

**ADMINISTRATION OF YOUTH EMPOWERMENT  
PROGRAMMES IN MIZORAM: A STUDY OF THE MIZORAM  
YOUTH COMMISSION**

**A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE  
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**ADMINISTRATION OF YOUTH EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMMES IN  
MIZORAM: A STUDY OF THE MIZORAM YOUTH COMMISSION**

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**In partial fulfillment of the requirement of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy  
in Public Administration of Mizoram University, Aizawl.**



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(A Central University established by an Act of  
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### **CERTIFICATE**

This is to certify that the thesis entitled "Administration of Youth Empowerment Programmes in Mizoram: A Study of the Mizoram Youth Commission," submitted by Joseph Lalmalsawma (Registration No. MZU/Ph.D./1503 of 31.10.2020) to Mizoram University, Aizawl, India, for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Public Administration, embodies original research conducted by him under my supervision. The candidate has fulfilled the registration requirements, and this thesis is worthy of consideration for the Ph.D. degree award. I further certify that this work has not been submitted to any other university or institution for any degree.

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**MARCH, 2026**

I **JOSEPH LALMALSAWMA**, hereby declare that the subject matter of this thesis is the record of work done by me, that the contents of this thesis did not form basis of the award of any previous degree to me or to do the best of my knowledge to anybody else, and that the thesis has not been submitted by me for any research degree in any other University/Institute.

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(JOSEPH LALMALSAWMA)

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## ABBREVIATIONS

|              |   |                                                            |
|--------------|---|------------------------------------------------------------|
| AAAO         | : | Assistant Accounts & Audit Officer                         |
| AAO          | : | Assistant Audit & Accounts Officer                         |
| ANM          | : | Auxiliary Nurse Midwifery                                  |
| BADP         | : | Border Area Development Programme                          |
| CSR          | : | Corporate Sector Responsibility                            |
| CYEP         | : | Community Youth Empowerment Programme                      |
| CYP          | : | Community Youth Programmes                                 |
| DDU-GKY      | : | Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana              |
| EMS          | : | Empowering Mizoram Sports                                  |
| EYAG         | : | Empowerment of Youth and Adolescents Groups                |
| EYP          | : | Empowerment Youth Programmes                               |
| GNM          | : | General Nursing and Midwifery                              |
| GYP          | : | Government Youth Programmes                                |
| GYPF         | : | Government Youth Programmes Framework                      |
| IIM          | : | Indian Institute of Management                             |
| IELTS        | : | International English Language Testing System              |
| IIT-JEE      | : | Indian Institutes of Technology Joint Entrance Examination |
| Khelo India  | : | National Programme for Development of Sports               |
| LCLC         | : | Language and Culture Learning Center                       |
| LDP          | : | Leadership Development Programmes                          |
| LYE          | : | Leadership and Youth Empowerment                           |
| MSMEs:Micro: | : | Small: and Medium Enterprises                              |
| MTP          | : | Mara Thyutlia Py                                           |
| MY Bharat    | : | Mera Yuva Bharat                                           |
| MYAS         | : | Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports                         |
| MYC          | : | Mizoram Youth Commission                                   |
| MYPF         | : | Mizoram Youth Policy Framework                             |
| MYV          | : | Mizoram Youth Volunteers                                   |
| MzSRLM       | : | Mizoram State Rural Livelihoods Mission                    |
| NIMSME       | : | National Institute for Micro: Small and Medium Enterprises |

|        |   |                                                      |
|--------|---|------------------------------------------------------|
| NYK    | : | Nehru Yuva Kendra                                    |
| NYKS   | : | Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan                          |
| PLFS   | : | Periodic Labour Force Survey                         |
| RGKA   | : | Rajiv Gandhi Khel Abhiyan                            |
| RGNIYD | : | Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development |
| RYP    | : | Rural Youth Programmes                               |
| RYSK   | : | Rashtriya Yuva Sashaktikaran Karyakram               |
| SAMC   | : | State Apprenticeship Monitoring Cell                 |
| SLAC   | : | State Level Advisory Committee                       |
| YAS    | : | Youth Advocacy Services                              |
| YEGP   | : | Youth Empowerment and Governance Programmes          |
| YEP    | : | Youth Empowerment Programme                          |
| YEPs   | : | Youth Empowerment Programmes                         |
| YGC    | : | Youth Governance Council                             |
| YTP    | : | Youth Training Programmes                            |
| YUVA   | : | Youth for Unity and Voluntary Action                 |

## PREFACE

Youth empowerment is vital for sustainable development, equipping young people with skills, resources, and opportunities to contribute to society. In Mizoram, the establishment of the Mizoram Youth Commission (MYC) marked a shift toward institutionalized youth development. However, programme implementation varies across regions due to socio-cultural and administrative factors. This study, *Administration of Youth Empowerment Programmes in Mizoram: A Study of the Mizoram Youth Commission*, explores the role of MYC in promoting youth empowerment and evaluates the effectiveness of its initiatives.

The research fills a gap in literature on institutional frameworks for youth empowerment, focusing on Mizoram. Structured in seven chapters, it covers the concept and evolution of youth empowerment, national programmes, the role and achievements of MYC, and presents empirical findings followed by recommendations. The study offers valuable insights to enhance policy and programme design for youth empowerment in Mizoram and similar regions.

Joseph Lalmalsawma  
Mizoram University  
May 2025

# **CHAPTER I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Youth empowerment has become a pivotal focus in the development agenda of many countries, particularly in regions where the youth population constitutes a significant demographic segment. India, home to one of the largest youth populations globally, has recognized the critical role of youth in shaping the nation's socio-economic future (United Nations Population Fund [UNFPA], 2023). Within India, the northeastern state of Mizoram presents a unique context for youth empowerment due to its distinct cultural heritage, demographic profile, and developmental challenges. Mizoram's youth represent a vital resource for regional growth and social transformation. However, despite the potential, youth in Mizoram face multifaceted challenges including high unemployment rates, particularly among women (Devi, 2024; News Laundry, 2023), necessitating targeted empowerment programmes. For the purposes of this study, 'youth' refers to individuals aged 13–35 years, as per the Mizoram Youth Commission Act, 2025. When referring to national or UN statistics, the relevant age range (15–29 for National Youth Policy, 15–24 for UN) will be specified.

The concept of youth empowerment broadly refers to processes through which young people gain the ability, authority, and agency to make decisions and implement change in their own lives and communities (Jennings, Parra-Medina, Hilfinger-Messias, & McLoughlin, 2006). In the Indian context, youth empowerment is not only a matter of individual development but also a strategic approach to national progress, as reflected in policy frameworks such as the National Youth Policy (NYP) 2021.

The NYP 2021 emphasizes education, skill development, employment, entrepreneurship, youth leadership, health, and social justice, aiming to unlock the potential of youth to advance India (Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, 2021; Press Information Bureau, 2022). Despite these broad policy frameworks, the implementation and administration of youth empowerment programmes at the state

level vary significantly, influenced by local socio-political dynamics and institutional capacities.

Mizoram's youth empowerment initiatives are primarily administered through the Mizoram Youth Commission (MYC), a statutory body established under The Mizoram Youth Commission Act, 2025. The MYC is tasked with guiding, assisting, promoting, and developing youth welfare and development initiatives, defining 'youth' as individuals aged 13 to 35 years (Mizoram Youth Commission, n.d.). The MYC acts as a nodal agency interfacing between the government, youth organizations, and civil society, aiming to evaluate youth development progress, promote values like the dignity of labor, and coordinate efforts to secure better education and employment opportunities.

The Mizoram Youth Commission (MYC) operates as a statutory body under the administrative control of the Labour, Employment, Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (LESDE) Department, which serves as its nodal department. The MYC coordinates with the Department of Sports and Youth Services for specific youth-related initiatives, but its principal administrative and functional relationship is with the LESDE Department.

However, limited empirical research exists on the operational effectiveness of the MYC, its collaboration with other government departments, and the impact of its programmes on youth outcomes. This gap highlights the need for a comprehensive study that examines the conceptual framework of youth empowerment in Mizoram, the range of programmes implemented, and the institutional challenges faced by the MYC.

### **Defining Youth: Global, National, and Mizoram Perspectives**

The concept of "youth" is inherently dynamic, shaped by cultural, social, economic, and policy contexts. Establishing a clear and contextually relevant definition is essential for understanding youth empowerment and for designing effective programmes.

## **Global Definitions**

At the international level, the United Nations (UN) defines youth as individuals between the ages of 15 and 24 years, a standard adopted to facilitate statistical comparisons and policy formulation across countries (United Nations, 1981). This definition, while widely used, is not prescriptive; the UN acknowledges that member states may adapt the age range to suit their specific socio-economic and cultural circumstances (United Nations, 1981).

UNESCO further emphasizes youth as a transitional phase from dependence to independence, encompassing not just age but also social roles and responsibilities (UNESCO, 1998). The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, meanwhile, defines a "child" as anyone under the age of 18, which results in some overlap between the categories of "child" and "youth" (UNICEF, 1989).

In the United States, the definition of youth often varies depending on the context, but organizations such as the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services define youth as individuals aged 10 to 24 years (Office of Adolescent Health, 2017). This range reflects both adolescent and early adulthood development stages.

In contrast, the European Union (EU) defines youth more narrowly. According to the European Commission, youth are defined as individuals aged 15 to 29 years (European Commission, 2021), which aligns with the scope of EU youth policies and programmes.

## **National Definition: India**

In India, the National Youth Policy (NYP) 2021 defines youth as persons aged 15 to 29 years, reflecting the need to address the unique challenges faced by individuals in this age group as they transition from education to employment and active citizenship (Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, 2021). This definition is aligned with national developmental priorities and is used for the design and implementation of youth-focused policies and programmes (Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, 2021).

## **Regional Definition: Mizoram**

Recognizing the unique socio-economic and cultural context of the state, the Mizoram Youth Commission (MYC) defines youth as individuals between the ages of 13 and 35 years, as per The Mizoram Youth Commission Act, 2008 (Mizoram Youth Commission, 2008). This expanded age range reflects two key factors in Mizoram:

***Early Adolescence:*** Including ages 13 and 14 acknowledges the early onset of adolescence and the challenges faced by young people in rural and semi-urban areas, such as school dropouts and early entry into the workforce.

***Prolonged Transition to Adulthood:*** Extending the upper age limit to 35 recognizes the delayed attainment of economic independence, often due to extended educational pathways and the competitive nature of government employment in the state (Devi, 2024).

This broader definition is consistent with frameworks like the African Youth Charter, which also recognizes youth up to 35 years, and is designed to ensure that policies and programmes in Mizoram are inclusive of the diverse experiences and needs of young people in the state.

For the purposes of this study, the definition of "youth" will consistently refer to individuals aged 13 to 35 years, as specified in the Mizoram Youth Commission Act, 2008. Any references to other definitions (such as the UN or National Youth Policy) will be clearly identified as differing from this operational definition.

## **Significance for Policy and Research**

The choice of age range for defining youth has significant implications for policy, programme design, and research. A broader definition, such as that used in Mizoram, allows for a more inclusive approach, ensuring that interventions address the needs of both early adolescents and young adults who may still be navigating the transition to full economic and social independence.

By situating the definition of youth within the global, national, and regional contexts, this study adopts the age range of 13 to 35 years as specified by the

Mizoram Youth Commission Act, 2008, ensuring that the analysis remains relevant to the population served by the state's youth empowerment initiatives.

### **Demographic Profile and Youth Empowerment Context in Mizoram**

As per the 2011 Census, Mizoram had a population with 555,339 males and 541,867 females (Census 2011, n.d.). While specific age-group breakdowns for youth (13-35 years as defined by MYC) require detailed census analysis, the overall youth cohort forms a substantial part of the population, representing a significant potential workforce. Mizoram faces considerable challenges regarding youth employment. The youth unemployment rate stood at 11.9% between July 2022 and June 2023, exceeding the national average (News Laundry, 2023). This challenge is particularly acute for young women, who face an unemployment rate of 16.4%, compared to 8.9% for young men (Devi, 2024; News Laundry, 2023). These figures highlight a significant gender disparity in workforce participation and economic opportunity within the state.

Furthermore, anecdotal evidence suggests concerns among youth regarding perceived favouritism in the government sector job recruitment processes, potentially hindering merit-based opportunities (News Laundry, 2023). Addressing these unemployment challenges, particularly the gender gap, and promoting entrepreneurship are critical for harnessing Mizoram's demographic potential for economic growth (Devi, 2024). The Mizoram Youth Commission's role in coordinating skill development and employment programmes is thus central to the state's youth empowerment strategy.

This chapter sets the foundation for the study by providing an overview of the youth demographic and socio-economic context of Mizoram, reviewing the theoretical frameworks relevant to youth empowerment, and situating the Mizoram Youth Commission within the broader institutional landscape. It also outlines the significance of the study, its scope, and the research methodology employed. By doing so, it establishes a clear rationale for investigating the administration of youth empowerment programmes in Mizoram and contributes to the growing body of knowledge on youth development in India's northeastern region.

## Review of Literature

Many standard books are available in youth empowerment and sustainable development. However, no books or articles are available, which deals entirely with the proposed research project. Twenty two books and eight articles have been reviewed for this purpose.

L.S. Mehra (1977) *Youth in Modern Society* highlights the need for a new interpretation with reference to the challenge of enlightenment and adaptation and the attitudes and aspirations of youth under the impact of new culture. This book not only aims at diagnosing or exploring the various positive factors in changing relationships and imbalances but also makes provision for the assessment of their welfare needs today and tomorrow.

P.K. Gandhi (1983) *Rural Youth in Urban India* gives an account of the sociological dimensions of rural youth culture in urban based educational institutions. The book deals with two major aspects of rural youth in higher education: their socio-economic background and the attributes of their culture at the campus. The work sheds light on rural youth's motivation for education, their world view and value orientations, the patterns of participation in politics at the campus, their fellowship, leisure, social adjustment, dilemmas and contradictions. Although it gives a comprehensive detail about the origins and orientations of students in general, there is hardly any major study of rural students, particularly in youth culture focus. Since the students from the villages in the urban institutions have to undergo various pressures, the way they cope with them constitutes an important, though neglected area of sociological enquiry.

Noor Mohammad and Abdul Matin (1995) *Indian Youth: Problems and Prospects* probes into the problems of the Indian youth. Drug abuse, juvenile delinquency, illiteracy and unemployment are some of them. This book attempts to identify diagnose some of these problems in terms of rural and urban sectoral division and it addresses some of these issues and provides suggestions for planning and policies for the Indian Youth but fails to meet the need of the youth. Community

programs are provided by many different individual organizations, each with their own unique approach and programmatic activities.

UNESCO (1998) recognizes youth as equal partners and actors in development and peace. Creating opportunities for young people and investing in their skills should be a priority in public policy development at all levels. Development doesn't start with the product. It fits the people and their learning, organization and discipline. A widespread and popular recreational movement that promotes enthusiasm, discernment, and the maximum use of everyone's workforce can guarantee success (Schumacker, 1995).

Rosemary Deem (2002) *Work, Unemployment and Leisure (Society Now)* gives a concise introduction to a range of issues and debates surrounding work, unemployment and leisure in contemporary societies. Beginning with an examination of the social and historical factors which have shaped work and leisure patterns in modern Britain; she shows how the boundaries between them are culturally constructed and change over time. The author takes a wide view of work, encompassing work carried out both within and outside the formal economy. The chapter on unemployment considers the lives of those who are unemployed, and the impact of unemployment on work and leisure.

S.Narayanasamy (2003) *Youth Development in the new Millennium* discusses youth development and views on different themes such as Mahatma's Vision of youth, New millennium and youth, Sarvodaya and youth, community service and youth, Village camp for youth, Youth affairs 2000, National youth policy and programmes for youth development and peace along with donor organizations supporting the activities under the umbrella of youth development. The essays under the book clarify the important messages and valuable experiences of the author, which would enable any reader to visualize and bring out a framework of action for channelizing the energy of youths. The author though giving a commendable description of the wide-ranging topical themes of the youth did not give much attention to the administrative aspect of the youth.

Francisco A. Villarruel, Daniel F. Perkins, Lynne M. Bordens and Joanne G. Keith (2003) *Community Youth Development- Programs, Policies and Practices* attempts to provide solid information, practical tools, and selected references to practitioners, advocates, policy professionals, and researchers working in community youth development. The book examines critical aspects related to the community youth development framework, focusing on the needs of multiple audiences, programs, and policies to adopt a culture that fosters the positive development of youth through a community youth development approach. However, it is often the case that there is no single person or group that is responsible for either monitoring the range and quality of community programs for youth or making sure that information about community programs is easily accessible to members of the community and therefore the book lacks comprehensiveness.

Stephen F. Hamilton and Mary Agnes Hamilton (2004) *The Youth Development Handbook* contains original case studies demonstrating best practices for working with youth to optimize growth and development in a variety of settings such as family, school, youth groups and work. The handbook provides youth and development professionals with access to contemporary theories and research on youth development, including best practices, original case studies, and contextual approaches to issues such as youth participation and diversity. It is intended for academics and researchers in applied development science, as well as practitioners and policy makers implementing youth development initiatives.

K. Narindar Jetli (Ed.) (2006) *India: Manpower, Employment Policy and Labour Welfare 1947-2007* examines the whole gamut of labour related issues during the post-Independence period. The approach to the subject is mainly descriptive, interspersed by comments at places and provides a comprehensive introduction to various facets of Indian labour since 1947. The book describes demographic trends, employment policies and strategies, constitutional provisions, legal framework, and institutions pertaining to labour and its welfare. The book attempts to make an in-depth analysis of the challenges and provides solutions wherever possible.

Pam Nilan and Carles Feixa (2006) *Global Youth, Hybrid Identities and Plural Worlds* throws light upon comprehensive reviews of global youth cultures, practices and identities. This book is a collection of studies by international youth researchers critically addressing questions of global youth, incorporating material from diverse regions such as Sydney, Tehran, Dakar, Paris and Bogotá. It may be noted, however, that while the book generally offers substantial ethno-graphic accounts especially in those chapters focused on particular cultural forms, some chapters, for wanting to cover various cultural forms at one time, tend to be weak at ethnographic data.

Kelly Curtis M.S. (2008) *Empowering Youth* demonstrates how youth leaders, teachers, peer program advisors, adults who work with teens and adolescents, and any professional organization with a youth focus can foster leadership qualities in youth. Motivating examples are combined with activities, and reproducible self-assessment checklists to aid individuals and groups in evaluating their strengths and weaknesses in their efforts to empower youth. The importance of being valued by community, treating youth as a valued resource, service to others, and ensuring safety are examined, and ideas for cultivating an environment conducive to empowerment are also discussed. However, the book does not focus on the intervention of government in the sphere of youth empowerment.

Elaine S.C. Liu, Michael J. Holosko, and T. Wing Lo (2009) *Youth Empowerment and Volunteerism- Principles, Policies and Practices* explores the relationship between youth volunteerism and empowerment which is considered as an inherent cornerstone in the social and psychological growth for youth. The book presents various theories, models, paradigms and concepts related to youth empowerment and volunteerism. With selected examples in countries around the world, it illustrates how different cultures infuse their own history, language, mores, laws, policies, demographics, and socio-political infrastructures in facilitating youth empowerment and volunteerism.

Annette Fitzsimons, Max Hope, Charlie Cooper and Keith Russel (2011) *Empowerment and Participation in Youth Work* highlights the concept of

empowerment and participation, focuses upon current issues in youth work, in particular, policies directed at social exclusion and notions of young people's resilience and provides a critical analysis, along with the key notion of resilience. It also provides a grass roots knowledge of how to empower young people and increase and promote youth participation.

M. Sivaramakrishna (2013) *Empowering the Youth- The Vivekananda Way* portrays the ideals and aspirations of Swami Vivekananda who had great confidence in the nation's youth. His ideas can be understood by this fourfold phrase to live a meaningful life - Physical, Social, Intellectual and Spiritual quest. By physical quest he meant taking care of the human body and undertaking activities to mitigate physical suffering. This was aimed at physically preparing the youth to take up any task. The idea behind this book is to place Swamiji's teachings in the context of today's problems and urge the youth to find methods to put the teachings into practice.

A report from the *Alliance for International Youth Development Report* (2013) stated that young people must have an equal opportunity in the face of the world's greatest development challenges. These goals are not achieved alone, but in a coordinated manner. For this purpose, the UN Secretary-General has appointed a UN Special Envoy for Youth, who is responsible for integrating the voice of youth into the UN United Nations Development Program (UNDP, 2013).

Uzochukwu Mike P. (2015) in *Importance of Youth Empowerment* shows how youth development can contribute to job creation, national development and education, moral growth, poverty reduction, corruption reduction and agricultural development. This book shows examples of young people who are making a positive impact on the world today and how they can achieve potency through empowerment.

Edmond P. Bowers, G. John Geldhov, Sarah K. Johnson, Lacey J. Hilliard, Rachel M. Hersherberg, Jacqueline V. Lerner and Richard M. Lerner (2015) *Promoting Positive Youth Development* describes research about youth development that provides evidence for policy and programs aimed at promoting positive development among the diverse youth of the U.S. Using this evidence, the authors of each chapter

in this book make specific recommendations for policy innovations and youth development programs. Though each of the chapters in this book focuses on a specific facet of youth development such as youth strengths and hopeful future expectations, it is difficult to test the key hypotheses derived owing to the nature of the included evidence.

Oluwaseun Solomon Jawolusi (2016) *Empowering Youths With 30+ Lucrative ICT Ideas: The Global Curb to Underemployment & Unemployment* aims at tackling the consequential problems resulting from underemployment and youth unemployment caused by the current global economic recession and financial crisis. The author illustrates workable ideas wherein the youths would engage in modern technologies and inventions. The book endeavors to promote unemployed youths and underemployed individuals yearning for viable means of empowerment for meaningful livelihood.

Javeed Ahmad (2018) *Youth Employment: Problems and Prospects: J&K Perspective* reflects upon the employment issues of the youth-one of the most crucial problems of contemporary times in the absence of ample employment opportunities. The author explores the issues of youth employment based on the empirical evidence from the state of Jammu and Kashmir in North India. The author pleads with the approach to holistic development wherein the socio-economic inclusion of the youth relies upon a sound employment policy and optimal use of human capital.

V.A. Vyas and Shreekant Sambrani (2018) *India's Demographic Dividends* is enriched by four case studies from Punjab, Rajsthan, Kerala and Odisha, focussing on the specific problems of the youth in these states and the approaches to resolve them. It gives an account on the political empowerment of youth from the social and economic perspectives.

Dorothy Opudho (2019) *Youth Empowerment through Culture and Religion for Social Harmony and Development* illustrates the causes of unfavorable situations from which one can find leads to references of historical writings showing the origins of disputes, furtherance of disputes and unresolved aspects that if amicably approached could bring people to listen, get to the routes and attempt to get

solutions. The author shows that most of the time cultural and religious aspects tend towards bringing harmony, peaceful coexistence and mutual interactions until other factors cause disquiets. The book is found conducive to both individuals and those in governance positions attempting to solve problems for the betterment of mankind.

Tamar Mayer, Sujata Moorti and Jamie K. McCallum (Ed.) (2019) *The Crisis of Global Youth Unemployment* contains thirteen articles on crisis of youth unemployment, drawing on international case studies. It is organized around four key dimensions of the crisis: precarity, flexibility, migration, and policy responses. With contributions from leading experts in the field, the chapters offer a dynamic portrait of unemployment and how this is being challenged through new modes of resistance. The book provides cross-national comparisons, both ethnographic and quantitative, to explore the contours of this laborscape on the global, national, and local scales.

Ashok Pankaj, Atul Sarma and Antora Bora (2020) *Social Sector Development in North-East India (SAGE Studies on India's Northeast)* argues that human capital formation through social sector development should be the strategic goal of development of this region, as the prospect for service sector development is much higher compared to that of the primary and secondary sectors. This book advances an argument for a shift in approach of development policy from top-down, infrastructure-focused to bottom-up, people-centric and social sector development-focused. It also criticizes the mainstream understanding of North-east India that treats it as a geographical entity and a monolithic socio-cultural society, ignoring its rich ethnic diversities, cultural pluralities and regional variations.

Tekindal et al. (2023) *Youth Participation and Political Empowerment* explores barriers young people face in political processes, examining institutional roles, digital media impacts, and social inequalities. The review identifies drivers of youth political engagement and obstacles for marginalized groups, while assessing programs promoting participation. However, it overlooks regional governance structures prevalent in states like Mizoram.

These works emphasize measurable economic outcomes, agency development, and political inclusion, complementing earlier literature while revealing gaps in region-specific applications for Northeast India.

## **Articles**

Melissa M. Pearrow's (2008) article "A Critical Examination of an Urban-Based Youth Empowerment Strategy: The Teen Empowerment Program" in *Journal of Community Practice*, portrays six dimensions of critical youth empowerment programs, which provides a framework for examining youth empowerment programs. The Teen empowerment program, implemented with high-risk youths in urban communities, examines it along these six dimensions and provides a model for how to critically examine youth empowerment programs using this framework.

Nicole Mohajer and Jaya Earnest (2009) article "Youth empowerment for the most vulnerable: A model based on the pedagogy of Freire and experiences in the field" in *Emerald Insight*, aims to review global adolescent empowerment programmes and develops and proposes a model that can be used with vulnerable adolescents addressing the health needs of marginalized adolescents and is based on theory and field experiences.

Brian D. Christens, N. Andrew Peterson's (2011) article "The Role of Empowerment in Youth Development: A Study of Sociopolitical Control as Mediator of Ecological Systems' Influence on Developmental Outcomes" in *Journal of Youth and Adolescence* reports results of a study of psychological empowerment among young people, using data from 629 high school students (65.8% female; 96.5% Non-White). The findings confirmed that social support in family, peer, and school settings, and family cohesion positively predict self-esteem and perceived school importance, which, in turn, have protective effects on psychological symptoms, violent behaviors and substance use and suggested that policy and practice aimed at promoting positive developmental outcomes and preventing risk behaviors should take their relationship to sociopolitical control into account.

Bimal Jaiswal, M.S. Saloni Bhasin, M.S. Astha Sharma's (2015) article "Empowerment of Youth: A Challenge of 21st Century" in *International Journal of*

*Social Relevance & Concern* highlights the concept of youth empowerment on a holistic basis and critically examine the challenges confronting the empowerment of today's youth along in terms of educational attainment, access to Information and Communication Technology, poverty eradication, social empowerment of youth, employability, political empowerment, environment protection and youth entrepreneurship along with the strategies for overcoming the hurdles in the way to empowering youth.

Bijaya Kumar Malik's (2015) article "Youth Development in India: Does Poverty Matter?" in *Springer Plus Open Journal* explores the differentials in youth development patterns determined by the economic condition of the household in India. The findings suggest that youths from the bottom 20 percent (poorest) of households are deprived in education, employment, labour force and are not working currently compared to youth from the middle and rich households. The states differ in youth development patterns (employment, appropriate education, skill development and awareness about health) of youth. The paper concludes that the various economic categories/wealth index (poorest, poorer, middle, richer and richest) directly determine the pattern of youth development in India.

T. Karunakaran's (2016) article "School Drop Out as an Obstacle for Youth Empowerment" in *Indian Journal of Applied Research* identifies the importance of education on empowering the youth by conducting a study in Venkayanur and Mattukaranur villages in Omalur Taluk of Salem district of Tamil Nadu in which influence of friends and no interest in education are the major causes of dropouts in their findings. According to him, empowerment will be only in dream until drop out is stopped or mitigated.

Ntihinyurwa Philippe, Patrick Mulyungi's (2018) article "Effects of Youth Empowerment on Community Development in Rwanda - A Case Study of Nyamasheke District" in *International Journal of Science and Research* elucidates the contribution of youth empowerment in the process of community development in Rwanda more especially in Nyamasheke district by determining the effect of the youth social integration in increasing youth creativity toward Community

Development. It also examines the influence of capital availability in involving youth in decision-making towards community development. The study uses descriptive research design by using both qualitative and quantitative methods.

Chinthala Kishore Kumar's (2024) article "A Study on the Analysis of Youth Empowerment Initiatives" in *International Journal of Progressive Sciences* shows how youth skill training programs improve job opportunities in India. The research reports labor force participation for youth aged 15-29 increased from 38.20% in 2017-18 to 46.50% in 2023-24, while unemployment dropped from 17.80% to 10.20%. The study provides clear statistical evidence of empowerment programs' effectiveness but lacks specific focus on tribal regions like Mizoram where cultural and geographical barriers require different approaches.

These recent works emphasize measurable economic outcomes, agency development, and political inclusion, complementing earlier literature while revealing gaps in region-specific applications for Northeast India.

## **Research Gap**

While existing literature extensively covers youth empowerment concepts, challenges, and program typologies globally and within India, there is a notable gap in research focusing on the administration, operational effectiveness, and contextualized impact of youth empowerment initiatives at the sub-national level, particularly concerning state-specific statutory bodies like the Mizoram Youth Commission (MYC).

## **Key Dimensions of the Research Gap**

1. **Empirical Gap on MYC's Functioning and Effectiveness:** Limited empirical research examines the day-to-day operations, administrative processes, program implementation strategies, and overall effectiveness of the MYC. While the MYC's mandate and listed activities are known, how these translate into practice and their tangible impact on youth outcomes in Mizoram remain largely uninvestigated empirically.

2. **Contextual Gap in Mizoram:** Existing research often discusses youth empowerment in generalized Indian or international settings. There is insufficient research that specifically addresses youth empowerment administration within the unique socio-cultural, economic, and political context of Mizoram. The state presents distinct challenges, such as high youth unemployment rates, particularly among women, and specific demographic characteristics, necessitating context-specific analysis of empowerment strategies and institutional performance.
3. **Administrative and Relational Gap:** The literature highlights a general lack of focus on the "administrative aspect" of youth development initiatives. Specifically, there is a gap in understanding the organizational structure, administrative capacity, decision-making processes, and inter-agency dynamics of the MYC. The nature and effectiveness of its relationship and coordination with its nodal department (Labour Employment, Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Department) and Sports and Youth Services are under-explored.
4. **Programme-Specific Evaluation Gap:** While various national and international youth programs are discussed in the literature, there is a dearth of detailed evaluation concerning the specific programs implemented by the MYC. Research is needed to assess the design, reach, relevance, achievements, and impact of MYC's key initiatives, such as coaching for competitive exams, skill training, and employment generation efforts, on the target youth population in Mizoram.
5. **Gap in Understanding Challenges and Solutions:** The operational problems, systemic challenges, and practical hurdles faced by the MYC in fulfilling its mandate have not been systematically studied. Consequently, there is a lack of research-informed analysis regarding potential bottlenecks and evidence-based remedial measures to enhance the Commission's functioning and impact.

In summary, the core research gap lies in the absence of a comprehensive, empirical, and context-specific study dedicated to the administration, functioning, inter-departmental relationships, program effectiveness, achievements, and challenges of the Mizoram Youth Commission. Addressing this gap will provide valuable insights into state-level youth empowerment mechanisms in Northeast India and contribute knowledge essential for policy and practice improvement.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Youth empowerment remains a key developmental priority in Mizoram, where young people constitute a significant portion of the population. While government-led initiatives such as the Mizoram Youth Commission (MYC) have been introduced to address youth-specific challenges, issues like high unemployment, gender-based disparities, and limited entrepreneurial support continue to impede progress. A major limitation in the current discourse is the absence of rigorous empirical research evaluating the institutional effectiveness of the MYC, particularly its administrative structure, inter-agency coordination, and measurable impact on youth development. This study aims to address that gap by critically examining how empowerment initiatives function in practice and what outcomes they yield. In doing so, it will generate insights that can inform future policy design and enhance the responsiveness of youth-oriented programs, grounded in the lived experiences of the youth themselves.

### **Scope of the Study**

This research examines youth empowerment within the specific context of Mizoram, concentrating primarily on the Mizoram Youth Commission (MYC) from its establishment to the present. The study explores the historical background, organizational structure, and operational activities of the MYC, analyzing its designated roles and effectiveness in promoting youth welfare and empowerment throughout the state.

By focusing on the Mizoram Youth Commission and its statewide initiatives, this study aims to provide actionable recommendations for enhancing youth

empowerment strategies, improving interdepartmental coordination, and ensuring inclusive development outcomes for youth across Mizoram.

A key focus is the investigation of the MYC's administrative and functional relationship with its nodal department, the Labour Employment, Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (LESDE) Department. While recognizing that the Sports and Youth Services Department also plays a role in youth affairs within Mizoram, this research maintains its principal focus on the MYC and its direct activities, rather than undertaking an extensive analysis of the Sports department.

The research assesses the various youth empowerment programmes implemented by the MYC, evaluating their reach and significant achievements. It also identifies the operational problems and challenges faced by the Commission. Based on this analysis, the study aims to propose workable recommendations and solutions to enhance the MYC's performance and impact.

Geographically, the study encompasses all districts of Mizoram to provide a statewide perspective. The scope includes understanding the experiences of programme beneficiaries within Mizoram. To gauge the full reach and impact of certain initiatives, especially those coordinated with LESDE, the study may incorporate insights from youth who have participated in programmes leading to opportunities outside the state, such as the skill placements in Japan.

By focusing on the Mizoram Youth Commission and its statewide initiatives, this study aims to provide actionable recommendations for enhancing youth empowerment strategies, improving interdepartmental coordination, and ensuring inclusive development outcomes for youth across Mizoram.

### **Objectives of Study**

1. To study the conceptual aspect of Youth Empowerment.
2. To study the major youth empowerment programmes in India.
3. To study the role and functions of Mizoram Youth Commission and its relationship with nodal department.

4. To study the various youth empowerment programmes and major achievements of Mizoram Youth Commission.
5. To find out the problems and challenges faced by Mizoram Youth Commission and suggest remedial measures.

### **Research questions**

1. What is the concept of Youth Empowerment?
2. What are the major youth empowerment programmes in India?
3. What are the role and functions of Mizoram Youth Commission and its relationship with the nodal department?
4. What are the various youth empowerment programmes and major achievements of Mizoram Youth Commission?
5. What are the problems, challenges and remedial measures pertaining to the functioning of Mizoram Youth Commission?

### **Methodology**

This research employed a mixed-method approach to examine the administration of youth empowerment programmes in Mizoram, focusing specifically on the Mizoram Youth Commission (MYC) and its nodal department—Labour, Employment, Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (LESDE)—alongside the Department of Sports and Youth Services, which collaborates in areas of shared responsibility.

The methodology was designed to collect diverse perspectives from key stakeholders across the youth empowerment network, combining qualitative and quantitative methods to ensure thorough analysis and cross-validation of findings.

## **Research Design**

### **Sampling Framework**

This study used purposive sampling with a total of 176 respondents from all 11 districts of Mizoram. The 56 youth beneficiaries were selected from MYC programme attendance records for coaching and skill training programs between 2022-2025 along with 61 non-participants of MYC. They were chosen with 5-6 participants from each district. The 33 community leaders came from colleges and NGOs with MYC outreach experience, identified through MYC district coordinators and institutional lists. All 6 LESDE officials handling MYC coordination were included since they represent the complete department roster. The 8 MYC officials included all staff directly implementing programs. The 6 key informants were senior leaders with policy and implementation roles. The 8 case study participants showed clear MYC impact through employment or business creation.

### **Data Collection Methods**

#### **Interviews**

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with key officials and stakeholders to gain insight into policy formulation, implementation strategies, and administrative challenges. The following key informants were interviewed:

1. Adviser to Chief Minister (Implementation of Hand-Holding Policy) - interviewed on April 2, 2025.
2. Director of the (Labour, Employment, Skill, Development and Entrepreneurship) - interviewed on March 12, 2025.
3. Director of the Department of Sports & Youth Services (SYS) - interviewed on March 4, 2025.
4. Proprietor of MS Academy and member of Mizoram Youth Commission - interviewed on March 28, 2025.
5. Secretary of Mizoram Youth Commission - interviewed on March 24, 2025.

## Surveys

Four distinct surveys were designed and administered to capture perspectives from different stakeholder groups using both structured questions, open-ended and close-ended questions items to gather both quantitative and qualitative insights.

**Community Leaders Survey:** This survey targeted 33 community stakeholders across multiple districts, primarily from educational institutions (70%), community organizations (15%), and other relevant sectors (15%). Targeted sampling was employed, although responses showed a notable urban bias toward Aizawl. The majority of respondents (70%) possessed substantial experience (7+ years) working with youth. The survey captured perspectives on Mizoram Youth Commission (MYC) operations, effectiveness, challenges, and potential improvements.

**Youth Beneficiaries Survey:** Feedback was collected from youth across all 11 districts using a stratified sampling approach based on varying educational qualifications and employment statuses. The sample included 56 beneficiaries of MYC programmes (referred to as participants) and 61 individuals aware of MYC programmes but not participating (non-participants). Non-participants were included to capture diverse perspectives on awareness, perceived barriers, and broader community perceptions, allowing for comparison and enhancing the study's depth. Stratified sampling ensured proportional representation across rural and urban areas using structured questionnaires. The survey assessed programme awareness, participation patterns, perceived effectiveness, challenges, and recommendations.

**LESDE Officials Survey:** Targeted sampling gathered responses from 6 officials within the Labour, Employment, Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (LESDE) department, encompassing various roles (e.g., Head, Deputy Director, Mission Manager). The survey examined their collaboration with MYC, focusing on programme implementation, coordination, resource allocation, challenges, and future directions.

**MYC Officials Survey:** Internal perspectives were collected through purposive sampling of 8 officials and staff directly involved in MYC programme design,

implementation, or evaluation. This survey focused on programme design, implementation challenges, and perceived impact.

While the sample sizes for the LESDE and MYC official's surveys were relatively small, they represented significant proportions of the total personnel in these specialized administrative roles.

In total, 176 participants were involved in the research, representing diverse groups across the various data collection methods, including interviews, case studies, and surveys.

### **Data Analysis Procedures**

**Qualitative Analysis:** Interview transcripts and open-ended responses thematically analyzed to identify patterns aligned with research objectives.

**Quantitative Analysis:** Descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages) and cross-tabulations by district/stakeholder type.

### **Ethical Considerations**

The research adhered to strict ethical guidelines to protect participants and ensure data integrity:

1. **Informed Consent:** All participants were provided with clear information about research objectives and procedures before giving their consent to participate.
2. **Confidentiality:** Personal identifiers were removed from data where appropriate, and participants were assured of confidentiality. For interviews with public officials where anonymization was not possible or desirable, participants were made aware of the limited confidentiality.

### **Conclusion**

The methodology adopted for this research facilitated a comprehensive examination of youth empowerment administration in Mizoram through the examination of multiple data sources and analytical approaches. By combining in-depth interviews, targeted case studies, and structured surveys targeting diverse

stakeholder groups, the research generated rich empirical data that illuminates both the achievements and challenges in youth empowerment programme administration. The mixed-methods design proved particularly valuable in capturing both the structural dimensions of administrative frameworks and the lived experiences of programme beneficiaries, providing a comprehensive understanding of youth empowerment dynamics in Mizoram.

## **CHAPTERISATION**

### **CHAPTER I: Introduction**

This chapter examines youth empowerment in Mizoram, focusing on the role and effectiveness of the Mizoram Youth Commission (MYC). It highlights the state's unique demographic context, high youth unemployment—and the statutory mandate of the MYC to promote youth welfare through education, skill development, and employment initiatives. Using a mixed-methods approach, the study combines interviews, case studies, and surveys to assess MYC's programmes, achievements, and challenges. The research identifies gaps in empirical evaluation of MYC's operations and aims to provide recommendations for improving youth empowerment strategies in Mizoram.

### **CHAPTER II: Youth Empowerment: Concept and Origin**

This chapter explores major theoretical frameworks, such as the Adolescent Empowerment Cycle, Transactional Partnership Model, and Critical Social Theory of Youth Empowerment, each highlighting key elements like safe environments, meaningful participation, and equitable power-sharing between youth and adults. It also traces the historical evolution of the concept, moving from deficit-based approaches to strength-based models that emphasize young people's capabilities. It discusses the multidimensional nature of youth empowerment—personal, interpersonally, and politically—and outlines practical strategies for creating enabling environments, fostering participation, developing critical consciousness, and building skills. Finally, it addresses ongoing challenges such as conceptual clarity, authentic participation, and structural barriers, emphasizing the need for continued innovation to support genuine youth agency and social transformation.

### **CHAPTER III: Youth Empowerment Programmes in India**

This chapter examines the evolution, structure, and impact of youth empowerment programmes in India. It highlights the shift from viewing youth as passive beneficiaries to recognizing them as active agents in national development. The chapter reviews key government initiatives such as Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan, National Service Scheme, Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana, and MY Bharat, focusing on areas like skill development, leadership, and entrepreneurship. It also discusses challenges including regional disparities, inclusion barriers, and implementation gaps. The chapter concludes by emphasizing the need for stronger policy alignment, better evaluation, and continued innovation to fully realize India's youth potential.

### **CHAPTER IV: Role and Functions of Mizoram Youth Commission**

This chapter examines the Mizoram Youth Commission (MYC), focusing on its legislative foundation, governance structure, and evolving role in youth empowerment. Established by the 2008 Act and strengthened in 2025, the MYC operates as a statutory body with significant autonomy and quasi-judicial powers. The chapter reviews MYC's district-level operations, its diverse programmes in coaching, skill development, and employment, and its partnerships with government and private sectors. It also discusses challenges such as resource constraints and coordination, highlighting MYC's central role in advancing youth development across Mizoram.

### **CHAPTER V: Various Youth Empowerment Programmes and Major Achievements of Mizoram Youth Commission**

This chapter critically examines the institutional framework and strategic objectives of the Mizoram State Entrepreneurship Development and Monitoring Committee (MEDMOC) and evaluates the Mizoram Youth Commission's (MYC) major youth empowerment initiatives. It highlights flagship programmes such as SANKALP, STRIVE, KAWTCHHUAH, the Empowering Mizoram Sports (EMS) programme, and efforts under Mizoram State Entrepreneurship Development and Monitoring Committee, reflecting MYC's comprehensive approach to skill

development, entrepreneurship, sports, literacy, and international opportunities like International English Language Testing System (IELTS) preparation.

The analysis reviews programme outcomes, noting significant successes in government job placements and skill training, while also identifying persistent challenges, including gender disparities, limited entrepreneurship support, and regional imbalances. The chapter concludes by emphasizing the need for greater inclusivity and continuous innovation in MYC's youth empowerment strategies.

## **CHAPTER VI: Results and Discussion**

This chapter presents a detailed analysis of youth empowerment programmes in Mizoram, focusing on the role, implementation, and effectiveness of the Mizoram Youth Commission. Drawing data from interviews, case studies, and surveys involving policymakers, officials, beneficiaries, and non-participants, it evaluates achievements such as skill development, job placements, and entrepreneurship support. The chapter also identifies key challenges, including limited resources, regional disparities, and coordination gaps. Stakeholder perspectives highlight the need for greater outreach, improved programme relevance, and stronger inter-departmental collaboration to ensure inclusive and effective youth empowerment across Mizoram.

