

**EDUCATION, COMMUNICATION AND STATUS OF
THE WOMEN**

Tribal people constitute the most disadvantageous section of Indian population in the light of every sphere of life like economic, political, etc. Culturally, tribal people are characterized by distinct languages with traditional values; they always enjoy a unique lifestyle far away from the mainstream culture. Various tribal communities of India are also identified as one of the major contributors to the national poverty. Most of the tribal people are isolated in different pockets of the hilly terrain and have been regularly subjected to worst type of social injustice and exploitation. Such exploitation is reflected in the educational sphere, basically of their girl children in particular and the overall status of women (Mohanty 2015). The UNESCO conducted a survey in 18 countries to identify the areas from where girls come less in numbers in schools and found some common features and areas regarding the tendency of schooling of girls. The common areas from where girls in large number never come to school are (i) rural areas (ii) Urban slums (iii) Minorities and (iv) marginal groups who are either geographically, economically or culturally isolated (Ranaweera 1989). Education plays a vital role in the society; girls' education always plays a crucial role in the building-up of a society. In the process of attaining adulthood, a girl must have certain education which builds up the foundation to let her proceed towards a smooth journey of successful woman. It is a common tendency found generally among girls, especially girls of marginalised sections are that they are less likely to access to and remain in school. Proper education helps boys and girls to realise their rights and responsibilities. Value education also makes the future generation to understand the potentialities existing in them, which may lead them to the socio, political or economic arenas in life. Education may be used as a powerful tool to lift themselves out from poverty. Literate people understand their situation and its

consequences better. They also respond to it effectively due to their knowledge/awareness. Communication and its various ways are essential for imparting education and educational facilitates always improves communication. As such combined role of both education and communication results in socio-economic development of society. This chapter analyses the education and communication with reference the status of women in the two tribal communities. For this purpose, the variables such as educational level, dropout rate, family attitude in child's education, uses of media and their modes, etc are used to understand the respondents' (women's) status.

EDUCATIONAL LEVEL

The level of education is an important variable to understand the status of an individual. Therefore, on the basis of educational qualification, the respondents of the two communities were classified into various educational levels; viz; Primary School, Middle School, High School, Higher Secondary School, and Graduation. After gathering the data about the educational level it is strange to found that out of 284 respondent 184, near about three fifths (57.71%) in Karbi and out of 218 respondent 66, over one fourth (30.28%) in Kuki did not even enrolled . Hence Kuki respondents are more educated than Karbi. The level of education of the respondents given in the following table:

Table 8.1
Distribution of respondents on the basis of their Educational Level
(Percentage in Parentheses)

Educational Level	Karbi Respondents	Kuki Respondents	Total Respondents
Illiterate	98 (34.51)	49 (22.48)	147 (29.28)
Literate	66(23.24)	17(7.80)	83(16.54)
Primary School (Standard I to V)	67 (23.59)	60 (20.13)	127 (25.30)
Middle School (Standard VI to VIII)	41 (14.41)	70 (32.11)	111 (22.11)
High School (Standard IX to X)	07 (2.46)	14 (6.42)	21 (4.18)
HSLC pass	04 (1.41)	04 (1.83)	08 (1.59)
H.S pass	01 (0.35)	02 (0.92)	03 (0.60)
Graduation	--	02 (0.92)	02 (0.40)
Total	284 (100)	218(100)	502 (100)

HSLC – High School Leaving Certificate. H.S – Higher Secondary

Source: Field survey Conducted during June 2014 - December 2015.

The table reveals that over one fourth (29.28%) of the respondents in both the communities are illiterate: 34.51% of the Karbi and 22.48% of the Kuki. So the literacy rate among the respondents is 70.72%, where 65.49% Karbi and 77.52% Kuki respondents are literate. However, one tenth of the respondents have only the knowledge of alphabets without any schooling: 12.68% of the Karbi and 7.80% of the Kuki respondents. One fourth of the respondents achieved the educational status up to the primary level (Karbi- 23.59% and Kuki- 20.13%) followed by over one fifths (22.11%) of respondents have education up to middle school (14.41% of the Karbi and 32.11% of the Kuki respondents) and only 4.17% of the respondents read up to High school level, but not passed the HSLC (2.46% Karbi and 6.42% Kuki), whereas, 1.59% of the respondents have passed the HSLC (Karbi- 1.41% and Kuki- 1.83%). Besides, 0.60% respondents are Higher Secondary passed (0.35% of the Karbi and 0.92% of the Kuki respondents) and 0.92% of the Kuki respondents are graduate.

