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DECLARATION

I, Zoramthanga, do hereby declare that I am the sole author of this dissertation entitled, “**Voting Behaviour of Youth in Aizawl District: A Case Study of the Seventh Assembly Elections**”, submitted to Mizoram University for the award of the degree of MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY. And, that neither part of this dissertation nor the whole of the dissertation has been submitted for the award of a degree to any other University or Institutions.

Date: 14.07.2016
Aizawl, Mizoram.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Voting is an essential process in a democratic set up. Among the various systems of governments in the world, democratic form of government, with all its shortcomings, whether direct or through elected representatives, is considered an ideal form of government. Even though no consensus existed on the definition of democracy, the characteristics of legal equality, freedom and rule of law are identified as the foundations of democracy. These characteristics of democracy are reflected in all eligible citizens being equal before the law and having equal access to legislative processes such as contesting in elections and occupying public offices, the right to form political associations and to exercise franchise. An important legislative process in a democratic government is election, whereby the population chooses an individual or a group of people to hold public offices.

In today's world, almost all the sovereign states have adopted the ideology of democracy directly and otherwise. In either way, the behavior of the voters in election is the most important thing in any democratic country.

Theoretical Aspect of Voting Behavior

The study of voting activity gained momentum in the late 1940s through the behavior school of thought also known as 'Behaviouralism'. The study of political actors as well as the voters in democratic countries increased day by day and critics also developed the Post-Behavioral approach to create a more logical and deep inquiry into the world politics. The theoretical model of voting behavior was first developed by Lazarsfeld, Berelson, Gaudetin(1944) in their work '*The*

People's Choice' whose main work originated from the Colombia University, also known as the 'Sociological Model'. This model or school of thought focuses its study mainly on the influences of social factors.¹ Another theory was developed by the School of Rochester. This school had its base on the work of Anthony Downs' *'An Economic Theory of Democracy'* published in 1957. This theory draws attention to the economy of the state and it was known as the model of economic voting, sometime it was also referred as the rational choice theory.² Another important approach was developed in 1960 by the School of Michigan that later came to be known as the psychological model of voting behavior. This approach draw its main source from the work of Angus Campbell, Philip Converse, Warren Miller and Donald Stokes that assume party identification is the main factor behind the behavior of the voters. Their work *'The American Voter'* published in 1960 paved the way for the study of election process in America.

From the above school of thought other theories were also developed to have a deep study of voting behavior, some of them are, the field theory, the cognitive theory, the psychodynamic theory, the humanistic Theory and the converging theories.³ Following are a few explanations of these theories.

The field theory is an approach to find out the voter intentions in elections. It mainly relies on systematic research design and also employed a probability sampling method to draw the necessity sample which later became an interview through open-ended questions. This theory gives emphasis on the measurement of

¹RuiAntunes. (2010). *Theoretical models of voting behavior*. Escola Superior de Educação - Instituto Politécnico de Coimbra. Pp 145-169.

²*Ibid.*, p 145.

³ *Ibid* p 149

attitudes and perceptions, and it also believed that variables like age, sex, education and economic status of the candidate as important factors. And systematic field research is necessary under this theory to find out the determinants of voting behavior.

The cognitive theory pays attention on the theory of causal attribution and a theory of balance. This theory seeks an account for the processes that are involved in perceiving other persons, their behavior and their personal characteristics. According to this theory the origin and the adjustment attributed to that origin forms a causal unit, in that the origin causes the change.⁴ The next step is to investigate in general the relations between attitudes and causal units. With an improvement in technology after the Second World War and the invention of a computer, the theory of cognitive orientation was applied to the computer world. It was both appealing and easy to conceive of humans as information processing devices, receiving input from their environment (perception), processing the input (thinking), and converting it into output (action/decision). A simple explanation of cognitive orientation can be given like this, cognitive psychology refers to the study of knowledge and how people use it or to the study of mental processes of perception, memory, and information processing by which the individual acquires knowledge, solves problems, and plans for the future. With the application to social phenomena, social cognition is concerned with how people make sense of other people and themselves.

⁴M. Visser. (1998). *Five Theories of Voting action: Strategy and structure of psychological explanation*. Doesburg: Author. Pp 44-47.

Further, the psychodynamic theory holds that all human behavioral and mental activity was ultimately motivated by a few basic drives, divided into two categories: sexual (including self-preservation) and aggressive drives. Self-preservative need is directly tied up with the modes of economic production and organization that is the sole basis of society. This theory also emphasises on the historical sociological approach to inquiring into the social basis of political system or political rule.

The humanistic theory is similar with psychodynamic theory but with a little difference in terms of different variables in human nature. The humanistic theory believed in human behavior that life strivings and needs can be best understood by employing the phenomenological method of understanding on the one hand, and by studying biographical materials (like diaries and letters) on the other. Human life is about pleasure-need (satisfaction in sex, love and Ego-recognition), self-limiting adaptation (fitting in, belonging, security), creative expansion (self-expression, creative accomplishments), and integration (maintenance of inner psychic order). These basic strivings are all present from the beginning of life, but each plays a prominent role in each phase. As an end goal, fulfilment represents the attainment of something the person believes in, which requires the balancing of expansion and adaption, satisfaction and internal order in the course of the person's life. When a person fails to pursue his end and goal of life, i.e. fails to realize his potential, this may lead to psychological problems of conflict, anxiety and guilt, the curing of which is the main area of humanistic psychotherapy. The humanistic theory was successful in predicting election results in many European countries.

The different theoretical aspects give rise to the combination, discussion and argument that in turn led to the development of the convergence theory. Researchers tried to find out the best theoretical form for decades on voting behavior and the research has brought significant advances in data collection, measurement techniques and statistics. Yet, it failed to establish a generally adopted theoretical framework, around which knowledge could be accumulated. In other words, the convergence theory employed the best form and strategies of the existing theory to study the psychology, history, personality, economic status and the behavior of voters in election.

Election as a form of political procedure is undoubtedly the most important and popular means of choosing the people's representatives or an individual to hold and occupy a public office. The process is also employed by business, private and non-political institutions such as trade unions and civil society organizations. It is through elections that governments were formed and removed and the process whereby authority is determined at the regional and local levels in a political set up. It makes a peaceful and orderly transfer of authority possible. It is also the basis upon which authority, power and influence is exercised with legitimacy. In other words, elections are a form of political communication between the government and the people. However, it is imperative to make a distinction between the form and substance of elections. In some cases, electoral forms are present but the substance of an election is missing, as when voters do not have a free and genuine choice between any two alternatives.

Election is not a new phenomenon. Although elections were used in ancient Athens, in Rome, and in the selection of Popes and Holy Roman emperors, the

origins of elections in the contemporary world lie in the gradual emergence of representative government in Europe and North America beginning in the 17th century.⁵ Since then, election is practiced as the most reliable process for electing a representative or rejecting an individual in a political system. In fact, among the various aspects of democracy, election occupies a prominent position that distinguishes a democratic government from other forms of government. Other forms of government may be classified as dictatorial or authoritarian on the basis of how the office and seat of power is acquired and exercised.

An important attribute of elections in a democratic set up is the existence of political parties formed with a common goal of acquiring and exercising political power. Membership of a political party is usually open to all members of the society and in order to attain their objectives political parties tend to develop and determine voting behavior of the voters.

Voting behavior reflects the standard of living of the people and voting behavior are measures of attitudes, perceptions and biases. As such, it is influenced by race, clan, religion, casteism, regionalism, language, charismatic leader, ideology, development, incidences, language, communalism, regionalism and personality of the candidate resulting in place-to-place differences in election results.

India is one of the largest democratic countries in the world having a huge electorate or voters. Having a huge population, it is impossible for India to adopt direct democracy as was practiced in smaller population, like Switzerland. But the

⁵Brian Duigan.(2013).Political Parties, Interest Groups, and Elections.Britannica Educational Publishing.P-94

people from 29 states indirectly elect their representatives in the Parliament every five years.

In India, election results have revealed that nearly half of the electorate does not exercise their franchise in national and state elections. Apart from the high voter turnout in elections held after a national or state emergency or other social, economic, political or cultural issues, the continual low voter turnout signify the alienated voters as apathetic and does not regard elections as a solution to the problems that concern them. For them, the present political system or the party system offers too little choice or change from the position and condition. They viewed that almost all parties are guided by their self-interests and not by the interests and good of the common man. Directly or indirectly, this perception is responsible for the low or decreased participation of citizens in the elections.

Mizoram contributed two members of Parliament, one each in the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha. The strength of Mizoram Legislative Assembly stands at 40 since the attainment of statehood as the Indian Union in 1987. Since then, election to the members of Legislative Assembly was held every five years in the State.

Mizoram is a mountainous State in the southern-most part of North Eastern India. It has an international boundary with Bangladesh and Myanmar. Indian states of Manipur, Assam and Tripura are located on its north and north east. Originally a part of Assam, Mizoram became a Union Territory in 1972, and consequent upon the signing of Peace Accord with Mizo National Front in 1986, statehood was granted to Mizoram on 20th February 1987. It became the 23rd state of India. There are three Autonomous District Councils (ADCs) for ethnic tribes in Mizoram, namely the Chakma Autonomous District Council (CADC), Lai

Autonomous District Council (LADC) and Mara Autonomous District Council (MADC). There are eight districts in Mizoram, namely – Aizawl, Lunglei, Champhai, Lawngtlai, Mamit, Serchhip, Kolasib and Saiha.⁶

The first state assembly was constituted in 1987 with 40 elected members. The election for the 40 seat legislative assembly was held in 1987, 1989, 1993, 1998, 2003, 2008 and the seventh election to the Mizoram Legislative Assembly was held on November 25, 2013⁷. The result was declared on December 9, 2013 where the Indian National Congress (INC) won 34 seats and the Mizo National Front (MNF) and Mizoram People's Conference (MPC) won five and one seat respectively. Thus, INC won majority and retained the government. Out of the 40 legislative assembly seats in Mizoram, Aizawl District accounts for 13 seats. The Mizoram Municipalities Act, 2007 was enacted by the Mizoram Legislative Assembly and accordingly the Aizawl Municipal Corporation started functioning from July 1, 2008. The Aizawl Municipal Corporation is composed of 19 Wards and the first election to the Corporation was held in November, 2010.⁸

A number of communities with distinct socio-cultural system, which are quite different from one another are found in Mizoram. And the influence of various variables of voting behavior upon an individual has to be examined not only from political context but also in the context of socio-economic and cultural institutions. In short, the core study of the problem lies in these heterogeneous and complex factors of socio-economic, cultural and political system. Apart from the

⁶RintluangaPachauu.(2009).MIZORAM:A Study in Comprehensive Geography. Northern Book Centre. New Delhi.

⁷ Election Commission, Government of Mizoram. Official website. Accessed on 11th May 2013.

⁸ Official website of Aizawl Municipal Corporation.(2010).Election results. Accessed on 12th July, 2016. Stable URL: <https://amc.mizoram.gov.in/page/election-results.html>

political parties, various non-governmental organizations have been playing significant role in the political process of Mizoram.

A number of non-governmental organizations established in Mizoram have their headquarters in Aizawl. Although, non-political in their principles and objectives, they have been acting as important pressure groups to gain recognition as and when their interests and causes were in question. The exclusive membership and the loyalty of its members to their cause tend to shape and fashion voting behavior of the members. As a non-profit organization, the Young Mizo Association (YMA) is the largest voluntary organization among the Mizo with its headquarters in Aizawl. It enrolls membership from teenager onwards.

Student associations with their headquarters at Aizawl have been an effective pressure group on the government policies and initiatives that concern the student's welfare, as well as social, economic and political affairs that may directly or indirectly go against their cause. As the students association membership is limited to students who may be referred to as youth and comprising a significant number of the electorate, their movements and cause are likely to have a far reaching implication in the political process in general and elections in particular. The MizoZirlai Pawl (MZP) and the Mizo Students' Union (MSU) are two such associations which have played a vocal role in facilitating student's movements in Aizawl.

Besides, the church is credited as the leading factor for socio-economic and political development as well as modernization in Mizoram. Its role in the political development of Mizoram cannot be undermined as it was instrumental in bringing

peace in Mizoram which was afflicted with insurgency.⁹ A number of churches exist in Mizoram, among which the Presbyterian Church of Mizoram with its administrative center in Aizawl, is the most dominant church. The church has constantly endeavored through appeals and requests to its members to promote free and fair elections and The Social Front, as a wing of the Presbyterian Church has organized seminars and conducted political education which may be observed as an important factor in moulding voting behavior. After confining their involvement in political process within the Church, the Mizoram People Forum (MPF) was established on the initiative of the Presbyterian Church.

The Mizoram People Forum (MPF) is a gathering of several churches in Mizoram along with the largest voluntary organizations. All registered political parties are usually consulted and agreements are signed in the conduct of peaceful elections¹⁰. In an attempt to bring about free, fair and peaceful elections, the Mizo People Forum, in agreement with the political parties, issued certain model code of conduct to be followed by the candidates, political parties and the electorate. The voice of the Forum is given high regards and followed by the members and is supposed to exert a significant weight in influencing voting behavior.

As one of the smallest state in India, Mizoram is identified as a backward state lacking infrastructures for economic development. Even though agriculture is the primary occupation of the population, the rough and hilly terrain of the state has severely put a limit on the scope of production. The remote geographical location along with the difficulties in communication and transport coupled with

⁹The Peripheral Centre: Voices from India's Northeast (2013). *The Role of the Churches in the Mizo Peace process*. Edited by Preeti Gill. Zubaan, New Delhi

¹⁰Mizoram People Forum. (2012). *Annual General Meeting Vawi 6-Na*. MPF General Headquarters.

lesser population for investment has isolated the state with other parts of the country with regard to economic infrastructural development. Mizoram enjoys a high literacy percentage which can be assumed to represent the presence of a strong number of skilled work forces. However, the unique socio-cultural institutions, difficulty and high cost of transport, language barriers has put a constraint upon the youth to seek employment outside Mizoram. Colleges in Mizoram that offers conventional discipline of learning has been churning out thousands of graduate every year. As a result, there has been an enormous increase in unemployment among the educated. Without the expansion of governmental administration and activities it is highly unlikely that they will acquire gainful employment under the government of Mizoram. A good option may be an entrepreneurship which is not possible for many, as it requires large capital investments. Hence, though laudable, the high literacy percentage has significantly contributed for the growth of unemployment among the youth in Mizoram, which in turn, is bound to affect their voting behavior.

According to statistics the number of unemployed youth was fast rising in Mizoram. Statistics reveal that there are 64,281 persons registered at the four employment exchange offices in Mizoram.¹¹ The state has only four employment exchange offices and Kolasib, Mamit and Serchhip districts fall under the jurisdiction of Aizawl. Aizawl Employment Exchange houses the highest number of registered unemployment youths in Mizoram. At the state capital alone, there is a whopping 30,540 listed unemployed youth while the total household is 78,606.¹²

¹¹Statistical Handbook 2010.Labour and Employment Department, Govt. of Mizoram (2010)

¹² Ibid

ROLE OF THE YOUTH

The discussions and explanations of election as well as the voting behavior of the electorate would not be complete without analyzing the role of the youth and the electoral implication of their participation in the electoral process. The study of the voting behavior of 'youth' is essential in any election as the youth composed a considerable proportion of the electorate and their active participation in elections, as well as their apathy towards the body politics in general and elections in particular tends to deliver notable electoral change or continuity.

'Youth' has been explained and defined in a number of ways. Though, usually differentiated, it is considered synonymous with adolescent, teenager, kid and young person. It refers to a period in life where a person is between childhood and adulthood. Youth may also refer to a particular mindset wherein an active and energetic person maybe identified as youthful. Though it is linked to biological processes of development and aging, it is also defined as a social position as age-based definitions have not been consistent across cultures and tends to change with the change of time. However, age is the most accurate way to define this group, particularly in relation to education and employment. 'Youth' is identified as the period of time where a person leaves compulsory education, and the age at which a person finds his first employment. The latter age limit has been increasing on account of the fact that, increasing unemployment and the cost of setting up an independent household puts many young people into a longer period of dependency.

Different periods of chronological age has been used to define youth. The differentiation varies between various organizations and among nations. The age

period of youth mostly varies from 15-25, 15-35 or 18 -35, and for the purpose of study, the chronological age between 18-35 will be identified as youth.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Despite the importance of this study, there are neither research based works nor available sources of materials on this topic. This research work produces the role played by the youth and factors that determine their voting behavior in elections. With regard to the factors that determine voting behavior, this study goes beyond the basic assumptions of factors like, money, wealth, personality, manifesto, and patriotism. But, it also study other importance factors like – the role played by peer groups during election, family influences, different activities of the political party or the candidates during election. This work also studies the influences of mass media that determine the voting behavior of the youth in Aizawl.

The most interesting questions about an election are not always concerned with who or which political party won, what is the total expenditure incurred in conducting election or what is expected from the new government, but with questions, such as, why people voted the way they did or what the implications in election results are. These questions are not always easily answered as the general perceptions and assumptions on the question do not always provide the factual answers. Looking only at the campaign events and incidents, voter turnout and manifestoes of the political parties will not suffice. And, to provide a full explanation of the different aspects of elections a more general understanding of electoral behavior should be acquired. A major concern characterizing the study of electoral behavior is explaining the election result by identifying the sources and

influences of individual's voting behavior which may range from political parties manifestoes, foreign policy, defense and others to issues relating to daily life, such as unemployment, price rise, issues of law and order and daily needs of the electorate. The study attempts to examine the election outcome by investigating how and why the voters would make up their minds and exercise their franchise in favour of a certain political party or an individual, as well as the factors affecting a voter's choice of candidates.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

For this study, Aizawl District, which is the capital of Mizoram and the most populous among the eight districts, is selected. The Aizawl District is classified into urban and rural area. According to the 2011 census, out of the total population of Aizawl District, 78.63% or 3,14,754 of the population lives in the urban area with an average literacy rate of 98.27 %. In actual number 270,820 people are literate in the urban region of Aizawl District¹³. The rural areas of the District accounts for 21.37 % of the population amounting to 85,555 populations with a literacy rate of 96.40 % amounting to 69,775 of the total population.¹⁴

As the capital city of the state, Aizawl is the centre of trade and commerce. As such people from all over the state migrate to Aizawl in search of better opportunities and livelihood. It is the political centre of the state which housed important government offices and residences of state officials. Since, it has the most number of educational institutions and other skill-training institutes, whether managed by the state government or private undertakings, it can be assumed

¹³Directorate of Census Operation, Mizoram. (2011). *District Census Handbook Aizawl – Village and Town wise Primary Census Abstract (PCA)*. Pp 12 – 28.

¹⁴ Ibid

beyond doubt that the highest number of enrolment in these institutes will be from the residents of Aizawl. Further, the influx of migration from villages to Aizawl will also increase the number of youth in Aizawl. In the context of this high rate of enrolment in education and skill development institutes as well as rise in unemployment, the perspectives, biases and political attitudes of the youth whether employed or unemployed is bound to exert a significant influence upon electoral politics in general and election in particular.

Therefore, it is imperative to take up research on the influence of voting behavior of youth in election in Mizoram and Aizawl in particular. What is intended here is to analyze and find out whether the youth in Aizawl District exhibits apathy towards politics in general and elections in particular; whether the votes of the youth counts for electoral change and transition of power. The study of Aizawl District is very important as it revealed various factors that attracted the youth to vote for a particular political party and individual, and the effect of various political activities that engaged political parties in elections.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

'Candidate's Perception of the Voting Behaviour' written by C.P. Bhambhri and Pratap Singh Verma is an empirical research based work. It was published in 1971 by the Indian Political Science Association and this research was done at the local level. Researchers pay more attention to the candidates but not to the voters in order to understand the voting behavior of five different municipal areas, such as, Jaipur, Ajmer, Kota, Bikaner and Alwar that different candidates were interviewed from these five different municipalities. Interview was conducted before the election – from October 10th to 24th, 1970 and the actual election

washeld on October 25th, 1970. This research regarded party loyalty, caste, candidate personality, financial status, and candidate's ability to solve social issues and the candidate's ability to contribute to public life, as different variables which determined electoral behavior. In their conclusion, the researchers argued that candidate personality is the strongest variable in election, especially when the candidate happen to have a unique personality that could have benefitted the public is regarded as invincible in election. Caste is also one of the most important factors in elections but less important than candidate's personality and capability. But this article also states that when it comes to the national level, electorate behavior in election is mainly determined by party loyalty, and in local level voters paid more attention to candidates who has good personalities to solve their day-to-day difficulties in social life.

ChittaRanjan Nag focuses on all political issues, movements and achievements as well as the evolution in administration that had taken place in Mizo territory in his book '*Mizo Polity and Political Modernisation.*' Even though the book provides an insight into the Mizo society since the early days of the Mizos and the traditional socio-economic and political structures till the British colonial rule, it does not focus on the political development in Mizoram after the Independence of India and elections to constitutional institutions in Mizoram. However, this book has been useful in providing the reasons and effects of the wave of political movement that culminated into the formation of the first political party in Mizoram – the Mizo Union.

Sanjay Kumar and Praveen Rai discusses in detail the tradition of voting behavior in India with a prime focus on Poona Lok Sabha constituency of 1967 in

their book *'Measuring Voting Behaviour in India.'* The authors discussed the various methods and tools employed to ascertain voter's attitudes and opinion along with the advantages and disadvantages of each method in reflecting the voter's behavior under different settings in India. This book presents a good insight about the various tools and methods, such as – sampling, questionnaire design, data collection and analysis, along with the challenges and problems in investigating voter's behavior. However, its methods and means, as well as the result derived by the authors cannot be applied to states in north east India, which is composed of heterogeneous cultures and societies, with a lower level of economic development.

In the book *'Zoram Politics ThliTleh Dan - Vol. II (1972 – 1999)*, C. Hermana highlights the political development in Mizoram from Union Territory to statehood till the Lok Sabha election of Indian Parliament in 1999. The author's presentation of the sequences of events affecting political change and political party formation as well as the election results provides a deep insight into voting behavior of the Mizo in general and Aizawl in particular. The data pertaining to the election results from Union Territory to Mizoram Legislative Assembly elections and the Lok Sabha election on 1999 are genuine information that offer better understanding of voter's behavior during the period covered. The essence of the book is further strengthened by the large pool of background information and context upon which political changes and development occurred in Mizoram. On the other hand, authenticity of the author's record can be questioned as it rely mainly on observations, personal experiences and understanding of events, which a good researcher may not acknowledge on account of the derivatives being bias and narrow.

'Voting Behaviour of Tribals in India,' a book written by K.S. Padhy and P.P. Tripathy investigates the voting behavior of tribals in eastern India and the tribals in the state of Orissa in particular. The book provide a historical background as well as an analysis of voting behavior which greatly help this research work as the study made herein pertains to a tribal population of Mizoram and Aizawl in particular. The book offers an illuminating understanding of the socio-political structures of the tribals of Orissa and the political progress made by them which may be measured in terms of political participation through elections. The book has greatly assisted this research as it provide the various political movements in the area as well as the methods, tools and techniques employed to consider voting behavior among the less educated, poverty stricken and distinct socio-political identity of the tribals.

In his book – *'Government and Politics in Mizoram,'* R.N. Prasad illustrates the development of political consciousness of the Mizo; he describes the performance and characteristics of national and regional political parties. In addition, he gives the story of the previous elections, outcome of the election, and the background upon which the electorate exercise its franchise in favour of the Mizo Union. This book touches almost every aspect of the Mizo society and is of great help in understanding various political events in Mizoram and voting behavior of the Mizo electorate. The assumptions and proposition offers by the author on various political issues are to be duly noted to facilitate desirable political change as well as a further study of political development in the state.

Zahluna, J. *"The Origin and Growth of Aizawl,"* Mizo Studies, Vol.III, No. 4, October – November, 2014, provides a brief description of the topography,

climate, area, population, rainfall, etc., of Aizawl as well as its origin. He gave a description of how Aizawl became the most populous town in Mizoram, citing insurgency as the main cause. The author briefly describes the political development in Aizawl from the advent of the British to the election of the Local Council members of Aizawl. As focused in the title of the article, Aizawl was the primary attention given by the author. However, apart from the illustration of Aizawl and its habitants, as well as its growth, the author does speak about neither election nor voting behavior. And, the attempt made to cover a long period of time distorts the real intention of the author.

Valuable information to study elections and voting behavior in India is found in the work of Joan Morris, W.H. "*Indian Voting behavior.*" Pacific Affairs. Vol. 30, No. 3, September 1957, pp. 265 – 268. The work elaborated upon the bold stride of India in adopting a democratic set up where the overwhelming majority of the populace is illiterate with a low level of democratic political experiences. Various sources and works by eminent scholars on voting behaviour in India are cited in the article which may be of valuable assistance to a researcher in the study of voting behavior. However, certain impediment exists as the sources and works cited by him are not easily available. Nevertheless, the article presents an illuminating piece of information regarding various focuses made in the study of voting behavior in India. In this article, the author compared determinants of voting behavior of India with other democratic countries. It further states that in India, caste system is one of the most complicated factors that effected the voting behavior of different ethnic groups.

Patil, B.B. “*Campaign Strategy and Voting Behaviour.*” *Economic and Political Weekly*. Vol. 3, January 1968, pp. 157-162, offers an insight upon the general election of 1967 in Kamlapur Constituency, Gulbarga District in Mysore. The election was particularly noteworthy as the dominance of the Indian national Congress was challenged for the first since the first general election in the country. Moreover, the constituency holds an impressive position of being the most politically conscious constituency in the district. The author describes the various strategies employed by the contesting candidates to win the support of electorate and provides an analysis of an outcome of the strategy as presented by election results. A major portion of the article is dedicated in highlighting the pattern of voting or voting behavior which, as the author substantiate, is fashioned by caste, projection of charismatic national leaders like Jawaharlal Nehru, rule of the Indian National Congress, emotions, role of money and sympathy towards the candidate. This six page article provides a systematic study of voting behavior as well as the various variables to be taken into account in the study of voting behavior.

‘*Voting Behaviour in India and Its Determinants*’ written by BirajHazarika published in the *Journal Of Humanities And Social Science (IOSR-JHSS)* Volume 20, Issue 10, Ver. IV (Oct. 2015), PP 22-25 is one interesting article that deals with voting pattern in India. This article gave different definitions of voting behavior given by different scholars. One definition given by Plano and Riggs states that –

“*Voting Behaviour is a field of study concerned with the ways in which people tend to vote in public election and the reasons why they vote as they do*”¹⁵

¹⁵Hazarika, Biraj. (2015). *Voting Behaviour in India and Its Determinants in India. IOSR Journal Of Humanities And Social Science (IOSR-JHSS) Volume 20, Issue 10, Ver. IV (Oct. 2015), PP 22-25.*

It also gives another definition that voting behavior is not confined to the examination of voting statistics, records and computation of electoral shifts and swings. It also involves an analysis of individual psychological processes (perception, emotion, and motivation) and their relations to political action as well as of institutional patterns, such as the communication process and their impact on election. The writer of the article further mentions different determinants of voting behavior in India. It argued that the behavior of voter is influenced by several factors such as religion, caste, community, language, money, policy or ideology, purpose of the polls, extent of franchise, political wave etc.

Another article written by Rahul Verma '*Dalit Voting Patterns*' is an interesting argument about voting behavior of India. It was published in Economic & Political Weekly on September 26, 2009 VOLXLIV No. 39. It is mainly based on an analysis of Dalit voting pattern of 2009 Lok Sabha elections in India. The article concluded that, it was clear enough to demolish the claims that dalits were a homogeneous category and that they vote for any single party. Dalits may be behaving as a collective homogeneous unit in electoral arena, dalit voting behavior is often if not always, but determined by logic and dynamics of the party system. The article further states that the patterns of dalit vote in 2009 conveys that any attempts to reduce the competitive logic of democracy in India to an undifferentiated mass of pure community-based politics violates both theory and practice of electoral politics.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study the voting behavior of youth in the election process of Mizoram.

2. To investigate the factors that influenced voting behavior of youth in Aizawl District.
3. To analyze its electoral implications in the seventh assembly elections in the District.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. How does the voting behavior of youth influence the election process in Mizoram?
2. What are the various variables that influence the voting behavior of youth in Aizawl District?
3. What are the implications of the voting behavior of youth on the outcome of the Seventh Assembly Election in Aizawl District?

METHODOLOGY

A Qualitative Approach has been employed as the study intends to analyse voting behaviour of youth in Aizawl District. Hence, the data for the study has been collected from primary and secondary sources.