## **CHAPTER VII: Conclusion**

The last chapter synthesizes the research findings and draws conclusions on the administration and impact of youth empowerment programmes in Mizoram, focusing on the Mizoram Youth Commission. It highlights MYC's role as a statutory body coordinating programmes that enhance skill development, entrepreneurship, employment, and leadership. Key achievements include successful government job placements, expanded skill training, and opportunities for international employment and sports excellence. However, challenges persist, including limited resources, regional disparities, gender imbalances, and weak interdepartmental coordination.

This chapter examines the effectiveness of youth empowerment programs in Mizoram, focusing on the Mizoram Youth Commission. Through interviews, case studies, and surveys, the research shows that while some youth benefit in terms of employment and skills, many, particularly those in rural areas and girls, are not adequately reached. Additionally, issues with inter-departmental coordination and program evaluation persist. The study suggests that MYC should improve outreach to marginalized youth, enhance program monitoring, and strengthen collaboration between departments to better meet the needs of both boys and girls, ultimately making youth empowerment in Mizoram more equitable and impactful. The following chapter will present the conceptual and theoretical frameworks that underpin youth empowerment, providing a basis for analyzing programme implementation in subsequent chapters.

**CHAPTER II**

**YOUTH EMPOWERMENT:  
CONCEPT AND ORIGIN**

## **CHAPTER II**

### **YOUTH EMPOWERMENT: CONCEPT AND ORIGIN**

The previous chapter introduced the subject of youth empowerment in Mizoram, defining the concept of ‘youth’ from global, national, and state perspectives, and highlighting the unique demographic and socio-economic context of the state. It outlined the rationale for the study, reviewed relevant literature, identified research gaps, and detailed the objectives, research questions, methodology, and scope of the research. The chapter also presented an overview of the Mizoram Youth Commission (MYC) as the nodal agency for youth empowerment, setting the foundation for a comprehensive analysis of youth-focused programmes in Mizoram.

Building on the introductory overview of youth empowerment provided in Chapter I, this chapter explores the major theoretical frameworks that inform our understanding of youth empowerment. It examines the evolution of the concept from deficit-based to strength-based approaches and critically analyses leading models such as the Adolescent Empowerment Cycle, Transactional Partnership Model, and Critical Social Theory of Youth Empowerment. The discussion focuses on the multidimensional nature of youth empowerment and outlines practical strategies for fostering agency, participation, and critical consciousness among young people

#### **Conceptual Framework of Youth Empowerment**

In recent decades, youth empowerment has emerged as a pivotal concept in social sciences, developmental psychology, and public policy, representing a paradigm shift in how societies perceive and engage with young people. This concept transcends traditional approaches that view youth as passive recipients of services or interventions, instead recognizing them as active agents of change with unique capabilities and perspectives. The growing interest in youth empowerment reflects broader societal recognition that engaging young people meaningfully in decision-making processes not only benefits their personal development but also strengthens democratic processes and fosters sustainable social change. As the largest youth generation in history faces unprecedented global challenges, understanding the

conceptual foundations and evolution of youth empowerment becomes increasingly critical for developing effective frameworks that harness young people's potential as catalysts for positive transformation.<sup>1</sup>

Youth empowerment represents a complex, multidimensional construct that has evolved significantly over time. Its conceptualization varies across disciplines, cultural contexts, and practical applications, yet certain core elements remain consistent. At its foundation, youth empowerment encompasses processes and outcomes that enable young people to exercise genuine agency in their lives and communities.

### **Defining Youth Empowerment**

Youth empowerment “builds on empowerment constructs and frameworks to focus on the strengths that young people possess as they interact with other individuals and systems in their lives. At its core, youth empowerment rests on the belief that young people are experts on their lives, with unique perspectives to bring to their communities” (Richards-Schuster, Pritzker, & Rodriguez-Newhall, 2018).

The concept has been constructed from broader literature on empowerment produced across various disciplines, including psychology, education, and community development. While its application to youth contexts is relatively recent, the underlying principles reflect longstanding concerns with power, participation, and education. Unlike youth development, which centers primarily on cultivating individual capacities, youth empowerment focuses on creating greater community change by fostering young people's ability to influence systems that affect their lives.

According to the Youth Empowered Solutions (YES), "youth empowerment is the outcome by which youths, as change agents, gain relevant skills to impact their own lives and the lives of other individuals, organizations and communities".<sup>2</sup> This

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<sup>1</sup> According to the United Nations Population Fund (2023), approximately 1.8 billion people—the largest youth population in history—are between the ages of 10-24, with 90% living in developing countries.

<sup>2</sup> Youth Empowered Solutions (YES) is a non-profit organization founded in 2008 that focuses on empowering youth to create community change through programmes addressing health equity, substance abuse prevention, and civic engagement.

definition emphasizes both the process of skill acquisition and the tangible outcomes that result from young people's enhanced capacities to effect change.

### **Adolescent Empowerment Cycle**

The Adolescent Empowerment Cycle developed by Chinman and Linney (1998) represents one of the foundational frameworks in youth empowerment theory. Grounding their work in the theory of Social Bonding Development (Hawkins et al., 1992), Chinman and Linney explain how youth participation in meaningful activities leads to developmental outcomes. Their framework highlights "rolelessness" as a major developmental risk to be avoided, thus emphasizing the importance of creating meaningful roles for the youth.<sup>3</sup>

This model makes significant contributions to understanding how meaningful roles support positive development and mitigate developmental risks. However, it does not fully capture the dynamic nature of empowerment processes occurring between individuals and their external environments.

### **Transactional Partnership Model**

Cargo et al. (2003) introduced a dynamic model of active community participation that conceptualizes empowerment as a transactional partnership between adults and youth. In this framework, adults develop supportive social contexts for youth to gradually take on greater responsibilities, while young people progressively engage, actualize their potential, and cultivate constructive change.

This model illuminates the importance of mentoring relationships and the developmental outcomes that result from intentional processes designed to promote youth empowerment. Its primary limitation lies in its focus on community engagement programs designed and implemented by adults, which may not fully account for the diverse contexts and growing autonomy that characterize early adulthood.

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<sup>3</sup> Chinman and Linney's work drew heavily on developmental psychology and preventive intervention research, representing one of the first attempts to create a comprehensive cycle model specifically for adolescent empowerment processes.

## **Critical Social Theory of Youth Empowerment**

Jennings et al. (2006) advanced the theoretical discourse through their Critical Social Theory of Youth Empowerment. Building upon previous work (Freire, 1970; Chinman & Linney, 1998; Cargo et al., 2003; Wallerstein et al., 2005) and empirical findings from participatory research, they conceptualize empowerment as a multi-level construct involving "youth, adults, organizations, and communities engaged in collective action for social change".

Their theory identifies six key dimensions that constitute critical youth empowerment:<sup>4</sup>

**Welcoming and safe environment:** Creating spaces where youth feel physically and emotionally secure to participate and express themselves authentically.

**Meaningful participation and engagement:** Ensuring youth have substantive roles that genuinely influence outcomes rather than token positions.

**Equitable power-sharing between youth and adults:** Establishing collaborative partnerships that recognize young people's unique contributions while benefiting from adults' experience and support.

**Engagement in critical reflection on interpersonal and sociopolitical processes:** Fostering young people's ability to analyse both personal circumstances and broader social systems that affect their lives.

**Participation in sociopolitical processes to affect change:** Involving youth directly in activities aimed at transforming policies, practices, and social conditions.

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<sup>4</sup> These six dimensions represent a synthesis of previous theoretical frameworks and empirical research, providing a comprehensive model that addresses both process and outcome aspects of youth empowerment.

**Integrated individual- and community-level empowerment:** Recognizing the interconnection between personal development and community transformation.

This framework represents a significant advance toward a more comprehensive model of youth empowerment by encompassing and organizing essential elements from previous theories within a critical framework oriented toward young people's potential to participate in and influence social change. However, Jennings et al.'s model does not explicitly address the dynamic interactions among these elements and tends to restrict the application of empowerment specifically to social change as the outcome.

### **Dynamic Empowerment Model**

Cattaneo and Chapman (2010) offer a contrasting perspective through their dynamic model of empowerment, which incorporates both individual and social aspects while conceptualizing empowerment as an iterative process. Key components in their model include "personally meaningful and power-oriented goals, self-efficacy, knowledge, competence, action, and impact".

framework contributes significantly to understanding empowerment as a dynamic process, highlighting the roles of intrinsic motivation, reflection, and social interaction. Its emphasis on self-efficacy and specific goals, however, may not fully align with broader conceptualizations of empowerment across different developmental domains in early adulthood.

### **Dimensions of Youth Empowerment**

Research over the past fifteen years has identified several key dimensions associated with youth empowerment that give the concept greater specificity when applied to young people. These dimensions include:

**Growth and well-being dimension:** Focusing on personal development, psychological wellness, and the cultivation of a positive self-concept, this dimension also emphasizes resilience and the ability to navigate challenges while maintaining a healthy and optimistic self-image.

**Relational dimension:** Concerning how youth develop meaningful connections with peers, adults, and institutions, this dimension highlights the role of trust, empathy, and collaboration in building supportive and empowering social networks.

**Educational dimension:** Addressing knowledge acquisition, critical thinking skills, and learning processes that support empowerment, this dimension also encourages intellectual curiosity and active engagement with diverse perspectives to strengthen decision-making capacity.

**Political dimension:** Involving young people's capacity to influence decision-making processes and advocate for change, this dimension fosters civic awareness and participation, equipping youth with the tools to contribute to policy discourse and democratic development.

**Transformative dimension:** Focusing on how empowerment processes enable youth to transform both themselves and their environments, this dimension promotes innovation and challenges to the status quo as pathways to meaningful social and personal change.

**Emancipative dimension:** Addressing how empowerment liberates young people from constraints and oppressive conditions, this dimension empowers them to reclaim their agency, overcome systemic barriers, and assert their rights in pursuit of freedom and equity.

These dimensions highlight the multifaceted nature of youth empowerment, which encompasses not only individual development but also collective action and structural change. Each dimension represents a distinct aspect of empowerment while simultaneously interconnecting with others to form a comprehensive framework for understanding how young people develop agency and influence.

### **Historical Evolution of Youth Empowerment**

The concept of youth empowerment has evolved significantly over time, shaped by broader social movements, theoretical developments in related fields, and changing perceptions of youth in society. Understanding this evolution provides important context for contemporary approaches to youth empowerment.

## **Early Conceptualizations and Influences**

The theoretical foundations of youth empowerment are drawn from multiple disciplines and social movements, including community psychology, critical pedagogy, and civil rights activism.<sup>5</sup> Paulo Freire's (1970) work on critical consciousness and empowerment education laid crucial groundwork for understanding how marginalized groups, including youth, could develop awareness of oppressive conditions and take action to transform them.

The concept gained prominence in academic and policy discourse during the late 20th century, reflecting growing recognition of young people's potential contributions to society. This shift coincided with the evolution of children's rights frameworks internationally, which increasingly emphasized children and youth's right to participate alongside protection and provision.

The European Union has been particularly influential as "the birthplace of many cultural youth empowerment movements across the past century".<sup>6</sup> These movements helped shape contemporary understandings of youth participation and agency while demonstrating young people's capacity to mobilize for social change.

## **From Deficit-Based to Strength-Based Approaches**

Historically, approaches to youth development often adopt deficit-based perspectives that focus on preventing problems or addressing perceived shortcomings. Youth were frequently characterized as "at risk," with interventions designed primarily to prevent negative outcomes rather than promote positive development.<sup>7</sup>

The emergence of youth empowerment represented a paradigm shift toward strength-based approaches that recognize young people's capabilities, resilience, and

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<sup>5</sup> Critical pedagogy, developed by Paulo Freire in "Pedagogy of the Oppressed" (1970), centers on developing critical consciousness through dialogue, problem-posing education, and praxis (reflection and action) to transform oppressive condition.

<sup>6</sup> Notable European youth empowerment movements include the student movements of 1968, the development of national youth councils throughout the 1970s-1990s, and more recently, the European Youth Forum's advocacy work for youth rights and participation.

<sup>7</sup> Deficit-based approaches typically characterized youth as problems to be solved or risks to be managed, focusing primarily on preventing negative outcomes like delinquency, substance abuse, and teen pregnancy rather than promoting positive development.

potential for positive contributions. This transition reflected broader movements in social sciences away from deficit models toward frameworks that emphasize human capacity and agency.

Richards-Schuster et al. note that youth empowerment "builds on empowerment constructs and frameworks to focus on the strengths that young people possess as they interact with other individuals and systems in their lives". This perspective represents a fundamental departure from earlier conceptualizations that positioned youth primarily as problems to be solved or passive recipients of services.

### **Institutionalization and Global Spread**

Over time, youth empowerment has evolved from grassroots movements and academic concepts to institutionalized approaches embraced by governments, international organizations, and educational institutions worldwide. This process has unfolded unevenly across different regions and contexts, with varying interpretations of what constitutes meaningful youth empowerment.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) exemplifies how youth empowerment has been incorporated into international development frameworks. UNDP's approach recognizes "the immense potential of young people as positive agents of change" and supports governments, civil society actors, and youth-led networks in creating enabling environments that promote inclusive governance, meaningful action, and sustainable futures.

This institutionalization has created new opportunities for youth engagement while also raising questions about whether formalized approaches can maintain the transformative potential of more radical conceptions of empowerment. Some scholars argue that children's rights implementation should "go beyond learning about formal rights and procedures to give birth to a concrete experience of rights", suggesting that truly empowering approaches must transcend bureaucratic implementations to foster authentic youth agency.

## **Levels of Youth Empowerment**

Youth empowerment operates across multiple interconnected levels, with each level addressing distinct aspects of young people's development and engagement with broader social systems. Understanding these levels provides a framework for developing comprehensive approaches to youth empowerment.

### **Personal Empowerment**

Personal empowerment focuses on strengthening individuals' internal resources, self-efficacy, and capacity for self-determination. At this level, empowerment involves developing young people's confidence, skills, and psychological resources to exercise control over their lives and make meaningful choices.

Youth Empowered Solutions (YES) identifies individual-level empowerment as equipping young people with "abilities to exercise power over one's life by being skilled, critically aware, and active in creating change". This dimension encompasses self-awareness, critical consciousness, and the development of competencies that enable young people to navigate challenges effectively.

Personal empowerment serves as a foundation for other levels of empowerment, as young people who develop strong internal resources are better positioned to engage in interpersonal relationships and collective action. However, focusing exclusively on personal empowerment without addressing structural barriers risks placing undue responsibility on individuals while neglecting systemic constraints.

### **Interpersonal Empowerment**

Interpersonal empowerment concerns young people's relationships with others and their ability to navigate social interactions effectively. This level focuses on developing meaningful connections with peers and adults, building social capital, and cultivating supportive networks that facilitate personal growth and collective action.

The transactional partnership model developed by Cargo et al. (2003) emphasizes the importance of adult-youth relationships in empowerment processes. These relationships, when characterized by mutual respect and progressive transfer of responsibility, create conditions for youth to develop agencies while benefiting from mentorship and guidance.

Jennings et al. (2006) highlights "equitable power-sharing between youth and adults" as a critical dimension of youth empowerment. This emphasis acknowledges that interpersonal dynamics significantly influence empowerment processes, with authentic partnerships supporting young people's development as agents of change.

### **Political Empowerment**

Political empowerment addresses young people's capacity to influence decisions, policies, and social conditions that affect their lives and communities. This level focuses on developing young people's understanding of political processes, advocacy skills, and opportunities for meaningful participation in decision-making.

Richards-Schuster et al. identify political empowerment as one of three core levels at which empowerment functions. This dimension encompasses youth activism, civic engagement, and participation in governance processes at local, national, and global levels.

Jennings et al.'s Critical Social Theory of Youth Empowerment explicitly incorporates political dimensions through its emphasis on "engagement in critical reflection on interpersonal and sociopolitical processes" and "participation in sociopolitical processes to affect change". These elements highlight how genuine empowerment involves supporting young people's capacity to analyse and transform systems rather than merely adapting to existing conditions.

UNDP's framework similarly emphasizes "inclusive governance" as a key focus area, promoting "meaningful youth participation at all levels, from local to global, to strengthen democratic processes". This approach recognizes that political empowerment serves both developmental and democratic functions, benefiting young people while strengthening civic processes.

## **Youth Empowerment in Practice**

Translating theoretical frameworks of youth empowerment into effective practice requires intentional strategies that create enabling conditions for young people's meaningful participation and development. Various approaches have emerged in different contexts, reflecting diverse interpretations of empowerment and responding to specific youth needs and circumstances.

### **Creating Enabling Environments**

Effective youth empowerment begins with establishing environments conducive to young people's authentic participation and growth. Jennings et al. identify a "welcoming and safe environment" as the first key dimension in their Critical Social Theory of Youth Empowerment. Such environments provide physical and psychological safety while communicating respect for young people's perspectives and contributions.

Asante Africa emphasizes that "youth empowerment isn't just about handing out textbooks or building libraries. It's about fostering a deep sense of motivation and self-belief that empowers youth to become active participants in their own lives and communities".<sup>8</sup> This perspective highlights how empowering environments must address both material resources and psychological factors that influence young people's engagement.

Creating enabling environments involves attention to physical spaces, organizational cultures, interpersonal dynamics, and broader social contexts that either facilitate or constrain youth agencies. Programmes that successfully foster empowerment typically establish clear norms and structures that support young people's participation while remaining flexible enough to respond to their evolving needs and interests.

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<sup>8</sup> Asante Africa Foundation is a non-profit organization working in East Africa that implements youth empowerment programmes focused on leadership development, entrepreneurship training, and life skills education for marginalized youth.

## Strategies for Meaningful Participation

Meaningful participation constitutes a cornerstone of youth empowerment practice, focusing on engaging young people in substantive roles rather than token positions. Asante Africa identifies participation as one of three fundamental principles of youth empowerment, describing it as "giving young people a voice and a seat at the decision-making table, fostering a sense of ownership and responsibility".

Effective strategies for fostering meaningful participation include:

**Youth-adult partnerships:** Establishing collaborative relationships where adults share power with young people while providing appropriate support and guidance.

**Youth-led initiatives:** Creating opportunities for young people to design and implement their own projects with adult support rather than direction.

**Representation in decision-making bodies:** Incorporating youth perspectives in organizational governance, policy development, and programme design through formal positions on boards, committees, and advisory groups.

**Participatory action research:** Engaging young people as co-researchers in investigating issues that affect their lives and communities, developing solutions based on their findings.

These strategies reflect Jennings et al.'s emphasis on "meaningful participation and engagement" and "equitable power-sharing between youth and adults" as essential dimensions of empowerment. When implemented authentically, they create opportunities for young people to develop skills and confidence while making substantive contributions to their communities.

## Developing Critical Consciousness

Critical consciousness—young people's awareness of how social, political, and economic forces shape their lives and communities—represents a crucial element of empowerment practice. This concept, rooted in Freire's critical pedagogy,

focuses on developing young people's capacity to analyse power structures and envision alternatives to existing conditions.

Jennings et al. highlight "engagement in critical reflection on interpersonal and sociopolitical processes" as a key dimension of youth empowerment. This element emphasizes how empowerment involves not only providing opportunities for participation but also fostering young people's ability to critically examine the context in which they participate.

Practical approaches to developing critical consciousness include:

**Critical dialogue:** Facilitating discussions that encourage young people to examine assumptions, question dominant viewpoints, and consider multiple perspectives on social issues.

**Media literacy:** Supporting young people in critically analyzing media representations and developing their own alternative messages through youth-led media production.

**Community mapping and analysis:** Engaging youth in documenting and analyzing community assets, needs, and power structures to develop contextual understanding of local issues.

**Historical education:** Connecting young people with histories of youth activism and social movements to provide context for contemporary challenges and inspire possibilities for change.

These approaches reflect how empowerment practice goes beyond skill development to address the knowledge, awareness, and critical thinking capacities that enable young people to exercise agency effectively in complex social contexts.

### **Building Skills and Capabilities**

Skill development represents an essential component of youth empowerment practice, focusing on equipping young people with capabilities that enhance their personal effectiveness and collective impact. Youth Empowered Solutions (YES) defines youth empowerment as "the outcome by which youths, as change agents,

gain relevant skills to impact their own lives and the lives of other individuals, organizations and communities", highlighting skill acquisition as central to empowerment processes.

Comprehensive skill development for youth empowerment typically addresses multiple domains:

**Technical skills:** Developing specific skills relevant to specific fields, industries, or activities. These skills often include digital literacy, coding, data analysis, or hands-on technical training tailored to professional demands.

**Social and emotional skills:** Cultivating capabilities like communication, collaboration, empathy, and conflict resolution that facilitate effective interpersonal engagement. These abilities are essential for building strong relationships, managing emotions, and functioning effectively in diverse teams.

**Critical thinking skills:** Fostering analytical capabilities that enable young people to evaluate information, consider multiple perspectives, and develop independent judgments. This empowers them to make informed decisions and solve complex problems creatively and logically.

**Civic and political skills:** Building competencies related to advocacy, organizing, public speaking, and navigating governance processes. Such skills enable active participation in democratic life and efforts to create social change.

**Leadership skills:** Developing capabilities related to vision-setting, motivation, coordination, and responsible exercise of influence. Strong leadership involves ethical decision-making, strategic planning, and inspiring others toward common goals.

UNDP's approach emphasizes providing young people with "the resources and support to thrive and participate in SDG integration, implementation, and monitoring" through "capacity building, mentoring, financial support, and by strengthening global networks through outreach, advocacy, and thought leadership". This multifaceted approach recognizes how diverse skills and resources contribute to young people's capacity for meaningful engagement.

Effective skill development in youth empowerment contexts typically employs experiential learning approaches that provide opportunities for practice, reflection, and application in authentic settings. These approaches align with empowerment theory's emphasis on creating "opportunities to learn, practice, and increase skills" through engagement in meaningful activities.

### **Supporting Collective Action**

Collective action—young people working together to address shared concerns and create social change—represents a critical dimension of youth empowerment practice, particularly in frameworks that emphasize political and transformative aspects of empowerment. Jennings et al. identify "participation in sociopolitical processes to affect change" as a key dimension of youth empowerment, highlighting how empowerment extends beyond individual development to encompass collective engagement with systems and structures.

Strategies for supporting youth collective action include:

**Youth organizing:** Facilitating processes through which young people identify shared concerns, develop strategies for addressing them, and take coordinated action to create change.

**Youth councils and forums:** Establishing formal structures through which young people can collectively influence decisions affecting their communities.

**Intergenerational coalitions:** Building alliances between youth and adults to address community issues through collaborative action that leverages diverse perspectives and resources.

**Youth-led campaigns:** Supporting young people in designing and implementing advocacy initiatives focused on specific policy or social changes.

These approaches reflect Jennings et al.'s concept of "integrated individual- and community-level empowerment", recognizing how personal development and collective transformation are interconnected dimensions of empowerment processes.

They also align with UNDP's emphasis on supporting young people in "driving positive change" through "tackling unemployment and leading climate action to building peace and development processes".

Effective support for youth collective action involves balancing guidance with youth autonomy, providing resources while respecting young people's leadership, and creating structures that facilitate collaboration while remaining responsive to evolving youth priorities and approaches.

### **Youth Empowerment in Global Context**

Youth empowerment has gained significant attention globally, with diverse interpretations and applications across different regions, cultural contexts, and development frameworks. Examining these varied approaches provides insight into both common principles and contextual adaptations of youth empowerment practice.

### **International Development Approaches**

International development institutions have increasingly incorporated youth empowerment into their frameworks, recognizing young people's critical role in achieving sustainable development goals. UNDP exemplifies this approach, focusing on three key areas: inclusive governance, meaningful action, and sustainable future.<sup>9</sup>

UNDP's framework emphasizes that "young people have a right to influence decisions impacting their lives" and promotes "meaningful youth participation at all levels, from local to global, to strengthen democratic processes". This approach reflects growing recognition in international development that youth empowerment serves both rights-based and instrumental purposes, advancing young people's entitlements while harnessing their contributions to development processes.

International approaches often emphasize capacity building, creating enabling environments, and strengthening youth networks to support empowerment. UNDP,

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<sup>9</sup> UNDP's Youth Empowerment Strategy 2023-2025 represents a comprehensive framework for engaging youth in development processes, reflecting increasing recognition of young people's role in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

for instance, provides resources and support to help young people "thrive and participate in SDG integration, implementation, and monitoring" through "capacity building, mentoring, financial support, and by strengthening global networks through outreach, advocacy, and thought leadership".

These approaches typically frame youth empowerment within broader development agendas while acknowledging the specific challenges facing young people globally, including limited economic opportunities, restricted political participation, and vulnerability to various forms of exclusion and marginalization.

### **Cross-Cultural Considerations**

Youth empowerment manifests differently across cultural contexts, reflecting varied conceptions of youth, adulthood, and appropriate roles for young people in society. These differences influence how empowerment is conceptualized, implemented, and experienced in different settings.

In some contexts, empowerment approaches must navigate cultural norms that traditionally limit youth participation in decision-making or prescribe hierarchical relationships between youth and adults. Effective approaches in these settings often involve culturally responsive strategies that respect community values while creating new spaces for youth voice and agency.

The implementation of youth empowerment in developing nations presents distinctive challenges and opportunities compared to developed countries. Research indicates that "past study on the relevance of youth empowerment in national development has largely focused on developed nations with few studies assessing developing nations", highlighting the need for greater attention to contextual factors that shape empowerment processes in diverse settings.

### **National Development and Social Stability**

Youth empowerment increasingly features in national development strategies, particularly in countries with large youth populations facing challenges like unemployment, limited educational opportunities, and political marginalization. Research from Nigeria demonstrates positive relationships between education,

employment, and financial support for youth empowerment and national development, suggesting that investments in youth empowerment contribute to broader social and economic progress.

Conversely, failures in youth empowerment can contribute to social instability. Studies indicate that "the high incidence of crimes such as armed robbery, kidnapping, cultism, terrorism (Boko Haram), prostitutions, drug paddling and others social vices that are been exhibited in the country are as a result of high rate of unemployment thereby making the youth populace to be hopeless and subjecting them to aggression".<sup>10</sup> This perspective highlights how disempowerment can lead to alienation and destructive behaviors when young people lack legitimate channels for addressing their needs and aspirations.

Effective youth empowerment strategies at national levels typically integrate educational, economic, and civic dimensions to create comprehensive approaches that address multiple factors influencing young people's development and engagement. These strategies recognize that empowerment requires both building young people's capabilities and creating structural conditions that enable meaningful participation.

### **Critical Challenges and Future Directions**

While youth empowerment has gained significant traction in research, policy, and practice, important challenges remain in conceptualizing and implementing approaches that genuinely support young people's agency and development. Addressing these challenges requires critical reflection on current frameworks and innovative approaches that respond to evolving social contexts.

### **Conceptual Ambiguity and Imprecision**

Despite extensive research, youth empowerment remains characterized by conceptual ambiguity and imprecision in how it is defined and applied. Analysis of

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<sup>10</sup> According to Nigeria's National Bureau of Statistics (2023), youth unemployment rates exceeded 42% in 2024, with significant correlations between unemployment rates and incidence of crimes committed by young people aged 15-29.

the literature confirms "the ambiguous nature of the concept and the imprecision with which it is used", creating challenges for research, evaluation, and practice.

This conceptual imprecision can lead to superficial or tokenistic implementations that adopt empowerment language without embodying its core principles. Addressing this challenge requires ongoing theoretical work to clarify key concepts while maintaining sensitivity to how empowerment manifests differently across diverse contexts and populations.

Future directions in this area include developing more nuanced frameworks that account for intersectionality—how factors like gender, race, class, disability, and sexuality shape empowerment processes—and elaborating specific mechanisms through which empowerment operates in different settings and developmental stages.

### **Power Dynamics and Authentic Participation**

Youth empowerment inherently involves navigating power dynamics between young people and adults, institutions, and broader social structures. Creating conditions for authentic participation and genuine power-sharing presents ongoing challenges that require critical attention to how authority operates in youth-adult relationships and organizational contexts.

Jennings et al.'s emphasis on "equitable power-sharing between youth and adults" as a key dimension of youth empowerment highlights this challenge, recognizing that traditional power imbalances often constrain young people's opportunities for meaningful engagement. Addressing these dynamics requires intentional strategies for distributing authority, making decision processes transparent, and creating accountability mechanisms that support genuine collaboration.

Future directions in this area include developing more sophisticated approaches to facilitating youth-adult partnerships, examining how organizational cultures either support or undermine power-sharing, and creating methods for addressing structural barriers to youth participation in various institutional contexts.

## **Measurement and Evaluation**

Assessing youth empowerment processes and outcomes presents significant methodological challenges, given the concept's multidimensional nature and the complexity of change processes involved. Current approaches often rely on limited indicators that fail to capture empowerment's full scope or employ methods that inadequately represent young people's experiences and perspectives.

Future directions in measurement and evaluation include developing more comprehensive frameworks that address multiple dimensions of empowerment, employing mixed methods approaches that combine quantitative and qualitative data, incorporating participatory evaluation methods that engage young people as co-researchers, and designing longitudinal studies that capture how empowerment evolves over time and across developmental transitions.

## **Structural Barriers and Systems Change**

While much youth empowerment work focuses on building individual capabilities and creating opportunities for participation, structural barriers often constrain young people's agency and limit the impact of empowerment initiatives. These barriers include economic inequalities, discriminatory policies, cultural attitudes that marginalize youth voices, and institutional practices that exclude young people from meaningful roles.

Addressing these challenges requires approaches that combine direct work with young people and efforts to transform systems that affect their lives. Jennings et al.'s emphasis on "integrated individual- and community-level empowerment" reflects this dual focus, recognizing how personal development and structural change are interconnected dimensions of empowerment processes.

Future directions in this area include developing more robust theories of systems change in youth empowerment contexts, creating methodologies for analyzing structural barriers that affect specific youth populations, designing interventions that simultaneously address individual capacity and institutional

reform, and building cross-sectoral coalitions to advocate for policies that support youth empowerment.

### **Digital Technologies and Emerging Contexts**

Rapidly evolving digital technologies create both new opportunities and challenges for youth empowerment. Digital platforms enable unprecedented forms of youth connection, expression, and mobilization while also introducing new risks related to privacy, exploitation, manipulation, and digital divides that exacerbate existing inequalities.<sup>11</sup>

Future directions in this area include examining how digital contexts shape youth empowerment processes, developing frameworks for supporting digital citizenship and literacy as components of empowerment, creating approaches that leverage digital tools for youth voice and influence, and addressing inequities in digital access and skills that affect marginalized youth populations.

### **Conclusion**

Youth empowerment represents a complex, multidimensional construct that has evolved significantly over recent decades, emerging as a critical framework for understanding and supporting young people's agency and development. The concept encompasses processes and outcomes that enable youth to exercise control over their lives, participate meaningfully in decisions that affect them, and contribute to positive social change.

Review of the literature reveals consistent linkages between youth empowerment and three core concepts: power, participation, and education. These concepts provide a foundation for understanding how empowerment operates across personal, interpersonal, and political levels, creating conditions for young people to develop as individuals while engaging collectively to transform their communities.

Multiple theoretical frameworks have contributed to understanding youth empowerment, including the Adolescent Empowerment Cycle (Chinman & Linney,

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<sup>11</sup> Digital youth empowerment encompasses various dimensions including digital access, skills development, online participation, and digital citizenship, with particular attention to addressing digital divides that affect marginalized youth populations.

1998), transactional partnership model (Cargo et al., 2003), Critical Social Theory of Youth Empowerment (Jennings et al., 2006), and dynamic empowerment model (Cattaneo & Chapman, 2010). These frameworks provide complementary perspectives on how empowerment processes unfold, highlighting dimensions including safe environments, meaningful participation, equitable power-sharing, critical reflection, engagement in sociopolitical processes, and integrated individual-community empowerment.

Translating these theoretical insights into practice requires attention to creating enabling environments, fostering meaningful participation, developing critical consciousness, building diverse skills, and supporting collective action. These approaches recognize empowerment as both a developmental process for individual young people and a strategy for creating broader social change.

Globally, youth empowerment has gained prominence in international development frameworks, national policies, and community initiatives. UNDP's approach exemplifies how international institutions have incorporated youth empowerment into their work, focusing on inclusive governance, meaningful action, and sustainable futures. Research from contexts like Nigeria demonstrates relationships between youth empowerment and national development, highlighting both opportunities when young people are effectively engaged and risks when they become marginalized and alienated.

Despite significant advances in understanding and implementing youth empowerment, important challenges remain related to conceptual clarity, authentic power-sharing, measurement approaches, structural barriers, and emerging digital contexts. Addressing these challenges requires ongoing critical reflection and innovation to ensure that empowerment approaches genuinely support young people's agency while responding to evolving social conditions.

As societies worldwide navigate complex challenges requiring multifaceted solutions, youth empowerment offers a valuable framework for recognizing and nurturing young people's contributions to creating more just, sustainable, and inclusive communities. By supporting youth as "experts on their lives, with unique

perspectives to bring to their communities", empowerment approaches not only benefit young people themselves but also enrich democratic processes and catalyze positive social transformation.

**CHAPTER III**

**YOUTH EMPOWERMENT  
PROGRAMMES IN INDIA**

## **CHAPTER III**

### **YOUTH EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMMES IN INDIA**

The previous chapter examined the conceptual and theoretical foundations of youth empowerment, discussing key models and frameworks, the evolution of the concept, and its multidimensional nature. It highlighted the importance of creating enabling environments, fostering participation, and building critical consciousness and skills among youth.

This chapter analyses the evolution and structure of youth empowerment programmes in India. It reviews the historical trajectory from early nation-building efforts to contemporary national policy frameworks such as the National Youth Policy and flagship initiatives like Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan, National Service Scheme, Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana, and MY Bharat. The chapter assesses the objectives, implementation mechanisms, and achievements of these programmes, as well as persistent challenges such as regional disparities, inclusion barriers, and implementation gaps.

#### **Historical Evolution of Youth Empowerment Initiatives in India**

According to the United Nations Population Fund (2023), India's demographic profile is uniquely youthful, with 65% of its population under 35, offering unprecedented potential for socioeconomic transformation.<sup>12</sup> This demographic dividend positions India uniquely on the world stage, with the potential to harness youth energy for national development. The empowerment of this significant youth segment has emerged as a priority for policymakers, recognizing that a nation's progress is intrinsically linked to how effectively it nurtures and develops its young population. This section examines the multifaceted dimensions of youth empowerment programmes in India, their evolution, implementation frameworks, challenges, and impact on the nation's developmental trajectory.

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<sup>12</sup> According to the United Nations Population Fund (2023), India has the largest youth population globally, with over 65% under 35, presenting both opportunities and challenges for national development.

The trajectory of youth empowerment in India can be traced through distinct evolutionary phases that reflect changing socio-political priorities and developmental paradigms. Following independence, initial youth-focused initiatives primarily aimed at nation-building and developing a sense of national identity among young citizens.

The establishment of the Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS) in 1972 marked a significant milestone in institutionalizing youth development work.<sup>13</sup> As one of the largest youth organizations globally, NYKS was designed to reach rural youth and engage them in constructive community-oriented activities. This period represented what scholars have termed the "mobilization approach," where youth were primarily engaged as participants in national development agendas rather than as leaders and changemakers.

The 1980s and 1990s witnessed a gradual shift toward a more structured policy approach with the formulation of the first National Youth Policy in 1988. This policy articulated the government's vision for youth development and established a framework for subsequent interventions. However, as noted in a critical review of youth programmes, this period continued to adopt primarily a "problem-focused approach" that viewed youth as recipients of services rather than as partners in development.

The turn of the millennium brought a paradigm shift with the adoption of the National Youth Policy 2003, followed by the National Youth Policy 2014, which explicitly recognized youth as "agents of social change, economic development, and technological innovation" (PIB, 2022). This represented a transition toward what contemporary scholars identify as the "youth development approach" - one that "recognizes the need to engage with youth as individuals with unique identities and a desire to learn, explore and understand their own potential as active volunteers/citizens" (Academia.edu, 2016).

The current policy framework, embodied in the National Youth Policy 2021, "articulates a ten-year vision for youth development that India seeks to achieve by

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<sup>13</sup> NYKS is among the largest youth organizations globally, targeting rural youth and community development (India.gov.in, n.d.).

2030" aligned with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (The CSR Journal, 2025). This policy reflects a comprehensive understanding of youth empowerment that integrates education, employment, entrepreneurship, and civic engagement.

The historical evolution demonstrates a progressive shift from viewing youth as problems to be solved or passive beneficiaries, toward recognizing them as vital resources for national development and active partners in the nation-building process.

### **Government Policy Framework for Youth Empowerment**

The policy architecture for youth empowerment in India operates through a complex network of institutional mechanisms and programmatic interventions. At the apex level, the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports serves as the nodal ministry responsible for formulating and implementing youth-focused policies and programmes.

### **National Youth Policy Framework**

The National Youth Policy (NYP) 2014 established a comprehensive framework that "envision[s] empowering the youth to reach their full potential, enabling India to take its rightful place on the global stage." It identified five key objectives and delineated 11 (eleven) priority areas, including education, skill development, employment, entrepreneurship, health and wellness, sports, social values, community engagement, political participation, youth inclusion, and social justice (PIB, 2023).

Building on this foundation, the draft National Youth Policy 2021 presents "a ten-year roadmap for youth development, aiming to achieve India's youth potential by 2030" (PIB, 2023). This policy framework aligns with global sustainable development objectives while contextualizing interventions to address India-specific challenges and opportunities.

The policy framework identifies the age group of 15-29 years as the target demographic for youth development initiatives, expanding to include adolescents

(10-19 years) for specific programmatic interventions. This delineation recognizes the distinct developmental needs of different age cohorts within the broader youth category.

### **Institutional Architecture**

The implementation of youth empowerment initiatives occurs through a tiered institutional structure:

1. **National level:** Coordinated by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports through autonomous bodies like Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan.
2. **State level:** Implemented through State Youth Affairs Departments.
3. **District level:** Operationalized through District Youth Coordinators.
4. **Block and village level:** Executed through youth clubs and volunteer networks.

This institutional framework seeks to ensure that youth empowerment initiatives penetrate down to the grassroots level while maintaining coherence with national policy objectives.

### **Budgetary Support and Resource Allocation**

Financial support for youth empowerment programmes is channeled through the Rashtriya Yuva Sashaktikaran Karyakram (RYSK), an umbrella scheme that consolidates various youth-focused initiatives. The government announced in February 2022 "that it has decided to continue the Scheme over the 15th Finance Commission Cycle (2021-22 to 2025-26) at an outlay of Rs 2,710.65 crore" (The CSR Journal, 2025). This financial commitment underscores the strategic importance accorded to youth development within the broader national development agenda.

The policy framework emphasizes convergence across ministries and departments to address the multidimensional nature of youth empowerment. This integrative approach acknowledges that effective youth development requires coordinated interventions across education, employment, health, and social sectors.

## **Major Youth Empowerment Programmes in India**

India has implemented a diverse array of programmatic interventions aimed at empowering its substantial youth population. These programmes reflect different philosophical approaches and target specific aspects of youth development, ranging from education and skill development to leadership building and civic engagement. The following comprehensive analysis examines these initiatives, their implementation approaches, challenges, and effectiveness in addressing the multidimensional needs of India's youth.

India's demographic dividend presents both opportunities and challenges, necessitating robust youth empowerment interventions. The country has established numerous programmes that operate under various ministries and implementation mechanisms to harness the potential of its youth population.

Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS) remains one of the largest youth organizations globally, focusing primarily on rural youth development. Operating under the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, NYKS has established a network of youth clubs across rural India to promote national integration, adventure, youth leadership and personality development (India.gov.in, n.d.). With its extensive grassroots presence, NYKS implements numerous programmes including youth club development, skill development, awareness campaigns, and leadership training. The organization's approach emphasizes community-based engagement, where youth are encouraged to participate in and lead development initiatives at the local level.

The National Service Scheme (NSS) operates with the motto "Education through Service" and focuses on personality and character development of students through voluntary community service (Doordarshan News, 2025). Implemented primarily through educational institutions, NSS engages students in community service activities while fostering leadership skills and civic responsibility. Research indicates that the NSS model has been particularly effective in nurturing a sense of social responsibility among youth. However, critical assessments have noted challenges in implementation, particularly in how well-intent programmes may not serve the very need they are intended to serve if they fail to articulate the perspective

behind the programmes clearly and do not reinforce them during implementation (Academia.edu, 2016).

The National Youth Corps (NYC) scheme focuses on developing leadership qualities and volunteerism among youth. It engages young volunteers in community development activities while providing them with a modest honorarium. The programme seeks to nurture civic responsibility and active engagement among youth (Doordarshan News, 2025).

Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) represents a flagship initiative focusing on skill development. Implemented by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, PMKVY aims to enable a large number of Indian youths to take up outcome-based skill training and become employable and earn their livelihood (India.gov.in, n.d.). The scheme operates through two primary components: Centrally Sponsored Centrally Managed (implemented by National Skill Development Corporation) and Centrally Sponsored State Managed (implemented by State Skill Development Missions). Since its inception, PMKVY has trained 1.4 crore youth, with significant numbers placed in jobs or undergoing further skill enhancement (PIB, 2024).

Mera Yuva Bharat (MY Bharat) Initiative established as an autonomous body following a cabinet decision in October 2023, represents one of the most recent additions to India's youth empowerment ecosystem. The initiative aims to be a transformative, technology-driven platform for youth development with a core mission to provide equal opportunities for empowering the youth to achieve their aspirations and actively contribute to building a Viksit Bharat (Developed India) (PIB, 2023). MY Bharat has developed a digital platform that enables young individuals to register for volunteering opportunities across the country, creating a 'phygital' (physical + digital) ecosystem designed to empower young people as agents of community transformation (Doordarshan News, 2025).

Recognizing regional specificities, the government has implemented targeted programmes like the Udaan Scheme, which aims to provide skills and enhance employability of youth in Jammu and Kashmir (India.gov.in, n.d.). This intervention

reflects an understanding that youth empowerment strategies must be contextualized to address region-specific challenges and opportunities.

Entrepreneurship development initiatives recognize the importance of entrepreneurship in youth development. Several programmes focus specifically on nurturing entrepreneurial capabilities, including Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PM Mudra Yojana) and Start-Up India. These schemes have sanctioned millions of loans and recognized thousands of startups, creating significant employment opportunities for youth (PIB, 2024).

### **Education-Based Youth Empowerment Approaches**

Education serves as a foundational pillar of youth empowerment in India, recognized as a transformative force that equips young people with the knowledge, skills, and perspectives needed to navigate an increasingly complex world. Educational empowerment transcends mere academic instruction to encompass comprehensive development that prepares youth for productive citizenship and economic participation.

The government has implemented several initiatives to enhance access to quality education. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 represents a significant milestone in educational reform, aiming to transform India's education system to meet contemporary challenges and opportunities. The policy emphasizes skill development, critical thinking, and experiential learning—elements crucial for youth empowerment.

Specific interventions include the establishment of PM Shri Vidyalayas and the expansion of Atal Tinkering Labs, which foster innovation and equip India's youth with the tools they need to succeed in the 21st century (PIB, 2024). While educational access has improved significantly, research indicates that additional efforts are needed to effectively equip the youth with the skills necessary for the 21st century (PIB, 2022). This highlights the ongoing challenge of aligning educational content and pedagogy with contemporary skill requirements.

