

Women & Child Issues in Meghalaya

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Women play an essential role (in Khasi society) as the right to inherit ancestral property is vested in them. However, these rights are meaningless as the women are merely a custodian, and the administrative power lies with the men. For instance, the local traditional Dorbar is headed by men, and men continuously make decisions.

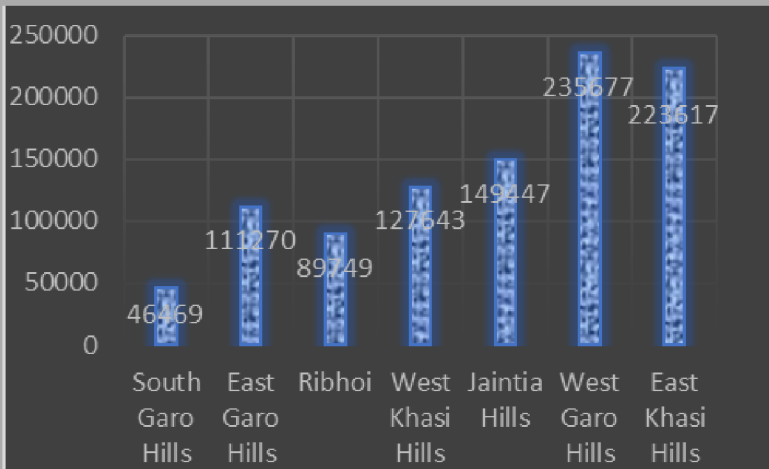


Figure 1 No of Households with House Ownership Status owned by Women
 Source: Socio-Economic Cast Census

Explanation: The Garo's practice matriarchal system unlike the Khasi's who practice matrilineal system (tribes of Meghalaya)

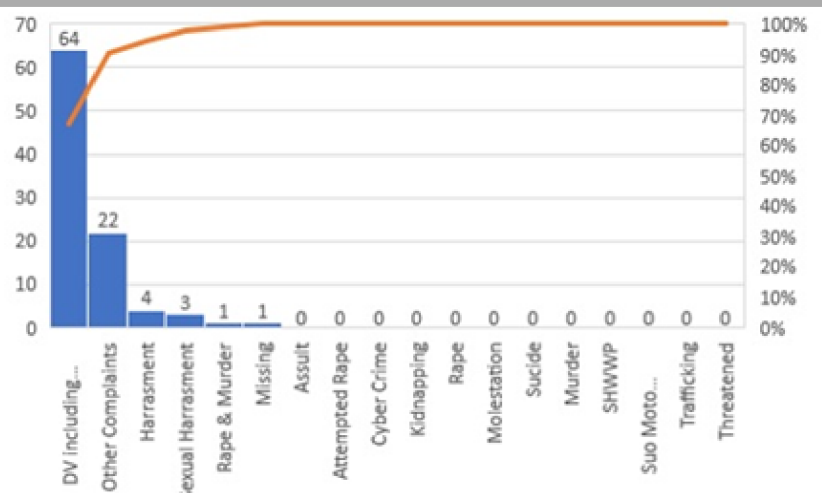


Figure 2: Registered violence case against women
 Source: Women's Commission, Meghalaya

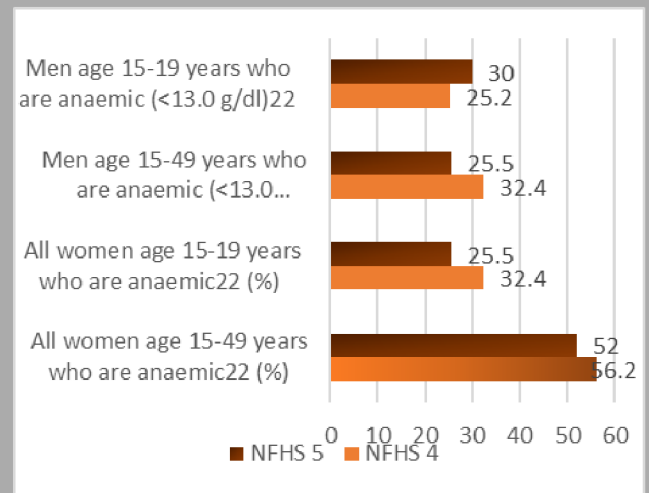


Figure 3: Anaemia cases

Domestic Violence negatively impacts women and children in terms of psychological stress and metabolic levels by increasing factors such as anemia and pushing children and women into a state of underweight. This also increases the risk of poor nutrition level