While looking at the average education level of the respondents, it is found that Karbi respondents have average education up to primary school level (23.59%) and the Kuki respondents have up to middle school level of education (32.11%). Then a very few respondents from both the communities had continued their study. Here, only 2.46% of Karbi and only 6.42% of the Karbi could reach up to the High School level of education. On the other hand, in the HSLC, 1.41% Karbi and 1.833% Kukis were found passed out while in H.S., only 0.83% Karbi (only 1 from New Malidhor Karbi Punjee) and 1.31% Kuki respondents (1 each from Old Bag Bagar and Phaizol) were found successful. But, at the Graduation level it is surprisingly found that no graduate women in the Karbi and only 2 (1.31%) respondents (both from Phaizol) are graduate in Kuki.

From the above table it is clear that, comparatively in literacy rate and the level of education, Kuki women are ahead of Karbis. Adaptation of Christianity with western culture plays a vital role in this respect. More girls were found reading in private English medium schools far away from their village by

arranging hostel. In Karbi, both Christian and Hindu never send their daughters in hostel for getting education. Lack of awareness regarding girl's education particularly in Karbi tribe is mostly responsible for that. But the overall scenario of women's education in both the tribal communities is very bad. The educational status of the women in both communities is neglected by their families and women are educationally not empowered while their society is still rigid in maximum cases so far as women education is concerned. Lack of awareness and motivation regarding girl's education in both the tribal communities are responsible for that.

After analyzing the educational level of Karbi and Kuki women, it is clear that, illiteracy among the women is one of the major hindrances towards the development of both the tribal communities while most of them left their studies in primary level (Class I- VIII).

Dropout

Dropout from an educational institution before completion of study is most common feature among the respondents. 272 (54.18%) respondents had admitted in schools [120 (42.25%) Karbi and 152 (69.72%) Kuki], from that 12 (4.62%) respondents (4 or 3.33% from Karbi and 8 or 5.56% from Kuki) had completed their education up to the desire level and did not drop out. The rest 260 (116 from Karbi and 144 from Kuki) respondents dropped out their studies. The following table exhibits the dropout patterns among of the respondents:

Table 8.2
Distribution of Respondents on the basis of Dropout
(Percentage in Parentheses)

Level of Dropout	Karbi Respondents	Kuki Respondents	Total Respondents
Lower Primary School (I to V)	52(44.83)	52(36.11)	104(40.00)
Upper Primary School (VI to VIII)	51(43.97)	71(49.31)	122(46.93)
High School (IX to X)	10(8.62)	16(11.11)	26(10.00)
Higher Secondary school (XI to XII)	02(1.72)	03(2.08)	05(1.92)
Graduation	01(0.86)	02(1.39)	03(1.15)
Total	116 (100)	144 (100)	260 (100)

Source: Field survey Conducted during June 2014 - December 2015.

The above table reveals that the maximum dropout registered in the Upper primary (U.P) classes, (VI-VIII) followed by Lower Primary (L.P) classes (I-V). About half (46.93%) of these respondents had left the school in U.P level followed by two fifths (40.00%) of respondents in L.P level. Whereas, one tenth (10%) of respondent had left the study without passing High School Leaving Certificate examination. However, for the Kuki respondents dropout is 'highest at UP level, whereas the highest Karbi dropout is found in L.P level. About half (49.31%) of the Kuki respondents and over two fifth (43.97%) of the Karbi respondents who were in study, had stopped study in UP level, whereas, about half (44.83) of Karbi respondents and about two fifths (36.11%) of Kuki respondents had stopped study in L.P level.

So, from the above table it is clear that the dropout rate is very high in both the tribal communities. But comparatively, in Kuki community the lower Primary (LP) level dropout rate is low than Karbi. In the same time, Kuki respondents have higher dropout rate than Karbi in classes Six to Ten. Lack of awariness for girl's education is mostly responsible for that which is widely visible in Karbi community in all level of education.