As primary sources not only provide concrete, original and first-hand information about an event, it also facilitate the students or the researcher to get as close as possible to what really happened, as such, data was collected through primary sources such as, field work and survey done through questionnaire. The field work and survey done through questionnaire forms an important element of primary sources and supplemented the study and the findings in assessing the general political awareness of the people as well as their involvement in the electioneering process, the awareness of issues highlighted by the parties, the

reasons for which they had voted a candidate. Relevant published material, journals, newspapers, statistical data as well as government records were taken into account to ascertain precise conclusion in the study.

A secondary source can be written or unwritten which is usually produced with an understanding of the nature of an event after it happened. Therefore, the study also relies on secondary sources such as, articles, newspapers, journals, time sequence record of State's report on elections published by Election Commission. Besides, the Census of India, e-resources and others were also consulted.

CHAPTERISATION

Chapters are divided as follows.

Chapter I : Introduction

Introduction covers significance of the study, statement of the problem, review of literature, objectives, research questions and methodology.

Chapter II : Election Process in Mizoram

Conceptual understanding of election process has been studied; Socio-economic and political profile of Aizawl is extensively covered in this chapter.

Chapter III : Voting Behaviour of Youth in Aizawl District

Various factors that influenced the voting behaviour of youth in Aizawl District is discussed in this chapter.

Chapter IV : Implications of Voting Behaviour on Electoral Outcome

Implications of voting behaviour of youth on the electoral outcome in the Seventh Assembly Elections in the case of Aizawl district of Mizoram are studied in the chapter.

Chapter V : Conclusion

Summary of research findings are covered in this chapter.

In fine, this chapter explains the essence of elections as an important political process of a democratic form of government. And, described elections as the most important and popular means of choosing an individual to hold a public office. An important feature of elections is the existence of political parties that try to win the support of the electorate and acquire political power. In order to attain political power the political parties tend to develop and determine voting behaviour of the voters. Therefore, an explanation of voting behaviour is given in this chapter as it is the primary subject of the study.

The various theories intended to provide a general framework for determining voting behaviour in elections is discussed. The theories discussed cover the field theory, the cognitive theory, the psychodynamic theory, the humanistic theory and the converging theory. However, an accurate determinants as well as factors could not be derived on account of the differences in the socio-cultural, economic and political settings upon which the electoral process operates.

A brief description of the political history of Mizoram is discussed highlighting the time when Mizoram was elevated to a union territory and then to a

full-fledged state in 1987 on account of the Mizo Peace Accord signed by the Mizo National Front and the Government of India. The first state Assembly was constituted in 1987 with 40 legislative assembly seats. With the enactment of the Mizoram Municipalities Act in 2007 by the Mizoram Legislative Assembly, the Aizawl Municipal Corporation composed of 19 Wards started functioning from July 8, 2010.

The study area ie., Aizawl district, which is the capital city of Mizoram is significant not only for being the most populated district but it is also the center of trade and commerce, all important state's administrative centres are in Aizawl. The civil societies which exerts a profound influence in the political process of Mizoram such as, the Young Mizo Association, the Mizoram People Forum, the church, student's association and others have their administrative centres in Aizawl. This aspect of the district make the study of voting behaviour of youth crucial in understanding elections in Mizoram in a larger scale as the youth comprises a sizable number of the population.

The term 'youth' has been explained in a number of ways. It is considered synonymous with adolescent, teenager, kid or a young person. It may refer to a period of life between childhood and adult. An energetic person may even be called young irrespective of his age. However, age is the most accurate way to define youth and for the purpose of this study the chronological age between 18 – 35 years is identified as youth.

Despite the importance of this study, there are neither research based works or available sources of materials on the voting behaviour of youth in Aizawl district. Therefore, this research work illustrated the role played by the youth and

factors determining their voting behaviour. The study is intended to go beyond basic factors like money, wealth, personality and study the important factors like the role played by peer groups in the election, family influences, activities of political parties and the role of mass media.

CHAPTER 2

ELECTION PROCESS IN MIZORAM

Mizoram was one of the districts of Assam till 1972 when it became a Union Territory. Sandwiched between Myanmar in the east and south, and Bangladesh in the west, Mizoram occupies an area of great strategic importance in the north eastern corner of India. According to the Economic Survey Mizoram, 2012 - 2013, the geographical area covered by the state is 21,087 Sq.Kms, and accounts for 0.64 per cent of the total geographical area of India. Its length from North to South is about 277 Kms and width from East to West is about 121 Kms. The longitudinal and latitudinal extent of Mizoram falls between 92°15'E to 93°29'E and 21°58'N to 24°35'N respectively. Mizoram has an international boundary of 381 Kms with Bangladesh and 404 Kms with Myanmar. The state has inter-state boundary with Assam on the North (123 Km), Tripura on the North West (66 Km.) and Manipur on the North East (95 Km.).¹

As per the provisional figure of 2011 census, the total population stood at 10,91,014 registering a growth rate of 22.78 percent over 2001 census. The sex ratio is 975 females per 1000 males. About 94.46% of the state population belongs to Scheduled Tribe, and the Scheduled Caste population comprises about 0.03 % of the State's population.²

Historians believe that the Mizo were a part of the green wave of the Mongolian race spilling over into the eastern and southern India centuries ago.

¹ Economic Survey, Mizoram 2012-2013

² Ibid

Their sojourn in western Myanmar, into which they eventually drifted around the seventh century, is estimated to last about ten centuries³. The origin of the Mizos is mythical and shrouded in mystery since there is no record of their history before the 17th century. They are generally accepted as part of a great Mongoloid wave of migration from China and later moved out to India from upper Burma around 1400 A.D. and 1700 A.D. or 1800 A.D. to their present habitat. It is possible that the Mizo came from Shinlung or Chhinlung located on the banks of the river Yalung in China. They first settled in the Shan State and moved on to Kabaw Valley to Khampat and then to the Chin Hills in the middle of the 16th century. The earliest Mizo who migrated to India were known as Kukis, the second batch of immigrants were called New Kukis. The Lushais were the last of the Mizo tribes migrated to India⁴.

The Lushais are tribal groups governed by a hereditary chief. They are a distinct community and the social unit was the village. Around it revolved the life of a Mizo. Mizo village was usually set on top of a hill with the chief's house at the center and the bachelor's dormitory called the 'Zawlbuk' prominently located in the central place. In a way of the focal point in the village was the Zawlbuk where all young bachelors of the village slept. The Zawlbuk was the training ground, and indeed, the cradle wherein the Mizo youth was shaped into a responsible adult member of the society. The institution of Zawlbuk was abolished with the abolition

³Vumson. (1986). *ZO HISTORY With an introduction to Zo culture, economy, religion and their status as an ethnic minority in India, Burma and Bangladesh*. Author. Pp 10-20.

⁴Teisi Thou, *Encyclopedia of Mizoram*, Volume I (New Delhi; Anmol Publications PVT.LTD., 2009), P-195

of chieftainship in 1954 following the first election to the Lushai Hills District Council in 1952⁵.

During the British period, the Lushai Hills was placed under 'Excluded Area' till 1891 when it came under the British territory. However, the administration of the villages was left in the hands of the local chiefs. When India attained her independence from the British in 1947, the Lushai Hills was placed under the administration of Assam. In 1966, the Mizo took up arms against the Indian government to attain an independent homeland. The insurgency continued even after it was elevated to a status of a Union Territory and prevailed till 1986 when the Mizoram 'Peace Accord' ushering a new area of peace was signed⁶.

As a sequel of the signing of the historic Memorandum of Settlement (MoS) between the Government of India and the Mizo National Front (MNF) in 1986, Mizoram was granted Statehood on February 20, 1987 as per the Statehood Act of 1986 and Mizoram became the 23rd State of the Indian Union.

Mizoram is a land of rolling hills, rivers and lakes. As many as 21 major hills ranges or peaks of different heights run through the length and breadth of the state. The terrain has, perhaps, the most variegated topography among all hilly areas in this part of the country. The hills are extremely rugged and steep, leaving some plains scattered occasionally here and there. The hills are steep and are separated by rivers which flow whether to the north or south creating deep gorges between the hill ranges. The average height of the hill is about 1,000 meters. The

⁵Rao, V. Venkata, H. Thansanga and NiruHazarika. (1987). *A Century of Government and Politics in North-East India*, Volume III - Mizoram. New Delhi: S. Chand & Company (Pvt) Ltd. Pp 23-28.

⁶Teisi Thou, *Encyclopedia of Mizoram*, Volume I (New Delhi;Anmol Publications PVT.LTD., 2009), P-195

highest peak in Mizoram is the Blue Mountain (Phawngpui) with a height of 2,210 meters⁷.

Among many rivers and streamlets that run down the hill ranges, the most useful rivers are Tlawng, also known as Dhaleswari or Katakhal, Tut (Gutur) Tuirial (Sonai) and Tuivawl rivers. These rivers flow through the northern territory and eventually join the Barak river of Cachar in Assam. Chhimtuipuiriver which is also known as Kaladan is the biggest river in South Mizoram. It originates from Chin State in Burma and passes through Lawngtlai and Saiha Districts in southern Mizoram and enters into the Bay of Bengal at Akyab.

Mizoram can be classified into four main cultures, namely, Mizo, Pawi, Lakher and Chakma. Each of them displays its own particular cultural identity. They came under the influence of the British Missionaries in the 19th century, and now most of the Mizo are Christian. However, the Chakma follows a different religion, customs and culture. Mizo are a close-knit society with no caste distinction and the village exists like a big family⁸. Birth of a child, marriage in the village and death of a person in the village are important occasions in which the whole village is involved. Before the British moved into the hills, for all practical purposes, the village and the clan formed units of Mizo society. The Mizo code of ethics or Dharma moved around the 'Tlawmngaihna', an untranslatable term meaning on the part of everyone to be hospitable, kind, unselfish and helpful to others. The 'Tlawmngaihna' to a Mizo stands for that compelling moral strength which finds expression in self-sacrifice for the services of others.

⁷Official Website of Aizawl District. (2016). *Mizoram – Brief Profile*. Accessed on 11th May, 2016. Stable URL:

⁸ Ibid

Mizoppractice what is known as *Jhum*/shifting cultivation. They slash down the jungle, burn the trunks and leaves and cultivate land. All their other activities revolve around the Jhum operation and their festivals are all connected with such agricultural operations. 'MimKut' or Maize Festivals is usually celebrated during the month of August and September, after the harvest of Maize. MimKut is celebrated with great fanfare by drinking rice-beer, singing, dancing and feasting. Dedicated to the memory of their dead relatives, the festival is underlined by a spirit of thanksgiving and remembrance of the year's first harvest is placed as an offering on a raised platform built to the memory of the dead. 'ChapharKut' is another festival celebrated during March after completion of their most arduous task of Jhum operation i.e., Jungle-clearing. This is a spring festival celebrated with great fervor and gaiety. It has emerged as the most popular and enjoyable festival today.

The 'Pawl Kut' is harvest thanks giving Festival-celebrated during December the harvest are over. Community feasts are organised and dances are performed. Mothers with their children sit on memorial platform and feed one another. This custom, is known as 'Chawngnawt'.

The fabric of social life in the Mizo society has undergone remarkable changes over the years. Mizos are fast giving up their old customs and adopting the new mode of life which is greatly influenced by the western pattern of life. Music is a passion for the Mizo, and the young boys and girls take to the western music avidly and with commendable skill. The fascinating hills and lakes of Mizo-land literally pulsate and resound with the rhythm of sonorous songs and guitars of the youths everywhere.

An old belief, the 'Pathian' is still in use to term God till today. The Mizo have been enchanted to their new-found faith of Christianity with so much dedication and submission that their entire social life and thought process have been altogether transformed and guided by the Christian Church organizations directly or indirectly and their sense of values has also undergone immense changes.

One of the beneficial results of missionary activities was the spread of education. The Missionaries introduced the Roman script for the Mizo language and formal education. The cumulative result is the present high percentage of literacy of 88.49% which is considered to be the second highest in India.⁹

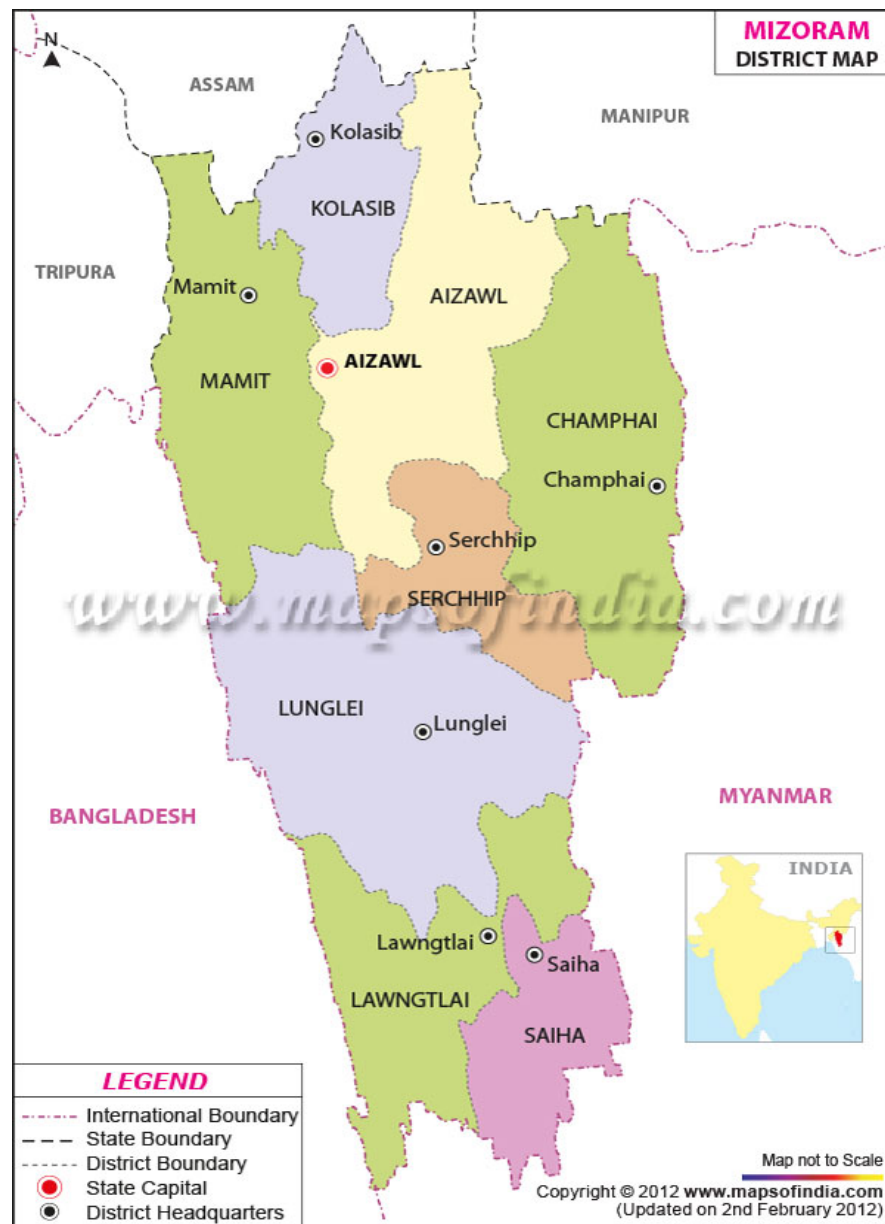
Mizoram, the 23rd state of India became a full-fledged state within the Indian Union on August 7, 1986¹⁰. Initially the state was divided into three districts, such as, Aizawl, Lunglei and Chhimituipui districts, which were later on splits into eight districts in 1998. The eight districts comprising the state of Mizoram, as shown in Figure 1.1, are Mamit, Kolasib, Aizawl, Champhai, Serchhip, Lunglei, Lawngtlai and Saiha¹¹.

⁹The Oxford Handbook of Asian Business Systems.(2014). Edited by Michael A. Witt, Gordon Redding.Oxford University Press.

¹⁰ Hermana, C.(1999).Zoram Politics ThliTleh Dan-Vol.II (1972-1999). Prescom, Aizawl, Pp-99

¹¹ Directorate of Economics & Statistics Mizoram.(2010).Statistical Handbook, Mizoram. 2010.

Fig. 1.1 :Map of Mizoram



Source: <http://www.mapsofindia.com/maps/mizoram/mizoram.htm>

There are different autonomous bodies in North East India whose evolution can somehow be linked with armed struggle and violence movement, but the existing autonomous bodies in Mizoram are the outcome of neither violence nor a conflict movement. So far, there is no autonomous body in Mizoram which is an outcome of an 'Accord' or 'Agreement after an armed struggle. But, in the case of

Hmar, their developmental autonomy is the product of peace agreement which does not have the character of a full-fledged Autonomous District Council.

The autonomy of what one speaks of, is a kind of self-rule inside an administrative unit, for self-governance, conditions for self-government, a set of rights expressive of one's sovereignty over oneself and a personal ideal. The Autonomous Councils in Mizoram had certain powers and function with regard to education, collection of taxes, development of social, political and cultural life for their respective regions. The existing Autonomous District Council (ADC) in Mizoram are the Lai Autonomous District Council (LADC), the Mara Autonomous District Council (MADC) and the Chakma Autonomous District Council (CADC). Out of these three Autonomous District Councils, the Lai Autonomous District Council is located under Lawngtlai District and use Lawngtlai town as its Headquarter. The Mara Autonomous District Council is located under Saiha District, and also uses Saiha Town as its Headquarter. The Chakma Autonomous District Council comprising part of Lunglei and Lawngtlai districts use Chawngte (Kamalanagar) as its Headquarter.

Elections to these Autonomous District Councils are held through periodic franchise and the strength of each Council is different from one another due to their differences in geographical area and size of their population.

Profile of Aizawl District with map, statistics and figures

Aizawl is the largest city and the capital of the state of Mizoram in India. The city is located on north of the Tropic of Cancer in the northern part of Mizoram and is situated on a ridge 1,132 meters (3,715 ft.) above sea level, with the Tlawng river valley to its west and the Tuirial river valley to its east. Aizawl is a

beautiful place that offers plenty of attractions to tourists and habitants alike. Besides its breathtaking beauty, Aizawl is the storehouse of all important government offices, State Assembly House and the Civil Secretariat. Various varieties of forest products, monuments and memorials connected with legends and folklores are also available. This lively and bustling city is definitely enchanting and worth visiting¹².

‘Aijal,’ or more correctly AIZAWL had always been a very favorite village site, but was unoccupied when, in the spring of 1890, Dally of the Assam Police, arrived there with 400 men of the Silchar Military Police Battalion, to join forces with a column of troops under Col. Skinner, which was struggling down the valley of the Dhaleswari river to punish Lianphunga for raiding the Chittagong Hill Tracts¹³.

On 1st April, 1898 two districts which were formerly known as the South Lushai Hills, a part of Bengal, and the North Lushai Hills, a part of Assam were merged into one District, the ‘Lushai Hills’ as a part of Assam. It was headed by the Superintendent. Mizoram (Lushai Hills) was the only District in the whole of British India where the head of the District was not known by the commonly accepted designation of the Collector in most parts of the country, the Deputy Commissioner in the districts of Assam or the Political Officer in some of the frontier tracts¹⁴. From April 1898 till April 1952, i.e. for nearly fifty four years, the

¹²Official Website of Aizawl District. (2016). *Mizoram – Brief Profile*. Accessed on 13th May, 2016. Stable URL:

¹³Shakespeare, J., (1939). *The Making of Aijal*. Aizawl: Official Website of Aizawl District. Accessed on 11th May, 2016. Stable URL:

¹⁴Office of the Deputy Commissioner, Aizawl District. (2016). *A Brief History of the Office of the Deputy Commissioner*. Accessed on 11th May, 2016. Stable URL:

district administration of the Lushai Hills remained under the control of the Superintendents and their Assistants.

In 1952, the designation of the Deputy Commissioner in the manner of the practice in other districts of Assam was adopted. S.N.Barkataki was the last of the Superintendents and the first of the Deputy Commissioners (1949 – 1953)¹⁵. He was a senior officer of the Assam Civil Service Cadre. When Mizoram was elevated to the status of Union Territory in 1972, the Aizawl District was trifurcated into Aizawl District, Lunglei District and Chhimituipui District. Presently, there are eight districts, such as Aizawl District, Lunglei District, Saiha District, Lawngtlai District, Champhai District, Serchhip District, Kolasib District and Mamit District, each headed by the Deputy Commissioner.

Aizawl, that is the research geographical area is the state capital of Mizoram locate at 23.727° N and 92.7176° E with an altitude of 3,500 feet high above the sea level. The entire District is hilly terrain that with a good climate. During winter season the district climate is normally between 10° – 23° Celsius, and in spring season it lays between 17° – 27° Celsius and during autumn the temperature rest between 18° – 26° Celsius¹⁶. It rains heavily from May to September and the average rainfall is 254 cm per annum. The average rainfall in Aizawl is 208 cm, and Lunglei has 350 cm¹⁷. Mizoram has great natural beauty and endless variety of landscape and is also very rich in flora and fauna. Almost all kinds of tropical trees and plants thrive in Mizoram. The hills are marvelously green.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ Lalchhuanawma Hrahsel. (2014). *Mizoram Statistics 2014*. Aizawl: Author. Pp 8-16.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp 15-31.

According to 2011 census, the overall population of Mizoram was 10,97,206 in which 5,55,339 are male and 5,41,867 are female. Out of the total population in Mizoram, Aizawl district population comprises of 4,00,309 and that is 36.48% from the total population.¹⁸ There were as much as 2,56,467 voters in Aizawl district¹⁹. The present study focuses on the age between 18 – 35 voters in Aizawl district in 2013 which comprises 1,47,277 of the electorate or 54.4%.

TABLE 1.1: District Age – Cohort Wise Elector Information

ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA
Format 3A
District Age – Cohort Wise Elector Information

Name of District		Year of Revision	2013
District Population in numbers (projected upto the year of current revision) [X]			406264
District population of 18+ only (projected upto year of current revision) [Y]			334344

Age Cohort	Projected Census population in age cohort (Projected upto the year of current revision)	%age of (2) to 'X' i.e..total population as per census.	Electors as per currently proposed Draft electoral roll w.r.t. 1.1.13 as qualifying date.	%age of (4) to 'X' i.e. total population as per voter roll.	%age of (4) to 'Y' i.e. registered voters vs eligible voters
1	2	3	4	5	6
18 – 19	29689	7.3	28810	7.1	8.6
20 – 29	103955	25.6	91240	22.5	27.3
30 – 39	82947	20.4	54454	13.4	16.3
40 – 49	55403	13.6	39822	9.8	11.9
50 – 59	34761	8.6	23628	5.8	7.1
60 – 69	15242	3.8	11852	2.9	3.5
70 – 79	9542	2.3	5338	1.3	1.6
80+	2805	0.7	1323	0.3	0.4
Total	334344	82.3	256467	63.1	76.7

A justification is imperative while deriving the number of youth voters since the population and number of electors as well as the percentage of youth was derived employing the data maintained by the Election Commission of India in

¹⁸LalchuanawmaHrahsel. (2014). *Mizoram Statistics 2014*. Aizawl: Author. P 15.

¹⁹LalchuanawmaHrahsel...*Op Cit.*,p 214.

2013. Since, the District Age – Cohort Wise Information provides data on the age cohort as, 18 – 19, 20 – 29, 30 – 39 only, the numbers taken into account reflects not just the cohort age group 18 – 35 years but 18 – 39 years. However, for the purpose of this study, the population of youth is assumed as 1,47,277 based on the fact that the age group of 30 – 35 and 36 – 39 is almost equal in number. Hence, it is valid to derive the youth population by calculating trends of increase in the age cohort according to the District Age – Cohort Wise Elector Information maintained by the Election Commission, Government of Mizoram.

Within the District there are various civil societies, such as, MizoZirlai Pawl (student group), Young Mizo Association (YMA), Mizoram Upa Pawl (elderly group), MizoHmeichhieInsuihkhawm Pawl (women group), etc. Various organizations and groups play an important role as an interest and pressure groups in the society. The main task of these organizations is to uphold and ensure peace and security in the society, to check and abolished the violator of law and order likerobbers inside their respective villages, to eliminate all threats for the people, to cooperate with government in various governmental policies or program and to deal with any social issues as deem necessary.

In Mizoram, there are 26 Rural Developmental Blocks (RDB) for better administrative convenience. Aizawl district is constituted by 94 inhabited villages and it is divided into five Rural Development Blocks viz. Tlangnuam, Darlawn, Phullen, Aibawk and Thingsulthlah.²⁰The Block-wise distribution of population is shown in Table 1.2 (Appendix-I) The map of Aizawldistrict is shown in Fig. 1.2

²⁰RintluangaPachau.(2009).MIZORAM:A Study in Comprehensive Geography.Northern Book Centre. New Delhi.

Fig. 1.2 Map of Aizawl District



.The Deputy Commissioner maintains the administration within the district and Rural Development Officer (RDO) or Block Development Officer (BDO) take control of their respective Block. Inside each Block there are a numbers of villages in which the Block Officer are responsible to take care of the day-to-day administration.

There are fourteen (14) main Legislative Assembly Constituencies inside Aizawl District, namely – Tuivawl Constituency, Chalfilh Constituency,

Tawi Constituency, Aizawl 'N'–I Constituency, Aizawl 'N'–II Constituency, Aizawl 'N'–III Constituency, Aizawl 'E'–I Constituency, Aizawl 'E'–II Constituency, Aizawl 'W'–I Constituency, Aizawl 'W'–II Constituency, Aizawl 'W'–III Constituency, Aizawl 'S'–I Constituency, Aizawl 'S'–II Constituency, and Aizawl 'S'–III Constituency. These constituencies, as shown in the Table 1.3 (Appendix-II), are also a part of the Lok Sabha Constituency while amalgamated with the whole of Mizoram.

Historical Background of Electoral Process in Mizoram

The history of the modern state of Mizoram can be traced back to the British colonial period in North Eastern part of India. Initially, the British had introduced some administration in the Lushai Hills, Chin and Chittagong hill tract with respect to other parts of North East India. But, before the Independence of India there was not much improvement in the political administration of these hill areas. Although the Government of India Act 1919 and 1935 declared the Lushai Hills (Mizoram) as Backward Tracts and Excluded Areas, there was some development with regard to education, administration and local self-government with the help of the christian missionaries. After Independence, the Lushai Hills was formed as a separate District within the administrative jurisdiction of Assam in 1952, but the chieftainship was still sustained in the area to run a little administration in their villages. However, chieftainship was abolished in Lushai Hills after the birth of Mizo Union in 1954²¹.

The Lushai Hills (Mizoram) was one of the backward areas in North East India. On account of the introduction of education by the christian missionaries,

²¹Rao, V. Venkata, H. Thansanga and Niru Hazarika. (1987)...*Op Cit*.

the youth of the Lushai began to develop political consciousness of their society. During this period, these hills area was administered by the local chiefs who were responsible for all the administration of their respective villages. Some of the educated youth began to raise questions about the powers and functions of their local chiefs. They started criticizing the 'Bawi' system which is a part of a slavery system and which is contradiction to the preaching of Christianity. The Church had many employees in her payroll, the pastors, teachers, publicity men and others who were paid in cash, a phenomenon unknown in the economy of the hills. That salaried class was the first middle class in the Mizo society²². These educated youth and the newly Christian converts were emerging as the middle class of their society. As time passes, number of christians among the Lushais increased, institutions of the new religion like the church, the new pastors among the Lushai, now contradict with the authority and functions of their local chiefs. Thus, a movement for the abolition of the chief was one of the products of political consciousness among the educated youth which in turn is the contribution of christianity. On 9th April, 1946 with the initiative of R. Vanlawma, Lalbuai and Hrangaiia, the first political party of Lushai Hills was established with the name of '*Mizo Commoner Union*'.

The main reason for the emergence of this political party is the resentment against the despotic rule of the Lushaichiefs. Later on, it was realized that the chiefs were lured to join the party, but the chiefs objected on the pretext that they were not the 'commoner(s)', since the name of political party bear the nomenclature 'Commoner'. Accordingly, the name of the party was changed to

²²Chatterjee, Suhas. (1994). Autonomy Movement in Mizoram: A Historical Analysis. In R.N Prasad(ed.), *Autonomy Movement in Mizoram*. New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House Pvt Ltd, p. 81.