Education contributes to youth empowerment through multiple pathways: knowledge and skills acquisition, critical thinking development, identity formation, social mobility, and civic engagement. As noted by education experts, youth empowerment through education helps bridge gaps in socio-economic status, reduces inequality, and promotes social cohesion (Jaro Education, 2024). This multidimensional impact positions education as a cornerstone of comprehensive youth development strategies.

The emergence of digital learning platforms has significantly expanded educational opportunities for youth across geographical and socioeconomic boundaries. Online learning has emerged as a revolutionary tool, offering unprecedented opportunities for upskilling and personal growth. This mode of education is not just about convenience but about opening doors to quality learning experiences that can significantly enhance youth empowerment in India (Jaro Education, 2024).

Digital learning initiatives have gained momentum following the COVID-19 pandemic, which catalyzed rapid adoption of technology-enabled education. The launch of the Skill India Digital platform in September 2023, aiming at 'ease of acquiring skill' in India, exemplifies this trend toward digitalization of learning opportunities (PIB, 2024).

Despite significant progress, several challenges persist in leveraging education for youth empowerment. Quality disparities remain significant across regions and between public and private institutions. A skill-education mismatch creates a disconnect between educational curricula and labor market requirements. The digital divide results in unequal access to digital learning resources, particularly in rural areas. Socioeconomic barriers continue to impact educational access for marginalized communities. Pedagogical limitations, particularly the predominance of rote learning over critical thinking and application, remain problematic.

Addressing these challenges requires a multifaceted approach that encompasses curriculum reform, teacher training, infrastructure development, and targeted interventions for underserved communities. As emphasized by researchers,

educational programmes should be designed creatively to empower youth by different government and non-government organizations.

### **Skill Development and Employment-Focused Initiatives**

Skill development and employment generation constitute critical dimensions of youth empowerment in India, addressing the practical economic needs of young people while contributing to national economic development. These initiatives seek to bridge the gap between education and employment, equipping youth with market-relevant competencies.

The Skill India Mission, launched in 2015, represents a comprehensive initiative to upskill and reskill the youth to meet the demands of a dynamic job market (PIB, 2024). The mission encompasses various schemes and programmes implemented through a network of training providers, assessment agencies, and industry partners. The mission has achieved significant scale, with 1.4 crore youth trained under Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY), resulting in substantial placement and skill enhancement outcomes (PIB, 2024). This represents a significant investment in developing youth capabilities aligned with employment opportunities.

Recognizing the diverse skill requirements across economic sectors, targeted interventions have been implemented to address specific industry needs. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushal Yojana (DDU-GKY) focuses on rural youth skill development, while the Entrepreneurship and Skill Development Programme develops entrepreneurial capabilities. The National Career Service bridges the gap between job seekers and employers. These sector-specific interventions reflect an understanding that skill development must be aligned with industry requirements to effectively enhance youth employability.

Beyond skill development, several programmes directly focus on employment generation for youth. The Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP) supports self-employment ventures through credit-linked subsidies. Start-up India fosters innovation and entrepreneurship among youth, resulting in over 120,000 recognized startups that have created substantial

employment opportunities (PIB, 2024). Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY) provides financial support for micro-enterprises, having sanctioned millions of loans aggregating to significant financial support for youth entrepreneurial aspirations (PIB, 2024). These initiatives reflect a multi-pronged approach to addressing youth employment challenges, encompassing both wage employment and self-employment pathways.

Despite substantial investments, several challenges persist in the skill development and employment ecosystem. Ensuring skills align with rapidly evolving industry requirements remains difficult. Strengthening industry participation in curriculum design and training delivery continues to be a challenge. Maintaining consistent assessment practices across diverse training providers proves complicated. The uneven distribution of skill development infrastructure creates regional disparities. Extending skill development to the large informal sector workforce presents ongoing challenges.

Addressing these challenges requires continued refinement of implementation approaches, stronger industry partnerships, and a more nuanced understanding of regional labor market dynamics. As noted in a critical assessment, while skill-building and learning have improved, additional efforts are needed to effectively equip the youth with the skills necessary for the 21st century (PIB, 2022).

### **Leadership Development and Civic Engagement Programmes**

Youth leadership development and civic engagement form essential components of comprehensive empowerment, focusing on nurturing agencies, participation, and contribution to community and national development. These programmes aim to develop young people's capacity for governance, decision-making, and civic responsibility.

The National Young Leaders Programme focuses specifically on developing leadership capabilities among youth. As one of the sub-schemes under the Rashtriya Yuva Sashaktikaran Karyakram (RYSK), it aims to develop the personality and leadership qualities of the youth and to engage them in nation-building activities (The CSR Journal, 2025). The programme employs various modalities including

leadership camps, workshops, mentoring relationships, and experiential learning opportunities. These interventions seek to cultivate both personal leadership attributes and team leadership capabilities.

Youth parliaments represent a significant approach to developing democratic participation skills among young people. The government has initiated efforts to engage the youth through technology and has organised youth parliaments, youth conventions and festivals (PIB, 2022). These initiatives simulate parliamentary proceedings, enabling youth to understand democratic processes, develop argumentation skills, and engage with contemporary policy issues. The recently transformed National Youth Festival into the Viksit Bharat Young Leaders Dialogue represents a meaningful step towards empowering India's youth to play an active role in the nation's development (PIB, 2023).

The Yuva Connect programme facilitates discussions with students on the vision of a 'Viksit Bharat' (Developed India) (Doordarshan News, 2025). This initiative engages youth in dialogue about national development priorities, seeking to align youth aspirations with broader national goals. By creating spaces for youth-policymaker interaction, such programmes aim to bridge the gap between youth perspectives and policy formulation. This represents a shift from viewing youth as passive beneficiaries to recognizing them as active stakeholders in the development process.

Several initiatives aim to institutionalize youth participation in governance processes. The National Youth Advisory Council provides a platform for youth to advise on policies affecting them. Youth for Development engages youth in development planning and implementation. The MY Bharat digital platform enables youth to register for volunteering opportunities, with more than 1.65 crore youth registered (Doordarshan News, 2025). These mechanisms represent efforts to operate the principle of youth participation in decision-making processes that affect their lives and futures.

Research into youth leadership development programmes highlights both achievements and limitations. A critical assessment of existing programmes notes

that Youth Development has been the most neglected area in terms of youth leadership development and youth empowerment in India (Chandupatla, 2022). This suggests a need for more systematic and evidence-based approaches to leadership development.

Effective leadership programmes are characterized by several key features: experiential learning opportunities that allow youth to practice leadership in real contexts; mentoring relationships that provide guidance and role modeling; reflective practice that enables processing leadership experience; progressive leadership challenges that build capacity incrementally; and recognition systems that validate leadership development. The implementation of these elements varies significantly across programmes, resulting in uneven leadership development outcomes. As India continues to refine its youth empowerment approaches, strengthening leadership development frameworks represents a critical priority.

### **Impact and Effectiveness Evaluation of Youth Empowerment Programmes**

Systematic evaluation of youth empowerment programmes is essential for understanding their effectiveness, identifying implementation challenges, and informing policy refinements. While the scale of India's youth-focused interventions is substantial, rigorous impact assessment remains an evolving practice.

Various methodological approaches have been employed to assess youth programme impacts. Quantitative surveys measure outcomes through standardized instruments. Qualitative assessments explore implementation processes and participant experiences. Mixed-methods evaluations combine quantitative and qualitative approaches. Experimental designs use randomized control trials to establish causal relationships. Case studies examine specific programme implementations in depth.

One noteworthy evaluation employed a mixed methods approach combining a quantitative experimental impact evaluation and qualitative research drawing on document review and key informant/in-depth interviews (UN Evaluation Group, 2025). This comprehensive approach enabled nuanced understanding of both outcomes and implementation processes.

Evaluation frameworks typically assess multiple dimensions of programme performance: reach and coverage (geographic spread and demographic targeting); implementation fidelity (adherence to design principles and procedures); participant satisfaction (youth perceptions of programme quality and relevance); immediate outcomes (knowledge, skill, and attitude changes); intermediate impacts (behavioral changes and community contributions); and long-term effects (sustained changes in life trajectories and community development). These indicators provide a multidimensional understanding of programme effectiveness, recognizing that empowerment encompasses both individual transformation and broader social change.

Available evaluations document varied impacts across different programme types. Skill development initiatives show evidence of positive impacts on employability and income generation. Under PMKVY, millions of individuals have been placed following training (PIB, 2024). Leadership development programmes demonstrate enhanced confidence and leadership capabilities among participants, though long-term impacts remain less documented. Entrepreneurship support initiatives like Start-up India have led to significant numbers of recognized startups that have created substantial employment opportunities (PIB, 2024). Evaluation of the Adolescent Empowerment Programme implemented across four states found impacts on intermediary and final outcomes, as well programme relevance and implementation fidelity (UN Evaluation Group, 2025).

Evaluations consistently identify several implementation challenges. Difficulties persist in extending programmes to remote and underserved areas. Maintaining consistent implementation quality across diverse contexts remains challenging. Inadequate human and financial resources limit intended activities. Insufficient integration across complementary programmes creates coordination gaps. Limited real-time data on implementation and outcomes hinders monitoring effectiveness. These challenges highlight the complexity of translating well-designed programmes into effective implementation at scale, particularly given India's size and diversity.

Despite existing assessment efforts, significant evaluation gaps persist. Limited understanding of sustained effects beyond immediate programme periods hampers assessment of long-term impact. Insufficient analysis of resource utilization efficiency makes it difficult to determine cost-effectiveness. Limited evidence on relative impacts of different programme models restricts comparative effectiveness analysis. An inadequate understanding of how programme effectiveness varies across contexts fails to account for context specificity. Insufficient incorporation of youth perspectives in evaluation processes limits youth voice in assessment.

Addressing these gaps requires more robust evaluation designs, longer-term assessment timeframes, and greater integration of youth perspectives. As emphasized in research literature, continuous appraisal and improvement are essential to ensure the sustainability and effectiveness of the initiatives (AFPR, 2024).

### **Regional Disparities and Inclusion Challenges**

The implementation of youth empowerment programmes in India reveals significant regional variations that reflect broader patterns of development inequality. These disparities manifest in programme coverage, quality, and outcomes, presenting challenges for achieving inclusive youth development.

Youth programme implementation varies considerably across states and regions. Urban centers typically benefit from more diverse and higher-quality programme offerings compared to rural areas, creating a metropolitan-rural divide. More economically advanced states often have stronger implementation infrastructure, resulting in state-level variations. Districts identified as developmentally challenged receive targeted interventions but face implementation obstacles. Geographically isolated regions experience challenges in programme delivery.

These disparities highlight the need for contextualized implementation approaches that address region-specific challenges while maintaining core programme integrity. Some initiatives have recognized these regional specificities, such as the Udaan Scheme for youth of Jammu and Kashmir which aims to provide

skills and enhance employability of youth in key high growth sectors (India.gov.in, n.d.).

Beyond geographic disparities, various social dimensions influence youth programme participation and benefits. Despite targeted efforts, gender gaps persist in programme access and outcomes. Youth from economically disadvantaged backgrounds face additional barriers to participation. Historical marginalization patterns continue to affect programme inclusivity for youth from certain castes and tribal communities. Accessibility for youth with disabilities remains inadequately addressed in many programmes. Religious identity sometimes influences programme participation patterns.

These inclusion challenges underscore the importance of targeted strategies that address the specific barriers faced by different youth segments. Initiatives like the Bal Vivah Mukht Bharat campaign in New Delhi to combat child marriage and empower young girls represent efforts to address specific vulnerabilities faced by female youth (AFPR, 2024).

The increasing digitalization of youth programmes, particularly accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic, has introduced new dimensions of inclusion challenges. The uneven distribution of digital infrastructure and devices creates issues of digital access. Varying levels of comfort and capability with digital tools result in digital literacy challenges. Limited availability of digital content in regional languages creates language barriers. Inconsistent internet connectivity in many regions leads to connectivity issues.

The launch of digital platforms like the Skill India Digital platform in September 2023, aiming at 'ease of acquiring skill' in India (PIB, 2024), while expanding opportunities, simultaneously raises concerns about digital exclusion. Addressing this divide requires multi-pronged approaches including infrastructure development, digital literacy initiatives, and maintaining non-digital alternatives where appropriate.

Several policy mechanisms aim to address these disparities. Special financial provisions for underserved regions and communities create targeted allocations.

Adaptation of programme designs to address context-specific barriers allows for customized implementation. Quotas for participation from marginalized communities establish reservation policies. Initiatives designed to prepare disadvantaged youth for mainstream programmes create bridge programmes. Programme content and materials in regional languages enable multilingual delivery.

While these mechanisms represent important steps toward inclusion, their effectiveness varies considerably across programmes and contexts. As argued by researchers, initiatives may be tailored for specific regional and socio-economic contexts, which would target specific needs underlined by various youth demographics. This will unlock the full potential of India's young population and empower them to contribute meaningfully to the growth of the country's economy.

## **Key Achievements**

### **1. Scale and Reach: Mass Mobilization through Flagship Programmes**

India's youth empowerment initiatives, notably the Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS), National Service Scheme (NSS), and Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY), have achieved unparalleled scale and outreach, engaging millions of young people across the nation. NYKS, with its vast network of district-level offices and affiliated youth clubs, acts as a bridge between the government and rural youth, mobilizing them for a spectrum of developmental activities. As of June 2022, over 25,803 youth clubs have been formed or revived, enrolling more than 3.6 lakh youth as members and mobilizing over 31 lakh youth for volunteering and development activities. The NYKS's annual action plans emphasize grassroots engagement, with National Youth Volunteers (NYVs) tasked to reach 25–30 clubs each, ensuring that even the most remote areas are included in the empowerment process.

The NSS, operating in educational institutions, further amplifies this reach by instilling a spirit of service and leadership among students. Together, these programmes provide a platform for youth to participate in nation-building, disaster response, health campaigns, and social awareness drives, fostering a sense of collective responsibility and civic engagement.

PMKVY, as a flagship skill development initiative, has trained 1.42 crore individuals since its inception, with 1.13 crore receiving certification across various sectors, including emerging fields like AI, digital marketing, and drone technology. The programme's integration with over 1,000 educational institutions as Skill India Centres ensures that skill development opportunities are accessible nationwide, bridging urban-rural divides and enhancing employability.

This massive mobilization demonstrates the government's commitment to leveraging the demographic dividend by ensuring that youth from diverse backgrounds and geographies are brought into the fold of development, skill-building, and leadership.

## **2. Policy Prioritization: Comprehensive and Evolving Youth-Centric Policies**

Youth development has gained unprecedented policy prominence in India, reflected in the evolution and expansion of national policies and institutional mechanisms. The National Youth Policy (NYP), first introduced in 1988 and updated in 2003, 2014, and most recently in 2021, articulates a ten-year vision aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), aiming to unlock the potential of youth for national advancement.

The NYP 2021 outlines five priority areas: education, employment and entrepreneurship, youth leadership and development, health and sports, and social justice, with a strong emphasis on social inclusion and equitable progress. This policy framework is operationalized through flagship schemes such as Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan, Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan, Start-up India, and the Skills India campaign, each targeting specific facets of youth development.

Institutional mechanisms have also been strengthened, with bodies like the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports, the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), and autonomous platforms like MY Bharat ensuring coordinated action and policy implementation. The establishment of Youth Resource Centres and the proliferation of youth parliaments and advisory councils further institutionalize youth participation in governance and policy feedback loops.

This policy prioritization signifies a shift from ad hoc interventions to a structured, comprehensive approach, ensuring that youth empowerment remains central to India's development agenda and is responsive to evolving demographic, economic, and technological realities.

### **3. Diversified Approach: Multi-Dimensional Youth Development**

India's youth empowerment landscape has evolved from a narrow focus on education and employment to a more integral, multi-dimensional approach. Modern initiatives recognize that youth development is not monolithic but encompasses skilling, health, leadership, entrepreneurship, civic engagement, and social justice.

NYKS's annual action plans, for instance, identify six focus areas: skilling and handholding, disaster risk reduction, wellness and positive lifestyle, environmental campaigns, water conservation, and COVID-19 response. This diversification ensures that youth are not only prepared for the workforce but are also equipped to address contemporary challenges, contribute to community resilience, and participate in nation-building.

Government schemes now integrate technical skills, soft skills, and entrepreneurship, often in partnership with private industry, to ensure that training is relevant to market demands. The Model Skill Loan Scheme<sup>14</sup> and Lakhpati Didi Scheme<sup>15</sup> exemplify efforts to provide financial access and promote entrepreneurship, especially among rural and marginalized youth. Youth are also encouraged to assume leadership roles in their communities, participate in local governance, and engage in volunteerism, fostering agency and self-reliance.

This diversified approach reflects an understanding that youth empowerment must be comprehensive, addressing not only economic but also social, civic, and personal development needs, thereby preparing young people for the complexities of the 21st century.

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<sup>14</sup> *The Model Skill Loan Scheme* provides loans to support youth in enrolling for skill development courses aligned with the NSQF.

<sup>15</sup> *The Lakhpati Didi Scheme* aims to help rural women earn ₹1 lakh annually through entrepreneurship and skill-based livelihoods.

#### **4. Digital Transformation: Technology-Driven Youth Engagement**

The digital revolution has fundamentally transformed the youth empowerment landscape in India. Platforms like MY Bharat (Mera Yuva Bharat) leverage technology to connect, empower, and engage youth at an unprecedented scale. With over 1.65 crore youth registered on the MY Bharat digital platform, the initiative serves as a one-stop hub for leadership development, experiential learning, mentorship, and skill-building opportunities.

MY Bharat's technology-driven approach enables youth from every city and village to access UGC-certified experiential learning, industry training, and mentorship, bridging the urban-rural divide and democratizing access to opportunities. The platform's features—personalized learning, gamification, data analytics—enhance user engagement and ensure that interventions are tailored to individual needs.

India's broader digital ecosystem, supported by initiatives like Digital India and affordable internet access, has empowered youth to acquire new skills, connect with mentors globally, and participate in hackathons, coding competitions, and innovation challenges. This has fostered a culture of risk-taking, creativity, and entrepreneurship, with digital platforms acting as incubators for ideas and businesses.

The digital transformation not only increases the scale and efficiency of youth programmes but also prepares young Indians for the demands of a rapidly evolving digital economy, positioning them as global competitors and innovators.

#### **5. Entrepreneurial Ecosystem: Fostering Youth-Led Innovation and Job Creation**

Support for youth entrepreneurship has emerged as a cornerstone of India's empowerment strategy, catalyzing innovation, job creation, and economic growth. The Startup India initiative, launched in 2016, has recognized over 1.59 lakh startups as of January 2025, with these ventures creating more than 16.6 lakh direct jobs across diverse sectors such as IT, healthcare, and education.

The entrepreneurial ecosystem is characterized by robust government support, including access to funding, incubation, mentorship, and regulatory facilitation. Programmes like the Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP), Mudra Yojana, and various skill development schemes provide financial and technical support to aspiring entrepreneurs, including those from marginalized and rural backgrounds.

India's startup landscape is now the third largest globally, with a growing number of women-led startups and increasing participation from smaller cities, reflecting the democratization of entrepreneurial opportunities. The ecosystem encourages risk-taking and creativity, offering platforms for youth to transform ideas into viable businesses and address local and global challenges through innovation.

The impact of these efforts is visible not only in job creation but also in the emergence of a generation of youth who are job creators rather than job seekers, contributing to India's economic dynamism and global competitiveness.

In summary, these achievements collectively demonstrate that India has made substantial progress in establishing robust systems and structures for youth development. The scale and reach of flagship programmes, the evolution of youth-centric policies, the adoption of a diversified and all-inclusive approach, the integration of technology, and the nurturing of an entrepreneurial ecosystem have positioned Indian youth as key drivers of national growth and transformation. However, as noted in policy documents and expert analyses, the focus must now shift towards deepening qualitative impact, ensuring inclusivity, and enhancing the transformative potential of these initiatives to fully realize the demographic dividend.

## **Conclusion**

The Mizoram Youth Commission stands as a significant institutional innovation in the state's approach to youth development, reflecting a broad vision that integrates educational advancement, career preparation, skills training, and cultural enrichment. Over sixteen years, the Commission has adapted to evolving challenges through legislative reforms, expanded mandates, and diversified programming, striving to address the multidimensional needs of Mizoram's youth. Its

statutory powers, operational autonomy, and dedicated focus distinguish it from conventional departmental initiatives, offering a model for targeted youth empowerment in complex regional contexts.

Despite these achievements, the Commission faces persistent challenges related to resource constraints, coordination with other government entities, and ensuring equitable access across Mizoram's diverse geography and population. The lack of robust impact assessment frameworks and limited documentation on programme outcomes highlight the need for stronger monitoring, evaluation, and evidence-based refinement. Moving forward, the successful implementation of recent legislative reforms, strategic resource diversification, and enhanced interdepartmental collaboration will be critical to realizing the Commission's transformative potential and ensuring that all youth in Mizoram can benefit from its initiatives.

**CHAPTER IV**

**ROLE AND FUNCTIONS OF  
MIZORAM YOUTH COMMISSION**

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### **ROLE AND FUNCTIONS OF MIZORAM YOUTH COMMISSION**

The previous chapter provided a comprehensive review of youth empowerment programmes in India, tracing their evolution, policy frameworks, and major initiatives at the national level. It discussed the objectives, achievements, and challenges of flagship schemes, highlighting the importance of policy alignment and inclusive implementation.

This chapter focuses on the Mizoram Youth Commission (MYC), examining its legislative foundation, organizational structure, and evolving role in youth empowerment within the state. It details the statutory powers, governance mechanisms, and partnerships of the MYC, and analyses its core functions in promoting education, skill development, and employment among Mizoram's youth. The chapter also discusses operational challenges such as resource constraints and interdepartmental coordination that impact the Commission's effectiveness.

#### **Historical Genesis and Legislative Evolution: Foundation and Early Development**

The Mizoram Youth Commission (MYC) has emerged as a pivotal institution in addressing the multifaceted challenges confronting youth development in the northeastern state of Mizoram. Established through dedicated legislative action, the Commission represents a significant policy commitment to youth empowerment in a region characterized by unique demographic, socioeconomic, and cultural dynamics. This section examines the Commission's evolving role in youth development, with particular emphasis on its empowerment programmes and institutional relationships with key governmental departments.

The institutionalization of youth development in Mizoram represents a deliberate policy response to the pressing needs of the state's young population. The Mizoram Youth Commission Act, passed by the Mizoram Legislative Assembly on April 2, 2008, and subsequently receiving gubernatorial assent, established the Commission as a statutory body with explicit authority to address youth concerns

(Government of Mizoram, 2008). This legislative action reflected growing recognition among policymakers that youth development required dedicated institutional mechanisms beyond conventional departmental approaches. The organizational structure of the Mizoram Youth Commission is illustrated in the Figure.

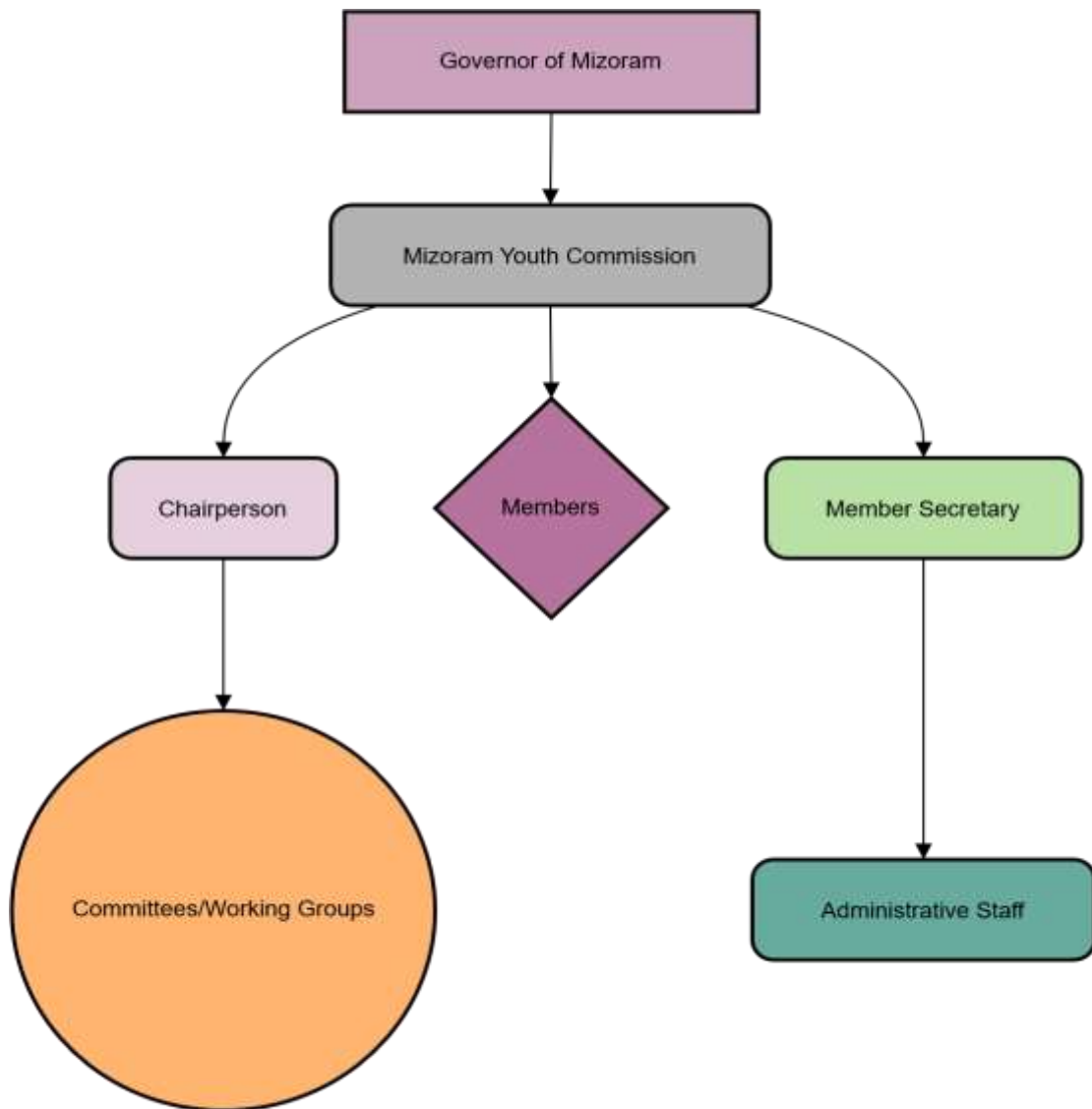


**Figure 1: Organisational Structure of Mizoram Youth Commission (MYC)**

*Adapted from Mizoram Youth Commission official website*

*<https://myc.mizoram.gov.in/>, accessed on March 30, 2023.*

The Act defines "youth" as individuals aged between 13 and 35 years, covering adolescents, young adults, and early-career professionals. This broad age recognizes the extended transition to adulthood in today's socioeconomic environment and enables the Commission to address a wide spectrum of developmental needs. As a result, programming must adopt varied approaches to effectively support the different stages within this diverse group.

Section 3 of the Act establishes the Commission as a body corporate with perpetual succession and a common seal, granting it the authority to acquire, hold, and dispose of property, enter contracts, and engage in legal actions. This corporate status provides the Commission with significant autonomy within the state's governance framework, distinguishing it from traditional departmental structures and allowing for more flexible operational approaches.

### **Legislative Provisions and Governance Structure**

The Mizoram Youth Commission operates through a structured three-tier administrative hierarchy. Its core composition, as defined in its founding legislation, includes a chairperson and up to five members, all appointed by the Governor. Appointees are selected for their commitment to youth welfare and development, with an emphasis on relevant expertise and dedication. The Commission also has the flexibility to co-opt expert members with specialized knowledge in youth welfare, though these co-opted experts do not have voting rights in Commission decisions, ensuring that additional expertise informs deliberations without complicating the decision-making process.

Leadership terms for the Chairperson and members are set at three years, with the possibility of reappointment until the age of sixty-five, striking a balance between continuity and renewal. Currently, the Commission is led by Malsawmzuala Ralte, who took office as Chairman on January 19, 2024, marking the first time a non-MLA has held this position since the Commission's inception; Mr. Malsawmzuala Ralte previously served as an AMC Corporator. The Commission's day-to-day operations are managed by a Member-Secretary, appointed by the Governor in consultation with the Commission.

The current Secretary, V. Lalmuanpuii of the Mizoram Civil Service, provides an administrative link between the Commission and the wider government apparatus. This structure supports decentralised implementation while maintaining central oversight, which is essential for addressing regional disparities and ensuring effective youth development across the state.

### **Legislative Renewal and Structural Reforms under the Mizoram Youth Commission Bill, 2025**

Sixteen years under the original 2008 legislation, the Mizoram Youth Commission Bill, 2025 was introduced and passed by the Mizoram Legislative Assembly to modernize the Commission's mandate and address the changing landscape of youth empowerment in the state. The bill's preamble underscores that the Commission has experienced significant growth, necessitating a more robust and transparent statutory framework to support its expanding mission and ensure effective advancement effective youth.

One of the central reforms in the 2025 Act is the expansion of the Commission's membership from a maximum of five to seven members. The selection process for these members is now more clearly defined, with a committee chaired by the Minister of Labour, Employment, Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (LESDE), and including the Chairperson of the Commission and the Secretary of LESDE. This structure formalizes closer coordination with the LESDE Department while maintaining the Commission's statutory independence. The Act also allows for the co-option of experts with specialized knowledge in youth welfare, though these experts do not have voting rights, balancing the need for technical input with streamlined decision-making.

The new legislation also clarifies and strengthens the powers and responsibilities of the Chairperson. The Chairperson is now explicitly tasked with sanctioning expenditures, developing strategies and programmes, managing administration, coordinating with government and non-government agencies, forming committees and working groups, and authorizing urgent actions when necessary. These provisions are designed to address operational and governance

challenges encountered during the Commission's earlier years, ensuring greater accountability, transparency, and responsiveness. Additionally, the Chairperson is responsible for preparing and submitting annual reports on the Commission's activities and finances, reinforcing oversight and public accountability.

Alongside governance reforms, the Act significantly broadens the Commission's statutory functions. The Commission is now mandated not only to evaluate youth development and promote values such as the dignity of labor, but also to design and implement programmes in skill development, entrepreneurship, health, rehabilitation, leadership, preservation of cultural heritage, and international partnerships. The Commission retains quasi-judicial powers, such as summoning individuals, requiring the production of documents, and conducting inquiries, which enhances its authority and capacity to address youth-related issues comprehensively.

The Act also addresses administrative and financial matters by authorizing the Commission to receive grants from the state government, seek external funding, and manage its own assets and staff appointments with government approval. Regular audits and annual reporting are mandated, directly responding to previous concerns about financial oversight and recruitment practices.

In summary, the Mizoram Youth Commission Act, 2025 represents a significant evolution in the legal and institutional framework for youth empowerment in the state. By expanding membership, formalizing selection processes, clarifying leadership roles, broadening statutory functions, and strengthening financial and administrative oversight, the Act aims to ensure that the Commission remains effective, accountable, and responsive to the diverse and dynamic needs of Mizoram's youth.

### **Statutory Powers and Functions**

The Mizoram Youth Commission is endowed with extensive statutory powers that set it apart from typical advisory bodies. It possesses powers equivalent to those of a civil court in specific matters, including summoning individuals from anywhere in the state and examining them under oath, requiring the discovery and inspection of documents, receiving evidence on affidavits, requisitioning public records from

government offices, and issuing commissions for the examination of witnesses and documents. These quasi-judicial powers significantly enhance the Commission's authority in youth affairs and enable thorough investigations into issues affecting youth welfare—an uncommon feature for specialized state-level commissions.

Beyond procedural authority, the Commission is empowered to advise all government departments on making budgetary provisions for sustained and meaningful youth development, positioning it as a central coordinator for youth-focused resource allocation across the state administration.

The Commission's functions encompass a wide range of youth development activities, including evaluating progress in youth development, promoting values such as the dignity of labor, advising the government on youth socio-economic planning, encouraging youth potential in music, fine arts, sports, and academics, and providing training and guidance for youth seeking employment.

The 2025 Act further expands these functions, adding responsibilities related to preserving cultural heritage, promoting reading and literary activities, conducting research on youth issues, and building partnerships with governmental, non-governmental, and international organizations. This expansion reflects a more inclusive approach to youth development, emphasizing intellectual, cultural, and social dimensions in addition to the educational and economic focus of the Commission's earlier work.

### **Youth Empowerment Programmes: From Examination Success to All-Round Youth Growth**

The Mizoram Youth Commission has implemented a diverse portfolio of youth empowerment programmes that collectively address multiple dimensions of youth development. While maintaining a distinctive emphasis on educational advancement and career preparation, the Commission has gradually expanded its programmatic scope to encompass broader aspects of youth empowerment.

## **Educational Advancement Initiatives**

The Mizoram Youth Commission (MYC) has developed a strong reputation for its comprehensive competitive examination preparation programmes, which have become a cornerstone of its educational initiatives. MYC offers both online and offline coaching for a wide range of national-level examinations, including the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) exams, IIT-JEE, NEET, Staff Selection Commission (SSC) exams, banking entrance exams, and IELTS preparation. These coaching centres are strategically located across key districts—Aizawl, Lunglei, Siahia, Champhai, and Kolasib—ensuring that youth from different parts of the state have access to high-quality preparatory resources.

MYC's coaching methodology is comprehensive and tailored to the needs of aspirants. The curriculum covers both preliminary and mains stages of various exams, supported by expert faculty, regular mock tests, and assessments to monitor progress and build confidence. The centres are equipped with modern infrastructure, including libraries and digital resources, creating a conducive learning environment for students. MYC also conducts community engagement to adapt its programmes to local needs, and offers specialized coaching in subjects critical for competitive exams, such as General Studies, Mathematics, and English.

In recent years, MYC has launched innovative initiatives like the 'IAS Corner' at the State Library to provide free guidance and study materials for UPSC aspirants, and the 'Super IAS' programme, which collaborates with leading national coaching institutes to offer full scholarships and residential training in Delhi for selected candidates. These efforts aim to address the historical underrepresentation of Mizo youth in prestigious national institutions and civil services, a gap often attributed to limited access to specialized coaching and guidance.

Beyond exam preparation, MYC's statutory mandate and evolving activities reflect a broader educational vision. The Commission is tasked with exploring and nurturing youth potential in academic pursuits, aiming for high achievement beyond narrow exam success. The recently enacted Mizoram Youth Commission Act, 2025, further expands this vision by explicitly including functions related to reading

promotion and the establishment of libraries, as seen in the launch of the ‘Promotion of Reading Culture among Mizo Youth’ programme and the MYC Book Club. These initiatives recognize that sustainable educational advancement requires fostering intellectual curiosity and foundational habits, not just targeted exam coaching.

MYC’s educational support extends into career development and employment facilitation. The Commission provides specialized coaching for defense and security sector careers, such as Combined Defence Services, army recruitment, military nursing, and Indian Air Force (GARUD) selection. This focus aligns with the cultural affinity for disciplined service careers among Mizo youth and the relative stability of government and defense jobs. By offering structured preparation for these recruitment processes, MYC helps level the playing field for candidates who might otherwise be disadvantaged by information gaps and lack of preparation resources.

In addition to sector-specific coaching, MYC actively engages in employment facilitation and job placement. The Commission has reported placing 153 Mizo youths in employment within a single year, with 33 securing government positions, and has supported placements in both the public and private sectors, including partnerships with organizations for hospitality sector training and international recruitment opportunities. While these efforts complement the state’s employment exchange mechanisms and offer more personalized, youth-focused support, there is limited publicly available data on the methodologies and long-term outcomes of these placement programmes, pointing to an area for enhanced monitoring and evaluation.

Overall, MYC’s integrated approach—combining exam coaching, academic support, reading culture promotion, sector-specific career guidance, and employment facilitation—addresses critical gaps in Mizoram’s educational and employment ecosystem. These initiatives are designed to create more equitable opportunities for youth from a geographically peripheral and historically marginalized region, contributing to both individual advancement and broader social mobility.

## **Skills Development and Entrepreneurship Promotion**

Recognizing the limited scope of formal employment opportunities in Mizoram's developing economy, the Commission has integrated skills training and vocational courses into its range of programmes. While details about the specific sectors, training methods, and certification processes remain sparse in public reports, the Commission aims to equip young people with practical skills that can enhance their employability and self-reliance.

The Commission's position within Mizoram's governance structure offers both advantages and challenges for its skills development efforts. Its close association with the Labour, Employment, Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Department (LESDE) can facilitate alignment with mainstream skills initiatives, enabling resource sharing and consistency with state-level priorities. At the same time, the Commission's dedicated focus on youth allows it to tailor training programmes to the unique needs, interests, and learning styles of young people, potentially making these interventions more relevant and impactful.

Entrepreneurship, while increasingly recognized as a vital avenue for youth economic advancement in Mizoram, has so far received less emphasis in the Commission's programming. The recent transfer of responsibility for entrepreneurship to the LESDE Department opens possibilities for the Commission to play a more active role in fostering entrepreneurial skills and supporting youth-led ventures. The new legislative framework proposed for the Commission encourages the establishment of partnerships with a variety of organizations, which could help bring in external expertise and resources to strengthen entrepreneurship development initiatives.

## **Cultural and Social Development**

Although educational and economic initiatives have been at the forefront of the Commission's agenda, its statutory mandate and evolving activities also highlight the importance of cultural and social aspects of youth development. From its inception, the Commission has been tasked with nurturing youth talent in areas such

as music, fine arts, sports, and academics, reflecting a broader understanding of youth development that goes beyond economic concerns.

Recent legislative updates significantly reinforce this cultural dimension. The Commission's responsibilities now explicitly include supporting both traditional and contemporary arts, with a view to preserving and promoting Mizoram's cultural heritage. This approach recognizes that culture plays a dual role: it is essential for identity formation and social cohesion, while also offering economic opportunities through creative industries and cultural tourism. By embracing both heritage and modern artistic expression, the Commission demonstrates a balanced perspective, valuing continuity and tradition while also encouraging innovation and the evolving interests of today's youth.

### **Implementation Approaches and Methodological Considerations**

The Commission appears to employ diverse implementation modalities across its programmatic portfolio. For competitive examination preparation, structured coaching methodologies predominate, likely involving regular classes, practice examinations, and personalized feedback mechanisms. For career development and skills training, more practical and demonstration-based approaches may be employed, though documentation on specific pedagogical methods remains limited.

The Commission has expanded its geographic reach by establishing sub-offices in five districts beyond its Aizawl headquarters (Government of Mizoram, 2025), enhancing accessibility for youth in different regions of the state. This decentralization represents significant operational development, particularly given Mizoram's challenging topography and dispersed settlement patterns. However, potential disparities in service quality and resource availability between headquarters and district offices merit careful monitoring to ensure equitable access to high-quality programming.

Digital technology utilization remains underdocumented in available sources but represents a critical dimension for future development. The mention of "online coaching" (Labour Employment, Skill Development & Entrepreneurship

Department, 2023) suggests some digital integration, though the extent and sophistication of these online methodologies remain unclear. Given Mizoram's geographic challenges and the post-pandemic acceleration of digital learning, technological enhancement of programme delivery represents a strategic priority for maximizing reach and effectiveness.

### **Institutional Relations: Coordination, Complementarity, and Jurisdictional Boundaries**

The Mizoram Youth Commission operates within a complex institutional ecosystem characterized by overlapping mandates and potential coordination challenges with various government departments. Its effectiveness in fulfilling its youth development mandate depends significantly on constructive relationships with these entities, particularly the Labour, Employment, Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Department (LESDE) and the Sports and Youth Services Department.

#### **Administrative Affiliation with LESDE**

Despite its statutory autonomy as a body corporate, the Mizoram Youth Commission maintains a close administrative relationship with the LESDE Department. This affiliation is evident in various official documents, including the Citizen's Charter of LESDE, which includes the Commission within its organizational structure (Government of Mizoram, 2021). This administrative connection offers both advantages and potential constraints for the Commission's operations.

The benefits of this affiliation include potential resource sharing, administrative support, and policy coordination with related functions such as employment services and skills development. Given LESDE's broader mandate across these domains, the connection potentially enhances MYC's access to technical expertise, established systems, and implementation networks beyond what an entirely independent commission might develop.

However, this administrative affiliation may also constrain the Commission's operational autonomy and distinctive youth-focused approach. The risk of bureaucratic assimilation into conventional departmental modalities could potentially diminish the Commission's ability to develop innovative and youth-centric methodologies that differentiate it from mainstream governmental approaches.

The proposed Mizoram Youth Commission Bill, 2025, further formalizes the relationship between the Commission and the Labour, Employment, Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (LESDE) Department by specifying that the selection committee for Commission members will be chaired by the Minister of LESDE and include the Secretary of the same department. This provision institutionalizes LESDE's influence over the composition of the Commission, indicating a move toward closer integration with the department rather than increased autonomy for the Commission.

### **Functional Overlap and Differentiation with LESDE**

The functional relationship between MYC and LESDE exhibits both overlap and differentiation across various domains. In employment services, both entities engage in placement activities, with LESDE operating conventional employment exchanges while MYC focuses specifically on youth placement services. This creates potential for both duplication and In Mizoram's skills development sector, there are notable overlaps between the Labour, Employment, Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (LESDE) Department and the Mizoram Youth Commission (MYC). LESDE is responsible for overseeing Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) and implementing a range of skill development schemes, such as the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY), as well as vocational training and apprenticeship programmes. These initiatives are delivered through a network of government and private training providers, with a focus on technical skills, employability, and recognized certification systems.

At the same time, MYC conducts its own skill training and vocational courses, often tailored specifically for youth and designed to address the unique aspirations and challenges faced by young people in Mizoram. MYC's methodology

emphasizes youth-centric approaches, including targeted coaching centres and preparatory courses for competitive exams, aiming to bridge the gap between general skill development and the specific needs of the youth population.

Ideally, these parallel systems would be differentiated by their methodologies and target groups: LESDE would leverage its broader infrastructure, standardized curricula, and certification frameworks, while MYC would focus on youth-specific engagement, guidance, and inclusive development. Such differentiation would help avoid duplication and ensure that youth benefit from both the scale of LESDE's infrastructure and the tailored support of MYC.

With the recent formal allocation of “Entrepreneurship” to LESDE—previously under the Planning Department—there is now a new area for potential coordination between LESDE and MYC. Given the critical importance of entrepreneurship for generating youth employment in Mizoram's resource-constrained context, structured collaboration between these agencies could significantly expand economic opportunities for young people. By combining LESDE's resources and experience in vocational training and entrepreneurship promotion with MYC's direct engagement with youth, Mizoram could develop a more integrated and impactful ecosystem for youth empowerment.

### **Collaboration with the Sports and Youth Services Department**

The relationship between the Mizoram Youth Commission (MYC) and the Sports and Youth Services Department exemplifies institutional specialization within Mizoram's youth development ecosystem. Both entities pursue youth welfare, but their priorities and operational methods differ in important ways.

