

**WOMEN IN ADMINISTRATION:
A STUDY OF WOMEN GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, MIZORAM**

**Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment for the award of the degree of
MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY
in Public Administration
(School of Social Sciences)**

**By,
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MZU/M.Phil/151 of 16.05.2014**

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AIZAWL, MIZORAM
2014**

DECLARATION

I, Biakthanpuii hereby declare that the dissertation entitled '**Women in Administration: A Study of Women Government Officials**' is a research work done by me during 2013- 2014 under the supervision and guidance of Prof. Lalneihzovi of the Department of Public Administration, Mizoram University. The dissertation did not form basis of award of any previous degree to me or to the best of my knowledge to anybody else and it has not been submitted by me or anybody else for my research degree in any other University/ Institute.

This is being submitted to the Mizoram University for the degree of Master of Philosophy in Public Administration.

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This is to certify that Miss. Biakthanpuii, M. Phil Scholar under Registration no. MZU/M.Phil/151 of 16.05.2014 in the Department of Public Administration, Mizoram University worked under my supervision on the topic 'Women in Administration: A Study of Women Government Officials, Mizoram' for the award of the Degree of Master of Philosophy in Public Administration. The dissertation is the product of her own original research work and does not form any part of any other dissertation. She is permitted to submit the dissertation for examination.

(PROF. LALNEIHZOVI)
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CONTENTS

Preface		i
Acknowledgements		ii
List of Tables		iii-iv
Abbreviations		v-vi
Glossary		vii
Chapter I:	Introduction	1-23
Chapter II:	Women Government Employees in Mizoram: An Overview.	24-35
Chapter III:	Programmes and Schemes Relating to Working Women in Mizoram.	36-54
Chapter IV:	Women Employee's Perception of Work and Work place.	55-71
Chapter V:	Conclusion.	72- 79
Bibliography		80- 96
Appendices - I		

PREFACE

The dissertation is divided into five chapters. The first chapter is the Introduction. The second chapter is titled ‘Women in Administration in Mizoram: An Overview’, the third chapter is ‘Programmes and Schemes Relating to Working Women in Mizoram’. The fourth chapter is titled ‘Women Employee’s Perception of work and their work place’. The fifth and final chapter is the Conclusion.

The first chapter introduced the whole content of the work, the scope of the study, the methodology used for the study and it also highlights the aim and objectives of the study. It contains an introduction of women as a member of the societal governance in the past and the criteria of work allotted to them based on their gender. The administrative participation of women in the chieftainship era, pre-independence, post independence and their present status in the contemporary era has also been highlighted.

The second chapter is an overview of the past and present year’s conditions of women government employees in Mizoram.

The third chapter listed out numerous Programmes/ Schemes implemented by the Government of India for the welfare of working women in particular.

The fourth chapter is an analysis of women’s perception of their work environment based on the study conducted through questionnaire’s and interview of a few sampled women officials from the Directorate of three Departmental offices namely: Local Administrative Department, Industry and Social Welfare Department.

The final chapter is a concluding chapter and it contains a report based on the findings and suggestions for improvement were given.

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LIST OF TABLES

TABLE	ITEMS	PAGE
1.1	Progress of Literacy Rate in Mizoram	25
1.2	Growth of State Government Employees in Mizoram.	28
1.3	Categorisation of Employment Status of Mizoram	29
1.4	Total Number of Government Employees categorised in Group wise.	31
1.5	Female Work Participation of Women in North East India.	33
1.6	Data showing whether the family expects the women officials to do household work and whether they are comfortable multitasking it with their jobs.	60
1.7	Figure showing if the married women officials consider themselves encouraged by their husbands at their being employed and if marriage is considered as a barrier by the respondents.	61
1.8	How the working women felt they are being considered at their work environment and if there is any favouritism towards male applicant's in vacant government jobs.	62
1.9	Figure showing the perception of women regarding their work environment.	64
2.0	Women employee's outlook towards the respect they receive in their workplace, whether they are secure to take decisions freely in their areas of work and if there is any deviation based on gender.	65

2.1	Women's outlook towards the schemes provided by the Government and how they consider the government's support.	66
2.2	The Women official's attitude towards being a government employee and if they consider their attitude different from unemployed house wives.	67
2.3	Women official's attitude towards leadership status.	68
2.4	The relationship between women officials with their fellow women government employees.	69
2.5	Data depicting the status being occupied by the women government employees in Mizoram.	70

Abbreviations

- CSWB : Central Social Welfare Board.
- DB : Dependent's Benefit.
- DCWD : Department of Women and Child Development.
- ESI : Employee's State Insurance.
- ESIC : Employee's State Insurance Corporation.
- ICDS : Integrated Child Development Scheme.
- IRWD : Institute for Rehabilitation of Women in Distress.
- IT : Information Technology.
- LAD : Local Administration Department.
- LDC : Lower Division Clerk.
- MB : Maternity Benefit.
- MBBS : Bachelor of Medicine.
- MHIP : Mizo Hmeichhe Insuihkhawm Pawl.
- MLA : Mizoram Legislative Assembly.
- NCW : National Commission for Women.
- NMEW : National Mission for Empowerment of Women.
- NPAG : Nutrition Plan Adolescent Girls.
- P& L : Pregnant and Lactating.
- PKSM : Poora Shakti Kendra Model.

