CONTENTS

Foreword xiii
Acknowledgement xv
General Introduction xvii
1. The Research Problem xvii
2. Child Theology: What It Is and Why It Emerged xix
3. Child Theology Movement in North East India xxii
4. Hypothesis xxiv
5. Scope xxiv
6. Method Employed and Sources xxiv
7. Structure of the Research xxv

Chapter 1: Tribal Children and Their Risks Context Today 1
Introduction 1
1. Understanding Risk Contexts of Children 2
2. Tribal Children and their Risks Situations 5
   2.1. Sexual Abuse of Children in Tribal Society 5
   2.2. Orphans in Tribal Society 8
   2.3. Sick Children 9
   2.4. Tribal Culture of Corporal Punishment 11
   2.5. Mass Media and Tribal Children 13
   2.6. Children as Additional Members or as Helpers in Others' Homes/Families 17
   2.7. Cultural Erosion and Identity Crisis in Tribal Children 18
   2.8. School Drop Outs 20

2.9. Child Trafficking in the North East 22
2.10. Ethnic Violence and Insurgency Affect Tribal Children's Future 24
2.11. Parenting Problem 25
2.11.1. Couples/Parents' Unhealthy Relationship Affects Children 26
2.11.2. Problem of Infidelity between Spouses 27
2.11.3. Domestic Violence 28
2.11.4. Unbelieving Parents (one or both) though Christians by Name 29
2.11.5. Divorce and Remarriages 30
2.11.6. Parents-Children Relationship Gap 32
2.11.7. Parental Card of Favouritism 33
2.11.8. Tribal Parents' Struggle to Care for the Special/Differently-abled Children 34
Summary 36

Chapter 2: Child Nurturing Traditions in Sumi Naga Culture 37
Introduction 37
1. The Authoritative Role of the Parents - *Apu* (Father) and *Aza* (Mother) in Parenting and Nurturing 39
2. Role of Grandparents - *Asu-apuza* ('Grandfather-grandmother') in the Nurturing of Children 41
3. Older Siblings as Guardians of Younger Ones 42
4. Tribal Concept of Community Parenting - *Niti-anuli* ('Our Children') 45
5. Tribal Culture of Co-Sleeping among Parents and Children 47
6. Special Children Food: *Apu-anga Khuna* (Boy-Girl-Child Food) 49

7. Crossbody Carrying of Children - *Apu-anga Xakupu Kihe*: Tribal Practice of Carrying Children on their Back/Front in a Cloth Sling 51
8. Tribal Practice of Bringing up Children with Freedom to Explore, Play and Build Self-reliance 53
9. The Family Fireplace/Hearth - *Amiphoki* or *Achuka*: The Heart of Nurture at Home 57
10. Family and Kinship Bond – *Akibo/Akibolomi* - in Tribal Culture 58
11. Teaching Tribal Children Socio-Cultural, Moral-Ethical Values (*Akukhu-aye Shikuka*) 61
12. Strong Disciplining of Children (*Sakiyi-shikuka* or *sakiyi-kukutsu*) 63
13. Traditional House of Nurture and Learning – *Apu-ki* (Boys Dormitory) and *Illi-ki* (Girls Dormitory) 65
14. Work Ethics Culture – *Alojimi* or *Kimivehkile Muqo* (Reciprocal Peer Work Group) 66
15. Folklores as a Medium of Imparting Cultural Wisdom to the Children 69
16. Tribal Children and their Bond with the World of Nature 70

Summary 73

Chapter 3: Biblical Teachings on Holistic Nurture of Children 75

Introduction 75
1. Family According to the Bible 76
2. Biblical Teachings Concerning the Holistic Nurture of Children 77
   2.1. Nurture of Children in the Old Testament 78

2.1.1. Children are to be Received and Loved as God's Gift and Blessing (Genesis 1:28; Psalm 127:3) 78
2.1.2. Children are Created in God's Image (Genesis 1:26-27; Psalm 139:13-16) 80
2.1.3. Children Help Establish the Parenthood of Adults - as Father and Mother (Exodus 4:22-23; Deuteronomy 1:31; 8:5; Psalm 103:13; Isaiah 66:13) 81
2.1.4. Parents and Elders' Responsibility of Teaching and Training Children in God's Laws (Deuteronomy 6:4-7; Proverbs 22:6) 81
2.1.5. God Commands His People to Discipline Children the Right Way (Proverbs 13:24; Proverbs 22:15; Proverbs 29:15) 82
2.1.6. God Hears, Sees and Hurts when Children Hurt and Warns those that Harm Children (Genesis 21:8-20; See Lamentations 2:11-12, 19; 4:4; Joel 3:3; Hosea 14:3; Psalm 10:14, 17 & 18) 84
2.1.7. God Chooses and Empowers Children to Serve Him (Exodus 2; I Samuel 3:1, 10ff; 17:31-34; 2 Kings 5:2-4; Psalm 8:1-2; 2 Kings 21-22) 86
2.2. Nurture of Children in the New Testament 87
2.2.1. Jesus Welcomes and Blesses Little Children (Matthew 19:13-15; Mark 10:13-16; Luke 18:15-17) 87

2.2.2. Jesus Warns and Pronounces Judgment upon Those Who Harm or Cause the Little Ones to Stumble/ Sin (Matthew 18:6; Mark 9:42) 88
2.2.3. Jesus Cares for the Health of the Children and Heals their Sicknesses (Matthew 15:21-28; Mark 5:21-24, 35-43; 7:24ff; 9:14-26; John 4:43-53) 89
2.2.4. Parents to Instruct Children the Right Way (Ephesians 6:4) 90
2.2.5. Children, an Integral Part of God's Kingdom (Matthew 18:1-5; Mark 9:33-37; Luke 9:46-48) 91
2.2.6. The Goal of Holistic Nurture of Children (Luke 2:52) 92
2.2.7. Children's Duty to Obey and Honor Parents (Exodus 20:12; 21:15; Deuteronomy 5:16; Proverbs 6:20; Ephesians 6:1-3; Colossians 3:20) 93
Summary 95

Chapter 4: Towards a Tribal Child Theology of Holistic Nurture of Children 96
Introduction 96
1. Children are God's Blessings to Parents/Families and to the World 96
2. Nurturing Children in Moral-ethical Values 97
3. Parental Role of Nurture – To Impress and Lead by Example 98
4. The Importance of Grandparents-Grandchildren (Intergenerational) Bond 99
5. Nurture within the Bond of Family 100

6. Stop Using Underage Children as Helpers and as Babysitters - A Much Needed Change in Childcare in Tribal Christian Homes 102
7. Nurturing Children on Cultural Identity 105
8. Family Fireplace Model of Parent-Children Nurture and Fellowship 106
9. Community Parenting – Child Protection Policy of the Community 107
10. Morung Model of Formal Cultural Education for Children 109
11. Nurturing Children in Work Ethics 110
12. Right Disciplining – The Biblical Dictum "Do Not Provoke Your Children to Anger" (Ephesians 6:4) 112
13. Nurturing Children's Faith at Home on Biblical Foundation 114
14. Nurturing Children in Eco-spirituality 117
15. Jesus is the God, Friend and Saviour of Children 119
16. Children's Responsibility towards Parents in Holistic Nurture 121
17. Church's Role in Holistic Nurture of Children 122
Summary 123

General Conclusion 125
Bibliography 130