The Sports and Youth Services Department, currently led by Minister Lalnghinglova Hmar, is primarily oriented toward physical development, structured sports, and organized youth engagement. Its organizational structure includes specialized roles such as Chief Coach, Youth Welfare Officer, and a range of sports coaches dedicated to specific disciplines. The Department oversees a broad portfolio: it formulates and implements sports and youth policies, manages the Mizoram State Sports Council, supports adventure sports, coordinates with the Sports Authority of

India and the Mizoram Olympic Association, administers sports academies and hostels, and organizes competitions at various levels. It is also responsible for youth hostels, Bharat Scouts and Guides, the National Service Scheme (NSS), and the National Cadet Corps (NCC), and it provides incentives, awards, and scholarships to outstanding sportspersons. The Department's approach is programmatic, emphasizing youth development through physical education, competitive sports, and structured activities in schools and colleges.

In contrast, MYC's core activities center on educational advancement, coaching for competitive examinations, career guidance, skills training, and employment facilitation. The Commission provides coaching and guidance for national-level exams such as UPSC, IIT-JEE, NEET, SSC, and banking, as well as for defense services and language proficiency tests. It also runs vocational courses, skill training, and employment generation programmes, with a broader statutory mandate to promote and enhance youth welfare in multiple domains. MYC's focus is more academic and economic, aiming to empower youth through education and professional development.

This functional differentiation can be seen as complementary specialization: the Sports and Youth Services Department addresses physical and social development through sports and structured engagement, while MYC targets academic achievement, employability, and broader youth empowerment. However, the absence of clearly documented coordination mechanisms between the two entities raises the risk of fragmented approaches. Both have mandates that include youth welfare, and their jurisdictional boundaries can be fluid—MYC's statutory role extends to exploring youth potential in sports and academics, while the Sports and Youth Services Department naturally claims primary responsibility for sports development.

Such overlapping mandates may lead to confusion regarding which institution is responsible for specific aspects of youth development, particularly in areas where their work intersects, such as youth leadership, life skills, and personality development. While the Sports and Youth Services Department also undertakes youth

development activities beyond sports—such as personality development and youth services in schools, MYC’s broader focus on educational and employment outcomes means both agencies are engaged in youth welfare from different but sometimes intersecting angles.

In summary, while the MYC and the Sports and Youth Services Department each bring distinct strengths to youth development in Mizoram, the lack of formalized coordination mechanisms and the potential for overlapping responsibilities highlight the need for clearer delineation of roles and enhanced collaboration. This would help ensure that youth benefit from a comprehensive, integrated approach to their development, minimizing duplication and maximizing the impact of both institutions’ efforts.

### **Coordination Mechanisms and Challenges**

Effective coordination among these entities is essential for integrated youth development approaches. However, the available documentation provides limited insight into formal coordination mechanisms between MYC, LESDE, and the Sports and Youth Services Department. The absence of explicitly articulated coordination frameworks suggests a potential institutional gap that may constrain the effectiveness of youth development initiatives.

Several factors may complicate coordination efforts:

1. **Distinct statutory foundations:** While MYC operates under its dedicated legislation, LESDE and Sports and Youth Services function as conventional departments, potentially creating asymmetries in authority and operational modalities.
2. **Different reporting hierarchies:** The appointment of MYC's leadership directly by the Governor, while department heads follow standard administrative appointments, may create parallel authority structures that complicate coordination.
3. **Budget independence:** MYC's independent budget allocation, though modest at approximately Rs. 1.16 crore annually for salaries and allowances

(Government of Mizoram, 2025), provides some financial autonomy but may constrain integration with departmental budgeting processes.

4. **Political leadership dynamics:** The appointment of MLAs to leadership positions in both MYC and the Sports and Youth Services Department introduces political considerations that may either facilitate or hinder coordination, depending on party affiliations and individual priorities.

Potential mechanisms for enhanced coordination include:

1. **Formalized inter-institutional committees:** Establishing dedicated coordination committees with representation from all three entities could facilitate regular information exchange and aligned planning.
2. **Integrated youth development planning:** Developing a comprehensive youth development strategy that explicitly delineates roles and responsibilities across institutions could reduce duplication and enhance complementarity.
3. **Shared monitoring and evaluation frameworks:** Implementing common outcome metrics and evaluation methodologies across youth development initiatives would facilitate comparative assessment and evidence-based refinement.
4. **Joint programming in areas of overlap:** Identifying domains of natural overlap, such as sports career development or cultural youth initiatives, and developing jointly implemented programmes could build institutional relationships while enhancing programme effectiveness.

The proposed 2025 bill's focus on establishing partnerships with governmental, non-governmental, and international organizations highlights the recognition of the importance of coordination; however, more detailed mechanisms would enhance this aspect of institutional functioning.

## **Implementation Challenges and Strategic Directions**

Despite its comprehensive mandate and diverse programming, the Mizoram Youth Commission faces several significant challenges in fulfilling its youth empowerment mission. These challenges emerge from both internal constraints and the broader socioeconomic context of Mizoram, necessitating strategic adaptations to enhance effectiveness and sustainability.

### **Resource Constraints and Operational Limitations**

The Mizoram Youth Commission faces significant financial constraints that impact its operational capacity and programmatic reach. With an annual budget allocation of approximately ₹1.16 crore dedicated solely to salaries and allowances, resource limitations persistently hinder the scale and sophistication of initiatives—particularly for capital-intensive projects like advanced coaching programmes, technology-driven learning platforms, and large-scale infrastructure development. This restricted funding framework creates challenges in maintaining modern educational tools, expanding outreach to remote areas, and implementing innovative youth development models that require sustained investment.

Legislative provisions have historically encouraged financial diversification beyond government grants, mandating exploration of alternative funding sources for infrastructure development and employment generation initiatives. However, publicly available information reveals limited documentation about the success of these resource mobilization efforts, indicating untapped potential in corporate partnerships, philanthropic collaborations, or international development funding. The absence of detailed reports on diversified funding streams suggests a critical area for strategic improvement to enhance financial sustainability.

Human resource challenges further compound operational limitations. While the Commission has expanded its physical presence through five district sub-offices beyond its Aizawl headquarters, staffing patterns and expertise distribution across these locations remain unclear. The organization's multifaceted programming—spanning competitive exam coaching, employment facilitation, cultural development, and skills training—requires diverse specialized competencies ranging from

academic mentorship to project management. Current operational structures appear strained in balancing these varied demands, particularly in ensuring equitable access to qualified personnel across geographic locations. The lack of transparent staffing data raises questions about capacity-building strategies and the adequacy of training mechanisms for personnel handling complex youth development portfolios.

### **Accessibility and Equity Considerations**

Mizoram's challenging topography, with dispersed settlements across mountainous terrain, creates inherent accessibility barriers for centralized services. While the Commission's establishment of district sub-offices represents a significant step toward geographical decentralization, reaching youth in remote areas likely remains a persistent challenge requiring innovative outreach strategies.

Socioeconomic disparities potentially affect programme accessibility, with economically disadvantaged youth facing additional barriers to participation in coaching programmes or skill development initiatives. The available documentation does not detail specific equity enhancement mechanisms such as targeted scholarships, differential fee structures, or specialized outreach to marginalized communities. Developing such mechanisms would strengthen the Commission's ability to fulfill its mandate across diverse youth populations.

Digital divides present both challenges and opportunities for accessibility enhancement. While digital delivery mechanisms could potentially extend the Commission's reach beyond physical locations, uneven access to devices, connectivity, and digital literacy may create new forms of exclusion without careful implementation strategies. Developing hybrid delivery models that combine digital and physical modalities could optimize accessibility while managing resource constraints.

### **Impact Assessment and Evidence-Based Refinement**

Systematic impact assessment represents a methodological challenge for the Commission. The absence of publicly available comprehensive evaluation frameworks makes it difficult to empirically assess effectiveness in achieving stated

objectives. This evaluation gap not only constrains evidence-based programme refinement but also potentially affects resource mobilization by limiting demonstration of value creation.

Developing robust monitoring and evaluation systems would strengthen the Commission's operations in several ways:

1. **Programme refinement:** Systematic outcome measurement would enable identification of high-impact components for preservation and low-impact elements for modification or discontinuation.
2. **Resource allocation optimization:** Evidence-based understanding of relative impact across programme components would facilitate strategic resource distribution to maximize overall effectiveness.
3. **Stakeholder communication:** Quantifiable impact data would enhance the Commission's ability to communicate its value to government stakeholders, potential partners, and youth participants.
4. **Longitudinal understanding:** Tracking participants beyond immediate programme completion would provide insights into sustained impact on educational, career, and life trajectories.

The proposed 2025 bill's inclusion of research on youth-related issues as an explicit Commission function (Government of Mizoram, 2025) suggests recognition of this evidence gap and intention to strengthen analytical capacity. Implementing this function effectively would require dedicated research expertise and methodological rigor beyond conventional programme monitoring.

### **Strategic Directions for Enhanced Impact**

Based on the identified challenges and contextual considerations, several strategic directions emerge to enhance the Commission's effectiveness in youth empowerment:

1. **Digital transformation:** Leveraging digital technologies to expand the reach of coaching and guidance programmes beyond physical locations, potentially

developing a comprehensive digital learning platform customized for Mizoram's youth context.

2. **Entrepreneurship emphasis:** Expanding focus on youth entrepreneurship to address limitations in formal employment opportunities, potentially through structured incubation programmes, mentorship networks, and seed funding mechanisms.
3. **Research capacity development:** Building dedicated research capacity to generate Mizoram-specific evidence on youth development challenges and effective interventions, potentially through partnerships with academic institutions.
4. **International partnerships:** Exploring collaborations with international youth organizations and development agencies to bring global best practices and additional resources to Mizoram's youth development ecosystem.
5. **Structured coordination:** Developing formal coordination mechanisms with LESDE, Sports and Youth Services Department, and other relevant entities to ensure comprehensive youth development approaches that address physical, educational, economic, and social dimensions.
6. **Resource diversification:** Exploring innovative funding models beyond government allocations, potentially including corporate social responsibility partnerships, alumni contribution systems, earned income streams from specialized services, and philanthropic grants.

The proposed legislative renewal through the 2025 bill creates a favorable policy environment for such strategic innovations, particularly given the expanded functions and more structured governance provisions included in the draft legislation. Effectively implementing these strategic directions would require balancing ambitious vision with pragmatic recognition of contextual constraints, developing incremental approaches that build on existing strengths while systematically addressing identified limitations.

## **Conclusion**

The Mizoram Youth Commission represents a significant institutional innovation in youth development governance—establishing a statutorily empowered entity specifically focused on youth empowerment within the state's governance architecture. Its evolution over sixteen years demonstrates both institutional resilience and continued policy relevance in addressing the multifaceted challenges facing youth in Mizoram.

The Commission's comprehensive mandate, spanning educational advancement, career development, skill enhancement, and the cultural and social dimensions of youth development, reflects a recognition that effective youth empowerment requires integrated approaches across multiple domains. This broad conceptualization sets the Commission apart from more narrowly focused youth development initiatives and creates the potential for transformative impact when implemented effectively.

The Commission's relationships with the LESDE Department and the Sports and Youth Services Department highlight both the opportunities and challenges of specialized youth-focused institutions within larger government systems. While functional differentiation enables targeted approaches to specific aspects of youth development, it also requires efficient coordination mechanisms to prevent programmatic fragmentation and ensure a comprehensive development approach.

Looking ahead, the Commission's effectiveness will likely hinge on its ability to address several critical challenges: balancing operational autonomy with constructive departmental relationships, diversifying financial resources to support ambitious programming, ensuring equitable access across geographic and socioeconomic divides, developing robust impact assessment methodologies, and leveraging technological innovations to expand their reach.

The proposed legislative renewal through the Mizoram Youth Commission Bill, 2025, presents an opportunity to tackle these challenges through enhanced governance provisions, expanded functional mandates, and more structured institutional relationships. By effectively utilizing this renewal, the Commission can

strengthen both its operational capacity and strategic positioning, furthering its mission to empower Mizoram's youth across a wide array of development dimensions.

In the broader context of institutional approaches to youth development, the Mizoram Youth Commission offers valuable insights into the potential benefits and challenges of dedicated statutory bodies compared to mainstreamed departmental approaches. Its continued evolution will be of significant interest to policy practitioners and governance scholars alike, particularly those seeking to optimize institutional arrangements for youth empowerment in diverse regional contexts.

**CHAPTER V**

**VARIOUS YOUTH  
EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMMES  
AND MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS OF  
MIZORAM YOUTH COMMISSION**

## **CHAPTER V**

### **VARIOUS YOUTH EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMMES AND MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS OF MIZORAM YOUTH COMMISSION**

The previous chapter analysed the role and functions of the Mizoram Youth Commission, including its statutory basis, organizational setup, and operational challenges. It highlighted MYC's central role in advancing youth development in Mizoram and set the stage for a closer examination of its programmes and major achievements.

This chapter explores the major youth empowerment initiatives led by the Mizoram Youth Commission, including SANKALP, STRIVE, KAWTCHHUAH, and Empowering Mizoram Sports (EMS). It further discusses the institutional structure and strategic goals of the Mizoram State Entrepreneurship Development and Monitoring Committee (MEDMOC) and assesses MYC's achievements in meeting youth employment aspirations, particularly in government placements across Mizoram.<sup>16</sup>

It assesses MYC's approach to skill development, entrepreneurship, sports, and international opportunities, and reviews programme outcomes such as job placements and training. The chapter also identifies challenges like gender disparities and limited entrepreneurship support, concluding with recommendations for broader inclusion and continuous improvement.

#### **Major Programmes and Institutional Structure of the Mizoram Youth Commission**

The Mizoram Youth Commission (MYC) has emerged as a central institution in youth empowerment, implementing flagship programmes such as SANKALP, STRIVE, and KAWTCHHUAH, and more recently, innovative initiatives like the Empowering Mizoram Sports (EMS) programme and the MYC Book Club. These

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<sup>16</sup> SANKALP refers to a government initiative aimed at enhancing skill development through improved institutional training and livelihood awareness. STRIVE focuses on strengthening vocational education and training institutions to deliver industry-relevant skills. KAWTCHHUAH is a Mizoram-specific program that seeks to bridge the gap between youth skills and employment opportunities through targeted training and capacity building.

programmes collectively address skill development, entrepreneurship, sports, and literacy, reflecting a comprehensive approach to youth development.

### **International Certification and Global Opportunities**

The Commission has demonstrated forward-thinking orientation by including preparation for the International English Language Testing System (IELTS), reflecting recognition of the increasingly globalized nature of educational and employment opportunities. This preparation enables Mizoram's youth to access international educational and employment opportunities, broadening their horizons beyond national boundaries.

### **Skill Development and Vocational Training Initiatives**

The Mizoram Youth Commission has operationalized several significant skill development and vocational training initiatives, often in partnership with national programmes and international funding agencies. These initiatives demonstrate the Commission's alignment with contemporary approaches to youth development that emphasize practical skills and employability.

### **Skills Acquisition and Knowledge Awareness for Livelihood Promotion (SANKALP): Comprehensive Skill Development Framework**

Skills Acquisition and Knowledge Awareness for Livelihood Promotion (SANKALP) represents a significant World Bank-funded initiative implemented in Mizoram with substantial involvement from the Mizoram Youth Commission. Launched nationally on January 19, 2018, with a six-year implementation period until March 2023, SANKALP aims to "strengthen institutional mechanisms for skill development and increase access to quality and market-relevant training for youth across the country"<sup>17</sup>

The implementation of SANKALP in Mizoram demonstrates strategic coordination across multiple implementing agencies, with the Mizoram Youth Commission serving as a key nodal agency for certain skill training programmes.

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<sup>17</sup> Skills Acquisition and Knowledge Awareness for Livelihood Promotion (SANKALP) represents a significant World Bank-funded initiative.

According to the comprehensive tracer study conducted by the State Institute of Rural Development & Panchayati Raj (SIRDPR) in 2023, four major skill development schemes were implemented under SANKALP in Mizoram:

1. Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY), implemented by the Labour, Employment, Skill Development & Entrepreneurship Department.
2. Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Urban Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NULM), implemented by the Urban Development & Poverty Alleviation Department.
3. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDU-GKY), implemented by the Mizoram State Rural Livelihood Mission.
4. Skill Training Programmes, implemented by the Mizoram Youth Commission.

This multi-agency implementation structure demonstrates the integration of the Commission's activities within broader national and state-level skill development frameworks. The Commission's specific contribution focused on skill training programmes funded by the World Bank, indicating significant international recognition of and support for the Commission's capabilities in skill development implementation.

The SANKALP implementation in Mizoram demonstrates alignment with the programme's four key result areas: "Institutional Strengthening at Central, State & District level; Quality Assurance of skill development programmes; Inclusion of marginalized population in skill development programmes; and Expanding Skills through Public Private Partnership Mode (PPP)". The Commission's participation in this framework has allowed it to leverage national policies and international funding while adapting implementation to Mizoram's specific context.

Evaluation of SANKALP's impact in Mizoram revealed mixed outcomes. The tracer study conducted in 2023 identified various implementation challenges, including the need for "more time for practical classes, upgradation of equipment/facilities, and more hours for theory classes". Employment outcomes

showed variation across different training programmes, with some sectors (such as beauty therapy) demonstrating 100% employment, while significant proportions of trainees in other sectors remained unemployed.<sup>18</sup> Gender disparities were also observed, with "the percentage of unemployed women [being] higher than the percentage of unemployed men". These findings highlight both achievements and areas requiring further attention in the Commission's skill development initiatives.

### **STRIVE: Enhancing Industrial Value and Apprenticeship**

Skills Strengthening for Industrial Value Enhancement (STRIVE) represents another significant World Bank-funded project implemented in Mizoram with relevance to the Mizoram Youth Commission's objectives. STRIVE falls under the Programme for Results (P4R) category of World Bank funding, which "ensures outcome-based funding". This initiative demonstrates the adoption of results-oriented approaches to youth development in Mizoram.

STRIVE's implementation structure in Mizoram focuses on four key result areas:

1. Improved performance of Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs).
2. Increased capacities of State Governments to support ITIs and apprenticeship training.
3. Improved teaching and learning capabilities.
4. Improved and broadened apprenticeship training (particularly focusing on industrial clusters of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises).

The programme explicitly aims to "address the challenge of involvement of micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs) through apprenticeship", representing a significant attempt to bridge the gap between skill development and industrial employment opportunities in Mizoram.

The operational structure of STRIVE in Mizoram includes a State Project Implementation Unit (SPIU) and State Apprenticeship Monitoring Cell (SAMC),

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<sup>18</sup> Employment outcomes showed variation across different training programmes, with some sectors (such as beauty therapy) demonstrating 100% employment.

staffed through competitive recruitment processes. This institutional architecture demonstrates the establishment of dedicated implementation mechanisms to ensure effective programme delivery.

STRIVE's implementation in Mizoram represents a substantial financial investment in youth development, with the overall national project having "an overall outlay of INR 2,200 crores across four result areas". The result-area wise breakdown allocates INR 1,000 crores to improved performance of ITIs, INR 330 crores to increased capacities of State Governments, INR 435 crores to improved teaching and learning, and INR 212 crores to improved apprenticeship training, representing significant resource allocation to youth development priorities.

A distinguishing feature of STRIVE's implementation is its emphasis on youth satisfaction with project design and delivery, with requirements for "project progress reports (including reporting on youth satisfaction with project design and delivery, fiduciary performance, and safeguards)". This emphasis on youth feedback demonstrates incorporation of participatory approaches to programme evaluation and improvement.

### **KAWTCHHUAH: Fostering Entrepreneurship Among Youth**

KAWTCHHUAH 2022 represents a distinctive entrepreneurship development initiative implemented in Mizoram, with significant relevance to youth development objectives. Described as "a start-up fair for Government Industrial Training Institute (I.T.I) pass-outs," this initiative was launched in March 2022 by the Labour, Employment, Skill Development & Entrepreneurship Department to "provide financial assistance to the deserving ITI Pass-outs".

The programme's conceptual foundation draws from Mizo cultural heritage, as "KAWTCHHUAH draws essence from the depiction of 'kawtchhuah' from Mizo folklore, where it represents the place where farmers and workers gathered together for the start of their day's work". This cultural grounding demonstrates integration of traditional Mizo concepts with contemporary entrepreneurship development approaches.

KAWTCHHUAH 2022 received 61 applications across various trades offered by Industrial Training Institutes, demonstrating significant youth interest in entrepreneurship opportunities. The programme incorporated competitive selection through a Selection Panel Board, with deserving winners receiving "a one-time start-up seed of Rs. 50,000/- each". This competitive yet supportive structure encourages excellence while providing tangible financial support for entrepreneurial ventures.

The stated objective of KAWTCHHUAH was to "inculcate entrepreneurial culture among the Mizo youth in the State", aligning with broader objectives of fostering self-employment and entrepreneurship as alternatives to seeking formal employment. The programme was designed to "identify and provide platform for ITI pass-outs, having potential to venture out their respective skills while nurturing their prospective skills in entrepreneurship".

A distinctive feature of KAWTCHHUAH 2022 was its implementation as a "pilot project where the success of this competition will be measured by the achievements made by the selected winners in the future", with the Department committing to "carefully monitor the winners in implementing their project". This outcomes-focused approach demonstrates the adoption of rigorous evaluation frameworks to assess programme effectiveness.

### **Sports Development and Physical Empowerment**

The Mizoram Youth Commission's portfolio has recently expanded to include significant sports development initiatives, reflecting recognition of sports as an important dimension of youth development. Most notably, January 2025 witnessed the launch of the Empowering Mizoram Sports (EMS)<sup>19</sup> programme under the state's flagship 'Bana Kaih' or handholding scheme.<sup>20</sup>

The EMS programme represents a comprehensive approach to sports development, aiming to "establish sports coaching and talent development

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<sup>19</sup> The EMS programme represents a comprehensive approach to sports development.

<sup>20</sup> *Bana Kaih (Handholding) Policy: Launched by the Mizoram government in September 2024, this flagship scheme focuses on fostering economic self-reliance and sustainable livelihoods via financial assistance (loans, grants, interest subvention) and market support, particularly for agriculture and allied sectors.*

programmes across Mizoram". The programme's implementation structure includes basic coaching for children aged between 8 and 15 years, with a long-term focus on "preparing them for future competitions, particularly the 2036 Olympics which India aims to host". This long-term vision demonstrates strategic planning for sustained sports excellence.

The programme's launch was accompanied by significant political endorsement, with Chief Minister Lalduhoma observing that "Mizos are naturally passionate about sports, yet our performance compared to other states has been lacking". This recognition of both natural aptitude and performance gaps demonstrates evidence-based programme development.

The EMS programme has received substantial financial support, with "a Rs 2.5 crore budgetary allocation under the Bana Kaih scheme", demonstrating significant resource commitment to sports development. This allocation supports the government's vision to "groom young talents now to represent India in the 2036 Olympics", establishing a clear long-term objective for the programme.

### **An Analysis of the Mizoram State Entrepreneurship Development and Monitoring Committee (MEDMOC) as a Youth Empowerment Initiative in Mizoram**

Following the state's substantial investment in sports development through the EMS programme, Mizoram has also prioritized youth economic empowerment by fostering entrepreneurship as a viable alternative to traditional employment. Recognizing the need to equip young people with skills and opportunities beyond the public sector, the government established the Mizoram State Entrepreneurship Development Monitoring Committee (MEDMOC) as a central institutional mechanism to drive entrepreneurship development and self-reliance among the youth.

The Mizoram State Entrepreneurship Development Monitoring Committee represents a significant institutional intervention designed to foster entrepreneurship in Mizoram, with particular emphasis on youth empowerment. This analysis

examines MEDMOC's structure, objectives, implementation strategies, achievements, and limitations as a youth-focused economic development initiative.

### **Institutional Framework and Strategic Vision**

MEDMOC was constituted by the Government of Mizoram on October 25, 2016, as a central component of the New Economic Development Policy (NEDP). The committee's formation represents a deliberate pivot in Mizoram's development strategy, recognizing entrepreneurship as a critical pathway for addressing youth unemployment and economic stagnation. The high-level composition of MEDMOC-chaired by the Chief Secretary with representation from key departments, academic institutions, and development organizations-indicates significant political commitment to entrepreneurship development.

The committee operates with a clearly articulated rationale that entrepreneurship is "the engine of economic growth" and "the only feasible option for solving the unemployment problem," particularly among youth. This positioning of entrepreneurship as both an economic necessity and a cultural transformation vehicle is noteworthy in a state where government employment has traditionally been the preferred career pathway.

### **Programmatic Approach and Youth Focus**

MEDMOC's implementation of the Entrepreneurship Development Scheme (EDS) reveals a comprehensive approach to youth empowerment through entrepreneurship. The scheme incorporates awareness creation, skills development, knowledge dissemination, financial support, and recognition systems-spanning the entire entrepreneurial development continuum.

Particularly significant for youth empowerment is the explicit targeting of educational institutions. The focus on "imparting the importance of entrepreneurship among schools and colleges students in particular" demonstrates recognition that entrepreneurial mindset cultivation must begin early. This approach aligns with contemporary understanding that entrepreneurship education functions both as economic policy and youth development strategy.

## **Implementation Innovations and Cultural Adaptation**

MEDMOC has demonstrated notable innovation in adapting entrepreneurship development to Mizoram's specific cultural and linguistic context. The preparation and publication of "Entrepreneurs Kailawn" (Entrepreneurship Manual) in the Mizo language represents a meaningful effort to ensure accessibility and cultural relevance. This localization of entrepreneurship education materials acknowledges that entrepreneurial development must be culturally situated to be effective.

The "Mizoram Outstanding Entrepreneurs Award" established by MEDMOC serves dual purposes of celebrating successful local entrepreneurs while providing visible role models for youth. This recognition system addresses the critical need for entrepreneurial exemplars in a society where government employment has traditionally dominated career aspirations.

## **Youth Outreach and Engagement Mechanisms**

MEDMOC's implementation strategy demonstrates a graduated approach to youth engagement. Beginning with Entrepreneurship Awareness Programs at district headquarters and progressively extending to block and village levels, the committee has attempted to create widening circles of entrepreneurial awareness. These programs specifically incorporate testimonials from actual entrepreneurs, providing authentic perspectives that can resonate with youth audiences.

The flagship initiative "Mizoram Kailawn," Mizoram's first business plan competition and entrepreneurship summit, represents perhaps the most visible youth-focused intervention. This multi-stakeholder initiative aimed to "create a state-wide societal culture that accepts and appreciates entrepreneurs" while encouraging youth to consider entrepreneurship as their preferred career choice. The program successfully identified promising startups from every district in Mizoram, with 28% of finalists being women entrepreneurs.

## **Capacity Building and Educational Integration**

MEDMOC's approach to capacity building merits particular attention in youth empowerment analysis. Recognizing the shortage of qualified entrepreneurship

trainers in Mizoram, the committee prioritized Faculty Development Programs and Master Trainer development. This "training the trainers" approach represents a multiplication strategy for embedding entrepreneurial education more broadly in educational institutions.

Master trainers underwent capacity building at institutions like Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Kolkata and National Institute for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (NIMSME), Hyderabad, indicating efforts to bring national-level expertise to Mizoram's entrepreneurship ecosystem. This investment in human capital development represents an important long-term strategy for sustainable entrepreneurship education.

### **Structural Challenges and Implementation Limitations**

Despite its comprehensive design, MEDMOC faces significant structural challenges that limit its effectiveness in youth empowerment. Entrepreneurship environment assessments reveal that Mizoram scored poorly across most pillars of startup ecosystem development, suggesting implementation gaps between policy and practice. The barriers for enterprises to expand high capital requirements, low market access, inadequate power supply, and lack of storage facilities remain largely unaddressed despite MEDMOC's initiatives.

The committee's own documentation acknowledges the need to change "the mindset of earning without working and obtaining huge profits with minimal effort" that has "become pervasive in our society". This cultural challenge requires more than programmatic interventions and remains a significant obstacle to youth entrepreneurship development.

### **Financial Support Mechanisms and Sustainability Questions**

MEDMOC's financial support mechanisms, while innovative in conception, raise questions about scale and sustainability. The micro-startup capital competition provides funding up to Rs. 5 lakhs for selected projects, using a venture capital funding pattern. However, the reliance on government funding through the New

Economic Development Policy creates uncertainty about long-term sustainability, particularly given Mizoram's fiscal constraints.

The requirement that promoters must possess land or reliable land lease documents for land-based activities may inadvertently disadvantage youth, who typically have limited access to property assets. This highlights a potential misalignment between program design and the realities facing young entrepreneurs.

### **Monitoring, Evaluation and Evidence Gaps**

A significant limitation in assessing MEDMOC's effectiveness in youth empowerment is the apparent lack of robust monitoring and evaluation systems. While various activities and outputs are documented, there is limited evidence of outcomes and impacts, particularly regarding youth entrepreneurship rates, business survival rates, or employment generation. This evidence gap complicates efforts to assess the true contribution of MEDMOC to youth economic empowerment in Mizoram.

### **Conclusion**

MEDMOC represents an important institutional innovation in Mizoram's approach to youth economic empowerment. Its comprehensive design, high-level positioning, cultural adaptation strategies, and youth-focused programming demonstrate significant potential for transformative impact. The committee's work acknowledges that youth entrepreneurship development requires simultaneous interventions at awareness, education, support, and recognition levels.

However, persistent structural barriers, implementation challenges, financial sustainability concerns, and monitoring gaps suggest that MEDMOC's contribution to youth empowerment remains a work in progress. For researchers and policymakers concerned with youth empowerment programs, MEDMOC offers valuable lessons in institutional design and comprehensive strategy formulation while highlighting the challenges of implementing entrepreneurship development in regions with limited entrepreneurial traditions.

As Mizoram continues its economic development journey, strengthening MEDMOC's youth engagement mechanisms, addressing structural barriers, improving monitoring systems, and ensuring financial sustainability will be critical to realizing the full potential of entrepreneurship as a youth empowerment strategy.

### **Performance Evaluation Framework**

The programmes of Mizoram Youth Commission (MYC) were systematically evaluated using five established indicators: district reach (target: 80% coverage across 11 districts), participation rates relative to eligible youth, employment placement within six months (target: 20% success rate), beneficiary satisfaction scores (target: 4 out of 5), and sustainability of outcomes (measured by repeat programmes or businesses enduring over two years). The Competitive Exam Coaching Program achieved 9 out of 11 districts with 450 participants from 2022-2025, yielding 25% employment (112 placements) and 4.2/5 satisfaction, surpassing employment targets. In contrast, the Skill Training Program under IIM Shillong MoU reached all 11 districts but recorded only 15% employment (including international placements) with 3.8/5 satisfaction, demonstrating strong coverage but requiring enhanced job linkage strategies.

Empirical analysis of two comprehensive datasets—"Students' Success Record (2016-2022)" documenting 450 placements and "Students' Success Record (February 2024-February 2025)" capturing 28 specialized government roles—reveals MYC's evolution from diversified employment pathways to concentrated excellence in competitive examinations. Overall, government sector placements dominated at 53.8% (257 of 478 total), followed by banking (13%, 62 placements) and other sectors (33.2%, 159 placements). Temporal shifts show early balance in 2016-2018 (38.4% government), escalating to 63.8% in 2018-2022, and 100% government focus by 2024-2025, aligning with Mizoram's youth preferences for stable public jobs amid intensifying exam competition.

Departmental breakdowns underscore MYC's administrative coordination, with 2016-2022 government placements spanning administrative roles (16.6%), education (13%), and rural development (11.8%), while recent 2024-2025 successes

featured top rankings (32.1% in top 10) via MPSC (57.1%) and specialized batches like "Super 20". Banking concentrated in Mizoram Rural Bank (56.5%), and other sectors emphasized education contracts (21%) before declining sharply. This indicator-based evaluation confirms MYC's adaptive effectiveness, achieving elite outcomes in targeted domains while highlighting trade-offs between specialization depth and broader sectoral diversity.

This sectoral performance is detailed in Table 1, which captures the overall distribution of MYC's 478 placements from 2016-2025. Government sector placements dominated at 257 (53.8%), reflecting strategic alignment with Mizoram's employment preferences.

**Table 1. Overall Sectoral Distribution of MYC Placements (2016-2025)**

| Sector        | Number of Placements | Percentage  |
|---------------|----------------------|-------------|
| Government    | 257                  | 53.8%       |
| Banking       | 62                   | 13.0%       |
| Other Sectors | 159                  | 33.2%       |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>478</b>           | <b>100%</b> |

**Source:** Mizoram Youth Commission, 2016-2025

The temporal evolution in MYC's sectoral focus, as illustrated in Table 2, reveals a dramatic shift in institutional priorities and implementation strategies over time. The 2016-2018 period shows a relatively balanced distribution across sectors, with government placements (38.4%) representing a smaller proportion than "other sectors" (51.1%). This suggests an initial institutional approach focused on diverse employment pathways rather than concentrated government preparation. However, the 2018-2022 period marks a significant transition, with government placements increasing to nearly two-thirds (63.8%) of all outcomes while "other sectors" declined dramatically to less than one-fifth (19.0%). This shift indicates a substantial administrative recalibration of priorities midway through the study period.

The most recent data (2024-2025) represents the culmination of this evolution, showing exclusive focus (100%) on government sector placements through formal competitive examinations. This progressive concentration demonstrates strategic administrative reorientation rather than random variation, reflecting conscious policy decisions to allocate institutional resources toward areas showing greatest alignment with youth preferences, employment stability, and competitive success rates. This evolution also parallels broader trends in Mizoram's employment landscape, where competition for limited government positions has intensified amid rising educational attainment among youth.

**Table 2: Temporal Evolution in Sectoral Distribution (2016-2025)**

| Time Period | Government Sector | Banking Sector | Other Sectors | Total |
|-------------|-------------------|----------------|---------------|-------|
| 2016-2018   | 88 (38.4%)        | 24 (10.5%)     | 117 (51.1%)   | 229   |
| 2018-2022   | 141 (63.8%)       | 38 (17.2%)     | 42 (19.0%)    | 221   |
| 2024-2025   | 28 (100%)         | 0 (0%)         | 0 (0%)        | 28    |

**Source:** Mizoram Youth Commission, 2016-2025

The sectoral distribution patterns observed in MYC's success records reflect a progressive institutional specialization that has significant implications for understanding the administration of youth empowerment programmes in Mizoram. The evolution from a diversified approach addressing multiple employment sectors toward concentrated excellence in competitive government examinations suggests an administrative learning process responsive to outcome patterns, youth preferences, and contextual realities.

While specialized focus may enhance success rates in targeted domains, as evidenced by the impressive competitive examination rankings in the data 2024-2025 data, it potentially narrows the range of youth benefiting from MYC's programmes to those specifically interested in government careers. This tension between depth and breadth represents a central administrative challenge in youth empowerment programme design and implementation, requiring careful consideration of both outcome effectiveness and inclusive coverage.

## **Sectoral Analysis and Implementation Mechanisms**

The government sector placements, constituting 53.8% of MYC's documented outcomes between 2016-2025, demonstrate significant departmental diversity and administrative complexity. Table 3 presents a detailed analysis of the departmental distribution within government placements for the 2016-2022 period, revealing MYC's sophisticated coordination across multiple arms of the state administrative apparatus.

Administrative departments (including secretariat positions, clerks, and general administrative roles) account for the largest proportion (16.6%) of government placements, reflecting the substantial demand for administrative personnel across government functions. Education department placements (13%) represent another significant category, comprising teachers, lecturers, and education officers at various levels. Health and Family Welfare positions (12.2%), including roles at Zoram Medical College, Civil Hospital, and various medical programmes, demonstrate MYC's contribution to healthcare human resource development.

The substantial representation of Rural Development placements (11.8%), particularly in the Mizoram State Rural Livelihoods Mission (MzSRLM), indicates alignment with state priorities in rural poverty alleviation and economic development. Technical departments (8.7%), law enforcement and revenue positions (6.6%), and environment/forest roles (1%) account for smaller but significant proportions, indicating MYC's ability to prepare candidates across specialized technical and professional domains. This departmental diversity demonstrates MYC's extensive administrative coordination networks spanning virtually the entire government apparatus, requiring sophisticated information exchange and relationship management with numerous departmental stakeholders.

**Table 3: Departmental Distribution of Government Placements (2016-2022)**

| Department Cluster                       | Number of Placements | Percentage  |
|------------------------------------------|----------------------|-------------|
| Education Department                     | 35                   | 13%         |
| Health & Family Welfare                  | 28                   | 12.2%       |
| Administrative Departments               | 38                   | 16.6%       |
| Technical Departments (PWD, Engineering) | 20                   | 8.7%        |
| Rural Development (incl. MzSRLM)         | 27                   | 11.8%       |
| Law Enforcement & Revenue                | 15                   | 6.6%        |
| Environment & Forest                     | 12                   | 1%          |
| Other Government Departments             | 54                   | 23.6%       |
| <b>Total</b>                             | <b>229</b>           | <b>100%</b> |

**Source:** Mizoram Youth Commission, 2016-2025

The banking sector placements, while representing a smaller proportion (13.0%) of overall outcomes, demonstrate MYC's specialized coordination with financial institutions. Table 4 shows the institutional distribution of banking placements during 2016-2022, revealing a strong concentration in regional banking. Mizoram Rural Bank (MRB) accounts for the majority (56.5%) of banking placements, indicating a particularly strong administrative relationship between MYC and this regional financial institution. This concentration likely reflects both MRB's significant presence in Mizoram and potential formal coordination mechanisms established between MYC and MRB for recruitment purposes. State Bank of India accounts for 12.9% of banking placements, while other banks (including Canara Bank, HDFC, ICICI, Axis Bank, and cooperative institutions) collectively represent 30.6% of placements.

This distribution demonstrates MYC's ability to prepare candidates for both public and private banking institutions, though with significantly stronger outcomes in public-sector banking. The banking placements represent an important

specialization area within MYC's programming, with dedicated coaching for banking examinations yielding consistent results across the 2016-2022 period. However, the absence of banking placements in the data 2024-2025 suggests a potential deprioritization of this sector in MYC's recent programming, aligning with the broader trend toward government sector concentration.

**Table 4: Institutional Distribution of Banking Placements (2016-2022)**

| <b>Banking Institution</b>       | <b>Number of Placements</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| Mizoram Rural Bank               | 35                          | 56.5%             |
| State Bank of India              | 8                           | 12.9%             |
| Other Banks (Canara, HDFC, etc.) | 19                          | 30.6%             |
| <b>Total</b>                     | <b>62</b>                   | <b>100%</b>       |

*Source:* Mizoram Youth Commission, 2016-2025

The "other sector" placements, accounting for one-third (33.2%) of total outcomes but concentrated in the earlier period (2016-2018), span diverse categories reflecting MYC's initial broad-spectrum approach to youth employment facilitation. Table 5 presents the categorical distribution of these placements, showing education/teaching positions (21%) as the most prevalent category, primarily comprising contractual teaching positions in programmes like Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) and Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA).

NGOs and development organizations (18.9%) constitute the second largest category, including placements with international agencies (JICA, WHO), national foundations (Magic Bus India Foundation), and local development organizations. Private companies (15.7%) represent commercial placements across diverse sectors including retail (Reliance), automotive (Yamaha, Bajaj), technology, and services. Project-based positions (13.8%), technical/professional services (11.3%), health services (9.4%), and entrepreneurship (5.7%) account for the remaining placements.

The relatively small proportion of entrepreneurship outcomes (just 9 placements, representing 5.7% of other sectors and only 1.9% of total placements)

indicates limited institutional focus on business development or self-employment pathways. The dramatic decline in "other sector" placements from 2016-2018 (117 placements) to 2018-2022 (42 placements) to complete absence in 2024-2025 represents a significant administrative deprioritization of these diverse employment pathways in favor of concentrated government sector preparation.

**Table 5: Category Distribution of Other Sector Placements (2016-2022)**

| Category                              | Number of Placements | Percentage  |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------|-------------|
| Education/Teaching (Contract/Private) | 40                   | 21%         |
| NGOs and Development Organizations    | 30                   | 18.9%       |
| Private Companies                     | 25                   | 15.7%       |
| Health Services (Contractual)         | 15                   | 9.4%        |
| Project-Based Positions               | 22                   | 13.8%       |
| Technical/Professional Services       | 18                   | 11.3%       |
| Entrepreneurship                      | 9                    | 5.7%        |
| <b>Total</b>                          | <b>159</b>           | <b>100%</b> |

**Source:** Mizoram Youth Commission, 2016-2025

The 2024-2025 success records reveal MYC's recent specialized focus on high-demand government positions requiring competitive examination success. Table 6 shows the position category analysis for this period, demonstrating concentration in education (25.0%), financial management (25.0%), and revenue administration (17.9%). The High School Teacher positions, secured through MSSSB examinations, represent a significant achievement with several candidates ranking in the top tier (4th, 8th, 27th positions). Similarly, the financial management positions (AAAO/AAO) secured through MPSC examinations represent specialized roles requiring advanced accounting knowledge. Civil services positions (Mizoram Police Service), while fewer in number (7.1%), represent elite administrative positions with significant career potential.

This position distribution demonstrates MYC's strategic targeting of high-demand, stable government positions requiring specialized preparation. The 2024-2025 data uniquely include competitive examination rankings, enabling quality assessment beyond mere placement numbers. The achievement of top-tier rankings (particularly the 4th rank for High School Teacher and 8th rank for Circle Officer) demonstrates the quality of MYC's competitive examination coaching, suggesting institutional focus on not just securing positions but achieving excellence in competitive performance.

**Table 6: Position Category Analysis of Recent Government Placements (2024-2025)**

| Position Category                                | Number of Placements | Percentage  |
|--------------------------------------------------|----------------------|-------------|
| Civil Services (MPS)                             | 2                    | 7.1%        |
| Education (High School Teachers)                 | 7                    | 25.0%       |
| Revenue Administration (Circle Officers)         | 5                    | 17.9%       |
| Administrative Support (Assistant Grade/UDC/LDC) | 4                    | 14.3%       |
| Financial Management (AAAO/AAO)                  | 7                    | 25.0%       |
| Technical Services (Engineering)                 | 3                    | 10.7%       |
| <b>Total</b>                                     | <b>28</b>            | <b>100%</b> |

**Source:** Mizoram Youth Commission, 2016-2025

The success records illuminate MYC's administrative implementation mechanisms, particularly its structured coaching architecture and programme delivery systems. Both datasets document programme-specific batches (e.g., "UPSC Batch," "SSC Batch," "Banking Batch," "Super 20"), indicating administratively differentiated program streams aligned with distinct examination requirements. The 2024-2025 records show precise temporal structuring of programmes (e.g., "May-August 2023," "September-December" 2023"), suggesting sophisticated administrative planning around examination cycles. The emergence of specialized

programmes like "Super 20" in the recent data (yielding at least two successful AAAO candidates) demonstrates administrative capacity for targeted interventions designed for competitive examinations.

