Parenting Challenges and Strategy to Improve Child Parental Relationship at Amjalong Village, West Jaintia Hills District, Meghalaya

Research Dissertation

Submitted to Martin Luther Christian University, Shillong

In partial fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of

Master of Social Work

By

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Under the supervisor of

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2025

Declaration

I hereby declare that this research dissertation entitled
Parenting Challenges and Strategy to improve Child Parental Relationship at Amjalong
Village, West Jaintia Hills District, Meghalaya.
submitted to Martin Luther Christian University, Shillong for the degree of
Master of Social Work is a bona fide effort made on my part under the
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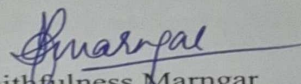Name of Scholar

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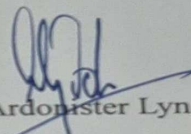
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Certificate

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submitted by Name of student to Martin Luther Christian University, Shillong for the degree of Master of Social Work embodies original work done by her under my supervision. This research work has not been presented for any degree or diploma to this or any other University.

Place: Amjalong

Dr. Faithfulness Marngar

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Date: 25ᵗʰ/6/25

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Acknowledgement

First and foremost, I thank the almighty God for protecting me that I am able to complete my dissertation.

Secondly, I am very much grateful to Martin Luther Christian University, School of Social Work for offering me with the possibility to do my Research and for constantly supporting and advising me during the entire course of the study.

I would also like to thank my research supervision, Dr. Faithfulness Marngar, for her guidance, direction and oversight at some point for the improvement of this research project.

I also would like to express my honest gratitude to all the people of Amjalong Village whospared their time and cooperate with me throughout their busy schedule.

Proficiency Suliang

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Abstract

This action-based research explores the effectiveness of a parent-adolescent intervention session conducted on 30th January 2025, aimed at addressing common parenting challenges and fostering healthier parent-child relationships. The session focused on promoting open dialogue, emotional understanding, and mutual respect between parents and their adolescents. Ms. Ilarisha M. Nongkhlaw, a professional counsellor, facilitated the session using accessible language, storytelling, and group activities to create an inclusive and engaging environment.

The session's impact was evaluated through participant observation, informal parent feedback, and analysis of engagement during group activities and discussions. The researcher found that high parental engagement, improved understanding of adolescent behaviour, and the initiation of meaningful parent-child dialogue. Several adolescents reported it was their first experience of openly communicating with their parents in such a setting. Participants also appreciated the facilitator's ability to simplify complex issues and offer relatable, practical strategies.

However, challenges were noted, including initial hesitation among some parents, limited time for deeper discussion, and underrepresentation of fathers. Many parents expressed concerns about communication difficulties, lack of adolescent responsiveness, and the growing influence of social media and peer pressure. These issues contributed to feelings of disconnection and helplessness among parents, who expressed a strong desire to reconnect with their children.

Based on the diagram below, the researcher found that the majority of respondents were 45 years old (42%), followed by those aged 37 (33%) and 27 (25%). In terms of gender, the respondents were evenly split, with 50% male and 50% female. Regarding educational

qualifications, the majority had completed Lower Primary education (42%), followed by Higher Secondary (33%) and Upper Primary (25%). As for family size, most respondents belonged to families with 4–7 members (58%), while 42% came from families with 1–3 members.

Overall, the session demonstrated the potential of interactive programs and support groups in enhancing parenting practices, improving communication, and strengthening family bonds. Continued follow-up and inclusive participation are recommended to sustain and deepen the impact of such interventions.

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Chapter 1
Introduction

Parenting plays an essential role in shaping a child's development, influencing their beliefs, behavior, and overall perspective on life. From the moment a child is born, the parent-child bond becomes their first and most important relationship, providing the foundation through which they begin to understand their surroundings. While parenting approaches differ around the world, distinct cultural norms influence how children are raised. In India, for instance, parents often emphasize moral teachings and a strong sense of social duty, whereas Western parenting typically encourages independence and self-expression.

Over the years, societal and technological changes have reshaped what it means to be a "good" parent, introducing new challenges. Modern parents are now expected to juggle professional responsibilities, societal norms, and financial demandsespecially related to their children's education and well-being. The digital era adds yet another layer of complexity, with concerns about screen addiction and exposure to harmful online content. These shifts require parents to remain vigilant and engaged while also managing their own emotional well-being.

Many caregivers struggle with maintaining a strong emotional connection with their children, managing time effectively, and coping with the constant influx of advice and expectations. This can create confusion, stress, and a sense of inadequacy. When parents are emotionally unavailable, children may seek validation and support from their peers, which can sometimes result in feelings of loneliness or disconnection. In response to these challenges, adopting intentional parenting strategiessuch as open communication, emotional presence, and mindful time management is vital. These approaches foster nurturing home environments that not only support children's development but also enhance parents' well-being. Ultimately,

responsive and emotionally attuned parenting is key to raising resilient, balanced children in today's complex world.

Statement of the Problem

According Global (2021) A global survey conducted across 16 countries revealed that over half (51%) of parents feel immense societal pressure regarding their parenting choices. Additionally, 43% admitted that raising a child was more challenging than they had expected, while 62% acknowledged the significant financial strain that comes with parenting. The study also examined the mental well-being of new parents, with 32% reporting feelings of loneliness in the initial months, and 25% of mothers experiencing postpartum depression. Interestingly, the challenges of parenting persist even with multiple children, as the structural difficulties within society remain unchanged, despite parents gaining more experience in childcare.

According to the United Nations defines 'youth' as individuals aged between. Between the ages of 15 and 24 years old, regardless of any other definitions set by Member States. This explanation originated during the planning for the International Youth Year. The General Assembly approved the proposal in resolution 36/28 of 1981 (as cited in A/36/215)

All data about young people from the UN relies on this definition, as seen in the yearly publications.of data released by the UN system regarding population studies, schooling, job trends,and healthcare.This definition of youth, which is focused on statistics, implies that children are seen as those whoindividuals who are below 14 years old. Multiple UN entities, tools, and regional organizations have various interpretations of youth, acknowledged by the United   Nations   Secretariat.

According to the National Youth Policy-2003 in India, a 'youth' is described as an individual

of a certain age.aged group is defined as young people between the ages of 13 to 35 years. This is outlined in the National Youth Policy 2014.Individuals aged 15 to 29 are classified as youth. Youth is defined asA policy has been implemented for this publication since 2014.