‘Mizo Union’. Finally, the chieftainship was abolished in the Lushai Hills in 1954, after the setting up of the Lushai Hills District Council and compensation was given to the chiefs by the Government of India. However, The Atlantic Charter and Roosevelt’s Declaration (February 22nd, 1942) on the right of self-determination encouraged the Young Lushai Association (YLA), Kulikawn unit to pass a momentous resolution - the right of self-determination of the Lushais²³. The YLA was the first body to demand autonomy in Mizoram.

In 1947, a Committee formed under the Advisory Committee, North Eastern Frontier (Assam) Tribal and Excluded Area Committee also known as the Bordoloi Committee visited Aizawl to study the possibility of granting autonomous body for the Lushai Hills. As the Committee had been already empowered to co-opt a representatives from each Hills they visited, Ch. Saprawnga and Khawtinkhuma of Mizo Union party was co-opted to represent the Lushai people before the Bordoloi Committee. Although there are some other ethnic groups like the Mara(Lakher), Lai (Pawi), and Chakma, etc., there was not any representatives from these ethnic group other than the Mizo Union, which may be regarded as an expression of the lack of political consciousness among the minor tribes.

As per the recommendations of the Bordoloi Committee, an Advisory Council was set up in each hills of North East India. As for the Lushai Hills the ‘District Advisory Council’ was set up as an interim body before the election of the

²³Chatterjee, Suhas. (1994). *Autonomy Movement in Mizoram: A Historical Analysis*. In R.N Prasad (ed.), *Autonomy Movement in Mizoram*. New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House Pvt Ltd, p. 82.

District Council²⁴. Advisory Council of Lushai Hills consists of 35 elected members, 10 seats were reserved for the chiefs and 25 seats for the common people. Out of 25 seats, 20 seats were for the general people and 5 seats were reserved for women and outgrowing towns. This council was abolished on November 12th, 1951. Similarly, in 1951, the Pawi-Lakher Regional Advisory Council was set up consisting of representatives from Pawi (Lai), Lakher (Mara) and Chakma. According to the rules laid down by the Government of Assam in the paragraph 2 of the Sixth Schedule, Lushai Hills District Council (later Mizo Hills District Council) and Pawi-Lakher Regional Council was set up on April 25th, 1952 and on April 23rd, 1953 respectively.

In the first Lushai Hills District council election, the first political party of Mizoram, that was Mizo Union (M.U.) won the election. Finally, Lushai Hills District Council was inaugurated on 26th April, 1952 at Aizawl by Bishnuram Medhi, the then Chief Minister of Assam. Election to the members of autonomous body was held every five years on the basis of adult franchise and these two autonomous bodies functioned till the formation of Union Territory in 1972. Hence, election to the post of the first Lushai Hills District Council in 1951 was the first general election in Mizoram.

In 1971, the Reorganization of North-East India Bill was framed and passed in the Parliament²⁵. This Bill reorganized the whole North-East India, wherein the province of Assam was reduced, the Hills District were organized as

²⁴Doungel, Jangkhongam. (2008). Autonomous District Councils: A Study of the Implications of the Sixth Schedule in Mizoram. In Jagadish K. Patnaik (Ed.). *Mizoram : Dimensions and Perspectives (society, economy and polity)*. New Delhi: Concept Publishing Company, pp. 208-209.

²⁵Rao, V. Venkata. (1972). Reorganization of North East India. *The Indian Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 33, No. 2, pp123-144. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41854497>. Accessed on 15/05/2014.

Union Territory, and by this very Act the Mizo Hills District (formerly Lushai Hills) was converted into an Union Territory with the new name 'Mizoram'. Not only the Bill transformed the Mizo Hills into U.T., but it also created three autonomous regions inside the Union Territory of Mizoram. Before the introduction of the North-East Reorganization Act in the Parliament, there are only two States in North East i.e., Assam and Nagaland and two Union Territories i.e., Manipur and Tripura. Other autonomous regions were Mizo Hills, Autonomous of Meghalaya, and North East Frontier Agency (NEFA) under the administrative jurisdiction of the Government of Assam. This Act converted the Autonomous Region of Meghalaya into a full-fledged State, the Union Territories of Manipur and Tripura into States, Mizo Hills and NEFA into Union Territories as '*Mizoram*' and '*Arunachal Pradesh*'²⁶ respectively. Thus, instead of two states, there are five states, Assam, Nagaland, Manipur, Tripura, Meghalaya and there are two Union Territories such as Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh. After the conversion of Mizo Hills into Union Territory (U.T.), Mizoram was given one seat in the Lok Sabha.

The Union Territory of Mizoram was inaugurated on 21st January, 1972. As per the provision of the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution of India, paragraph 20A, Mizo Hills District Council was dissolved after the first Legislative Assembly of Mizoram was constituted on 29th April, 1972. Regular elections to the Legislative Assembly of Mizoram U.T. was held every five years by adult franchise till Mizoram attained full-fledged statehood in 1987.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

Election Process in Mizoram after Statehood

The event of insurgency disturbed Mizoram from 1960s till 1980s in which political instability was the main hindrance of development for the people. During insurgency period, Mizoram enjoyed the status of Union Territory (U.T.) in the Indian Union that was later upgraded to a full-fledged state in 1986 by the Memorandum of Settlement (MoS) between Mizo National Front (MNF – the then insurgent group) and the Government of India that was later known as the 'Mizo Peace Accord'. The Accord was signed on 30th June 1986 and the day was later called as 'Remna Ni' (peace day) by the Mizo people²⁷. After the installation of peace and normalcy in Mizoram, formal election to the Legislative Assembly was to be held in 1987 to ensure and restore political stability in the state.

Before the general elections to the Legislative Assembly, an Interim Government was formed as per suggested by the above Peace Accord. In the interim government, the then Chief Minister Lal Thanhawla stepped down to be the Deputy Chief Minister and Laldenga, President of the MNF was placed as the acting Chief Minister as envisaged in the agreement²⁸. Accordingly, the interim government started functioning from 21st August, 1986 with the combination of Congress and MNF party. The term of this ministry was scheduled to be only six months and before the expiry of its term, general election to the proper ministry was to be held. Before the expiry of interim government, various political parties and candidate campaigned visiting different villages throughout Mizoram to convince the electorate.

²⁷Verghese VSM (Rtd), B., & Thanzawna MSC (Rtd), R. (1997). *A History of the Mizos - Volume II*. Delhi: Vikas Publishing House PVT. P 266.

²⁸ P. Lalnithanga. (2005). *Emergence of Mizoram*. Aizawl: Author. Pp 156-159.

As scheduled, the first general election to the Mizoram Legislative Assembly after statehood was held in 1987. According to the statistical report, no party was in a position to form the government in this election because the Independent (IND) candidates captured 24 out of 40 seats²⁹. However, in reality, the elected 24 independent candidates selected belong to the Mizo National Front (MNF) party. But, the leaders of MNF party, such as Laldenga, Zoramthanga, Rualchhina, Tawnluia and other prominent members were recorded as independent candidates.

The only two registered parties – Indian National Congress (INC) and Peoples Party (PPC) won 13 and 3 seats respectively out of the total 40 seats. Accordingly, the Mizo National Front (MNF) was in a position to form a government with Laldenga as the first Chief Minister after statehood³⁰. After a short period of the formation of the government, there was a split inside the ruling party and the MNF were not in a position to hold the reins of government. The then Governor of Mizoram Hiteswar Saikia had dissolved the Mizoram Legislative Assembly³¹.

Due to the split in the ruling party, President's Rule was imposed in Mizoram from 1988 till the next general election in 1989. Not only this, there was a charge of scandal against the MNF president Laldenga by Lalduhawma (present President of the Zoram Nationalist Party) that greatly surprised the people³². Furthermore, there were many deep rooted crises among the MNF party men with

²⁹Election Commission of India. (1987). *Statistical Report on General Election, 1987 to the Legislative Assembly of Mizoram*. New Delhi. Pp 4-5.

³⁰P. Lalnithanga. (2005). *Op Cit...* P 162-164.

³¹Letkholun Haokip. (2014). *Electoral Process in Mizoram: A Study on the role of Church in the Seventh Assembly Elections*. M. Phil dissertation: Mizoram University. P. 62.

³²P. Lalnithanga. (2005). *Op Cit...* pp 164-165.

regard to the appointment of Ministers. All these incidents suddenly came to public notice that shooked and weakened the first MNF ministry. Therefore, a proclamation President's Rule was inevitable for the Mizo people because of the split and factions in MNF ministry.

The President's Rule promulgated on 7th September, 1988 on account of the split in the MNF ministry was followed by a fresh general election. Accordingly, the second general election was held on 21st January, 1989. In this election, the INC party won the election with 23 seats, the former ruling party MNF secured only 14 seats and PPC also secured only one seat while the independent (IND) candidate are elected at two constituencies, namely Tawipui(ST) and Saitual (ST)³³. The new Government was set up on 24th January, 1989 with LalThanhawla as the Chief Minister and this ministry lasted for its full term of five years.

Although the third election to the Mizoram Legislative Assembly was to be held on 1994, it had to be preponed due to the Gospel Centenary Celebration (100 years of christianity in Mizoram). Therefore, the third general election was held in 1993 before the expiry of the former Congress ministry. In this election 80.75% of the total voters in Mizoram cast their vote³⁴. This election was remarkable in the history of Mizoram because the election result suggested the need of the first coalition government in Mizoram. Before the election, People's Conference (PC) and Janata Dal merged to form Mizoram Janata Dal (MJD). Finally, INC, MNF and MJD were the only party contenders in this election. The INC had only 28 candidates and secured 16 seats out of the total 40 seats. The MNF still stand as the

³³Election Commission of India. (1989). *Statistical Report on General Election, 1989 to the Legislative Assembly of Mizoram*. New Delhi. Pp 4-5.

³⁴ Election Commission of India. (1993). *Statistical Report on General Election, 1993 to the Legislative Assembly of Mizoram*. New Delhi. P 3.

strongest regional party and came out with 38 candidates but securing only 14 seats. The newly organized party MJD could secure only 8 seats. After the result was announced, MJD and INC made a political agreement to form the first coalition government known as United Legislature Party (ULP)³⁵. In this Ministry, LalThanhawla, the former Chief Minister was again sworn in as the Chief Minister of the third Mizoram Legislative Assembly.

However, there were some misunderstandings and rifts between the INC and MJD which affects their cooperation. The INC having more legislators in the Assembly maintained to uphold its ministry by dropping off the MJD legislators and instead made another agreement with five MNF Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA) defectors to complete its full five years term.

The fourth general election to the Mizoram Legislative Assembly was held on 25th November, 1998 under peaceful and calm atmosphere. In this election, there were as much as 221 candidates in 40 constituencies. But the voters turnout reach only 76.32% from the total voters, which was lesser than the previous election. In the election, a mutual agreement was made between the MNF and the MPC and the election was fought on the basis of 20 seats under a common zone. In other words, the two parties i.e., MNF and MPC contested the common 20 seats on friendly basis. The remaining 20 seats were equally distributed between the partners, 10 seats exclusively for MNF and the other 10 for MPC³⁶.

In the meantime, the INC contested in all 40 seats but was able to secure only 6 seats out of 40 Assembly seat. Both the MNF and MPC contested on 28

³⁵LetkholunHaokip. (2014). *Op Cit...* pp 63-65.

³⁶P. Lalnithanga. (2005). *Op Cit...*pp 240-245.

seats each and secured 21 and 12 seats respectively³⁷. Thus, the agreement between MNF and MPC delivered them majority in the election to form the Government with 33 MLA. But, within one year and six days after the installation of the MNF and MPC coalition ministry, there was a huge crack between them that could endanger their mutual friendship. This was the direct result of the discovery of a secret agreement between MPC and INC to fight together the forthcoming Village Council election in the whole of Mizoram which is schedule to be held on 16th December, 1999. Thereafter, the leader and the then Chief Minister of the coalition Government Zoramthanga asked for the resignation of five MPC Ministers. Consequent upon the matter, the MPC Ministers had no other options but to resign politely from the so called MNF and MPC coalition ministry clearing the desk for the pure MNF ministry.

After the completion of its five years term, the pure MNF ministry had to face the fifth general election in 2003. The election to the fifth Mizoram Legislative Assembly was held on 20th November, 2003 ensuring the continuation of a pure MNF ministry for the third time (1987, 1998, and 2003). When compared to the latest election, the number of voters' turnout increased a little to 78.65% from the total voters³⁸. But the number of candidates decreased from 221 to 185 in the total 40 constituencies. The INC contested at all 40 constituencies but were able to secure only 12 seats, the MNF candidates contested at 39 constituencies and won 21 MLA seats, the combined MPC and ZNP secured 5 seats. The former militant group known as Hmar People's Convention (HPD) who entered into an agreement with the Mizoram Government on 27th July, 1994 transformed itself into a political

³⁷ Election Commission of India. (1998). *Statistical Report on General Election, 1998 to the Legislative Assembly of Mizoram*. New Delhi. Pp 3-5.

³⁸ Election Commission of India. (2003). *Statistical Report on General Election, 2003 to the Legislative Assembly of Mizoram*. New Delhi. P 3.

party and was able to secure one seat in this election³⁹. The Mara Democratic Front (MDF) also secured one seat in south Mizoram.

This election came out with a remarkable change in the history of Mizoram electoral process as it was the first time that the electorates cast their votes using the Electronic Voting Machine (EVM). The counting of election result was held on 2nd December, 2003 and as already stated above the MNF proved themselves as the only majority party to form the government thereby sustaining its existing ministry for another five years.

The sixth Mizoram Assembly Election was held on 6th December, 2008 in which the INC came back in power. The number of contestants in this election had risen up to 206 and the voters' turnout also increased up to 80.02% from the total voters⁴⁰. INC had contested in all 40 constituencies and won 32 seats. Their main contender i.e., the MNF contested in 39 constituencies and secured 3 seats only⁴¹. As stated above, the INC formed the government with a thumping majority with Lal Thanhawla as the Chief Minister. This ministry continued its full five year's term till 2013.

Seventh Election to Mizoram Legislative Assembly – Manifesto, party politics and trends

The latest election to the Mizoram Legislative Assembly was held on 25th November, 2013. On the eve of election, several political parties as well as independent candidates issued different pamphlets and manifestos, organized campaigns and rallies. The number of candidates decreased from 206 to 142 in the

³⁹ P. Lalnithanga. (2005). *Op Cit...* p 241.

⁴⁰ Election Commission of India. (2008). *Statistical Report on General Election, 2008 to the Legislative Assembly of Mizoram*. New Delhi. P 3.

⁴¹ Election Commission of India. (2008). *Op Cit...* P 6.

last election, but the voters' turnout increased and accounts for 80.82% from the total voters⁴². The number of candidates from different political parties are as follows : Indian National Congress (INC) – 40 candidates, Mizo National Front (MNF) –31 candidates, Zoram Nationalist Party (ZNP) - 38 candidates, Mizoram People's Convention (MPC) – 8 candidates, Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) –17 candidates, Mara Democratic Front (MDF) - 1 candidate, and Independent Candidate (IND) –4 candidates.

As the present study is focused on the last election, it is imperative to analyze the manifestoes of the various contesting parties in the election. The following are a highlight of their manifestoes :

Mizoram Pradesh Congress Committee (MPCC):The ruling INC ministry swear to the people by their manifesto that they will deliver a just and fair government ensuring accountability and transparency. It will maintain law and order in a better way; enhance the welfare of the society and development in fiscal product⁴³. Through their manifesto the INC proclaimed that they will continue their unfinished business in the last ministry like the New Land Use Policy (NLUP). The MPCC also stated that if they are in a position to form the government in the election, they will stop all the smugglers, via Mizoram – Bangladesh Border and Mizoram – Myanmar Border. They also affirmed that education reform necessary in Mizoram and consequent upon the fact, the INC will establish Medical College, Mental Hospital, and pursue reforms for education at the elementary stage.

⁴² Election Commission of India. (2013). *Statistical Report on General Election, 2013 to the Legislative Assembly of Mizoram*. New Delhi. P 3.

⁴³ Mizoram Congress Pradesh Committee. (2013). *Election Manifesto*. Aizawl:MPCC. P 2.

The Party would produce electricity up to 280MW and provide electricity to all Mizoram villages as well as to initiate steps to complete the Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project at the earliest possible time⁴⁴. Other promises includes –

1. To initiate steps for the establishment of a separate High Court for Mizoram.
2. Gainful extraction and utilization of the natural resources of Mizoram.
3. To implement LokAyuktato counter the menace of corruption in public administration.

Mizo National Front (MNF): Being the largest regional party in Mizoram, the MNF party set their priority to issues of ethnicity, identity, regionalism and nationalism. In their manifesto, it stated that the Mizo people are scattered in different places like India, Myanmar and Bangladesh due to British imperialism. It is the MNF policy to bring all the Mizo people under one administration⁴⁵. The Party also promised the people to form a government which is reliable, accountable, transparent, fair; and sustaining peace in the state. Their administration will ensure the abolishment of corruption, revision of taxes, and formation of High Court. In terms of economics, the MNF leaders founded a policy called Socio Economic Development Program (SEDP) that will ensure the development of all the farmers in Mizoram⁴⁶. Education occupied the main topic in MNF manifesto in which the concept like Teacher Eligibility Test (TET),

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p 6.

⁴⁵ Mizo National Front. (2013). *Election Manifesto: PathianLehKan Ram Tan*. Aizawl: MNF General Headquarters. P 6.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p 11.

Provident Fund, pension scheme, quarters for teachers and student health care are very common. Other points in their manifesto contain the following –

1. To enhance the educational system to provide skill for utilizing the natural resources of Mizoram.
2. To give computer laptop to those who score a prescribed marks in High School Leaving Certificate (HSLC), Higher Secondary School Leaving Certificate (HSSLC) and Mizoram University.
3. To revive the Youth Commission.
4. To cooperate with the National Skill Development Corporation to give training to youth in the field of Automobile Engineering, Electronics, Building Construction, Food Processing, IT & Software Development, Tourism & Hospitality, Gems & Jewelry, Insurance & Banking, Entertainment & Broadcasting.

Zoram Nationalist Party (ZNP): Parties are concentrated on different issues, and ZNP focuses on services for the youth, agriculture and public administration. In the economic policy, the ZNP focus on the Immediate Economic Package (IEP) in which agricultural products are utilized and sold with a good price. The ZNP policy denounced the policy of distributing money as a developmental initiatives of the INC and the MNF manifestos⁴⁷. The party tried to develop the Sinlung Hills Development Council (SHDC) and also tried to resolve the border dispute with Assam that had been a burning issue in Mizoram. The need for a separate High Court for Mizoram is also their top priority for this party. Educational Loan to student are also their main topic in which coaching institute are also promises for

⁴⁷Zoram Nationalist Party. (2013). *Immediate Economic Package (IEP)*. Aizawl: Information & Publicity Department, ZNP Gen. Hqrs.

students aspiring to appear for the civil service examinations. Unlike other parties, the ZNP focus its policy on Food Processing that could be maintain and administered by a separate department⁴⁸. Further, the party put emphasised on financial management for different departments that has been a difficult process for the people as claimed by them. Other policies are the following –

1. Allocation of a separate budget for agricultural products.
2. Emphasizing terrace farming and abolishing shifting cultivation.
3. Encouraging the capacity and skilled development for the youth.
4. Restructuring of educational system in Mizoram.
5. Implementation of the LokAyukta with the power that could investigate from the bottom to the Chief Minister.
6. To protect the environment and make the departments accountable to the people through Public Private Partnership.

MNF, MPC and MDF Manifestoes: These three parties were allies and issued a common manifesto for the 7th Legislative Assembly Election. Like the MNF party, these three parties issued that they will try to integrate all Mizo under one administration. And to clarify their point, they used UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People as their base⁴⁹. Their policies include to insert Mizo language to Eight Schedule to the Constitution of India, to restructure the List of Tribal in Mizoram, to implement the Inner Line regulations (ILR) in a better way, to accomplish all the terms and agreements that had been incorporated in the Mizo Peace Accord⁵⁰. Decentralization of Power in Public Administration occupy their

⁴⁸Zoram Nationalist Party. (2013). *ZNP Manifesto*. Aizawl: ZNP General Headquarters. P11.

⁴⁹ MNF, MPC & MDF. (2013). *Common Manifesto*. Aizawl: MNF, MPC, MDF General Headquarters. P 1.

⁵⁰*Ibid.*

main focus and the 'Six Basic Needs' are still their main policy. Human resource development also occupy an important place in their policy in which restructure and utilization of education system in Mizoram are the top priority. The MPC's permanent policy of ensuring self-sufficiency in power and electricity is still their main aim to achieve. Other common policies also include the following –

1. To enlarge and utilize Mizoram Youth Commission.
2. To work with the National Skill Development Corporation and to facilitate several training programmes to the youth.
3. To implement LokAyukta or Vigilance Commission to counter corruptions in public administration.
4. Transportation in air, water, rail and roads are vital to our State and the parties will try to develop these transportation.
5. Extraction of our natural resources and utilize it for the benefit of the State.

BhartiyaJanata Party (BJP):The party divided their manifesto into several parts – Agriculture, Health, Road Transportation, Electric, Education, Women's Status, Development, Religious Part, Economic, Youth Policy, Administration, Law and Order, Telecommunication, Industry, Forest and Environment as well as welfare policy for the old and the aged.

The policy stated that 80% of Mizoram based their economy as agriculture and it is the BJP's policy to enrich, utilize agricultural farming and give a reliable job to them. Furthermore, they suggested that with the help of the Central BJP government, there can be a way to sell all the agricultural products without any hindrances to other states⁵¹. In their health care policy, they try to give a free clinic

⁵¹BhartiyaJanata Party. (2013). *Election Manifesto*. Aizawl: BJP General Headquarters. P 1.

to all the villages in Mizoram. The party also tried to build an extension city of Aizawl to avoid traffic jammed and the construction of a four lane national highway in their manifesto. Extraction of natural gas and utilization to produce electricity is an important policy for the party. Implementation of the Sarva Shiksha Abhian (SSA) to all private school is a distinct feature for the party, emphasis in English and Hindi language is also their main topic in education. The party also promised to adopt socialist principles and secularism to the people⁵².

Election Campaigning

'Election' is considered as the foundation upon which modern democratic nation stands. It is a sort of political communication where the citizen of a state expresses their decision through a legitimate political process to remove an incumbent of a public office or a political party from power and put a person or political party of their choice in power. And most elections are preceded by election campaigns, where a candidate or a political party would launch an effort to convince the voters to support and vote for them or the political party in the election. A political campaign is an organized effort which seeks to influence the decision making process within a specific group.⁵³ In other words, election campaign is an electoral process in which a candidate or a political party share their ideas with the voters to get those who agree with them to vote for them when running for a political position.⁵⁴

During election campaigning, political parties usually face the challenge of convincing the majority of electorates who does not have party identification or

⁵² *Ibid.*, p 3.

⁵³ Wikipedia.(2016).Political Campaign. Retrieved on 5th July, 2016. URL :https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Political_campaign.Political Campaign.

⁵⁴ *Ibid*

interest in politics. Therefore, candidates and political parties have to employ various campaign strategies and whatever means available to them to win the hearts of the electorate. Various campaigning techniques employed by political parties includes Campaign Advertising, Media Management, Mass Meetings and Rallies, use of modern technology and internet, husting, distribution of leaflets, whistlestop tour, and others.⁵⁵ It is evident that employing such campaigning techniques would entails the use of money power, therefore, political parties greatly rely on money power for effective campaigning in elections. However, in almost every democratic country there is an agency entrusted to conduct a free and fair election, and endowed with the power to disqualify a candidate or declaring an election result as invalid for violation of election rules or an election code of conduct.

In India, the political parties and contesting candidates are expected to adhere to a Model Code of Conduct evolved by the Election Commission of India. The model Code lays down broad guidelines as to how the political parties and candidates should conduct themselves during the election campaign, further, it is intended to maintain the election campaign on healthy lines, avoid clashes and conflicts between political parties or their supporters and to ensure peace and order during the campaign period and thereafter, until the results are declared.⁵⁶ However, in spite of the presence of a Model Code of Conduct and the Election Commission of India to oversee that there is a free and fair election, there are a number of misconducts which go against the norms of democratic principles. Among the misconducts of election campaigning, the excessive use of money

⁵⁵Electomatic Political News.(2016).Campaign techniques. Retrieved on 5th July, 2016. URL : <http://www.electomatic.com/campaign-techniques/>

⁵⁶ Website of the Election Commission of India..Campaign. Retrived on 5th July, 2016. URL : http://eci.nic.in/eci_main1/the_function.aspx#campaign

power to gain supporters or to buy votes is a menace which is a common feature in every election. Political parties are not transparent in financial matters and the financial transaction made by and within a political party are not under the gambit of the Right to Information Act.

The Election Commission of India, with its vast array of authority and power has not been able to deliver a level playing field for all candidates and political parties. The candidate or political party with a huge amount of fund would inevitably have an advantage over a financially weaker opponent. As such, buying votes, distributing money and liquor as well as excessive spending on campaign have become a major problem in election campaigning in India. Apart from these elements, the use of gun and muscle power, false propaganda, threats of violence are some elements of election campaign that are observed in elections.

In the Seventh Legislative Assembly Election of Mizoram, the main contenders were the ruling Indian National Congress (INC) headed by LalThanhawla and the Mizoram Democratic Alliance formed by three parties, namely, Mizo National Front (MNF), Mizoram People's Conference (MPC) and the Mara Democratic Front (MDF). The BharatiyaJanata Party (BJP), Zoram Nationalist Party (ZNP) and the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP), LokJanshakti Party (LJP) were other parties involved in the poll battle.

The main slogans of the INC was the continuation of the New Land Use Policy (NLUP) and to deliver a just and fair government which is transparent and accountable. The MDA issued a common manifesto stating that they would try to integrate all Mizo under one administration, Decentralisation of power in Public Administration and self-reliant in electricity production. The BJP campaign

slogans are mostly concerned with agrarian development, extraction of natural gas and production of sufficient electricity. Zoram Nationalist Party's campaign is focused on economic issues, such as Immediate Economic Package (IEP) and allocating a separate budget for agriculture.

Mizoram had gone to the Assembly elections on November 25, 2013 without any unpleasant instance to record. During the election campaigning, the candidates and political parties had strictly adhered to the code of conduct laid by the Mizoram People Forum. The Mizoram People Forum was established on 21st June 2006.⁵⁷ It is an organization set up for the purpose of fostering a free and fair election in Mizoram. It virtually turns into an official poll watchdog, monitoring the selection of candidates by political parties, keeping watch over the financial expenditures and even influencing the manifestoes of a political party.

The MPF was floated by the Synod of the Presbyterian Church, the largest church body in Mizoram as an election watchdog. It informed all the political parties in the state to adhere to the model code of conduct framed by the Election Commission of India. However, it is opposed to any agitation by any group or community that could disturb the preparation for the Assembly elections. The MPF also draws volunteers from other prominent civil society organizations such as the Young Mizo Association (YMA), Mizoram Women's Association and Mizoram Elders' Association, to name a few. The YMA is a powerful body where any Mizo who attains the age of 14 can become a member. It has branches in all villages within and outside Mizoram and almost all Mizo are members of the association.

⁵⁷ Mizoram People Forum. Constitution of Mizoram People Forum.(Lengchhawn Press, Aizawl. 2007)

Besides the YMA, the Mizoram Synod of the Presbyterian Church of India had a very influential role as a moral force in the state, where Christians are a majority. In fact, it is the church leaders who played a critical role in getting the insurgency ridden state back on a democratic set up and can be identified as the most peaceful state in North East India. It is notable that the rebel turned politician and first chief minister of Mizoram, Laldenga was persuaded by the church leaders to turn away from the path of violence and come back to the mainstream. So with active support of the church, the 'Mizo Accord' was signed with the MNF in 1986 by the late Rajiv Gandhi which paved the way for peace in the state. Even since the formation of the state, the church continued to play a role of a guardian and have a major influence in the Mizo life, whether social, economic, cultural or political. In fact, the church is identified by the youth of Aizawl District as one of the major influence in the voting behavior of the youth. However, it may be assumed that it is not only the youth who are influenced by the church, but, the older population who are more inclined towards the church are likely to follow the diktats of the church with matters relating to elections and others.

Under the watchful eye of the MPF, there were no public feasting, use of loud speakers for party meetings was not observed and minimum number of election posters were seen pasted on walls. There was a heavy use of social networking site and mobile phones were used to reach out to the farthest corner. Before the Assembly elections, the MPF asked all the political parties not to set up any 'campaign office' in connection with the election in the state. However, door to door campaign was allowed till ten days before the polling day.