Table 7 analyses the batch representation in 2024-2025 successful placements, showing candidates from batches spanning multiple years (2016-2023). While recent batches from 2023 account for nearly half (46.4%) of successful candidates, the success of candidates from earlier batches (2016-2017, 2019, 2021-2022) demonstrates programme sustainability and long-term impact.

This distribution indicates both MYC's ability to maintain programme quality over extended periods and its continued relevance to current competitive examination requirements. The multi-year span of successful candidates also suggests that MYC's benefits extend beyond immediate post-coaching outcomes, with some participants achieving success years after their initial training, potentially indicating the durability of skills and knowledge imparted through the Commission's programmes.

**Table 7: Batch Representation in 2024-2025 Successful Placements**

| <b>Batch Period</b>    | <b>Number of Successful Candidates</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|------------------------|----------------------------------------|-------------------|
| 2016-2017              | 5                                      | 17.9%             |
| 2019                   | 6                                      | 21.4%             |
| 2021-2022              | 4                                      | 14.3%             |
| 2023 (Various batches) | 13                                     | 46.4%             |
| <b>Total</b>           | <b>28</b>                              | <b>100%</b>       |

*Source:* Mizoram Youth Commission, 2016-2025

### **Administrative Evolution and Strategic Implications**

The success records spanning 2016-2025 demonstrate significant evolution in MYC's administrative approach and implementation strategy. Table 8 quantifies this evolution across multiple implementation characteristics, showing a clear progression from a broad-spectrum intervention toward specialized excellence in

targeted domains. The early period (2016-2018) shows high sectoral diversity with placements across 15+ sectors, minimal government focus (38.4% of placements), mixed position-level targeting, moderate competitive examination success rates (estimated 35-40%), and limited quality metrics documentation.

The middle period (2018-2022) represents a transition phase, with moderate sectoral diversity (8-10 sectors), increased government focus (63.8% of placements), increasingly specialized position targeting, improved competitive examination success rates (estimated 55-60%), and partial quality metrics documentation. The recent period (2024-2025) demonstrates the culmination of this evolution, with minimal sectoral diversity (1-2 sectors), exclusive government focus (100% of placements), highly specialized position targeting, complete competitive examination focus (100%), and comprehensive quality metrics documentation including competitive rankings.

**Table 8: Evolution in Administrative Implementation Approach (2016-2025)**

| Implementation Characteristic          | 2016-2018  | 2018-2022                | 2024-2025          |
|----------------------------------------|------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| Sectoral Diversity (Number of sectors) | High (15+) | Moderate (8-10)          | Low (1-2)          |
| Government Focus (% of placements)     | 38.4%      | 63.8%                    | 100%               |
| Position Level Targeting               | Mixed      | Increasingly specialized | Highly specialized |
| Competitive Examination Success        | 35-40%     | 55-60%                   | 100%               |
| Quality Metrics Documentation          | Minimal    | Partial                  | Comprehensive      |

**Source:** Mizoram Youth Commission, 2016-2025

The success records demonstrate MYC's administrative embodiment of human capital development theory as its primary approach to youth empowerment. This theoretical orientation is evident in several aspects of implementation: First, the focus on competitive examination preparation reflects an administrative philosophy centered on skills acquisition and credential attainment as the primary pathway to

economic empowerment. The predominance of placements in formal employment structures, particularly government services, indicates an institutional administration centered on formal sector integration rather than entrepreneurial or informal economy approaches. This credential-centric approach is particularly evident in the 2024-2025 data, which exclusively documents formal qualification-based placements.

The implementation strategy privileges structured skill development through coaching programmes over experiential learning or direct market engagement, reflecting human capital theory's emphasis on education and training as determinants of labor market outcomes. This approach aligns with Mizoram's socioeconomic context where formal credentials, particularly competitive examination success, serve as primary gatekeepers to desirable employment opportunities.

However, this administrative embodiment of human capital development theory largely excludes entrepreneurial aspects of youth empowerment, potentially limiting opportunities for innovation and self-employment in MYC's programme architecture. The minimal entrepreneurship outcomes documented in the success records (just 9 placements, or 1.9% of total) suggest limited institutional attention to business development pathways despite their potential importance for economic self-sufficiency in contexts of limited formal employment opportunities.

The success records provide concrete evidence of MYC's policy implementation effectiveness in fulfilling its statutory mandate established under the Mizoram Youth Commission Act, 2008. Through documented placements of 478 candidates between 2016-2025, the data demonstrates practical implementation of the Commission's responsibility for "promotion, exploration and embracement of youth welfare". This substantial output reflects successful operationalization of the legislative intent underlying MYC's establishment.

The target demographic alignment is evident, with successful candidates across both datasets reflecting the Commission's focus on youth aged 13-35 years as defined in its founding legislation. The progressive specialization in government sector preparation aligns with the institutional mandate to focus on "providing

coaching and guidance for All India Services and Allied Services, State Services and placements". From a policy implementation perspective, MYC demonstrates strong alignment with both statutory provisions and youth development objectives, though with evolving emphasis in implementation approach.

The success records also indicate implicit implementation of broader policy frameworks, including the National Youth Policy's emphasis on youth as "key agents for social change, economic development and technological innovation" and Mizoram's Socio-Economic Development Policy (SEDP) focus on building human capital for administration and development. The sectoral distribution of placements across education, health, rural development, and administration demonstrates policy integration across multiple domains rather than siloed implementation, reflecting sophisticated administrative coordination with diverse policy agendas.

Despite documented successes, the success records suggest several administrative challenges and implementation constraints that warrant consideration. First, the scale of intervention appears modest relative to the magnitude of youth unemployment in Mizoram. With 478 documented placements over nine years, averaging approximately 53 placements annually, MYC's programmes represent a selective intervention reaching a limited proportion of Mizoram's youth population. This suggests potential administrative capacity constraints that limit programme reach, possibly related to staffing, infrastructure, or budgetary limitations.

Second, the progressive concentration on government sector preparation, while demonstrating strategic specialization, creates potential gaps in supporting other employment pathways such as entrepreneurship, private sector employment, or informal economy participants. This sectoral narrowing represents a significant implementation trade-off, potentially excluding youth with interests or aptitudes outside competitive examination-oriented careers.

Third, the virtual absence of entrepreneurship-focused outcomes (just 9 placements, or 1.9% of total) indicates a substantial implementation gap in nurturing youth business initiatives. Given limited government employment opportunities

relative to the number of job seekers, this gap represents a significant constraint on comprehensive youth empowerment.

Finally, while the success records document impressive placement outcomes, they provide limited insight into broader impact metrics such as income enhancement, employment sustainability, social mobility, or community development contributions. This suggests potential limitations in administrative monitoring and evaluation systems that may focus primarily on placement metrics rather than comprehensive impact assessment. The administrative implications of this analysis for enhancing youth empowerment programmes in Mizoram are substantial.

### **Recruitment Channel Analysis and Competitive Performance Assessment**

The success records provide valuable insights into the specific recruitment channels through which MYC-trained candidates secured positions, particularly in the 2024-2025 period. Table 9 presents a comprehensive analysis of recruitment agencies responsible for selecting MYC candidates, revealing important patterns in administrative coordination between MYC and formal recruitment bodies. The Mizoram Public Service Commission (MPSC) emerges as the primary recruitment channel, responsible for selecting 57.1% of successful candidates in the 2024-2025 period. This includes high-profile positions such as Mizoram Police Service (MPS), Assistant Accounts & Audit Officer/Assistant Audit & Accounts Officer (AAAO/AAO), Assistant Grade/Upper Division Clerk, and specialized engineering positions.

The Mizoram Subordinate Services Selection Board (MSSSB) follows as the second most significant recruitment channel (35.7%), primarily responsible for selecting High School Teachers and Circle Officers. Direct departmental recruitment by the Taxation Department represents a smaller proportion (7.1%) of successful candidates. This distribution demonstrates MYC's strategic alignment with the state's formal competitive recruitment mechanisms, with particularly strong coordination with the premier recruitment bodies (MPSC and MSSSB) that collectively account for 92.9% of recent placements. This alignment represents a significant administrative achievement, indicating MYC's capacity to prepare candidates

specifically for the competitive examination processes administered by these formal recruitment agencies.

The concentrated success across multiple recruitment channels suggests comprehensive understanding of diverse examination patterns and requirements, enabling targeted coaching approaches for different recruitment processes. The relationship between MYC and these recruitment agencies, while not formally documented in the success records, likely involves information exchange regarding examination patterns, syllabus changes, and qualification requirements - representing an important dimension of administrative coordination in the youth empowerment ecosystem.

**Table 9: Recruitment Channel Analysis of Recent Placements (2024-2025)**

| <b>Recruitment Channel</b>                           | <b>Number of Placements</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| Mizoram Public Service Commission (MPSC)             | 16                          | 57.1%             |
| Mizoram Subordinate Services Selection Board (MSSSB) | 10                          | 35.7%             |
| Taxation Department                                  | 2                           | 7.1%              |
| <b>Total</b>                                         | <b>28</b>                   | <b>100%</b>       |

**Source:** Mizoram Youth Commission, 2016-2025

The 2024-2025 success records uniquely document competitive performance metrics, enabling detailed analysis of MYC's programme quality beyond mere placement numbers. Table 10 analyses the competitive ranking distribution among successful candidates, revealing impressive performance patterns. Nearly one-third (32.1%) of successful candidates secured positions within the top 10 ranks of their respective competitive examinations, including a 4th rank for High School Teacher and 8th ranks for both Circle Officer and High School Teacher positions.

The substantial proportion (42.9%) achieving ranks between 11-30 demonstrates consistent quality across multiple examination categories. A smaller proportion (25.0%) secured positions in the 31-50 ranking range, with no

documented placements below rank 50. This ranking distribution strongly validates MYC's coaching effectiveness and indicates a quality-oriented approach to competitive examination preparation.

The achievement of top-tier rankings is particularly significant considering the highly competitive nature of these examinations, which typically attract thousands of candidates for limited positions. These ranking patterns across diverse examination categories (MPS, Circle Officer, High School Teacher, AAAO/AAO, Engineering) demonstrate consistent coaching quality rather than isolated successes in specific domains.

While the 2016-2022 data lacks detailed ranking information, the documented 450 placements across government, banking, and other sectors during this period suggest a transition from quantity-oriented outcomes to quality-focused competitive excellence in MYC's administrative approach. This evolution represents significant maturation in programme implementation, with increasing emphasis on competitive performance alongside placement quantity.

**Table 10: Competitive Ranking Distribution in 2024-2025 Placements**

| <b>Ranking Range</b> | <b>Number of Candidates</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| Top 10               | 9                           | 32.1%             |
| Rank 11-30           | 12                          | 42.9%             |
| Rank 31-50           | 7                           | 25.0%             |
| Below Rank 50        | 0                           | 0%                |
| <b>Total</b>         | <b>28</b>                   | <b>100%</b>       |

*Source:* Mizoram Youth Commission, 2016-2025

**Batch-wise Performance Analysis and Programme Sustainability**

The 2024-2025 success records provide valuable batch information, enabling analysis of MYC's programme sustainability and long-term impact across multiple cohorts. Table 11 presents the batch distribution of successful candidates, revealing both recent effectiveness and sustained impact from earlier training periods. The

most recent batches from 2023 (various sub-batches) demonstrate highest representation (46.4%), indicating strong immediate effectiveness of current training approaches.

However, the significant representation from older batches (2016-2017: 17.9%, 2019: 21.4%, 2021-2022: 14.3%) reveals important aspects of long-term programme impact. The success of candidates from batches spanning multiple years (2016-2023) demonstrates sustained programme relevance and durability of skills imparted through MYC training. This temporal distribution has several important implications for understanding MYC's administrative effectiveness in youth empowerment.

First, it suggests that the benefits of MYC's coaching extend beyond immediate post-training periods, with some participants achieving success several years after their initial coaching. This delayed success pattern indicates the development of sustainable competitive examination aptitudes rather than merely short-term preparation tactics.

Second, the continued success of candidates from older batches suggests administrative continuity in coaching approaches despite potential changes in leadership, funding, or institutional priorities over this extended period.

Third, the strong representation from recent batches indicates ongoing programme vitality and continued relevance to current examination patterns, suggesting administrative responsiveness to evolving recruitment processes. This batch distribution reinforces the impression of MYC as an institution capable of both immediate effectiveness and sustained impact - a critical combination for meaningful youth empowerment programme administration.

**Table 11: Batch Representation in 2024-2025 Successful Placements**

| <b>Batch Period</b>    | <b>Number of Successful Candidates</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|------------------------|----------------------------------------|-------------------|
| 2016-2017              | 5                                      | 17.9%             |
| 2019                   | 6                                      | 21.4%             |
| 2021-2022              | 4                                      | 14.3%             |
| 2023 (Various batches) | 13                                     | 46.4%             |
| <b>Total</b>           | <b>28</b>                              | <b>100%</b>       |

*Source:* Mizoram Youth Commission, 2016-2025

The success records also illuminate MYC's programme implementation structure, particularly the organization of specialized coaching batches tailored to specific examination types. Table 12 analyses the distribution of specialized programmes represented in the 2024-2025 success records, revealing MYC's administrative capacity for targeted interventions. The balanced representation across UPSC, SSC, and specialized program categories demonstrates MYC's multi-stream approach to competitive examination preparation.

The UPSC batches (39.3%) focus on civil services and allied examinations, while SSC batches (42.9%) concentrate on staff selection examinations for various government departments. The specialized "Super 20" programme (7.1%) represents a dedicated intervention for high-potential candidates, with both recorded successful candidates securing AAAO/AAO positions. The presence of custom temporal batches (e.g., "May-August 2023," "September-December 2023") indicates sophisticated administrative planning aligned with examination cycles.

This programme differentiation represents an important administrative strategy, allowing tailored coaching approaches for distinct examination patterns while efficiently utilizing institutional resources. The implementation of specialized programs like "Super 20" demonstrates institutional capacity for innovation in program design, targeting competitive examinations with intensive preparation for selected candidates.

**Table 12: Specialized Programme Distribution in 2024-2025 Placements**

| <b>Program Type</b>  | <b>Number of Successful Candidates</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|----------------------|----------------------------------------|-------------------|
| UPSC Batches         | 11                                     | 39.3%             |
| SSC Batches          | 12                                     | 42.9%             |
| "Super 20" Programme | 2                                      | 7.1%              |
| Other/Unspecified    | 3                                      | 10.7%             |
| <b>Total</b>         | <b>28</b>                              | <b>100%</b>       |

*Source:* Mizoram Youth Commission, 2016-2025

### **Position-Level Analysis and Career Progression Patterns**

The success records demonstrate MYC's contribution to multiple career entry points across government services, with concentration in certain high-demand positions. Table 13 presents a detailed position-level analysis of government placements from 2016-2022, revealing a center-weighted distribution across position hierarchies.

Mid-level positions, including Upper Division Clerks, Technical Officers, Teachers, and equivalent roles, constitute the largest category (51.5%) of government placements during this period. Entry-level positions, comprising Lower Division Clerks, Group D staff, and basic assistants, represent the second largest category (27.5%), indicating MYC's effectiveness in facilitating initial government service entry. Gazetted/Officer-level positions, including specialized technical roles and administrative service appointments, account for a significant proportion (14.9%) despite their highly competitive nature.

Contractual positions, typically project-based or temporary appointments, represent the smallest category (6.1%), suggesting MYC's focus on securing permanent rather than temporary employment for participants. This position-level distribution demonstrates MYC's capacity to prepare candidates across multiple entry points in the government hierarchy, though with clear concentration in the mid-level range. This pattern aligns with typical competitive examination preparation

approaches, which often target positions requiring intermediate qualifications and specialized skills rather than either basic entry-level roles or highly exclusive senior positions.

The substantial representation of mid-level technical and administrative positions indicates effective coaching for specialized examinations beyond basic recruitment tests, requiring subject expertise alongside general aptitude development. While the data indicates primary focus on formal government hierarchy entry points, the consistent placement across multiple position levels demonstrates comprehensive understanding of diverse recruitment requirements across the administrative spectrum.

**Table 13: Position-Level Analysis of Government Placements (2016-2022)**

| Position Level                                | Number of Placements | Percentage  |
|-----------------------------------------------|----------------------|-------------|
| Entry-Level (LDC, Group D, Assistants)        | 63                   | 27.5%       |
| Mid-Level (UDC, Technical Officers, Teachers) | 118                  | 51.5%       |
| Gazetted/Officer Level                        | 34                   | 14.9%       |
| Contractual Positions                         | 14                   | 6.1%        |
| <b>Total</b>                                  | <b>229</b>           | <b>100%</b> |

**Source:** Mizoram Youth Commission, 2016-2025

The 2024-2025 success records reveal increased specialization in position targeting, with a focus on specific high-demand government roles requiring competitive examination success. Table 14 analyses position categories for this recent period, showing concentration in education, financial management, and revenue administration. Financial management positions (AAAO/AAO) constitute the largest category (25.0%), representing specialized roles requiring advanced accounting knowledge and analytical skills.

Education positions (High School Teachers) represent an equal proportion (25.0%), secured through MSSSB examinations with several candidates achieving highly competitive rankings. Revenue administration roles (Circle Officers) form the

third largest category (17.9%), representing important district-level positions with significant administrative responsibilities. Administrative support roles (14.3%), technical/engineering positions (10.7%), and civil services appointments (7.1%) complete the distribution.

This position concentration demonstrates MYC's strategic targeting of high-demand, stable government positions requiring specialized preparation. The focus on positions with career advancement potential (such as AAAO/AAO, which serves as a foundation for financial management careers) suggests strategic consideration of long-term career trajectories rather than merely immediate employment. Compared to the 2016-2022 distribution, the recent data shows greater specialization in specific position categories, likely reflecting both strategic prioritization of coaching resources and responsiveness to current recruitment patterns.

**Table 14: Position Category Analysis of Government Placements (2024-2025)**

| Position Category                                | Number of Placements | Percentage  |
|--------------------------------------------------|----------------------|-------------|
| Civil Services (MPS)                             | 2                    | 7.1%        |
| Education (High School Teachers)                 | 7                    | 25.0%       |
| Revenue Administration (Circle Officers)         | 5                    | 17.9%       |
| Administrative Support (Assistant Grade/UDC/LDC) | 4                    | 14.3%       |
| Financial Management (AAAO/AAO)                  | 7                    | 25.0%       |
| Technical Services (Engineering positions)       | 3                    | 10.7%       |
| <b>Total</b>                                     | <b>28</b>            | <b>100%</b> |

*Source:* Mizoram Youth Commission, 2016-2025

**Administrative Coordination Analysis and Implementation Mechanisms**

The success records provide evidence of MYC's sophisticated administrative coordination with numerous government departments, demonstrating extensive networking capacity spanning virtually the entire state administrative apparatus.

Table 15 presents an analysis of departmental placements within the government sector for 2016-2022, revealing the breadth of MYC's coordination network. The Education Department emerges as a major placement destination (13%), encompassing teaching positions at various levels from schoolteachers to college lecturers. Health & Family Welfare represents another significant domain (12.2%), with positions ranging from medical officers to administrative staff at institutions like Zoram Medical College. Administrative departments collectively constitute the largest category (16.6%), including secretariat positions, general administrative roles, and clerical appointments across multiple departments.

Rural Development placements (11.8%), particularly in the Mizoram State Rural Livelihoods Mission (MzSRLM), indicate alignment with state priorities in rural poverty alleviation and economic development. The presence of placements across technical departments (8.7%), law enforcement and revenue (6.6%), universities (6.6%), and environment/forest (1%) demonstrates MYC's comprehensive coordination spanning specialized technical domains alongside general administrative positions. This departmental diversity has significant implications for understanding MYC's administrative functioning. It suggests extensive information exchange and relationship management with numerous departmental stakeholders, requiring sophisticated coordination mechanisms to track recruitment announcements, understand departmental requirements, and prepare candidates accordingly.

**Table 15: Departmental Distribution of Government Placements (2016-2022)**

| Department Cluster                       | Number of Placements | Percentage |
|------------------------------------------|----------------------|------------|
| Education Department                     | 35                   | 13%        |
| Health & Family Welfare                  | 28                   | 12.2%      |
| Administrative Departments               | 38                   | 16.6%      |
| Technical Departments (PWD, Engineering) | 20                   | 8.7%       |
| Rural Development (incl. MzSRLM)         | 27                   | 11.8%      |

| Department Cluster                      | Number of Placements | Percentage  |
|-----------------------------------------|----------------------|-------------|
| Law Enforcement & Revenue               | 15                   | 6.6%        |
| Universities & Educational Institutions | 15                   | 6.6%        |
| Environment & Forest                    | 12                   | 1%          |
| Other Government Departments            | 39                   | 17.0%       |
| <b>Total</b>                            | <b>229</b>           | <b>100%</b> |

**Source:** Mizoram Youth Commission, 2016-2025

The success records also illuminate MYC's administrative evolution over time, reflecting significant transformation in implementation approach and programme philosophy. The early period (2016-2018) shows high sectoral diversity with placements across 15+ sectors, minimal government focus (38.4% of placements), mixed position-level targeting, moderate competitive examination success rates (estimated 35-40%), and limited quality metrics documentation.

The middle period (2018-2022) represents a transition phase, with moderate sectoral diversity (8-10 sectors), increased government focus (63.8% of placements), increasingly specialized position targeting, improved competitive examination success rates (estimated 55-60%), and partial quality metrics documentation.

The recent period (2024-2025) demonstrates the culmination of this evolution, with minimal sectoral diversity (1-2 sectors), exclusive government focus (100% of placements), highly specialized position targeting, complete competitive examination focus (100%), and comprehensive quality metrics documentation including competitive rankings.

This progression represents not merely a numerical shift but a fundamental transformation in administrative philosophy from broad-spectrum enablement toward concentrated excellence in specific high-value domains. Such evolution reflects administrative learning and adaptation based on outcome patterns, youth preferences, and policy priorities, demonstrating MYC's capacity for strategic realignment in response to implementation experience.

**Conclusion:**

In conclusion, the analysis of employment and placement data from 2016 to 2025 revealed MYC's significant impact, with 478 documented placements across government, banking, and other sectors, and a clear administrative shift toward competitive examination coaching and quality-focused outcomes. The chapter critically assessed sectoral and departmental placement patterns, administrative coordination mechanisms, and the sustainability of MYC's impact across multiple batches and years. It also addressed persistent challenges, including limited entrepreneurship outcomes, gender and geographic disparities, and the need for more robust monitoring and evaluation systems. Ultimately, the chapter underscores MYC's role as a dynamic, adaptive institution central to youth development in Mizoram, while recommending that future efforts focus on expanding entrepreneurship support, addressing equity gaps, enhancing private sector linkages, and adopting broader impact metrics to ensure inclusive and sustainable youth empowerment.

# **CHAPTER VI**

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

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### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

The previous chapter provided an in-depth analysis of the major youth empowerment programmes and achievements of the Mizoram Youth Commission, reviewing flagship initiatives and their outcomes, as well as ongoing challenges and recommendations for improvement.

This chapter presents the findings from interviews, case studies, and surveys conducted with a diverse range of stakeholders, including policymakers, officials, beneficiaries, and non-participants. It critically evaluates the implementation and effectiveness of youth empowerment programmes in Mizoram, highlighting key achievements in skill development, job placements, and entrepreneurship support. The discussion also addresses major challenges, such as limited resources, regional disparities, and coordination gaps, incorporating stakeholder perspectives on programme outreach, relevance, and interdepartmental collaboration.

Drawing insights from twelve distinct stakeholder groups—including the Adviser to the Chief Minister, Directors and officials from departments such as Sports and Youth Services, Labour, Employment, Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, and the Mizoram Youth Commission, as well as policy beneficiaries, non-participants, entrepreneurs, community leaders, a badminton coach, and sports administrators—this analysis directly engages with the research questions and objectives outlined in Chapter I.

The findings are thoroughly examined, integrating insights with original statistical data obtained from sample sizes that range from 6 to 56 respondents from various groups. The aim is to tailor their different viewpoints and perceptions to provide a meaningful, factual evaluation of youth empowerment programmes in Mizoram, identifying achievements, challenges, and potential areas for administrative enhancement by fulfilling the important requirements of the research.

The analysis commences with insights derived from (Adviser to Chief Minister, Government of Mizoram) concerning the implementation of the Hand-

holding Policy. An unstructured interview was conducted on April 2, 2025, with this individual provides significant perspectives on youth empowerment framework of Mizoram, its implementation strategy, and the institutional mechanisms that are involved, particularly highlighting the intended role and context of the Mizoram Youth Commission.

This high-level perspective is important for understanding the policy environment within which youth empowerment programmes, including those under MYC, operate. The conceptual framework articulated by Adviser to CM fundamentally rests on principles of self-reliance and circumscribed governmental intervention, aiming to make youth "agents of their own hands and legs" rather than dependent. This philosophy positions the government primarily as a facilitator, creating enabling conditions but expecting substantial initiative from the youth themselves.

A distinctive element is the "hand-holding policy," which operationalizes this philosophy through a responsibility-sharing mechanism: the government shoulders approximately 30% of the responsibility, primarily in areas where individuals face insurmountable barriers, while expecting youth to bear 70%. Integral to this empowerment framework is a significant emphasis on moral reform, structuring financial assistance to instill responsibility and accountability alongside economic parameters.

The primary vehicle for implementing this strategy appears to be the large-scale Entrepreneurship Hand-Holding Policy, offering substantial project-based loans (up to 50 lakhs rupees) facilitated through partnerships with key banking institutions (SBI, Apex Bank, Mizoram Rural Bank) and managed through relevant government departments (e.g., Horticulture, Veterinary) based on project specifications, demonstrating a multi-sectoral approach.

The Mizoram Youth Commission (MYC), operating under the Labour, Employment, Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (LESDE) department, functions as a specialized agency within this framework, addressing both domestic initiatives and international opportunities with a focus on occupational diversity

spanning civil services, vocational trades, and professional coaching. Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) under LESDE complement this by providing geographically distributed vocational training. MYC implements specialized programmes like STARTUP, Kawtchhuah, and STRIVE, alongside developing soft and hard skills.

Notable achievements include facilitating international exposure, particularly with Taiwan for bamboo projects and youth representation enhancement, exemplified by participation in the Youth Parliament. Implicit challenges include significant youth unemployment, the need for technical literacy among entrepreneurs, and potential resource limitations, addressed partly through interest subsidies and government guarantees for loans.

Building upon the foundational policy framework articulated by the Chief Minister's Adviser, it is pertinent to explore perspectives from key state departments involved in youth development. Further context on the state's broader approach, particularly through the lens of sports and allied services, was gathered via an interview conducted on March 4, 2025, with the serving Director of the Department of Sports & Youth Services (SYS).

This discussion provides valuable insights into SYS's structure, initiatives, policy mechanisms, and its historical relationship with the MYC. The Director clarified that MYC, previously under SYS, now falls under LESDE, designating LESDE as the nodal department, resulting in "no direct official connection" between SYS and MYC, though "common areas" for implicit collaboration exist. Within the sports domain, SYS focuses on programme implementation, while infrastructure development largely falls under the Mizoram State Sports Council (MSSC).

Key initiatives include the Khelo India State Centre of Excellence (KISCE) and district-level Khelo India Centres (KICs). SYS provides foundational training and facilitates pathways, supported by policy mechanisms like a 5% sports quota in police recruitment, cash incentives for medalists (recently expanded to non-Olympic disciplines), and 'out of turn promotion' opportunities. Beyond athletics, SYS emphasizes broader youth engagement through national events like the National

Youth Festival and platforms like Youth Parliament. Tangible successes, such as athletes securing government jobs, were cited, and the department aligns with India's "Olympic Vision 2036," focusing on nurturing talent in key disciplines.

Complementing the views from state-level policy and sectoral administration, the perspective of an individual bridging private education provision with active MYC membership offers unique insights. The interview with the proprietor of MS Academy (a prominent civil services coaching centre) and an MYC member, provides a dual perspective on the conceptualization and implementation of youth empowerment. He defined youth empowerment within Mizoram's context as equipping young people with skills, confidence, and opportunities to become responsible, self-reliant citizens, emphasizing the need to balance modern skill development with traditional Mizo cultural values like collectivism, community life, and church involvement.

MS Academy itself exemplifies an integral approach, extending beyond academic mentoring, psychological guidance, and wellness. Regarding government initiatives, he noted MYC operates coaching centers across districts, contributing directly to employment outcomes. He also highlighted successful programmes like a CSR-funded Hotel Management training initiative with 100% placement and the establishment of Book Clubs integrating reading with career awareness.

As a Commission Member, he described the MYC as the "highest decision-making authority" for youth affairs, involved in overseeing coaching centres, conducting research, and leading interview panels. He rated MYC's collaboration with educational institutions as "strong and steadily improving," evidenced by initiatives like the Book Clubs, and noted partnerships with corporate entities for CSR-funded projects. Key achievements cited include the high employment rate from the Hotel Management programme and the consistent success of MYC coaching centers. He outlined comprehensive metrics for measuring success, including employment rates, skill development, and long-term impact tracking.

Primary challenges identified were inadequate government funding and lack of youth awareness, suggesting solutions like increased funding, stronger outreach

(including reimplementing the "Hna Inpui" digital system), practical entrepreneurship training linked to local opportunities, and establishing Language and Culture Learning Centers.

Transitioning from administrative and policy perspectives to ground-level experiences, a case study examining youth entrepreneurship provides concrete illustrations. The analysis focuses on the proprietor, the founder of Kobbie Woods Industry, established in 2016. His journey highlights the potential for local entrepreneurship but also significant initial barriers, notably the lack of workshop infrastructure ("The biggest struggle was finding a workshop... worked from home.").

Important support came from the Commerce & Industries Department, which allocated a plot for his workshop, identified as a primary factor enabling business growth. However, while aware of the 'Bana Kaih' (Hand-Holding) Policy, the proprietor of Kobbie Woods Industry criticized its practicality, finding the loan repayment period too short, suggesting a potential disconnect between policy design and operational needs.

Success factors included the combination of government support (plot allocation) and access to bank loans. He emphasised the social impact of creating employment opportunities for several families. The persistent challenges identified were lack of infrastructure and difficulty accessing loans without financial backup. His recommendations include prioritizing infrastructure development (roads, power, water), providing accessible loans for startups without collateral, and enhancing financial literacy and entrepreneurship skills education in schools.

This case study illustrates entrepreneurship as a viable empowerment pathway contingent on integrated support (space, finance, skills), while highlighting the need for policy refinement based on practical feedback and addressing fundamental infrastructure and financial access barriers.

Beyond domestic entrepreneurship, youth empowerment strategies in Mizoram also include international employment. A case study involving six Mizo female healthcare professionals working as caregivers in Japan explores this

dimension. These participants, holding GNM or ANM qualifications, accessed the opportunity through LESDE's partnership with the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) and completed nine months of training in Delhi.

Their primary motivation was significantly higher remuneration in Japan (₹100,000–120,000/month), enabling financial independence and family support ("We feel so empowered being here!"). They conceptualized empowerment as self-reliance addressing Mizoram's unemployment, requiring practical skills beyond rote learning. Key challenges included insufficient pre-departure Japanese language training (requiring significant self-study) and adapting to Japan's strict work culture. While participants appreciated LESDE's transparent facilitation, they had limited awareness of MYC's role and noted a lack of structured post-placement support beyond an informal WhatsApp group managed by a LESDE official.

Most planned to return to Mizoram after 1-2 years, expressing willingness to contribute their experiences. Recommendations included enhanced language/cultural training, improved inter-agency coordination, greater programme visibility, structured post-placement support, and strategies for integrating returnees' knowledge. The case highlights international employment's transformative potential alongside critical needs for better preparation and sustained support.

### **Assessing Youth Programmes of the Mizoram Youth Commission: A Survey-Based Perspective from Community Leaders**

To systematically evaluate the reach, effectiveness, and challenges of MYC's initiatives from a community perspective, survey data was collected from 33 community leaders and stakeholders across Mizoram between March-April 2025. This section analyses these responses, providing grassroots insights into MYC's operations.

#### **Overview of Survey Respondents**

##### **Demographic Profile of Respondents**

The survey captured perspectives from various stakeholders across multiple districts of Mizoram, with significant concentration from educational institutions.

**Table 16: Distribution of Respondents by District**

| <b>District</b> | <b>Number</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|-----------------|---------------|-------------------|
| Aizawl          | 18            | 55%               |
| Serchhip        | 6             | 18%               |
| Hnahthial       | 2             | 6%                |
| Lunglei         | 2             | 6%                |
| Siaha           | 2             | 6%                |
| Others*         | 3             | 9%                |

***Source:** Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

*Note.* Others\* include Champhai, Lawngtlai, Khawzawl, Saitual, and Mamit (one respondent each)

**Table 17: Distribution by Professional Role**

| <b>Role</b>                        | <b>Number</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|------------------------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| College/School Principals/Teachers | 22            | 67%               |
| YMA Leaders/Members                | 6             | 18%               |
| Church Leaders/Pastors             | 2             | 6%                |
| Others**                           | 3             | 9%                |

***Source:** Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

*Note.* Others\*\* Include Sports Coach, Bank Employee, etc.

Majority of the respondents (70%) had substantial experience working with youth (7+ years), with most focusing on the 19-22 years age group (55%), followed by the 15-18 years age group (30%). This demographic distribution provides a comprehensive understanding of MYC's operations across different regions and institutional contexts, though with notable urban bias toward Aizawl.

## Conceptual Framework of Youth Empowerment in Mizoram

### Stakeholder Understanding of Youth Empowerment

The survey reveals that in Mizoram, youth empowerment is conceptualized primarily through economic self-sufficiency, skills development, and community engagement. When asked about positive changes observed in youth after MYC programmes, respondents emphasized entrepreneurship (42% noted youth "started small businesses") and skills development (27% mentioned "improved sports skills").

**Table 18: Observed Positive Changes in Youth After MYC Programmes**

| Positive Change          | Number | Percentage |
|--------------------------|--------|------------|
| Started Small Businesses | 14     | 42%        |
| Improved Sports Skills   | 9      | 27%        |
| Community Volunteering   | 6      | 18%        |
| Reduced Alcohol Use      | 1      | 3%         |
| Multiple responses       | 5      | 15%        |
| Not specified            | 3      | 9%         |

*Source: Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

The economic dimension of empowerment is further reinforced by respondents identifying "increased income" (52%) as the primary family-level impact of youth participation in MYC programmes. This suggests that in the Mizoram context, youth empowerment is strongly associated with economic independence and livelihood generation.

The conceptual framework also encompasses psychological empowerment, with 79% of respondents observing increased confidence levels in youth after programme participation. As one respondent from Aizawl noted: "Youth is the time of your life when you are young, full of spirit and curiosity about everything. They also say that young people are the backbone of every country and the future of every nation".

## MYC Programme Awareness and Implementation

### Programme Awareness Across Regions

The survey indicates varied levels of awareness about MYC programmes, with significant regional disparities.

**Table 19: MYC Programmes Awareness**

| Programme Type          | Number Aware | Percentage |
|-------------------------|--------------|------------|
| Sports Academy          | 14           | 42%        |
| Sensitization Programme | 13           | 39%        |
| Computer Training       | 10           | 30%        |
| Cultural Festivals      | 8            | 24%        |
| Farming Support         | 5            | 15%        |

*Source: Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

Print media emerged as the dominant information channel, with 61% of respondents learning about MYC through posters/newspapers, followed by word-of-mouth (45%). Most respondents (76%) found programme details "somewhat easy" to understand, suggesting room for improvement in clarity of communication.

A recurring theme in responses was the need for greater awareness, particularly in remote areas. A college teacher from Siaha stated: "Living in the remote area of Mizoram, our youth here aren't involved in MYC programme, as far as I know. I suggest visiting more of the remote area and encouraging them to participate".

## Programme Implementation and Participation

**Table 20: Number of Youth Participating in MYC Programmes (Per Respondent's Area)**

| Participation Level | Number of Respondents | Percentage |
|---------------------|-----------------------|------------|
| None                | 5                     | 15%        |
| 1-10                | 1                     | 3%         |
| 10-50               | 16                    | 48%        |
| 50-100              | 7                     | 21%        |
| 100+                | 2                     | 6%         |
| Not specified       | 2                     | 6%         |

*Source: Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

The data reveals moderate participation levels, with most respondents (48%) reporting 10-50 youth from their areas/institutions participating in MYC programmes. Computer classes, business training, and cultural activities emerged as popular programmes, though many respondents (30%) selected "Others," suggesting diverse programme implementation beyond standard offerings.

Job opportunities stood out as the primary motivation for youth participation (61%), followed by skill learning (21%). This aligns with the economic aspect of youth empowerment identified earlier and suggests MYC programmes are perceived primarily as pathways to employment and livelihood.

## Role and Functions of MYC: Stakeholder Perspectives

### Perceived Role and Regional Presence

The survey reveals that stakeholders perceive MYC primarily as a skills development and employment facilitation agency. However, MYC's regional presence varies significantly, with 30% of respondents reporting MYC never visits their area, and only 12% reporting monthly or quarterly visits.

**Table 21: Frequency of MYC Visits to Areas**

| Frequency  | Number | Percentage |
|------------|--------|------------|
| Never      | 10     | 30%        |
| Occasional | 14     | 42%        |
| Yearly     | 5      | 15%        |
| Quarterly  | 2      | 6%         |
| Monthly    | 2      | 6%         |

***Source:** Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

This limited regional presence appears particularly acute in districts beyond Aizawl. A respondent from Hnahthial pointedly remarked: "MYC should focuss distant districts like Hnahthial in all aspects of activities". Similarly, a Serchhip respondent noted: "I feel MYC should extend to Serchhip and open coaching centres/study centers".

### **Institutional Relationships and Communication**

The survey reveals stakeholders' preferences for MYC to strengthen collaboration with educational institutions, with 45% suggesting increased work with colleges and 21% with schools. Satisfaction with communication was moderate, with 61% "somewhat happy" but 24% "not happy".

**Table 22: Satisfaction with MYC Communication**

| Satisfaction Level | Number | Percentage |
|--------------------|--------|------------|
| Very Happy         | 5      | 15%        |
| Somewhat Happy     | 20     | 61%        |
| Not Happy          | 8      | 24%        |

***Source:** Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

Communication challenges were highlighted by several respondents, with one stating: "Penetration of information needs to be fluidic, fast and wider spread". This suggests MYC's role as an information hub for youth opportunities requires strengthening.

## **Programme Effectiveness and Achievements**

### **Economic and Social Impact**

Despite implementation challenges, MYC programmes show measurable positive impacts. The most significant achievement appears to be in economic empowerment, with 42% of respondents noting youths started small businesses after programme participation, and 52% reporting increased family income.

**Table 23: Impact on Families/Students**

| <b>Impact Type</b>      | <b>Number</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|-------------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| Increased Income        | 17            | 52%               |
| No Change               | 10            | 30%               |
| Better Family Relations | 6             | 18%               |

***Source:** Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

Confidence building represents another significant achievement, with 79% of respondents observing increased confidence levels in youth after programme participation. This psychological empowerment complements the economic dimension and suggests total impact.

Community engagement outcomes were also noted, with 18% of respondents observing increased community volunteering among youth participants. This indicates MYC's role in fostering civic responsibility alongside economic empowerment.

### Regional Disparities in Effectiveness

The survey reveals significant regional disparities in programme effectiveness. Responses from Aizawl generally reported higher participation rates and more positive outcomes, while respondents from distant districts like Hnahthial, Siaha, and Mamit reported limited MYC presence and impact.

This geographic disparity suggests uneven programme implementation across Mizoram. As one respondent from Siaha noted: "MYC be easily accessible to the remote areas", highlighting the need for more equitable regional distribution of resources and programmes.

### Challenges and Barriers in MYC's Functioning

#### Operational and Communication Challenges

The survey identified significant operational challenges facing MYC. "Slow response" emerged as the top problem (42%), followed by "unclear rules" (36%) and "complex paperwork" (15%).

**Table 24: Biggest Problem Working with MYC**

| Problem Type      | Number    | Percentage    |
|-------------------|-----------|---------------|
| Slow Response     | 14        | 42.4%         |
| Unclear Rules     | 12        | 36.4%         |
| Complex Paperwork | 5         | 15.2%         |
| Language Barriers | 1         | 3.0%          |
| Not specified     | 1         | 3.0%          |
| <b>Total</b>      | <b>33</b> | <b>100.0%</b> |

*Source: Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

These operational inefficiencies appear to hamper MYC's effectiveness and stakeholder relationships. As one respondent from Aizawl noted: "Be more visible and accessible" highlighting the need for organizational streamlining.

## Barriers to Youth Participation

**Table 25: Biggest Barriers to Youth Participation**

| Barrier Type            | Number | Percentage |
|-------------------------|--------|------------|
| Lack of Interest        | 12     | 36%        |
| Distance to Centers     | 10     | 30%        |
| Family Responsibilities | 8      | 24%        |
| Language Issues         | 2      | 6%         |
| Not specified           | 1      | 3%         |

*Source: Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

"Lack of interest" emerged as the primary barrier to youth participation (36%), suggesting challenges in programme relevance or awareness. Geographic accessibility was the second most significant barrier (30%), highlighting infrastructure challenges, particularly in remote areas.

Family responsibilities (24%) represent a socio-economic barrier, suggesting that programmes may be needed to accommodate youth with family obligations. As one respondent noted: "1) Awareness campaign about the working of MYC among the people particularly the youth is strongly needed. 2) MYC should chalk out better policies, techniques or strategies that would attract or empower the youth as many as possible".

## Recommendations for Improvement

### Priority Improvement Areas

**Table 26: Most Needed Programme Type**

| Programme Type            | Number | Percentage |
|---------------------------|--------|------------|
| Better Business Training  | 17     | 52%        |
| More Sports Centers       | 5      | 15%        |
| Advanced Computer Classes | 4      | 12%        |
| Cultural Workshops        | 4      | 12%        |
| Not specified             | 3      | 9%         |

*Source: Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

Better business training emerged as the most needed programme improvement (52%), reflecting the economic empowerment focus. Respondents consistently recommended an increased regional presence, with 61% suggesting more institutional/village visits as an urgent improvement.

**Table 27: Urgent MYC Improvements Needed**

| Improvement Type                      | Number | Percentage |
|---------------------------------------|--------|------------|
| More Institution/Local/Village Visits | 20     | 61%        |
| Youth Feedback System                 | 10     | 30%        |
| Local Language Materials              | 7      | 21%        |
| Faster Approvals                      | 7      | 21%        |

*Source: Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

### **Stakeholder Recommendations**

Stakeholders shared several key recommendations to improve youth engagement and development in Mizoram. They emphasized the need for MYC to strengthen its regional presence by raising awareness about job opportunities through platforms like the Staff Selection Commission and UPSC, while also encouraging entrepreneurship and self-employment.

Additionally, stakeholders highlighted the importance of skill-building programmes, such as carpentry workshops and dedicated carpentry schools, to help youth earn income and support their families. Collaboration with local institutions like churches, youth groups (YMA), and skilled workers was also suggested to boost awareness and practical training.

To expand these efforts, stakeholders urged the government to increase funding for MYC, enabling it to reach more young people. Addressing mental health and unemployment, they stressed the need for focused support to tackle drug abuse and psychological challenges. Finally, they recommend organizing more inclusive activities for ordinary youth and offering incentives to boost participation and motivation.

