

Transitional Phases Of Plain Karbis Of Guwahati City From Jirkedam To Modern Educational Institutions

Dr. Binita Devi

Assistant Professor, Suren Das College, Hajo, District – Kamrup, Assam.

parijatbed@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Keywords

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Introduction

Education is the major instrument of social transformation. Education is the only means that facilitates equal opportunities for all the sections of the society and ensures a bright future of the entire society. Programme of Action NPE (1992) states “Education is a powerful and pervasive agent for all round development, individual and social transformation. This alone can sustain culture and civilization”. Spread of education and exposure to modernity, brought in significant changes among the tribes of North Eastern States. The shift from traditional to modernity has been immense in every sphere, starting from food, dress, and rituals and norms, beliefs and most importantly in the overall outlook of the tribe. Confining only with a particular tribe, the Karbis, one of the oldest ethnic groups in northeast India the transitional phases in the field of education is dealt here. A large number of Plains Karbis have permanently settled at Guwahati for many generations. This is evident from Thaparia’s (2016) paper on the trending population growth as per Census reports. In the course of their living they have undergone immense changes. In spite of the impact of growing urbanism, the earlier settlers retain to a great extent the traditional socio-cultural activities particularly the religious functions.

Prior to independence almost all the people of Karbis were illiterate. The parents had not very much interested to send to send their children to school. After independence also most of the boys of the school going age did not go to school. It is observed that there is a growing tendency among educated Karbis to procure a plot of land and settle down permanently in a town. This is particularly true in the case of Guwahati. Their flow into the urban areas is mainly on economic ground such as job or contract. After getting the job or contract they invariably look for a permanent settlement within the town, and most of them thus become permanent town dwellers for the rest of their lives. This process of transformation, therefore, is due to economic reason, and in the process they are becoming rapidly modernized. In this paper the various phases of transition occurred among the Plain Karbis is highlighted.

Phase 1 –Transmission from Family

Informal Education in the Karbi society

For every person education begins informally immediately after his birth into the world and his first teachers are the family and the society. The child learns the techniques of survival from conscious as well as unconscious gestures and restrictions of the family members and social associations. Among conscious gestures the first one is language, i.e. mother tongue. It is also important to mention that folk literature such as tales, proverbs, riddles, ballads, jokes, etc. are oral mode of communication and these folk materials are transmitted orally to the individual through language.

Language

There is a strong political movement on part of the Plains Karbis to consider their variety of Karbi a different language rather than just a different dialect from the variety of Karbi that is spoken in the Hills. The Plains Karbi speaking population is scattered across a number of districts, Ethnologic estimates the number of speakers at a total of 125,000 (Lewis, Simons, and Fennig, 2013). There are differences between the song lyrics and the ordinary language. Specifically, Plains Karbi uses lexemes in ordinary, colloquial speech, which are only used in the song lyrics of Hills Karbi, and vice versa. Language shift to Assamese is a lot more common among Amri Karbis, who live in the plains, compared to Karbis of Karbi Anglong. This has likely been the case historically (in the last several centuries or so) as well, since there are a lot contributions from Assamese to the Plains Karbi variety. A comparative dictionary of Plains and Hills Karbi by M. Teron and Tumung (2007) represents an important source on the major dialectal divide within the language.