After being discussed the dropout patterns among the respondents one needs to know the reasons for the dropout among the respondents from the two communities. The following table shows the reasons for the drop-out of the respondents:

Table 8.3
Reasons for School / College Dropout among the Respondents
(Percentage in Parenthesis)

Reason for dropout	Karbi Respondents	Kuki Respondents	Total Respondents
Lack of motivation/ Gender bias	49 (42.24)	62(43.06)	111(42.69)
Language Barrier	11(9.48)	12(8.33)	23(8.85)
Distance of educational institution & security problem	48(41.38)	56(38.89)	104(40)
Financial problem	08(6.90)	14(9.72)	22(8.46)
Total	116(100)	144(100)	260 (100)

Source: Field Survey conducted from June 2014 - December 2015.

The above table reveals that over two fifths (42.69%) of the dropout respondents had to discontinue their study due to the lack of motivation or gender bias of their parents / guardians. In this respect, a similar pattern is observed among the respondents of the two communities. Two fifths (40%) of respondents had to discontinue education due to the distance of educational institution and security problem while about one tenth (8.85%) left their studies before completion due to language barrier. Similar pattern is observed among the respondents of the two communities. About one tenth (8.46%) of respondents had to discontinue education due to financial problems of their parents: 6.90% of the Karbi and 9.72% of the Kuki respondents.

Thus, mainly the dropout among the respondents is due to lack of motivation and distance of the educational institutions from their habitations causing the financial and security problems. Parents are also found biased towards the education of their male children. Besides, when the distance of educational institution is more, then girls cannot go to the institution daily due to financial burden or security reason. Therefore, as well as non-availability of educational institution within accessible distance deprive the women from education in the two communities.

GENDER BIAS IN CHILD'S EDUCATION

Discrimination in the field of education is visible in both the tribal communities. In spite of free elementary education, a very few Karbi girls have completed even Lower Primary education. Gender bias in child's education is more or less visible in both the tribal communities. The following table shows the patterns of discrimination with girl child in education among the respondents' families:

Table 8.4
Patterns of Discrimination in Children's Education in the Families of the
Respondents (Percentage in Parenthesis)

Pattern of discrimination	Karbi Respondents	Kuki Respondents	Total Respondents
Boys are preferred	186(65.49)	122(56.96)	308(61.35)
Girls are preferred	17(5.99)	19(8.72)	36(7.17)
No preference / No bias	81(28.52)	77(35.32)	158(31.48)
Total	284(100)	218(100)	502(100)

Source: Field Survey conducted during June 2014 - December 2015.

The above table reveals that over three fifths (61.35%) of the respondents' families, who have larger family size with very poor economic condition preferred boys to girls for education: 65.49% of the Karbi and 56.96% of the Kuki respondents. Whereas those families where single girl child against more boys prefers girls to boys for education and only 7.17% respondents' families prefers only girls for education: 5.99% Karbi and 8.77% Kuki. However, near about one third (31.48%) of the respondents' families are free from gender bias in their children's education: 28.52% of the Karbi and 35.32% of the Kuki respondents.

Thus, there exist gender bias attitudes in both the tribal communities. But the Karbis' are more gender-biased than the Kukis in child education. This is perhaps due to Hinduization of the Karbi's while the impact of westernization through Christianity in Kuki's has brought less gender-bias towards children's education.

COMMUNICATION STATUS

Various ways of communication play an important role in imparting knowledge and making people aware about the value of education. In the two communities, several tools of communication are used. Radio, television, cell-phone and newspaper are four most common tools used for communication. From the respondents, 210 have Cell phone (41.20% Karbi and 42.66% Kuki respondents). However, cellphones replaced radio in all Kuki and most of the Karbi villages because of the multiple facilities available in the cell-phone.

Newspaper is not found in these villages due to communication and few person collect newspapers occasionally. Hence, Cellphone plays vital roles in providing all types of information and entertainment. The following table indicates the mode of acquiring cell-phone among these Karbi and Kuki respondents:

Table 8.5
Mode of Acquiring Mobile Phone among the Respondents
(Percentage in Parentheses)

Cell phone acquired by	Karbi Respondents	Kuki Respondents	Total Respondents
One self	73(62.39)	59(63.44)	132(62.86)
Father/Husband	16(13.68)	15(16.13)	31(14.76)
Siblings	17(14.53)	12(12.90)	29(13.81)
Gifted	11(9.40)	07(7.53)	18(8.57)
Total	117 (100)	93 (100)	210 (100)

Source: Field survey Conducted during June 2014 - December 2015.