Before the elections, the MPF had signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with major political parties in Mizoram so that a free and fair elections could be held. The parties, which had signed the MoU are the Mizoram Pradesh Congress Committee (MPCC), Mizo Peoples Convention (MPC), Zoram National Party (ZNP), Mizo National Front (MNF) and the BharatiyaJanata Party.

There were about 27 guidelines made by the MPF for the political parties to follow in the election. If any political party violates any of the 27 points, the MPF would make that party 'invalid'. The Election Commission is supportive of the endeavor of the MPF as the goal of both the institution is to ensure a free and fair election in the state.

One of election guidelines is to decrease party's expenditure. And, as a step to reduce the election expenses, the parties are requested not to set up election campaign offices. Another guideline advises political parties to compile an election manifesto which can be implemented, instead of making empty promises.

An observation was made in the 2003 that the event of Assembly elections in Mizoram, and the Seventh Assembly Election in particular was unique as it was marked by a low key and a less festive campaign and a polling day. During the campaigning period, there were no noisy microphones, no posters and no big processions. There is also no mud-slinging and candidates try to win support by advocating what they wish to do.⁵⁸The electorates cast their votes under similar environment in 2013. There were about 1,126 polling station in the state and the election is significant with a high voter turnout of about 82% electors. A notable

⁵⁸SubirBhaumik.(2003).BBC News. Mizoram's Model ElectionRetrieved on 6th July, 2016.
URL :http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/3279389.stm..

feature of the Assembly election is that, it is the only state in India where the women voter outnumbered men. There were no incidence of violence reported. For the first time in Mizoram, Voter Verified Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) was used in ten Assembly constituencies in the election.

To conclude, this chapter gives an extensive insight into the history of the Mizo, the geography and the demography as well as the socio- cultural life of the people. The various communities present in Mizoram as well as the autonomous district councils are discussed. A detailed description of the profile of Aizawl district is given in the chapter highlighting the political history, geographic location, demography, administrative set up and the Assembly constituencies.

The history of the modern state of Mizoram can be traced back to the British colonial period in North Eastern part of India. Initially, the British had introduced some administration in the Lushei Hills, Chindhills and the Chittagong hill tract with respect to other parts of North East India. The christians missionaries had introduced western education that paved the way for the development of political consciousness amongst the Mizo. The educated and the christian converts criticized the chieftainship, and hence, the first political party of the Mizo was established with the name 'Mizo Commoners Union.' The name was later changed to 'Mizo Union.' The Mizo Union won the first Lushai Hill District Council elections in Mizoram. On 21st January 1972 Mizoram was inaugurated as the Union Territory and after a period of insurgency for 20 years peace was restored and it became a full-fledged state in 1987.

The chapter provides a detailed discussion on the election process in Mizoram after statehood. Before the general elections to the Legislative Assembly,

an Interim Government was formed as per suggested by the above Peace Accord. In the interim government, the then Chief Minister Lal Thanhawla stepped down to be the Deputy Chief Minister and Laldenga of the MNF president was placed as the acting Chief Minister as envisaged in the agreement. Accordingly, the interim government started functioning from 21st August, 1986 with the combination of Congress and MNF party. The term of this ministry was scheduled to be only six months and before the expiry of its term, general election to the proper ministry was to be held. As scheduled, the first general election to the Mizoram Legislative Assembly after statehood was held in 1987

The only two registered parties – Indian National Congress (INC) and Peoples Party (PPC) won 13 and 3 seats respectively out of the total 40 seats. Accordingly, the Mizo National Front (MNF) was in a position to form a government with Mr. Laldenga as the first Chief Minister after statehood. After a short period, there was a split inside the ruling party and President's Rule was imposed in Mizoram from 1988 till the next general election in 1989. In this election, the INC party won the election

A remarkable event is observed in the third Assembly election in 1993 as Mizoram witnessed the first coalition government under United Legislature party which consisted of the INC and the Mizoram Janata Dal (MJD). Instances of election malpractice such as the use of money power, threat of violence and such others have invited the church to take up measures to ensure a free and fair elections. Hence, elections in Mizoram and specially the seventh Assembly election was conducted under a peaceful atmosphere. The election watchdog known as the Mizoram People Forum along with the Election Commission of

Mizoram has issued several code of conduct for parties and candidates to follow. The MPF had asked all the political parties to compile a manifesto that is achievable, hence, manifestoes had become an important agenda in the election campaign.

CHAPTER 3

VOTING BEHAVIOUR OF YOUTH IN AIZAWL DISTRICT

There are various variables and factors that determined and influenced the voting behavior of youth in the study area i.e., Aizawl District. The determinants work in terms of facilitating the process of making a decision to vote, rendering advice about whom and how to vote, as well as providing requisite information regarding the election in order to vote for the most appropriate representative(s). The concepts with the nomenclature ‘Political Culture’ and ‘Political Socialization’ determine the way people react during the election period. In other words, political culture and the process of political socialization in Aizawl District exerts a profound bearing upon the voting behavior in the elections to the Mizoram Legislative Assembly (MLA), 2013.

To substantiate the above argument, one has to study the level of political culture and socialization in Aizawl District in order to understand how, when and why the electorates make their decision in voting. However, the present study is focused only on the youth’s voting behavior, hence, it is imperative for the researcher to discuss the variables and factors that concern the youth alone.

As the study focuses only on the youth which are between 18 – 35 years of age, it is necessary for the researcher to draw a sample age between 21 – 38 years. The reason for drawing this particular sample is because the present study is based on the age of the electorate in the 2013 election, and those who were in that age group have grown older and have attained the age of 21 – 38 in 2016.

The following discussion illustrates the behavioral condition of youth in the election, their perception of the system of election and electoral politics, their choice of candidates among a number of alternatives, as well as how they identify and classify a candidate most suitable for them to address their wants, as well as their day to day challenges. And, as Aizawl District is consisted of both the rural and urban areas the analysis is divided into rural and urban areas in which samples are divided into several parts on the basis of their character.

Rural Area Analysis

To study the voting behavior in the rural areas of Aizawl District, the samples were drawn from two villages, Maubuang South and Sihphir, through the Simple Random Sampling method. The number of samples are divided into 30 each which accounts for a combined samples of 60 from rural areas alone. Samples are given questionnaire containing 15 different questions about Mizoram Legislative Assembly Elections 2013. The entire samples are then classified into five groups on the basis of their character, such as , student, self-employed, employed, unemployed and government servant.

‘Students’ consist of those who have passed a higher secondary school level to a master level of education, but has not yet held a regular job under a private or government undertakings. No differentiation is made between students who study inside or outside Mizoram. ‘Self-employed’ includes those person who owns a business firm or an agency, such as a shop, a carpentry business, owner of a private school, owner of a vehicle workshop and those persons who run a small business in the daily market, as well as a small and private contractor. ‘Employed’ are classified as those persons who are employed under a private sector and working day to day to

earn their livelihood. ‘Unemployed’ youth includes those who are neither employed nor engaged in any self-sustaining work under any private or public sector. Lastly, ‘Government servants’ are identified as those persons who hold a certain job and enjoying a monthly salary pay by the Central or Mizoram Government.

Accordingly, the percentage of sample derived through a survey of the rural areas comprised of, students- 10%, employed - 8.5%, unemployed – 60%, self-employed – 20% and Government servant – 1.5%. As stated earlier, the respondents were given questionnaire containing 15 questions and their answers are classified on the basis of the respondent from which an attempt is made to identify the voting behavior of youth in Aizawl District.

The Responses of students of rural areas in Aizawl District are illustrated using tables for analysis and better understanding.

Table 1.4: *What was the most important medium of information that gives you an interest to vote in the last Assembly election?*

Character	% of respondents out of total respondents	Variables in Percentage				
		Newspapers	Public meetings	TV and Radio	Distribution of pamphlets	Social Networking Site
<i>Students</i>	10%	20	10	10	10	50
<i>Employed</i>	8.5%	40	8.5	40	4.5	7
<i>Unemployed</i>	60%	13.5	16.5	50	8.5	11.5
<i>Self employed</i>	20%	25	16.5	33.3	16.5	25
<i>Govt. Servants</i>	1.5%	-	-	100	-	-

Source : Survey Questionnaire

The first question is regarding the medium through which an information is received by the respondent that facilitated their insight on the election. A total of 50% students replied that the discussion of politics in social networking sites/internet, such as Facebook and WhatsApp are the most important medium that facilitated their knowledge and understanding about electoral politics. The second

most important medium is newspapers. The Rest of the respondents are divided into several categories who choose television and radio, party manifestoes and public meetings as their source of information. For a student, technological development plays a crucial role in their day to day life giving them knowledge about the issues in the society they live.

Another group of respondents who are identified as 'employed,' include as stated in the beginning, those persons who are being employed in a private sector and working day to day to earn their livelihood. The percentage of this category comprised 8.5% of the total respondents. In this group, 40% of the respondents choose television and radio as the medium of understanding and acquiring information about the election of 2013, another 40% consider newspapers as their main medium.

The number of unemployed youth amounts to 60% of the total respondents. Hence, such a majority would exert significant implications upon the overall rural respondents. From the total respondents, 50% consider television and radio as their medium of instrument for understanding electoral politics, while 16.5% claim public meetings as their medium of understanding electoral politics, 13.5% states newspapers, 11.5% affirms it is the discussion in the social networking sites, and 8.5% admits that the distribution of pamphlets by different political parties formed the most important medium of information.

The respondents under the category 'self-employed' constitutes 20% of the respondents in the rural areas of Aizawl District. As the medium of information through which knowledge and information on the Seventh Legislative Assembly Elections is acquired, 33.3% of the respondents chooses television and radio, 25%

acquires essential information through discussion in the social networking sites, 16.5% gained information through the distribution of pamphlets, and another 16.5% are benefitted by public meetings in acquiring information in the last Assembly elections.

The category of respondents under ‘government servants’ comprises 1.5 % only. The respondent admits that the medium of television and radio was the channel through which an understanding and knowledge of political process was acquired.

Table 1.5: *Do you think voting was important?*

Character	% of respondents out of total respondents	Variables in Percentage				
		Very important	Important	Not important	Make no differences	No response
<i>Students</i>	10%	100	-	-	-	-
<i>Employed</i>	8.5%	80	20	-	-	-
<i>Unemployed</i>	60%	88.5	8.5	-	-	3
<i>Self employed</i>	20%	91.5	8.5	-	-	0.5
<i>Govt. Servants</i>	1.5%	100	-	-	-	-

Source : Survey Questionnaire

On the question regarding the importance of casting a vote in the last Assembly Elections, all the samples agreed that voting in the election was very important as illustrated in the table above. However, as seen in the table, 3% of unemployed youth and 0.5% of self-employed youth were not in position to determine whether casting a vote was important or not.

The high percentage of students and government servants identifying voting as very important illustrates that elections had a deep impact in their life as they tended to be more socialized than the other category.

Table 1.6: *Cite the reason for your voting in the 7th Assembly election?*

Character	% of respondents out of total respondents	Variables in Percentage				
		It is a right and responsibility	To elect the person I trust	My sacred duty	Just following others	For the good of the society
<i>Students</i>	10%	66.5	20	10	-	3.5
<i>Employed</i>	8.5%	100	-	-	-	-
<i>Unemployed</i>	60%	58.5	13.5	22.5		5.5
<i>Self employed</i>	20%	66.5	10	16.5	-	7
<i>Govt. Servants</i>	1.5%	100	-	-	-	-

Source : Survey Questionnaire

Among the students, 66.5% states that the reason for their voting in the last election was to enjoy their rights and responsibility as a citizen. Although, some samples choose other options like ‘for the good of society’ and ‘to elect the person I trust’, the majority of them exhibit conduct of good citizenship by asserting that the exercise of rights and responsibilities was the main determinant for voting in the elections.

Underlining the reason for voting in the last Assembly elections, all respondents representing the ‘employed’ and ‘government servants’ casts their votes to enjoy their rights and responsibility as responsible citizens in the last elections; whereas 58.5% of the unemployed youth states that the reason for voting was to exercise their rights and responsibility, 22.5% alleged that voting is their ‘sacred duty’ and 13.5% cast their vote to elect the person they trusted.

Like all other characters, a majority of the self-employed amounting to 66.5% confirmed that the reason for their voting was to ‘enjoy their rights and responsibility’ as a responsible citizen, while 16.5% claim that it was their ‘sacred duty.’

Table 1.7: *Apart from voting, what was your highest level of participation in the electoral process?*

Character	% of respondents out of total respondents	Variables in Percentage				
		Discuss politics with friends	Attending public meeting	Participation in political rally	Political worker	None of the above
<i>Students</i>	10%	20	30	-	-	50
<i>Employed</i>	8.5%	60	-	-	-	40
<i>Unemployed</i>	60%	16.5	11.5	2.5	19.5	50
<i>Self employed</i>	20%	25	25	15	10	25
<i>Govt. Servants</i>	1.5%	100	-	-	-	-

Source : Survey Questionnaire

The Responses to the question illustrates the level of political participation of youth in the Assembly Election. A total of 50% of the students claimed that they did not participate in the electoral process such as public meetings, they neither discussed politics with their friends and co-worker nor involved themselves in the election campaign or facilitate voting in the election as party workers. But, on the other hand, it is interesting to note that 30% of them exhibited keenness towards the election by participating in public meetings organized by the Mizoram People Forum and different political parties during election. And, another 20% participated in the electoral process by discussing politics and election with their friends and co-workers. It is surprising to observe that while some of them participated in public meetings none of them were affiliated to any political party. This fact, as substantiated through personal interaction with the respondents revealed that it was the issues in electoral politics and not their interest in politics that motivated them to participate in the election process and entered the polling booth to cast their votes. It is evident that the youth became active only when some interesting issues of their concern surfaced. However, when these issues are addressed or sidelined by the party they perceived to deliver a solution, they automatically discontinued their

participation and does not make efforts to acquaint themselves in politics or with any other issues concerning election.

From the entire respondents under the category of employed youth, 60% acknowledged discussing electoral politics with their friends and the remaining 40% held that they did not participated in the electoral process thereby revealing that the youth were not attracted to the field of politics.

The level of unemployed youth's political participation is learnt by the fact that 50% never participated in electoral process while 16.5% participated in the election by discussing electoral politics with their friends. And 19.5% actively participated as political workers with membership in the party while 11.5% participated in public meetings only. Analyzing the responses, it is clear that the unemployed youth also did not exhibited a profound interest in politics. The inference is further substantiated by the fact that 72.5% were not affiliated to any political party (Table 1.8).

Analysis of the self-employed respondents regarding their level of participation in the electoral process shows that 25% of them discussed electoral politics with their friends and co-workers, 25% participated in public meetings, 25% did not participate at all. Only a small number, as illustrated by the table above were active in the electoral process as political workers.

The government servant respondents admit discussing politics with friends and co-workers as the highest level of participation. No samples are affiliated to any political party, since the samples are bound by the conduct rules of the Government of Mizoram to hold a neutral position in party politics.

Table 1.8: *Were you affiliated to any political party?*

Character	% of respondents out of total respondents	Variables in Percentage			
		Yes	No	If Yes, reason is	If No, reason is
<i>Students</i>	10%	-	100	-	No interest in politics, Does not believe in party system
<i>Employed</i>	8.5%	20	80	Party affiliation of family, interest in political party's policy and program	Does not deliver expected results, No interest in politics
<i>Unemployed</i>	60%	27.5	72.5	interest in political party's policy and program, expectation of benefit	No interest in politics, No reason, Does not believe in party system
<i>Self employed</i>	20%	50	50	Party affiliation of family, interest in political party's policy and program	No interest in politics, Does not deliver expected results, Does not believe in party system
<i>Govt. Servants</i>	1.5%	-	100	-	No reason

Source : Survey Questionnaire

Affiliation to a political party can be considered as an illustration of one's interest in politics. Based on this assumption, the students can be considered as having no interest in politics as none of them were affiliated to any political party, and the reason may be identified through the responses of youth that they did not believe in the party system of acquiring political power, and some of them neither trust nor have confidence upon the existing political parties which had propelled them away from politics.

On the question of political party affiliation through membership among the employed youth, only 20% declared their membership, while 80% say that they had no affiliation with any party through membership status. In explaining the reason for non-affiliation 50% of the respondents maintained that political parties did not deliver the expected results, and 25% states that they were not just interested in politics in general and the election of 2013 in particular.

Among the unemployed youth, 72.5% states that they were not affiliated to any political party while 27.5% states they were affiliated. The reason cited by the unemployed youth for non-affiliation by 26% was the lack of interest in politics, 15.5% did not have faith in the operation of the party system, and 19.5% had no reasons to cite. Among those who are affiliated to a political party, 27.5% declared the main reason for their affiliation was interest in party's policy and family loyalty to a particular party.

A remarkable response from the self-employed youth is that 50% of them were affiliated to a political party, while the same percentage of 50% were not affiliated to any political party. The reason for their affiliation to a political party through party membership can be ascertained since 50% claim the identification of family towards a political party as the main reason for the affiliation and membership, another 50% claimed that they were affiliated to a political party because of their interest in a party's program, policies and agendas. As for the reason for non-affiliation, 16.5% cited the reason as lack of interest in politics, 16.5% say it does not deliver expected results, 8.5% does not believe in party system and the same percentage of 8.5% does not cite any reason for non-affiliation.

Since, they are bound by the conduct rules of government to be neutral with regard to party politics, all respondents from the government servants are not affiliated to any political parties.

Table 1.9: *What was your reason for voting a particular candidate in the last Assembly election?*

Character	% of respondents out of total respondents	Variables in Percentage				
		Party identification	Candidate's personality	Just following others	Personal benefits	Family and kinship ties
<i>Students</i>	10%	13.5	66.5	-	-	20
<i>Employed</i>	8.5%	-	100	-	-	-
<i>Unemployed</i>	60%	25	69.5	-	1.5	3
<i>Self employed</i>	20%	41.5	58.5	-	-	-
<i>Govt. Servants</i>	1.5%	-	-	-	100	-

Source : Survey Questionnaire

Choosing a particular candidate among the number of alternatives and to vote is an important aspect of voting behaviour. In this question, 66.5% of the student respondents claimed to have cast their votes on the basis of the candidate's personality and 20% cast their votes through the influence of family or kinship; 13.5% votes on the basis of party identification. All the respondents under employed youth casts their vote on the basis of a candidate's personality. The personality of a candidate occupies a major determinant of voting behavior as 69.5% unemployed youth cast their vote on the basis of a candidate's personality, while 25% casts their votes on the basis of party's loyalty. Reflecting the rural youth's nature of voting a candidate, it is obvious that the level of political party's influence was quite low among the unemployed rural youth. An analysis on the reason for voting a particular candidate among alternatives shows that 58.5% of the self-employed cast their vote on the basis of a candidate's personality and another 41.5% cast their vote on the basis of loyalty to specific party. The government servants claimed to have voted for personal gain is a peculiar instance. However, it may be assumed that they have voted a party or candidate who would be serving them by way of transferring to a more desirable post or location or even a better amenities.

Table 2.1: Among the following, what influence you the most?

Character	% of respondents out of total respondents	Variables in Percentage				
		First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth
<i>Students</i>	10%	Family	Friends	Mass media	NGO	Political Leader
<i>Employed</i>	8.5%	Family	Mass media	Community	NGO	Religion
<i>Unemployed</i>	60%	Family	Religion	Husband/wife	Friends	Community
<i>Self employed</i>	20%	Family	Community	Political Leader	NGO	Religion
<i>Govt. Servants</i>	1.5%	Husband/wife	Family	Religion	NGO	Mass media

Source : Survey Questionnaire

From the overall respondents, ‘family’ is regarded as the most influential agent of the rural youth’s voting behavior. Again, the respondents under the category of government servants has put the factor of husband/wife as the most important influence. For the government servants are bound by their conduct rules to maintain neutrality in terms of affiliation to political party and hence the opinion of their spouse plays an important role in shaping their opinion.

The next choice of answer differs among the various categories. While the students attributed with a young and vibrant thinking put the influence of friends as an important influence, the employed youth chooses mass media which may be an attribute of their position to enjoy the technological development of the day. The unemployed youth having lesser socialization in the society chooses religion while the self-employed youth chooses community and government servants chooses family as their biggest influence. It is notable that political leadership takes a backstage position when the question of what influenced the youth is answered.

Table 2.2: Identify the key factor of political process that helped you to decide your choice of voting.

Character	% of respondents out of total respondents	Variables in Percentage					
		Election awareness campaign (e.g. MPF)	Political party's campaign	Rally	Manifesto	Canvassing	None of them
<i>Students</i>	10%	20	-	-	30	-	50
<i>Employed</i>	8.5%	-	-	-	60	-	40
<i>Unemployed</i>	60%	25	-	-	38.5	9.5	27
<i>Self employed</i>	20%	25	3.5	-	41.5	4	25
<i>Govt. Servants</i>	1.5%	-	-	-	-	-	100

Source : Survey Questionnaire

The factors of political process that helped to decide their choice of voting was addressed through the questionnaire. In response to this question a total of 50% of students answered that their participation was not the outcome of an election awareness campaign organized by the NGO like MPF, neither by any party manifestoes and rallies, nor by canvassing through house-to-house election campaigning by the party workers. It is remarkable that a majority of them decided on whom to vote without any assistance or facilitation by any political activities. While some of the respondents decided on whom to vote on the basis of political party's manifestoes. A total of 60% of the 'employed' youth are motivated by political party's manifestoes in deciding whom to vote. However, the remaining 40% are not influenced by party's manifestoes or rallies, or canvassing of voters by party workers to facilitate their support.

In response to the question of what political process assists them to decide on whom to vote in the election, 38.5% of the unemployed youth gives credit to the election manifestoes, 25% cited election awareness campaigns and public meetings, and 27% affirms that electioneering campaigns, party manifestoes, political rallies or canvassing of votes does not have any influence on them. From among a number of factors in the political process that assisted the self-employed to decide their

choice of voting, 41.5% made a decision based on the party's manifestoes, 25% decided after attending or viewing on television the election awareness campaign organized by the NGOs like MPF, YMA, MUP, MZP, MHIP, and MSU, whereas, the 25% does not cite being influenced by any political process. The time for deciding whom to choose is notable as 50% decided whom to vote even before election campaigning began, 33.5% decided after the campaigning commenced. The respondents of the government servants affirm that the decision on whom to vote was not facilitated by election awareness campaigns organized by the NGOs, political party rallies, party manifestoes and canvassing of voters by party workers. The decision on whom to vote is stated as having after election campaigning commenced.

In fine, a close examination of the responses of the rural youth reveal that political party manifestoes played a crucial role and influence in deciding whom to vote in the last Assembly Elections.

Table 2.3: *When did you make up your mind about whom to vote?*

Character	% of respondents out of total respondents	Variables in Percentage				
		Before election campaign begins	After election campaign	A day or two before election	Voting day	Can't say
<i>Students</i>	10%	66.5	20	3.5	-	10
<i>Employed</i>	8.5%	80	-	20	-	-
<i>Unemployed</i>	60%	27.5	33	15	11.5	13.5
<i>Self employed</i>	20%	50	33.5	4	5	7.5
<i>Govt. Servants</i>	1.5%	-	100	-	-	-

Source : Survey Questionnaire

It is noteworthy that a majority of students, accounting 66.5% of the respondents decided on whom to vote even before election campaigning begins. From among the employed youth, it is again notable that 80% decided whom to vote even before election campaigns began while 20% of the respondents decided only a

day or two before the election. The time at which the unemployed youth make their decision on whom to vote can be summarized as follows - 27.5% decided on whom to vote even before election campaign begins, 32.3% decided after the commencement of election campaigning, 11% decided on a day or two before the polling day, 13.5% could say the time when they made up their minds to vote a candidate and 11.5% say that they made up their minds on the voting day. The self-employed youth and the government servants make their decision after the election campaign begins.

It is evident from the responses that a high percentage of youth decided whom to vote even before election campaigning began, and among them, the unemployed youth was the most vulnerable category that was influenced by election campaigns.

Table 2.4: *What type of candidate did you vote in the election?*

Character	% of respondents out of total respondents	Variables in Percentage				
		First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth
<i>Students</i>	10%	Good academic background	Young and energetic	Prominent personality	Community base candidate	Career politician
<i>Employed</i>	8.5%	Prominent personality	Good academic background	Community base candidate	Young and energetic	Accessibility of the candidate
<i>Unemployed</i>	60%	Prominent personality	Young and energetic	Community base candidate	Accessibility of the candidate	Good academic background
<i>Self employed</i>	20%	Young and energetic	Community base candidate	Good academic background	Accessibility of the candidate	Prominent personality
<i>Govt. Servants</i>	1.5%	Prominent personality	Community base candidate	Young and energetic	Good academic background	Wealthy and popular

Source : Survey Questionnaire

A measure to set the question for the respondents to choose the order of their preferences is the candidate's personality. From the entire rural respondents, a

candidate who is identified as a prominent person is given weightage by the youth while summarizing the preferences of the type and quality of a candidate. Following the first preferences is the quality of a young and energetic candidate, and a community-based candidate.

Among the various qualities of a candidate, the students find a candidate with a good academic background as the most important personality for being put up as a candidate. It seems that the students realized the importance of education for administration as well as for politicians to govern the state and lead the people. Among the unemployed youth a candidate identified as a prominent person was considered as the most important. Again due to the lower level of political culture, the voters may not realize or understand the importance of an educated representative as perceived by the students' category. A self-employed youth wants a young and energetic candidate who would solve their day to day issues and generate employment for them.

Table 2.5: *What was the most important issue for you in the last MLA (Mizoram) election?*

Character	% of respondents out of total respondents	Variables in Percentage		
		Good governance	Benefits for the poor	Day to day issue
<i>Students</i>	10%	33.5	33.5	33
<i>Employed</i>	8.5%	60	40	-
<i>Unemployed</i>	60%	63.5	22.5	14
<i>Self employed</i>	20%	25.5	58.5	16.5
<i>Govt. Servants</i>	1.5%	100	-	-

Source : Survey Questionnaire

Referring to the issues considered most important by the students during the last election, a total of 33.5% claimed that good governance is the most important issue in the election, another 33.5% were of the opinion that the issue of a government that governed for the benefit and welfare of the poor was equally

important, and again, about the same percentage of 33% claimed that it was the day to day issues, such as affordability and availability of every day essential commodities, peace and development and such others, are the most important issues in the election. Among the employed youth, 60% held the view that good governance was the most important issue in the election, while 40% concluded that the formation of a government that would be of benefit to the poor was the most important. The response of the unemployed youth is divided in the following manner. The majority percentage of 63.5% unemployed claims that good governance was most important issue in the election, whereas, 22.5% holds that it was the formation of the government that would govern for the benefit the poor was most important. Among the self-employed 50% claimed that a government which would work for the benefit of the poor was the most important issue in election, while 25.3% states that it was the issue of good governance, and 16.5% claimed it was day to day issue which was the most important in the elections.

Table 2.6: *Which among the following was the most prevalent malpractice observed in the last election to Mizoram Legislative Assembly?*

Character	% of respondents out of total respondents	Variables in Percentage				
		Booth capturing	Use of money power	False propaganda	Manipulation of E-Rolls	No Responses
<i>Students</i>	10%	-	33.5	33.5	20.5	12.5
<i>Employed</i>	8.5%	-	20	40	15	25
<i>Unemployed</i>	60%	-	25	30.5	1	44.5
<i>Self employed</i>	20%	-	66.5	8.5	16.5	8.5
<i>Govt. Servants</i>	1.5%	-	-	-	-	100

Source : Survey Questionnaire

Malpractices in elections tends to be a glaring issue in the party politics before and after elections. On the question of election malpractices observed in the Seventh Mizoram Legislative Assembly elections, 33.5% of the student respondents observed the use of money power to buy votes illegally, while another 33.5%

acknowledged the spread of false propaganda among contending political parties and candidates. Among the rest of the respondents 20.5% believed there was a manipulation of e-rolls while 12.5% did not have any conclusion on the question.

Reflecting on the last Assembly elections in 2013, 20% of the respondents among the employed youth alleged the use of money power in the election, 40% were informed of the spread of false propaganda by political parties targeted against one another. Among the unemployed youth, 44.5% of the respondents claimed that they had not witnessed or observed any form of malpractice, 25% experienced the use of money power by some candidates to buy vote, and 30.5% bears knowledge of false propaganda targeted against one another by the political parties and candidates. While the respondents from the government service did not witness or observe any malpractice during the election a total of 66.5% unemployed youth observed the use of money power to gain support from the electorate, 16.5% observed the manipulation of electoral rolls and 8.5% also acknowledged false propaganda targeted against the candidates and between political parties.