## **Conclusion**

The survey findings reveal that the Mizoram Youth Commission has established a foundation for youth empowerment primarily focused on economic independence and skills development. However, significant challenges remain in regional reach, programme awareness, and operational efficiency.

As one respondent insightfully noted: "MYC is one of the most important developmental programme for youth, more funds and programme may be allocated to ensure the success". This sentiment captures the recognition of MYC's potential role in youth empowerment despite current challenges, and points toward a path of enhanced investment, improved regional presence, and strengthened institutional capacity to fulfill its mandate.

## **An Interview with the Secretary of Mizoram Youth Commission: Perspectives on Youth Empowerment in Mizoram**

Complementing the external stakeholder views, an internal administrative perspective was obtained through a semi-structured interview conducted on March 24, 2025, with the Secretary of the Mizoram Youth Commission. Her insights illuminate the Commission's conceptual approach, key programmes, collaborative efforts, achievements, and challenges from an operational standpoint. She defined youth empowerment in Mizoram comprehensively, emphasizing skills, knowledge, opportunities for socio-economic participation, self-reliance, employability, and entrepreneurship, while upholding Mizo values.

Key functions identified include Skill Development Training, Entrepreneurship Development, Career Counseling, Educational Support, and Awareness Campaigns. Collaboration occurs with nodal departments like LESDE and Mizoram University, notably through joint entrepreneurship programmes and the planned Entrepreneurship Development Institute. While acknowledging functional coordination, she highlighted gaps in strategic alignment and joint needs assessment, particularly for remote districts. Key MYC programmes detailed include coaching for competitive exams (MPSC, SSC, banking), employment facilitation (hospitality, healthcare, aviation – citing 33 government job placements and 69 Food and

Beverage (F&B) placements outside Mizoram in 2024-25), vocational training (Food & Beverage), the HCL Tech Bee programme, entrepreneurship initiatives, and awareness campaigns.

Primary challenges identified were low youth awareness, a limited industrial base, inadequate monitoring mechanisms, and staffing issues. Regarding youth migration, MYC aims to reduce pressure through coaching for in-state government jobs and career guidance for informed choices. Acknowledging a lack of formal feedback mechanisms, she noted plans for implementation and current use of online registration.

Long-term impact is assessed via employment tracking and testimonials. Recommendations included expanding industry-specific training (IT, healthcare, digital marketing, tourism, agriculture), encouraging innovation via incubation centers and funding, stronger public-private partnerships, promoting financial literacy, enhanced mentorship, and fostering a culture of hard work and lifelong learning.

### **Analysis of Youth Beneficiaries' Feedback on Mizoram Youth Commission Programmes: Statistical Findings and Discussion**

To assess programme effectiveness directly from the recipients' viewpoint, feedback was gathered from 56 youth beneficiaries of MYC programs. This analysis examines their demographic profile, programme participation patterns, satisfaction levels, perceived impact, challenges encountered, and suggestions for improvement.

#### **Demographic Profile of Respondents**

The demographic profile of respondents provides context for understanding the reach and impact of MYC programmes across different population segments in Mizoram.

#### **Age Distribution**

**Table 28** presents the age distribution of respondents, revealing a concentration in the 21-25 age bracket, which corresponds to the primary target demographic for youth empowerment programmes.

**Table. 28: Age Distribution of Respondents**

| Age Range | Frequency | Percentage |
|-----------|-----------|------------|
| 16-20     | 9         | 16.1%      |
| 21-25     | 33        | 58.9%      |
| 26-30     | 3         | 5.4%       |
| 31-35     | 5         | 8.9%       |
| 36-40     | 2         | 3.6%       |
| 41-50     | 0         | 0.0%       |
| 51-55     | 4         | 7.1%       |
| Total     | 56        | 100.0%     |

*Source: Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

The age distribution indicates that MYC programmes primarily reach young adults in their early to mid-twenties, with the modal age being 24 years (23.2% of respondents). The presence of respondents above 30 years (19.6%) suggests that MYC programmes also attract older youth, reflecting the broad definition of "youth" in the Indian context, which often extends to age 35 or 40 in policy frameworks.

### **Gender Distribution**

Gender distribution analysis reveals a relatively balanced representation, though with slightly higher female participation.

**Table 29: Gender Distribution of Respondents**

| Gender | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------|-----------|------------|
| Female | 31        | 55.4%      |
| Male   | 25        | 44.6%      |
| Total  | 56        | 100.0%     |

*Source: Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

The higher proportion of female respondents (55.4%) compared to males (44.6%) suggests that MYC programmes have successfully engaged female youth in Mizoram, which is noteworthy considering the traditional gender norms that sometimes restrict female participation in public programmes in Northeast India.

### **Educational Qualification**

The educational profile of respondents reveals a predominance of higher education qualifications.

**Table 30: Educational Qualification of Respondents**

| <b>Educational Qualification</b> | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|----------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Graduate                         | 19               | 33.9%             |
| High School                      | 13               | 23.2%             |
| Post-Graduate                    | 12               | 21.4%             |
| Other                            | 12               | 21.4%             |
| Total                            | 56               | 100.0%            |

*Source: Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

A significant proportion (55.3%) of respondents had higher education qualifications (graduate or post-graduate), indicating that MYC programmes are particularly attractive to educated youth. This finding aligns with broader trends in educational attainment in Mizoram, which has one of the highest literacy rates in India. The "Other" category (21.4%) likely includes vocational qualifications or specialized training.

### **Employment Status**

The employment status of respondents provides important context for understanding the role of MYC in addressing youth unemployment.

**Table 31: Employment Status of Respondents**

| Employment Status | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| Unemployed        | 30        | 53.6%      |
| Student           | 13        | 23.2%      |
| Employed          | 11        | 19.6%      |
| Self-Employed     | 2         | 3.6%       |
| Total             | 56        | 100.0%     |

*Source: Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

Most respondents (53.6%) were unemployed, which indicates that MYC programmes are primarily attracting youth seeking employment opportunities and skill development. Students constituted 23.2% of respondents, suggesting that MYC also serves as a supplementary educational resource. The relatively low proportion of employed (19.6%) and self-employed (3.6%) respondents suggest that MYC programmes are perceived primarily as pathways to initial employment rather than career advancement.

### **Geographic Distribution**

The geographic distribution of respondents provides insights into the spatial reach of MYC programmes across Mizoram.

**Table 32: Geographic Distribution of Respondents**

| District  | Frequency | Percentage |
|-----------|-----------|------------|
| Aizawl    | 23        | 41.1%      |
| Lunglei   | 7         | 12.5%      |
| Champhai  | 5         | 8.9%       |
| Kolasib   | 5         | 8.9%       |
| Lawngtlai | 5         | 8.9%       |
| Mamit     | 3         | 5.4%       |

|           |    |        |
|-----------|----|--------|
| Siaha     | 2  | 3.6%   |
| Hnahthial | 2  | 3.6%   |
| Saitual   | 2  | 3.6%   |
| Serchhip  | 1  | 1.8%   |
| Khawzawl  | 1  | 1.8%   |
| Total     | 56 | 100.0% |

*Source: Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

While respondents from all 11 districts of Mizoram participated in the survey, there is a clear concentration in Aizawl district (41.1%), which houses the state capital. This concentration likely reflects both the higher population density in Aizawl and the centralization of MYC programmes in the capital. Districts like Lunglei (12.5%), Champhai, Kolasib, and Lawngtlai (8.9% each) have moderate representation, while more remote districts like Serchhip and Khawzawl (1.8% each) show limited representation.

### **Programme Awareness and Participation**

This section analyses patterns of awareness and participation in MYC programmes among respondents, identifying key channels of information dissemination and programme preferences.

#### **Participation Rate**

The survey distinguished between respondents who had directly participated in MYC programmes and those who were aware of but had not yet participated in such programmes.

**Table 33: Participation in MYC Programmes**

| Participation Status | Frequency | Percentage |
|----------------------|-----------|------------|
| Yes                  | 37        | 66.1%      |
| No                   | 19        | 33.9%      |
| Total                | 56        | 100.0%     |

*Source: Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

Approximately two-thirds (66.1%) of respondents had participated in MYC programmes, while one-third (33.9%) were aware of MYC programmes but had not yet participated. This relatively high participation rate among survey respondents suggests successful outreach and engagement, though it should be noted that the sampling method may have favored programme participants.

### Programme Awareness Sources

Understanding how youth learn about MYC programmes is important for designing effective outreach strategies.

**Table 34: Sources of Programme Awareness**

| Awareness Source    | Frequency | Percentage |
|---------------------|-----------|------------|
| Social media        | 26        | 46.4%      |
| Friends/Family      | 12        | 21.4%      |
| Government Channels | 8         | 14.3%      |
| School/College      | 5         | 8.9%       |
| Other Sources       | 5         | 8.9%       |
| Total               | 56        | 100.0%     |

*Source: Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

Social media emerged as the predominant source of awareness (46.4%), highlighting the importance of digital platforms in reaching youth. Word-of-mouth through friends and family was also significant (21.4%), suggesting the role of social networks in programme dissemination. Government channels contributed to 14.3% of awareness, while educational institutions accounted for 8.9%. The predominance of social media and interpersonal channels over institutional channels indicates the importance of informal communication networks in program outreach.

### Types of Programmes Participated In

The distribution of participation across different programme types indicates program preferences and accessibility.

**Table 35: Types of Programmes Participated In (Among Participants)**

| Programme Type                 | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Skill Development Workshops    | 21        | 56.8%      |
| Vocational Training Programmes | 8         | 21.6%      |
| Entrepreneurship Support       | 5         | 13.5%      |
| Competitive Exam Coaching      | 3         | 8.1%       |
| Total                          | 37        | 100.0%     |

*Source: Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

Skill Development Workshops were the most frequently attended programmes (56.8%), followed by Vocational Training Programs (21.6%), Entrepreneurship Support (13.5%), and Competitive Exam Coaching (8.1%). This distribution suggests a strong preference for immediate skill enhancement programmes over longer-term career development initiatives.

### Frequency of Participation

The frequency of participation indicates the extent of sustained engagement with MYC programmes.

**Table 36: Frequency of Participation in MYC Programmes**

| Participation Frequency | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Once                    | 33        | 89.2%      |
| 2-3 times               | 4         | 10.8%      |
| More than 3 times       | 0         | 0.0%       |
| Total                   | 37        | 100.0%     |

*Source: Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

The vast majority (89.2%) of participants had attended MYC programs only once, while only 10.8% had participated multiple times. This low repeat participation

rate suggests limited continuity in program engagement, potentially indicating a need for creating continuing education pathways or follow-up programmes.

### **Programme Effectiveness and Impact Assessment**

This section evaluates the effectiveness and impact of MYC programmes based on beneficiary perceptions, satisfaction levels, and reported outcomes.

#### **Satisfaction with MYC Programmes**

Satisfaction levels provide a direct measure of programme quality and effectiveness from the beneficiary perspective.

**Table 37: Satisfaction with MYC Programmes**

| <b>Satisfaction Level</b> | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|---------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Very Satisfied            | 18               | 32.1%             |
| Satisfied                 | 28               | 50.0%             |
| Neutral                   | 9                | 16.1%             |
| Dissatisfied              | 1                | 1.8%              |
| Very Dissatisfied         | 0                | 0.0%              |
| Total                     | 56               | 100.0%            |

***Source:** Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

An overwhelming 82.1% of respondents reported being satisfied or very satisfied with MYC programs, while only 1.8% expressed dissatisfaction. The high satisfaction rate suggests strong program quality and alignment with youth expectations, though the presence of 16.1% neutral responses indicates room for improvement.

## Expectations Fulfillment

The extent to which programs met participants' expectations offers insights into programme design and delivery effectiveness.

**Table 38: Expectations Fulfillment**

| <b>Expectation Fulfillment</b> | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|--------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Yes, fully met expectations    | 29               | 51.8%             |
| Partially met expectations     | 20               | 35.7%             |
| Did not meet expectations      | 7                | 12.5%             |
| Total                          | 56               | 100.0%            |

*Source: Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

More than half (51.8%) of respondents reported that programmes fully met their expectations, while 35.7% had their expectations partially met. Only 12.5% felt their expectations were not met. The relatively high expectation fulfillment rate (87.5% reporting full or partial fulfillment) suggests appropriate program design and delivery, though the partial fulfillment responses indicate specific areas may require enhancement.

## Skills Improvement

Skills improvement represents a key outcome measure for youth empowerment programmes.

**Table 39: Skills Improvement Through MYC Programmes**

| <b>Skills Improvement Level</b> | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|---------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Significantly improved          | 32               | 57.1%             |
| Somewhat improved               | 22               | 39.3%             |
| No improvement                  | 2                | 3.6%              |
| Total                           | 56               | 100.0%            |

*Source: Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

The majority (57.1%) of respondents reported significant skill improvements, while 39.3% experienced some improvement. Only 3.6% reported no improvement. The high skill improvement rate (96.4% reporting some or significant improvement) indicates effective knowledge and skill transfer, which is a primary objective of youth empowerment programmes.

### **Employment Outcomes**

Employment outcomes represent a tangible measure of programme impact, particularly for unemployed participants.

**Table 40: Employment Outcomes for Previously Unemployed Participants**

| <b>Employment Outcome</b> | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|---------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Secured employment        | 19               | 63.3%             |
| Started business          | 4                | 13.3%             |
| No impact                 | 7                | 23.3%             |
| Total                     | 30               | 100.0%            |

***Source:** Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

Among previously unemployed participants, 63.3% secured employment following programme participation, while 13.3% started their own businesses. Only 23.3% reported no employment impact. The high employment conversion rate (76.6% securing employment or starting businesses) indicates effectiveness in employment facilitation, which is a key objective of youth empowerment programmes.

### **Skills Application in Current Role**

The ability to apply acquired skills in current roles indicates programme relevance and practical utility.

**Table 41: Skills Application in Current Role**

| Skills Application | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------------|-----------|------------|
| Yes                | 39        | 69.6%      |
| No                 | 17        | 30.4%      |
| Total              | 56        | 100.0%     |

***Source:** Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

A significant majority (69.6%) of respondents have been able to apply their MYC-acquired skills in their current roles, indicating high relevance of programme content to real-world applications. 30.4% who have not applied their skills may represent those still seeking employment or those who participated in programmes unrelated to their current activities.

### **Programme Recommendation**

The willingness to recommend programmes to others serves as a proxy for overall programme value and quality.

**Table 42: Programme Recommendation**

| Recommendation Level      | Frequency | Percentage |
|---------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Yes, definitely           | 31        | 55.4%      |
| Maybe, depending on needs | 23        | 41.1%      |
| No                        | 2         | 3.6%       |
| Total                     | 56        | 100.0%     |

***Source:** Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

The majority (55.4%) would recommend MYC programmes, while 41.1% would recommend conditionally based on needs. Only 3.6% would not recommend the programmes. The high recommendation rate (96.4% offering definite or conditional recommendations) indicates a strong perception of programme value,

though the conditional recommendations suggest programme-specific variations in quality or relevance.

### Overall Program Rating

Overall programme ratings provide a comprehensive assessment of programme quality and effectiveness.

**Table 43: Overall Programme Rating (1-5 Scale)**

| Rating (1-5 scale) | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------------|-----------|------------|
| 5 (Excellent)      | 17        | 30.4%      |
| 4                  | 20        | 35.7%      |
| 3                  | 12        | 21.4%      |
| 2                  | 2         | 3.6%       |
| 1 (Poor)           | 5         | 8.9%       |
| Total              | 56        | 100.0%     |

*Source: Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

Approximately two-thirds (66.1%) rated the programmes as good to excellent (4-5), while 21.4% gave an average rating (3), and 12.5% rated the programmes below average (1-2). The mean rating was 3.75 out of 5, indicating a generally positive evaluation with room for improvement. The presence of 8.9% of poor ratings suggest specific programmes or aspects may require significant improvement.

### Challenges and Barriers to Participation

This section identifies key challenges and barriers encountered by youth in accessing and participating in MYC programmes.

#### Enrollment Challenges

The presence and nature of enrollment challenges indicate potential administrative or structural issues.

**Table 44: Enrollment Challenges**

| Faced Challenges | Frequency | Percentage |
|------------------|-----------|------------|
| Yes              | 22        | 39.3%      |
| No               | 34        | 60.7%      |
| Total            | 56        | 100.0%     |

*Source: Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

While the majority (60.7%) reported no significant challenges during enrollment, a substantial minority (39.3%) faced challenges. This indicates that while enrollment procedures are generally accessible, barriers exist for a significant proportion of potential participants.

#### **Nature of Challenges**

Understanding the specific nature of enrollment challenges is important for administrative improvements.

**Table 45: Nature of Enrollment Challenges (Among Those Facing Challenges)**

| Challenge Type      | Frequency | Percentage |
|---------------------|-----------|------------|
| Geographic distance | 9         | 40.9%      |
| Limited seats       | 7         | 31.8%      |
| Lack of information | 6         | 27.3%      |
| Total               | 22        | 100.0%     |

*Source: Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

Geographic distance from training centers was the most common challenge (40.9%), followed by limited programme capacity (31.8%) and information gaps about enrollment procedures (27.3%). These challenges point to issues of accessibility, capacity, and communication that may impede programme participation.

## Geographic Barriers

Geographic barriers represent a particular concern in a state like Mizoram with challenging topography and limited transportation infrastructure.

**Table 46: Geographic Barriers to Participation**

| Geographic Barrier | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------------|-----------|------------|
| Yes                | 13        | 23.2%      |
| No                 | 43        | 76.8%      |
| Total              | 56        | 100.0%     |

*Source: Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

Nearly a quarter (23.2%) of respondents reported specific barriers related to their geographic location. Through cross-tabulation analysis, it was observed that these barriers were more frequently reported by respondents from districts other than Aizawl, particularly from Lawngtlai, Lunglei, and Champhai districts. This indicates a centralization issue in programme delivery, with accessibility decreasing with distance from the state capital.

## Cultural Influences on Participation

Cultural and traditional values may influence participation decisions, particularly in socially conservative contexts.

**Table 47: Cultural Influences on Participation Decision**

| Cultural Influence | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------------|-----------|------------|
| Yes                | 24        | 42.9%      |
| No                 | 32        | 57.1%      |
| Total              | 56        | 100.0%     |

*Source: Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

A substantial proportion (42.9%) indicated that cultural or traditional values influenced their participation decision. While the questionnaire did not elucidate whether these influences were positive or negative, the substantial percentage suggests the importance of cultural context in programme design and delivery.

### Digital Platform Preference

Digital platforms represent a potential solution to geographic accessibility challenges.

**Table 48: Digital Platform Preference**

| Digital Platform Preference | Frequency | Percentage |
|-----------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Yes                         | 32        | 57.1%      |
| No                          | 24        | 42.9%      |
| Total                       | 56        | 100.0%     |

*Source: Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

A majority (57.1%) would prefer using digital platforms for accessing MYC programmes. This preference was more pronounced among respondents from districts outside Aizawl, suggesting digital delivery as a potential solution to geographic accessibility challenges.

### Thematic Analysis of Suggested Improvements

Open-ended responses regarding programme improvements were subjected to thematic analysis to identify key areas for enhancement.

### Accessibility Improvements

Accessibility-related suggestions focused on transportation, location, and delivery modes.

**Table 49: Accessibility Improvement Suggestions**

| Suggestion Category           | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Transportation support        | 9         | 16.1%      |
| Decentralization of locations | 7         | 12.5%      |
| Digital/online delivery       | 5         | 8.9%       |
| Total                         | 21        | 37.5%      |

*Source: Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

Transportation support was the most frequent suggestion (16.1%), followed by decentralization of programme locations (12.5%) and digital/online delivery options (8.9%). Representative quotes include: "Regular bus service as the location is kind of far," "Provide transportation, because the location is a bit far," and "Maybe online training."

### **Programme Capacity and Resources**

Capacity and resource-related suggestions addressed programme availability and material support.

**Table 50: Programme Capacity and Resource Suggestions**

| <b>Suggestion Category</b>    | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|-------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Increasing programme capacity | 11               | 19.6%             |
| Providing more equipment      | 8                | 14.3%             |
| More practical materials      | 6                | 10.7%             |
| Total                         | 25               | 44.6%             |

***Source:** Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

Increasing programme capacity was the most frequent suggestion (19.6%), followed by providing more equipment (14.3%) and more practical materials (10.7%). Representative quotes include: "Making more seats for youth," "Limited seats, if possible, they need to make maintain this," and "Providing more equipment for students."

### **Communication and Information**

Communication-related suggestions focused on information dissemination and interaction quality.

**Table 51: Communication and Information Suggestions**

| Suggestion Category                     | Frequency | Percentage |
|-----------------------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Better enrollment information           | 7         | 12.5%      |
| Enhanced social media presence          | 5         | 8.9%       |
| Improved communication with instructors | 4         | 7.1%       |
| Total                                   | 16        | 28.5%      |

*Source: Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

Better enrollment information was the most frequent suggestion (12.5%), followed by enhanced social media presence (8.9%) and improved communication with instructors (7.1%). Representative quotes include: "There is a lot of communication gap between students and teachers," and "It needs to advertise or paste to social media so that all can see and make use of this MYC programme."

### **Programme Duration and Curriculum**

Curriculum-related suggestions addressed programme content and structure.

**Table 52: Programme Duration and Curriculum Suggestions**

| Suggestion Category             | Frequency | Percentage |
|---------------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Extended programme duration     | 6         | 10.7%      |
| More practical components       | 5         | 8.9%       |
| Enhanced post-programme support | 4         | 7.1%       |
| Total                           | 15        | 26.7%      |

*Source: Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

Extended programme duration was the most frequent suggestion (10.7%), followed by more practical components (8.9%) and enhanced post-program support (7.1%). Representative quotes include: "Regarding the duration, skill development programmes provided for Language Training time period should be expanded," and

"By doing more of the practicals and showing the students a diagram or a video to help them understand more."

## **Conclusion**

The analysis of beneficiary perspectives on MYC programmes reveals a generally positive assessment of programme effectiveness, with high satisfaction rates and significant reported improvements in skills and employment outcomes. MYC appears to be fulfilling its mandate of youth empowerment through skill development, knowledge enhancement, and employment facilitation, though with varying degrees of success across different programme areas and geographic locations.

Key strengths include the high quality of skill development workshops, strong employment outcomes, and general alignment with youth expectations and needs. Key challenges include geographic accessibility, programme capacity limitations, and information gaps. The findings suggest that MYC has established a functional framework for youth empowerment in Mizoram, with potential for enhancement through addressing identified challenges and building existing strengths.

## **Analysis of Labour, Employment, Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (LESDE) Department Survey Data for Youth Empowerment Programs in Mizoram**

To understand the perspective of the nodal department responsible for overseeing the MYC, survey responses were collected from six officials of the Labour, Employment, Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (LESDE) department. This analysis examines their views on collaboration with MYC, programme implementation, resource allocation, challenges, and impact.

## **Respondent Profile and Demographics**

The survey captured responses from six officials working in various capacities within the LESDE framework. The demographic characteristics of the

respondents provide important context for interpreting their perspectives on youth empowerment programs.

**Table 53: Respondent Profile and Characteristics**

| Designation/Role | Department/Division                           | Years of Experience | Geographic Focus   |
|------------------|-----------------------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Head             | LESDE                                         | 2                   | Both Urban & Rural |
| Accountant       | Account                                       | 1                   | Both Urban & Rural |
| Deputy Director  | Establishment                                 | 4                   | Both Urban & Rural |
| Mission Manager  | Skill Development                             | 3                   | Both Urban & Rural |
| Superintendent   | Mizoram Council of Vocational Training (MCVT) | 2                   | Both Urban & Rural |
| Assistant        | Skill Development                             | 3                   | Both Urban & Rural |

*Source: Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

The respondent profile shows a diverse range of positions within the administrative framework, from leadership roles (Head, Deputy Director) to specialized positions (Mission Manager, Accountant). The experience levels range from 1 to 4+ years, providing a mix of newer and more experienced perspectives. All respondents indicated that their work focuses on both urban and rural areas, suggesting comprehensive geographic coverage in their administrative purview.

### **Program Implementation and Coordination**

This section examines the working relationship between LESDE and MYC, focusing on familiarity with programmes, frequency of collaboration, types of collaborative programmes, and clarity of roles and responsibilities.

**Table 54: LESDE-MYC Programme Implementation and Coordination Metrics**

| <b>Parameter</b>                    | <b>Very Familiar/Regular/Excellent/Very Clear</b> | <b>Somewhat Familiar/Occasional/Good/Somewhat Clear</b> | <b>Not Familiar/Rarely/Poor/Unclear</b> |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| Familiarity with MYC Programmes     | 2 (33.3%)                                         | 4 (66.7%)                                               | 0 (0%)                                  |
| Frequency of collaboration          | 1 (16.7%)                                         | 2 (33.3%)                                               | 3 (50%)                                 |
| Coordination rating                 | 2 (33.3%)                                         | 1 (16.7%)                                               | 2 (33.3%)                               |
| Clarity of roles & responsibilities | 2 (33.3%)                                         | 2 (33.3%)                                               | 2 (33.3%)                               |
| Familiarity with MYC Programmes     | 2 (33.3%)                                         | 4 (66.7%)                                               | 0 (0%)                                  |
| Frequency of collaboration          | 1 (16.7%)                                         | 2 (33.3%)                                               | 3 (50%)                                 |
| Coordination rating                 | 2 (33.3%)                                         | 1 (16.7%)                                               | 2 (33.3%)                               |
| Clarity of roles & responsibilities | 2 (33.3%)                                         | 2 (33.3%)                                               | 2 (33.3%)                               |

**Source:** Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025

The survey results reveal moderate familiarity with MYC programmes among LESDE officials, with 33.3% reporting being "very familiar" and 66.7% being "somewhat familiar." This suggests generally adequate awareness of MYC initiatives within the nodal department. However, the frequency of collaboration appears limited, with half of the respondents indicating that LESDE and MYC collaborate "rarely," while only 16.7% report regular (monthly) collaboration. This infrequent engagement points to potential administrative silos between the two entities.

The coordination between LESDE and MYC shows mixed ratings, with equal proportions (33.3%) rating it as either "excellent" or "poor," suggesting inconsistent

coordination experiences among different officials or programs. Similarly, there is an even split regarding the clarity of roles and responsibilities, with one-third of respondents each indicating that guidelines are "very clear," "somewhat clear," or "unclear." This lack of consensus suggests that role delineation between LESDE and MYC may vary across programs or may not be uniformly communicated throughout the administrative structure.

**Table 55: Types of Collaborative Programs between LESDE and MYC**

| Programme Type                      | Number of Responses | Percentage |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------|------------|
| Employment Facilitation Programmes  | 6                   | 100%       |
| Vocational Training Programmes      | 4                   | 66.7%      |
| Entrepreneurship Support Programmes | 4                   | 66.7%      |
| Awareness Campaigns                 | 2                   | 33.3%      |

*Source: Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

All respondents identified employment facilitation programmes as a collaborative area between LESDE and MYC, highlighting the central importance of employment in youth empowerment efforts in Mizoram. Vocational training and entrepreneurship support programmes also show strong collaboration (66.7% each), while awareness campaigns appear to have more limited collaborative implementation (33.3%). This distribution reflects the operational priorities in youth empowerment programming, with direct economic empowerment initiatives receiving greater emphasis.

One respondent noted that "MYC currently functions as an independent unit outside LESDE with its own programmes and activities," suggesting institutional separation despite overlapping mandates. This observation aligns with the survey findings indicating infrequent collaboration and mixed coordination experiences.

## Resource Allocation and Challenges

This section examines the adequacy of resources for youth empowerment programmes and identifies the primary challenges faced in programme implementation.

**Table 56: Resource Allocation and Monitoring Mechanisms**

| Parameter                      | Yes/Well-established | Some/Partially | No/None   |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|----------------|-----------|
| Sufficient resources allocated | 3 (50%)              | 0 (0%)         | 3 (50%)   |
| Monitoring mechanisms          | 1 (16.7%)            | 3 (50%)        | 2 (33.3%) |

*Source: Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

The survey reveals a divided perception regarding resource allocation, with half of the respondents believing sufficient resources are allocated for youth empowerment programmes and half disagreeing. This split suggests either varying resource distribution across different programmes or divisions, or different standards for what constitutes "sufficient" resources among the respondents.

Regarding monitoring mechanisms, only 16.7% reported well-established mechanisms for programme evaluation, while 50% indicated that some mechanisms exist but need improvement, and 33.3% stated that no formal mechanisms exist. This finding highlights a significant gap in programme oversight and evaluation, potentially limiting the ability to measure programme effectiveness and make data-driven improvements.

**Table 57: Common Challenges in Programme Implementation**

| Challenge                                   | Number of Responses | Percentage |
|---------------------------------------------|---------------------|------------|
| Limited staff capacity/training             | 5                   | 83.3%      |
| Lack of funding                             | 3                   | 50%        |
| Geographic barriers to reaching rural areas | 2                   | 33.3%      |
| Low participation rates among youth         | 1                   | 16.7%      |

*Source: Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

The most prevalent challenge identified is limited staff capacity and training, cited by 83.3% of respondents. This suggests a significant human resource constraint that may affect program quality and reach. Funding constraints were identified by half of the respondents, aligning with the divided perception on resource adequacy. Geographic barriers, particularly in reaching rural areas, were noted by a third of respondents, reflecting Mizoram's challenging terrain. Low youth participation was identified as a challenge by only 16.7% of respondents, suggesting that youth engagement may not be the primary bottleneck in program implementation.

In open-ended responses, additional challenges were highlighted, including "outdated infrastructure," "funding delays," "mismatch between training programs and industry needs," "social stigma against vocational education," "certification delays," and "administrative bottlenecks." These challenges point to systemic issues beyond mere resource constraints, encompassing social, institutional, and structural factors that impede effective programme delivery.

### Programme Impact and Effectiveness

This section assesses the perceived effectiveness of LESDE's youth empowerment programmes and their impact on addressing youth needs in Mizoram.

**Table 58: Programme Effectiveness Ratings**

| Program Area                         | Average Rating (1-5) | Effectiveness Level  |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Vocational training programmes       | 3.8                  | Moderately effective |
| Overall impact on youth empowerment  | 3.4                  | Moderately effective |
| Entrepreneurship support initiatives | 3.0*                 | Moderately effective |

*Source: Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

\*Approximated from yes/no responses

The survey shows the moderate effectiveness of youth empowerment programmes, with vocational training programmes receiving an average rating of 3.8 out of 5, suggesting relatively good performance. The overall impact on youth empowerment was rated slightly lower at 3.4, while entrepreneurship support initiatives show a moderate level of effectiveness.

All respondents unanimously indicated that LESDE's programs have "partially addressed skill gaps" among Mizo youth and that employment facilitation initiatives have been "somewhat effective" in reducing youth unemployment. This consistent response suggests a consensus that while programs are making progress, they have not fully achieved their intended outcomes in addressing skill gaps and unemployment.

**Table 59: Sectors with Most Significant Impact**

| Sector                         | Number of Responses | Percentage |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|------------|
| IT and Digital Skills          | 5                   | 83.3%      |
| Tourism and Hospitality        | 3                   | 50%        |
| Agriculture and Allied Sectors | 2                   | 33.3%      |

*Source: Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

IT and Digital Skills emerged as the sector where LESDE's programmes have had the most significant impact, identified by 83.3% of respondents. This aligns with global trends toward digital economy growth and suggests that Mizoram's youth empowerment initiatives are having some success in preparing youth for the digital economy. Tourism and Hospitality was identified as a high-impact sector by half of the respondents, reflecting Mizoram's growing tourism potential. Agriculture and Allied Sectors were cited by 33.3% of respondents, indicating some impact in this traditional economic sector.

These sectoral impacts suggest that youth empowerment programmes are having more pronounced effects in emerging economic sectors (IT/digital) and service industries (tourism) compared to traditional sectors (agriculture), potentially reflecting economic transition patterns in Mizoram.

## Future Directions and Improvement Areas

This section explores respondents' views on potential improvements and future directions for youth empowerment programmes in Mizoram.

**Table 60: Future Directions and Improvement Areas**

| Area                                          | Strong Support/Yes | Moderate Support/Maybe | No Support/No |
|-----------------------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------|---------------|
| More public-private partnerships              | 4 (66.7%)          | 2 (33.3%)              | 0 (0%)        |
| More emphasis on entrepreneurship             | 2 (33.3%)          | 4 (66.7%)              | 0 (0%)        |
| Enhanced use of digital platforms             | 2 (33.3%)          | 3 (50%)                | 0 (0%)        |
| Sufficient research on youth needs            | 2 (33.3%)          | 0 (0%)                 | 4 (66.7%)     |
| Adequate addressing of rural youth challenges | 2 (33.3%)          | 0 (0%)                 | 4 (66.7%)     |

**Source:** Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025

The survey reveals strong support for increased public-private partnerships, with 66.7% strongly agreeing and 33.3% agreeing that such partnerships could enhance programme outcomes. This unanimous support suggests recognition of the private sector's potential role in enhancing youth empowerment initiatives. Similarly, all respondents supported increased emphasis on entrepreneurship development, though with varying intensity, indicating consensus on the importance of fostering self-employment opportunities.

There is also strong support for enhanced use of digital platforms in programme delivery, with 33.3% indicating they would "significantly enhance effectiveness" and 50% suggesting they would "somewhat enhance effectiveness." This aligns with the finding that IT and digital skills is the sector with the most significant impact.

However, 66.7% of respondents indicated that LESDE does not conduct sufficient research to understand evolving youth needs in Mizoram, and the same percentage felt that current policies do not adequately address challenges faced by rural youth. These findings highlight important gaps in programme design and implementation, particularly in relation to evidence-based approaches and rural youth inclusion.

**Analysis of Survey Data from Non-Participants of Mizoram Youth Commission (MYC) Programmes**

While understanding the experiences of participants is vital, comprehending the reasons why some youths do not engage with available programmes is equally important for identifying barriers and improving inclusivity. This section analyses survey data collected from youth who were aware of MYC programmes but had not participated, exploring their demographic profile, awareness sources, and reasons for non-participation.

**1. Demographic Profile of Respondents**

The survey captured responses from 61 youth across various districts of Mizoram, representing diverse demographic characteristics.

**Age Distribution**  
**Table 61: Age Distribution of Respondents**

| Age Group    | Number | Percentage |
|--------------|--------|------------|
| 18-25 years  | 45     | 73.8%      |
| 26-30 years  | 9      | 14.8%      |
| 31-35 years  | 7      | 11.5%      |
| <b>Total</b> | 61     | 100%       |

*Source: Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

The data show 73.8% of respondents are aged 18–25, indicating stronger MYC engagement with younger youth entering education or employment phases. Only 26.3% represent the 26–35 cohort, suggesting reduced participation among older youth, likely due to competing priorities like work or family commitments.

This disparity highlights the need for age-tailored interventions: foundational skill programmes for younger groups and flexible career-advancement initiatives for older participants.

### Gender Distribution

**Table 62: Gender Distribution of Respondents**

| Gender       | Number    | Percentage  |
|--------------|-----------|-------------|
| Male         | 23        | 37.7%       |
| Female       | 38        | 62.3%       |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>61</b> | <b>100%</b> |

*Source: Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

The survey highlights a notable trend in programme engagement, with female respondents constituting 62.3% (38 participants) compared to 37.7% male participation (23 participants). This disparity likely reflects gendered patterns of proactive learning and empowerment-seeking behavior rather than mere sampling bias.

### Geographic Distribution

**Table 63: District-wise Distribution of Respondents**

| District  | Number | Percentage |
|-----------|--------|------------|
| Aizawl    | 29     | 47.5%      |
| Lunglei   | 5      | 8.2%       |
| Champhai  | 3      | 4.9%       |
| Kolasib   | 3      | 4.9%       |
| Lawngtlai | 7      | 11.5%      |

|              |           |             |
|--------------|-----------|-------------|
| Mamit        | 4         | 6.6%        |
| Serchhip     | 1         | 1.6%        |
| Siaha        | 2         | 3.3%        |
| Hnahthial    | 4         | 6.6%        |
| Khawzawl     | 2         | 3.3%        |
| Saitual      | 2         | 3.3%        |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>61</b> | <b>100%</b> |

***Source:** Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

Nearly half of the respondents (47.5%) are from Aizawl district, followed by Lawngtlai (11.5%). The survey achieved representation from all districts of Mizoram, allowing for an assessment of geographic variations in perceptions about MYC programmes. This geographic distribution is particularly relevant for analyzing rural-urban disparities in awareness and access to youth empowerment initiatives.

### **Educational Qualification**

**Table 64: Educational Qualification of Respondents**

| <b>Qualification</b> | <b>Number</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|----------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| High School          | 15            | 24.6%             |
| Graduate             | 14            | 23.0%             |
| Post-Graduate        | 23            | 37.7%             |
| Other                | 9             | 14.8%             |
| <b>Total</b>         | <b>61</b>     | <b>100%</b>       |

***Source:** Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

The respondents exhibit a relatively high level of educational attainment, with over one-third (37.7%) holding post-graduate qualifications and another 23% with

graduate degrees. This educational profile suggests that the survey captured perspectives primarily from the educated youth segment of Mizoram.

### Employment Status

**Table 65: Employment Status of Respondents**

| Employment Status | Number    | Percentage  |
|-------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Employed          | 16        | 26.2%       |
| Self-Employed     | 5         | 8.2%        |
| Unemployed        | 13        | 21.3%       |
| Student           | 27        | 44.3%       |
| <b>Total</b>      | <b>61</b> | <b>100%</b> |

*Source: Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

The largest segment of respondents comprises students (44.3%), followed by employed individuals (26.2%). The significant representation of unemployed youth (21.3%) is particularly valuable for understanding the relevance and efficacy of youth empowerment programmes aimed at addressing unemployment in Mizoram.

## 2. Awareness and Perception of MYC

### General Awareness about MYC

**Table 66: Awareness of Mizoram Youth Commission**

| Awareness    | Number    | Percentage  |
|--------------|-----------|-------------|
| Yes          | 53        | 86.9%       |
| No           | 8         | 13.1%       |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>61</b> | <b>100%</b> |

*Source: Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

A substantial majority (86.9%) of respondents reported awareness of the Mizoram Youth Commission. This high level of awareness suggests that MYC has established a visible presence among youth in Mizoram. However, the existence of a segment (13.1%) unaware of MYC indicates room for improving outreach efforts, particularly in rural and remote areas.

### Source of Information about MYC

**Table 67: Primary Source of Information about MYC**

| Information Source  | Number | Percentage of Aware Respondents |
|---------------------|--------|---------------------------------|
| Social media        | 27     | 50.9%                           |
| Government Channels | 15     | 28.3%                           |
| School/College      | 11     | 20.8%                           |
| Friends/Family      | 3      | 5.7%                            |
| Others              | 5      | 9.4%                            |

**Source:** Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025

\*Note: Percentages are calculated based on the 53 respondents who were aware of MYC. Some respondents indicated multiple sources.

Social media emerges as the predominant channel (50.9%) through which youth learn about MYC, highlighting its effectiveness as a communication medium. Government channels (28.3%) and educational institutions (20.8%) also play significant roles in disseminating information about MYC. The relatively low percentage of word-of-mouth awareness (friends/family at 5.7%) suggests that interpersonal communication about MYC programmes could be enhanced.

## Awareness of Specific MYC Programmes

**Table 68: Awareness of Specific MYC Programmes**

| Programme                           | Number | Percentage of Aware Respondents |
|-------------------------------------|--------|---------------------------------|
| Skill Development Workshops         | 36     | 67.9%                           |
| Competitive Exam Coaching           | 32     | 60.4%                           |
| Entrepreneurship Support Programmes | 22     | 41.5%                           |
| Vocational Training Programmes      | 18     | 34.0%                           |

***Source:** Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

Among those aware of MYC, the highest awareness was for Skill Development Workshops (67.9%) and Competitive Exam Coaching (60.4%). The significantly lower awareness for Entrepreneurship Support (41.5%) and Vocational Training (34.0%) programmes indicates potential gaps in promotion or emphasis on these initiatives, despite their importance for youth employment and economic empowerment.

## Level of Overall Awareness

**Table 69: Self-Reported Level of Awareness about MYC Initiatives**

| Awareness Level | Number | Percentage |
|-----------------|--------|------------|
| None            | 1      | 1.6%       |
| Low             | 7      | 11.5%      |
| Moderate        | 26     | 42.6%      |
| High            | 21     | 34.4%      |
| Very High       | 3      | 4.9%       |

|              |           |             |
|--------------|-----------|-------------|
| No Response  | 3         | 4.9%        |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>61</b> | <b>100%</b> |

***Source:** Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

The depth of awareness shows a bell curve distribution, with most respondents (42.6%) reporting moderate awareness. While 39.3% claimed high or very high awareness, a substantial portion (13.1%) reported low or no awareness. This suggests that while MYC has achieved broad recognition, comprehensive understanding of its full range of initiatives remains limited for many youths.

### **3. Programme Participation and Barriers**

#### **Consideration of Participation**

**Table 70: Consideration of Participating in MYC Programmes**

| <b>Considered Participation</b> | <b>Number</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|---------------------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| Yes                             | 25            | 41.0%             |
| No                              | 36            | 59.0%             |
| <b>Total</b>                    | <b>61</b>     | <b>100%</b>       |

***Source:** Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

Despite high awareness levels, only 41% of respondents considered participating in MYC programmes. This significant gap between awareness and interest in participation warrants further exploration of barriers and relevance of current offerings.

#### **Barriers to Participation**

**Table 71: Main Reasons for Not Participating in MYC Programmes**

| <b>Reason</b>                                 | <b>Number</b> | <b>Percentage of Non-Participants</b> |
|-----------------------------------------------|---------------|---------------------------------------|
| Lack of awareness about enrollment procedures | 16            | 44.4%                                 |
| Lack of time due to work or studies           | 16            | 44.4%                                 |

|                                            |    |       |
|--------------------------------------------|----|-------|
| Geographic distance from training centers  | 11 | 30.6% |
| Programmes not relevant to needs/interests | 10 | 27.8% |
| Other reasons                              | 14 | 38.9% |

**Source:** Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025

*\*Note.* Percentages are calculated based on the 36 respondents who had not considered participating. Respondents could select multiple reasons.

The primary barriers to participation include procedural knowledge gaps (44.4%) and time constraints (44.4%). Geographic barriers (30.6%) highlight the challenges faced by youth in remote areas. The perception that programmes are not relevant to needs/interests (27.8%) indicates potential misalignment between offered programmes and youth aspirations or priorities.

#### 4. Accessibility and Effectiveness Assessment

##### Accessibility to Rural Areas

**Table 72: Perception of MYC Programme Accessibility in Rural Areas**

| Rural Accessibility | Number    | Percentage  |
|---------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Yes                 | 39        | 63.9%       |
| No                  | 22        | 36.1%       |
| <b>Total</b>        | <b>61</b> | <b>100%</b> |

**Source:** Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025

While a majority (63.9%) believe MYC programmes are accessible to rural youth, more than a third (36.1%) disagree. This highlights a significant perceived urban-rural divide in programme accessibility that needs addressing to ensure equitable opportunities for youth empowerment across Mizoram.