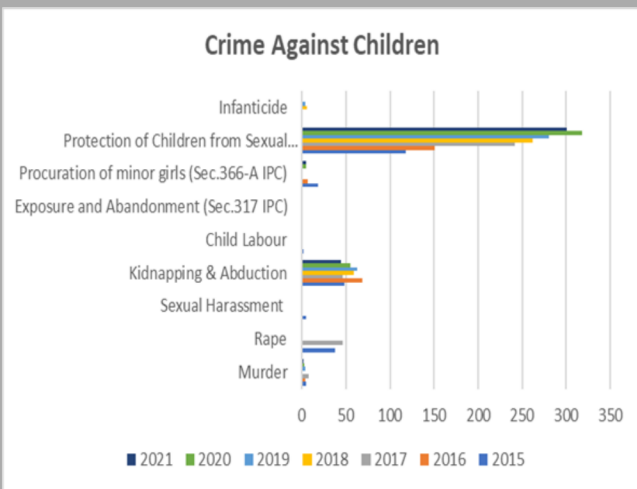


Figure 4: Reported Crimes against children
 Source: Meghalaya Police

Crime against Children was on the rise during the Covid-19 Pandemic in 2020, with 318 registered cases under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act 2012. (Police, 2020)

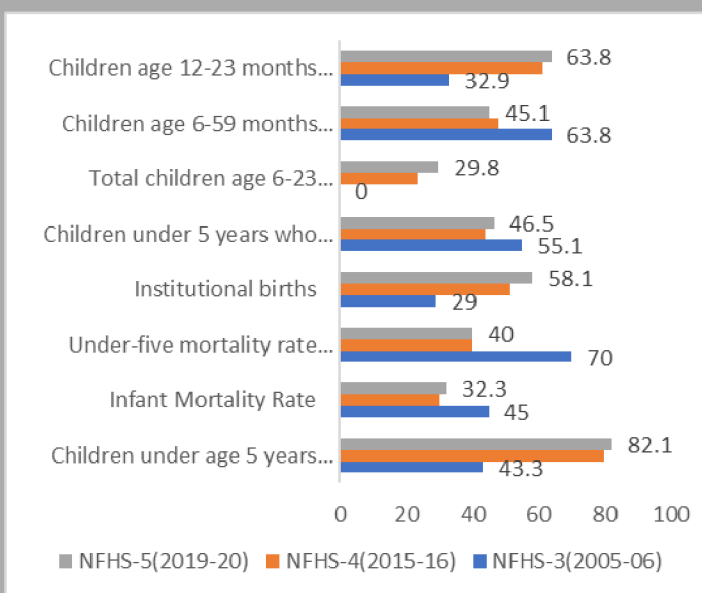


Figure 5: Health Status Of Children In Meghalaya

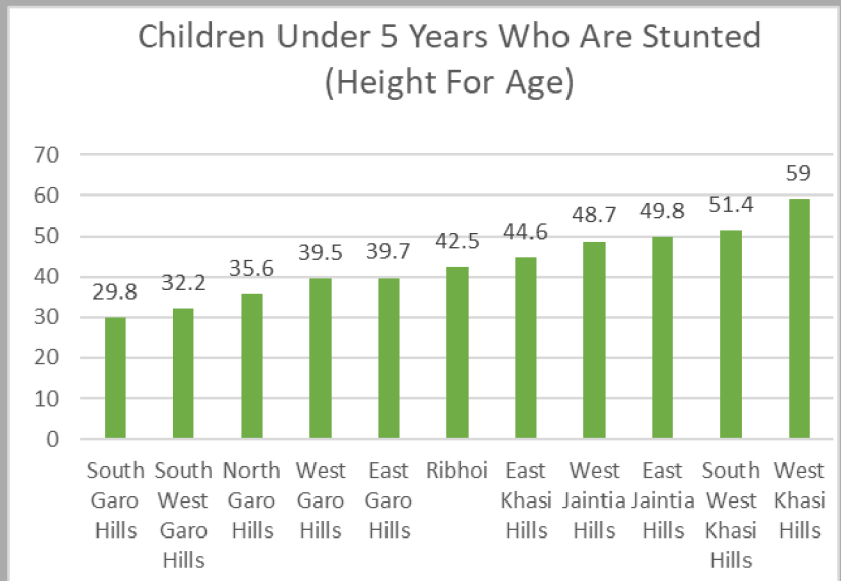


Figure 6 Cases Of Stunting In Meghalaya
 Source: NFHS

The following figure depicts the health status of Children in Meghalaya according to the National Health and Family Survey Data

Policy Recommendations

1. Empower the ASHA workers through capacity building, especially in rural areas. These workers may be the first point of contact that can be easily accessible by any victim in the community
2. A monitoring and Vigilance Committee may be set up by actively involving functionaries of the Dorbar Shnongs to monitor the various issues women and children face within the community.
3. Empowering local governance by empowering women's participation in social, political, and economic leadership and reserving seats for women's participation in the State Legislative Assembly