The above table reveals that over three fifths (62.86%) of the respondents using their own cell phone; over one tenth (14.76%) of them use the cell-phone of their father or husband and another over one tenth (13.81%) have got cellphone from their siblings. Less than one tenth (8.57%) of the respondents have got cell phone as gift. These patterns are found among the respondents of both the communities.

Thus, majority (over three-fifths) of the respondents have their own Cell-phones. The rest two-fifths of the mobile users have been using others mobile set. But despite of very poor network in almost all villages and also having poor economic condition, over two-fifths of the respondents in the two communities have cell-phone to use. However, mobile phone is now not only used for communication but also it is used as the entertainment tools. The following table finds the types of mobile phones used by the respondents.

Table.8.6
Types of Mobile Phone Set among the Respondents
(Percentage in Parentheses)

Type of Mobile Set	Karbi Respondents	Kuki Respondents	Total Respondents
Ordinary Phones	16 (13.68)	08 (8.60)	24 (11.43)
Android Set	04(3.42)	03(3.23)	07(3.33)
Phones with Memory Card (Other than Android)	97(82.91)	82(88.17)	179(85.24)
Total	117 (100)	93 (100)	210 (100)

Source: Field survey Conducted during June 2014 - December 2015.

The above table reveals that most (85.24%) of the cellphone using respondents have phones with memory card (other than android): 88.17% of the Kuki and 82.91% of the Karbi respondents. However, over one tenth (11.43%) of the mobile user respondents have ordinary cell-phones. More Karbi (13.68%) respondents have ordinary phones than the Kuki (8.60%) respondents. A few respondents from the both communities have android phone and similar pattern is observed in the two communities.

Thus, the Kuki respondents are comparatively more prone to use mobile set with latest technology than Karbi respondents. Comparatively Kuki have poor location of their habitation for communication than Karbi, hence in order to use their hand set as the entertainment tools along with the communication, they use more costly handset than their Karbi counterparts.

However mobile set now may be used for multiple purposes. The following table finds the purposes of using cell-phone by the respondents:

Table 8.7
Type of Using Cell-phone by the Respondents'
(Percentage in Parentheses)

Type of use	Karbi Respondents	Kuki Respondents	Total Respondents
For communication only	24 (20.51)	11(11.82%)	35 (16.67)
For entertainment only	08 (6.84%)	16 (17.20)	24 (11.43)
For both entertainment and communication	85 (72.65%)	66 (70.98)	151 (71.90)
Total	117 (100)	93 (100)	210 (100)

Source: Field survey Conducted during June 2014 - December 2015.

The above table speaks that about three-fourths (71.90%) of the respondents has a tendency to use the cell-phone for multiple purposes like entertainments, games along with the important communication with the relatives and friends: 72.65% Karbi and 70.98% Kuki respondents. Hence, almost same pattern is observed across the two communities, whereas only about one fifth (16.67%) of the respondents use their cellphone only for the necessary communication with the others. However over one tenth of the respondents (11.43%) have cell-phone only for the entertainment: 17.20% Kuki and only 6.84% Karbi. Mostly, those respondents who have cell-phones with multiple facilities and belong to the remote villages where the network facility almost unavailable, use their handset only for entertainment.

Hence, maximum respondents (about three fourth) use their cellphones for both entertainment and communication in both the communities with similar trend, whereas one fifth (20.51%) of the Karbi respondents against over one tenth (11.82%) of the Kuki respondents use their cell phone only for communication. Respondents who have ordinary handset as well as mostly senior member belong to this category. On the other hand, as maximum Kuki habitations are located in the remote areas of the district with either very low or no network, hence about one-fifth (17.20%) of them have the same for entertainment only where only 6.84% of the Karbi respondents use mobile phone for entertainment only.

Using mobile phone carries expenditure and therefore it is necessary to know the nature of payment of phone bill or recharge amount and its monthly expenditure. The following table shows the nature of payment of phone bill among the respondents:

Table 8.8
Nature of Payment of phone Bill among the Respondents
(Percentage in Parentheses)

Bill paid by	Karbi Respondents	Kuki Respondents	Total Respondents
Oneself	88(75.21)	52(55.91)	140(66.66)
Father/Husband	13(11.11)	28(30.10)	41(19.52)
Siblings	16(13.68)	13(13.97)	29(13.08)
Total	117 (100)	93 (100)	210 (100)

Source: Field Survey conducted from June 2014- December 2015.