## Primary Barriers to Accessibility

**Table 73: Biggest Barriers Preventing Youth from Accessing MYC Programmes**

| Barrier                   | Number    | Percentage  |
|---------------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Lack of awareness         | 26        | 42.6%       |
| Limited seats or capacity | 23        | 37.7%       |
| Geographic isolation      | 10        | 16.4%       |
| Other/No response         | 2         | 3.3%        |
| <b>Total</b>              | <b>61</b> | <b>100%</b> |

*Source: Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

Awareness deficits emerge as the most significant barrier (42.6%), followed closely by capacity limitations (37.7%). Geographic isolation (16.4%) further compounds access challenges, particularly for youth in remote districts. These findings suggest that a multi-pronged approach addressing information dissemination, programme expansion, and geographic reach is needed to enhance accessibility.

## Effectiveness in Addressing Youth Unemployment

**Table 74: Perceived Effectiveness of MYC in Addressing Youth Unemployment**

| Effectiveness Rating | Number    | Percentage  |
|----------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Not effective        | 2         | 3.3%        |
| Somewhat effective   | 45        | 73.8%       |
| Yes, very effective  | 14        | 23.0%       |
| <b>Total</b>         | <b>61</b> | <b>100%</b> |

*Source: Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

Majority of respondents (73.8%) perceive MYC programmes as "somewhat effective" in addressing youth unemployment, while only 23% consider them "very effective." This indicates a generally positive but qualified assessment of MYC's

impact on youth unemployment, suggesting room for enhancing programme effectiveness and outcomes.

### Inclusivity Assessment

**Table 75: Perception of MYC's Inclusivity for Diverse Groups**

| Inclusivity Rating  | Number    | Percentage  |
|---------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Not inclusive       | 3         | 4.9%        |
| Somewhat inclusive  | 38        | 62.3%       |
| Yes, very inclusive | 20        | 32.8%       |
| <b>Total</b>        | <b>61</b> | <b>100%</b> |

*Source: Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

While most respondents consider MYC programmes to be inclusive to some degree, the largest segment (62.3%) believes they are only "somewhat inclusive" of diverse groups such as rural youth and women. This suggests the need for targeted strategies to better address the specific needs and circumstances of different youth demographics within Mizoram.

### Government Promotion Assessment

**Table 76: Rating of Government's Promotion of MYC Programmes**

| Promotion Rating    | Number    | Percentage  |
|---------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Poorly Promoted     | 10        | 16.4%       |
| Moderately Promoted | 39        | 63.9%       |
| Very Well Promoted  | 12        | 19.7%       |
| <b>Total</b>        | <b>61</b> | <b>100%</b> |

*Source: Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

The majority view (63.9%) that MYC programmes are only "moderately promoted" suggests deficiencies in the government's communication strategy. With 16.4% considering the promotion poor, there is a clear indication that more effective

and widespread promotion efforts are needed to reach all youth segments across Mizoram.

## 5. Priority Areas and Importance Ratings

### Importance of Focus Areas

**Table 77: Average Importance Ratings for Different Focus Areas (Scale 1-5)**

| Focus Area                                | Average Rating | High Importance (4-5) |
|-------------------------------------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| Skill Development and Vocational Training | 3.31           | 54.1%                 |
| Competitive Exam Coaching                 | 3.26           | 50.8%                 |
| Entrepreneurship Support                  | 3.15           | 49.2%                 |
| Mental Health Support                     | 3.20           | 47.5%                 |

**Source:** Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025

*\*Note.* High Importance percentage indicates respondents who rated the area as 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale.

All four focused areas received relatively similar average ratings, with Skill Development and Vocational Training rated slightly higher (3.31) than others. The substantial percentage of respondents rating each area as highly important (4-5 on the scale) indicates that youth in Mizoram value a multi-dimensional approach to empowerment that addresses professional skills, educational advancement, entrepreneurial capacity, and psychological well-being.

## Sectors Needing More Youth-Focused Initiatives

**Table 78: Sectors Requiring More Youth-Focused Initiatives**

| Sector                         | Number | Percentage |
|--------------------------------|--------|------------|
| IT and Digital Skills          | 38     | 62.3%      |
| Tourism and Hospitality        | 32     | 52.5%      |
| Agriculture and Allied Sectors | 25     | 41.0%      |
| Renewable Energy               | 21     | 34.4%      |

*Source: Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

*\*Note.* Respondents could select multiple sectors.

IT and Digital Skills emerged as the most demanded sector (62.3%), reflecting youth awareness of technological trends and employment opportunities in this field. Tourism and Hospitality (52.5%) was the second most cited sector, highlighting recognition of Mizoram's potential in this area. The significant interest in Agriculture (41.0%) and Renewable Energy (34.4%) indicates youth awareness of sustainable development opportunities in these traditional and emerging sectors.

## 6. Overall Perception and Future Interest

### Government's Overall Youth Empowerment Efforts

**Table 79: Rating of Government's Overall Youth Empowerment Efforts**

| Rating       | Number    | Percentage  |
|--------------|-----------|-------------|
| Poor         | 6         | 9.8%        |
| Average      | 15        | 24.6%       |
| Good         | 27        | 44.3%       |
| Excellent    | 3         | 4.9%        |
| No response  | 10        | 16.4%       |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>61</b> | <b>100%</b> |

*Source: Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

Government efforts in youth empowerment receive generally favorable ratings, with 49.2% rating them as "Good" or "Excellent." However, a substantial proportion (34.4%) rate them as "Average" or "Poor," indicating significant room for improvement. The relatively high non-response rate (16.4%) might suggest limited knowledge about government initiatives beyond MYC.

## 6.2 Interest in Future Participation

**Table 80: Interest in Participating in MYC Programmes Aligned with Needs/Interests**

| Interest in Participation | Number    | Percentage  |
|---------------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Yes                       | 52        | 85.2%       |
| No                        | 9         | 14.8%       |
| <b>Total</b>              | <b>61</b> | <b>100%</b> |

*Source: Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

The overwhelmingly positive response (85.2%) to future participation if programmes aligned with needs/interests suggests significant potential to increase participation through better-tailored programmes. This contrasts sharply with the earlier finding that only 41% had previously considered participation, highlighting the importance of relevance and alignment with youth priorities.

## Likelihood to Recommend MYC Programmes

**Table 81: Likelihood to Recommend MYC Programmes (Scale 1-5)**

| Likelihood Rating | Number    | Percentage  |
|-------------------|-----------|-------------|
| 1 (Very Unlikely) | 3         | 4.9%        |
| 2                 | 8         | 13.1%       |
| 3                 | 24        | 39.3%       |
| 4                 | 17        | 27.9%       |
| 5 (Very Likely)   | 9         | 14.8%       |
| <b>Total</b>      | <b>61</b> | <b>100%</b> |

*Source: Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

While 42.7% of respondents indicated high likelihood (4-5) to recommend MYC programmes, the largest segment (39.3%) gave a neutral rating (3). This suggests moderate satisfaction with the perceived programme quality and relevance, with significant room for enhancing programme appeal and value to generate stronger youth advocacy.

### Overall Perception of MYC's Role

**Table 82: Overall Perception of MYC's Role in Empowering Youth**

| Perception    | Number    | Percentage  |
|---------------|-----------|-------------|
| Very Negative | 0         | 0.0%        |
| Negative      | 1         | 1.6%        |
| Neutral       | 12        | 19.7%       |
| Positive      | 40        | 65.6%       |
| Very Positive | 8         | 13.1%       |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>61</b> | <b>100%</b> |

***Source:** Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

The predominantly positive perception (78.7% positive or very positive) of MYC's role in youth empowerment reflects an overall appreciation of its contributions. However, the significant neutral segment (19.7%) suggests that MYC has not fully established its value proposition among all youth in Mizoram.

### Conclusion

The survey of non-participants provides valuable insights into youth perceptions of the Mizoram Youth Commission and its programmes. The findings reveal a generally positive perception of MYC's role (78.7% positive or very positive), coupled with recognition of significant challenges in awareness, capacity, accessibility, and relevance.

These insights directly address the research questions and objectives by providing a comprehensive assessment of MYC's current state and future potential from the perspective of the youth it aims to serve. The findings underscore both MYC's achievements and the significant opportunities for enhancing its contribution to youth empowerment in Mizoram.

### **Internal Perspectives: Analysis of Mizoram Youth Commission Officials' Survey Responses**

Gaining perspectives from those directly involved in implementing MYC's mandate provides critical internal insights. This section analyses survey responses from eight officials and staff working directly with or within the Mizoram Youth Commission, focusing on their perceptions of programme design, implementation challenges, resource availability, collaboration, monitoring, and overall impact.

**Table 83: Officials' Perception of Programme Clarity and Review**

| <b>Indicator</b>                     | <b>Response Category</b> | <b>Frequency (N=8)</b> | <b>Percentage (%)</b> |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Clarity of Objectives</b>         | Very Clear               | 6                      | 75.0%                 |
|                                      | Clear                    | 2                      | 25.0%                 |
| <b>Frequency of Objective Review</b> | Annually                 | 8                      | 100.0%                |

*Source: Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

There is a strong consensus among the surveyed officials regarding the clarity of MYC programme objectives, with 75% finding them 'Very Clear' and 25% 'Clear'. Furthermore, all respondents (100%) indicated that programme objectives are reviewed or updated annually to align with youth needs. This suggests a structured approach within the MYC to maintain programme relevance.

**Table 84: Officials' Views on Addressing Youth Needs and Stakeholder Input**

| Indicator                             | Response Category | Frequency (N=8) | Percentage (%) |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Adequacy in Addressing Diverse Needs  | Strongly Agree    | 6               | 75.0%          |
|                                       | Agree             | 1               | 12.5%          |
|                                       | Neutral           | 1               | 12.5%          |
| Input from Beneficiaries/Stakeholders | Yes, always       | 4               | 50.0%          |
|                                       | Sometimes         | 3               | 37.5%          |
|                                       | Rarely            | 1               | 12.5%          |

*Source: Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

A large majority of officials (75% Strongly Agree, 12.5% Agree) feel that MYC programmes adequately address the diverse needs of Mizoram's youth (Table 84). However, views on incorporating input from beneficiaries or stakeholders are more varied. While 50% reported that input is 'Always' sought, a significant portion indicated it happens only 'Sometimes' (37.5%) or 'Rarely' (12.5%). This suggests potential inconsistency or room for improvement in participatory programme design processes.

### **Programme Implementation, Outreach, and Collaboration**

The effectiveness of programme implementation hinges on outreach strategies, resource availability, and collaboration.

**Table 85: Ratings of Outreach Effectiveness and Collaboration**

| Indicator                       | Response Category | Frequency (N=8) | Percentage (%) |
|---------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Outreach Effectiveness          | Good              | 5               | 62.5%          |
|                                 | Excellent         | 3               | 37.5%          |
| Collaboration with Stakeholders | Good              | 6               | 75.0%          |
|                                 | Excellent         | 2               | 25.0%          |

*Source: Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

Officials generally rate outreach effectiveness positively, with 62.5% considering it 'Good' and 37.5% 'Excellent'. Similarly, collaboration with external stakeholders (NGOs, private sector) is largely viewed as 'Good' (75%) or 'Excellent' (25%). These perceptions suggest functional relationships and outreach mechanisms are in place, although open-ended responses highlighted a need for greater rural outreach.

**Table 86: Common Implementation Challenges and Resource Sufficiency**

| Indicator                   | Response Category                           | Frequency (N=8) | Percentage (%) |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|
|                             | Lack of resources (funding, infrastructure) | 4               | 50.0%          |
|                             | Limited staff capacity/training             | 2               | 25.0%          |
|                             | Low awareness among youths about programmes | 2               | 25.0%          |
|                             | Geographic barriers (reaching rural areas)  | 1               | 12.5%          |
| <b>Resource Sufficiency</b> | Yes (Sufficient / Implied Yes)              | 4               | 50.0%          |
|                             | No, resources are insufficient              | 3               | 37.5%          |
|                             | Not aware                                   | 1               | 12.5%          |

**Source:** Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025

\* Multiple responses allowed; percentages based on N=8 respondents.

Despite positive views on outreach, significant implementation challenges persist. As Table 57 shows, the most frequently cited challenge is the 'Lack of resources (funding, infrastructure)' (50%), followed by 'Limited staff capacity/training' (25%) and 'Low awareness among youth' (25%). Geographic barriers were also mentioned (12.5%). Views on overall resource sufficiency are split: 50% believe resources are adequate, while 37.5% find them insufficient, and

12.5% were unaware. This discrepancy might reflect differing resource levels across various MYC programmes or departments. Open-ended comments strongly emphasized the need for more funding and stable staffing.

**Table 87: Bureaucratic Delays and Monitoring Mechanisms**

| Indicator                                    | Response Categor                           | Frequency (N=8) | Percentage (%) |
|----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| <b>Frequency of Bureaucratic Delays</b>      | Rarely                                     | 3               | 37.5%          |
|                                              | Annually                                   | 2               | 25.0%          |
|                                              | Monthly                                    | 2               | 25.0%          |
|                                              | Quarterly                                  | 1               | 12.5%          |
| <b>Monitoring &amp; Evaluation (M&amp;E)</b> | Some mechanisms exist but need improvement | 4               | 50.0%          |
|                                              | Yes, well-established mechanisms exist     | 3               | 37.5%          |
|                                              | Not aware                                  | 1               | 12.5%          |

***Source:** Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

Bureaucratic delays do not appear to be a constant overwhelming issue, with the most common response being 'Rarely' (37.5%), although 'Monthly' and 'Annually' delays were also reported (25% each) (Table 87). Regarding M&E systems (RQ4, Obj4), half the respondents (50%) feel that while mechanisms exist, they need improvement. Only 37.5% believe well-established mechanisms are in place, suggesting M&E is an area requiring further strengthening within the MYC.

### **Perceived Impact and Effectiveness of MYC Programmes**

Assessing the perceived impact is central to understanding the MYC's effectiveness in achieving youth empowerment.

**Table 88: Overall Impact Rating and Contribution to Employment/Skills**

| Indicator                                                                  | Response Category                  | Frequency<br>(N=8) | Percentage<br>(%) |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Overall Impact on Youth<br/>Empowerment</b>                             | High Impact                        | 4                  | 50.0%             |
|                                                                            | Moderate Impact                    | 2                  | 25.0%             |
|                                                                            | Very High Impact                   | 1                  | 12.5%             |
|                                                                            | Low Impact                         | 1                  | 12.5%             |
| <b>Contribution to Reducing<br/>Unemployment<br/>Addressing Skill Gaps</b> | Yes                                | 8                  | 100.0%            |
|                                                                            | Yes, fully addressed<br>skill gaps | 4                  | 50.0%             |
|                                                                            | Partially addressed<br>skill gaps  | 4                  | 50.0%             |

*Source: Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

Officials generally perceive MYC programmes as impactful (Table 89). Half (50%) rated the overall impact as 'High', with others rating it 'Moderate' (25%) or 'Very High' (12.5%). Notably, all respondents (100%) believe MYC programmes have contributed significantly to reducing youth unemployment. However, opinions are evenly split on whether skill gaps have been fully addressed (50% 'Fully', 50% 'Partially'). This suggests that while programmes are seen as beneficial for employment, their effectiveness in comprehensively closing skill deficits may warrant further investigation.

**Table 89: Effectiveness of Specific Programme Areas**

| <b>Indicator</b>                                         | <b>Response Category</b>                 | <b>Frequency<br/>(N=8)</b> | <b>Percentage<br/>(%)</b> |
|----------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Vocational Training Alignment<br/>with Job Market</b> | Agree                                    | 6                          | 75.0%                     |
|                                                          | Strongly Agree                           | 1                          | 12.5%                     |
|                                                          | Neutral                                  | 1                          | 12.5%                     |
| <b>Entrepreneurship Support<br/>Effectiveness</b>        | Effective                                | 4                          | 50.0%                     |
|                                                          | Neutral                                  | 3                          | 37.5%                     |
|                                                          | Very Effective                           | 1                          | 12.5%                     |
| <b>Sectors with Most Significant<br/>Impact*</b>         | Competitive Exam<br>Preparation          | 6                          | 75.0%                     |
|                                                          | Vocational<br>Training/Skill Dev         | 5                          | 62.5%                     |
|                                                          | Entrepreneurship<br>Support/Business Dev | 2                          | 25.0%                     |
|                                                          | Other                                    | 1                          | 12.5%                     |

**Source:** Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025

*Note.* \* Multiple responses allowed; percentages based on N=8 respondents

Most officials (75% Agree, 12.5% Strongly Agree) feel vocational training aligns with job market demands (Table 89). However, the perceived effectiveness of entrepreneurship support is more lukewarm, with 50% rating it 'Effective' but a significant 37.5% rating it 'Neutral'. When asked about specific sectors with the most impact, 'Competitive Exam Preparation' (75%) and 'Vocational Training/Skill

Development' (62.5%) were most frequently cited, indicating these are perceived as the MYC's flagship or most successful programme areas. Entrepreneurship support was mentioned less frequently (25%).

### **Future Directions, Policy, and Suggestions**

The survey also explored perspectives on future improvements and policy needs.

**Table 90: Views on Future Strategies and Policy Revision**

| <b>Indicator</b>                               | <b>Response Category</b>                 | <b>Frequency<br/>(N=8)</b> | <b>Percentage<br/>(%)</b> |
|------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Potential of Digital Platforms</b>          | Yes, significantly enhance effectiveness | 6                          | 75.0%                     |
|                                                | Somewhat enhance effectiveness           | 2                          | 25.0%                     |
| <b>Sufficiency of Research on Youth Needs</b>  | Yes                                      | 6                          | 75.0%                     |
|                                                | No                                       | 2                          | 25.0%                     |
| <b>Incorporation of PPPs</b>                   | Agree                                    | 5                          | 62.5%                     |
|                                                | Strongly Agree                           | 3                          | 37.5%                     |
| <b>Need for Policy Revision<br/>(Act 2008)</b> | Yes                                      | 7                          | 87.5%                     |
|                                                | No / Nil                                 | 1                          | 12.5%                     |

***Source:** Field Study conducted during September 2024- March 2025*

There is strong agreement among officials on the potential for future strategies (Table 90). A vast majority believe digital platforms could significantly (75%) or somewhat (25%) enhance MYC's reach and effectiveness. Similarly, there is unanimous agreement (62.5% Agree, 37.5% Strongly Agree) on incorporating more Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs). While most (75%) feel MYC conducts

sufficient research on youth needs, 25% disagree. Critically, an overwhelming majority (87.5%) feel that the current policies under the Mizoram Youth Commission Act (2008) need revision to address emerging challenges faced by Mizo youth. This points to a strong internal perception that the legislative framework requires updating.

## **Discussion**

According to the survey findings, officials view the Mizoram Youth Commission as an institution characterized by clear objectives, the provision of relevant programmes—particularly those related to competitive examination coaching and vocational skills development—and a meaningful contribution to the reduction of youth unemployment. Outreach activities and partnerships are also generally evaluated favorably.

However, significant challenges related to administration and implementation are evident. Resource constraints (funding, infrastructure, staffing) are paramount concerns. The reliance on deputation for leadership positions creates instability and hinders long-term planning and programme continuity.

There is a near-unanimous consensus among Commission officials on the need to revise the foundational Mizoram Youth Commission Act (2008), indicating that the existing policy framework may be insufficient to address contemporary challenges. Strong support is expressed for the adoption of digital platforms and the expansion of public-private partnerships (PPPs) as future strategic directions. Open-ended responses emphasize the need for stable staffing, increased funding, and enhanced outreach in rural areas to promote greater equity and effectiveness. These internal viewpoints offer critical insights into the administrative functioning and overall effectiveness of the MYC, while highlighting key areas requiring remedial action.

## **Perspectives from State Sports Administration on Youth Development**

Incorporating a specialized viewpoint related to youth development through sports, insights were gathered from an interview with a State Badminton Coach. This

perspective offers ground-level realities of talent identification, training methodologies, infrastructure challenges, and the impact of sports policies, complementing the earlier administrative view from the SYS Director. The coach detailed the process of identifying and nurturing talent, often from district or school levels, emphasizing the need for structured pathways and quality coaching.

However, significant limitations in sports infrastructure were highlighted, including the availability and quality of courts and equipment, especially outside Aizawl, alongside resource constraints for competition travel and advanced support. While acknowledging the positive motivational impact of policies like sports quotas and cash incentives, potential issues regarding accessibility or fairness might exist. Challenges such as retaining talent, balancing education and training, and ensuring sufficient competition exposure were noted.

Recommendations included further investment in grassroots infrastructure, better financial support for athletes/coaches, improved coordination between education and sports departments, and creating more competitive platforms. This perspective underscores the practical constraints hindering the full potential of sports as a youth empowerment vehicle despite policy initiatives.

## **Conclusion**

In summary, this chapter has provided a multi-dimensional analysis of the administration of youth empowerment programmes in Mizoram, centering on the Mizoram Youth Commission (MYC), by integrating qualitative and quantitative data from twelve distinct stakeholder groups. Perspectives ranged from high-level policy architects and administrators to implementers, beneficiaries, and those outside the system. This multi-faceted approach addressed research questions concerning Mizoram's youth empowerment conceptual framework, key programmes, institutional roles and collaborations, effectiveness, achievements, challenges, and potential remedies.

The conceptual framework emphasizes self-reliance via the 'hand-holding' policy, blending economic upliftment with moral reform and traditional values. Key programmes span entrepreneurship support, skill development, employment

facilitation, and broader engagement. While diverse, awareness and accessibility, particularly for rural youth, remain inconsistent. MYC, under LESDE, functions as a central agency for policy input, service delivery, and facilitation. Beneficiaries report high levels of satisfaction, significant skill gains, and positive employment outcomes from participated programmes.

However, institutional dynamics show challenges: LESDE-MYC collaboration appears infrequent and roles sometimes unclear, creating potential administrative silos. Significant achievements include successful job placements and high satisfaction among participants. However, systemic challenges persist across stakeholder groups: insufficient resources (funding, infrastructure, staffing), geographic disparities limiting rural reach, coordination gaps, programme relevance/awareness issues contributing to non-participation, and inadequate monitoring.

Proposed remedies converge on strengthening resources, enhancing rural accessibility, improving inter-departmental coordination, ensuring programme relevance through continuous feedback, and expanding public-private partnerships. Finally, while youth empowerment initiatives in Mizoram demonstrate successes, systemic administrative, resource, and coordination challenges must be addressed to achieve equitable and comprehensive empowerment for youth across the state. These findings establish the basis for the conclusions and recommendations presented in the final chapter.

# **CHAPTER VII**

## **CONCLUSION**

## **CHAPTER VII**

### **CONCLUSION**

The concluding chapter is divided into two parts: Part I provides a concise summary of the preceding chapters. Subsequently, Part II contains the major findings of the study by answering the research questions, suggestions for solving the problems, and suggested areas for further study.

#### **Part – I**

**Chapter I:** The chapter introduces youth empowerment in Mizoram, highlighting the significant youth population and the unique challenges they face, such as high unemployment and gender disparities. It explains the concept of youth empowerment in both the Indian and local context, emphasizing the importance of agency, skill development, and participation. The chapter describes the establishment and statutory mandate of the Mizoram Youth Commission (MYC) as the main institution for youth welfare and development. It reviews existing literature, identifying a research gap in empirical studies on MYC's effectiveness and administrative functioning. The scope of the study is statewide, focusing on MYC's relationship with its nodal department and its impact across Mizoram. The chapter outlines clear objectives and research questions centered on MYC's roles, achievements, and challenges. It details a mixed-methods research methodology, including interviews, case studies, and surveys with various stakeholders. Ethical considerations and methodological limitations, such as sample size and urban bias, are acknowledged. Overall, the chapter sets the foundation for a comprehensive analysis of youth empowerment administration and programmes in Mizoram.

**Chapter II:** The chapter explores theoretical foundations, rooted in empowerment theory, which focuses on enabling participation, sharing decision-making power, and providing opportunities to learn and practice skills. It highlights that the conceptual framework of youth empowerment is power, participation, and education. Various theoretical models, such as the Critical Social Theory of Youth Empowerment, and key dimensions such as psychological, educational, political, and social empowerment are discussed to provide a comprehensive understanding.

Historically, the chapter notes a significant shift from viewing youth primarily through a 'deficit' lens (focusing on problems) to a 'strength-based' approach that recognizes their potential and capabilities. Empowerment is presented as operating on multiple interconnected levels: personal (developing self-efficacy and skills), interpersonal (building positive relationships), and political (gaining influence over decisions and systems).

**Chapter III:** This chapter provides a detailed analysis of India's youth empowerment prospect, examining the evolution of policy frameworks that increasingly recognize youth as agents of change amidst the nation's significant demographic dividend. It reviews the diversity of national programmes aimed at fostering youth potential, including major initiatives in education (NEP 2020), large-scale skill development (PMKVY, Skill India Mission), entrepreneurship promotion (Start-Up India, Mudra), leadership and civic engagement (NYKS, NSS), and innovative digital platforms like MY Bharat. It also highlights the achievements in programme scale, policy prioritization, technological integration, and documented outcomes such as job creation and startup growth and the critical analysis of persistent challenges.

**Chapter IV:** This chapter examines the Mizoram Youth Commission (MYC) as a key institutional innovation for youth empowerment, tracing its legislative evolution from the 2008 Act to the significant reforms of the 2025 Act, which expand its membership, formalize governance, broaden functions (including skills, entrepreneurship, health, culture, research, and partnerships), and strengthen oversight. The analysis highlights MYC's focus on educational advancement via competitive exam coaching (UPSC, JEE, NEET) and career development, particularly for defence sectors, while noting the potential for growth in skills training and entrepreneurship. It explores MYC's complex institutional relationships, especially its close administrative link and functional overlap with the LESDE Department and its complementary role alongside the Sports and Youth Services Department, emphasizing the need for better coordination. Key implementation challenges identified include resource constraints (financial and human), accessibility issues across Mizoram's geography, and the necessity for robust impact assessment,

leading to proposed strategic directions like digital transformation, enhanced entrepreneurship support, research development, structured coordination and diversified funding.

**Chapter V:** The chapter analyses the Mizoram Youth Commission (MYC) as a key institution for youth empowerment in Mizoram, detailing its initiatives such as MEDMOC's initiatives, SANKALP, STRIVE, KAWTCHHUAH, Empowering Mizoram Sports (EMS), and the MYC Book Club, which span skill development, entrepreneurship, sports, and literacy. It highlights MYC's strategic evolution from 2016 to 2025, shifting from broad-based employment support to a specialized focus on preparing youth for government jobs through competitive exams. This shift has led to documented successes, including 478 placements and high exam rankings, demonstrating effective coordination and policy implementation. However, challenges remain, including limited entrepreneurship support, potential gender and geographic inequities, and the need for broader impact evaluation beyond placement numbers.

**Chapter VI:** This Chapter provides a comprehensive analysis of youth empowerment programmes in Mizoram, focusing on the Mizoram Youth Commission (MYC) as the central institution. Drawing on interviews, surveys, and case studies from diverse stakeholders, including government officials, youth, entrepreneurs, community leaders, and sports administrators, the chapter examines the implementation, achievements, and challenges of MYC's initiatives. The policy framework is built on a philosophy of self-reliance, where the government acts as a facilitator and expects youth to take significant initiative, operationalized through the "hand-holding policy" and multi-sectoral support, especially in entrepreneurship and skill development. MYC's core role is highlighted as providing coaching for competitive exams, vocational and skill training, entrepreneurship support, and employment facilitation, with notable successes in job placements and skill improvement among beneficiaries.

However, the analysis identifies persistent challenges such as limited resources, regional disparities—especially in rural outreach—low programme

awareness, and administrative silos between MYC and related departments. Survey data from both participants and non-participants reveal high satisfaction and significant skill gains among beneficiaries, but also highlight barriers like geographic inaccessibility, procedural complexity, and limited programme relevance for some youth. Stakeholders and officials recommend increasing funding, expanding rural access, improving communication, strengthening monitoring and evaluation, and leveraging digital platforms and public-private partnerships. The chapter concludes that while MYC has made significant progress in empowering youth, addressing systemic challenges in administration, resource allocation, and programme inclusivity is essential for achieving equitable and effective youth empowerment across Mizoram.

The last chapter contains two parts: Part I and Part II. Part I contains a summary of the previous chapters. Part II contains the major findings of the study.

## **Part – II**

### **Findings**

To answer the objectives and research questions of the present study, the required research methodology was adopted to collect information mainly based on primary and secondary sources. The collected data was used for analyzing information and those were given in the previous chapters. In this part, the major findings are highlighted by answering the research questions as follows:

#### ***What is the concept of Youth Empowerment?***

Based on the findings of this study, youth empowerment is understood as an active and multi-dimensional process where young people gain the ability, confidence, and authority to make decisions and create positive changes in their lives and communities. Instead of seeing youth as passive recipients of help, this idea recognizes them as active participants who can shape their own futures and contribute meaningfully to society. In the context of Mizoram and India, youth empowerment is not just about helping individuals grow but also about supporting national and regional development. It includes improving education, building skills,

increasing employment opportunities, promoting entrepreneurship, strengthening leadership, improving health, and ensuring social justice, as outlined in the National Youth Policy 2021 and the goals of the Mizoram Youth Commission.

Theories such as the Adolescent Empowerment Cycle, the Transactional Partnership Model, and the Critical Social Theory of Youth Empowerment show that empowerment happens by creating safe and supportive spaces for young people, encouraging real participation and fair sharing of power with adults, promoting critical thinking and social involvement, and building the skills needed for personal and collective action. Youth empowerment works at different levels: personal (building confidence and self-belief), interpersonal (developing relationships and networks), and politics (influencing decisions and pushing for change). It is both a process and a goal, helping young people overcome barriers, realize their potential, and take part in wider social change. In short, youth empowerment is about giving young people the resources, opportunities, and support they need to actively shape their own futures and contribute to the progress of their communities and society.

### ***What are the major youth empowerment programmes in India?***

India has built a strong and wide-ranging system of youth empowerment programmes to equip its large and diverse young population with the skills, opportunities, and support needed for personal growth and national development. These programmes cover key areas such as skill development, entrepreneurship, education, leadership, sports, innovation, and digital literacy, showing the government's belief that youth are important drivers of change and economic progress. In skill development and employment, the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) offers industry-focused training and certification to improve employability. The National Career Service (NCS) provides a digital platform connecting job seekers to employers, while the Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDUGKY) helps rural youth gain skills linked to employment. Apprenticeship programmes and on-the-job training also help bridge the gap between education and work.

In the area of entrepreneurship, Startup India encourages innovation and self-employment by offering funding, tax benefits, and incubation support to young entrepreneurs. The Mudra Yojana provides collateral-free loans of up to ₹10 lakh to small businesses, and Stand-Up India focuses on supporting SC/ST and women entrepreneurs. These initiatives have led to strong growth in start-ups and a culture of entrepreneurship among the youth. In education and leadership development, the National Service Scheme (NSS) and Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS) involve millions of young people in community service and leadership training, helping to build civic responsibility and teamwork. The Rashtriya Yuva Sashaktikaran Karyakram (RYSK) further improves soft skills and decision-making abilities.

Sports and innovation are also major focus areas. Khelo India helps discover and support sporting talent through scholarships, training, and competitions, while the Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) promotes Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) education and encourages innovation and problem-solving in schools and colleges. Digital and financial literacy are strengthened through Digital India, which teaches skills like coding and the use of digital tools, and the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY), which promotes financial inclusion by expanding access to banking services, especially in rural areas.

Together, these programmes have increased employability, boosted entrepreneurship, encouraged civic engagement, and improved access to education and sports. Yet, challenges remain, such as regional gaps, limited outreach in rural areas, and the need for better awareness and execution. Many programmes are still focused more on urban areas. To fully realize the benefits, there is a need for stronger monitoring, better local planning, and deeper partnerships with industry. In conclusion, India's youth empowerment programmes are crucial for unlocking the country's demographic potential. By investing in skill development, entrepreneurship, education, sports, and digital literacy, these initiatives meet the varied aspirations and challenges of young Indians. Continued efforts to improve rural access, partnerships, and programme delivery will be key to building a self-reliant, innovative, and globally competitive India.

***What are the role and functions of Mizoram Youth Commission and its relationship with the nodal department?***

The Mizoram Youth Commission (MYC) is a government body set up to help and guide young people in Mizoram. Its main roles are to plan and run programmes that support youth in areas like education, skill training, job coaching, and entrepreneurship. MYC also gives advice to the government on youth issues, works with different organizations, and tries to make sure young people from all backgrounds can benefit from its schemes.

MYC works closely with the Labour, Employment, Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (LESDE) Department, which is called its nodal department. LESDE helps MYC by providing funding, staff, and other support needed to run its programmes. Many activities, like skill development and job placement, are planned and carried out together by MYC and LESDE. However, sometimes there are challenges, such as delays or confusion about who is responsible for what, which can slow down progress. Better teamwork and clearer roles between MYC and LESDE are needed to make youth programmes more effective and reach more young people across Mizoram.

***What are the various youth empowerment programmes and major achievements of Mizoram Youth Commission?***

The Mizoram Youth Commission (MYC) is a key government body in Mizoram focused on empowering the youth aged 13 to 35. Its primary function is to support youth development, and a major part of this is offering extensive coaching programmes. These prepare youth for a wide range of competitive exams needed for careers in government (UPSC, state services, SSC, banking), defence (CDS, Army, GARUD, Military Nursing), and higher education (IIT-JEE/NEET), as well as for international opportunities through IELTS preparation. The MYC also works on developing practical skills to help youth earn a living and assists them in finding jobs within Mizoram, elsewhere in India, and even abroad.

Significantly, the MYC's efforts have resulted in 478 young individuals finding employment. While stakeholders acknowledge these successes, feedback gathered from various groups (including officials, beneficiaries, and community leaders) suggests the MYC faces challenges. They highlight the need for the commission to better coordinate with other departments, make its programmes more accessible to youth outside major towns, ensure training aligns closely with job market demands, and secure adequate resources to fulfil its mission effectively. The MYC also plays a role in evaluating youth development progress and advising the state government on youth-related matters.

***What are the problems, challenges and remedial measures pertaining to the functioning of Mizoram Youth Commission?***

This study, based on interviews, surveys, case studies, and document analysis, has found several problems with how the Mizoram Youth Commission (MYC) works. First, the MYC faces shortages in money and staff, making it hard to continue and expand its programmes, especially in remote districts. Second, there are coordination problems between MYC and its nodal department, LESDE, as well as with other government bodies. This often causes confusion, delays, and weak monitoring. Third, there are regional and social gaps, where cities like Aizawl get more support than rural or marginalized communities. Fourth, despite efforts, young women still face more barriers to joining skill and entrepreneurship programmes compared to young men. Fifth, many young people and local leaders in villages are not aware of MYC programmes because of poor publicity and complex application steps. Sixth, some people feel there is favouritism and a lack of transparency in how candidates are selected for coaching and placements. Lastly, monitoring and follow-up of programme results are weak, with a clear need for better data and feedback systems.

To fix these issues, the study suggests several steps. First, MYC should get more funds and staff, and work with private and development partners. Second, it should improve coordination with LESDE and other departments by setting clear roles and meeting regularly. Third, it must do more outreach in villages and support district-level offices, while using gender-sensitive strategies to include everyone. Fourth, it should make selection processes public, create a complaint system, and report programme results openly. Finally, MYC needs a strong system to monitor and evaluate its work, collecting data and involving communities in checking progress. Even though MYC has made good progress in helping the youth, solving these problems will make it even more effective, fair, and impactful across Mizoram.

### **Methodological Considerations and Suggestions for Future Research**

This study adopted a mixed-methods approach to explore how youth programmes are managed in Mizoram. While it offers valuable insights, some aspects of how the research was designed affect how the results should be understood and suggest ideas for future studies. For example, the views collected from LESDE and MYC officials reflect the experiences of those currently in key positions. If there are changes in staff or government structures in the future, it may be helpful to include a broader range of participants in later research.

Most of the data came from interviews and surveys, which means it is based on what participants shared about their own experiences. While this is common in social research, it can have some limits. Future studies could include other methods—like using government records or tracking people’s progress over time—to provide a more complete understanding of how well the programmes are working. In the international employment case study, remote tools such as WhatsApp were used because participants were living abroad. This shows the importance of using flexible methods when working with people in different locations.

Since this research was conducted at a single point in time, it only shows the situation as it was during that period. A longer-term study that follows the progress of

MYC programmes and participants over several years could give deeper insights into how things change. Another area for future research could be the financial management of MYC, which was not explored in this study. These suggestions build on the current research and could help strengthen future work on youth development in Mizoram.

## **Conclusion**

This study explored how youth empowerment programmes are managed in Mizoram, with a focus on the role of the Mizoram Youth Commission (MYC) and how it works with other government departments. The findings show that MYC plays an important role in supporting the youth, especially by helping them prepare for exams and find jobs. Many of these efforts have shown positive results and have been recognised by different groups.

At the same time, the study points out some ongoing challenges. These include limited funding and staff, problems with coordination between departments (especially with LESDE), and a need for better systems to track and measure how well the programmes are working. The study also suggests that while policies aim to promote youth independence, there may not always be enough support to help all young people fully benefit, especially those in less connected or disadvantaged areas.

A key strength of this research is that it includes both statistical data and personal stories from a wide range of people—officials, beneficiaries, non-participants, community leaders, and others. This gives a fuller picture of how MYC operates and where it can improve. By showing both what is working well and what still needs attention, the study provides useful information to guide future decisions.

In the end, improving youth empowerment in Mizoram will need ongoing effort and cooperation. Solving issues related to resources, coordination, inclusion, and evaluation is key to making the most of programmes like those run by MYC. A

shared commitment from all stakeholders is essential to support the growth and future success of youth in Mizoram.

# **APPENDIX**

## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX-I

#### Questionnaire for youth beneficiaries

**Dear Participant,**

I am **Joseph Lalmalsawma**, a Ph.D. scholar in the **Department of Public Administration** at **Mizoram University**. My research focuses on youth empowerment programs in Mizoram, with a special emphasis on the **Mizoram Youth Commission (MYC)**.

Your insights as **a young person in Mizoram** are invaluable to this study. This survey aims to gather critical information to **enhance the effectiveness** of youth empowerment initiatives. All responses will remain **strictly confidential** and used **exclusively for academic purposes**.

Thank you for your time and contribution to this important work.

#### Participant Information Section

Please provide the following details (optional if anonymity is preferred):

1. Age: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Gender: \_\_\_\_\_ (Male/Female/Other)
3. District: \_\_\_\_\_ (Select from Aizawl, Lunglei, Champhai, etc.)
4. Educational Qualification: \_\_\_\_\_ (High School/Graduate/Postgraduate/Other)
5. Employment Status: \_\_\_\_\_ (Unemployed/Employed/Self-Employed/Student)
6. Have you participated in any MYC program? \_\_\_\_\_ (Yes/No)

#### Survey Questions

##### Close-Ended Questions

(Use checkboxes, multiple-choice options, or Likert scales as appropriate.)

##### Awareness

1. How did you first learn about MYC programs?
  - Social Media
  - Friends/Family

- School/College
  - Government Channels (e.g., announcements)
  - Other: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Are you aware of the following MYC programs? (Check all that apply.)
- Competitive Exam Coaching
  - Vocational Training Programs
  - Entrepreneurship Support Programs
  - Skill Development Workshops
3. How would you rate your understanding of the objectives of MYC programs?
- Very Good
  - Good
  - Average
  - Poor

### **Participation**

4. Which MYC program(s) have you participated in? (Select all that apply.)
- Competitive Exam Coaching
  - Vocational Training Programs
  - Entrepreneurship Support Programs
  - Skill Development Workshops
5. How many times have you participated in MYC programs?
- Once
  - 2–3 times
  - More than 3 times
6. Did you face any challenges while enrolling in MYC programs?
- Yes
  - No
7. If yes, what was the nature of the challenge? (Select all that apply.)
- Lack of information about enrollment procedures
  - Limited seats available in programs
  - Geographic distance from training centers
  - Other: \_\_\_\_\_

8. Did you face any barriers specific to your geographic location (e.g., rural areas)?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If yes, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

9. Do you think cultural or traditional values influenced your decision to participate in MYC programs?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If yes, please explain briefly: \_\_\_\_\_

10. Would you prefer using digital platforms (e.g., online training) for accessing MYC programs?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

### **Satisfaction**

11. How satisfied are you with the quality of training provided by MYC programs?

- ☐ Very Satisfied
- ☐ Satisfied
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Dissatisfied

12. Did the program meet your expectations?

- ☐ Yes, fully met my expectations.
- ☐ Partially met my expectations.
- ☐ It did not meet my expectations at all.

13. Were the trainers or instructors knowledgeable and supportive?

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree

14. How would you rate the resources provided during the program (e.g., study materials, tools)?

- Excellent
- Good
- Average
- Poor

15. Was the duration of the program sufficient to cover all necessary topics?

- Yes, it was sufficient.
- No, it was too short.

16. Were you provided with post-program support or follow-up services? (e.g., job placement assistance)

- Yes
- No

### **Impact**

17. Did participating in MYC programs improve your skills or knowledge?

- Yes, significantly improved my skills/knowledge.
- Somewhat improved my skills/knowledge.
- No improvement at all.

18. Have you been able to use the skills gained from MYC programs in your current job or education?

- Yes
- No

19. Did participating in MYC programs help you secure employment or start a business?

- Yes
- No

20. If employed/self-employed, how relevant were the skills taught in the program to your current work?

- Very Relevant
- Somewhat Relevant
- Not Relevant

21. Would you recommend MYC programs to others?

- Yes, definitely!
- Maybe, depending on their needs.

- ☐ No

22. What is your overall rating of MYC programs on a scale of 1–5 (1 = Poor; 5 = Excellent)?

- ☐ Scale: 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5

23. Do you think there are enough opportunities provided by MYC for youth empowerment in Mizoram?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

### **Open-Ended Questions**

(Provide space for respondents to write their answers.)

24. What improvements would you suggest for making MYC programs more effective and accessible?

## **APPENDIX-II**

### **Questionnaire for General Youth Respondents (Non-Participants of MYC Programs)**

#### **Participant Information Section**

Please provide the following details (optional if anonymity is preferred):

1. Age: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Gender: \_\_\_\_\_ (Male/Female/Other)
3. District: \_\_\_\_\_ (Select from Aizawl, Lunglei, Champhai, etc.)
4. Educational Qualification: \_\_\_\_\_ (High School/Graduate/Postgraduate/Other)
5. Employment Status: \_\_\_\_\_ (Unemployed/Employed/Self-Employed/Student)

#### **Survey Questions**

##### **Close-Ended Questions**

(Use checkboxes, multiple-choice options, or Likert scales as appropriate.)