Table 2.7: Give your opinion whether a change of the political party in power would make any difference(s) in your life.

Character	% of respondents out of total respondents	Variables in Percentage			
		Make a difference	Not much difference	No difference	Can't say
<i>Students</i>	10%	6.5	33.5	50	10
<i>Employed</i>	8.5%	-	60	40	-
<i>Unemployed</i>	60%	13.5	32.5	44.5	9.5
<i>Self employed</i>	20%	-	41.5	41.5	16.5
<i>Govt. Servants</i>	1.5%	-	-	100	-

Source : Survey Questionnaire

With regard to the question whether a change in the political party in power would make any difference in their day to day life, among the students, 50% of the respondents affirmed that it did not make any difference, whereas 33.5% admitted

that they were somehow affected. A low percentage of 6.5% claimed to have been affected by the change.

Among the employed youth, 60% respondents observed little change while 40% said there was no difference, and 44.5% of unemployed youth affirmed that a change in the political party in power did not make any difference in their day to day life, but 13.5% claimed that they were affected while 32.3% acknowledged that they were only somehow affected. Respondents among the self-employed are split into three opinions on the question. A total respondents of 41.5% confirm that a change in government did not make any difference in their day to day life and 41.5% say that they were somehow affected, while 16.5% did not cite their opinion. Among the government servants no respondent(s) assumed any difference in the change of political party in power.

Table 2.8: *Is it necessary for political parties to give a special focus in their policy and program for the youth to win their support?*

Character	% of respondents out of total respondents	Variables in Percentage			
		Very important	Somehow important	Not at all	Can't say
<i>Students</i>	10%	33.5	33.5	33	-
<i>Self employed</i>	20%	33.5	50	10	6.5
<i>Employed</i>	8.5%	20	60	20	-
<i>Unemployed</i>	60%	27.5	27.5	22.5	22.5
<i>Govt. Servants</i>	1.5%	-	-	-	100

Source : Survey Questionnaire

It is apparent, as reflected in the party manifestoes that all political parties intended to attract the support of the youth through a separate policy for youth incorporated in their manifestoes in the Assembly elections of 2013. In response to the question regarding the soundness of a separate policy for youth, 33.3% of the student respondents acknowledged that it was indispensable and must be incorporated in all party manifestoes and policies, while another 33.3% stated that it

was not very necessary, and again the remaining 33.3% concludes that it was not necessary at all. The perception of the employed youth regarding the policy was determined by the fact that 60% of the respondents assumed that such a policy was not very necessary, while 20% respondents believe it was necessary, and an equal number of 20% asserted it was not necessary at all. The opinion of the unemployed youth regarding the incorporation of a separate policy focused on the youth could be highlighted as follows - 27.5% believe that a separate policy focused on the youth was necessary, another 27.5% believed it was not very necessary; while 22.5% believed that it was not necessary at all, the same percentage of 22.5% does not have any conclusions on the importance of youth policy in the party's manifestoes.

The perception of the self-employed youth policy as incorporated in the party's manifestoes can be read as follows – 33.3% perceive that youth policy was necessary, 50% perceive that it was not very necessary while the remaining percentage did not see the need for this policy. However, the government servants cannot affirm the necessity of a separate policy for youth incorporated by political parties in their manifestos.

Table 2.9: *Do you think the youth of Aizawl District played a crucial role in the outcome of the seventh Mizoram Legislative Assembly, 2013?*

Character	% of respondents out of total respondents	Variables in Percentage	
		Yes	No
<i>Students</i>	10%	100	-
<i>Self employed</i>	20%	58.5	41.5
<i>Employed</i>	8.5%	80	20
<i>Unemployed</i>	60%	55.5	44.5
<i>Govt. Servants</i>	1.5%	100	-

Source : Survey Questionnaire

With reference to the question whether the role of youth is significant in the election, all of the student respondents assumed that the youth had played an

important role to the extent of facilitating changes in the outcome of the election result.

Regarding the question whether the role of youth plays a significant role in the outcome of the last Legislative Assembly election, a total of 80% employed youth assumed that the youth played a significant role, however, the remaining 20% respondents did not hold the same conclusion. The assumption of the unemployed respondents on the role of youth could be divided into two, in which 55.5% claims that the youth plays an important role in the outcome of the election result, but 44.5% did not believe that the role of youth was significant. Among the self-employed youth, a majority percentage of 58.5% claim that the role of youth was important in the outcome of election result, while 41.5% say that the role of youth was not important.

Urban Area Analysis

The respondents for the urban area sample are derived from Zemabawk and Vaivakawn localities. The samples are given the questionnaire containing 15 different questions about Mizoram Legislative Assembly elections in 2013. Like the rural youth, the entire samples are then classified into five groups on the basis of their character, such as – student, self-employed, employed, unemployed and government servant.

Accordingly, percentage of the samples derived through the survey of urban areas consisted of, students- 20%, employed - 15%, unemployed – 25%, self-employed – 20% and Government servant – 20%. As stated earlier, the respondents were given questionnaire containing 15 questions and the answers are classified on

the basis of the respondents occupational character from which an attempt was made to study the voting behavior.

The following table shows the responses given by the different categories of urban youth respondents.

Table 3.1: *What was the most important medium of information that gave you an interest to vote in the last Assembly election?*

Character	% of respondents out of total respondents	Variables in Percentage				
		Newspapers	Public meetings	TV and Radio	Distribution of pamphlets	Social Networking Site
<i>Students</i>	20%	25	2	41	7	25
<i>Employed</i>	15%	44.5	11	33	-	11.5
<i>Unemployed</i>	25%	22	14.5	28.5	28.5	66.5
<i>Self employed</i>	20%	25	8.5	33	8.5	25
<i>Govt. Servants</i>	20%	25.5	-	16.5	16.5	41.5

Source : Survey Questionnaire

The student population from the entire sample comprises 20% of the respondents. The first question pertains to the medium through which essential information is disseminated to the respondents thereby enhancing their insight towards the election. In response, 25% of the students choose the medium of social networking sites, while 41.5% regarded television and radio as the medium of information and knowledge about election. The remaining 25% cited newspaper as a medium of information and understanding of electoral processes. The number of respondents in the category ‘employed’ comprises 15% of the respondents. In response to the question, 44.5% gives credit to newspapers, 33% respondents choose television and radio as their medium of understanding and knowledge about electoral politics, while 11.5% choose public meetings organized by the NGOs, and about 11.5% claimed discussions in social networking sites, such as Facebook and whatsApp messenger and the like.

The respondents classified under 'unemployed' constitute 25% of the total respondents. As a medium of their understanding and acquiring knowledge about elections of 2013, 26.5% respondents indicated television and radio as their source, 13.5% respondents cited public meetings as their medium, 20% gives credit to newspapers, 6.6% choose the discussion in social networking sites, and 26.5% maintained distribution of pamphlets as their source of information.

The sample of 'self-employed' urban youth constitutes 20% of the total respondents. From the entire respondents, 33.5% regards television and radio as their main instrument or the medium for acquiring information and understanding politics, 25% consider discussion in the social networking sites/internet like Facebook and whatsapp as the medium that facilitated information about the election, while 8.5% say that the distribution of pamphlets was their main source of information, an equal percentage (8.5%) considered public meetings and the remaining 25% supposed newspaper as a medium of understanding the electoral process.

This category of urban youth comprises 20% of the total respondents. And to acquire knowledge and gain information about the last Assembly elections, 41.5% of the respondents said a discussion in the social networking sites such as Facebook and whatsapp formed the most important medium, 25% respondents regarded newspapers, 16.5% respondents alleged television and radio and the same percentage (16.5%) said the pamphlets distributed by parties formed the main medium of understanding about the electoral politics.

Table 3.2: Do you think voting was important?

Character	% of respondents out of total respondents	Variables in Percentage				
		Very important	Important	Not important	Make no differences	No response
<i>Students</i>	20%	83.5	16.5	-	-	-
<i>Employed</i>	15%	77.5	22.5	-	-	-
<i>Unemployed</i>	25%	83	17	-	-	-
<i>Self employed</i>	20%	75	25	-	-	-
<i>Govt. Servants</i>	20%	100	-	-	-	-

Source : Survey Questionnaire

On the importance of voting, 83.5% students agree that voting was very important, and the remaining 16.5% claimed that voting in election was somehow important. From the entire employed youth, 77.7% respondents agree that voting in election was very important while 22.5% argued that it was somehow important. Among the unemployed category, voting is considered very important by this group, as 83% of the respondents subscribed to the view, and only 17% claimed that it was somehow important. The urban self-employed youth also regarded voting in election as very important since 75% agreed with the choice of answer, 25% of the respondents say it was somehow important. The entire government servant sample acknowledges that voting was a very important political activity.

Table 3.3: Cite the reason for your voting in the 7th Assembly election?

Character	% of respondents out of total respondents	Variables in Percentage				
		It is a right and responsibility	To elect the person I trust	My sacred duty	Just following others	For the good of the society
<i>Students</i>	20%	61.5	38.5	-	-	-
<i>Employed</i>	15%	66	22.5	-	-	11.5
<i>Unemployed</i>	25%	73.5	26.5	-	-	-
<i>Self employed</i>	20%	50	16.5	-	-	33.5
<i>Govt. Servants</i>	20%	75	-	-	-	25

Source ; Survey Questionnaire

Among the urban students, there is not much difference between the response of the rural and urban respondent in reply to the reason for voting in the last Assembly election. A majority of 61.5% urban students cited the exercise and enjoyment of their rights and responsibility as the reason for voting and, 38.5% cast their vote only to elect the person they trusted. In this question, like rural respondent, a majority of 66.6% employed youth in urban area states that the reason for voting in the election was to enjoy their rights and responsibility, 22.5% of the total respondents cast their vote to elect the person they trusted and only 11.5% cast vote for the good of the society.

Among the unemployed respondents, 73.5% states that the reason for their vote in election was to enjoy their rights and responsibility while 26.5% cast vote to elect person their trusted. The basis of voting according to self-employed goes like this – 50% of the respondents was to enjoy their rights and responsibility, 33.5% cast their vote for the good of society, and the remaining 16.5% cast vote to elect a particular person they trust. The basis of voting among the government servant was that 75% cast their vote to enjoy their rights and responsibility, the remaining 25% respondents claimed to cast vote for the good of the society.

Table 3.4: *Apart from voting, what was your highest level of participation in the electoral process?*

Character	% of respondents out of total respondents	Variables in Percentage				
		Discuss politics with friends	Attending public meeting	Participation in political rally	Political worker	None of the above
<i>Students</i>	20%	50	8.5	8.5	-	33
<i>Employed</i>	15%	88.5	-	-	-	11.5
<i>Unemployed</i>	25%	53.5	-	-	-	46.5
<i>Self employed</i>	20%	25	33.5	-	-	41.5
<i>Govt. Servants</i>	20%	29	-	-	-	77

Source : Survey Questionnaire

A brief comparison between the level of participation between the rural and urban students indicates that the urban youth were more active in the political process in the last Assembly election. While 50% of the rural youth never participated in the electoral process, only 33% of the urban youth claimed that they did not participate in any electoral process. Only 8.5% of them participated by attending public meetings, 50% discussed electoral politics with their friends and co-workers or class mates, and another 8.5% also participated in the election campaigning. Among the urban employed youth, the highest level of participation as substantiated by 88.5% is discussing electoral politics with their friends and co-workers, which further indicates that the urban youth were more interested and active in electoral politics than their rural counterpart. However, 11.5% never participated in the electoral process.

The highest level of political participation among the respondents, as indicated by the unemployed youth was discussing election with their friends and co-workers, 46.5% unemployed youth did not participate in the electoral process. The level of urban self employed youth participation in the last Assembly election is not very significant as 41.5% never participated in electoral politics in any form or manner, 25% discussed electoral politics with their friends and co-workers and 33.5% participated by attending several public meetings.

As the government servants are to adhere to the conduct rules of the government their level of participation in the last Assembly election was limited which is evident by the fact that 66.5% of them neither discussed politics nor participated in public meeting, rallies or electioneering campaigns, however, 25% participated by discussion in electoral politics with friends and co-workers.

Table 3.5: Were you affiliated to any political party?

Character	% of respondents out of total respondents	Variables in Percentage			
		Yes	No	If Yes, reason is	If No, reason is
<i>Students</i>	10%	16.5	83.5	Party affiliation of family	No interest in politics, No trust in existing political parties.
<i>Employed</i>	20%	11.5	88.5	Party affiliation of family,	No interest in politics, Does not deliver expected results
<i>Unemployed</i>	8.5%	6.5	93.5	Party affiliation of family, interest in political party's policy and program	Does not believe in party system, No trust in existing political parties.
<i>Self employed</i>	60%	8.4	91.6	interest in political party's policy and program, expectation of benefit	No interest in politics, No trust in existing political parties, Does not deliver expected results
<i>Govt. Servants</i>	1.5%	-	100	-	No reason

Source : Survey Questionnaire

Among the urban student respondents, 83.5% were not affiliated to any political party because they had no trust or confidence among the existing parties and did not show interest in politics, while 16.5% were affiliated to political parties with the reason being family identification of political parties.

Even though the employed youth discusses electoral politics at the time of election, a high 88.5% are not affiliated to any political party which indicates that the youth were passive in politics except during election period, 11.5% acknowledges their affiliation to political parties. The reason for the lesser number of party affiliation is that the youth did not perceive the political parties delivering their expected result, and most of them were just not interested in politics as well.

Like the students, the lack of interest in politics among the urban unemployed youth is evident by the fact that 93.5% did not have affiliation with any party, and only 6.6% were affiliated to a political party, with the reason of joining the party being interested in a party's policies and programmes. And this fact can be

interpreted as a lack of interest in politics, as well as the lack of confidence in the existing party and party system upon which the process of politics operated.

Among the self-employed urban youth, 91.6% are not affiliated to any political party while only 8.5% are affiliated. The reason for their affiliation to a political party is mainly the influence of family and the reason for non-affiliation is the lack of interest in politics. Further, the urban youth did not believe in the party system and they perceived that the existing political parties did not deliver their expected results. All respondents under the category of government servants states that they were not affiliated to any political party.

Table 3.6: *Why was your reason for voting a particular candidate in the last Assembly election?*

Character	% of respondents out of total respondents	Variables in Percentage				
		Party identification	Candidate's personality	Just following others	Personal benefits	Family and kinship ties
<i>Students</i>	20%	2	91.6	3	-	3.5
<i>Employed</i>	15%	22.5	77.5	-	-	
<i>Unemployed</i>	25%	20	66.5	-	-	13.5
<i>Self employed</i>	20%	10.5	75.5	-	3.5	10.5
<i>Govt. Servants</i>	20%	16.5	75	-	-	8.5

Source : Survey Questionnaire

Among a number of alternatives, a voter can pick a candidate to vote during election, hence, an interesting question remains, 'What is the reason for voting a particular candidate among others?' Among the unemployed youth, 66.5% of the respondents claimed to vote on the basis of a candidate's personality, while 20% of the respondents say that they cast their vote on the basis of party loyalty, and the remaining 13.5% voted for a particular candidate on the basis of family and kinship ties. A high percentage of 91.6% of the urban students cast their vote on the basis of a candidate's personality. The employed youth respondent's choice of candidate was

shown by the fact that, 77.7% casts their vote on the basis of a candidate's personality, 22.5% cast their vote on the basis of loyalty to a specific party.

Out of the total self employed youth, 75% cast their vote on the basis of the candidate's personality, 8.5% of the respondents cast their vote on the basis of loyalty to a specific party, and another 8.5 also voted for a particular candidate on the basis of family and kinship ties. Answering the question soliciting the reason for voting a particular candidate, 75% of government servants cast their vote on the basis of a candidate's personality, 16.5% maintained their choice of voting was influenced by party identification, and the remaining 8.5% also voted on the basis on family and kinship ties.

Table 3.7: *Among the following, what influenced you the most?*

Character	% of respondents out of total respondents	Variables in order of preference				
		First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth
<i>Students</i>	20%	Family	Religion	Mass media	Friends	NGO
<i>Employed</i>	15%	Religion	Family	NGO	Friends	Mass Media
<i>Unemployed</i>	25%	Family	Friends	Religion	Mass Media	NGO
<i>Self employed</i>	20%	Family	NGO	Religion	Mass Media	Friends
<i>Govt. Servants</i>	20%	Husband /wife	NGO	Mass Media	Friends	Religion

Source ; Survey Questionnaire

From the student respondents, family is considered as the most influential element for voting in the Assembly election, religion comes next, which is followed by mass media, and community-based consideration. But, among the employed youth respondents, religion is regarded as the most influential agent in politics, followed by family, then NGOs and friends. Among the unemployed urban youth, the most influential agent in politics chosen by them was the family, friends occupy a second place which is followed by religion, and lastly the mass media.

The self-employed youth claimed that the family was the most influential agent in politics, followed by community, religion and mass media. And among the various variables, government servants believed that the family was the most important agent of influence in the political process which was followed by community based consideration, personality of political leader and then the mass media.

Table 3.8: *Identify the key factor of political process that helped you to decide your choice of voting.*

Character	% of respondents out of total respondents	Variables in Percentage				
		Election awareness campaign (e.g. MPF)	Political party's campaign/ Rally	Manifesto	Canvassing	None of them
<i>Students</i>	20%	25	-	58.5	-	16.5
<i>Employed</i>	15%	44.2	-	33.3	-	22.5
<i>Unemployed</i>	25%	53.4	-	20	66	20
<i>Self employed</i>	20%	25	2	33.5	6	33.5
<i>Govt. Servants</i>	20%	8.5	-	50	8	33.5

Source : Survey Questionnaire

The key factor of political process that assisted the student respondents to decide their choice of voting can be identified as their attraction to the party manifestoes while 16.5% say they not aided by and electioneering campaign, party manifestoes, rally or canvassing to decide whom to vote; 25% stated that their choice of voting was an outcome of awareness campaigns organized by the NGOs. This fact revealed that the students in urban area are more intellectual and more sincere about politics with the capacity to examine a political party and judge their programme of actions that were declared to the population.

The key factor of political process that helped the employed respondents in deciding their choice of voting was election awareness campaign/public meetings organized by the NGOs which was the claim of 44.4% of the respondents. The awareness campaign/public meetings included an awareness on election model code

of conduct, right to vote and so on. Out of the total respondents, 33.3% decided on the basis of the policy and programmes enshrined in the manifesto, however, 22.5% states that their choice was not the outcome of political party manifestoes, rally or canvassing by party workers.

In making a decision to vote for a particular candidate, the pertinent question of interest is what the key factor of political process would be? In the last Assembly election, 53.3% unemployed urban youth claim that awareness campaign organized by NGOs was the key political process that facilitated in making decision about whom to vote among the unemployed urban youth; 6.6% say that their decision was the outcome of canvassing by party workers, 20% of the respondents asserted that they were not influenced by any electioneering campaign, party manifestoes, rallies or canvassing by party worker in deciding whom to vote. However, another 20% declare that party manifestoes was the basis upon which they made a decision.

Among a number of political factors that helped the urban self-employed youth to decide whom to vote in the election 33.5% asserted that their decision for voting was the outcome of political party's manifestoes, 25% decided on whom to vote through the election awareness campaign that was organized by the NGOs. However, 33.5% says they were not influenced by any political process or electioneering activities. The time at which the urban youth decide on whom to vote also vary among the youth. The key factor of political process that assisted the respondents from government servant in deciding whom to vote was the distribution of pamphlets, such as party manifestoes. This fact is derived as 50% of the respondents declared it in their responses, 33.5% who cast their vote maintained that their decision of voting was not influenced by election awareness campaign organized by the NGOs, rallies, nor manifestoes and canvassing by party workers.

About 8.5% of the respondents affirmed that their decision was facilitated through canvassing by party workers, and the same percentage of them said that their decision is influenced by awareness campaigns organized by NGOs.

Table 3.9: *When did you make up your mind about whom to vote?*

Character	% of respondents out of total respondents	Variables in Percentage				
		Before election campaign begins	After election campaign	A day or two before election	Voting day	Can't say
<i>Students</i>	20%	25	25	-	-	50
<i>Employed</i>	15%	33.3	22.5	33.3	5.5	5.4
<i>Unemployed</i>	25%	40	33.5	-	20	6.5
<i>Self employed</i>	20%	25.5	8.5	-	-	6.6
<i>Govt. Servants</i>	20%	33.5	41.5	5	16.5	3.5

Source : Survey Questionnaire

From the total student respondents, 25% decided whom to vote before election campaigning, another 25% decided after the election campaigning commenced, and the remaining 50% could not say at what point of time did they decide on the candidate to vote for. The time at which the urban employed respondents made a decision to vote could be put into three groups, 33.3% decides whom to vote even before election campaigning begins, another 33.3% decided a day or two before election, and 22.5% respondents decided after the election campaigning commenced.

It is likely to be an attribute of living in the capital city that the unemployed urban youth exhibited a better understanding and knowledge of politics in general and election in particular, since 40% of the respondents decided upon whom to vote even before election campaigning began. After the election campaigning, 33.5% respondents decided on the candidate to vote for, and whereas, 20% decided on whom to vote on the voting day and 6.6% could not say the time when they made a decision to support a particular candidate.

Among the self-employed respondents of urban youth, 25% respondents decided on whom to vote even before election campaigning, only 8.5% made a decision after the campaigning began. However, majority percentage of 66.5% cannot established the time when they make a decision to vote for a particular candidate. The time at which a government servant's respondents decided varied from a voter to a voter , however, 41.5% of the respondents said that they decided whom to vote after the election campaigning, 33.5% respondents decided before election campaign started but, 16.5% decided on the voting day. Being a government servant whose conduct is governed by the conduct rules of the government, they exhibit passive participation in electoral politics. However, it is clear from their responses that they were informed about the elections through discussions among peer groups, manifestoes as well as campaign strategies of different political parties.

Table 4.1: *What type of candidate do you vote in the election?*

Character	% of respondents out of total respondents	Variables in Percentage				
		First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth
<i>Students</i>	20%	Eloquent leader	Good academic background	Career politician	Prominent personality	Young and energetic
<i>Employed</i>	15%	Prominent personality	Career politician	Community based candidate	Good academic background	Young and energetic
<i>Unemployed</i>	25%	Young and energetic	Prominent personality	Wealthy and popular	Good academic background	Career politician
<i>Self employed</i>	20%	Community based candidate	Wealthy and popular	Prominent personality	Young and energetic	Career politician
<i>Govt. Servants</i>	20%	Young and energetic	Prominent personality	Community based candidate	Career politician	Good academic background

Source : Survey Questionnaire

From the entire student respondents, the type of candidate that was most favoured were those having eloquent leadership, and the next quality preferred by the respondents was about a good academic background, followed by a career

politician and lastly a prominent leader. An assumption can be derived that the urban students made use of a candidate's speech for assessing a candidate. However, to the unemployed youth a candidate with prominent personality was the most favoured quality of a candidate, and then it was a career politician, followed by the community-based candidate and lastly a candidate with good academic background.

Among the unemployed youth respondents, a candidate who is young and energetic was given the highest preference among the number of character traits, the next order of preference were prominent personality, followed by wealthy and a popular personality and lastly a candidate with good academic background.

The most preferred candidate among the self-employed youth was a community based candidate, followed by the wealthy and popular candidate, then a prominent personality which was followed by a young and energetic candidate. The most favoured character traits of a candidate by the urban youth under the category of government servants was a young and energetic personality, followed by a prominent personality, then a community based candidate and a career politician.

Table 4.2: *What was the most important issue for you in the last MLA (Mizoram) election?*

Character	% of respondents out of total respondents	Variables in Percentage				
		Good governance	Majority for the party supports	Benefits for the poor	Personal gain	Day to day issue
<i>Students</i>	20%	58.5	-	41.5	-	-
<i>Employed</i>	15%	66.6	-	33.4	-	-
<i>Unemployed</i>	25%	53.5	-	33.5	-	13
<i>Self employed</i>	20%	66.5	-	33.5	-	-
<i>Govt. Servants</i>	20%	91.5	-	8.5	-	-

Source : Survey Questionnaire

In this last question, the respondents among the student were split into two on the question regarding the most important issue for the formation of government after the election. A total of 58.5% claimed that the good governance was most important issue in election, whereas a government that governs for the welfare and benefit of the poor was the most important issue for the remaining 41.5% respondents.

For 66.6% of the employed respondents the most important issue in 2013 election was the good governance while the remaining 33.3% maintain that the Government that would be of benefit for the poor was the most important issue.

Among the various issues that political parties as well as the government had to tackle after the election, the most important issue was good governance as was held by 53.5% unemployed respondents, and 33.5% alleged that the creation of a government that would work for the welfare and benefit of the poor was most important in the election, while 13.5% regarded the day to day issues as the most important.

However, 33.5% self-employed respondent claimed that a government which would be of benefit for the poor was the most important issue in election, but 66.5% argued that it was the issue of good governance that was the most important in the election. For 91.5% government servants, the issue of good governance was the most important in the election, while a little percentage of 8.5% argues that the interest of the poor was most important.

Table 4.3: Which among the following is the most prevalent malpractice observed in the last election to Mizoram Legislative Assembly?

Character	% of respondents out of total respondents	Variables in Percentage				
		Booth capturing	Use of money power	False propaganda	Manipulation of E-Rolls	No Responses
<i>Students</i>	20%	-	58.5	8.5	-	33
<i>Employed</i>	15%	-	44.5	22.5	-	33
<i>Unemployed</i>	25%	-	29.5	7.5	-	63
<i>Self employed</i>	20%	-	33.5	25	-	41.5
<i>Govt. Servants</i>	20%	-	50	16.5	-	33.5

Source : Survey Questionnaire

With reference to the malpractices in the last elections, most of the urban students(58.5%) observed the use of money power, 8.5% heard the spread of false propaganda against the candidates, and the remaining 33.5% did not observe any malpractice during election. After comparing the responses of the rural and urban youth, it can be established, without doubt, that the urban students were smarter and more intellectual than rural students. For employment of false propaganda which tends to be very useful in the rural areas was highly reduced in the urban area and this could be the reason for an increase in the use of money power among the urban students.

The use of money power to buy votes in the election is acknowledged by 44.5% of the employed youth in the urban area, 22.5% witnessed the spread of false propaganda against a party or a candidate, and 33.3% did not observe any malpractice during the election, whereas, 60% of the respondents from unemployed category did not observe any malpractice, 26.5% alleged the use of money power, and 6.6% say they witnessed the use of false propaganda among the contending political parties and candidates.

The observation of self-employed is split into three groups – 33.5% say there was the use of money power in election, 25% acknowledged the spreading of false

propaganda against the candidates or the contending political parties, while the outstanding 41.5% did not observe any malpractice in the election. Among the government servant responses, 50% respondents assumed the use of money power to buy votes in the election, 33.5% sample did not observe any malpractice, however, 16.5% witnessed the spread of false propaganda in the election campaigns.

Table 4.4: Give your opinion whether a change of the political party in power made any difference(s) in your life.

Character	% of respondents out of total respondents	Variables in Percentage			
		Make a difference	Not much difference	No difference	Can't say
<i>Students</i>	20%	-	67	16.5	16.5
<i>Employed</i>	15%	-	55.5	22.5	22
<i>Unemployed</i>	25%	26.5	33.5	26.5	13.5
<i>Self employed</i>	20%	-	58.5	16.5	25
<i>Govt. Servants</i>	20%	16.5	25	58.5	-

Source : Survey Questionnaire

The urban students sample accounting 16.5% replied that a change in political party in power did not make any difference in their day to day life, but 67% declared that they were somehow affected and the rest 16.5% could not validate whether it made a difference for them or not. This fact highlights that the urban students were more active in politics than the rural students which is clearly indicated by the perception of the urban youth that a change in the political party in power made a difference in their life even though it was not much. Out of the total employed respondents, 55.5% said that a change of political party in power does not make much difference in their day to day life and 22.5% declared that they were not affected at all.

Among the unemployed urban youth, a mixed opinion was presented by the respondents to the question if a change in the political party in power delivered corresponding difference in their daily life. Of the total respondents, 26.5% held that

a change in government did not make any difference in their day to day living, while another 26.5% asserted that they were affected, however, 33.5% claim that they were only somehow affected.

In responses to the question, 58.5% of the self-employed affirm that they were somehow affected when the government changed, 16.5% respondents assumed that the change in the government did not make any difference in their day to day life, while 25% did observe a difference whenever there is a change in the political party in power. But 58.5% of the respondents from government servant say that their day to day life did not make any difference when there was a shift in power from one party to another, 25% assumed a difference somehow and the outstanding percentage of 16.5% respondents affirmed that there was a difference.