- RGNCS : Rajiv Gandhi National Creche Scheme for Children of Working Mothers.
- S B : Sickness Benefit.
- S C : Schedule Caste.
- SCERT : State Council of Educational Research and Training.
- SGS : Swadhar Greh Scheme.
- SSH : Short Stay Homes.
- S T : Schedule Tribe.
- STEP : Support to Training and Employment Programmes.
- SWD : Social Welfare Department.
- UT : Union Territory.
- VAB : Voluntary Action Bureau.
- WDCS : Women's Development Corporations.
- WTC : Women's Training Centres.
- WWH : Working Women Hostel.

GLOSSARY

- Jhum : Burning and cutting method of cultivation.
- Laipho : A sleeping quarter for young men.
- Lal Khawnbawl : The chief's advisors.
- Lal : Chief.
- Lushai : Corrupted form of Lusei.
- Patriarchal : A system of society controlled by men.
- Sixth Schedule area : Some areas of four identified states in India.
- Upa : Council of Elders.
- Zawlbuk : Bachelor's Dormitory.

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- Vanlaldini, Director of SWD on 10th October 2014.
- C. Lalhmingangi , Project officer Special Project Support Unit, SWD on 13th October 2014
- Zohmangaihi, Master roll, Industry dept. On 29th September 2014.
- Zonunpari Sailo, Special Officer (Nutrition) SWD on 13th October 2014.
- Lalremthangi, Extension Officer, Industry Dept on 29th September 2014.
- Laldikkimi , Deputy Director (Accounts), SWD on 7th October 2014.
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Appendix
QUESTIONNAIRE

Research
on
Women in Administration;
A study of women government officials, Mizoram.

**For the award of Master of Philosophy under the Department of Public
Administration Mizoram University**

Instruction to Respondent

I have been carrying on a research work for the degree of M.phil under the supervision of Prof. Lalneihzovi, Head of Department, Public Administration, Mizoram University. In this connection I need your cooperation for providing information. Your responses will be treated as confidential and your name will not appear anywhere in the research report and will be strictly used for academic and research purpose. Your kind cooperation in this regard is highly solicited.

(BIAKTHANPUII)
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- 1). Age: 18-25() 26-35() 36-45()
 46-55 () 56-65 () 66 and above ()

2). Educational Qualification:

- | | |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| Primary School () | Middle School () |
| High School () | 10+2/ PUC () |
| Graduate () | Post Graduate () |

- 3). Grade A (), Grade B (), Grade C (), Grade D ()

- 4). Marital Status : Single () Married ()

- 5). Family status: Joint () Nuclear ()

6). Before joining your job, did you face any resistance from the side of your family members? (*I hna I chelh hma hian , i chhungte lam atang harsatna i tawk em?*)

(a) Yes ()

b) No ()

c) _____

7). If you are married, how does your husband feel about your job? (*Pasal nei tawh i nih chuan i pasal in i hna hi enge a ngeih dan ?*)

a) Encourages. () *phurpui*

b) Discourages. () *tul ti vaklo*

c) _____

8). Does your family expect you to do household routine work and expect you to balance it with your career? (*I chhungten I office hna bakah inchung chet ti turin an beisei che em?*)

a) Yes. ()

b) No. ()

c) _____

9). If so, are you uncomfortable with your job and household work? (*An beisei che chuan, I office hna leh inchung hna thawhkawp hian harsatna a thlen che em?*)

a) Yes. ()

b) No. ()

c) _____

10). Do you think marriage is or will be a barrier in your career? (*Pasal neih/ neihhunah i hna leh i thil tih tum zelah harsatna a thlen thei che ni in i hria em ?*)

a) Yes. ()

b) No. ()

c) _____

11). Do you think there is a perception that women are less efficient in administration in your workplace? (*I hna thawhna hmunah te hian hmeichhia te hi chaklo zawka ngaihda awm in i hria em ?*)

a) Yes. ()

b) No. ()

c) _____

12). Do you think there is favoritism towards male applicant's in vacant government jobs? (*Sawrkar hna lak reng reng ah mipa duhsakna bik awm thin in i hria em?*)

a) Yes. ()

b) No. ()

c) _____

13). What is your perception of your workplace? (*I hna chelhna hmun I hmuh dan*)

a) Female centric environment (*hmeichhia duhsakna hmun*) ()

b) Male centric environment. (*mipa duhsakna hmun*) ()

c) Fair environment. (*mipa leh hmeichhia in ang tlan tak na hmun*) ()