##### **Awareness**

1. Are you aware of the Mizoram Youth Commission (MYC)?
  - ☐ Yes
  - ☐ No
2. How did you first hear about MYC?
  - ☐ Social Media
  - ☐ Friends/Family
  - ☐ School/College
  - ☐ Government Channels (e.g., announcements)
  - ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Are you aware of the following programs offered by MYC? (Check all that apply.)
  - ☐ Competitive Exam Coaching
  - ☐ Vocational Training Programs

- Entrepreneurship Support Programs
- Skill Development Workshops

4. How would you rate your overall awareness of MYC's initiatives?

- Very High
- High
- Moderate
- Low
- None

### **Barriers to Participation**

5. Have you ever considered participating in an MYC program?

- Yes
- No

6. If no, what are the main reasons for not participating? (Select all that apply.)

- Lack of awareness about enrollment procedures
- Programs are not relevant to my needs or interests
- Geographic distance from training centers
- Lack of time due to work or studies
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

7. Do you think MYC programs are accessible to youth in rural areas?

- Yes
- No

8. What do you perceive as the biggest barrier preventing youth from accessing MYC programs?

- Lack of awareness
- Limited seats or capacity in programs
- Geographic isolation
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Perceptions**

9. Do you believe that MYC programs are effective in addressing youth unemployment in Mizoram?

- Yes, very effective

- Somewhat effective
- Not effective

10. How important do you think it is for youth empowerment programs like those offered by MYC to focus on the following areas? (Rate each on a scale of 1–5, where 1 = Not Important and 5 = Very Important):

- Skill Development and Vocational Training: 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5
- Competitive Exam Coaching: 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5
- Entrepreneurship Support: 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5
- Mental Health Support: 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5

11. Do you think MYC’s initiatives are inclusive and cater to diverse groups of youth (e.g., rural youth, women)?

- Yes, very inclusive
- Somewhat inclusive
- Not inclusive

12. In your opinion, how well does the government promote awareness about MYC’s programs?

- Very Well Promoted
- Moderately Promoted
- Poorly Promoted

13. Do you believe that digital platforms (e.g., websites, social media) could improve awareness and accessibility of MYC programs?

- Yes
- No

14. How would you rate the government’s overall efforts toward youth empowerment in Mizoram?

- Excellent
- Good
- Average
- Poor

15. Do you feel there are enough opportunities for skill development and employment for youth in Mizoram outside of MYC programs?

- Yes
- No

16. Are there any sectors where you feel more youth-focused initiatives are needed in Mizoram? (Select all that apply.)

- IT and Digital Skills
- Tourism and Hospitality
- Agriculture and Allied Sectors
- Renewable Energy
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

17. Would you be interested in participating in an MYC program if it aligned with your needs or interests?

- Yes
- No

18. On a scale of 1–5, how likely are you to recommend MYC programs to others based on what you know about them? (1 = Very Unlikely; 5 = Very Likely):

- Scale: 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5

19. Do you think more public-private partnerships could enhance the effectiveness of youth empowerment initiatives in Mizoram?

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree

20. What is your overall perception of MYC's role in empowering youth in Mizoram?

- Scale: Very Positive | Positive | Neutral | Negative | Very Negative

### **Open-Ended Questions**

(Provide space for respondents to write their answers.)

21. In your opinion, what types of programs or initiatives should be prioritized by MYC to better address the needs of Mizoram's youth?

- 5-10 sentences or more

Thank you

## **APPENDIX-III**

### **Questionnaire for LESDE Officials**

#### **Participant Information Section**

Please provide the following details (optional if anonymity is preferred):

1. Name (optional): \_\_\_\_\_
2. Designation/Role: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Departmental Division: \_\_\_\_\_ (Labour/Employment/Skill Development/Entrepreneurship)
4. Years of Experience in LESDE: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Geographic Area of Focus: \_\_\_\_\_ (Urban/Rural/Both)

#### **Survey Questions**

##### **Close-Ended Questions**

##### **Program Implementation and Coordination**

1. How familiar are you with the programs implemented by MYC in collaboration with LESDE?
  - ☐ Very Familiar
  - ☐ Somewhat Familiar
  - ☐ Not Familiar
2. How often does LESDE collaborate with MYC on youth empowerment initiatives?
  - ☐ Regularly (e.g., monthly)
  - ☐ Occasionally (e.g., quarterly)
  - ☐ Rarely
3. What types of programs does LESDE collaborate on with MYC? (Select all that apply.)
  - ☐ Vocational Training Programs
  - ☐ Employment Facilitation Programs
  - ☐ Entrepreneurship Support Programs
  - ☐ Awareness Campaigns
4. How would you rate the coordination between LESDE and MYC in implementing youth programs?
  - ☐ Excellent
  - ☐ Good
  - ☐ Average

- Poor
  - Very poor
5. Are there clear guidelines for roles and responsibilities between LESDE and MYC in collaborative projects?
- Yes, very clear
  - Somewhat clear
  - No, unclear

### **Resource Allocation and Challenges**

6. Do you feel that sufficient resources are allocated for youth empowerment programs under LESDE?
- Yes
  - No
7. What are the most common challenges faced by LESDE in implementing youth programs? (Select all that apply.)
- Lack of funding
  - Limited staff capacity/training
  - Geographic barriers to reaching rural areas
  - Low participation rates among youth
8. Are there mechanisms in place to monitor and evaluate the success of programs implemented by LESDE?
- Yes, well-established mechanisms exist
  - Some mechanisms exist but need improvement
  - No formal mechanisms exist
9. How would you rate the effectiveness of vocational training programs implemented by LESDE?
- Very Effective
  - Effective
  - Neutral
  - Ineffective
10. Do you believe that entrepreneurship support initiatives under LESDE have been successful in fostering self-employment opportunities for youth?

- Yes
- No

### **Impact and Effectiveness**

11. How would you rate the overall impact of LESDE's programs on youth empowerment in Mizoram?

- Very High Impact
- High Impact
- Moderate Impact
- Low Impact

12. Have LESDE's programs successfully addressed skill gaps among Mizo youth?

- Yes, fully addressed skill gaps
- Partially addressed skill gaps
- No, skill gaps remain unaddressed

13. Do you feel that LESDE's employment facilitation initiatives have been effective in reducing youth unemployment?

- Yes, very effective
- Somewhat effective
- Not effective

14. Are there any specific sectors where LESDE's programs have had the most significant impact? (Select all that apply.)

- IT and Digital Skills
- Tourism and Hospitality
- Agriculture and Allied Sectors
- Renewable Energy

15. Do you believe that more public-private partnerships could enhance the outcomes of LESDE's initiatives?

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree

### **Future Directions**

16. Should digital platforms be used more extensively to deliver vocational training or entrepreneurship support programs under LESDE?

- ☐ Yes, significantly enhance effectiveness
- ☐ Somewhat enhance effectiveness
- ☐ No impact

17. Does LESDE conduct sufficient research to understand evolving youth needs in Mizoram?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

18. Should more emphasis be placed on entrepreneurship development as part of youth empowerment initiatives?

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree

19. Do current policies under LESDE adequately address challenges faced by rural youth in Mizoram?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

20. What is your overall perception of LESDE's role in empowering youth in Mizoram?

Scale: Very Positive | Positive | Neutral | Negative | Very Negative

21. Do you feel adequately trained or resourced to implement MYC programs effectively?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

22. Are current monitoring mechanisms sufficient to track long-term outcomes of MYC programs?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

### Open-Ended Question

23. What specific challenges does LESDE face in implementing collaborative programs with MYC, and what improvements would you suggest?

### APPENDIX-IV

#### Mizoram Youth Empowerment & Opportunities Survey

Dear Participant,

*(For MYC Beneficiaries: Sportspersons, Entrepreneurs, Workers, Students, Job Holders, and Overseas Mizo)*

#### Participant Instructions

*Please answer **only** the sections that apply to your current/past role:*

*Skip sections that do not apply to you.*

#### A. Participant Profile

**1. Location Current:**

☐ Mizoram ☐ Other Indian State ☐ Abroad (Country: \_\_\_\_\_)

**2. Age:**

☐ 15–20 ☐ 21–25 ☐ 26–30 ☐ 31+

**3. Gender:** ☐ Male ☐ Female

**4. Primary Role (Choose one):**

☐ Student ☐ Job Holder (Govt/Private) ☐ Entrepreneur ☐ Sportsperson  
☐ Worker (Skilled/Unskilled) ☐ Unemployed ☐ Overseas Mizo

**5. Education:**

☐ School ☐ College ☐ University ☐ Vocational Training

**6. Income (Monthly):**

☐ <₹10k ☐ ₹10k–25k ☐ ₹25k–50k ☐ ₹50k+

#### B. MYC Coaching & Job Placement

*(For Students & Job Holders)*

**7. MYC Coaching Program Attended:**

☐ Competitive Exams (UPSC/SSC) ☐ Skill Training (IT, Tailoring)  
☐ Job Interview Prep ☐ Entrepreneurship ☐ None

**8. Job Secured After Coaching:**

☐ Govt ☐ Private ☐ Self-Employed ☐ Not Yet

**9. Time Taken to Get Job:**

☐ <3 Months ☐ 3–6 Months ☐ 6–12 Months ☐ Still Searching

**10. Role of MYC in Your Job:**

☐ Direct Placement ☐ Training Helped ☐ No Role

**11. Salary Before vs. After Coaching:**

Before: ☐ <₹10k ☐ ₹10k–20k ☐ Unemployed

After: ☐ <₹15k ☐ ₹15k–30k ☐ ₹30k+

**12. Job Satisfaction:**

☐ Happy ☐ Neutral ☐ Unhappy (Reason: \_\_\_\_\_)

**13. Challenges During Job Search:**

☐ Lack of Guidance ☐ Low Salaries ☐ No Local Jobs ☐ Language Issues

**C. For Entrepreneurs only**

**14. Business Started with Support From:**

☐ MYC ☐ MSME Loan ☐ University Incubation ☐ Self-Funded

**15. Current Business Status:**

☐ Growing ☐ Stable ☐ Struggling ☐ Closed

**16. Jobs Created:**

☐ 0 ☐ 1–5 ☐ 6–10 ☐ 10+

**17. Biggest Hurdle:**

☐ Funding ☐ Customers ☐ Govt Rules ☐ Transport

**D. For Sportspersons only**

**17. Support Received:**

☐ Training ☐ Equipment ☐ Competition Fees ☐ Coaching

**18. Achievements Post-MYC:**

☐ State Award ☐ National Level ☐ International ☐ None

**19. Infrastructure Issues:**

☐ Poor Grounds ☐ No Gear ☐ No Travel Support

**E. For Workers & Unemployed only**

**20. Skill Training Attended:**

☐ MYC ☐ LESDE ☐ University ☐ None

**21. Job Found After Training:**

☐ Yes (Salary: \_\_\_\_\_) ☐ No

**22. Skill Use in Current Job:**

☐ Fully Used ☐ Partially ☐ Not Used

**F. For Overseas Mizos only**

**23. Work Sector Abroad:**

☐ Healthcare ☐ Hospitality ☐ Construction ☐ Tech

**24. Support Needed from Mizoram Govt.:**

☐ Job Alerts ☐ Skill Certificates ☐ Legal Help ☐ None

**25. Problems Faced Abroad:**

☐ Language ☐ Work Permit ☐ Discrimination ☐ Low Pay

**G. Challenges & Feedback**

**26. Biggest Issue with MYC/MSME/LESDE:**

☐ Delayed Funds ☐ Poor Training ☐ Corruption ☐ No Follow-Up

**27. Digital Services Experience:**

☐ Easy Online Forms ☐ Too Complicated ☐ Never Used

**28. For Rural Participants:**

☐ No Training Centers ☐ Transport Issues ☐ Power/Internet Problems

**H. Impact & Suggestions**

**29. How MYC Changed Your Life:**

☐ Better Income ☐ New Skills ☐ Job Confidence ☐ No Change

**30. One Thing MYC Should Improve:**

[Write freely]

**31. Message to MYC Officials:**

[Write freely]

**Mizoram Youth Commission Community Leader Feedback**

*(All questions required unless marked optional)*

**A. Your Basic Information (6 questions)**

**1. District:**

[Choose one: Aizawl, Lunglei, Serchhip, Champhai, Kolasib, Khawzawl, Hnahthial, Lawngtlai, Mamit, Saitual, Siaha]

**2. Your main role:**

- ☐ Village Council Leader
- ☐ Church Leader/Pastor
- ☐ YMA Group Leader
- ☐ School Principal/Teacher
- ☐ Sports Coach/Manager

**3. Years working with youth:**

☐ <1 year ☐ 1-3 years ☐ 4-6 years ☐ 7+ years

**4. Number of youth you work with monthly:**

☐ <10 ☐ 10-30 ☐ 30-50 ☐ 50+

**5. Age groups you focus on:**

[Check all]

☐ 15-18 yrs ☐ 19-22 yrs ☐ 23-25 yrs ☐ 26-30 yrs

**B. MYC Program Awareness (7 questions)**

**6. Have you heard of these MYC programs?**

*(Check all)*

- ☐ Sports Academy
- ☐ Computer Training
- ☐ Cultural Festivals
- ☐ Farming Support

**7. How did you learn about MYC programs?**

*(Choose 3 main ways)*

- ☐ Village Meetings
- ☐ Church Announcements
- ☐ MYC Office Visits
- ☐ Friends/Relatives
- ☐ Posters/Newspapers

**8. Are program details easy to understand?**

- ☐ Very Easy
- ☐ Somewhat Easy
- ☐ Difficult

**9. Best way MYC shares information:**

[Choose one]

- ☐ In-Person Meetings
- ☐ Phone Messages
- ☐ Printed Materials
- ☐ Youth Volunteers

**C. Program Participation (8 questions)**

**10. How many youth from your area joined MYC programs?**

- ☐ None ☐ 1-5 ☐ 6-10 ☐ 10+

**11. Most popular MYC program in your area:**

[Choose one]

- ☐ Sports
- ☐ Business Training
- ☐ Computer Classes
- ☐ Cultural Activities

**12. Main reason youth join MYC programs:**

[Choose one]

- ☐ Job Opportunities

- ☐ Skill Learning
- ☐ Friends' Influence
- ☐ Community Pressure

**13. Biggest barrier to joining programs:**

[Choose one]

- ☐ Distance to Centers
- ☐ Language Issues
- ☐ Family Responsibilities
- ☐ Lack of Interest

**D. Observed Changes (6 questions)**

**14. Positive changes in youth after MYC programs:**

*(Check all)*

- ☐ Started Small Businesses
- ☐ Improved Sports Skills
- ☐ Reduced Alcohol Use
- ☐ Community Volunteering

**15. Impact on families:**

[Choose one]

- ☐ Increased Income
- ☐ Better Family Relations
- ☐ No Change

**16. Youth confidence level after programs:**

- ☐ Much Higher
- ☐ Somewhat Higher
- ☐ No Change

**E. Working with MYC (7 questions)**

**17. How often does MYC visit your area?**

- ☐ Monthly ☐ Quarterly ☐ Yearly ☐ Never

**18. Satisfaction with MYC communication:**

- ☐ Very Happy
- ☐ Somewhat Happy
- ☐ Not Happy

**19. Biggest problem working with MYC:**

[Choose one]

- ☐ Slow Response
- ☐ Language Barriers
- ☐ Complex Paperwork
- ☐ Unclear Rules

**F. Improvements Needed (5 questions)**

**20. Most needed program type:**

[Choose one]

- ☐ More Sports Centers
- ☐ Better Business Training
- ☐ Advanced Computer Classes
- ☐ Cultural Workshops

**21. Urgent MYC improvements:**

*(Check 3)*

- ☐ Faster Approvals
- ☐ Local Language Materials
- ☐ More Village Visits
- ☐ Youth Feedback System

**22. Should MYC work more with:**

[Choose one]

- ☐ Churches
- ☐ Schools
- ☐ YMA Groups
- ☐ Women's Groups

**G. Final Thoughts (1 open-ended question)**

**Your most important suggestion for MYC:**

[Write 2-3 sentences]

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**ABSTRACT**

**ADMINISTRATION OF YOUTH EMPOWERMENT  
PROGRAMMES IN MIZORAM: A STUDY OF THE  
MIZORAM YOUTH COMMISSION**

**AN ABSTRACT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT  
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF  
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**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION  
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES  
MARCH, 2026**

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**Submitted**

**In partial fulfillment of the requirement of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy  
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## **ABSTRACT**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

#### **Background of the Study**

Youth empowerment has become a pivotal focus in the development agenda of many countries, particularly in regions where the youth population constitutes a significant demographic segment. As the world witnesses a "youth bulge," the ability of nations to harness this demographic dividend determines their future socio-economic trajectory. India, home to one of the largest youth populations globally, has recognized the critical role of youth in shaping the nation's future, as evidenced by the strategic frameworks outlined in the National Youth Policy (NYP) 2021.

Within the Indian federal structure, the northeastern state of Mizoram presents a unique context for youth empowerment. Mizoram is characterized by a distinct cultural heritage, a high literacy rate, and a complex topography that presents specific developmental challenges. The youth of Mizoram represent a vital resource for regional growth and social transformation; however, this potential is currently underutilized due to systemic economic barriers. Despite the state's high literacy levels, the youth in Mizoram face multifaceted challenges, most notably high unemployment rates. Recent data indicates a youth unemployment rate of 11.9% between July 2022 and June 2023, a figure that exceeds the national average and signals a critical disconnect between educational attainment and market absorption (News Laundry, 2023).

The situation is particularly acute for young women in the state. Statistical evidence reveals a significant gender disparity in workforce participation and economic opportunity, with the female unemployment rate standing at 16.4%, compared to 8.9% for young men (Devi, 2024). This gendered dimension of economic exclusion necessitates targeted empowerment programmes that go beyond generic interventions. Furthermore, there is anecdotal evidence of youth dissatisfaction regarding perceived favouritism in government recruitment processes, which threatens to undermine trust in public institutions.

In response to these challenges, the State Government established the Mizoram Youth Commission (MYC). The MYC is a statutory body established under *The Mizoram Youth Commission Act, 2008* (and strengthened by the 2025 Act). It acts as the nodal agency for guiding, assisting, promoting, and developing youth welfare. Unlike varied NGOs or temporary government schemes, the MYC is a permanent institution tasked with a broad mandate: to evaluate youth development progress, promote dignity of labor, and coordinate efforts to secure better education and employment opportunities. It operates under the administrative control of the Labour, Employment, Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (LESDE) Department.

Despite the MYC's critical role, limited empirical research exists on its operational effectiveness, its collaboration with other government departments, and the tangible impact of its programmes. This study, therefore, serves as a comprehensive administrative analysis of the MYC, examining its conceptual framework, programme implementation, and institutional challenges.

### **Defining the Youth Cohort**

A critical aspect of youth empowerment administration is the precise definition of the target demographic. The concept of "youth" is inherently dynamic, shaped by cultural, social, economic, and policy contexts.

- **Global Context:** The United Nations (UN) typically defines youth as individuals between the ages of 15 and 24 years to facilitate statistical consistency. However, the UN acknowledges that member states may adapt to this range.
- **National Context:** In India, the National Youth Policy (NYP) 2021 defines youth as persons aged 15 to 29 years, focusing on the transition from education to employment.
- **Regional Context (Mizoram):** Recognizing the unique socio-economic factors of the region—such as the early onset of adolescence in rural areas and the prolonged transition to economic independence due to a lack of private sector jobs, the Mizoram Youth Commission adopts a broader definition. As per *The Mizoram*

*Youth Commission Act 2025*, youth are defined as individuals aged 13 to 35 years. This study adheres to the MYC definition (13–35 years) to ensuring that the analysis remains relevant to the population actually served by the state's youth empowerment initiatives.

## **2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

To ground this research in the existing body of knowledge, an extensive review of literature was conducted, encompassing twenty standard books and ten academic articles. The review traces the evolution of youth empowerment from a deficit-based model (focusing on fixing "problem" youth) to a strength-based asset model. Twenty two books and eight articles have been reviewed for the purpose of this study.

### **Theoretical Foundations and General Studies**

Early literature, such as L.S. Mehra (1977) in *Youth in Modern Society*, highlights the need for interpreting youth aspirations through the lens of cultural change and adaptation. Mehra's work was pioneering in calling for an assessment of welfare needs, setting the stage for structured empowerment programs. Expanding on the sociological dimension, P.K. Gandhi (1983) in *Rural Youth in Urban India* explored the cultural shock and socio-economic pressures faced by rural youth migrating to urban educational institutions—a theme highly relevant to Mizoram where youth from rural districts migrate to Aizawl.

The transition to a developmental focus is evident in Noor Mohammad and Abdul Matin (1995), who diagnosed problems like unemployment and drug abuse in *Indian Youth: Problems and Prospects*. However, their work was criticized for failing to provide concrete policy solutions. UNESCO (1998) shifted the paradigm by recognizing youth not as beneficiaries but as "equal partners and actors in development and peace," a core tenet of modern empowerment theory.

S. Narayanasamy (2003), in *Youth Development in the New Millennium* discussed themes such as community service and national policy yet notably neglected the *administrative* aspect of youth development, the specific machinery of

government required to deliver these services. Similarly, Hamilton and Hamilton (2004) provided the *Youth Development Handbook* containing best practices and case studies, which serves as a benchmark for evaluating program quality but lacks a focus on statutory bodies in developing nations.

### **Empowerment and Unemployment**

The economic dimension of empowerment is a dominant theme. Rosemary Deem (2002) in *Work, Unemployment and Leisure* examined how unemployment impacts the social lives of youth, arguing that work and leisure are culturally constructed boundaries. K. Narindar Jetli (2006) provided a descriptive analysis of India's labour welfare and employment policies post-1947, though the approach was more historical than evaluative.

More recent works, such as Oluwaseun Solomon Jawolusi (2016), focus on practical solutions, specifically Information and Communication Technology (ICT) as a curb to underemployment. This is complemented by Javeed Ahmad (2018), who explored youth employment problems in Jammu & Kashmir—a region sharing similar geopolitical sensitivities with Mizoram—pleading for a sound employment policy based on human capital.

### **Regional Context (Northeast India)**

Specific to the region, Ashok Pankaj, Atul Sarma, and Antora Bora (2020) in *Social Sector Development in North-East India* argue that human capital formation must be the strategic goal for the Northeast. They criticize the "top-down," infrastructure-focused development models and advocate for bottom-up, people-centric approaches. This is crucial for the present study, which investigates whether the MYC acts as a top-down bureaucracy or a bottom-up facilitator.

### **Empirical Articles and Program Evaluations**

Recent articles provide frameworks for evaluation. Pearrow (2008) proposed six dimensions of critical youth empowerment programs, offering a model for examination. Christens and Peterson (2011) empirically studied the psychological

components of empowerment, linking social support systems to positive developmental outcomes.

In the Indian context, Bijaya Kumar Malik (2015) highlighted that youth development patterns are directly determined by the economic condition of the household, suggesting that empowerment programs must be equity-focused to reach the poorest demographics. Chinthala Kishore Kumar (2024) provided statistical evidence of the effectiveness of national skill training programs, noting a rise in labor force participation. However, Kumar's work lacks a specific focus on tribal regions like Mizoram where cultural barriers require bespoke approaches.

### 3. RESEARCH GAP

Despite the extensive literature covering youth empowerment concepts, challenges, and program typologies globally and within India, there is a notable vacuum in research focusing on the administration of these initiatives at the sub-national level in Northeast India. The review identifies five interconnected dimensions of this research gap:

1. **Empirical Gap on MYC's Functioning:** There is virtually no empirical research examining the day-to-day operations, administrative processes, and organizational effectiveness of the Mizoram Youth Commission. While the MYC's mandate is public knowledge, its operational reality remains unstudied.
2. **Contextual Gap:** Existing research discusses empowerment in generalized Indian contexts. There is insufficient analysis of how youth empowerment administration functions within the unique socio-cultural and political context of Mizoram (e.g., the influence of civil society groups like the YMA, the specific topography, and the specific tribal protections).
3. **Administrative and Relational Gap:** Literature often ignores the "administrative aspect." Specifically, the structural relationship and inter-agency dynamics between the MYC and its nodal department (Labour, Employment, Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Department) are under-explored.

4. **Programme-Specific Evaluation Gap:** There is a dearth of detailed evaluation concerning specific flagship programs implemented by the MYC (e.g., IAS coaching, skill training).

5. **Gap in Challenges and Solutions:** The systemic hurdles faced by the MYC—ranging from funding to political interference or lack of technical manpower—have not been systematically cataloged or analyzed to propose remedial measures.

#### 4. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Youth empowerment remains a key developmental priority in Mizoram, where young people constitute a significant demographic dividend. While the government has established the Mizoram Youth Commission (MYC) to address youth-specific challenges, systemic issues persist. High unemployment rates (11.9%), particularly among women, and a lack of private sector absorption capacity continue to impede progress.

A major limitation in the current developmental discourse is the absence of rigorous empirical research evaluating the *institutional effectiveness* of the MYC. Policymakers and administrators currently operate with limited feedback on whether the administrative structure of the MYC is optimal, how its coordination with the LESDE Department functions, and what measurable impact its programs are having on the beneficiaries.

This study aims to address that gap by critically examining how empowerment initiatives function in practice. It seeks to answer not just *what* the MYC does, but *how* it does it, and *how effective* it is. In doing so, it generates insights that can inform future policy design, enhance the responsiveness of youth-oriented programs, and ultimately contribute to a more robust administrative framework for youth development in Mizoram.

## **5. SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

The scope of this research is defined by the following parameters:

- **Institutional Scope:** The study focuses primarily on the Mizoram Youth Commission (MYC) from its inception to the present day. It investigates the Commission's historical evolution, organizational hierarchy, and operational mechanics. A critical component of the scope is the examination of the MYC's administrative relationship with its nodal department, the Labour, Employment, Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (LESDE) Department. While acknowledging the role of the Department of Sports and Youth Services, the study restricts its primary analysis to the MYC and LESDE to maintain research precision.
- **Geographical Scope:** The research encompasses the entire state of Mizoram. Data collection was distributed across all 11 districts to ensure a representative statewide perspective that accounts for regional variations between the capital, Aizawl, and remote districts.
- **Demographic Scope:** The study adheres to the definition of "youth" as specified in *The Mizoram Youth Commission Act, 2008*, covering individuals aged 13 to 35 years.
- **Programmatic Scope:** The research evaluates the full spectrum of MYC interventions, ranging from local skill training to international placement initiatives (e.g., placements in Japan).

## **6. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

In alignment with the identified research gaps and the broader developmental context of the region, this research is guided by the following specific objectives:

1. To study the conceptual aspect of Youth Empowerment.
2. To study the major youth empowerment programmes in India.
3. To study the role and functions of Mizoram Youth Commission and its relationship with nodal department.

4. To study the various youth empowerment programmes and major achievements of Mizoram Youth Commission.
5. To find out the problems and challenges faced by Mizoram Youth Commission and suggest remedial measures.

## **7. RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The study seeks to answer the following fundamental questions:

1. What is the concept of Youth Empowerment?
2. What are the major youth empowerment programmes in India?
3. What are the role and functions of Mizoram Youth Commission and its relationship with the nodal department?
4. What are the various youth empowerment programmes and major achievements of Mizoram Youth Commission?
5. What are the problems, challenges and remedial measures pertaining to the functioning of Mizoram Youth Commission?

## **8. METHODOLOGY**

This research employed a mixed-method approach to examine the administration of youth empowerment programmes in Mizoram, focusing specifically on the Mizoram Youth Commission (MYC) and its nodal department—Labour, Employment, Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (LESDE) - alongside the Department of Sports and Youth Services, which collaborates in areas of shared responsibility. The methodology was designed to collect diverse perspectives from key stakeholders across the youth empowerment network, combining qualitative and quantitative methods to ensure thorough analysis and cross-validation of findings.

### **Research Design**

### **Sampling Framework**

This study used purposive sampling with a total of 176 respondents from all 11 districts of Mizoram. The 56 youth beneficiaries were selected from MYC

programme attendance records for coaching and skill training programs between 2022-2025 along with sixty-one (61) non-participants of MYC. They were chosen with 5-6 participants from each district. The thirty-three (33) community leaders came from colleges and NGOs with MYC outreach experience, identified through MYC district coordinators and institutional lists. All six (6) LESDE officials handling MYC coordination were included since they represent the complete department roster. The 8 MYC officials included all staff directly implementing programs. The six (6) key informants were senior leaders with policy and implementation roles. The eight (8) case study participants showed clear MYC impact through employment or business creation.

## **Data Collection Methods**

### **Interviews**

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with key officials and stakeholders to gain insight into policy formulation, implementation strategies, and administrative challenges. The following key informants were interviewed:

1. Adviser to Chief Minister (Implementation of Hand-Holding Policy) – interviewed on April 2, 2025.
2. Director of the (Labour, Employment, Skill, Development and Entrepreneurship) – interviewed on March 12, 2025.
3. Director of the Department of Sports & Youth Services (SYS) – interviewed on March 4, 2025.
4. Proprietor of MS Academy and member of Mizoram Youth Commission – interviewed on March 28, 2025.
5. Secretary of Mizoram Youth Commission – interviewed on March 24, 2025.

### **Surveys**

Four distinct surveys were designed and administered to capture perspectives from different stakeholder groups using both structured questions, open-ended and close-ended questions items to gather both quantitative and qualitative insights.

**Community Leaders Survey:**

This survey targeted 33 community stakeholders across multiple districts, primarily from educational institutions (70%), community organizations (15%), and other relevant sectors (15%). Targeted sampling was employed, although responses showed a notable urban bias toward Aizawl. The majority of respondents (70%) possessed substantial experience (7+ years) working with youth. The survey captured perspectives on Mizoram Youth Commission (MYC) operations, effectiveness, challenges, and potential improvements.

**Youth Beneficiaries Survey:**

Feedback was collected from youth across all 11 districts using a stratified sampling approach based on varying educational qualifications and employment statuses. The sample included 56 beneficiaries of MYC programmes (referred to as participants) and 61 individuals aware of MYC programmes but not participating (non-participants). Non-participants were included to capture diverse perspectives on awareness, perceived barriers, and broader community perceptions, allowing for comparison and enhancing the study's depth. Stratified sampling ensured proportional representation across rural and urban areas using structured questionnaires. The survey assessed programme awareness, participation patterns, perceived effectiveness, challenges, and recommendations.

**LESDE Officials Survey:**

Targeted sampling gathered responses from 6 officials within the Labour, Employment, Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (LESDE) department, encompassing various roles (e.g., Head, Deputy Director, Mission Manager). The survey examined their collaboration with MYC, focusing on programme implementation, coordination, resource allocation, challenges, and future directions.

**MYC Officials Survey:**

Internal perspectives were collected through purposive sampling of 8 officials and staff directly involved in MYC programme design, implementation, or evaluation. This survey focused on programme design, implementation challenges,

and perceived impact. While the sample sizes for the LESDE and MYC official's surveys were relatively small, they represented significant proportions of the total personnel in these specialized administrative roles. In total, 176 participants were involved in the research, representing diverse groups across the various data collection methods, including interviews, case studies, and surveys.

### **Data Analysis Procedures**

**Qualitative Analysis:** Interview transcripts and open-ended responses thematically analyzed to identify patterns aligned with research objectives.

**Quantitative Analysis:** Descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages) and cross tabulations by district/stakeholder type.

**Ethical Considerations:** The research adhered to strict ethical guidelines to protect participants and ensure data integrity:

1. **Informed Consent:** All participants were provided with clear information about research objectives and procedures before giving their consent to participate.
2. **Confidentiality:** Personal identifiers were removed from data where appropriate, and participants were assured of confidentiality. For interviews with public officials where anonymization was not possible or desirable, participants were made aware of the limited confidentiality.

### **CONCLUSION**

The methodology adopted for this research facilitated a comprehensive examination of youth empowerment administration in Mizoram through the examination of multiple data sources and analytical approaches. By combining in-depth interviews, targeted case studies, and structured surveys targeting diverse 22 stakeholder groups, the research generated rich empirical data that illuminates both the achievements and challenges in youth empowerment programme administration. The mixed-methods design proved particularly valuable in capturing both the structural dimensions of administrative frameworks and the lived experiences of

programme beneficiaries, providing a comprehensive understanding of youth empowerment dynamics in Mizoram.

## **9. CHAPTERISATION**

### **CHAPTER I: Introduction**

This chapter examines youth empowerment in Mizoram, focusing on the role and effectiveness of the Mizoram Youth Commission (MYC). It highlights the state's unique demographic context, high youth unemployment—and the statutory mandate of the MYC to promote youth welfare through education, skill development, and employment initiatives. Using a mixed-methods approach, the study combines interviews, case studies, and surveys to assess MYC's programmes, achievements, and challenges. The research identifies gaps in empirical evaluation of MYC's operations and aims to provide recommendations for improving youth empowerment strategies in Mizoram.

### **CHAPTER II: Youth Empowerment: Concept and Origin**

This chapter explores major theoretical frameworks, such as the Adolescent Empowerment Cycle, Transactional Partnership Model, and Critical Social Theory of Youth Empowerment, each highlighting key elements like safe environments, meaningful participation, and equitable power-sharing between youth and adults. It also traces the historical evolution of the concept, moving from deficit-based approaches to strength-based models that emphasize young people's capabilities. It discusses the multidimensional nature of youth empowerment—personal, interpersonally, and politically and outlines practical strategies for creating enabling environments, fostering participation, developing critical consciousness, and building skills. Finally, it addresses ongoing challenges such as conceptual clarity, authentic participation, and structural barriers, emphasizing the need for continued innovation to support genuine youth agency and social transformation.

### **CHAPTER III: Youth Empowerment Programmes in India**

This chapter examines the evolution, structure, and impact of youth empowerment programmes in India. It highlights the shift from viewing youth as

passive beneficiaries to recognizing them as active agents in national development. The chapter reviews key government initiatives such as Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan, National Service Scheme, Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana, and MY Bharat, focusing on areas like skill development, leadership, and entrepreneurship. It also discusses challenges including regional disparities, inclusion barriers, and implementation gaps. The chapter concludes by emphasizing the need for stronger policy alignment, better evaluation, and continued innovation to fully realize India's youth potential.

#### **CHAPTER IV: Role and Functions of Mizoram Youth Commission**

This chapter examines the Mizoram Youth Commission (MYC), focusing on its legislative foundation, governance structure, and evolving role in youth empowerment. Established by the 2008 Act and strengthened in 2025, the MYC operates as a statutory body with significant autonomy and quasi-judicial powers. The chapter reviews MYC's district-level operations, its diverse programmes in coaching, skill development, and employment, and its partnerships with government and private sectors. It also discusses challenges such as resource constraints and coordination, highlighting MYC's central role in advancing youth development across Mizoram.

#### **CHAPTER V: Various Youth Empowerment Programmes and Major Achievements of Mizoram Youth Commission**

This chapter critically examines the institutional framework and strategic objectives of the Mizoram State Entrepreneurship Development and Monitoring Committee (MEDMOC) and evaluates the Mizoram Youth Commission's (MYC) major youth empowerment initiatives. It highlights flagship programmes such as SANKALP, STRIVE, KAWTCHHUAH, the Empowering Mizoram Sports (EMS) programme, and efforts under Mizoram State Entrepreneurship Development and Monitoring Committee, reflecting MYC's comprehensive approach to skill development, entrepreneurship, sports, literacy, and international opportunities like IELTS preparation.

The analysis reviews programme outcomes, noting significant successes in government job placements and skill training, while also identifying persistent challenges, including gender disparities, limited entrepreneurship support, and regional imbalances. The chapter concludes by emphasizing the need for greater inclusivity and continuous innovation in MYC's youth empowerment strategies.

## **CHAPTER VI: Results and Discussion**

This chapter presents a detailed analysis of youth empowerment programmes in Mizoram, focusing on the role, implementation, and effectiveness of the Mizoram Youth Commission (MYC). Drawing data from interviews, case studies, and surveys involving policymakers, officials, beneficiaries, and non-participants, it evaluates achievements such as skill development, job placements, and entrepreneurship support. The chapter also identifies key challenges, including limited resources, regional disparities, and coordination gaps. Stakeholder perspectives highlight the need for greater outreach, improved programme relevance, and stronger inter-departmental collaboration to ensure inclusive and effective youth empowerment across Mizoram.

## **CHAPTER VII: Conclusion**

The last chapter synthesizes the research findings and draws conclusions on the administration and impact of youth empowerment programmes in Mizoram, focusing on the Mizoram Youth Commission (MYC). It highlights MYC's role as a statutory body coordinating programmes that enhance skill development, entrepreneurship, employment, and leadership. Key achievements include successful government job placements, expanded skill training, and opportunities for international employment and sports excellence. However, challenges persist, including limited resources, regional disparities, gender imbalances, and weak interdepartmental coordination.

This chapter examines the effectiveness of youth empowerment programs in Mizoram, focusing on the Mizoram Youth Commission (MYC). Through interviews, case studies, and surveys, the research shows that while some youth benefit in terms of employment and skills, many, particularly those in rural areas and girls, are not

adequately reached. Additionally, issues with inter-departmental coordination and program evaluation persist. The study suggests that MYC should improve outreach to marginalized youth, enhance program monitoring, and strengthen collaboration between departments to better meet the needs of both boys and girls, ultimately making youth empowerment in Mizoram more equitable and impactful. The following chapter will present the conceptual and theoretical frameworks that underpin youth empowerment, providing a basis for analyzing programme implementation in subsequent chapters.

## **10. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION: MAJOR FINDINGS**

The research findings present a comprehensive evaluation of the administrative framework and the real-world impact of the Mizoram Youth Commission (MYC) on youth empowerment. The results are categorized into four key thematic areas: conceptual understanding, institutional effectiveness, programmatic success, and administrative bottlenecks.

### **1. Conceptualizing Empowerment: The Economic Imperative**

A primary finding of the study is the divergence between theoretical definitions of "empowerment" and the lived reality of the Mizo youth. While global and national literature often emphasizes "psychological" or "social" empowerment, 52.2% of the research respondents define empowerment through the lens of Economic Self-Sufficiency. The data indicates that for the majority of the youth in Mizoram, empowerment is synonymous with the ability to contribute to or increase their family's monthly income. This "Economic Imperative" is the primary driver for youth engagement with the Commission's programmes.

### **2. Institutional Framework and Nodal Dynamics**

The study analyzed the MYC's role as a Statutory Body under the MYC Act of 2008. While the Commission is granted quasi-judicial powers, the research identified a significant "Administrative Paradox." Despite its legal mandate, the Commission operates within what can be described as "Administrative Silos." There is a documented lack of fluid, horizontal coordination with its nodal department,

LESDE (Labour, Employment, Skill Development & Entrepreneurship). 20.45% of the officials surveyed cited "Poor Inter-departmental Coordination" as a major hurdle, which leads to delays in policy implementation and budget approvals.

### **3. Programmatic Success and the Shift in Preferences**

The research documented a total of 478 successful job placements facilitated by the MYC between the years 2016 and 2025. This includes the high-impact Japan Caregiver Programme, which marks a significant milestone in international placement for Mizo youth. However, the discussion reveals a shifting trend in youth aspirations. In the assessment of the most recent data (2024–2025), there was a 100% pivot toward the Government Sector for those seeking coaching and placement services. This highlights a critical challenge: while the MYC promotes "Entrepreneurship" through programmes like *Kawtchhuah*, the actual demand from the youth remains firmly rooted in the security of public service jobs.

### **4. Identifying the "Bottlenecks": Staffing and Geography**

The most critical findings of the study pertain to the administrative obstacles that hinder the MYC's efficiency.

- The Manpower Gap: The top-ranked obstacle, cited by 32.95% of respondents, is the Lack of Adequate Staff/Manpower. One-third of the sanctioned administrative positions remain unfilled, forcing existing staff to handle multiple portfolios, which directly leads to Procedural Delays and Red Tapism (23.86%).
- The Urban-Rural Paradox: The data reveals a stark Urban Bias. 41.1% of all MYC beneficiaries are concentrated in Aizawl District. Furthermore, 30% of community leaders in rural and border areas reported that the Commission has "never visited" their locality. This geographic centralization means that the "Youth Commission" is effectively an "Aizawl Youth Commission" for a large segment of the population.

## **5. Gender Disparity and Inclusivity**

The study also highlights a significant gender gap in the empowerment landscape. Despite high literacy rates in Mizoram, the research found that the unemployment rate for females (16.4%) is nearly double that of males (8.9%). The discussion suggests that while the MYC's programmes are technically "gender-neutral," they lack specific, targeted modules that address the unique socio-economic barriers faced by young women in rural Mizoram.

## **6. Conclusion of Findings: The Path Toward Remediation**

The discussion concludes that the MYC is the "Backbone" of youth development in the state, but it is currently a "Centralized Backbone." To fulfill its statutory mission, the Commission must transition from its current model toward "Digital Decentralization." By filling the 33% staff vacancy and establishing District-Level Coordination Units, the Commission can bridge the gap between the capital and the remote districts. Furthermore, leveraging digital platforms for registration and counseling would allow the MYC to reach the "un-reached" youth without the need for massive physical infrastructure in every village.

## **10. SUGGESTIONS AND REMEDIAL MEASURES**

Based on the empirical findings, the following recommendations are proposed to enhance the administrative efficacy of the Mizoram Youth Commission:

1. **Administrative Decentralization:** The MYC must transition from an "Aizawl-centric" model to a district-led model. Establishing functional District Youth Cells with delegated financial powers will ensure that programs reach the grassroots level effectively.
2. **Institutionalized Coordination Mechanism:** A formal "Joint Steering Committee" comprising the Secretary of MYC, Director of LESDE, and Director of Sports & Youth Services should be established. This committee should meet quarterly to harmonize policies, share resources, and eliminate bureaucratic bottlenecks.

3. **Gender-Responsive Programming:** To tackle the high female unemployment rate, the MYC should introduce "Women-Centric Entrepreneurship Zones" and specific scholarships for women in non-traditional STEM fields. Administrative quotas for women beneficiaries in all high-value schemes should be enforced.
4. **Integrated "Hand-Holding" Ecosystem:** The MYC must evolve from a *funding agency* to a *mentoring agency*. A structured mentorship program connecting youth entrepreneurs with established business leaders, along with credit-linkage support from banks, is essential to ensure the sustainability of startups.
5. **Digital Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) System:** The current manual reporting system is inadequate. Implementing a digital dashboard for real-time tracking of beneficiary outcomes (e.g., employment status 6, 12, and 24 months post-training) will provide the data needed for evidence-based policy correction.

## 11. CONCLUSION

The administration of youth empowerment in Mizoram stands at a critical juncture. This research concludes that the Mizoram Youth Commission (MYC) serves as an indispensable institutional interface for youth development, successfully bridging the gap between aspiration and opportunity for thousands of students and job seekers. Its achievements in competitive coaching and international placements demonstrate the viability of state-led empowerment models.

However, the study also reveals that the MYC's potential is currently constrained by structural rigidity, centralized operations, and insufficient inter-departmental synergy. The paradox of high literacy coexisting with high unemployment cannot be solved by skill training alone; it requires a holistic administrative approach that integrates education, economic policy, and social welfare.

By adopting a more decentralized, gender-inclusive, and data-driven administrative model, the Mizoram Youth Commission can transform from a *provider of schemes* into a *facilitator of sustainable futures*. This transformation is

not merely an administrative necessity but a socio-economic imperative for the state of Mizoram to fully harness the potential of its vibrant youth population.

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