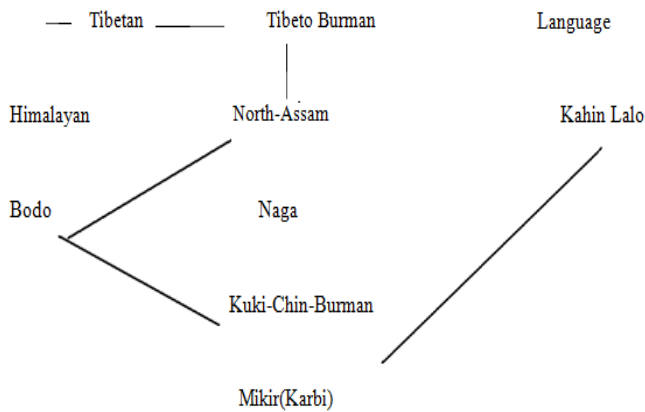


Fig. 1. Adopted from Language Family Prepared by S. N. Goswami

Phase 2 – Indigenous Institution

The Karbis, like other tribes, do have traditional institutions. The institutions are mostly of socio-political in nature, while some are of economic character. Traditional knowledge includes types of knowledge about traditional technologies of subsistence (e.g. tools and techniques for hunting or agriculture), ecological knowledge, climate, etc. These kind of knowledge are crucial for subsistence and survival and are generally based on accumulation of empirical observation and interaction with the environment” (Wikipedia)1. Indigenous knowledge is local knowledge that is unique to a culture or society. This is also known by the terms ‘local knowledge’, ‘folk knowledge’, ‘people’s knowledge’, ‘traditional wisdom’ or ‘traditional science’. The depth of indigenous knowledge rooted in the long inhabitation of a particular place offers lessons that can benefit everyone, from educator to scientist, as we search for a more satisfying and sustainable way to live on this planet (Barnhardt and Kawagley 2005)2. It needs to be acknowledged that indigenous people have a wide knowledge of living sustainably. Already much of its knowledge has vanished due to adaptation of formal education thereby creating a risk of extinction of the indigenous values and ways of living sustainably. Some of these institutions are non-existent in the modern context. The Karbi traditional institutions are as follows:

The Bachelors' Dormitory, "FARLA" (JIRKEDAM):

The bachelors' dormitory of the Karbis, which is known as the Terang Ahem, Terang Hangbar, Farla, but more popular as "JIRKEDAM"3. The Jirkedam was originally designed to include males only but later the females are also allowed although they do not occupy any office of consequence. In fact, participation in it means the preparation of the youth for the future. It is not merely a club, it is a school too. The dormitory is generally constructed in the central place of the village with locally available construction materials. The Jirkedam has 10 office bearers with its leader and deputy leader known as Kleng-Sarpo and Klengdun respectively. This traditional institution is, however, gradually dying as it fails to withstand the onslaught of rapid changes brought about by development modern social activities including the

spread of education. However, the spirit of offering a helping hand to the needy by the youths of a Karbi village has not yet been eroded by the absence of the building of the bachelors' dormitory.

Phase 3 – Script and Literature

The Karbis are considered as one of the very backward communities in Assam. They are educationally not much advanced. Earlier, the Karbi language was a spoken language and it had no script of its own. At present they have accepted the modified Roman script for writing and printing text book for primary school as well as other literature. The Karbi language has been actually flourishing as a spoken language only. But after the independence of India, the tribe has drawn much attention of the popular government of Assam and the language has gained considerable importance. Though they accepted the Roman script for writing their literature, many Karbi scholars are still using Assamese script for scripting their literature. As such the written Karbi literature is found in both Assamese and Roman script. Various oral literatures like songs, tales etc. are compiled and written in Assamese script. Karbis are very rich in oral literature which includes folk tales, ballads, idioms, folk songs like love song, nature song, wedding song, children’s song and popular epic song ‘Sabin Alun’ is the Karbi Ramayan. There are also proverbs relating to their social life. Through this literature, we get various pictures and information about agriculture, different household activities, wedding and other festivals, funeral rites etc. of the Karbi society. A few of them are compiled and published in book form with modified Roman script, but majority of them are compiled and published in Assamese script.

Karbi literature did not have a written form till the 19th century. Major John Butler, in his Travels in Assam, has said: The Mikirs have no particular creed, or any written language of their own, yet their dialect differs from that of every other tribe in the province, and we are at a loss to conjecture whence they came, or from what race they sprang. All elements of folklore, like social rituals, legends, historical tales, ballads of love and separation, folksongs of Ram- Ravan, love songs, fables, magic chants and proverbs etcetera, have been kept alive through oral literature.

Among the first written texts in Karbi language is the Karbi Catechism, a propaganda newsletter printed at the Christian Missionary Press at Sivasagar in 1875. Then in 1898, two textbooks for primary schools Plipli and Kalakha, written in the Roman script were published by Rev P. E. Moore, Sir J. M. Carwell and Rev W. R. Hutton, and these continued as primary texts for almost five years. Subsequently, these books were also published in the Axamiya script. The first Bachelors degree holder among Karbis, Samsonsing Ingti and Basapi Ingti were the main forces behind the re-printing of the textbooks in Axamiya script and they continued to be taught in schools for another four years.

The contribution of the Christian missionaries in bringing literacy and education among the Karbis is undeniable. They not only printed the above mentioned textbooks but also other books like A Dictionary of the Mikir Language, Tomo Puru, Arleng Alun Athui, Mikir Third Reader, Bituso

Akitap, Ning Arjan, Pilgrim's Progress and Karbi-English Vocabulary. Rev. Hutton also edited a Karbi journal, Birta. In the post-independence era, a handful of Karbi writers like Bonglong Terang can be mentioned. Terang published three books in the Karbi language in 1937: Ha-E, Rukasen and Adam-Asar. Adam-Asar is a collection of traditional wedding songs. Rukasen is a description of the activities of the headman of a Karbi village; it also describes how the Karbis established villages and also contains some folksongs about the origins of paddy and the chilli. Ha-E contains a ballad about the eternal love of a young couple. A writer named Raghunath Teron who is a Plain Karbi authored a book titled Karbi Po. In 1966, the Karbi Lammet Amei, or the Karbi Sahitya Sabha, was formed to work towards the development and spread of the Karbi literature. The books published by the Karbi Lammet Amei include: short story collection like Lammet Esang, Samfri Apunsir, Kasanghang; poetry collections like Sengwe Amir Sikidupupe, Dampujuk Singdi, Ruptaine, Jengjeri, Kungriso Mirdan; collection of tales like Tomo Puru; anthology of articles like Khei Aharsi, Jutang Amung, Rongtheang Angtang, Ser Langsar, Lamjir Afar, Lamjir Kangdak; compilation of folksongs like Pengsomir, Dimir Alun; collection of biographies like Langri Amelur; dictionaries like Akemi Karbi Lamthe Amarjang; etc.

There are a few newspapers in Karbi. The Arleng Daily and the Thekar are written in Roman script, while there are also newspapers that use the Assamese script. The KLA publishes quite a lot of books in Karbi. There is a local film industry that produces movies and comedy shows (and some documentaries) in Karbi. There also is a Karbi language TV program. There has been a recent increase in availability of Karbi media on the internet. In particular, there are Karbi blogs and there are a number of songs sung in Karbi (but following the 'mainland' Indian Bollywood style) on Youtube.

Folk literature

It is noteworthy that folk literature like folktales, proverbs, riddles, ballads, plays a significant role in acquiring basic human values. These folk materials being a rich source of traditional knowledge form the fundamental basis of imparting informal education

a) Folk Tales

Folk story about the origin of the division into Terang subclans starting with two Terang brothers. The younger one, was Dili and the older one, Rongchetcho (also referred to as Rongchercho); the older one causes a lot of hardship for the younger one, finally, the younger one, Dili, takes a vow to officially form separate subclans (with various societal implications)

Another folk story is about a chain reaction of events that sets off when a frog blocks the road and sits down on an ant that in return bites the frog; from there on, one animal suffers from being disturbed or hurt by another animal, and as a consequence accidentally disturbs or hurts another animal, and so on.

Folk story about an elderly couple with a dog; the wife dies and the dog takes the husband to Chom arong (i.e., the

village of the dead); the wife does not want to leave, but the husband forces her; upon return to their village, soon somebody else in the village dies, and the wife has to die and go back to Chom arong with the other person Pindeng.

Folk story about an orphan who encounters a tiger; by using a container with a mirror on top, he manages to convince the tiger that he (the orphan) has caught a large tiger in that container; the tiger is scared and the orphan ends up managing to steal gold from the tigers' Rongker (name of a festival in Karbi traditional culture) due to his trick with the mirror container.

Folk story about step-parenthood: the mother of two children (with the names Rengso and Onso, dies and the father marries again. The new stepmother is evil and mistreats her step-children, whereupon the father does not know what to do and abandon his children in the jungle and kills his wife Bokolapo.

Though the stories are simple in nature, yet, offers an insight about the family existing processes.

b Proverbs

1. Kithe kang je e the, timuong kang am ee am (Rojar adesh ebar e, Ghariyale khabo e kamorey)

This indicates that during the kingship period, king used to give order once only, just as crocodile eats its prey in one bite only.

2. Rong bong si reshoo, hem phlak hem serek ee arnam (Raije roja giyatie ganga) This proverb means 'People are the kings and people are sacred like river ganges'.

3. Eedeshi epang hrengman, ee deshi ee pathimaan (Kothat kota jaye, Kothat bota paye) Arguments erupts during conversation, reward is received while conversing

4. Women o kota chine ne lang, arlo chota chini ne ping han(maase ni chine noi, tirotay ni chine poi)

Fish does not recognise a boat as women derecognises

5. Edu Inglong aamrek bangta thek maan, ingthin aalam ke kaita ee thek the (Bonor jui dekha pua jai monor jui dheka na jai)

Fire in forest is visible but fire inside mind is invisible

6. Eere ke ong dung aate long key eenglong ta daam (Maanu bohut hole baamoto nao ujabo pare)

Knowledge acquired through experience is expressed in the form of proverbs, also social evils or faults get highlighted through proverbs. Oratory expression of speech gets encouragement and the capacity to attract audience develops in the form of application of proverbs in day to day conversation.

c) Riddles

1. Reso aatimi ki phok keun, ki maari ke uun e- uati (Rojar chunor temato khulibo pari maaribo nuari) Answer koni

2. Reso aabarit kilut keun, kaleke uun e- ru (rojar baarit humabo pari ulabo nuari) Ans. Chepa Fish Trap

3. Ingam along passi khok khok passid maan baang oleke baang olele - so (Haabit kahe mmatile nahey) Ans. Kuthar Axe

4. Resopo asorang ki ekope, aalongteno laang junochi daammaan- borohi (roja ghoror koligayi ghate ghate paani khaye - borosi

5. Eechilong daang long eejon o kosi singli aarning aarning san hreck hreck chi domain – aarleng aade (eta silor guhat sodai chengeli maach etai thake jopai- jeeva)

6. Aali aali damochi aaphu chiomaan- eempri (aaliye aaliye jaye moor dangi dangi chaye- beji)

From these riddles it can be suggested that Karbi people give importance to social intelligence. Following importance is derived from the education point of view with regard to riddles which is in practice orally since for centuries. Following outcomes are derived

1. It promotes mental development among individuals
2. It increases inquisitiveness
3. Leisure time entertainment in proper manner
4. Encourages self-expression
5. Promotes language development
6. Develops cooperative attitude

d) Ballads

Another source of informal education among the Karbis is in the form of ballads which express deep socio-emotional expressions of certain individuals. An example is cited as follows

1. An unknown poet described a love story between a boy and a girl named Cham Longki and Romi. Once, a boy used to love a girl. Their love was mutually deep. Due to social prejudices, the people were against of their relationship. The girl was in great depression which led her to commit suicide. The boy had a great setback because of this incident. Later on he left the village. Their love story could not be successful because of society’s prejudices.

2. Another popular ballad known as Sher Dihun sung by Romi. Once, in a village there lived a family where there was only girl named Dihun. The Gaonburah (Bangthe) of that place selected the girl, Dihun and entrusted with certain social responsibility. She established a new village with three families. At a certain period of time these three families increased to thirty numbers of families. Dihun was in great shock and depress and wished that in the next rebirth she would be born in such a family where there were brothers and uncles.

Phase 4 - Modern Education

Modern education is marked by the spread of Christianity, higher exposure to reformation, and revolutionary sense of value of education sweeping across the Karbi society. Age old beliefs and practices are replaced by new ideas and ideologies and practices. Noticeable changes in the society is brought about by these transforming agents as a result of whom a number of traditional belief systems and traditional practices got abandoned and are being replaced by new ones resulting in achievement in different fields. Changes in the lifestyle of the Karbis are occurring at an exponentially increasing pace in recent years. Due to urbanization and increased physical and virtual infrastructure, elements of traditional culture are becoming more endangered newly developing cultural elements are embraced and cherished. Due to the influence of modernization, some sections of the Karbis have migrated to and began to settle in urban areas of

Assam. The major factors responsible for this migration are pursuits of easy means of livelihood, better vocations and higher education (Baruah, 1990:75). Due to the spread of education and exposure to modernity, significant socio-cultural changes leading towards better achievements have become apparent among the Karbis.

Present status of acquiring education

A survey is conducted on the plain Karbis with a sample of 444 households delimiting only in the Guwahati area of Assam. Questionnaire is used for the purpose of data collection.

Language

a) Mother tongue Spoken

Nearly 44% of the respondents found to speak in Assamese language as mother tongue followed by 31.5% in Karbi language and the rest speak both in Karbi and Assamese language shown in Table 1 and Fig. 2. Though the Karbis use their own mother tongue/dialect among themselves but at the same time most of them do converse in Assamese, some of the urban Karbis of younger age group are convenient in speaking Assamese dialect.

Table 1 Mother tongue spoken by respondents

Mother tongue	No. of Respondents	Percent
Assamese	195	43.9
Karbi	140	31.5
Karbi, Assamese	109	24.6
Total	444	100.0

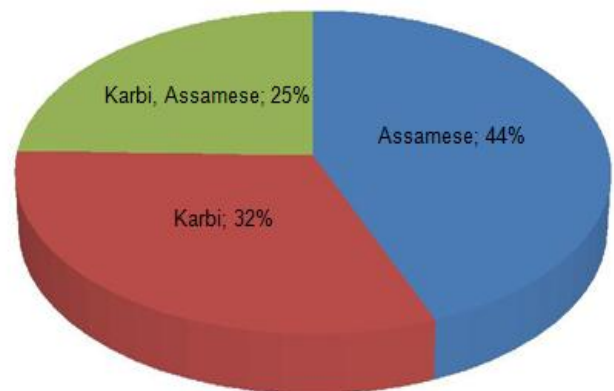


Fig. 2 Mother Tongue Spoken

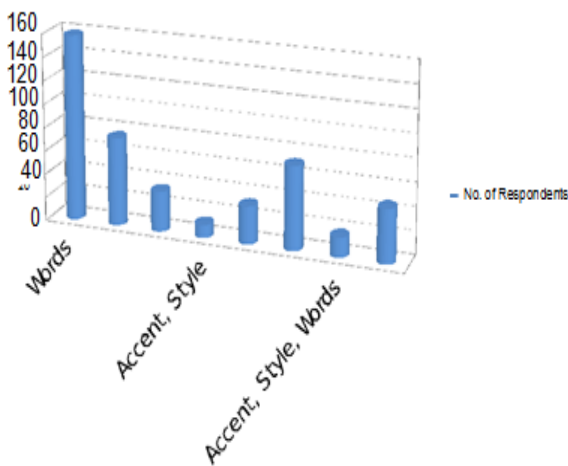
b) Difference between Mother tongue spoken by Karbi Hills and Karbi Plains

Out of 444 respondents, almost 89.6% of them opined that there exist certain differences either with respect to words, accent or style while transaction of mother tongue by Karbi Hills and Karbi Plains people.

Table 2 Difference of Mother tongue spoken by Karbi Hills and Karbi Plains

Difference	No. of Respondents	Percent
Words	158	35.6
Accent	75	16.9
Style	34	7.7
Accent, Style	11	2.5
Accent, Words	32	7.2
Style, Words	71	15.9
Accent, Style, Words	17	3.8
No response	46	10.4

Fig. 3 Difference among Plain & Hill Karbis in language



c) Other languages known

Out of 444 respondents, 350 respondents are found to know language(s) other than the Karbi language. Prominent languages known are Assamese, Hindi, and English.

Table 3 Other languages known

d) Knowledge of Karbi Language

Around 78% of the respondents are well versed with their own mother tongue that is Karbi language. But the remaining are not so.

Table 4 Knowledge of Karbi Language

Knows Karbi Language	No. of Respondents	Percent
Yes	347	78.2
No	97	21.8
Total	444	100.0

e) Reason for not knowing Karbi Language

Almost 60% of the respondents hold that as everyone speaks Assamese language so the use of Karbi language is very rare. According to 38% of the respondents stated that even at home Assamese language is spoken.

Table 5 Reason for not knowing Karbi Language

Reason	No. of Respondents	Percent
No one speaks Karbi Language at home.	37	38.1
No interest in learning Karbi Language.	2	2.1
Every one speaks Assamese language	58	59.8
Total	97	100.0

b) School Education

Glancing at the present educational status in the selected localities it is observed that out of 12 numbers in 7 numbers of localities Pre-Primary schools do exist; Primary schools in 10 localities; Middle schools in 6 localities; and High Schools in 4 localities. That is to say that a total of 42 schools of various levels do exist. With respect to enrolment of students in these schools it is found that there are mixed trend of students from various communities including Plains Karbi community. Altogether 328 teachers are extending their services in these schools. It is quite clear from table 6 that there are certain localities wherein the lack of schools at various levels is felt. The schools are mostly privately managed, while only a limited number of schools are managed by government. Medium of instruction in these schools do vary. There are both English and Assamese medium schools.

Table 6 Educational Status in the Selected Localities

Location	Number of Schools				Enrolment				Number of Teachers			
	Pr	Pr	Mid	H	Pr	Pr	Mid	H	Pr	Pr	Mid	H
Barbari	2	2	1	1	85	190	55	75	7	10	7	5
Bhalukachok	4	1	1	2	215	145	400	510	6	21	6	24
Chachal	-	1	-	-	-	40	-	-	-	5	-	-
Chokardo	-	2	1	-	-	95	43	-	-	9	5	-
Devchutal	-	1	-	-	-	53	-	-	-	4	-	-
Hengrabari	2	4	-	-	241	760	380	90	22	45	19	6
Upper Hengrabari	-	1	-	-	-	33	-	-	-	4	-	-
Japorigog	2	-	-	-	32	-	-	-	5	-	-	-
Kholipara	1	1	1	-	80	200	360	-	7	5	15	-
Moinakhareng	-	1	1	-	-	25	240	-	-	2	9	-
Pamohi	1	1	-	1	43	25	-	500	2	1	-	26
Rongkimi Gaon	3	-	1	2	78	-	-	647	16	-	11	24
Total	15	15	6	6	774	1566	1478	1822	65	106	72	85

c) Other form of Educational Institutions

Out of 12 selected localities it is revealed from the study that there exists a Junior College at Mainakhareng; Special Learning Unit Kendra and Anganwadi Kendra at Kenduguri; Parismita Fine Art Academy and Hengrabari Junior College at Upper Hengrabari locality; and Pratiksha school of Nursing at Borbari.

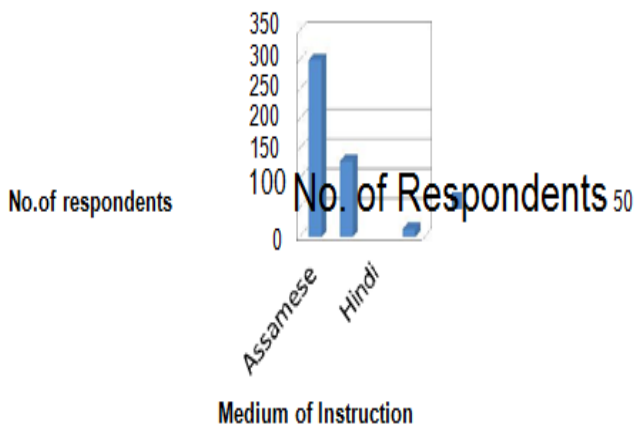
d) Desired Medium of Instruction in School

More than 67% of the respondents are of the opinion that the desired medium of instruction be in Assamese language followed by 29 % of the respondents are in favour of English language depicted in table 7.

Table 7 Expectable Medium of Instruction in School

Desired Medium	No. of Respondents	Percent
Assamese	301	67.8
English	129	29.1
Hindi	0	0
No Response	14	3.1
Total	244	100.0

Fig. 4 Desired medium of Instruction



e) Personal view on last stage of Education

More than 70% of the respondents are of the opinion that higher education should be the last stage (vide table 8).

Table 8 Last stage of Education

Last stage	No. of Respondents	Percent
Primary schooling	52	11.7
Secondary schooling	79	17.8
Higher level	313	70.5
Total	244	100.0

f) Likes to attend any function in the school

Seventy percent of the respondents are in favour of attending any function in the school (vide table 9).

Table 9 Opinion on attending function in the school

Attends	No. of Respondents	Percent
Yes	311	70.0
No	105	23.7
No response	28	6.3
Total	444	100.0

g) Education of girls

More than 97% of the respondents are in favour of imparting education to the girls is presented in table 10.

Table 10 Opinion on Education of girls

In favour	No. of Respondents	Percent
Yes	433	97.5
No	11	2.5
Total	444	100.0

h) Manner sought in imparting Education to girls

Three fourth of the respondents sought regular form of imparting education to the girls (vide table 11).

Table 11 Manner sought in imparting Education to girls

Manner	No. of Respondents	Percent
Occasional	11	2.5
Regular	333	75.0
No response	100	22.5
Total	444	100.0

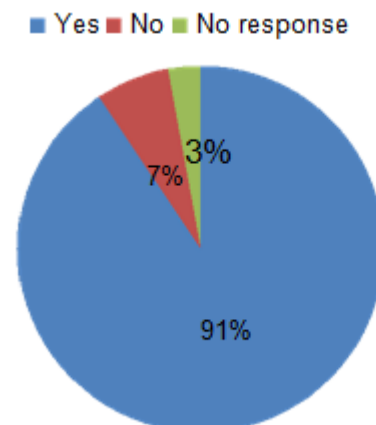
i) Vocational training to the younger generation

More than 90% of the respondents are of the opinion that vocational training to the younger generation is a must as presented in table 12.

Table 12 Vocational training to the younger generation

In favour	No. of Respondents	Percent
Yes	402	90.5
No	29	6.6
No response	13	2.9
Total	244	100.0

Fig. 9 Vocational training to youngsters



j) Type of Vocational training for the younger generation

More than 48% of the respondents are in favour of Informal traditional vocational training to the younger generation presented in table 13. But, around 44% of them are in favour of imparting vocational training formally.

Table 13 Type of Vocational training recommended

Type	No. of Respondents	Percent
Formal training	196	44.1
Informal traditional training	217	48.9
No response	31	7.0
Total	444	100.0

k) Willingness to allow woman for employment in Office

More than 93% of the respondents are in favour of allowing woman for employment in Office presented in table 14.

Table 14 Willingness to allow woman for employment

In favour	No. of Respondents	Percent
Yes	414	93.2
No	30	6.8
Total	444	100.0

l) Manner of employment desired for women

Majority (44.7%) of the respondents are desirous of employing women in government, 2% in semi-government and around 28% in private jobs (vide table 15).

Table 15 Manner of employment desired for women

Manner	No. of Respondents	Percent
Any	34	7.7
Government	198	44.7
Private	67	15.1
Semi Government	9	2.0
Social Worker	57	12.8
Teaching	26	5.8
No response	53	11.9
Total	444	100.0

j) Other Sources of Education

Likes to read Newspaper

Sixty one percent of the respondents are in favour of reading newspaper (vide table 16).

Table 16 Read Newspaper

Likes	No. of Respondents	Percent
Yes	271	61.0
No	149	33.6
No response	24	5.4
Total	444	100.0

Other person read Newspaper for the illiterates
For the interested illiterate person there exists around 95% of the educated people who read the newspapers for them (vide table 17).

Table 17 Read Newspaper

Other person read	No. of Respondents	Percent
Yes	142	95.3
No	7	4.7
Total	149	100.0

Frequency of reading Newspaper at present

Number of daily newspaper readers are around 24%, and weekly being 33%. Non readers are found to be 33% (vide table 18).

Table 18 Frequency of reading Newspaper at present

Frequency	No. of Respondents	Percent
Everyday	106	23.9
Several days a week	147	33.1
Once a week	40	9.0
Less than once a week	3	0.7
No response	148	33.3
Total	444	100.0

Likes to watch Television

Almost eighty one percent of the respondents are in favour of watching television but 18% are against of it (vide table 19).

Table 19 Watch Television

Watch	No. of Respondents	Percent
Yes	360	81.1
No	81	18.2
No response	3	0.7
Total	444	100.0

Likes to Listen Radio

Only around 23 percent of the respondents are in favour of listening radio (vide table 20).

Table 20 Listen Radio

Listen	No. of Respondents	Percent
Yes	102	22.9
No	321	72.4
No response	21	4.7
Total	444	100.0

Radio Programmes mostly listen on Band

Out of the interested radio listeners almost 7% of them like to listen different bands such as 91.5, 92.7, 93.5, 94.3 or 95 (vide table 21).

Table 21 Radio Programmes mostly listen

Radio Band	No. of Respondents	Percent
91.5,93.	2	0.4
92.7	8	1.8
93.5	11	2.5
94.3	8	1.8
95	3	0.7
No response	412	92.8
Total	444	100.0

Findings

Nearly 44% of the respondents found to speak in Assamese language as mother tongue followed by 31.5% in Karbi language and the rest speak both in Karbi and Assamese language.

Nearly 90 % of the respondents opined that there exist certain differences either with respect to words, accent or style in transaction of mother tongue by Karbi Hills and Karbi Plains people.

Around 79 % of the respondents know other language(s) other than the Karbi language. Prominent languages known are Assamese, Hindi, and English.

Around 78% of the respondents are well versed with their own mother tongue that is Karbi language. Almost 60% of the respondents hold that as everyone speaks Assamese language so the use of Karbi language is very rare.

Near about 87% of the heads and more than 84% of the family members went to schools.

More than 67% of the respondents are of the opinion that the desired medium of instruction be in Assamese language.

More than 70% of the respondents are of the opinion that higher level of education should be the last stage.

Out of 12 numbers, in 7 numbers of localities Pre-Primary schools do exist; Primary schools in 10 numbers of localities; Middle schools in 6 numbers of localities; and High Schools in 4 numbers of localities. Most of the schools are privately managed only a limited number of schools are managed by government.

In certain selected localities educational institutions such as Junior College; Special Learning Unit Kendra; Anganwadi Kendra; Fine Art Academy; Nursing School are available.

More than 90% of the respondents are in favour of vocational training to the younger generation. Around 44% of them are in favour of imparting vocational training formally.

More than 97% of the respondents are in favour of imparting education to the girls. Three fourth of the respondents sought regular form of imparting education to the girls.

More than 93% of the respondents are in favour of woman employment. Majority (44.7%) of the respondents are desirous of employing women in government.

70 % of the respondents are in favour of attending any function in the school. 61 % of the respondents are in favour of reading newspaper.

Almost 81 % of the respondents are in favour of watching television. Only around 23 % of the respondents are in favour of listening radio.

Conclusion

In the process of modernization education plays a pivotal role among the Plains Karbis. A very positive attitude towards education, though at a slow pace, has brought changes. Due to the spread of education and exposure to modernity, significant socio-cultural changes leading towards better achievements have become apparent among the Karbis. The transition from indigenous to modernity has been immense in every sphere.

The percentage of educated people among the Plains Karbis is less. They are mostly of poor economic conditions, it is not quite easy to maintain and especially educate the children properly, and when the chief income holders are women. Most of the mothers are less educated and are not able to groom their children properly. Moreover, women are bound by certain obligations that do not allow them to work and earn as efficiently as they could have otherwise. The obligations are children, families, social notions etc. So it is quite difficult to witness development for the Plains Karbis unless they resolve themselves for it. Men have to contribute equally in the families' income. Both girls and boys should get fairly equal chances to education. Karbi girls have taken up higher education and they are coming forward for higher education in great numbers. The hidden potential of Karbi women have gradually been changing with the economic empowerment, entrepreneurship and development. Living in the urban societies has played a big role whereby the Karbis began to adopt modernity and civilized way of life.

The Plains Karbi society is gradually changing. The educated male-members of the household are realizing the problems of women. They try to engage themselves in different professions. In such families women are comparatively more protected and the girl-children also get a chance to educate themselves.

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