d) _____

14). Being a woman government employee, does that makes you receive less respect you deserve with the present status you have acquired in your workplace?(*Hmeichhia sawrkar hnathhawk i nih na hian i hna chelhna hmunah i dinhmun mila zahawmna nei phha lo in i in ngai em?*)

a) Yes. ()

b) No. ()

c) _____

15). Is there any division of work based on gender? (*Office hna ah hian mipa hna bik leh hmeichhia hna bik a in then na a awm in i hria em?*)

a) Yes ()

b) No ()

c) _____

16). Are you mentally secure to take decision in your field of work? (*Rilru zangkhai takin office hna ah hian duhthlana i siam thei in i in hria em ?*)

a) Yes ()

b) No. ()

c) _____

17). Do you think the government has formulated enough Schemes/Policies for woman officials? (*Sawrkar hian hmeichhia hnathawk te hamthratna tur hian dan mumal a siam in i hria em?*)

a) Yes. ()

(b) No. ()

c) _____

18). If so, are you aware and have you made use of such Policies? (*Hriat chuan, chung dan te chu I lo hmangin I lo ngaihven ve toh ngai em?*)

a) Yes. ()

(b) No. ()

(c) _____

19). Do you think the government has implemented Policies for women officials with whole hearted support? (*Heng hmeichhe sawrkar hnathawk te hamthatna tura dan siam nan hian sawrkar hian rilru leh tihtakzet seng in hria em?*)

a) Yes. ()

b) No. ()

c) _____

20). Do you feel that being a Government employee, you can contribute more towards the society?(*Sawrkar hna thawk i nih na hian ram leh hnam than na lamah pui in i in ngai em?*)

a) Yes. ()

b) No. ()

c) _____

21). As you are educated and holding a job, do you think your attitude would be different from those women who remain inside the four walls of their house? (*Lehkhathiam ni in hna chelh lai i nei bok hian in chhung chauha hnathawk te ai hian i hawi her a san phhah in i hria em?*)

a) Yes. ()

b) No. ()

c) _____

22). What is your perception towards the concept that there are more male officials in the leadership role and less women in such status? (*Mipa sawrkar hnathawk thuneihna dinhmuna hmeichhia hnathawk te aia an tam zawk nachhan I ngaihdan enge?*)

a) Women officials have not mentally acquired such leadership status (*hmeichhia te chu thu neihna dinhmun kan la phhak lo ani*) ()

b) There is leadership role based on gender (*Mipa leh hmeichhe inthhliarna awm vang*)

()

c) Men at the leadership role is most appealing (*Mipa thuneihna hmun hi a felfai zawk e*)

()

d) _____

23) Do you think there is enough support and respect between fellow female government employees's or is there more ill-treatment and opposition in the work environment? (*Hmeichhia sorkar hnathawk te in karah hian in duhsak tawn tlana nge in el rela tam zawka I hriat?*)

a) Enough support and respect (*in duhsak tawn tlana a tam*) ()

b) More ill-treatment and opposition (*in el rela a tam*) ()

c) _____

24). Do you think women officials in Mizoram have attained?

- a) High status (*dinhmun tha*) ()
- b) Moderate status (*dinhmun pangai*) ()
- c) Low status (*dinhmun chhia*) ()
- d) Could still be improved (*la tha zawk thei*) ()

CHAPTER- I

INTRODUCTION

The women of Mizoram have been a part of the ‘*Custodian of the Mizo society*’ since time immemorial. They account for nearly half of the population of Mizoram and the roles played by them in upbringing the traditional vernal culture and customary laws could not be disregarded. The traditional era sees women working very hard in their daily work including fetching water, pounding and winnowing rice for the day, cooking , washing clothes, weeding the jhum, looking after the children, entertaining the visitors etc.¹ She would cook for the next day, take care of the children and spun clothes for the family. She might not go to sleep till her men folk retired and was given pro-active responsibility in upbringing the family. What needs to be emphasized is that the social standings of Mizo women are somehow based upon the society’s traditional religious belief and gender based ideology. Women’s consent to a religious identity and community as well as the agency in maintaining these, are often presented as the rationale for maintaining personal laws and which reformed them from within ².

Women of Mizoram in the past were considered the main workforce in the family economy, in the agricultural work and other productive activities. The Mizo society is regarded to be a strict patriarchal one where customs and traditions have long ruled the psychology of the people and the recognition of the male as the leader and decision maker in the family was thought to be justified. They had no codified laws and as a result, customs was the source of law that bound even the chief and villagers equally. ³ A wife was expected

¹ Sinha .Harendra, Lalrinchhani.B., *Women in Mizo Society*, Mittal Publications, New Delhi, 2013, p. 18.

² John. E. Mary, *Women’s Studies in India*, Penguin Group Publication, New Delhi, 2008, p. 519.