The above table reveals that a large number of mobile users recharge their mobile at their own cost. Two thirds (66.66%) of the mobile user respondents [over three fourths (75.21%) of the Karbi and about three fifths (55.91%) of the Kuki respondents] recharge phones on their own. Father or husband of the mobile user respondents recharge mobile in about one fifth (19.52%) cases: in case of about one third (30.10%) of the Karbi respondents and over one tenth (11.11%) of the Kuki respondents, students and housewife are mostly belong to this category. Over one tenth (13.08%) of the respondents get mobile recharge from their siblings and the pattern is same in both the communities.

Thus, despite a high literacy rate, the Kuki respondents are found economically less empowered and therefore more dependent on others for mobile's bill payment.

The dependency of mobile is also related to amount of the expenditure among the respondents in the two communities. The following table shows the approximate expenditure for recharging cellphone among the respondents:

Table 8.9
Monthly Expenditure of Mobile-Phone among the Respondents
(Percentage in Parentheses)

Amount of expenditure (in Rs.)	Karbi Respondents	Kuki Respondents	Total Respondents
Upto 250	102(87.17)	83(89.24)	185(88.09)
251- 500	13(11.11)	08(8.60)	21(10)
Above 500	02(1.70)	02(2.15)	02(0.95)
Total	117 (100)	93 (100)	210 (100)

Source: Field survey Conducted during June 2014 - December 2015.

The above table reveals that most (88.09%) of the respondents have monthly mobile bill, up to Rs. 250/- and one tenth (10%) of them spend Rs. 251-500 per month. A negligible number of respondents (about 1%), who are mostly from the villages, which are located near the Silchar-Shillong national highway and economically sound, spend more than Rs. 500/- per month. The Karbi respondents spend more on phone than the Kuki respondents.

Like the road communication, mobile network is also poorer in Kuki areas than Karbi areas. Therefore, for economic connectivity reasons, the Kukis have relatively less use of mobile than the Karbis.

Besides cell phone, television is another important means of communication and the availability of television sets indicates the overall status of an individual in a community. To remain well acquainted about surroundings, importance of television cannot be denied. To know the communication status of the respondent it is necessary to find out the availability of television among the respondents of the two communities. In both the communities, it is observed that popular television programmes are often enjoyed by many people of the village sitting together. Television users among karbi respondent are only 48 (16.90%) and Kuki are 35 (16.06%), totally to 83 (16.53%) of the respondents. The following table shows the types of television sets among the respondents:

Table 8.10
Types of Television Sets in the Respondents' Families
(Percentage in Parentheses)

Type of Television Set	Karbi Respondents	Kuki Respondents	Total Respondents
Black and white TV	03(6.25)	01(2.85)	04(4.81)
Colour TV	41(85.41)	25(71.42)	72(86.74)
LCD TV	03(6.25)	04(11.42)	07(8.43)
LED TV	01(2.08)	01(2.85)	02(2.40)
Total	48(100)	35(100)	83(100)

Source: Field survey C1 conducted during June 2014 - December 2015.

The above table reveals that most (86.74%) of the respondents who possess Television set, have colour TV set: 85.41% of the Karbi and 71.42% of the Kuki respondents. About one tenth (8.43%) of the respondents have LCD TV set 4.81% of respondents have Black and White TV set and the rest 2.40% who belong to high income families and have adequate power facility possess LED TV set. The Karbi respondents have more colour TV sets and Black & white sets while the Kuki respondents have more LCD TV sets than Karbi.

Due to the non-availability of power supply in some villages of both the communities, few families watch Black & White television chargeable with power battery.

For watching various programmes according to the choice, the proper connection is also important for watching programmes. The following table shows the TV programs available to the respondents of the two communities:

Table 8.11
Types of Channels Watched by the Respondents
(Percentage in Parentheses)

Type of Connection	Karbi Respondents	Kuki Respondents	Total Respondents
Watching only Doordarshan Channels	18(37.5)	07(20)	25(30.12)
Watching through DTH	30 (62.5)	28(80)	58(69.88)
Total	48(100)	35(100)	83(100)

Source: Field survey Conducted during June 2014 - December 2015.

The above table finds that over two thirds (69.88%) of the respondents who have television set, watch TV through DTH (direct to home) connection followed by the remaining about one third (30.12%) watching Doordarshan only by using antenna. More Karbi respondents (37.5%) as compared with the Kuki respondents (20%) have only Doordarshan channels while more Kuki respondents (80%) as compared with the Karbi respondents (62.5%) have DTH connection.