(Ministry of Health and Family Welfare 2021). The fast-paced transformations in society and the expanding youth population are increasingly influencing the ongoing difficulties of modern parenting. India, with the world's largest youth population, has a notable number of people aged 15-29 years, making up 27.2% of the population in 2021, as per the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare's Technical Group on Population Projections report. It is anticipated that this number will continue to be significant, with approximately 345 million young people expected by 2036. As parents' guide children through the emotional and developmental challenges of this age group, their own emotional health is becoming more vulnerable. It is essential to tackle these challenges because the emotional well-being of parents significantly affects their capacity to assist and mentor their children during this crucial stage of development.

(Ministry of Health & Family Welfare 2011). India's population of one million in 2021 puts it among the world's youngest countries, at 27.3 percent.Report from the Technical Group on Population indicates that a substantial portion of the population falls within the 15-29 age range, categorized as youth.India and States' projections for 2011-2036 by the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare. Regarding the subjectfrom 2011 to 2036, due to decreasing fertility rates, in terms of actual figuresAs life-expectancy rises, the country's population pyramid will experience a change. Percentage of people over the age of 65 is expected to increase.There will be a growth in the number of elderly people in the population. It is anticipated that the

youth population will.Rise at first then decrease in the latter half of 2011-2036 timeframe. sum of all the number of young people rose from 222.7 million in 1991 to 333.4 million in 2011 and continues to grow.Expected to hit 371.4 million by 2021 and then drop to 345.5 million by 2036.

Research question

1. What is the biggest challenges parents experience when raising adolescent aged 10-18?

2. What strategies have been effective in improving communication between parents and adolescent?

3. How does technology affect your behaviour and learning?

Research Objectives

1. To identify the challenges of parenting in the Amjalong village.

2. To assess the effect of parenting style

3. To develop strategy to improve child parenting through parenting style

4. To intervene with realistic solution and address the impact of intervention

Operational Definition

Parenting: Parenting is the process of raising and supporting a child's physical, emotional, social, and cognitive development from through adulthood.

Adolescent: Adolescent stage that spans from childhood to adulthood, typically between the ages of 10and 18. This period is characterized by rapid growth in physical, mental, and social aspects, which influences how adolescents feel, think, make choices, and engage with the world around them. It is a crucial time for establishing a foundation for lifelong health.

Child parental Relationship: The Child parental relationship is the close bond between a parent and their child, involving emotional, physical, and mental connections. It can be healthy, where parents meet their child's needs. On the other hand, an unhealthy relationship is characterized by neglect or abuse, where the child does not receive the necessary care and attention from the parent.

Significant of the Study

The researcher aims to understand the challenges faced by parents in rising adolescent and the strategies that can improve the parent child relationship. The importance of this study is to provide insight into the difficulties parents experience and the factors that influence their relationship with their adolescent. This research seeks to identify effective strategies that can strengthen communication and emotional bonds leading to healthier family dynamics. Understanding these challenges and solution is essential for supporting parents in fostering positive and nurturing relationship with their children.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Kwon et al (2013) This study explored the challenges parents face when raising toddlers and the strategies they use to manage them. Using qualitative interviews conducted separately with mothers and fathers in a university setting, the findings indicated a shift from traditional gender roles toward more shared parenting responsibilities. Both mothers and fathers reported similar challenges, including concerns about their child's behavior and development, as well as difficulties balancing childcare with other responsibilities. Fathers expressed feeling less confident in handling daily routines compared to mothers. Additionally, mothers utilized a broader range of coping strategies, such as seeking advice and support from family, friends, and books, to manage stress. The study underscores the importance of parenting education programs that acknowledge these differences and support co-parenting efforts to enhance parenting effectiveness and child-parent relationships.

Fitriyah (2024) The rapid advancement of digital technology has impacted various aspects of life, including parenting within the family environment. Some believe that Islamic parenting is becoming less relevant due to its perceived lack of a positive image. This study, based on a literature review, explores theories related to this issue, emphasizing that Islamic parenting is a child-rearing approach grounded in Quranic and prophetic teachings. It stresses that raising children in alignment with Islamic values does not mean following every societal trend but rather preparing them to navigate their generation while upholding religious principles. The study presents challenges based on existing data and offers strategies derived from the book Modern Islamic Parenting and the School of Parenting application, demonstrating ways to integrate Islamic teachings into contemporary parenting practices.

Sriram and Navalkar (2013) explore the evolving role of fathers in urban India, emphasizing that although the traditional image of the father as a provider and protector still exists, there is a noticeable shift toward increased involvement in childrearing. Their chapter reviews various studies that examine how fathers participate in their children's lives—from the prenatal stage through different phases of childhood. They identify both practical and personal factors that either support or hinder father involvement. Cultural expectations, particularly those related to gender norms and power dynamics within families, often restrict fathers from engaging more fully in parenting. The chapter also includes policy and program recommendations to encourage and support active fatherhood, based on the available research.

In a more recent study, Patnaik et al. (2024) focus on the parenting challenges associated with raising preschool-aged children. They argue that early childhood is a foundational stage of development and that parenting during this period significantly affects a child's emotional, physical, cognitive, and social growth. The study emphasizes the importance of a balanced parenting styleone that accepts the individuality of the child while maintaining appropriate boundaries. Parents are encouraged to explain rules in ways children can understand and to support their children's efforts in problem-solving and daily tasks.The researchers highlight the importance of the "3Fs" in parenting: being Firm, Fair, and Friendly. They also note that parenting styles are closely linked to a child's behaviour and emotional development. However, many parents tend to become overly involved or controlling, which can lead to increased behavioural challenges. Issues such as feeding difficulties, sleep problems, aggression, discipline, and emotional sensitivity are common. Based on data collected from parents and preschoolers across different districts in Odisha using standardized questionnaires and SPSS analysis, the study found that parents often show strong support during times of

illness or difficulty but may also struggle with temper and patience. The findings stress the need for consistent parental involvement, emotional availability, and quality time spent with children to promote healthy development and strengthen the parent-child relationship.

Although parenting can be fulfilling, it frequently involves considerable stress and challenges (Deater-Deckard & Scarr, 1996). Parenting stress encompasses a variety of difficulties, ranging from everyday annoyances to persistent life challenges, often triggered by children's behavioral problems, parents feeling inadequate, or lacking sufficient resources and social support (Abidin, 1992). These stress factors can adversely affect how parents interact with their children and weaken the quality of their relationship.

Numerous studies have demonstrated connections between parenting stress and various psychosocial factors, such as parents' mental health, the quality of their relationships, and children's developmental progress (Mitchell & Cabrera, 2009; Saisto et al., 2008). Nonetheless, there is less research examining how parents personally perceive stress and the coping methods they use to sustain healthy relationships with their children. Additionally, much of the existing research has concentrated on mothers (Fischer, 1990), assuming they are the main caregivers. However, with evolving family roles and greater father involvement, dads face similar parenting pressures (McBride, Schoppe, & Rane, 2002; Mitchell & Cabrera, 2009), though their perspectives have not been as thoroughly studied.Given the crucial role of strong parent-child relationships in children's emotional and behavioural development, it is essential to explore not only the challenges parents face but also the strategies they adopt to strengthen these relationships. Positive parenting strategiessuch as open communication, consistent discipline, emotional support, and active involvementcan help mitigate stress and improve family functioning (Sanders, 1999; Webster-Stratton & Reid, 2004).

Chapter 3

Methodology

3.1 Introduction

Research methodology is a systematic plan for conducting research. It defines the research approach, data collection methods, source, and analysis techniques to ensure accurate and reliable results.

According to Kothari et al. (2004), research methodology involves the systematic and theoretical examination of the methods applied within a specific field of study. Similarly, Ahuja et al. (2001) describe methodology as the set of processes or techniques used in research, offering a structured framework for scientific inquiry. It serves as a bridge between theoretical principles and practical research, facilitating the analysis and understanding of societal.

Area of the study:

The study was conducted in Amjalong village West Jaintia Hills District Meghalaya.

Research design

According to the researcher understanding qualitative research is a method used to explore and understand people's experiences, behaviors, and perspectives. It focuses on gathering non-numerical data through methods such interview, focus groups, and observation. This approach helps researcher gain in-depth insights into complex topics, such as emotions, social interaction and culture influences.

Jain (2023) describes qualitative research design is a distinct approach within research methodology, typically involving data collection methods like interviews and document analysis. This method allows researchers to obtain in-depth, descriptive insights into participants perspective and experiences. Rather than relying solely on statistical analysis, qualitative research aims to explore the complexity of human experiences.

Similarly, Juma (2023) in qualitative research, a case study involves an in-depth examination of a particular subject, often an individual. This approach focuses on understanding the subject life experiences and conducting a detailed analysis of the collected data.

Sampling design

Kothari (2004) describes sampling design as a plan for selecting a sample from a population. It outlines the methods and procedure a researcher uses to determine the sample, including its size. This design is established before data collection begins. Researchers can choose from various sampling design, some of which are simpler to implement, while others offer greater accuracy.

Sampling methods

According to the researcher understanding, snowball sampling is a technique used to recruit participants through referrals. It starts with a few initial respondents who meet the study criteria, and they refer others with similar experiences. This method is especially useful for reaching hard to find groups or individual dealing with sensitive topics, as referrals help build trust and encourage participation. In my study, researcher choose snowball sampling because it focuses on parenting challenges, which may be a sensitive topic for some individuals. This method allows the researcher to reach suitable participants through referrals making it easier to connect with parents who share relevant experience. Since researcher sample size is small (12 respondent), this approach ensures that researcher gather the necessary data effectively.

In this study, the snowball sampling design is used to recruit respondents. According to Nikolopoulou (2023), snowball sampling where participants are selected through referrals from existing participants. Researchers begin by asking initial respondents to suggest other potential participants, who are then contacted to provide further information. This method is also known as networking or chain referral sampling.

According Nikolopoulou (2022) explains that non-probability sampling means that not all members of the population have an equal chance of being chosen for the study. Instead, participants are selected based on specific criteria, such as availability or the researcher's judgment, considering factors like expertise or relevant characteristics to gather the necessary data.

Sampling unit: The researcher purposely chosen the parents of young adolescent (Age group 10-18).

3.7 Sample size: 12 respondents were included in the study. This number was determined by the availability of participants during the interview process. Other individuals where either unavailable or unable to spare time for the interview. Therefore, only 12 respondents were able to take part in the interview and provide answers.

3.8 Method of Data collection

Primary data

The researcher used an interview guide as a data collection tool, with questions designed to capture the lived experiences of the respondents. The guide consisted of a semi-structured questionnaire with open-ended questions to understanding the challenges faced by parents of young adolescents. The sequence of questions was flexible and adjusted based on the respondents' answers.

Secondary Data

Journals: Contain articles written by experts in a specific field, presenting research findings.

Google Scholar: Provides access to academic literature and research resources.

Ethical consideration:

1. Researcher obtained permission from the headman of Amjalong village to carry out the research project.

2. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, and they were made aware of the research project purpose.

3. The researcher ensured the confidentiality of the collected data it secure.

4. Participant had the freedom to withdraw from the study at any time if they chose not to continue.

Chapter 4

Finding based on the intervention

4.1 Introduction of the intervention:

The purpose of this research project is to focuses on parenting challenges and strategies to improve child parental relationship in Amjalong village, West Jaintia Hill District, Meghalaya. The researcher explained the plan to conduct a research project in the village. First, the researcher met the headmen and Asha of Amjalong village. Second, the researcher arranges for the program by confirming the Headman, resources person and community people's for conducting the Interactive Session with Parent of adolescent. Before conducting an interactive session the researcher conducted the Focus Group Discussion to understand the challenges of parenting challenges. After confirming the researcher started to conduct this program. The headman was very welcoming and agreed to allow the researcher to proceed with the project in their village. After that, the researcher began identifying resource persons to invite at Amjalong village, experts in discussing parenting challenges and strategies to improve child parental relationship.

The researcher invited the resource person her name is Ilarisha M. Nongkhlaw, hailing from the Breathtaking Khasi Hills of Meghalaya (Shillong). She completed her Master's degree in counselling psychology and has worked as a counsellor at Pearly Dew Higher Secondary School. She has also worked with MACS (Meghalaya Aids control society) on a project addressing stigma and discrimination for PLHIV (People living with HIV) and KPs (key populations). Recently, she has been working as a lecture at Mairang Presbyterian science college.

4.2 Focus group discussion with the parents of young adolescent (age group 10-18)

Interactive session with the parents of young adolescent (age group 10-18)

The researcher had an interactive session with the parents.

There are (10) members who are taking part in the discussion.

4.3 The purpose of the focus group discussion with the parents of young adolescent (age group 10-18) of Amjalong village.

The researcher organized a focus group discussion with parents of young adolescent (age group 10-18) in Amjalong village, as part of the study on parenting challenges and strategies for improving parent-child relationships. focusing on their challenges, particularly the lack of communication between parents and their adolescent. A total of 10 participants are taking part in the session. The researcher aims to understand their perspectives.

The primary objective of the focus group discussion was to address the challenges faced by parents of adolescents in Amjalong. The researcher aimed to:

1. Understand the challenges parents face in rising their adolescents.
2. How these challenges impact parent-adolescent relationship.
3. Gain insight into common concerns, communication barriers, and other factors affecting their relationship.
4. Inform parents about an upcoming interactive session led by an expert.
5. Encourage parents to send their adolescent to participate in a life skills session.

During the discussion, the parents openly shared their experiences and challenges. Many spoke about difficulties in communicating with their adolescent's, particularly the growing disconnects as their children entered adolescence. Some parents expressed frustration, saying

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that their children no longer listen to them or follow their advice, which made them feel powerless and disconnected. A few parents became emotional while recounting their struggles, as they felt helpless and worried about their adolescent's future behaviour.

The concerns discussed included issues like a lack of respect, difficulties in setting boundaries, and the challenges of understanding the complex emotional needs of their adolescent's. Others mentioned the increasing influence of peer pressure, the internet, and social media, which they felt further complicated their ability to guide theiradolescentseffectively. It became evident that many of the parents were seeking better ways to connect with their adolescents and address these issues.

After listening to all the concerns and challenges faced by the parents, the researcher assured them that their voices were heard and that practical help was on the way. The researcher informed the parents that an expert in the field of parenting, with extensive experience in working with families and adolescents, had been invited to lead an interactive session. The expert, who specializes in strategies for improving communication between parents and children, would share tools and techniques to help address the specific concerns raised during the discussion. The session would also provide a safe space for parents to ask questions and seek advice on effective parenting practices.

The parents responded positively to this news, expressing relief that their concerns would be addressed by an expert. Many of them expressed eagerness to learn new strategies that could help improve their relationships with their children, particularly in areas of communication, discipline, and emotional support. The researcher concluded the session by thanking the parents for their openness and active participation, and reassured them that the upcoming session would provide valuable insights and practical solutions.

4.4 Interactive session programme on "Parenting challenges and strategies to improve child parental relationship"

Objectives:

- ➤ To educate parents on common parenting challenges and effective ways to address them.
- ➤ To improve communication between parents and adolescent for a stronger relationship.
- ➤ To encourage parents to share their experiences challenges and solutions with one another.

Based on the findings, the researcher organized an interactive session and invited an expert resource person to lead the session on parenting challenges and strategies to improve the parent-child relationship. The session was for parents of adolescents (ages 10-18 years old) and took place on January 30th, 2025, at the community hall in Amjalong village.

The resource person discussed how the relationship between parents and their teenagers often transitions into a more independent stage, which can be challenging for both the child and theparents. This stage involves a shift toward more open communication, while maintaining the core foundation of support and guidance as the teenager navigates their feelings and decisions in life. Often, this period brings greater conflict compared to earlier years, but it is also a time for developing a deeper connection and mutual respect between parents and their adolescent.

As children move through various stagesfrom childhood to adolescence, and eventually to adulthoodsignificant changes take place. These transitions can be challenging for everyone involved. Over time, each person develops their own ideas and perspectives, which influence their choices, relationships, and understanding of the world.

The resource person, Ma'am Ilarisha M. Nongkhlaw, discussed adolescent development and the different developmental stages within this age range: pre-adolescence (10-12 years), early adolescence (13-15 years), and mid-adolescence (16-17 years). She also explained the importance of understanding adolescent perspectives and provided effective strategies for parents to support their adolescent during this critical period.

Here is the explanation provided by the resource person during the interactive session:

1. Physical Development

Most adolescents between the ages of 13 to 17 experience:

The transition from childhood to full adolescence, along with physical changes.Significant bodily changes, especially in girls (boys continue to grow taller into their early twenties).

2. Cognitive Development

Most adolescents between the ages of 13 to 17:

- Develop a mature way of thinking and reasoning: Gain the ability to make decisions based on their knowledge of opportunities, risks, and consequences.
- Continue to be influenced by their peers (though peer pressure decreases as they grow older). They also develop their talents to become self-sufficient.
- Respond to news and media message while improving their ability to critically analyze them.
- Strengthen their relationships with friends and family.
- Seek a greater sense of purpose in life.
- Develop a sense of independence.

3. Emotional Development:

Most adolescents between the ages of 13 to 17 will:

1. Develop the ability to build long-lasting, meaningful, and healthy relationships with friends and others if they have a strong foundation of trust, past positive experiences, and an understanding of love.

2. Understand their own emotions and develop the ability to analyze why they feel a certain way.

3. Begin to place less importance on physical appearance and focus more on inner values and life experiences.

4. Sexual Development

Most adolescents between the ages of 13 to 17 will:

- Understand their connection to relationships and marriage, as well as the opportunities and risks that come with expressing their gender identity.
- Choose to express their gender identity in ways that may or may not align with traditional gender roles.
- Recognize the aspects of a healthy and unhealthy relationship.
- Gain a clear understanding of reproduction, HIV, and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs).
- Identify the influence of various media on cultural perceptions of relationships and sexuality. Develop an understanding of deep, loving, and long-term relationships.
- Gain awareness of their own gender identity (which differs from biological sex).

Developmental stages within this age range:

- Independence vs. Dependence: As children grow, the struggle between seeking independence while still relying on parental support becomes a central theme.
- Conflicts and Negotiation: Especially during the early adolescent years, conflicts may arise more frequently regarding rules and personal freedoms. Parents often need to engage in discussions while maintaining boundaries.
- Emotional Growth: Adolescents often experience stronger and deeper emotions about their identity, which can sometimes lead to misunderstandings between them and their parents.

A. Pre-Adolescence (Ages 10-12)

- Parent-Child Dynamics: At this stage, children still rely heavily on their parents but begin to test boundaries. They may show an increasing preference for spending time with friends rather than family. Parents might notice their children questioning rules more often and displaying some resistance to authority.

- Transition Period: Children begin shifting from childhood to early adolescence. While they still need parental guidance, they start seeking greater independence.
- Communication: Parents may experience some pushback as children test limits and assert their opinions. However, children still turn to their parents for support and emotional guidance.

- Rules and Boundaries: This is a stage where children start challenging rules but still require structure and guidance.

- Developmental Characteristics: Children begin to experience a sense of independence and explore their own interests more deeply. They become more influenced by their peers and start developing stronger self-awareness and perspectives about the world.

B. Early Adolescence (Ages 13-15)

- Parent-Child Dynamics: The relationship between parents and adolescents can become more challenging as teenagers seek greater independence. Conflicts may intensify over rules, personal space, and decision-making. However, despite their desire for independence, they still need emotional support and guidance.

- Developmental Characteristics: The beginning of adolescence brings significant changes in the body, hormones, and emotions. Teenagers at this stage experience shifts in thinking, a stronger desire for autonomy, and increased peer influence. They may start forming an identity distinct from their family.

- Identity Formation: Adolescents begin to develop their own sense of self, which can sometimes conflict with their parents' values and expectations. This process can lead to more disagreements and a stronger push for self-governance.

- Emotional Intensity: Hormonal changes lead to heightened emotions, which can cause mood swings and unpredictable emotional responses.

- Parent-Child Tension: Parents may struggle to balance setting boundaries while granting their teenagers more independence. There may be an increased need for personal space and individuality.

- **The Influence of Peer Groups:** The influence of peers becomes stronger and can sometimes challenge family values.

Examples:

Aidan, 14 years old, often argues with his mother about his curfew, frequently saying, "I'm not a child anymore!" However, he still seeks her advice when facing social challenges at school.

Olivia, 13 years old, has become more private about her life and spends less time with her family. She feels frustrated when her father tries to monitor her social media, but she still confides in her mother about friendship issues.

C. Mid-Adolescence (Ages 16-17)

- Developmental Characteristics: Teenagers are now transitioning into young adulthood. They continue to develop a deeper understanding of themselves, their goals, and their unique identities. While they gain more independence, they still face challenges related to their future, relationships, and responsibilities. There is a stronger desire for self-governance, though many still seek parental guidance on important matters.

- Parent-Child Dynamics: During these years, the relationship between parents and teenagers may improve as adolescents begin to understand their parents' perspectives better. Parents often shift from being authority figures to more of a supportive and advisory role. While teenagers seek greater independence, they also start to appreciate their parents' advice and recognize their efforts.

- Increasing Independence: As teenagers prepare for adulthood, many want to make their own decisions. This can sometimes lead to more misunderstandings with parents as they push boundaries.

- Deeper Conversations: As they gain more independence, teenagers may still seek guidance from their parents on significant life topics such as relationships, career choices, and personal values.

- Conflict and Negotiation: While conflicts may still arise, there is more opportunity for mature discussions. Some teenagers begin to see their parents more as mentors rather than strict authority figures.

Example:

Sophia, 17 years old, has become more independent and spends less time with her family. However, she still seeks her parents' advice when applying to colleges or making important decisions about her future.

Understanding Adolescent Perspective

Teenagers go through major changes as they grow, and their way of seeing the world can be very different from adults. Here are some key aspects of how they think:

1. **Search for Identity:**

Teenagers are trying to figure out who they are, what they believe in, and where they fit in the world. This often leads them to question authority, explore new interests, and try different ways of expressing themselves.

Example: A 15-year-old might experiment with different clothing styles, music, or friend groups to discover what feels right for them. This can sometimes confuse or even worry parents, but it's a natural part of their self-discovery.

2. Desire for Independence

As teenagers grow, they want more freedom and control over their own lives. They may push against rules and set their own boundaries, which can sometimes seem like they are rebelling against their parents. However, this is a normal part of growing up.

Example: A 16-year-old might insist on deciding where to go on weekends, not because they don't respect their parents' advice, but because they are learning to make independent choices.

3. Social Connections and Peer Influence

Friends become very important during adolescence. Teenagers are strongly influenced by their peers, and their friendships can affect their confidence, decisions, and behavior. The desire to fit in can sometimes lead them to risky behaviors.

Example: A 13-year-old might feel pressured to join a new friend group or try something just to fit in.

4. Cognitive Development and Idealism

Teenagers develop more advanced thinking skills, allowing them to reflect deeply on the world around them. This often leads them to idealism—a strong desire to change society or fight against injustice. However, their way of thinking can sometimes be overly confident or overly simplistic.

Example: A 17-year-old might become passionate about a social issue, seeing it only in terms of right and wrong. They may feel frustrated when others don't share their level of enthusiasm or urgency.

5. **Need for Privacy:**

As teenagers become more aware of their personal space and identity, they start valuing privacy. This can sometimes lead to secrecy or withdrawal, which parents may see as defiance. However, it is usually just a normal part of growing up.

Example: A 15-year-old might lock their bedroom door or get defensive about their phonenot because they are hiding something, but because they are setting personal boundaries.

6. **Struggles with Self-Esteem and Body Image:**

Teenagers are very sensitive to how others see them, especially regarding their appearance and social status. Their self-esteem often fluctuates, particularly when it comes to body image. Peer pressure and media portrayals of "perfection" can make this even more challenging.

Example: A 13-year-old might feel insecure about body changes like weight gain or acne. If they receive negative comments from friends or familyeven unintentionallyit can deeply affect their confidence.

7. **Exploration of Relationships and Sexuality**

As teenagers grow, they begin to explore romantic relationships and their sense of identity as male or female. This process can be exciting but also confusing. Many teens seek validation through relationships, which can lead to emotional ups and downs.

Example: A 17-year-old might enter a relationship that feels all-consuming, prioritizing it over school or family time. Parents may struggle to understand this, but for the teen, it is an important part of emotional growth.

While adolescents still rely on their parents for guidance and support, they increasingly seek control over their own lives, wanting to make their own decisions—even if they don't always make the best ones.

8. Increased Need for Autonomy

As teens continue to rely on their parents for guidance and support, they also want more control over their lives. They desire independence and the ability to make their own choices, even if they don't always make the best ones.

Strategies for parents during this period:

- Maintaining open communication: it's important to keep channels open, even if teens seem withdrawn or resistant to sharing.
- Respecting independence: Acknowledge their growing need for privacy and autonomy while still setting appropriate boundaries.
- Modelling support and respect: Be a role model for healthy communication, decision-making, and problem solving.
- Setting clear expectations: While allowing independence, it's crucial to maintain rules and expectations that ensure safety, responsibility, and respect for family values.

Activity

Parents are given a mock situation (eg: teens refusing to talk, dealing with a mistake and work in pairs to respond effectively)

- Communication: Openly discuss boundaries with your teen, allowing them to have input and express their thought and feelings. This can provide insight into their needs and help them feel heard and understood.

- Safe space: Create an environment where teens feel safe expressing themselves without fear of judgment. Encourage open communication and actively listen to their concerns.

- Consistency: Reinforce established boundaries consistently to help teens understand their importance and foster a sense of stability.

- Trust Building: Demonstrate reliability, confidentiality, and respect to build trust. Show genuine interest in their well-being and be responsive to their needs.

- Support: Encourage teens to seek support if they encounter challenges or situations that violate their boundaries. This can help them navigate difficult situations and maintain healthy relationship.

After the resource person concluded the explanation, parents were invited to share their thoughts on whether the program was helpful and effective. Many parents expressed that the session was helpful and effective. Many parents expressed that it was a very valuable session, helping them better understand their role as parents of young adolescent. They especially appreciated learning about the key strategies, such as open communication with their adolescent, setting clear boundaries, fostering respect, and spending quality time with their children. They found these insights to be practical and beneficial in strengthening their child parental relationship.

1.1 Introduction:

The Life Skills & Support Group helps adolescents develop essential skills for daily life while also providing emotional and social support. It is a safe space where they can share their thoughts, feelings, and challenges while learning from each other. Through interactive sessions, discussions, and activities, the group empowers young individuals to grow with confidence and make positive life choices. Additionally, it encourages adolescents to stay committed to their education, as education is very important for their future.

1.2 Background and need for the group:

Before starting the group and selecting its members, the researcher first met with the headman to explain the purpose of forming a small group to teach adolescents age group 10-18, about the importance of life skills. The researcher shared concerns about the adolescents in the village, noting that many have lost interest in school and studying, while others spend excessive time on their phones and social media. This has led to difficulties in communication between parents and their adolescent. Additionally, adolescents today seem to lack respect for their parents, teachers, neighbours, and elders.

During conversations with parents, some expressed concerns that their adolescent had started using tobacco and were not listening when asked to study or complete their homework. Many adolescents responded with, "I'll do it later" or "I'll do it tomorrow." When the researcher asked parents whether they spent quality time with their children, some admitted they did, but not much, due to their busy schedules. This lack of quality time has made it harder for parents to stay connected with and involved in their adolescent lives.

After hearing these concerns, the headman agreed that these issues were real and had also been observed in the village. He supported the idea of forming a small group, believing it would benefit both adolescents and parents as well.

1.3 Formation of the life skills & support group:

The next day, the researcher met with a community member, a parent, and a teacher to discuss the plan. They were very interested in joining the group. The researcher carefully selected members who had knowledge and a passionate for working with adolescents, in teaching life skills.The researcher has selected four members to form a group of five, including themselves.

The selected members are:

1. The village headman, who is also a lower primary school teacher.

2. A parent

3. A community member.

4. The headmaster of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan(SSA).

Objective of the life skills & support group:

The group aims to teach adolescents (ages group 10–18) the importance of life skills such as respect, kindness, education, and personal growth while also providing emotional support.

Program structure & Activities:

Each member will take turns teaching different topics or lessons. Sessions will include interactive activities such as group discussions, role-playing, storytelling, and communication exercises.The group plans to conduct sessions twice a month, on Saturdays, at either the

community hall or the school. After each session, the researcher will meet or contact the group members to review the day's topic, assess the adolescents' progress, and discuss any improvements or concerns.

Parental involvement:

Before starting the group, the researcher and the headman had a discussion with the parents of young adolescents. The researcher explained the purpose of the group to them. During a previous focus group discussion, the researcher had also introduced the idea of the Life Skills & Support Group to the parents. They responded positively, saying it was a good idea and that they were willing to send their adolescent's. The following diagram is indicated about the

Figure 1

AGE
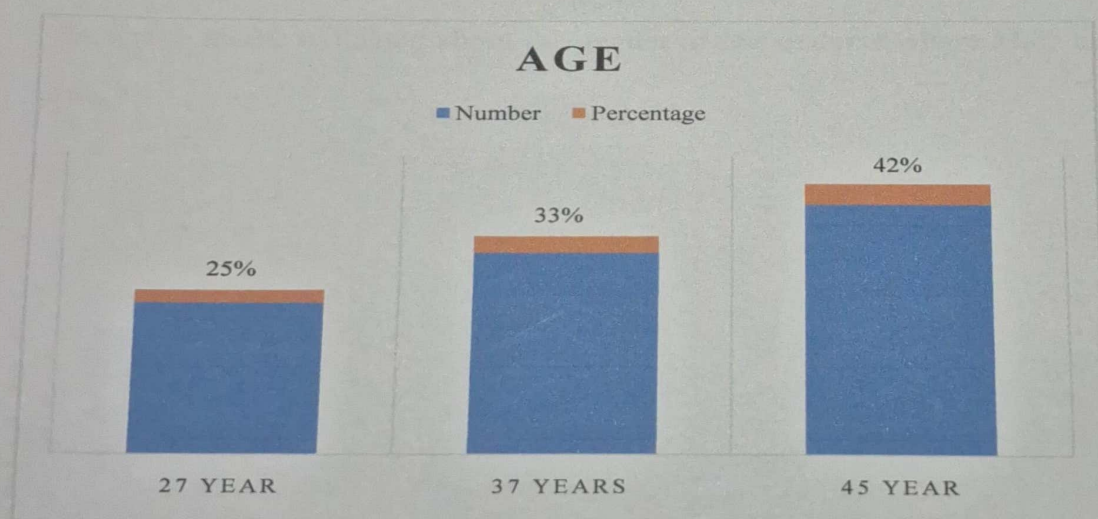
The figure 1 indicated about the age of respondents where majority of them are 45 year old with 42%, followed 37 years old with 33% and 27 years old with 25%.

Figure 2
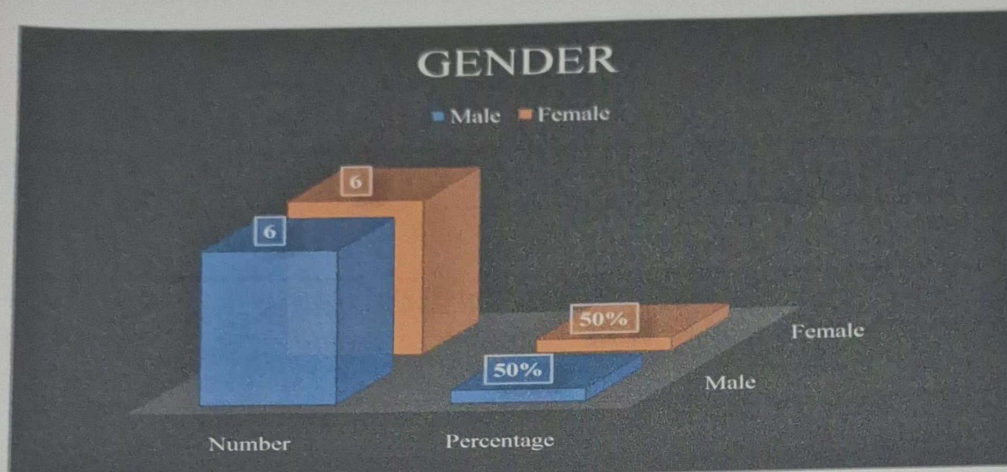
GENDER

The figure above indicated about the gender of respondents where Male are 50% and female 50%.

Figure 3

EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION

■ Number ■ Percentage

42%

25%

33%
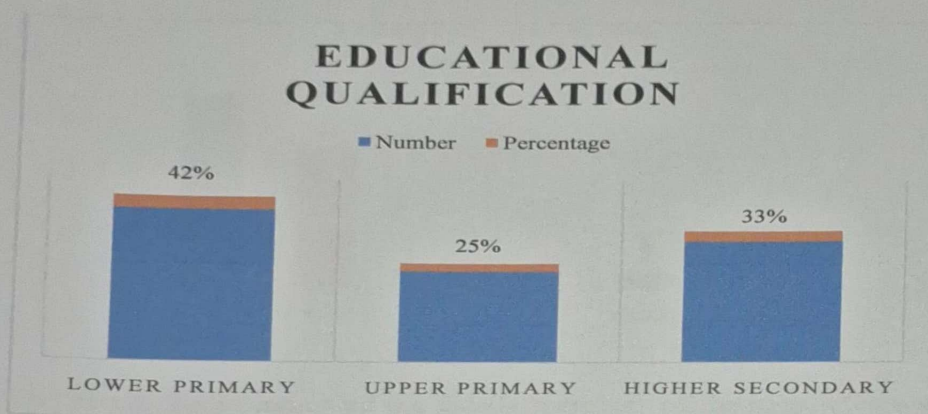
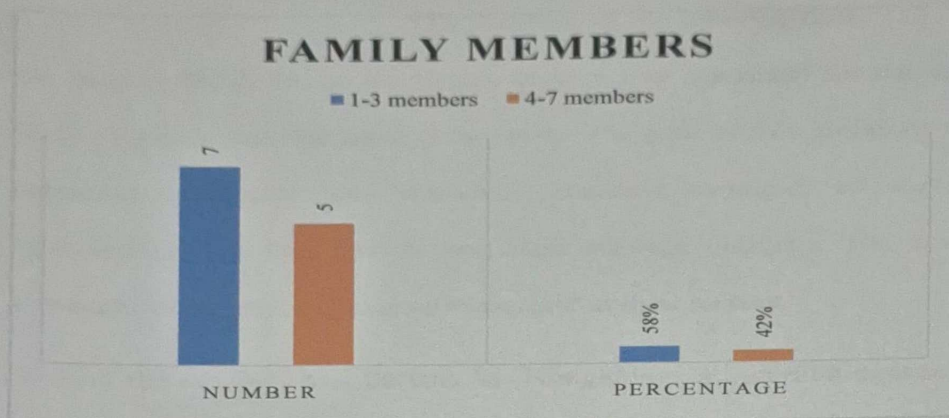LOWER PRIMARY   UPPER PRIMARY   HIGHER SECONDARY

Figure 3 shows about the qualification of the respondence where majority of them has completed the Lower Primary with 42%, Higher Secondary with 33% and Upper primary with 25%.

Figure 4

FAMILY MEMBERS

■ 1-3 members   ■ 4-7 members

The above figure indicated the family members of the respondents where majority (58%) of thefamily consisted of 4-7 members and 42% with 1-3 member in a family.

Chapter 5

Evaluation of the Intervention

On January 30, 2025, an interactive session was organized for parents and adolescents aged 10 to 18 years from the local community. The goal of this initiative was to explore everyday parenting challenges and introduce practical strategies to nurture stronger, healthier relationships between parents and their teenage children. The session emphasized open communication, emotional awareness, and mutual respect.

To lead the session, Ms. Ilarisha M. Nongkhlaw, a qualified counsellor, was invited as the resource person. She conducted the session using clear, relatable language, interactive group exercises, and storytelling methods to make the experience engaging and inclusive for both age groups.

Evaluation Methods

The session was assessed through:

- Observation of interactions among participants during and after the session,

- Informal verbal feedback gathered from parents,

- Monitoring engagement levels in group activities and during the Q&A portion.

Key Outcomes

1. **Active Participation**

   Parents engaged fully, with the activities and relatable stories creating a welcoming and comfortable environment.

2. **Enhanced Awareness**

   Many parents expressed that the session improved their understanding of adolescent behavior, emotional shifts, and the value of non-judgmental communication.

3. **Strengthened Dialogue**

   The space encouraged honest sharing between parents and teens, with some adolescents noting it was their first time speaking so openly with their parents in a group setting.

4. **Acknowledgment of Facilitator**

   Ms. Nongkhlaw's approachable and empathetic facilitation style was praised. She effectively simplified complex parenting topics and provided actionable insights.

Challenges Noted

- A few parents were hesitant to speak at first.

- Time limitations restricted deeper conversations about individual family issues.

- The absence of many fathers led to a gender imbalance in parental perspectives.

Conclusion of the evaluation

The session proved to be a meaningful and impactful effort in promoting healthier family communication. It opened a space for emotional connection and awareness. With ongoing sessions and broader parental involvement, such initiatives have the potential to bring about long-term improvement in parent-child relationships.

Interactive Session With Parent's of Adolescents
(Age group 10-18)

Focus Group Discussion (FGD) on Parenting
Challenges

Chapter-6

Conclusion and Recommendation

This study aimed to investigate the parenting challenges experienced in Amjalong village, situated in the West Jaintia Hills District of Meghalaya, and to identify strategies for enhancing child-parent relationships. Through this research, the investigator obtained a detailed understanding of the struggles faced by parents of adolescents aged 10 to 18. A common concern among parents was that their teenagers no longer listened to their guidance, leading to feelings of helplessness and emotional distance. Communication barriers were frequently mentioned, with many parents reporting difficulties in setting boundaries, gaining respect, and addressing the emotional complexity of adolescence. Other influencing factors included peer pressure, widespread internet access, and the impact of social mediafurther complicating parental efforts to provide guidance. Despite these difficulties, parents showed a strong desire to reconnect with their children and improve their relationships.

The findings from this action-oriented research indicate that introducing interactive programs and establishing life skills and support groups can be highly beneficial for families. These measures can enhance parents' understanding of adolescent needs, foster more effective communication, and contribute to healthier family relationships, ultimately promoting stronger community support systems.
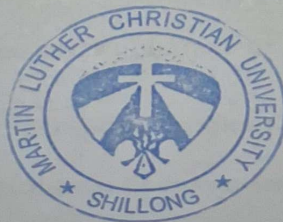
Recommendations

The research highlighted key parenting challenges such as emotional stress, limited communication, time limitations, and weakened connections with adolescentsissues that are especially pronounced in rural and low-resource communities. Based on the study's results, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. Conduct regular awareness sessions to educate parents on effective parenting practices, emotional connection, and communication skills. These can take place in schools, community spaces, or health centres.

2. Integrate life skills training for children and adolescents into school or youth programs, focusing on empathy, emotional control, and respectful interaction.

3. Support the development of community-based parent groups where individuals can share experiences, learn from each other, and receive mutual support.

4. Encourage family-based activities such as shared storytelling, meals, or games that promote connection and interaction.

5. Distribute easy-to-understand parenting resourceslike posters and tip sheetsin the local language, with messages about listening to children, stress management, and constructive conflict resolution.

6. Collaborate with educators, social workers, and healthcare professionals to identify families in need of support and offer guidance or basic counselling.

7. Actively involve fathers in parenting responsibilities to ensure balanced gender participation and foster the emotional development of children.

8. Promote an atmosphere of open and respectful communication at home, encouraging adolescents to express themselves freely while parents respond with empathy and understanding.

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Annexure
Interview Guide

1. What is the biggest challenge you face as a parent?
2. What worries you most about raising your children?
3. How do financial challenges affect your ability to raise your children?
4. What specific challenges do you face regarding your child education (e.g school access, fees, interest in learning).
5. What are the most common health problems do children face in Amjalong, and how do they affect families?
6. How do you usually handle your child's health issues when they arise?
7. How does technology (Smartphones, Tv, internet) affect your children's behaviour and learning?
8. What challenges do you experience in managing technology use in your family?
9. How do you control your child's screen time, and what strategies work best for you?

1. To assess the effects of parenting style
   1) How would you describe your parenting style?
   2) In what way do you think your parenting style shapes your child's behaviour?
   3) How do you believe your parenting style effects your child's emotional well-being?
   4) How would you describe your communication with your child?
   5) How do you think your parenting style has affected your child's performance in school?
   6) How do you think your parenting style affect your child's relationship with friends and family?
   7) How do you usually guide your child when they face conflicts with others (e.g... friends or family?
   8) How do you think your parenting style will affect your child in the future?

2. To develop strategy to improve "Child parenting relationship through parenting style"
   1) How do you currently approach parenting in your household?
   2) What is the most difficult part of your parenting approach, and why?
   3) What kind of support or knowledge do you feel would help you improve your pare nting style?
   4) How do you feel about participating in interactive parenting session or training, and what topics would you find most helpful?

5) How do you balance being strict and being flexible in your parenting?
6) What way do you show emotional support and build a strong connection with your children?
7) How would you like to improve your communication with your children?
8) How do you believe your current parenting style will affect your child's future?
9) What changes would you like to make in your parenting style to better support your child's development?

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The Light of Truth

VI/SW/CE/PROJ/008/2024-25/233   Date: 13/01/2025

To,
The Headman,
Amjalong Village,
West Jaintia Hills District,
Meghalaya

Subject: Permission to conduct an interactive session program on Parenting Challenges and Strategy to improve Child parental Relationship at Amjalong Village

Respected Sir,

Greetings from the School of Social Work, Martin Luther Christian University, Shillong.

The School of Social Work, MLCU offers a Master's degree in Social Work and as part of the curriculum, students are to carry out a research project and they are expected to design and organize an intervention based on their selected topic of interest. In this regard, I would like to inform you that Ms. Proficiency Suliang, a student of our university residing in Amjalong Village, is planning to conduct an interactive session on Parenting Challenges and Strategy to improve Child parental Relationship in your village. The program will equip the Educators with valuable skills, promoting self-sufficiency and engaging the community to foster development.

Therefore, as part of the student's intervention plan, we would like to request your office to extend the support and expertise required for the said program.

Your kind consideration in this regard will be highly appreciated.

Thanking you

Sincerely,

Dr. Faithfulness Marngar
Assistant Professor
School of Social Work
Martin Luther Christian University

Waheh Shnong
Amjalong Village
West Jaintia Hills District

QuillBot

Tr Parenting-Chall

Parenting Challenges and Strategy to Improve Child Parental Relationship at Amjalong Village, West Jaintia Hills District, Meghalaya

Research Dissertation

Submitted to Martin Luther Christian University, Shillong

In partial fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of

Master of Social Work

By

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CERTIFICATE OF PARTICIPATION

THIS IS TO CERTIFY

Proficiency Suliang

presented a poster at the Regional Social Work Conference organized by the School of Social Work in collaboration with the Office of the Dean, Academics, Martin Luther Christian University, on March 18, 2025.

Dr Ibasaralyne Thabah Synthiang
Dean, Academics

Dr Ardonister Lyngdoh
Dean, School of Social Work

NAPSWI
National Association of
Professional Social Workers in India