³ Sinha .Harendra, Lalrinchhani.B., *op. cit.*, p.12.

to recognise the supremacy of her husband.⁴ The women were engaged in activities almost completely demarcated from the village governance and law making, customs and traditional rules. They were taught to be submissive as being submissive was thought to be an ideal trait for the women in the past. They were ought to be judged pertaining to these criteria of an 'Ideal' wife, sister or women in general which further categorised them as being a good or bad person during their life span. The women were engaged in activities almost completely demarcated from the village governance. They were not involved in the making of laws, customs and traditional rules. However the rules which are not mended by them guarded their lifestyle and their positions in the society. They were regarded as not having the time or energy to take part in decision making and societal administration as they were considered to have exhausted themselves after their countless chores including fetching of water, collecting sticks for preparing meals for the family, spinning looms, looking after the children, entertaining guests etc to name a few.⁵

These activities performed by women in the traditional era was however justified and rightful on their part and roles as being a part of the Mizo society. Men were not involved with the domestic work but were solely responsible for their family affairs. They were to perform functions such as clearing of the forest for jhum, hunting, fishing. In their spare time, the elderly and bachelors stayed at *Laipho* courting girls, and sometimes they also accompanied the women in collecting firewood.⁶ Briefly since they follow patriarchal system of the family, there is a sharp distinction between men and women in regards to their role, position and status.⁷ The Mizo women in the past though also took active roles in certain community services like during death festivities etc. However, women

⁴ Sinha .Harendra, Lalrinchhani.B., *op. cit.*, p. 52.

⁵ *Ibid*, pp. 18

⁶ Lalneihzovi, *Changing Status of Women In North Eastern States*, Mittal Publications, New Delhi, 2009, p. 95.

⁷ *Ibid*

of the Sixth Schedule area were considered to be not directly involved in the administration of the village.

The Mizo society being a patriarchal society, lineage is usually from the male side. If a man has no son then the brother may inherit, in the absence of a son, the nearest male relative inherits.⁸ Such system is not merely a jurisdictional issue which can just be solved and changed as it challenges the very existence of the community. This patriarchal set up was considered to directly affect the associated behaviour in the Mizo family. This traditional bounded lifestyle is a priority of the community which is regarded to be an essential and which needs to be enforced without any questions. Further, the administration and village governance in the past see very less women leaders as were limited by the positions classification and division of labour since earlier days. Women were considered as not capable to draw clear cut decisions like men.

The traditional administration was simple where the whole governance was under the rule of an aristocrat ruler in the form of a chief. It was considered that women were more lacking than men. The competence level here seems to regard women as lacking because women were discriminated on the ground of sex. Mizo parents refused to send their daughters to school saying ‘who would work if the girls were sent to school.’⁹ In spite of the tireless sacrifice rendered to the family, they had no ‘say’ in their families and never inherit properties as property is inherited by male heirs and transmitted through them.¹⁰ Further, the extra activities performed by women in their homes were usually not recognised as hard earned tasks are least accounted for. The administrative system in the Mizo traditional era was exclusive and almost all the tasks of the village governance lies in the hands of the Chief who exercised absolute power with the help of his *Lal Khawnbawl*

⁸ Aleaz, Bonita, *Emergent Women ; Mizo Women's Perspectives*, Mittal Publications, New Delhi, p. 34.

⁹ Sinha .Harendra, Lalrinchhani.B., *op. cit.*, p. 48

¹⁰ Lalfakzuali, *Changing Position of Mizo Women*, Tribal Research Institute, Aizawl, 2010, p. 1.

(Council of Elders) or *Upa* who were mainly composed of men . Here, the word ‘Upa’ signified men. As in the Mizo society, men were expected to be brave, selfless and wise. On the other hand women were to be submissive and pure. The categorisation in the workforce was however seem to be of mutually accepted as was conceived to exist as a result of what was best for the administration of the earlier days. The structure of administration was liable in the earlier times as governance was considered as another branch of higher power to be occupied by one powerful, competent leader. The chief was regarded as the Deputy of God who could not be questioned for his acts of omission or commission.¹¹ The power of the chief in the traditional era was absolute and was not answerable to anyone for his acts of omission or commission.¹² The orders of the chief were considered just and right and none had the authority to infringe against such decisions made by the chief.

This era also saw few female chiefs for instances such as Lalhlimpuii, widow of Lalngura , Sentlang Chief; Pi Buki, widow of Manga , Chief of Durtlang; Darbilhi, widow of Nochhuma, chief of Darzo; Ropuiliani, widow of Vandula, chief of Denlung; Darsuakpuii, widow of Hrangphhunga; Suaki, widow of Sangliana; Sumkungi, widow of Lalthuama; and others.¹³ There were some instances like Vawmbuk village where the wife of the deceased chief had to take over the administrative tasks on behalf of the deceased son.¹⁴ Among these female chief’s Ropuiliani is the most popularly known particularly for her role in the Freedom Struggle from the British invasion. She is considered as one of the best known woman chiefs.¹⁵ James Dokhuma, a famous Mizo writer used to mention in his writing about how the men folk were very much unconcerned about the decision of women in certain administration. He used to quote the famous saying by the Mizo men folk which is , ‘*Let them*

¹¹ Sinha .Harendra, Lalrinchhani.B.,*op. cit.*, p. 104.