Thus, watching DTH is popular among the tribal communities as it possess no any problem in installing anywhere and enjoying TV programmes without any hassles. But still a good numbers of people watch Doordarshan to avoid recharge problem. However, a large section of the tribal people prefer DTH as it is easy to install and have good picture quality.

Generally, in the non-tribal low middle class, there is single primary earner, but in the tribal communities, there are more primary as well as secondary earners. Also, expenditure is made jointly for the family where matured members are involved according to the necessity. The following table shows the ownership of television set among the respondents' family.

Table 8.12
Purchasers of Television Set among the Respondents
(Percentage in Parentheses)

Purchased by	Karbi Respondents	Kuki Respondents	Total Respondents
One self	12(25)	05(14.29)	17(20.48)
Father/Husband	21(43.75)	23(65.72)	44(53.01)
Son/Daughter	8(16.66)	04(11.42)	12(14.46)
Siblings	7(14.58)	03(8.57)	10(12.05)
Total	48(100)	35(100)	83(100)

Source: Field survey Conducted during June 2014 - December 2015.

The above table reveals that in over half (53.01%) of the respondents' families, television sets were purchased by father or husband, followed by over one fifth (20.48%) of the respondents who have purchased the television for the family. In case of one tenth (14.46%) of the respondents that son or daughter purchased the television for the family and in another case of over one tenth (12.05%) of the respondents, only siblings purchased the television set.

Comparatively, in the Kuki respondents' families more (65.72%) TV sets were purchased by the respondent's father/son, whereas, in Karbi families, over two fifths (43.75%) TV sets were purchased by the father/husband of the respondents. However, one fourth (25%) of the Karbi respondents had purchased their family TV set, while only over one tenth (14.46%) of the Kuki respondents could have purchased this for the family. On the other hand, about one third (31.24%) of the Karbi families, TV sets were purchased by the son/daughter or siblings, where, the same trend were found in about one fifth (19.99%) of the Kuki families. Thus, the Karbi respondents have comparatively greater freedom to purchase the TV set. In Kuki families, it is often observed that the family head generally purchases the family assets; also, in most of the cases, family economy is always controlled by the family head and hence in maximum cases they take the decision for purchasing any asset like television set. But Karbi women are relatively enjoy more freedom in keeping and spending their income as compared with Kuki women.

The time spent for watching television is also not uniform for the male and female members of family in both the tribes. The following table presents the time spent by the respondents on watching television:

Table 8.13
Distribution of Respondents on the basis of Time Spent to Watch Television
(Percentage in Parentheses)

Hours Spent	Karbi Respondents	Kuki Respondents	Total Respondents
1-2 Hours	13 (27.08)	07 (20)	20(24.09)
3-4 Hours	29(60.41)	22 (62.86)	51(61.45)
5-6 Hours	6 (12.5)	06(17.14)	12(14.46)
Total	48(100)	35(100)	83(100)

Source: Field Survey conducted from June 2014- December 2015

Above table reveals that watching television in 3-4 hours per day is most common among both the respondents' families where television sets are available. Over three fifths (61.45%) of the respondents watch television for 3-4 hours per day, followed by about one fourth (24.09%) of them who spend 1-2 hours and over one tenth (14.46%) of them spend 5-6 hours daily for watching television.

Thus, Kukis are more habituated to watch television than Karbis. Also, they spent more time than Karbis on watching various programmes.

Watching television also helped the villagers to adopt the habits like washing hands before taking meal, discarding of age old open defecation etc. Effect of television also can be noticed in their socio-cultural life.

Briefly, the analysis reveals that:

1. General education level among the respondents is very low. Lack of awareness and motivation regarding girl's education in both the tribal communities are responsible for it. The literacy rate among the respondents altogether is 64.74%: 54.93% among the Karbi and 77.20% among the Kuki respondents. However, one tenth of the respondents have only the knowledge of alphabets without any schooling: 12.68% of the Karbi and 7.80% of the Kuki respondents. One fourth of the respondents have achieved the educational status

up to primary level (Karbi 23.59%, Kuki 20.13%), followed by over one fifth (22.11%) of the respondents who have education up to middle school level (14.41% Karbi and 32.11% Kuki) and only 4.17% of the respondents have studied up to High school level (IX passed). Besides, 1.59% of the respondents have passed the HSLC (Karbi 1.41% and Kuki 1.83%); 0.60% respondents are Higher Secondary school pass (0.35% Karbi and 0.92% Kuki) and only 2 (0.92%) Kuki respondents are graduates whereas no Karbi respondent was found as graduate. The Karbi respondents' have average education largely up to primary school (23.59%) and Kuki respondents have upto middle school (32.11%).