Table 4.5: *Do you think it is necessary for political parties to give a special focus in their policy and program for the youth to win their support?*

Character	% of respondents out of total respondents	Variables in Percentage			
		Very important	Somehow important	Not at all	Can't say
<i>Students</i>	20%	66.5	16.5	8.5	8.5
<i>Employed</i>	15%	55.5	33	-	11.5
<i>Unemployed</i>	25%	60	26.5	8.5	13.5
<i>Self employed</i>	20%	58.5	25	-	8
<i>Govt. Servants</i>	20%	58.5	33	-	8.5

Source : Survey Questionnaire

Various political parties incorporated a separate policy focused on youth to gain their favour and support in the last Assembly elections. On the question of necessity of such measures, a total of 66.5% urban students believed that such a policy for youth was necessary, 16.5% believe that it was not very necessary while the other 8.5% believe that it was not necessary at all.

Whether the employed youth are in favour of political parties incorporating a separate policy for youth in their manifestoes was determined by the fact that

55.5% believed it was necessary and must be incorporated in party's manifesto, 33.3% believe it was not very necessary, while the outstanding 11.5% did not have any assumption. Out of the total unemployed youth respondents, 60% acknowledged that such a policy focussed on youth was necessary, while 26.5% believe it was not very necessary, the remaining 13.5% did not have an opinion on the importance of youth policy.

The opinion of the self-employed respondents on the incorporation of a policy for youth by various political parties in the last Assembly election was derived as 58.5% believe that such a policy for the youth was necessary. While 25% believe it was not very necessary; 8.5% of the respondents claim that it was not necessary at all. Among the government servant respondents, 58.5% claim that a youth policy in party's manifesto was very important, but 33.5% say it was not very important, the remaining 8.5% could not establish the importance of a separate policy for youth to attract young voters.

Table 4.6: *Do you think the youth of Aizawl District played a crucial role in the outcome of the seventh Mizoram Legislative Assembly, 2013?*

Character	% of respondents out of total respondents	Variables in Percentage	
		Yes	No
<i>Students</i>	20%	91.5	8.5
<i>Employed</i>	15%	66.5	33.5
<i>Unemployed</i>	25%	73.5	26.5
<i>Self employed</i>	20%	58.5	41.5
<i>Govt. Servants</i>	20%	58.5	41.5

Source : Survey Questionnaire

Whether the voting behavior of youth in the Seventh Legislative Elections have a profound implication on the outcome of the election is a matter of study in this research work. And, in response to the question, 91.6% urban students were of

the view that the youth played an important role in the outcome of the election result, however, 8.5% did not agree with this view.

When it comes to the employed urban youth, 66.6% of the respondents claim that the youth inevitably played an important role in the outcome of election result, but 33.3% assumed no observable role of youth in the election. With regard to the perception given by the unemployed youth in the Seventh Legislative Assembly Election in 2013, a majority of the respondents accounting to 73.5% claim that youth role was important for the outcome of the election result, but 26.5% did not supposed that the role of youth made changes in the electoral outcome.

However, the youth played a significant role in the outcome of election result as ascertained by 58.5% self-employed urban youth in which 41.5% say that youth role was not important. In response to the same question, a majority percentage of 58.5% government servants assumed that the youth played an important role and made a difference in the electoral outcome, but 41.5% did not perceived the youth to play an important role in election outcome.

The Overall Voting Behavior of Youth in Aizawl District

The sampling area, ie., Aizawl District, is consisted of an urban and rural areas. In this analysis, the classification of respondents based on their character are analyzed on the basis of the 15 questions presented to them. Analysis of the overall voting behavior of Aizawl District is made as follows.

Table 4.7: *What was the most important medium of information that gave you an interest to vote in the Assembly election?*

Study Area	No. of Responses	Variables in Percentage				
		Newspapers	Public meetings	TV and Radio	Distribution of pamphlets	Social Networking Site
Rural	60	13.34	13.34	46.65	10	16.65
Urban	60	26.67	6.57	31.67	13.34	21.75
Total	120	20%	10	39.17	11.67	19

Source : Survey Questionnaire

Replying to the question of what the main medium of understanding and acquiring information about electoral politics of 2013 election is, 39.17% youth of Aizawl District held that television and Radio was the most important medium for acquiring information and knowledge about the elections, 20% respondents gives credit to newspapers and another 19% asserted that it was the discussion in social networking sites, such as the Facebook and the whatsapp, while 11.67% respondents considered the distribution of pamphlets issued by different political parties during election as the most important medium for them, and finally, 10% respondents acknowledged that public meetings organized by both political parties and the civil societies form the most important medium that provided necessary information and knowledge about the Seventh Legislative Assembly Election of 2013.

It is assumed without doubt that television and radio played the most important source of information regarding the election of 2013. The reason assumed could be that the Mizoram People Forum had been active in the electoral process to facilitate a free and fair election and had organized a joint platform in every constituency which was telecast on television by the local cable operators.

Table 4.8: *What was your view on the importance of voting in elections?*

Study Area	No. of Responses	Variables in Percentage				
		Very important	Important	Not important	Make no differences	No response
Rural	60	91.67	6.57	-	0.09	1.67
Urban	60	84.67	15	-	-	1.67
Total	120	85.84	11.67	-	-	1.67

Source : Survey Questionnaire

Whether the youth of Aizawl District consider voting in election important is a crucial question to understand the voting behavior of youth. The reply acknowledging that it was very important constitutes 85.84% of the respondents, while 11.67% states that it was somehow important and the last 1.67% respondents offered no response. Considering the voting in the election to be important may not amount to be a sufficient basis upon which the youth would actually give an effort to cast a vote in the election. Hence, it is crucial to find out the reason behind the youth of Aizawl District to exercise the rights of franchise in the Seventh Legislative Assembly Election in particular.

Table 4.9: *Cite the reason for your voting in the 7th Assembly election?*

Study Area	No. of Responses	Variables in Percentage				
		It is a right and responsibility	To elect the person I trust	My sacred duty	Just following others	For the good of the society
Rural	60	65	11.67	18.34	1.67	3.34
Urban	60	65	18.34	-	1.67	15
Total	120	35	15	9.17	1.67	9.17

Source : Survey Questionnaire

Out of the total respondents, 35% declare that they had cast their vote in the election to enjoy their rights and Responsibility, 15% cast their vote to elect the person they trusted, while 9.17% affirmed casting his vote on for the good of the society, the same percentage (9.17%) also casts their vote considering voting as a sacred duty to be performed, and finally 1.67% respondents asserted that they had cast their vote, just following the others.

It is not be an exaggeration to conclude that the youth of Aizawl District were informed of the essence of voting in the election thereby considering voting in the last Assembly election as an exercise of their rights and responsibility..

Table 5.1: *What was your participation in the electoral process?*

Study Area	No. of Responses	Variables in Percentage				
		Discuss politics with friends	Attending public meeting	Participation in political rally	Political worker	None of the above
Rural	60	21.67	15	3.34	13.34	46.65
Urban	60	46.65	10	1.67	-	41.67
Total	120	35	14.17	2.5	6.67	41.6

Source : Survey Questionnaire

The level of political participation of youth in Aizawl District in the last Assembly elections would be an important factor in finding out whether the youth possessed an interest in politics or not. Through their responses to the questionnaire, the researcher concluded that the youth in Aizawl District did not actively participate in the last Assembly elections, and this conclusion was derived from the 41.6% of the respondents who said that they did not participate in any electoral process; 35% respondents discussed electoral politics with their friends and co-workers, 14.17% participated in public meetings organized by either a political party or NGO's, 6.67% of the respondents were political workers who were actively involved in electoral politics. A small figure 2.5% claims to have participated in an election campaign or rallies.

Table 5.2: *Were you affiliated to any political party?*

Study Area	No. of Responses	Variables in Percentage			
		Yes	No	If Yes, reason is	If No, reason is
Rural	60	28.34	71.67	Influence of family and friends	Do not interest in politics, does not believe the existing parties
Urban	60	10	90	Interest in party policy and family influence	Do not interest in politics, does not deliver expected result
Total	120	19.17	80.84	-	-

Source : Survey Questionnaire

A conclusion is arrived that the youth of Aizawl District was not interested in politics, and this fact was substantiated through the 80.84% of respondents who

claim that they were not affiliated to any political party. The reason for non-affiliation to political parties cited by the respondents included the lack of interest in politics and that political parties did not deliver expected results, further, they did not have confidence in the existing parties to enhance and provide desirable changes in the society, while some did not believe in the party system of acquiring power. From the overall sample, only 19.17% respondents were affiliated to political parties and the reason behind this affiliation was an interest in party's policy and program, and apart from the reason for affiliation stated, a few youth were affiliated because of their family's affiliation and identification to a political party.

Table 5.3: *Why did you vote for a particular candidate?*

Study Area	No. of Responses	Variables in Percentage				
		Party identification and loyalty	Candidate's personality	Just following others	Personal benefits	Family and kinship ties
Rural	60	25	68.34	3.34	3.34	4.17
Urban	60	11.67	76.67	1.67	-	8.34
Total	120	19.17	72.5	2.5	1.67	4.17

Source : Survey Questionnaire

An attempt is made to find out how the youth in Aizawl District determine their most desired candidate in the Assembly election of 2013. A majority of 72.5% respondents acknowledged voting a particular candidate among a number of contenders on the basis of the candidate's personality and specific quality. Only 19.17% respondents voted for a particular candidate on the basis of loyalty to a specific political party. And, 4.17% respondents voted for a particular candidate on the basis of family and kinship ties which means they did give their vote to a particular candidate who was their relative or family's good friend. It is not surprising by judging lack of interest in politics as well as the level of political participation among the youth of Aizawl District that 2.5% respondents did cast their vote following others. In other words, it means that they did not know why they cast

their vote in favour of a certain candidate and they just cast their vote in his favour because they think that others would vote him/her. However, the apathy towards politics and the election of 2013 did not keep the youth away from exercising the rights to franchise. The few 1.67% respondents claimed to have voted for their personal benefit and it can be assumed that this respondent might be a party worker, a relative or known person of a candidate. The fact revealed by the youth response is that the youth were more influenced by the candidate's personality than identification of political parties.

Table 5.4: *Among the following, what influenced you the most?*

Study Area	No. of Responses	Variables							
		First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth	Sixth	Seventh	Eighth
Rural	60	Family	Community	Friends	Religion	NGO	Mass media	Husband/wife	Pol. Leader
Urban	60	Family	Religion	Friends	NGO	Community	Mass media	Pol. Leader	Husband/wife
Total	120	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Source : Survey Questionnaire

Among the various agents of politics, such as, family, friends, mass media, religion, community, and others that influenced the youth, the table above highlights that all the respondent commonly acknowledged 'family' was most influential agent in politics, followed by religion, friends, community, mass media, NGO, political leaders, and lastly was the influence of husband/wife.

A notable conclusion is derived by the researcher that political leadership was not given a high position among the factors that influenced the youth. The biggest influenced identified, based on the respondent's answer was the family,

which is followed by religion. The response of the youth is also illustrative of the fact that the youth were not interested in politics and their decision in the electoral process was not the outcome of political activities.

Table 5.5: *Which helped you the most in making the voting decision?*

Study Area	No. of Responses	Variables in Percentage					
		Election awareness campaign (e.g. MPF)	Political party's campaign	Rally	Manifesto	Canvassing	None of them
Rural	60	23.34	-	-	40	5	31.67
Urban	60	31.67	-	1.67	38.34	3.34	25
Total	120	27.5	-	0.84	39.17	4.17	28.33

Source : Survey Questionnaire

It has been observed that the key factor of political process that facilitated the youth's decision and choice of voting was the party's manifestoes according to 39.17% of the respondents, 27.5% of the sample's decision and choice of voting was shaped by election awareness campaigns organized by NGOs, while 28.33% did cast their vote without any influence. Out of the total respondents, 4.17% asserted that their decision and choice of voting was the result of canvassing campaign engaged by political workers, and only 0.84% stated that they were influenced by political party rallies and public meetings.

Table 5.6: *When did you make up your mind about whom to vote?*

Study Area	No. of Responses	Variables in Percentage				
		Before election campaign begins	After election campaign	A day or two before election	Voting day	Can't say
Rural	60	40	31.67	8.34	10	10
Urban	60	31.67	26.67	6.57	8.34	26.67
Total	120	35.84	29.17	7.5	9.17	18.34

Source : Survey Questionnaire

The time or period within which the youth made a decision to cast a vote in favour of a particular candidate tended to occupy an important aspect in the study of voting behavior. A conclusion to this statement was given by 35.84% of the

respondents who affirmed that a decision to this effect was made by them even before election campaign begins. However, it must be noted that the political parties usually nominate and select their candidates to different constituencies before the election campaigns and only after the candidates were allotted to a specific constituency the election campaign would start. From the remaining percentage, 29.17% respondents decided after the campaign commenced. While 7.5% decided whom to vote a day or two before the voting day, 9.17% decided on voting day. It is also not an astonishing fact that 18.34% respondents could not say as and when they made up their mind about whom to vote, since election periods were usually marked by unexpected change of events, perceptions as well as observations.

Table 5.7: *What type of candidate did you vote in the election?*

Study Area	No. of Responses	Variables							
		First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth	Sixth	Seventh	Eighth
Rural	60	Prominent personality	Young & energetic	Community base candidate	Good academic background	Wealthy and popular	Eloquent leader	Career politician	Accessibility of the candidate
Urban	60	Young & energetic	Prominent personality	Good academic background	Community base candidate	Accessibility of the candidate	Career politician	Wealthy and popular	Eloquent leader
Total	120	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Source : Survey Questionnaire

The type and quality of a candidate tends to play a crucial role in securing a nomination for a candidate as well as winning a seat in the legislature. The statement is substantiated by the respondents of the youth of Aizawl District who chose prominent personality as the best quality of candidate from amongst a number of alternatives. The order in which the youth chose the character traits of a candidate are - community base, good academic background, young and energetic, wealthy and popular, career politician, and eloquent leader. The candidate most opted for i.e.,

a prominent leader, may possess the quality of being known for their involvement in undertakings towards the public welfare, academician, wealth and a person deemed to possess administrative skills.

Table 5.8: *What was the most important issue for you in the last MLA (Mizoram) election?*

Study Area	No. of Responses	Variables in Percentage			
		Good governance	Benefits for the poor	Day to day issue	Attaining majority of the party I vote
Rural	60	53.34	31.67	10	6.57
Urban	60	66.67	31.67	3.34	6.57
Total	120	60	30	6.67	3.34

Source : Survey Questionnaire

The most important issue in the Mizoram Legislative Assembly Elections, 2013, as stated by 60% of the youth was the establishment of good governance. Out of the total respondents, 30% regarded that the government that would work for the welfare of the poor was the most important issue in the election. A figure of 6.67% believe that the day to day issues, such as, the smooth running of the state's administration, availability of daily essential commodities and such others was most important issue in the elections and the remaining 3.34% argued that attaining a majority and power by the party of their choice was the most important issue in election.

Table 5.9: *Which among the following was the most prevalent malpractice observed in the last election to Mizoram Legislative Assembly?*

Study Area	No. of Responses	Variables in Percentage				
		Booth capturing	Use of money power	False propaganda	Manipulation of E-Rolls	No Responses
Rural	60	1.67	35	26.67	3.34	33.34
Urban	60	1.67	41.67	15	-	41.57
Total	120	1.16	33.34	20.84	1.16	37.5

Source : Survey Questionnaire

Regarding the issue of election malpractices in the Mizoram Legislative Assembly elections 2013, out of the total respondents 33.34% assumed the use of

money power to buy votes and to convince/persuade others during election. A figure of 20.84% respondents observed the spread of false propaganda among the candidate; whereas, this propaganda can be in the form of a speech, a written note, rumors and gossip to weaken an opponent. However, the majority respondents of 37.5% did not observe any malpractice during the election. Only 1.16% alleged an event of booth capturing, and another 1.16% believe there was a manipulation of e-rolls.

It is notable that a few respondents observed an event of booth capturing and manipulation of e-rolls in the election, however, no election petition on account of the same was observed in the election under study.

Table 6.1: Give your opinion whether a change of the political party in power made any difference(s) in your life.

Study Area	No. of Responses	Variables in Percentage			
		Make a difference	Not much difference	No difference	Can't say
Rural	60	8.34	38.34	45	8.34
Urban	60	10	45	31.67	15
Total	120	9.17	41.6	37.5	11.67

Source : Survey Questionnaire

The observation and experience of the youth whether a change in the political party in power made a difference in their life or not was a pertinent question. While the response of 41.6% claim that a change in the political party in power had little effect in their life, 37.5% claim that a change in government did not make any difference in their day to day life. Again, 9.17% acknowledge that a change in the ruling power made a difference in their life, the remaining 11.67% cannot say whether a shift in power affects them or not.

Table 6.2: *Do you think that youth policy in party manifesto was important?*

Study Area	No. of Responses	Variables in Percentage			
		Very important	Somehow important	Not at all	Can't say
Rural	60	28.34	35	20	16.65
Urban	60	60	26.67	3.34	10
Total	120	44.17	30.84	11.67	13.34

Source : Survey Questionnaire

Political parties in Mizoram have incorporated a policy for youth in their manifestoes to attract the young voters and studying the perception of youth towards the policy would determine the validity of the policy. Since 44.17% respondents assert that a separate policy for youth in the party manifesto was very important, it is an indication that a good policy would be an attraction for the party. Whereas 30.84% respondents assume that the policy for the youth in party manifesto was not very important, 11.67% believe that it was not important at all. The rest 13.34% respondent did not have any perception whether the youth policy was important or not.

Table 6.3: *Do you think the youth of Aizawl District played a crucial role in the outcome of the seventh Mizoram Legislative Assembly, 2013?*

Study Area	No. of Responses	Variables in Percentage	
		Yes	No
Rural	60	60	40
Urban	60	70	30
Total	120	65	35

Source : Survey Questionnaire

In reply to the question whether the youth of Aizawl District played a crucial role in the outcome of the Seventh Mizoram Legislative Assembly Election, 65% of the respondents observed that youth did play a crucial role in the outcome of the electoral process, but 35% respondents assume that youth did not play an important role in the outcome of electoral process.

A Comparative Analysis of Rural and Urban Youth in Aizawl District

The number of total respondents/responses in rural and urban areas are same, however, due to the differences in the political culture, socio-economic settings, as well as the mindset and perception about politics, it is imperative to study the rural and urban responses separately. As the number of characters in rural and urban areas is different, the views and ideas of the sample about politics are also different which is bound to have a bearing on voting behavior.

In the first question, the overall response of the youth held that the television and the radio were the most important medium of understanding about politics, but in their second answer, the urban respondents used more social networking sites than the rural respondents. The position that the medium of newspapers held in the life the youth for gaining knowledge was almost the same in the rural and urban area but it is clear from the analysis that the urban youth read newspapers more thereby acquiring more information about politics than the rural youth. Hence, it is concluded that the most important medium for the youth was television, newspaper and radio.

Their views regarding the importance of voting is almost the same as most of them claimed it was very important for their society, however a few urban respondents assert that voting in election was not very important.

The level of participation in politics and election among the youth is not very high in Aizawl District in which the overall 41.6% respondents were not involved in any electoral politics. However, for the urban youth, the low level of participation in politics is of little difference as most of the respondents claim to be involved in the discussion of politics with their friends while only a few respondents in the rural

area discuss politics with their friends. Some of the respondents in the rural area participated in public meetings and few of them were active party worker whereas only the few respondents in the urban areas participated in public meetings. It must, however, be remembered that a majority of them, whether urban or rural, did not participate in the electoral politics.

A majority of the youth in urban area are not affiliated to any party but some respondents in the rural area were affiliated to party due to the influence from their family. This fact reveals that the urban respondents had more liberty than the rural youth in deciding their political patronage. This nature of party affiliation among the rural youth tends to become very useful for political parties as it forms a kind of a vote bank.

With regard to the importance of a type of candidate both of the respondents from rural and urban areas claim to vote for a candidate on the basis of a candidate's personality, which, in their opinion, was also the best quality for a candidate. However, a slight difference is observed that more number of respondents in comparison with the urban respondents did cast their vote on the basis of party identification of their family. This fact highlights that above the party affiliation of the respondents, the affiliation and party identification of the family played a higher role. Citing the reason for their non-affiliation to a political party, both the rural and urban respondents asserted that they did not believe in the existing parties of Mizoram, while a few respondents acknowledged a lack of interest in politics.

According to the rural respondents, the order of agents/institutions that influenced their attitudes and participation in politics are, family, religion, community and friends, whereas in the urban area the order of agents are Family,

Religion, Friends, and NGO. Hence, family is the most influential agent/institution shaping the voting behavior of both the rural and the urban youth. Among the rural respondents, welfare of the community or a candidate from the community forms the second biggest influence of voting behavior for them, whereas, religion was considered the second biggest influence of voting behavior by the urban youth. Both the rural and urban youth presumed the factor of friendship as the third biggest influence that moulded their voting behavior. In urban area, the role of NGO is regarded as the fourth important influential agent in politics while the rural youth identified religion as the fourth important agent that influenced their voting behavior.

The order of preference in the candidate's quality as given by the rural respondents are – prominent personality, young and energetic, community based candidate, good academic background whereas, the order of urban youth responses are young and energetic, prominent personality, good academic background, community-based candidate. The rural youth consider prominent personality as the best quality and character of a candidate while the urban youth regarded a young and energetic candidate as the best quality and characteristic candidate.

The remaining questions deal with their experiences, observations and perceptions on the issue of the role of youth, the fairness of the last Assembly election. A total of 35% of the rural youth respondents observed the use of money power during election and 26.67% also witnessed a false propaganda levelled against the contending political parties and the candidates. On the other hand, 41.67% of the urban youth respondents observed the use of money power during elections and 15% also believed the spread of false propaganda against the contending political parties and candidates. The data then reveals that the use of

money power was more prevalent in the urban areas than the rural areas. The reason why the use of money power is more prevalent in the urban area, according to the researcher is the lack of interest in politics among the urban youth, non-affiliation to any political party, or in other words, most urban youths are neutral in the election, and to foster their support, political parties tried to convince them by using money or some other kinds of inducements. A comparison of the responses of the rural and urban youth on the issue of malpractices in the last Assembly election shows that the rural youth witnessed a higher rate of false propaganda levelled against the competing parties and candidates. According to the researcher, the reason for a higher rate of malpractice in the elections by way of spreading false propaganda among the rural youth was because the urban youth possesses better educational qualification than the rural youth. The lesser level of educational qualifications among the rural youth could be assumed as a fertile ground for the spread of false propaganda to win the hearts of the rural youth.

With regard to the youth policy incorporated by political parties in their manifestoes to attract the youth, almost all the respondents in the urban area claim that it was very important and necessary for the youth as well as for the party to win election, but only one-third of the respondents in the rural area agreed with the irrelevance of the youth policy.

To sum up, 'Youth' are perceived to constitute a sizable population and the work force in all nations. Hence, if such force is harnessed for the benefit of a political party during election, the youth population would be an effective force in the struggle for power in politics. It is in this context that various political parties in Mizoram incorporated a separate policy focused for the welfare of the youth. In Aizawl District, the youth comprises more than half of the electorate, therefore, their

perception, attitudes and outlook tends to exert a significant implication in the election to the Mizoram Legislative Assembly in 2013.

An analysis of the responses of youth illustrates that the youth of Aizawl District are not involved in party politics, however, they consider voting in election as very important in a democratic government and they voted with the knowledge that voting was a right and responsibility of a good citizen. Their level of participation in the election is low based upon their response that about half of them were not influenced by canvassing by political workers, political rallies and attending public meetings. However, a good number of them discussed politics with their friends and co-workers during the last Assembly elections. The low level of political participation is further substantiated by the fact that a high percentage of them were not registered in any political party.

Their choice of voting to a particular candidate is mainly determined by the candidate's personality while some youth tend to vote on the basis of party identification as well as family and kinship ties. It is apparent that the youth's choice of voting was not determined by the political game played by political parties. A close examination of the youth decision of voting was based on party identification also reveal that it was the family's party identification that they took into account. Hence, the lack of interest in politics made the youth dependent on the family and kinship ties in deciding whom to vote in the election under study.

A notable conclusion derived by the researcher is that it was neither the political leadership nor the political party or the political game of political parties that influenced them, but it was the family, friends, religion and mass media that played a key role in influencing the youth towards politics. As the youth exhibit a

lack of interest in politics, the agent that assisted the youth making a decision of whom to vote occupies an important aspect in the study of voting behavior. In this case, the programmes and agendas of political parties disseminated through manifestoes served as the main element for the youth. However, the youth have stated that the quality of the candidate, namely, prominent personality, is a major attraction for them among a number of alternatives, and, this is the reason why a majority of them decided whom to vote even before the election campaigning commenced as the candidates were announced before campaigning began.

The youth of Aizawl District, as indicated through their response, does not give importance whether the candidate they voted win the election or not, as they exhibit an altruistic outlook by regarding good governance as the major issue for them in the last election. Their lack of interest in politics is bound to be strengthened by the fact that a majority of the perceived that a change in the political party in power did not make much difference in their life. However, a majority of them declare that youth vote exerted a significant result in the electoral outcome of the Mizoram Legislative Assembly elections of 2013.

CHAPTER 4

IMPLICATIONS OF VOTING BEHAVIOR ON ELECTORAL OUTCOME

India is the second most populous country in the world with over 1.3 billion population and 50% of its population below the age of 25 and more than 65% below the age of 35¹. According to the statistics prepared by the Election Commission of India in 2014, in each Lok Sabha constituency almost 90,000 voters between 18 and 22 years of age were eligible to vote for the first time, and the General Elections witnessed over 1.79 lakh new voters on an average in each constituency. This trends of population growth bestows India as having the largest population of youth in the world. As a body of voters, the age cohort of 18 – 35 years, identified as ‘youth’ in this study, are not only India’s precious human resources since they held the power to transform the nation through their active participation in politics. Hence, various political parties are stressing upon youth as a critical part of the preparation when facing elections. However, two deplorable scenes are observed in Indian politics regarding their participation in politics and elections. For instance, it can be observed that the youth in general are not active in politics, which is illustrated by the low level of enrolment to party cadres by the youth; secondly, their participation is limited on account of their inexperience in politics. The youth are aware of the problems faced by the country and the world. However, even with their knowledge and understanding of the issues faced by the nation, they are not given chances to bring about changes and development due to their inexperience in politics and

¹Girija Shivkumar.(2013).*India is set to become the youngest country by 2020*. The Hindu. Retrieved on 20th June, 2016. URL : <http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/india-is-set-to-become-the-youngest-country-by-2020/article4624347.ece>

administration. If more opportunities are open for the youth, it can be assumed without a shadow of doubt that the level of participation of youth in politics would be higher. Therefore, this study intends to illustrate the implication of youth's voting behavior in the electoral outcome in Aizawl District in the Seventh Legislative Assembly Election. The study would also provide suggestions to attract a higher level of youth participation in politics and elections in particular in Mizoram.

Aizawl District as the capital city of Mizoram accounts for a total electorate of 2,56,467 in which the study area of the age cohort 18 – 35 years, who are identified as 'youth' make up for 1,47,277 of the voters or 57.4%². Hence, it is a sound assumption that the youth in Aizawl District who accounts for more than half of the total electorate would inevitably play a crucial role, directly or indirectly, in the State Legislative Assembly of 2013 and thereby delivering significant implication in the outcome of the election result. Further, Aizawl District is comprised of 14 constituencies out of 40 Assembly Constituencies in Mizoram. It is the largest district in terms of population as well as the number of electorate. As a capital city of Mizoram, Aizawl is the center of trade and commerce. Being equipped with the best available amenities in terms of information technology, the attitudes, perception and lifestyle of Aizawl tends to influence other districts in the sphere of socio-economic, political and cultural developments. Therefore, it is obvious that the role played by the youth in Aizawl District had a significant implication in the electoral outcome not only not only within Aizawl District but in the Seventh Legislative Assembly Election, 2013.

In this chapter, the implication of youth participation in the electoral process as well as the impact of youth's decision in voting on the overall election result is

² Election Commission of India, District Wise Elector Information, 2013

studied based on response of the overall respondent without their occupational character and geographical location. In other words, the fourteen elected Members of Mizoram Legislative Assembly in Aizawl District are analyzed on how they were elected, whether the youth played a crucial role on their being elected, and did the candidate's personality motivate or determined the voting behavior of youth of Aizawl District.