¹² *Ibid.* p.104.

¹³ Lalneihzovi.,*op., cit.*, 2009, p. 62.

¹⁴ Sinha .Harendra, Lalrinchhani.B., *op. cit.*, p. 105.

¹⁵ Lalneihzovi, *Role of Ropuiliani in the Freedom Struggle*, Published by Andrew Lalsangzuala, Ist Edition, Aizawl, 2005, p. 27.

Grumble and be satisfied by saying whatever they want'.¹⁶ It was a popular phrase in the past that there are two things that could be changed and these are a broken fence and a woman. Just like a crab meat is considered not to be a meat, a woman's decision was considered to be something of no value.

Women of Mizoram were not in equal footing with men in politics and in administrative works in the past. An institution called 'Zawlbuk' or 'Bachelor's Dormitory' existed in the past in the Mizo society which provided formal training for the male adolescents. They were educated here, taught to be brave, and taught to have self control. The women who dare enter the dormitory was seen as a woman with no class, shame and one who was bound to receive counselling by the elders. The continuance of village administration and clan norms depended on the Zawlbuk.¹⁷ Women had no role at all to play in governance during chieftainship and their status was not improved overnight even after independence.¹⁸

The coming of the Gospel (Christianity) as early as in the year 1894 led to the progress and change in the status of Mizo women.¹⁹ Christianity was the forerunner which brought the onset of availability of education to the Lushai areas. The coming of Christianity and Westernisation immensely loosened the traditional status quo which once opposed change. This change could be in the form of the cultural change and administrative changes. The effort to educate girls by the missionaries was done to provide them with such education as would make it useful in their homes and society by incorporating in their curriculum weaving, knitting, sewing, health care nutrition, child care etc.

¹⁶ Dokhuma. James, *Hmanlai Mizo Kalphhung*, Mizoram Publication Board, 2nd Edition, Aizawl, 2008, p. 313.

¹⁷ Aleaz, Bonita., *op., cit.*, p. 90.

¹⁸ Sinha .Harendra, Lalrinchhani.B., *op.,cit.*, p. 104.

¹⁹ Lalneihzovi., *op., cit.*, 2009, p. 52.

By 1916, the prejudice against girl's education had to a great extent had declined. In 1921 the percentage of female literacy was higher than several districts of Assam.²⁰ The missionaries use education as a tool to liberate Mizo women and were focused on internal agency such as education to have a fulfilling affect on the outlook of women in the tribal society.²¹ Moreover, women's education plays a very important role in the overall development of the society. It not only helps in the development of half of the human resources but in improving the quality of the life at home and outside.²² The need for a balanced gender relations were called for by these missionaries. It was the ideal thinking of the missionaries that if they educate a woman they have succeeded in educating the whole family. The Revivals wiped away the traditional discrimination face by Mizo women to a wide extend. The accessibility of education and various privileges made the women felt their important roles in the social, political, economic development of the society. Christianity confronted an intensely closed, patriarchal society in Mizoram.²³

Christianity and the teaching of the early revivals have also led to modernisation. This modernisation has also highlighted the need for enlightening both sexes for a better living. The traditional thinking that educating women would shatter their status and roles played in the society has been more or less wiped out and are now guarded by the alternate thinking that women needs to be educated to uplift the society as a whole.. The opportunity for education for Mizo women intensified the efforts by women to not only witness societal administration by the government but the urge to be a part of such administration.

²⁰ Sinha .Harendra, Lalrinchhani.B.,*op.,cit.*, p.37.

²¹ Aleaz Bonita, *op., cit.*, p.11.

²² Lalneihzovi, Women's Education in India : An Overview, *Indian Journal of Public Administration*, July-September 2010, Volume LVI, No. 3,p.584.

²³ *Ibid.* p.4.

The outlook of the women was immensely widened by their status of being educated and morally informed. Certain new organisations promoting women status began to sweep every nook and corner of Mizoram. The educated women thus formed a women organisation called Mizo Hmeichhe Trangrual to emancipate the social standings of Mizo women as early as on 16th July 1946 to become the first women Voluntary Organisation.²⁴ Further on 6th July 1974, Mizoram Hmeichhe Insuikhhawm Pawl (MHIP) was formed. This Tangrual Pawl was composed of women who were morally aware of exact status of women in Mizoram. Its objective is to uplift women's status in the society and rendering useful services to women, destitute children, poor and handicapped.²⁵ The feeling of a long run submission and hardships is what guided their goals and mission. It endeavours women participation in societal administration and enhancing their capacity in rendering services to society to the extent of preparing a second line of brave and responsible women officials in societal administration.

The Mizo Hmeichhe Trangrual (Women Organisation) had succeeded in even establishing Working Women Hostel since the year 1980²⁶ Motherless Baby's Home in the year 1969 and Crech Centre since 2007.²⁷ Mizo women's movement, titled 'MHIP Chanchin 1974-2009', says with a broad smile, *"During our General Assembly Meetings when more than 2,000 women gather, even the Vanapa Hall – the biggest public hall in Mizoram – is small for us. That's the kind of woman power we have"*.²⁸ This shows that women have thrive and thirst for a popular status in the form of being a leader and a harbinger of societal administration. Women were no longer happy with confinement within the four walls of the house. The gradual coming up of these women activists and certain post

²⁴ Sinha .Harendra, Lalrinchhani.B., *op.,cit.*, p. 47.

²⁵ Lalkima. C. *Social Welfare Administration In Tribal State; A case Study of Mizoram*, Spectrum Publication, Guwahati, 1997, p. 46

²⁶ Sinha .Harendra, Lalrinchhani.B.,*op.,cit.*, p.47.

²⁷ Lalsangpuii interviewed on 30th November 2014.

²⁸ <http://www.morungexpress.com/Perspective/103700.html> , Accessed on 20th September 2014.

independence movement have favourably increase the participation of Mizo women in societal administration.

The transition from Chieftainship to District Council created by the Lushai Hills Autonomous District Council in the year 1952 brought a change in the administrative setup where the chieftainship which was once considered inevitable component for the prosperity of mizo society has been abolished in the year 1954 by the Act of Assam Lushai Hills District (Acquisition of Chief's Right).²⁹ The Mizo society in this stage was no longer ruled by the absolute power of the chiefs but was now under the direct administration of the Deputy Commissioner.³⁰ Till 1951, almost 93% of Mizo population still depended on agriculture. However, government jobs started to be available in the 1970's. The availability of Government jobs result in the rapid diversion of a section of workplace to the service sector (Singh, 1996). By this era, women started to enter into governmental offices as clerks and the traditional orthodox boundaries were gradually relaxed. Many compatible and eligible educated women began to occupy various posts of the government. Besides their jobs however the women are still to be engaged in the household work. The Mizo's women work contributes substantially to the occupational continuity of the society. Further, the women organisation such as *Hmeichhe Trangrual* had inspired the women to be bold enough to take part in the politics and the feeling of being a part of the society was intensified. It was no longer shocking to see women actively taking part in many voluntary organisations to get their voice heard. Other service sectors like business, marketing, quarry, the butcher's house have been occupied by women by the late 90's. The women of Mizoram have now excelled by heaps and bounds in all works of life.

²⁹ Lalneihzovi., *op.,cit.*, 2009, p.62.

³⁰ Lalneihzovi, *District Administration in Mizoram*, New Delhi, Mittal Publications, 2006, p.23.

The criteria for entering the government offices were eventually based on quality and merit system instead of the so called gender determinism and the educated women increasingly occupied their status as one among the part and parcel of various governmental institutions. The growth of women recruitment to occupations has been an important aspect of change to the Mizo society. A record shows that among the first educated Mizo women Matriculation examination was passed by Vanhlunchhungi in the year as early as 1929, Bachelor's degree have been attained in the year 1942 by Lalsangpuii, Master's Degree in the year 1953 by Rita Neihpuii, Master of Commerce in the year 1970 by Vanhlupuii, MBBS in the year 1964 by Dr. Lalengi ³¹. The above records shows the gradual possibility of quite a number women in being employed without bias be it in governmental or private enterprises in the early 1990's. It was considered that the traditional patriarchal bounded administration was loosened and more concern was given to women empowerment with the result that women began to directly interfere in the administration. The increasing needs felt for the quota system for upbringing women off their hurdles and programmes for emancipating them were further intensified gradually. These programmes and schemes were framed keeping in mind the actual condition of women in the society, their status compared to men, and the various areas where women are lacking and needed help. The women development schemes were framed as early as the mid nineties in India and have touched the life of Mizo women simultaneously.

In the political scenario, for the first time, women got elected as a member of the District Advisory Council where Lalsangpuii and Remthangi were elected from the reserved seats, one each from Aizawl and Lunglei on 15th April 1948.³² Further, two women Lalziki Sailo and M.C. Hmingliani were nominated as members of the District

³¹ Record compiled by Prof.Lianzela in *Changing Status of women in North East India*.p. 53.

³² Chaltuakhuma, *Political History of Mizoram*, Mizoram Publication Board, Aizawl, 2001, p. 110.

Council in the year 1952 and 1957 respectively.³³In Mizo history, these years could be considered as a landmark where due consideration was given to women as capable of decision makers and administrators. When Mizoram had attained the status of Union Territory in the year 1972, more and more women started contesting elections and the amount of women voters grew. The first General Election to member of Legislative held in February 1972 during the Union Territory regime had witnessed four women candidates in which however none won a single seat. Moreover, though there were no women candidates who won the election, Saptawni was chosen as one of the three nominated member when the Mizo Union formed a government. Therefore, she became the first women MLA among the Mizo's.³⁴ In the later years, one women candidate by the name Thanmawii got elected for two consecutive years i.e. in the year 1978 and 1979 with the People Conference Party ticket. She became the first Mizo women who was re-nominated and elected as Member of Legislative Assembly.³⁵ The General Election to MLA election in the year 1984 also saw one women K.Thansiami from People Conference party nominated and elected as the state Assembly member. In fact the state of Mizoram had already witnessed a Mizo woman elevated to the post of a Minister of State, Lahlimpuii, in the Mizoram Legislative Assembly. So far Mizoram state had the privilege of having five MLA's in the then Mizoram Legislative Assembly.³⁶

When Mizoram attained the status of statehood (1987), in the first Assembly election three women candidates out of four candidates got party ticket in which only one woman Lahlimpuii was the only women to have won the election. In the General Election held in 1989 four women contested the election however none won again. It is worth

³³ *Ibid.*, p.111.

³⁴ Lalneihzovi., *op.,cit.*, 2009, p. 65.

³⁵ *Statistical Report on General Election, 1979 to the Legislative Assembly of Mizoram Election*, Election Commission of India, 1974, New Delhi, p.92.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p.92.

knowing to mention that since the election of 1987, women candidates have not succeeded in attaining seats in the election. Even after decades or after twenty five years i.e. in the recent Election held in November 2013, though women voters have outnumbered men voters, no women candidate have succeeded in winning the election. In this 2013 election, women candidates namely; Tlangthanmawii of the Indian National Congress, Lalmalsawmi of the Mizoram National Front, one Independent candidate B.Sangkhumi a former President of the Hmeichhe Insuihkawm Pawl and three other Bharatya Janata Party candidate nominee's have been defeated by the male candidates . There were a total of six female candidates. ³⁷ Mizoram got its first female member of Legislative Assembly i.e. after 1987 in the By-Election held on May 2014 where an Indian National Congress candidate named Vanlalawmpuii Chawngthu won Hrangturzo Assembly By-poll. She broke the 27 year old jinx in Mizoram by becoming the first women MLA in the male dominate State Politics since 1987. ³⁸One cannot neglect that the condition of women in the society has now improved but their role and status in the political sphere is still however very weak. Though we have seen few women political candidates over the years, the amount of win is very less as compared to their male counterparts. The political scenario is directly related to the societal governance and administration however, the past years and the contemporary era has shown that a very merger amount of this opportunity has been provided to women.

This era has highlighted that the accumulated experience of women officials. This determination for taking part in administration instead of just being confined to household chores illustrates the productivity in bringing about strong societal administration. As a result, for the first time 33% of seats are reserved for women in the first Municipal council election held in 3rd November 2010. Of the newly elected 19 Councillors for the

³⁷ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mizoram_Legislative_Assembly_election,_2013 Accessed on 23rd September 2014.

³⁸ http://www.telegraphindia.com/1140517/jsp/northeast/story_18351121.jsp Accessed on 30th September 2014.

Aizawl Urban Local Body six are women.³⁹ These women are ; Hmingthanzami of the Zoram National Party, Lalmalsawmi of Mizoram National Front, Zamanthangi of Mizoram National Front, Lalchhuanmawii of Zoram National Front, Laldinsangi of Indian National Congress, and F.Lalhuthangi of Indian National Congress. This standing could be considered as one of the challenging and highlighted priority being given to women and shows that women were considered as equal partners as decision makers and capable counsellors in administration.

The history of Mizoram during the Union Territory regime, Statehood and the current era has seen a large number of women employees in various governmental departments. Their proportions to the total Government employment have improved over the years. The awareness and zeal for being a part and parcel of the society administration grew among the women. The onset of voluntary institutions and bountiful Legislations for emancipating women conditions intensified their essence as a part of the society. Education turned out to be a major part of the life of the Mizo people. This highly lessened the orthodox Patriarchal mindset and women evolved little by little due to such educative background. These immensely quantify their essence in the Mizo society. The demands for the need of an educated wife also grew. The loosening of traditional bond and the growing flexibility of the division of labour has result in the increase of women workers in government services. Women have become rightful entrepreneurs, business owners, office clerks, lawyers, administrators etc and a number of women have made to the Civil and Central Services.

In the post – independence era, the Mizo society espoused an ideology that stressed the wider aspects of the mission to bring about grass root development, including the claim to provide protection from Mizo women from certain exploitations often felt in the pre- independence era. Even some academic observers among the educated Mizo's

³⁹ <http://www.pibaizawl.nic.in/pr/archive/jul10eng/nov4.htm> 22nd September 2014.

had stressed on the needs to emancipate women and have witnessed the utility of a strong benevolent and charismatic women for a flourishing social and economic endeavours. This further implies the needs for more women officials in governmental jobs for societal continuity and modernisation. This era has highlighted that the accumulated experience of women officials.

A survey conducted by the Ministry of Labour and Employment of India on the Statistical profile of Employment and Women Labour (2007-2008) showed that the State of Mizoram had the highest female work participation rate (47.5%) in India .⁴⁰ Gradually, the position in the Mizo society has undergone tremendous changes which are comparatively better than the past. They have come a long way from the traditional four walls bounded lifestyle to the contemporary much wider scope for them to excel. The position of women has always been changing with the changing of time; it is also known that their position has also been changing for the better and in a more civilised way.⁴¹

Review of Literature

In order to have a better understanding of women government employees of Mizoram, a review of the following literature has been done.

Lalneihzovi, (2010) '*Women's education in India; An Overview*' article shows the importance of education for the overall development of society and how education for women have become a major concern for the government today. It highlighted women as a par taker of role when it comes to socio-economic upheaval of the society. A brief introduction of the historical background of women's education in India has been given in

⁴⁰ Labour Bureau, *Ministry of Labour and Employment- Statistical Profile of Women Labour*, Government of India, Chandigarh, 2008, p. 3.

⁴¹ Lalfakzuali., *op., cit.*, p. 1.

this article where the disparity in the opportunity to education between both the genders has been highlighted. Tabulations showing literacy rate, life expectancy at birth in India and the disparity that exists between rural and urban women's literacy has also been included in this article. The various hurdles faced in attaining women education in India and remedial suggestions have also been jotted down in this article.

Anita Bangai (2011) in her article '*Feminist Perspective of Public Administration*' shows the possibility of re-inventing government from a rigid bureaucratic government to a more efficient, participative, competitive, decentralized and a free gender biased administrative system. The writer through this article attempted to investigate the governance of gender and show how gender determinism influences administrative policies, power and institution. The second part of this article defined 'Feminism' and identified feminist as one who studies woman's status and strived for their betterment so that an equal ground could be shared by both sexes without neither sex lagging behind. In the last part of the article, the writer assumed that gender determines 'power' and further added that '*masculinity*' contained the privileges of being more powerful than '*being masculine*'. This case is very prominent to the writer in the area of governance. A possible solution for shaping such biological determinism based on gender has also been suggested in this article.

Chakraborty Ranjita, (2011) '*Gender concerns within planning in India: an enquiry into the nature of inclusion*' article brought to light the gender stereotype that placed women at home and how their productive labour is still taken for granted. It further noted that women constitute a heterogeneous group and the Government unanswered questions about gender bias detained the actual possibility on conferring benefit to all. The second part of this article showed that prior to 1970's, women were seen as a mere spectator however their actual role in decision making remain a zilch. Having acquired the essence of the dominant role played by women by the 1990's, the question of gender and a growing need for

identifying women participation for a sustainable development started to gain more concern. The last part of this article showed that various schemes launched for empowering women and the acknowledgement of tackling their concern in the Eighth Five year plan till the 11th Five Year plan led to the participation of women in planning in India. The hurdle faced such as budget limitations and inactive role played by the Government in realising the actual goal of inclusion of women in governance and planning seemed to be the major finding under this article.

Lalneihzovi (2012) in her article '*Empowering Women in Mizoram; the Socio-Political Dimension*' emphasised the need for political empowerment of women in the state of Mizoram. The inadequacy of women political participation and decision making is showed to have far negating consequences which further stagnant the capabilities of and the socio-political status of women of Mizoram. According to this article, women are will deprived of the opportunities to an equal participation in the public policy choices that affect their lives. The actual standings of women in their socio-political status in Mizoram has been briefly highlighted from the era of chieftainship to the village council era, district council to village council, U.T regime to Statehood. The numerous provisions or rights given to women by the Constitution, their status in critical decision making levels and suggestions to overcome the problems faced have also been included in this article.

Sudhanshu Tripathi, (2013) in his article '*Empowerment of Women: an Urgency*' shows how women have been lagging behind men in various contexts of the society. It also traced the question associated with women empowerment and strived to portray a more objective understanding of women status through empirical data and through the actual observation of the standing of women in various environmental settings. According to the writer, the attitude showed towards gender and the atmosphere of prejudice towards women has been in society throughout the ages. In the last part of the article, the author

showed how the availability of education, health, work participation and other exposure to women led to their valued role for the society's sustainable development. Empowerment of women is thus to the writer, an urgent need.

Lalneihzovi (2005) *'Role of Ropuiliani in the Freedom Struggle'* is a book written based on the role of Ropuiliani in the context of Mizoram Resistance Movement against the imperialistic British Empire during the years 1871 till her death in January, 1895. It gives a sketch of her last days highlighted by Sir Robert Reid, Governor of Assam based on some of his writings and the role played by her as a great heroine and a patriotic female chief. Her imprisonment and the fight till her death while being jailed has also been noted down in this book. She was regarded as the 'Mizo Lady Freedom Fighter'. Her fearless roles in the resistance against the annexation by the British Empire and her patriotic role in enhancing the unity among the Lushai people have also been highlighted. Ropuiliani was rightly quoted as 'An eminent architect of the Mizo Freedom Movement'.

Bonita Aleaz (2005) in her book *'Emergent Women: Mizo Women's Perspectives'* provides a highly analytical view on the women issues which gained significance in the contemporary era. It gives certain explanations as to how religion, Church, