram (Rural Area)
Below 5000	Below-116	44.4	13.3	44.7
Rs.5000-10,000	116-233	44.4	13.3	48.9
Rs.10,000-15,000	233-349	12.2	26.7	6.4
Rs.15,000-20,000	349-465	-	6.8	-
20,000 above	465 and above	-	40.0	-

*: Expressed as $1=Rs.43/= (According to rate as on 1st June, 1999.)

Figure No-1, Income Pattern in the three developmental blocks.

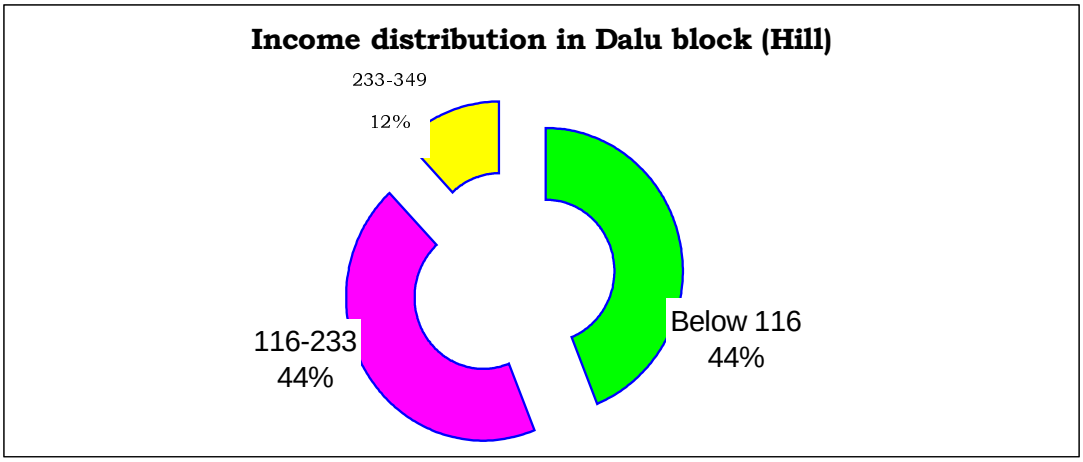
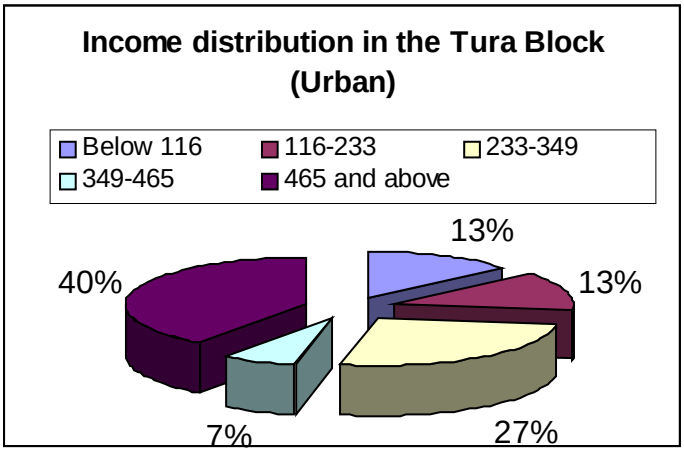
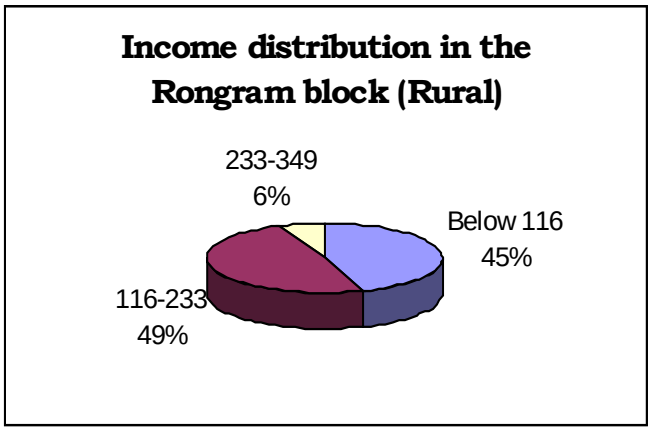


Figure No-2, Income Pattern in the three developmental blocks.





2. Occupation of the Parents:

Table VII reveals that in Dalu majority of the people practices Jhum cultivation, in Tura since it is an Urban area most of them are belonging to the service class. Rongram has been dominated by Jhum cultivators.

Table -VII

Occupation of the Parents (In %)

	Occupation	Dalu (*Hill Area*)	Tura (*Urban*)	Rongram (*Rural Area*)
1.	Farmers	39	Nil	9.5
2.	Hawkers	8.3	13.3	Nil
3.	Jhumlo Cultivators	44.4	Nil	90
4.	Labourer	8.3	6.8	0.5
5.	Service	Nil	66.6	Nil
6.	Business	Nil	13.3	Nil

Thus local area level planning can help to eradicate intra district divergence in educational attainments. The local planning would consider not only the educational problems but also closely related problems like economics social and geographical which generally overlooked by the top level plans

3. Education Level of the Parents:

Table VIII reveals that in three blocks majority of the parents belongs to the categories of illiterates, as in the case, Dalu Hill area 62% of the parents is illiterates and only 28% are semiliterate. There fore, their incomes level also very low. Majorities of them are practicing them (Shifting) cultivation. They find no use of education for girls since they see no job opportunities in the area.

In the case of Tura Urban majority of the parents are (43%) in the category of Above primary level and upto primary level (32%) very less percentage of people are in the category of illiterates (5%) and semiliterate (20%). Therefore, the income levels also higher than the other two blocks. Majorities of them are in the service.

In Rangaram rural area only 2% of the people are upto Primary level and rest of them are either illiterate of semiliterate. The income also very low for majority of the parents. The occupations of the majority (90%) are theme cultivation.

Table VIII

Educational Background of the Parents (%)

Literacy Level	Dalu (*Hill Area*)	Tura (*Urban*)	Rangaram (*Rural*)
Illiterate	62	05	58
Semi-literate	28	20	40
Upto Primary	--	32	02
Above Primary	--	43	--
TOTAL	100	100	100

4. Family Size:

The family sizes of the 80% of the people were more than an ideal family size of India i.e. 2 children. Even though at the beginning of the School year all the children were enrolled but they were unable to retain in the school continuously because of the variety of economic problems.

5. Occupation and Education:

The above analysis reveals that most of the population (households survey) are illiterate. The operation of the economy in the Blocks as such, it requires only unskilled labour because lack of other type of job opportunities.

Table No.IX

The Relationship between the Retention Rate and Occupation of the Parents

Indicators	**Correlation (r)**
I) Occupation of the Parents and Retention Rate	
a) Labourer	0.30
b) Jhum Cultivator	0.10
c) General Cultivator	0.50
d) Job Holders	0.80
II) Literacy Level with Retention Rate	
a) Illiterate	0.20
b) Semi-Literate	0.23
c) Up to Primary School	0.45
d) Above Primary School	0.75
III) Annual Income of the Parents and the Retention Rate	
a) Below $350	0.15
b) Between $350 to $500	0.62
c) Above $500	0.78

The correlation coefficient between economic indicators and retention rates of the three development blocks are calculated. The value of the correlation coefficient indicates

that all are positively correlated. So far as the occupation patterns of the parents are concerned, the correlation coefficient is very high in the case of job holders and very less in the case of Jhum Cultivators.

The Indicators on literacy level shows higher literacy level of the parents, lead to higher rate of retention.

The third Indicator, Income of the parents has revealed that higher the income of the parent higher will be the rate of retention level of the girls.

Thus the above analysis has confirmed the assumption of higher the incidence of poverty, higher will be the dropout-level and vise-versa.

6. Dependency Ratio:

The dependency ratio has been given in tabular form below.

Table No.10

Distribution of Dependency (in %)

Blocks	1:5*	1:4	1:3	Total
Dalu	95%	2%	3%	100%
Tura	10%	10%	80%	100%
Rongaram	97%	2%	1%	100%

** 1:5 (One earning member to five dependents)*

The table provides the information of distribution of non-willing population and dependency. It is noted that in Rangaram and Dalu blocks the dependency is very high. As has been mentioned earlier high percentage of the population constitute the class of Jhum cultivators and hawkers. Since, Tura is an urban area, size of the family is also less

and there is a possibility of jobs for the parents. In rural and hilly area the choice of jobs are very meager.

Rural Poverty and Rural Female:-

Rural labour in this region continue to be under served in terms of job opportunities, education, health, communication, roads, electricity, other development infrastructure, the rural female illiteracy limit the possibilities of rural girls utilising whatever facilities are available even though it is a matriarchal society.

Summery and Conclusion:

An attempt is made in this study to have a look into the economic problems of the rural and remote Hill districts and also assess its impact on enrollment of girls at primary schools.

It is well known that in spite of primary education being free and compulsory in India children either do not regularly attend their classes or left their education even before reaching the terminal standards. The factors responsible for such wastage of education are because of the poor economic condition of the parents constitute to the core a factor. Poverty deprives the family member from in adequate consumption of food leading to malnutrition and at time to visual hunger. Under such circumstances, provision of free meals in the noon has a greater impact. The introduction of *MDM* Incentive Scheme, found to be a right step in a right direction in providing social justice.

The impact of incentive schemes like Midday meals has an effect on retention of girls students in Primary schools was not pronounced as it should be because of poverty of the students and backwardness of the district to meet the other private expenditure of education. The high incidence of dropout of girls particularly in primary school level upsets the real achievements; as enrolment itself do not reveal actual picture. The various social-economic and academic contributing factors need to be review and by adopting

suitable integrated approach the problem of dropouts may be solved otherwise these dropouts soon relapse into illiteracy.

The above analysis reveals that majorities of the parents are agriculture laborer with low annual income and 75 percentage of people are having more than ideal family size i.e. 2 children. Therefore, in a hill area with no higher income occupation it is utmost difficult to send all the children to the schools since private cost of education is so high. Majority of the parents had expressed their inability to give one full meal to the child in a day. In such a circumstance, sending children daily to school is rather difficult. It may be possible only if Residential Schools are established in the areas where Jhum cultivation is in practice. In such a situation the parents can admit the children in the residential school and can feel less burdened.

The reasons given by the parents for not sending their daughters to schools regularly are (*1*) poverty; (*2*) high cost of private educational expenditure and of Jhoom cultivation. Around 49 percentage of people expressed that because of poverty they are unable to send the children regularly, and 16 percentage people expressed that because of Jhoom cultivation they are unable to send the children regularly. Around 35 percentage of parents observed that the private cost of education is very high and they are not in a position to meet the private expenditure. The main problems and issues encountered in enrolment and retention of girls in W. Garo Hills are briefly listed below:

1. The lack of access of primary schools within walking distance of children in sparsely populated scattered villages constituting over one-fourth of the habitation. The access of schooling being a pre-requisite for enrolment and retention target for 100% enrolment is not feasable. The roads connecting to schools are mainly improper, since the areas are mostly densely forests it is not possible for a child to walk that far.

2. The inability to adopt the strategy of non-formal education in those areas lacking schools due to lack of accommodation and Instructors. It is necessary at-least to set up a *'Learning Centre'* in such areas for a village or cluster of villages.

3. The presence of a large number of untrained as well as unqualified teachers is a handicap for effective class- room teaching for increasing retention problem of the schools. In fact most of the students being first generation learners are getting little parental support actually need more help and assistance from the school. The absence of basic physical infrastructure like durable and strong buildings to protect the children from rain and storm is a deterrent to hold the students in the school.

4. The switching over to the restructured educational pattern is posing a serious concern for the schools. The addition of class IV to the Primary Schools, basic inputs like teachers and physical facilities are required more. The teacher with higher qualification will be required to tackle enriched syllabi and Textbook.

5. The absence of separate Pre-Primary section in the school to take care of the pre-school children is a handicap for the schools. The incentive schemes given for the enhancement of enrolment and prevention of dropout lacks proper planning and implementation.

Since allotments of rice in make only on enrolment of children from class I to class IV-V, the children in pre-primary class who attend the same school are deprived of the rice. This is considered to be discrimination.

The problems identified above are meant not to magnify the issue but to stimulate our thought to the possible hurdles and adopt suitable remedial measures. The problems being numerous and varied it is desirable to formulate strategies on a selective basis keeping in view of the resources?

There is a need for a holistic view of the total education system in ruraland remote places and also of each component of the system. While planning to achieve the goal of universal enrolment at the primary stage, it is necessary to place it in the over-all context of the school education and its linkage with other stages. The need is for having a total vision of the school education and work out multi-dimensional strategies to improve quality of education along with quantitative expansion. The emphasis need to be shifted from enrolment to retention and positive support to the girl child to ensure at least five years of effective schooling.

CHAPTER-5

Summary and Conclusion

It is well known that inspite of primary education being free and compulsory in Meghalaya state, quite a good number of registered students either do not regularly attend their classes or left their education even before reaching the terminal standards. Most of the factors responsible for such wastage of education cause of the poor economic conditions of the parents constitute the core a factor. Poverty deprives the family member from in adequate consumption of food leading to malnutrision and at times to visual hunger. Under such circumstances, provision of free supply of rice would make vulnerable children to attend school to pacify their hunger. The introduction of MDM Scheme, is a right step in a right direction in providing social justice.

An attempt is made in this study to have a look into the one of the development black's of Garo Hills district and also suggested a model to improve its functioning. The scheme has potentiality to offer better results in economically backward blocks.

At the outset it may be concerned that West Garo Hills district being a relatively more developed district in terms of transport network and number of educational Institutions, in comparison to other districts but female literacy is fairly low in this region.

The impact of MDM scheme on retention of girls students in school was not pronounced as it should be because of poverty of the students and backwardness of the district. Similarly the MDM scheme in the state has hardly been 2 years old and as such

it is too short a time span to generate firm conclusions regarding its impact on attendance of girls students in schools. However the analysis has revealed interesting findings.

Proportion of Registered Students Attending School

To comprehend the impact of MDM scheme on the school attendance by the students it is necessary to have such information for two points of time viz. one period representing the absence of the operation of MDM scheme and the other after the introduction of MDM scheme.

We have collected the data of proportion of schools registered students attending schools in different development blocks of the district in two different periods. The period i.e. 1993-94, 1994-95 was the pre MDM period. While the second period i.e. 1995-96 was the period when MDM scheme was in operation in the district. The analysis shows that difference of proportion of school-registered students attending school in the pre MDM period was certainly less than the after MDM period.

In terms of number of considerations like availability of infrastructural facilities, social and economic; occupation structure, awareness about the importance of education etc. Tura urban differs considerably from the Dalu and Rongram development blocks. MDM scheme is appreciated more in Dalu and Rongram than Tura. Hence in this study development block wise analysis of different aspects of MDM scheme and its allied aspects have been done separately for three blocks. The examination of the development blocks clearly reveals that the proportion of school registered students attending school had increased after the scheme has implemented.

Adoption of Midday Meal Scheme by Schools

All the selected primary schools had introduced MDM scheme in March 1995. Advisory committee in each school got 11 committee members and they used to meet two to three times in a year.

Impact of the Scheme on Enrolment and Retention

The scheme has shown a positive impact on Dalu and Tura Urban areas and negative growth rate of enrolment in Rongram even after the MDM implementation.

The overall enrolment growth rate in the district was 25% after the implementation of the scheme and overall retention was 80 per cent. Block-wise analysis shows that Rongram development block as shown negative growth in enrolment and retention since majority of them follow jhuming cultivation.

Difficulties in the Implementation of MDM Scheme

When any scheme is being launched, there have to be some difficulties at least in the initial stages of operation. It is the school principal who is closely associated with the implementation. Table below provides information about the difficulties faced by the school headmasters and frequency number in percentages are given in the below table explains that the difficulties faced by the headmaster in implementing the scheme were (1) Money given by the government for transportation of rice is very small. (2) Quantity of rice per child is very small. Therefore, they have to face the grumbling of parents (3) There is a necessary for a pucca room to keep rice so far in the sample schools. There is no provision for storing the rice. (4) The involvement of other staff member of village community is nil.

Table - 25

Difficulties faced by the Principals during Implementation of the Scheme

	Money for Transportation of rice should be more	Qty. of rice is very little	No. strore to keep rice	No. other staff to help this scheme
Tura	90%	90%	50%	10%
Dulu	100%	99%	90%	82%
Rongaran	98%	97%	20%	5%

Tura area got relatively good infrastructure and transport facility, the other blocks like Rongram and Dalu do not enjoy such facilities. These areas are mostly thick forest areas with wild animals. Therefore, it was felt that it will be difficult to transport the rice sacks with the meagre amount of money given by the government i.e. Rs. 25 per quintal.

Micellaneous difficulties are also note worthy in implementation of the scheme. The students who are actually beneficiaries are those who were enrolled 1993. The govt. has taken the enrolment data of the year 1993 as a base. In the same family one child is receiving the rice while the other one is not. Secondly because of the extreme poverty of the parents they feel quantity of rice is too small and quantity of rice is also observed to be bad. The data shows that, rice is generally distributed once in three months.

Findings of the study.

1. The enrollment growth rate of girls in primary school has increased in Dalu and Rongram area. The growth rate after the implementation of the MDM Scheme was 9.1% to 25 % in Dalu and 10.9% to 25.30% in Tura urban area. But in Rongram the growth rate was negative (-19) because majority of the people are practicising Jhuming cultivation. Therefore, it is assumed as zero impact on this area.

2. The retention rates also has increased in Dalu and Tura urban area i.e. 72.65% to 100% in Dalu and 45% 60% in Tura urban area. But the retention rate has decreased from 82% to 74 % in Rongram.

3. Monitoring of the working of the scheme is voluntarily done by the villagers even though there is a govt. constituted monitoring committee.

4. To bear the cost of conservation of the dry ratios scheme to one of the hot meals centre would have to bear a handsome expenditure. It is estimated that for the entire country; the centre would have to bear an expenditure of Rs. 3,600 crores in 1997-98 for providing the cooked meal for nearly about 11 crore children in 5.90 lakhs schools the country (Usha Rai, H.T. April 14) paying at the rate of 70 paise per meal per child for dry ratios alone the centre picked up a bill of Rs. 1,400 crore in the eighth plan. The hot meal was tabulated at an additional Rs. 1.50 to Rs. 1.80 per head. A hot meal was seen as positive incentive for education in the Backward and poorest districts. Construction of Kitchen, sheds and recruitment of cooks will definitely cost more.

   However it was the mandatory for the state to convert the dry rations into the hot meal. The fuel, spices and other things for cooking were to be provided by the states and the village community.

5. For the proper assessment of the benefits of the scheme by the centre, a better computer installation and, information management system is needed in these district and at the block level.

   There have also been problems in transporting the food grains to the schools. Since recovery of the money spent on transport has been slow; the lifting of grains from the FCI godown also getting delayed.

In such situation if the villagers wanted to lift three four months allotment of the rice in one trip firstly the FCI would not permit them and secondly there is not enough place to keep the rice. In this hilly area carrying the food up in head loads is a difficult task and moreover the transport subsidy and found grossly in-adequate.

However, if the scheme works as conceived, primary education in the district would get a boost. It is observed from our study that the introduction of MDM (NNP) scheme is one of the important factors for improving attendance of primary school children. The study findings reveals that the programme is successful in the Development Blocks of Dalu and Tura. However, it was found to be having zero impact on Rongram development block as the area still practices Jhuming cultivation. Therefore we feel that there is a need for indepth study of the problems of girls education in Rangram development block.

6. The district need to be developed economically as it is found to be difficult for the people to meet the private expenditure of the education unless the economic condition is not improved in the area, the schemes for education will not give a full impact. It has been observed that majority of the people are still following the primitive cultivation system i.e. jhuming cultivation. In such case it is inevitable to control the dropout rate as they keep moving from place to place. Unless an overall integrated development plans takes place in the district it may be difficult to achieve universal retention of girls.

Since the transport facilities are not developed and accessibility of schools in rural densely forested areas are meagre, we feel a model residential school could be tried. The district demographic profile shows that, the average family size of the district is very high, and the economic conditions are not very sound in the area, therefore, the development of education has been adversely affected.

The success of any scheme will be visible only when the scheme is implemented for a longer period. This has been in practice in our country to discontinue the scheme after one two years of introduction. Lastly for the better results of the scheme the following are the suggestions drawn from the investigation.

7. There were four main reasons for parents for not sending their girls to school viz. (a) financial difficulties (b) girls being required to help household work (c) girls being needed to act as nurse-cum aids to younger children in the family (d) girls being required to help in occupation to earn wages to increase the family income. Social barriers, indifference of parents; lack of appreciation of education etc. were not found to be of much importance in this area.

8. However majority of the respondents felt that it is necessary to educate the girls in the present set up of the society and that the educated girls could manage household duties and child care in a better manner.

9. The parents of the non-school going children desired facilities, such as free supply of textbooks, stationary, slates and school uniforms followed by stipend or scholarship and free mid-day meals with mild supply for sending their daughters to school.

10. Large proportion of parents of school going children were appreciative of the scheme introduced and considered it good for the including girls to attend schools. They also expressed dissatisfaction because of the delay in receipt of the rice and not adequate in terms of quantity and not satisfied with quality.

11. The findings of the study points out the need for the continuation and expansion of the scheme. The scheme is popular because parents feels it has directly lightened their burden on the education of their children. The study also revealed that there are deficiencies in the planning, estimation and implementation of the scheme.

12. The involvement of village heads and local community leaders in the management of the scheme is minimal. The linkages between the school and the village committees is not developed as a result the local people are unable to assume any responsibilities for better improvement in the school.

13. The lack of access of primary schools within walking distance of children in sparsely populated scattered villages constituting over one-fourth of the habitation. In such a situation the access of schooling being a prerequisite for enrolment, retention target for 100% enrolment is not feasible.

14. The roads connecting to schools are mainly Kucha, since the areas are mostly forest areas it is not possible for a child to walk at far.

15. The inability to adopt the strategy of non-formal education in those areas facing schools due to lack of accommodation and instructors. The areas facing schools due to lack of accommodation and instructors. The incentive scheme given for the enhancement of enrolment and preventions of dropout lacks proper planning and implementation. The area level planning is needed in such areas.

The problems identified above are meant not to magnify the issue but to stimulate our thought to the possible hurdles and adopt suitable remedial measures. The problems being numerous and varied, it is desirable to formulate strategies on a selective basis keeping in view of the resources.

Suggestions

- The quota of rice should be increased
- It should be given regularly every month

- For the smooth functioning of the scheme, the infrastructure facilities like store room, availability of adequate money for lifting the sacks etc. should be improved
- Efforts should be made to involve the community to share the work and other major things.

The scheme if it is properly planned and implemented in the light of the above discussions, offer promising results especially in the economically backward pockets of the state. However the district needs thorough economic and educational development.

Other Issues in Achieving Universalization of Primary Education for Girls in West Garo Hills

The main problems and issues encountered in implementing the programme of Primary Education in achieving the goal of universal enrolment for girls in W. Garo Hills are briefly listed below :

1. The lack of access of primary schools within walking distance of children in sparesely populated scatered villages constituting over one-fourth of the habitation. The access of schooling being a pre-requisite for enrolment, and retention target for 100% enrolment is not feasable. The roads connecting to schools are mainly Kucha, since the areas are mostly densely forests it is not possible for a child to walk that far.

2. The inability to adopt the strategy of non-formal education in those areas lacking schools due to lack of accommodation and Instructors. It is necessary at-least to set up a 'Learning Centre' in such areas for a village or cluster of villages.

3. The high incidence of drop-out of girls particularly in primary school level upsets the real achievement; as enrolment itself do not reveal actual picture. The various social-economic and academic contributing factors need to be review by

adopting suitable integrated approach as these drop-outs soon relapse into illiteracy.

4. The presence of a large number of untrained as well as underqualified teachers is a handicap for effective class- room teaching for increasing retentive power of the schools. In fact most of the students being first generation learners or getting little parental support actually need more help and assistance from the school. The absence of basic physical infra-structure like durable and strong buildings to protect the children from rain and storm is a deterrent to hold the students in the school.

5. The switching over to the restructured educational pattern is posing a serious concern for the schools. The addition of class IV to the Primary Schools, basic inputs like teachers and physical facilities are required more. The teacher with higher qualification will be required to tackle enriched syllabi and Text book.

6. The absence of separate Pre-Primary section in the school to take care of the pre-school children is a handicap for the schools. The incentive schemes given for the enhancement of enrolment and prevention of dropout lacks proper planning and implementation.

Since allotment of rice in made only on enrolment of children from class I to class IV-V, the children in pre-primary class who attend the same school are deprived of the rice. This is considered to be a discrimination.

The problems identified above are meant not to magnify the issue but to stimulate our thought to remove the possible hurdles and adopt suitable remedial measures. The problems being numerous and varied, it is desirable to formulate strategies on a selective basis keeping in view of the resources.

There is a need for a holistic view of the total education system and also of each component of the system. While planning goal of universal enrolment at the primary stage, it is necessary to place it in the over-all context of the school education and its linkage with other stages. The need is for involving a total vision of the school education and work out a multi-dimensional strategy/improve quality of education along with quantative expansion. The emphasis need to be shift from enrolment to retention and positive support to the girl child to ensure at least five years of effective schooling.

Conclusion

The study attempted to look into the impact of National Nutrition programme. (Mid day meals) on enrolment and retention of girl students at primary level in West Garo Hills. The working of the MDM scheme, difficulties, associated in implementation and likely suggestions for its improvement have also been worked out in this study. The study is based on the primary schools, data about the number of schools, number of students registered, number of them attending school etc. The study covered 40 primary schools from rural and urban areas of the 3 development blocks of Garo Hills of Meghalaya state i.e. Dalu, Tura and Rongram, for this purpose headmasters of selected schools, Administrators, from the state to block level and the guardians of the students were contacted and interviewed.

The programme on mid-day meal scheme is the central government grander dream of attracting children to schools through a mourishing, mid-day meals of the Tamil Nadu model, have a success to 60%. It is successful even in West Garo Hills of Meghalaya despite many problems. The State Meghalaya is now distributing dry rations. However to bear the cost of conversion of the dry ratios scheme to one of hot meals centre would have to bear an handsome expenditure. It is estimated that for the entire country; the centre would have to bear an expenditure of Rs. 3,600 crores in 1997-98 for providing the cooked meal for nearly about 11 crore children in 5.90 lakhs schools of the country (Usha Rai, H.T. April 14, 1947) paying at the rate of 70 paise per meal per child for dry rations alone the centre picked up a bill of Rs. 1,400 crore in the eighth plan. The

hot meal was tablulated at an additional Rs. 1.50 to Rs. 1.80 per head. A hot meal was seen as positive incentive for education in the Backward and poorest districts. Construction of kitchen, sheds and recruitment of cooks will definitely cost more.

However it was the mandatory for the state to convert the dry nations into the hot meals. The fuel, spices and other things for cooking were to be provided by the states and the village community. For the proper assessment of the benefits of scheme by the centre, better computer, information management system is needed in the state.

There have also been problems in transporting the food grains to the schools, since recovery of the money spend on transport has been slow; the lifting of grains from the FCI godown has been late.

If the village wanted to lift three four months allotment of the rice in one trip the FCI would not permit and secondly there is no place to keep the rice. In this hilly areas carrying the food up in head loads is a difficult task and moreover the transport subsidy was found grossly inadequate.

However, if the scheme words as conceived, primary education in the district would get a boosts. It is observed from out study that the introduction of MDM (NNP) scheme is one of the important factors for improving attendance of primary school children. The study findings reveals that the programme is successful in the areas of Dalu and Tura. Howevert it was not found to be so in the case of Rongram development block as the area still practices Jhuming cultivation. Therefore we feel that there is a need for in-depth study of the problems girls education in Rangram development block.

There is a need for a holistic view of the total education system and also of each components of the system. While planning goal of universal enrolment at the primary stage, it is necessary to place it in the over-all context of the school education and its linkage with other stages. The need is for involving a total vision of the school education and work out a multi-dimensional strategies to improve quality of education along with

quantative expansion. The emphasis need to be shifted from enrolment and retention to positive support to the girl child to ensure at least five years of effective schooling.

Appendix

Table -1 1993

No. of Primary Schools and Enrolments West Garo Hills

Name of the Dist.	Name of the Block	No. of Primary Schools		Total	Enrolment Classes I-V
		Govt.	Govt.aided		
W.Garo Hills	Rongam	109	37	146	10264
	Dalu	130	-	130	6260
	Dada Nagar	189	-	189	2212
	Bel Sell	113	76	189	17088
	BRA Singh	131	14	145	5915
	Zikzak	87	56	143	7068
	Tikrikilla	107	-	107	7484

Table – 2
Urban Areas – Outside CD Blocks

W. Garo Hills	Tura	44	-	44	8751

Table – 3
Distribution of Enrolment According to Category of (Primary level)

District	Area	All Communities			SC			ST		
		T	B	G	T	B	G	T	B	G
W. Garo Hills	R	44352	-	212024	938	-	451	38451	-	18389
	U	4978	-	2742	403	-	201	3855	-	2170
	T	49330	-	23765	1341	-	652	42309	-	20559
State	R	183448	-	92094	1519	-	745	176720	-	89089
	U	20134	-	10065	1017	-	509	16443	-	8190
	T	203582	-	102159	2535	-	1254	193163	-	97279

Table – 4
Literacy of West Garo Hills 1991

Literacy	Total	Male	Female	Rural	Urban
Total	52.21	64.13	39.29	44.69	73.09
Rural	49.10	53.12	44.85	41.05	81.74
urban	39.33	46.93	31.32	34.34	78.29

Table – 5
Enrolment According to Category of Primary School

W. Garo Hills	Male	Female	Total
Rural	47.40	21024	44352
Urban	55.08	2742	4978
Total	48.22	23788	49330
Rural		83094	183448
Urban		10065	20134
Total		102159	203582

Table – 6
Distribution of Schools According to Type of Building in Rural and Urban Area

I	West Garo Hills	Pucca	Partly Pucca	Kacha	Thatchel	Tents	Open	Total space
	Rural	198	322	196	300	-	1	917
	Urban	19	9	9	6	-	1	44
	Total	217	331	205	206	-	2	961
II	Meghalaya	Pucca	Partly Pucca	Kacha	Thatchel	Tents	Open	Total space
	Rural	811	1530	863	660	3	1	4049
	Urban	73	61	35	14	-	1	-
	Total	884	1647	839	674	3	2	4099

Table – 7
Number of Primary Schools According to Area and Type

I	W. Garo Hills	B	G	Co.Ed.	Total
	Rural	8	11	889	917
	Urban	1	3	40	44
	Total	9	14	938	961
II	Meghalaya	B	G	Co.-Ed.	Total
	Rural	14	16	3888	3718
	Urban	5	5	171	181
	Total	19	21	4039	4099

Table -8
Number of Primary Schools According to Area and Management

I	W. Garo Hills	Govt.	LB	PA	PUA	Total
	Rural	24	889	2	2	917
	Urban	4	37	2	1	44
	Total	28	926	4	3	961
II	Meghalaya	Govt.	LB	PA	PUA	Total
	Rural	465	2697	788	868	3918
	Urban	14	95	62	30	181
	Total	179	3782	950	238	4099

Table - 9
Full Time Teachers

I	W. Garo Hill	Management - wise	Total	Female
		Govt.	40	11
		LB	1547	422
		PA	6	5
		PUA	4	3
		Total	1597	444
II	Meghalaya		Total	Female
		Govt.	331	130
		LB	5483	2136
		PA	1637	891
		PUA	389	814
		Total	7830	3371

Source : All Tables are collected from II All India Survey of Meghalaya (unpublished)

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*This study is conducted by the Author herself, and views are personal.

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