In the first instance, a deliberation is made on the type of personality that the youth of Aizawl District admired and looked for in a candidate. In their response to the questionnaire, the youth in Aizawl District claim that a candidate having the type of quality, such as - prominent personality, a community-based candidate, good academic background, young and energetic, are mostly admired and favoured. A candidate possessing such quality when elected would be indicative of the implication of the youth's voting behavior. Hence, it is necessary to analyse the 14 Assembly constituencies of Aizawl District, to examine whether a candidate who possess such type of personality won in the last election or not. A brief bio-data of the candidates are shown in Table 6.4.

Table 6.4 Details of Candidate Bio-data in the Seventh Assembly Election, 2013

Name of Constituency	Sl. No	Name of Candidate	Party	Age	Occupation	Edn. Qualification
Tuivawl Constituency	1	Ramkinlova	BJP	58	Business	Class X (HSLC)
	2	Lalmuanpuia Punte	ZNP	46	Self-Employ	B.A
	3	R.L. Pianmawia	INC	56	Business	B.A
	4	Gogo Lalremtuanga	MNF	37	Self-Employ	B.A
Chalfilh Constituency	5	Dr. Ngurdingliana	INC	47	Politician	Ph.D
	6	J. Lalchhanhima	ZNP	51	Self-J.E (Dept of PWD)	Class X (HSLC)
	7	L.T. Kima Fanai	MPC	53	Business	Class XII
Tawi	8	Lalmalsawmi	MNF	43	Self-Employ	B.A

Constituency	9	R. Lal̄thatluanga	ZNP	49	Politician	B.A
	10	R. Lalzirliana	INC	64	Business	HSLC
Aizawl ‘N’ – I Constituency	11	C. Lalmalsawma	ZNP	41	Business	M.A
	12	David Lalfakzuala	BJP	37	Business	B.A
	13	R. Romawia	INC	66	Political Party Worker	M.A
	14	Vanlalhlana	MPC	54	Self-Employed	M.A
Aizawl ‘N’ – II Constituency	15	C. Lalnunziri	BJP	51	Farmer	Class X (HSLC)
	16	Lalchhanhima Pautu	ZNP	55	Pensioner	B.A
	17	Lalthanliana	MPC	64	Councilor, AMC	M.A
	18	H. Liansailova	INC	70	Pensioner	M.A
Aizawl ‘N’ – III Constituency	19	Biakmawia	BJP	45	Cultivation	Class IX
	20	Lalchhandama Ralte	MNF	41	Politician (Ex-MLA)	M.A
	21	Lal Thanzara	INC	64	Political Party Worker	M.A
	22	R.K. Daniela	ZNP	61	Police Pensioner	B.A
Aizawl ‘E’ – I Constituency	23	Lalhmangaiha Sailo	MPC	63	Pensioner	M.A
	24	R. Lalrinawma	INC	51	Advocate	HSLC
	25	Thangchungnunga	BJP	38	Social Activist	B.A
	26	Zarzoliana	ZNP	60	Self-Employed	HSLC
Aizawl ‘E’ – II Constituency	27	Lalsawta	INC	67	Politician	M.A
	28	K. Laltuvela	ZNP	61	Social Worker	B.A
	29	Sailothanga Sailo	MNF	65	Business	B.A
Aizawl ‘W’ – I Constituency	30	K. Sanḡthuama	MNF	68	Ex-MLA	B.A
	31	Kapmawia Ralte	BJP	33	Business	HSSLC
	32	Lalduhoma	ZNP	64	MLA	B.A
	33	Tlangthanmawii	INC	64	Social Worker	HSLC
Aizawl ‘W’ – II Constituency	34	C. Ropianga	ZNP	64	Gov’t Servant (I.A.S Retd)	B.A
	35	Dr. Lalmalsawma Nghaka	INC	31	Self-Business	M.B.B.S
	36	Lalruatkima	MNF	41	Self-Employ	B.A
Aizawl ‘W’ – III Constituency	37	Dr. C.T. Tluanga	ZNP	65	Medical Private Practitioner	M.B.B.S
	38	Vanlalzawma	MNF	58	Politician (Ex MP)	M.A
	39	R. Selthuama	INC	69	-	-
Aizawl ‘S’ – I Constituency	40	K. Liantlinga	ZNP	60	Politician	B.A
	41	R. Vanlalvena	INC	48	Politician	B.A
	42	R.K. Lianzuala	MNF	47	Business	B.A
Aizawl ‘S’ – II Constituency	43	Lt. Col. Zosangzuala	INC	70	Army Officer Pensioner	Intermediate Arts
	44	R. Tlanghmingthanga	MNF	70	Business	HSSLC
	45	Rinzawna	ZNP	63	Social Worker	M.Com

Aizawl 'S' – III Constituency	46	K.S. Thanga	INC	53	Politician	B.A
	47	Tawnluia	MNF	70	Business	B.A
	48	R. Vanlaltluanga	ZNP	39	-	B.A

(Source: Chief Election Officer, Mizoram Election Commission, as published on the official website Mizoram.gov.in, 2016)

Constituency-wise analysis

In Tuivawl Constituency, there were four contenders, one each from the Bharatiya Janata Party, Zoram Nationalist Party, Indian National Congress and the Mizo National Front. The INC candidate R.L. Pianmawia was elected by the people to be their representative in the Assembly. With the exception of the BJP candidate, all the candidates possess a good academic background as one of the ideals that the youth advocated for being their representative. Again, all the parties except the BJP, also conform to the community based candidate criteria which is indicative that they all had the same opportunity to win in the election. But despite the fact that each candidate had a chance of winning the election, the INC candidate R.L. Pianmawia won the race for a seat in the Assembly on account of him being a prominent person, the quality which is given the highest regard by the youth. His edge as a prominent person is the attribute of being a standing MLA from this constituency.

From Chalfilh Constituency, Dr. Ngurdingliana of the INC was the winner among the three contenders. In the first place, he has a hopeful opportunity in terms of his academic background as his contenders acquire the High School Leaving Certificate (HSLC) and Higher Secondary School Leaving Certificate (HSSLC) degrees, whereas the winner Dr. Ngurdingliana holds a Doctoral Degree from a renowned University. Secondly, the INC candidate also happened to be the youngest candidate in this constituency which gave him a better chance of winning the election.

In Tawi Constituency, there were three contenders, one each from MNF, ZNP and INC in which the INC candidate R. Lalzirliana was elected to be the representative of this Constituency. Although this candidate holds only a HSLC degree, he possess the quality of a prominent personality and happened to be the standing MLA from this constituency. Even though he does not conform to the quality of being a young and energetic candidate, his prominent leadership within the INC party gives him a better chance to win the election than the other two contenders.

In Aizawl North – I constituency there are four candidates, one each from from ZNP, INC, BJP and MPC, contesting for a seat in which the INC candidate R. Romawia won the election with 37.8% from the total voters³. There were three Master’s Degree holders including the winner in this constituency with one Bachelor’s Degree holder which gives them the same opportunity in terms of one of the youth’s ideal quality for a candidate i.e., a good academic background. Therefore, it is obvious that other things being equal, an extra advantage is necessary to attract a greater number of supporters in the election, and this quality is found in R. Romawia who happen to be a former MLA and a Speaker in the Mizoram Legislative Assembly, as well as a prominent worker in the INC party. Even though R. Romawia does not subscribe in any manner to the criteria of a young and energetic candidate, the winner possess the quality of a being prominent personality and an intellectual. As far as the social standing of the candidates are concerned, R. Romawia happens to be a church elder in his local church which is another advantage giving him a better chance to receive confidence from the electorate.

³ Statistical Report on General Election, 2013 to the Legislative Assembly of Mizoram. New Delhi: Election Commission of India. P-52.

Aizawl North – II constituency witnessed the race among four candidates, one each from BJP, ZNP, INC and MPC in which the MPC candidate Lalthanliana won the election. The winner in the election had contested it in the election in the same constituency in the General Election to Mizoram Legislative Assembly, 2008 securing 34.65% to secure the second highest majority of votes in that election⁴. But, in 2013 General election, he proved himself a worthy representative of the people by securing 41.53% votes from the total votes polled in the Constituency⁵. He is a well known person among the electorates, and he also holds a Master Degree which is an important quality in the eyes of youth elevated Lalthanliana to have a better chance of being elected by the electorate in comparison with the other contenders. A question why H.Liansailova, a former MLA from this constituency is not elected surfaced especially considering the landslide victory of the INC in the Assembly election. Reflecting the choice of candidate by the youth, the likely answer would be that the other contender Lalthanliana is 6 years younger than him thereby projecting Lalthanlian as better suited for the public office.

In Aizawl North – III constituency the winner Lal Thanzara possess a good quality in comparison with the other contenders. There were four candidates contesting in this constituency, one each from the BJP, MNF, INC and ZNP in which the incumbent Chief Minister's Brother Lal Thanzara secured 45.48% votes⁶. His prominent leadership in the INC party as well as inside the constituency represented gave him a better chance among his contenders. Moreover, his good academic background was a credit for him to attract the youth vote in his favour. The INC

⁴ Statistical Report on General Election, 2008 to the Legislative Assembly of Mizoram. New Delhi: Election Commission of India. P 54.

⁵ Statistical Report on General Election, 2013 to the Legislative Assembly of Mizoram. New Delhi: Election Commission of India. P 52.

⁶ Statistical Report on General Election, 2013 to the Legislative Assembly of Mizoram. New Delhi: Election Commission of India. P 52.

Party's policy of facilitating youth activities and welfare such as sports, quality education, employment and publicity promoting the various achievements of the Party in television, newspaper and radio also increased the level of success.

In Aizawl East – I constituency, there were four candidates representing the four political parties, MPC, INC, BJP and ZNP running the race, in which the INC candidate R. Lalrinawma won the election. As R. Lalrinawma was the former MLA from this constituency he had a better chance of winning the election. He is also the second youngest candidate next to Thangchungunga, a candidate of the BJP. Although R. Lalrinawma did not secure a high academic degree his career as a lawyer increased the level of his success among the contenders.

From Aizawl East – II constituency Lalsawta, the INC candidate was elected as representative of the people in Assembly. There were only three parties namely - INC, MNF and ZNP, contesting in the constituency. When the ballot was counted Lalsawta secured 38.31% votes while the MNF contestant secured nearly 37% and ZNP candidate was able to secure 24.03%⁷. From the measurement of the youth choice of candidate, Lalsawta was assumed to have had lesser opportunity in the contest since he was the oldest among the contenders even though their difference was not much. Due to his election as MLA in 2008 election, he clearly gained popularity among the voters and in terms of academic background Lalsawta possess the highest academic record among the contenders that gave him greater opportunity than the other two candidates.

In the Aizawl West – I constituency the MNF candidate K. Sangthuama who was the former Food and Civil Supply Minister during the MNF ministry was elected. His contenders Tlangthanmawii of INC and Lalduhawma, the President of

⁷ *Ibid...*p 53.

ZNP, were able to secured 33.96% and 28.05% votes respectively while the winner K. Sangthuama secured 36.61% from the total votes⁸. In terms of academic background, only Lalduhoma appeared to be the choice of the youth, other candidates did not possess such kind of high academic record as possess by the Lalduhawma⁹. However, the winner in the election K. Sangthuama is a former Minister with a good name, hence he was elected.

From Aizawl West – II constituency, there were three candidates – Lalruatkima (MNF), Dr. Lalmalsawma Nghaka (INC), and C. Ropianga (ZNP). Among them Lalruatkima of the MNF party won the election securing 43.47% votes¹⁰. In terms of academic background, the three contenders were regarded as intellectual but in terms of age differences, the winner seems to have had a better option than the ZNP candidate. In spite of the landslide victory, the INC achieved in this election, a pertinent question why the INC candidate did not win would inevitably arise. A likely answer would be that the MNF candidate was a young and energetic man with a good name of being a social worker, and these two qualities along with his candidature in the 2008 elections made him a known person. The INC candidate did not contest from this constituency in 2008 election, which may greatly affected his performance in the election under studied.

The contesting candidates of Aizawl West – III Constituency were Dr. C.T. Tluanga (ZNP), Vanlalzawma (MNF) and R. Selthuama (INC) and among them the MNF candidate Vanlalzawma won the election defeating his two opponents. One remarkable event is that the winner was not among the candidates in 2008 election and was new to this constituency. Meanwhile, R. Selthuama of INC candidate was

⁸ *Ibid*...P 53.

⁹ Affidavit of the four contestant as filed before election, published by Election Commission, Mizoram: 2016.

¹⁰ Statistical Report on General Election, 2013...*Op Cit*... P 53.

the MLA from this constituency but lost his seat to the MNF's new candidate. The winner is the youngest among them and holds a Master Degree which is an important criteria for a legislator.

From the Aizawl South – I constituency R. Vanlalvena of INC candidate was elected as the winner securing 39.59% votes¹¹. K. Liantlinga, a candidate of ZNP was the former MLA from this constituency and R. K. Lianzuala, a candidate from the MNF was also new to politics. All of them are graduate and thus they share an equal chances of being elected in the election, but their differences in age can be a disadvantage for some. The winner seems to have had a better chance than others because his opponent from the MNF was new to politics and his opponent from the ZNP is the eldest.

Aizawl South – II constituency's candidates were of Lt. Col. Z.S. Zuala (INC), R. Tlanghmingthanga (MNF) and Rinzawna (ZNP). Among them Rinzawna of ZNP is the youngest with the highest academic background who was expected to win the election, but Lt. Col. Z.S. Zuala won the election securing 39.79% Votes¹². The possible answer is that the winner was a former MLA and the only prominent leader among the three contenders.

In the South – III constituency, K.S. Thanga of INC candidate was declared the winner in this constituency. All candidates were graduates but there is a little difference in their age. K.S. Thanga had better chances than the ZNP candidate in terms of popularity, and his main contender Tawnluia of MNF was able to secure 37.30% votes. An obvious reason might be that the winner was younger than the main contender giving him a better chance of success.

¹¹ Statistical Report on General Election, 2013...*Op Cit...*p 54.

¹² *Ibid.*

As far as different variables were concerned, prominent personality, educational qualification, and age are regarded as the most important variable according to the youth. It is important to note that the INC party candidate had a better chances than other parties because all the INC candidate possess such qualities as considered necessary and important by the youth in Aizawl District.

Although, there are two HSLC grade holders elected from Ṭawi and Aizawl East – II constituency, these men were prominent leaders in their respective parties as well as in their constituencies. Some candidates from the MNF and the ZNP did possess a good academic background but they lacked the quality of a prominent personality, which was regarded as the most important factor as suggested by the majority of the youth in Aizawl district.

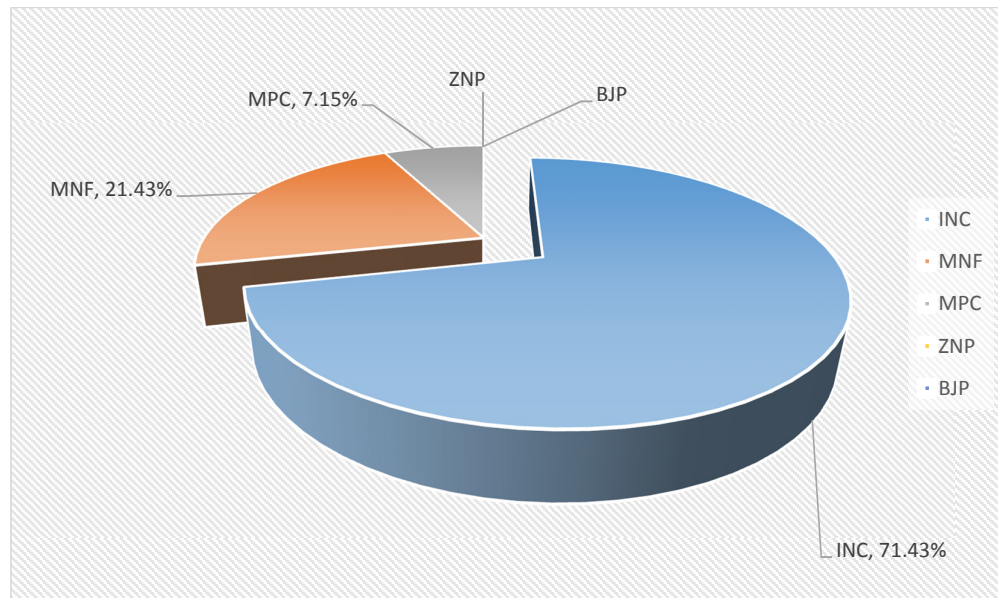
In addition to this, 60% of the elected MLAs in the Aizawl District were below the age of 60 years and the rest of the percentage i.e., 40% have reached 60 years. Only one of them have attained 70 years, which is a clear indication that a young and energetic candidate was an important factor and a key variable in this election. Moreover, some candidates from the parties like MNF, MPC, BJP and ZNP are very new to the politics and can be considered inexperience, lacking eminence and popularity in politics among the electorates reduced their chances of success.

It can thus be assumed that the candidate's popularity outside the field of politics did not play much important role in election. Because some candidates are social workers, some are civil service-retired and some are successful businessmen in their fields. But all those attributes did not help them to win the election or they were not considered better than their contenders. Summarizing the ideal candidate, projected by majority of the youth in Aizawl district, a prominent leader in the

society, a young candidate, an good intellectual who have credible experiences in politics has a high chances of success in the general election.

The following chart reveal the percentage of seats won by different parties in the 2013 election. As already stated above the INC obtained a majority in Aizawl District as shown in Table 6.5 (Appendix-III). And, the main reason behind this success is that the majority of the other party candidates did not possess the most important assets – prominent personality, good academic background, a young candidate and a community-based candidate which the INC candidates possessed.

Fig. 1.3 SEAT PERCENTAGE CAPTURED BY THE PARTIES IN AIZAWL DISTRICT



Youth of Aizawl district and Assembly elections of 2013

Even though the influence of politics, whether directly or indirectly, exerts a profound weight in our day to day life, the public in general hardly exhibit an interest in politics, and especially due to the bickering among various political parties in their quest to win over the support of the public. Unless a crucial issue that affected the

values they cherished are challenged, an assumption can be made that the public was passive in politics. However, the operation of democratic institutions solicits the participation of the people in a given period of time to elect the representatives of the people. In such a state where the people were passive but their participation was required, the political parties played a central role, driven not only to woo the public and seek their support, but with the intention of holding the reins of power as well as to educate and inform the masses regarding politics, issues of the day and solutions to the challenges of the society. Hence, political parties play an essential role in keeping the population connected with politics.

A democratic form of government is marked by a free and fair, periodic elections, where all eligible voters are endowed with the rights and duties to choose a representative they favour. As the very existence of the political party is to make all efforts to dislodge a party in power and form a government, it is not just its function but a crucial necessity to woo the passive public in their favour to form the government. In order to gain the favour of the masses, political party employs many tactics and means. It may range from organizing rallies and public meetings, door to door canvassing, distribution of pamphlets, and many other ways to reach out to the public. Even though, it may not be the decision of the party leaders, some party workers can go to the extent of engaging themselves in buying votes, intimidating the voters through the threat or use of force, capturing polls, making false promises, kidnapping candidates or their relatives and the like. It is this undesirable phenomenon that propels the general public away from politics during inter election period(s) and people in general tend to distance themselves from politics on account of their misunderstanding of the whole milieu of politics. A point can also be made that the expectations of the masses are not always met by the political party when they acquire power which eventually led the masses to assume that since politics

does not bring a desirable change in their life, it is not worth involving. Hence, in such a setting, the political parties and the candidates in election have to endeavor certain means to reach out to the people to gain their favour and support. And, in Mizoram, to do away with the ill practices during the election, the Mizoram People Forum, in consultation and as approved by the political parties, have been monitoring the elections and prescribing certain conduct for political parties in conformity with the Election Code of Conduct enforced by the Election Commission of India. It is within this environment that the political parties had to operate to gain the support of masses, as a violation of the much revered MPF's code of conduct that would cause the public opinion against their favour.

In the last election to Mizoram Legislative Assembly 2013, the political parties and candidates were restrained by the MPF's Election Code of Conduct to engage in the house to house canvassing of votes or to organize public meetings and rallies separately, they were not allowed to hold feast or give out presents to win the hearts of the electorate. This is an attempt by the MPF to facilitate a free and fair election, in which the voters would exercise their franchise without fear or inducement. As election requires the participation of electorate, political parties use what they would regard as the most effective means to win and gain the electorate in their favour. During the election campaign, the party agendas are disseminated to the electorate through the Joint Platform Public Meetings wherein the candidates are given a chance to address the electorate. Public meetings like this are organized by the MPF and in many places, live coverage of the programme was telecast. In this electioneering process, attracting the youth, who forms a sizeable part of the electorate and who's active involvement on account of their knowledge, skills and strength would be powerful force to woo the electorate, and also as a source to shape the public opinion in their favour. In view of this fact, all political parties in Mizoram

have incorporated a separate policy for the youth and the focus upon the youth for their support also have had an implication in the election outcome of the last Assembly election.

In this election, the most important source of information regarding election activities and programmes, as well as the agendas of the parties is television and radio for the youth, as 39.17% respondents claim it. The next two important sources which have the same number of respondents (20% each) are newspaper and the social media. This is a clear indication that the mass media, rather than the political parties played a greater role in reaching out to the youth. In other words, political parties have employed the fast growing information technology more than ever in the last Assembly election to sway the youth in their favour. Hence, it can be established that the implication of youth participation is the extensive use of the mass media such as television and radio, newspaper and the social media so as to muster their support as youth, by nature, and seek enjoyment in experiencing with the latest development in information technology.

Even though a restraint, owing to lack of proper records, upon the researcher exist in deriving the exact number of youth voters who voted in the last election, an estimation can be presented that a high percentage of youth turn up at the polling booth. This assertion is made on account of the fact that a high percentage of 85.84% of the respondents affirm that their voting was very important. This asserattion is further substantiated by the fact that the candidates who won in the last election within Aizawl District conform to a certain traits that the youth of Aizawl District valued and preferred. In other words, the last election witnessed a high number of youth participation in voting and their choice of candidates got elected. This phenomenon is validated by the fact that the youth did not cast their votes on party lines, as 80.84% respondents affirm that they were not affiliated to any political

party. The reasons cited by them for not being affiliated to any political party was that they were just not interested in politics, political parties did not deliver expected results and they did not believe in the party system and thus, have no confidence in the political parties to enhance desirable change in their lives. An estimated figure of 41.6% also claim that they did not participate in any electioneering process in the Assembly election. In the light of the responses made by the youth, it can be confirmed, without a shadow of doubt that the last election witnessed a high youth voter turnout in Aizawl District and the youth, who did not vote on party lines, have a deep implication on the outcome of the election result as their choice of candidates, who are bestowed with the quality traits preferred by the youth got elected.

Introduction of the western education by the Christian missionaries proved a blessing for the Mizo. The state of Mizoram is now credited with a high literacy rate in comparison with the other states of India. This educational achievement is particularly important as it implies a society strengthened with knowledge and learning, which is a requisite for a viable democratic institutions to operate. As such, the high turnout of youth voters is obvious as the good number of 35% of the respondents declare that they had voted in the last election to exercise their rights and responsibilities and 15% says that they had voted to elect the person they trusted. Only 1.67% of the respondents confessed to have voted just following the others. This figures highlights the fact that, the youth were educated, informed and possess enough knowledge to know their rights and duties. It is then a viable conclusion that a well-informed age cohort, who were aware of their rights and duties would have a substantial implication in any election, including the seventh Legislative Assembly Election. Consequently, to attract the youth, who are educated, informed and having a clear perception for choosing an appropriate candidate, political parties had to have such means to catch their attention. The endeavor of the political parties maybe

observed in the publication of party's manifestoes in general and the youth policy integrated into the manifestoes in particular. Hence, a major implication of the youth participation in the election is the meticulous preparation of the party manifestoes. Since, the highest percentage amounting to 33.34% of the total respondents claimed to have decided which party or which candidate to vote after going through the manifestoes.

A seasoned politician may have acquired all the experiences essential for a candidate, but the youth of Aizawl District chooses a candidate on the basis of his personality. This statement is authenticated by the respondents, amounting to a high percentage of 72.5% that claimed to vote for a candidate, based on their personality, while, 19.17% of the respondents affirm voting on party lines. It is further substantiated by the fact that the elected members of the last Assembly elections can be identified as possessing a good personality. Hence, political parties know the implication of the youth voting behavior and to attract their support they had nominated candidates with good personality who were revered, respected and who would command the obedience of people.

There is not one but many influences that facilitated the process of voting choice in an individual. The agents of influence can be – political leader, media, community-based politics and candidates, religion, husband/wife and the like. When the respondents were asked to present the agents that influenced them in order of their weightage, the agent of influence given the highest position is the family, followed by mass media, then community based politics, religion, friends, and so on. Family as the biggest influence in politics can be confirmed by the result of the Seventh Legislative Assembly Election, 2013 in which the INC achieved a landslide victory. The overwhelming victory of the INC, among many factors, can be confirmed through an observation, as the result of the INC's flagship programme,

the New Land Use Policy. This policy has benefitted a number of families throughout Mizoram. And, the most beneficiary of the Policy can be regarded as the youth who would be provided financial assistance by the state to earn a livelihood. The government targets the family to have had a reliable source of earnings but as mentioned above, it is the youth who are, in reality, being benefitted as they are provided such assistance. Consequently, it can be established that there was an intimate relationship between the NLUP, youth and the family, and the youth did vote for a candidate that a family favoured in the last election.

The time at which a voter make a firm decision to vote for a particular candidate is something to examine while studying the voting behavior. In the Aizawl District, a majority of the youth decided how, whom and why to vote for a particular candidate before the actual election campaign starts and a number of them say they made up their minds after the election campaign. It is to be understood that the usage of a term 'election campaign' herein is referred to mean all the actual election motivation programmes, awareness campaign, introduction of manifesto and electioneering proceedings. From this fact, it can be affirmed that the election campaign, while perceived as a decisive agent in shaping the youth's voting behaviour, most of the intellectual youth had already made a decision even before the campaign began. It must be remembered that the candidates were nominated before the campaign and it was evident that most intellectual youth decision regarding whom to vote did not depend much on the party's campaign. This fact also reveal that the nomination of a good candidate in any constituency was very imperative since the basis on which most of the youth in Aizawl District make a decision depended on the candidate's personality, which in turn would have had a significant implication in the election result of Aizawl district.

For the youth in Aizawl District, the quality of being a prominent person is the most important trait for a candidate. Therefore, identifying and nominating a prominent person as a candidate is another implication of youth's participation in the election. The importance of such traits of prominent personality can be confirmed by the response of the youth who were asked to identify from a number of candidate's essential characters according to their weightage. Accordingly, first and foremost quality as was chosen by almost all the youth was about the quality of being a prominent person in the society, followed by a community-based candidate, a candidate with a good academic background, and an young and energetic candidate. In other words, if a political party fails to produce or nominate the type of candidate the youth preferred. It must be difficult to persuade the youth to render their support and win the election. A close observation of the 2013 election result indicates that the elected candidates have had at least one or two quality/qualities as suggested by the youth to be an ideal candidate, which in turn was an illustration showing the importance and implications of the youth role in Aizawl District. The political parties can set up their candidates before the campaign and those candidates could have acquired the traits in terms of educational qualification, age, personality and community feelings that were to win over or convince the youth. Because the youth's support or non-support would make much difference in the electoral outcome.

During the last election, a majority of the youth believed that the issue of good governance was most important while some youth also argued that the formation of a government, which would work for the benefit of the poor was more important than the good governance. Accordingly, it can be affirmed with confidence that good governance and government of the poor alone would be the two most important issues in the last election. A close examination of various

political party manifestoes highlights a fact that such perception of the youth was taken into account by political parties. For instance, the INC party promised to eradicate corruption which is vital means for delivering good governance in administration. It promised to implement a developmental scheme for the poor, which identified as the New Land Use Policy (NLUP). These issues and policies of the INC to enhanced the party's influence in the election in 2013, and it can be acclaimed that the all the INC candidates of Aizawl District was elected on account of the youth support who regard good governance and a government for the poor as important issues in the last election.