2. Dropout is mostly responsible for the poor level of education among the respondents from the two communities. 272 (54.18%) of the respondents were admitted in schools, -120 (42.25%) Karbi and 152 (69.72%) Kuki, out of which, 12 (4.62%) respondents, (04 or 3.33% of the Karbi and 08 or 5.56% of the Kuki), completed their education up to their desired level and did not drop out. The rest, 260 (116 from Karbi and 144 Kuki) respondents, dropped out of their studies. Comparatively, among Kuki respondents the lower Primary (LP) level dropout rate is low than the Karbi respondents. On the other hand, Kuki respondents have higher dropout rate than Karbi in the classes Six to Ten. Lack of awareness for girl's education is mostly responsible for this and it is widely visible in Karbi community at all levels of education.

3. Over two fifths (42.69%) of the dropout respondents of both the communities had to discontinue their study due to the lack of motivation for girls, i.e. gender bias of their parents / guardians. Two fifths (40%) of the respondents had to discontinue education due to the distance of educational institution and security problem while about one tenth (8.85%) left their studies before completion, due to language barrier. Similar pattern is observed among the respondents of the two communities. About one tenth (8.46%) of the respondents had to discontinue education due to financial problems of their parents: 6.90% of the Karbi and 9.72% of the Kuki respondents.

4. Gender bias among the parents is mainly responsible for the women's poor educational level in both the tribal communities. But the Karbis are more gender-biased than the Kukis, perhaps due to their Hinduization of the Karbis while the impact of Christianity in Kukis has brought less gender-bias. Over three fifths (61.35%) of the respondents' families preferred boys to girls for education: 65.49% of the Karbi and 56.96% of the Kuki respondents. Very few prefer girls to boys for education only 7.17% respondents' families prefer girls for education: 5.99% Karbi respondents and 8.77% Kuki respondents. However, near about one third (31.48%) of the respondents' families have no preference for child of a particular gender and are free from gender bias: 28.52% of the Karbi and 35.32% of the Kuki respondents.

5. Different modes of communication play an important role in imparting knowledge and making people aware of the value of education. Mobile phone has emerged an important means of communication in all sections of people including women. Of the respondents, 210 have Cell phone (41.20% Karbi and 42.66% Kuki). Over three fifths (62.86%) of the respondents are using their own cell phone; over one tenth (14.76%) of them use the cell-phone of their father or husband and another over one tenth (13.81%) of the respondents have got cellphone from their siblings. Less than one tenth (8.57%) of the respondents are having gifted cell phone. Most (85.24%) of the cellphone using respondents have phones with Memory Card (other than Android): 88.17% of the Kuki and 82.91% of the Karbi respondents. Besides, over one tenth (11.43%) of mobile user respondents all together have ordinary cell-phones. More Karbi (13.68%) respondents have ordinary phones than the Kuki (8.60%) respondents.

6. Most of the respondents (about three fourths) use their cellphones for both entertainment and communication in the two communities. One fifth (20.51%) of the Karbi respondents and over one tenth (11.82%) of the Kuki respondents use their cell phone only for communication. Respondents with ordinary handset or mostly senior members belong to this category. On the other hand, as Kuki maximum habitations are located in the remote areas of the district with either

very low or no network, about one-fifth (17.20%) of the Kuki respondents have the handset for entertainment only and 6.84% of the Karbi respondents use mobile phone for entertainment.

7. A large number (66.66%) of mobile using respondents, recharge their mobile at their own cost: over three fourths (75.21%) of the Karbi and about three fifths (55.91%) of the Kuki respondents. Father or husband recharges mobile in case of about one fifth (19.52%) respondents: about one third (30.10%) of the Karbi respondents and over one tenth (11.11%) of the Kuki respondents-students and housewives mostly belong to this category. Over one tenth (13.08%) of the respondents get mobile recharged from their siblings and the pattern is same in both the communities. Thus, despite a relatively higher literacy rate, Kuki respondents are found economically less empowered and therefore more dependent on others for mobile's bill payment.

8. Most (88.09%) of the respondents have monthly mobile bill of up to Rs. 250/- and one tenth (10%) of them spend Rs. 251-500 per month. A negligible number of respondents (about 1%), who are mostly from the villages located near the Silchar-Shillong national highway and have economically sound position, spend more than Rs. 500/- per month. The Karbi respondents spend more on phone use than the Kuki respondents. Like the road communication, mobile network is also poor in Kuki areas than Karbi areas. Therefore, for economic and connectivity reasons the Kukis have relatively less use of mobile than the Karbi

9. Television is another important means of communication. Television users among the Karbi respondents are only 48 (16.90%) while the Kukis are 35 (16.06%), totaling to 83 (16.53%). Most (86.74%) of the respondents who possess television set has colour TV set: 85.41% of the Karbi and 71.42% of the Kuki respondents. About one tenth (8.43%) of them have LCD TV set; 4.81% of the respondents have Black and White TV set and the rest (2.40%) who belong to high income families and have adequate power facility possess LED TV set. The

Karbi respondents have more colour TV sets and Black & White sets while the Kuki respondents have more LCD TV sets than the Karbi respondents.

10. Over two thirds (69.88%) of the respondents who have television set watch TV through DTH (direct to home) connection, followed by the remaining, about one third (30.12%), having access to only Doordarshan by using antenna. More Karbi respondents (37.5%) as compared with the Kuki respondents (20%) have only Doordarshan channels while more Kuki respondents (80%) as compared with the Karbi respondents (62.5%) have DTH connection. Due to the non-availability of power supply in some villages of the two communities, a few families have to watch Black & White television chargeable with power battery.

11. Over half (53.01%) of the respondents', television sets were purchased by father or husband, followed by over one fifth (20.48%) of the respondents who have themselves purchased television set for the family. In case of one tenth (14.46%) of the respondents' son or daughter purchased the television for the family and in another case of over one tenth (12.05%) of the respondents only siblings purchased the television set. Comparatively, in the Karbi respondents' families TV sets are purchased more by the respondents or their son/daughter, or siblings, while in Kuki respondents' families TV sets are purchased more by father / husband. Thus, TV sets are purchased generally by husband / father; however, the Karbi respondents have comparatively greater freedom to purchase it. In Kuki families, the family head generally purchases the family assets; also, in most of the cases, family economy is always controlled by the family head and hence in maximum cases they take a decision for purchasing any asset like television set. But Karbi women relatively enjoy more freedom for keeping and spending their income as compared with their Kuki counterparts.

12. Watching television for 3-4 hours per day is most common in both the respondents' families where television sets are available. Over three fifths (61.45%) of the respondents watch television for 3-4 hours per day, followed by about one fourth (24.09%) of them who spend 1-2 hours and over one tenth

(14.46%) of them spend 5-6 hours daily for watching television. Thus, Kukis spent more time than Karbis on watching various programmes. Watching television also helped the villagers to adopt the habits like washing hands before taking meal, discarding age old practice of open defecation etc. Effect of television also can be noticed in their socio-cultural life.

The foregoing discussion on the educational and communication status of the Karbi and Kuki women makes clear that both communities are not conscious about girl's education. Lack of awareness and motivation (gender bias) in both the tribal communities are responsible for it. Comparatively literacy and level of education are better in Kuki women than Karbi women. Adaption of Christianity with western culture in Kuki community plays a positive role for education in general and for their womenfolk in particular. Dropout results in lower level of women's education in both the tribal communities. There is seen high dropout during primary education in both the communities. Dropout of Karbi respondents is highest during Lower Primary level, but high dropout is in Kuki respondents during Upper Primary school education. Gender bias of parents always cause dropout of girls in both the communities. High dropout during primary school education created adverse impact on women is education. However, this attitude of parents is distinctly visible among the Karbi respondents than Kuki respondents. Unavailability of educational institutions after Lower Primary school education in most of the villages also results in dropout of girls. Effect of communication tools (like Television and Cellphone) in education is visible in these communities by their change of behaviour and habits. Due to lack of economic empowerment, Kuki respondents are more dependent on father or husband for mobile recharge than Karbi respondents. Kuki respondents also use more ordinary handset than Karbi respondents. Kuki respondents spend more time in watching television and also have more DTH connection than the Karbi respondents' families.