Almost all the youth claimed that a shift in ruling power did not make a difference in their life and only a few argued that changes in power somehow have had an implication upon them. This fact can be explained when a majority of the youth in Aizawl District were unemployed and only few of them held office under the State government. Those who are not accountable to the government do not much care about the changes of the government as their most basic necessities were not different when there was a shift in power. However, the employed youth has a reason to claim that their lives and welfare, their sources of economic income relied upon the good and bad performance of the government. It is therefore an essential agenda for a political party as well as the government of the day to ensure avenues of employment for the youth under government undertakings or through private enterprises. This policy of creating and facilitating the jobs and avenues of earnings can be an essential character in any government. However, it is also a clear indication of the implication of youth's voting behavior of Aizawl District that political parties tried to attract the youth voters of the District through the promise of providing better avenues of income and earnings.

To sum up, from the overall respondents, 44.17% claim that a youth policy in a party manifesto was very important while 30.84% believe that such inclusion of youth policy in a party manifesto was not very important. This means that a youth policy was very important among the youth and if political parties aspire to prevail in the future, they could continue to integrate such policies in their manifestos and policies. In the last election, all the parties did incorporate the youth policy in their manifestos. Introduction and popularization of the manifestoes and the policy for the youth in particular play an important role to attract young voters. To popularize their agenda for youth, the political parties use the mass media such as newspaper, social media and through canvassing of voters as well as through the public meetings. It maybe noteworthy that the INC had popularized their youth policy through the television, which is the most important medium of understanding about politics among the youth. Hence, the INC got more chances of winning the election than the other parties as the youth were better informed with the programme of the INC popularized through the television. The notable achievement of the INC in the last election indicated the soundness of youth policy as a major factor to attract voters and winning an election.

Finally, as much as 65% respondents of Aizawl District claim that the voting behavior of youth played a crucial role in the outcome of election of 2013. This data, as substantiated in the above paragraphs, illustrates the implication of youth voting behavior, youth position and their role in the Seventh Legislative Assembly of 2013. In other words, it can be affirmed that the youth choice of candidate, favour and support, whom the youth wanted and opted for, got elected in the election.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

As a form of government, democracy entails a certain behaviour of the people in the political process to form a government by electing representatives, and that behavior of the people during election becomes a relevant subject of study in politics. Further, it is imperative for political parties which contest in election to discuss, study and analyze the behavior of the electorate to win the election.

In India, there was a systematic study of voting behavior from 1950s emphasize by Myron Weiner, Paul R. Brass, Kothari and some other prominent thinkers. These foremost studies paved the way for further investigation and left the study of voting behavior to the younger generation. The study of voting behavior in India reveal the need for further study about political socialization, political culture, electoral process as well as political development. Unlike many countries of the world, India is comprised of a number of ethnic and religious groups that somehow determine the voting pattern of the people.

Within the Indian Union there are 29 states in which the North Eastern Region is one of the unique areas in terms of ethno-political character. Among the North Eastern part of India, Mizoram, Nagaland, Assam, Manipur and Tripura have been in one way or the other influenced by ethno centric policies from the time of Indian independence till today. This ethno-politics sometimes play a limited role in elections and in some other cases play a vital role in determining the voting behavior in State Assembly elections.

With the passage of time, behavior of the electorates in North East India underwent changes as a result of the inter-play of the socio-economic, political as well as cultural factors. In other words, the voting behavior of the people of North East India changed from ethnic centric politics to other issues and factors with the change of time and development. In Assam, Nagaland and Mizoram, the ethnic issues which occupy an important issue in the late 1950s – 1970s is no more the most important issue in the election. New factors, variables that centered around development have arisen that determined the voting behavior of the electorate of the North East India.

The present study only focuses on the behavior of youth in Aizawl District of Mizoram in which the youth are identified as the age between 18 – 35 years in the last 2013 General Election. This study presents the voting behavior of youth in Aizawl District and its influence upon election process in Mizoram, various variables that influenced the voting behavior and the role and implications of youth in the last Assembly Elections in Aizawl District. It further focuses on the way how the people, especially the youth found themselves involved or alienated in politics; and the study also reveals the political socialization and culture of the youth in Aizawl District.

In 1952, Mizoram was under the administration of Assam as a separate District Council (Lushai Hills District Council) and continued till 1972 when Mizoram attained the status of a Union Territory (UT). The administration of the UT continued to exist till 1986 when Mizoram attained a full-fledged statehood in the Indian Union. The first State Assembly was constituted in 1987 with 40 elected members in which the MNF secured a majority. Due to a split in the ruling party,

President's Rule was imposed in Mizoram from 1988 till the next Assembly election in 1989. Accordingly, the second general Assembly election was held on 21st January, 1989 with the INC securing 23 seats out of the 40 Legislative Assembly seats. Although the third election to the Mizoram Legislative Assembly was to be held in 1994, it was preponed due to the celebration of the Gospel Centenary (100 years of christianity in Mizoram). Consequently, the third Legislative Assembly election was held in 1993 before the expiry of the term of Congress ministry and this election witnessed the emergence of coalition government in Mizoram politics.

The fourth general election to the Mizoram Legislative Assembly was held on 25th November, 1998 under a peaceful and calm atmosphere in which the MNF and MPC jointly forms the government. The election to the fifth Mizoram Legislative Assembly was held on 20th November, 2003 and this election ensure the continuation of the sole MNF ministry for the third time (*1987, 1998, and 2003*). The sixth Assembly election was held on 6th December, 2008 where the INC came back into power. The last election to the Mizoram Legislative Assembly was held on 25th November, 2013 in which the INC won for the second consecutive term with an astounding majority.

In Mizoram, there are 26 Rural Developmental Block (RDB) for better administrative conveniences. Aizawl District is comprised of 94 inhabited villages and is divided into five Rural Development Blocks viz. Tlangnuam, Darlawn, Phullen, Aibawk and Thingsulthliah. The Deputy Commissioner maintains the administration within the district, Rural Development Officer (RDO) and the Block Development Officer (BDO) take control of their respective Blocks. Inside each

Block, there are a numbers of villages in which the Block Officers are responsible for the day-to-day administration.

The population of Aizawl District is 4,00,309 and that is 36.48% from the total population of Mizoram ¹. There were as much as 2,58,153 voters in Aizawl district². The present study focuses on the age between 18 – 35 voters only in Aizawldistrict and the total youth population according to this study is 1,41,862 that comprises 54%³.

The study explains the voting behavior of youth in Aizawl District in the last Assembly electionby identifying the various variables, factors and elements that determined and effected the voting behavior of youth. The factors may include - money, candidate's personality, career, administration, policy or manifesto in elections, local area development of infrastructure and many others.The political culture and socialization of the youth are linked with voting factors and variables that in turn determined the voting behavior of the youth.

In rural areas the samples were drawn from twovillages – Maubuang South and Sihphirthrough the Simple Random Sampling Method. The number of samples are divided into 30, each amounts to 60 samples from rural areas alone. These Samples are given questionnaire containing 15 different questions about Mizoram Legislative Assembly elections in 2013. The entire samples are then classified into five groups on the basis of their character, such as, student, self-employed, employed, unemployed and government servant.

¹LalchhuanawmaHrahsel. (2014). *Mizoram Statistics 2014*. Aizawl: Author. P 15.

²LalchhuanawmaHrahsel...*Op Cit.*,p 214.

³Election Commission, Government of Mizoram. (2016).

Like the rural areas, the urban area sample also comprises two localities – Zemabawk and Vaivakawn, selected through the Simple Random Sampling Method. The Samples are given questionnaire containing 15 different questions about Mizoram Legislative Assembly election in 2013. The entire samples again are then classified into five groups on the basis of their character, such as, student, self-employed, employed, unemployed and government servant.

Due to differences in the political culture, socialization as well as in the outlook towards politics between the rural and urban areas, the responses to the questionnaire exhibit certain variations and therefore a complex study is essential to derive a valid conclusion. The questions are concerned with the most important medium that provided information about the election, whether the youth consider voting important and the reason why they voted for a particular candidate in the election, their level of participation in the election process, the factors that influenced them in the elections, their choice of candidates and perception whether the youth play a significant role in the Mizoram Legislative Assembly Election, 2013.

The number of total respondents/responses in rural and urban areas are same, however, due to differences in the political culture, socio-economic settings, as well as in the outlook towards politics, it is imperative to study the rural and urban responses to have a deeper insight in the voting behavior of youth.

In the first question, the overall response of the youth held television and radio as most important medium of understanding about politics, but in their second answer, the urban respondents uses more social networking sites more than the rural respondents.

Their views regarding the importance of voting is almost the same as most of them claimed it is very important for their society, however a few urban respondent asserts that voting in election was not very important.

The level of participation in politics and election among the youth is not very high in Aizawl District. However, for the urban youth, the low level of participation in politics is of little difference as most of the respondents were involved in the discussion of politics with their friends while only a few respondents in the rural area discussed politics with their friends. Some of the respondents in the rural area participated in public meetings and few of them are active party workers whereas only a few respondents in the urban areas participated in the public meetings.

A majority of the youth in urban area are not affiliated to any party but some respondents in the rural area are affiliated to the party due to the influence of their family. This fact reveals that the urban respondents had more liberty than the rural youth in deciding their political patronage.

With regard to the importance of the type of candidate both the respondents from rural and urban areas claim to vote for a candidate on the basis of a candidate's personality, which, in their opinion, is also the best quality for a candidate. However, a slight difference is observed that more number of respondents in comparison with the urban respondents, cast their vote on the basis of party identification of their family. This fact highlights that above the party affiliation of the respondents, the affiliation and party identification of the family played a higher role. Citing the reason for their non-affiliation to a political party, both the rural and urban respondents asserts that they did not believe in the existing

parties of Mizoram, while a few respondents acknowledged lack of interest in politics.

According to the rural respondents, the order of agents/institutions that influenced their attitudes and participation in politics are, family, religion, community and friends, whereas in the urban area the order of agents are family, religion, friends, and NGOs. Among the rural respondents, welfare of the community or a candidate from the community forms the second biggest influence of voting behavior for them, whereas, religion is considered the second biggest influence of voting behavior by the urban youth. Both the rural and urban youth presume the factor of friendship as the third biggest influence that moulded their voting behavior. In urban areas, the role of NGO is regarded as the fourth important influential agent in politics while the rural youth identify the religion as the fourth important agent that influenced their voting behavior.

The order of preference in the candidate's quality as given by the rural respondents are, prominent personality, young and energetic, community-based candidate, good academic background whereas, the order of urban youth responses are, young and energetic, prominent personality, good academic background, community-based candidate. The rural youth consider prominent personality as the best quality and character of a candidate while the urban youth regards a young and energetic candidate as the best quality and characteristic candidate.

The remaining questions deal with the experiences, observations and perceptions on the respondents on the issue of the role of youth and the fairness of the last Assembly elections. A total of 35% of the rural youth respondents observe the use of money power during election and 26.67% also witnessed the false

propaganda levelled against the contending political parties and the candidates. On the other hand, 41.67% of the urban youth respondents observed the use of money power during election and 15% also believe the spread of false propaganda against the contending political parties and candidates. The data also asserts that the use of money power was more prevalent in the urban areas than that in the rural areas. The reason why the use of money power is more prevalent in the urban area, according to the researcher, is the lack of interest in politics among the urban youth, non-affiliation to any political parties. In other words, most urban youths are neutral in the election, and to foster their support, political parties try to convince them by using money or some other kinds of inducements. A comparison of the responses of the rural and urban youth on the issue of malpractices in the last Assembly election shows that the rural youth witnessed a higher rate of false propaganda levelled against the competing parties and candidates.

With regard to the youth policy incorporated by political parties in their manifestoes to attract the youth, almost all the respondents in the urban areas claimed that it was very important and necessary for the youth as well as for the party to win election, but only one-third of the respondents in the rural areas agreed with the irrelevance of the youth policy.

When the responses of both the rural and urban areas are integrated, there are 120 respondents in Aizawl District. In response to the question of what the main medium of understanding and acquiring information about electoral politics of 2013 election is, 39.17% respondents held that the television and the radio was the most important medium for acquiring information and knowledge about the elections.

The level of political participation of youth in Aizawl District can be explained in the following manner, 41.6% never participated in any electoral politics/process, 35% respondents discussed electoral politics with their friends and co-workers as the level of their participation. Most of them are not affiliated to any party that showed the youth in Aizawl District were not interested in politics and those few respondents who were affiliated to some parties were involved in politics due to the influence of their family only.

With regard to the youth's most desired candidate in the Assembly elections, as much as 72.5% respondents vote a particular candidate on the basis of that candidate's personality and specific quality. In the level of influence by institutions or groups in politics, all respondents commonly chose family as the most influential agent in politics, followed by mass media, community, religion, friends, the NGO, political leader, and lastly by husband/wife. In the process of deciding which to vote, the activities like, reading party manifestoes, attending awareness campaign helps the youth to make their decision, but a number of respondents also claim that they were not assisted by any agent while making a decision to vote. When making decision, 35.84% respondents decided whom to vote even before the election campaign begins, 29.17% respondent decided after campaign commenced while 9.17% decided on the voting day and 7.5% decided whom to vote a day or two before the voting day.

The most common choice of a candidate according to the youth is a candidate bestowed with a prominent personality, secondly a community-based candidate, followed by a candidate with a good academic background, young and energetic, wealthy and popular, career politician, and eloquent leader. The youth's

choice of a candidate personality and character is certain to have an impact in the election.

The role of youth in the electoral process, their perceptions, observations and experiences in the seventh Mizoram legislative assembly election also highlights their voting behaviour. As modern democratic governments are expected to work for the welfare of the governed, a number of issues pertaining to welfare measures, stability of the government arise at the time of elections. As such, from the opinion and view of the respondents, 60% argue that the establishment of good governance was the most important issue in the Mizoram Legislative Assembly Elections, 2013. Out of the total respondents, 30% regarded that the government that would work for the welfare of the poor was the most important issue in the election.

With the issue of election malpractices in the Mizoram Legislative Assembly election, 2013, out of the total respondents 33.34% assumed the use of money power to buy votes and convince/persuade others during election. An estimated figure of 20.84% respondents observe the spread of false propaganda to weaken an opponent. However, the majority respondents of 37.5% did not observe any malpractice during the election.

In the last election to the Mizoram Legislative Assembly, the political parties and candidates were restrained by the MPF's election code of conduct to engage in house-to-house canvassing of votes or to organize some public meetings and rallies separately, they were not allowed to hold a feast or give out some presents to win over the hearts of the electorate. This is an attempt by the MPF to facilitate a free and fair election, in which a voter would exercise their franchise

without a fear or any sort of inducement. During the election campaign the party agendas are disseminated to the electorate through a Joint Platform public meetings where the candidates are given a chance to address the electorate. Under this setting, attracting the youth, who forms a sizeable part of the electorate and whose active involvement on account of their knowledge, skills and strength would be powerful political force to woo the electorate as well as a source to shape the public opinion in their favour. As such, all political parties in Mizoram have incorporated a separate policy for the youth it is rightly observed that such policy did have an implication in the election outcome of the last Assembly election.

An estimation can be presented that a high percentage of youth turn up at the polling booth in the election. This assertion is made on account of the fact that a high percentage of 85.84% of the respondents affirms that voting was very important. This assertion is further substantiated by the fact that the candidates who won in the last election within Aizawl District conforms to a certain traits that the youth of Aizawl District valued and preferred. In other words, the last election witnessed a high number of youth participation in voting and their choice of candidates got elected. This phenomenon is validated by the fact that the youth did not cast their votes on party lines as 80.84% respondents affirms that they were not affiliated to any political party.

A high turnout of youth voters is obvious as a good number of 35% respondents declare that they had voted in the last election to exercise their rights and responsibilities and 15% says that they had voted, to elect the person they trusted. Only 1.67% of the respondents confessed to have voted just following others. These figures highlights a fact that the youth were educated, informed and possessed enough knowledge to know their rights and duties. It is then a viable

conclusion that a well-informed age cohort, who are aware of their rights and duties would have a substantial implication in any election, including the seventh Legislative Assembly Election of Mizoram.

Among the various qualities a candidate possesses, prominent personality, educational qualification, and age were regarded as the most important variables according to the youth. Therefore, it is important to note that the INC party's candidates have a better chances of winning the election than other political parties because almost all the INC candidate possesses such qualities considered essential for a representative by the youth in Aizawl District. In this regard, Tawi and Aizawl East – II constituencies are remarkable as the elected representatives did not meet the ideals of the youth in terms of academic qualifications.

There were two HSLC grade holders elected from Tawi and Aizawl East – II constituency, however, these men were prominent leaders in their respective party as well as in their constituency. Some candidates from the MNF and the ZNP did possess a good academic background but it seems that they lacked the quality of a prominent personality which were regarded as the most important factor as suggested by majority of the youth in Aizawl district. This is a clear illustration that the youth of Aizawl District does advocate the quality of a prominent personality as an ideal candidate and it can also be read as an indication that the youth did not give much importance to political party. Hence, if political parties want the support of the youth, then a careful consideration has to be made at the time of making a nomination for candidature.

From the standpoint of age, 60% of the elected MLA in Aizawl District were below 60 years in which the rest of the percentage i.e., 40% have reached 60

years. Only one of them have attained the age of 70 years, which is a clear indication that a young and energetic candidate is an important factor and variables in this election. Moreover, some candidates from MNF, MPC, BJP and ZNP are very new to politics and can be considered inexperienced, therefore lacking eminence and popularity in politics among the electorates which may reduce their chances of success to a certain level.

Hence, it can be assumed that the candidate's popularity outside the field of politics did not play a significant role in election because some candidates who lost the election are social workers, some are retired bureaucrats and some are successful businessmen in their fields, but all those attributes did not help them to win election or they were not considered better than their contenders. Summarizing the ideal candidate as projected by majority of the youth in Aizawl district, a prominent leader in the society, a young candidate, a good intellectual who have credible experiences in politics has had a high chances of success in the general elections.

As the candidate's personality is considered the most important by the youth, it is the main task of the parties to nominate a candidate who would be able to convince the electorates and command their obedience, especially the youth. According to the youth's perception, prominent personality as the ideal candidate is followed by a community-based candidate, a good academic background, and an young and energetic candidate.

If a political party failed to produce or select this kind of candidates from amongst their cadres, it would be a herculean task to persuade and win over the heart of the electorates/youth in the election. If one looked at the 2013 election

results, one can observe that the elected candidates have had at least one or two quality/qualities as suggested by the youth that clearly showed the importance and implications of the role of youth in Aizawl District. The fact lies that the parties could select their candidates before the campaign and those candidates can have the ability to win or convince the youth to have some confidence in them, in terms of educational qualification, age, personality and community feelings because the youth, as a cohort age group, make much difference in the electoral outcome.

From the overall respondents, 44.17% claim that a youth policy in a party manifesto is very important while 30.84% believe that such inclusion of youth policy in a party manifesto was not very important. This means that a youth policy was very important among the youth and if political parties aspired to prevail in the future, they could continue to integrate such policies in their manifestos and policies. In the last election, all the parties did incorporate youth policy in their manifestos providing them the same chances of success.

Introduction and popularization of the manifestoes and the policy for the youth in particular plays an important role to attract young voters. To popularize their agenda for youth, political parties use the mass media such as newspapers, social media and through canvassing of voters as well as through the public meetings. It may be noteworthy that the INC had popularized their youth policy through the television which is the most important medium of understanding about politics among the youth. Hence, the INC got more chances of winning the election than the other parties as the youth would be better informed with the programme of the INC that was popularized through the television. The notable achievement of

the INC in the last election indicates the soundness of youth policy as a major factor to attract voters and winning an election.

To conclude, as many as 65% respondents of Aizawl District claim that the voting behavior of youth played a crucial role in the outcome of the election of 2013. As substantiated by the study, the data ascertains the implication of youth's voting behavior, youth's position and role in the seventh legislative assembly elections of 2013. The youth of Aizawl, which comprises the largest number of voters among the youth of the eight districts are focused by the political parties when they make nominations of candidature. The quality of a candidate which the youth would favour plays a significant role in the election. This election is also marked by a heavy use of social networking site, internet and mobile phones for campaigning. Even though the presence of MPF as a watchdog of the election has restrained the traditional form of campaigning and has compelled the party workers to employ such tools for campaigning, it has to be borne in mind that it was the youth who were most active in enjoying the benefits of technological development. Therefore, a conclusion can be made that the youth of Mizoram played a crucial role in the last Assembly election, as political parties select a candidate that the youth would favour and the tools and methods of campaigning changed from the traditional methods to attract and reach out to the young voters who are otherwise not very interested in politics.

The youth of Aizawl District are not interested in politics in general and do not affiliate themselves with political parties by registering themselves to party cadres. The role of mass media plays a prominent role in dissemination of requisite knowledge to the youth regarding elections assisting them to the level of deciding

whom to vote and what to look for in a candidate. Among the many traits that was deemed to make a candidate worthy of being elected, a prominent personality was considered the best quality of candidates by the youth and among many agents of politics that shaped and moulded the youth's orientation in politics, family formed the single most important agent of political socialization.

The study learn that the party's manifestoes form an important factor that attracted the youth to choose a party or a candidate over eligible alternatives. A high level of understanding politics and election is ascertained from the study since a majority of the youth regards the good governance as the most important issue in the election, and even though, a majority of the youth claims that a change in the political party in power did not make much difference in their life, they nevertheless cast their votes, affirm that their role have had a significant implication in the outcome of the election results in the Seventh Legislative Assembly Election in 2013.

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APPENDIX – I

Table 1.2 Block wise Population, Aizawl District

Sl. No	Name of R.D Block	Population
1	Tlangnuam	3,17,359
2	Darlawn	26,048
3	Phullen	13,303
4	Aibawk	17,128
5	Thingsulthliah	37,897

(Source: Government of Mizoram, Statistical Abstract 2013)

APPENDIX-II

Table 1.3 Numbers of Voters in the 14 Constituencies of Aizawl District

Sl. No	Name of Constituency	Numbers of Voters
1	Tuivawl Constituency	15088
2	Chalfilh Constituency	17239
3	Tawi Constituency	14566
4	Aizawl 'N' – I Constituency	20356
5	Aizawl 'N' – II Constituency	20664
6	Aizawl 'N' – III Constituency	17264
7	Aizawl 'E' – I Constituency	20332
8	Aizawl 'E' – II Constituency	16347
9	Aizawl 'W' – I Constituency	20920
10	Aizawl 'W' – II Constituency	18642
11	Aizawl 'W' – III Constituency	19154
12	Aizawl 'S' – I Constituency	20082
13	Aizawl 'S' – II Constituency	21339
14	Aizawl 'S' – III Constituency	17756

(Source: Statistical Report on General Election, 2013 to the Legislative Assembly of Mizoram, Election Commission of India: New Delhi)

APPENDIX – III

Table 6.5 Elected Members of Legislative Assembly in Aizawl District, 2013

Sl. No	Name of Constituency	Name of Candidate	Party
1	Tuivawl Constituency	R.L. Pianmawia	INC
2	Chalfilh Constituency	Dr. Ngurdingliana	INC
3	□awi Constituency	R. Lalzirliana	INC
4	Aizawl 'N' – I Constituency	R. Romawia	INC
5	Aizawl 'N' – II Constituency	Lalthanliana	MPC
6	Aizawl 'N' – III Constituency	LalThanzara	INC
7	Aizawl 'E' – I Constituency	R. Lalrinawma	INC
8	Aizawl 'E' – II Constituency	Lalsawta	INC
9	Aizawl 'W' – I Constituency	K. Sang□huama	MNF
10	Aizawl 'W' – II Constituency	Lalruatkima	MNF
11	Aizawl 'W' – III Constituency	Vanlalzawma	MNF
12	Aizawl 'S' – I Constituency	R. Vanlalvena	INC
13	Aizawl 'S' – II Constituency	Lt. Col. Zosangzuala	INC
14	Aizawl 'S' – III Constituency	K.S. Thanga	INC

(Source: Statistical Report on General Election, 2013 to the Legislative Assembly of Mizoram, Election Commission of India: New Delhi)

APPENDIX – IV

Survey Questionnaire

VOTING BEHAVIOUR OF YOUTH IN AIZAWL DISTRICT: A CASE STUDY OF THE SEVENTH ASSEMBLY ELECTION

QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire is a partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Philosophy in Political Science, Mizoram University. The data collected through this questions will be used to understand the voting behaviour of youth in Aizawl District in the election to Mizoram Legislative Assembly, 2013. The information obtained will be used for academic purpose only.

Please be assured that your response would be held completely confidential.

Name : _____
Father's/ Mother's : _____
Address : _____

Sex : _____
Occupation : _____
Contact No. : _____
Date : _____
Place : _____

Read the questions below and select the best choice that describes your activity.

1. What was the most important medium of information that gives you an interest to vote in the last Assembly election?
 - a) Newspapers
 - b) Public meetings
 - c) Television and radio
 - d) Distribution of pamphlets
 - e) Discussion in the Social Networking Site

2. Do you think voting is important?
- a) Very important
 - b) Important
 - c) Not important
 - d) Make no differences
 - e) No response
3. Cite the reason for your voting in the 7th Assembly election?
- a) It is a right and responsibility
 - b) To elect the person i trust
 - c) My sacred duty
 - d) Just following others
 - e) For the good of the society
4. Apart from voting, what was your highest level of participation in the electoral process?
- a) Discussing election with friends, co-workers, etc.
 - b) Attending public meetings
 - c) Participation in political rally/campaign
 - d) Political worker
 - e) None of the above
5. Were you affiliated to any political party?
- a) Yes
 - b) No
- If 'YES,' then why?*
- i) Interest in political party's policy and programmes
 - ii) Party affiliation of family
 - iii) Expectations of benefits
 - iv) Religion
 - v) No reason
- If 'NO,' then why?*
- i) No interest in politics
 - ii) Does not believe in party system
 - iii) No trust among the existing political parties
 - iv) Does not deliver expected results
 - v) No reason

6. Why did you vote for a particular candidate?

- a) Party identification / party loyalty
- b) Candidate's personality
- c) Just following others
- d) Personal benefits
- e) Family and kinship ties

7. Among the following, what influence you the most? Give your reply in the boxes provided below, indicating the order of your preferred choice from number 1.

- a) Family
- b) Friends
- c) Mass media
- d) NGO's
- e) Religion
- f) Community
- g) Political leader
- h) Husband/wife

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

8. Which helps you the most in making the voting decision?

- a) Election awareness campaign (Eg. MPF)
- b) Political party meetings / rally
- c) Political party's manifesto
- d) Canvassing by party workers
- e) None of the above

9. When did you make up your mind about whom to vote?

- a) Before election campaign begins
- b) After election campaign
- c) A day or two before election
- d) Voting day
- e) Can't say

10. What type of candidate did you vote in the election? Give your reply in the boxes provided below, indicating the order of your preferred choice from number 1.

- a) Career politician
- b) Prominent personality
- c) Young and energetic candidate
- d) Good academic background
- e) Wealthy and popular
- f) Community based
- g) Accessibility of the candidate
- h) Eloquent leader

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

11. What was the most important issue for you in the last MLA (Mizoram) election?

- a) Good governance
- b) Majority for the party of your choice
- c) Benefits for the poor
- d) Personal gain. Such as employment, loans, business, etc
- e) Day to day issues

12. Which among the following was the most prevalent malpractice observed in the last election to Mizoram Legislative Assembly?

- a) Booth capturing
- b) Use of money power
- c) False propaganda
- d) Manipulation of E-Rolls
- e) No response

13. Give your opinion whether a change of the political party in power make any difference(s) in your life.

- a) Make a difference
- b) Not much difference
- c) No difference
- d) Can't say

14. Did you think it is necessary for political parties to give a special focus in their policy and programme for the youth to win their support.

- a) Very much
- b) Not much
- c) Not at all
- d) Can't say

15. Did you think the youth of Aizawl District play a crucial role in the outcome of the seventh Mizoram Legislative Assembly, 2013?

- a) Yes
- b) No

Respondent

Thank you. Your kind cooperation and honesty is deeply appreciated.

(ZORAMTHANGA)
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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled “**Voting Behavior of Youth in Aizawl District: A Case Study of the Seventh Assembly Elections**”, Submitted by **Zoramthanga** for the award of the degree of **MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY**, is a research work, done under my supervision and guidance. The dissertation, submitted by him has not formed the basis of the award to the scholar for any degree or any other similar title and it has not yet been submitted as a dissertation or thesis in any university. I also certify that the dissertation represents objective study and independent work of the scholar.

Place: Aizawl

Date: 16-07-2016


(DR. K.V.REDDY)

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**M.Phil
DISSERTATION**

**Submitted By
ZORAMTHANGA**

**Department of Political Science
Regn. No. MZU/M.Phil./271 of 1.05.2015**

**In fulfilment for the Degree of
MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY**

**Supervisor
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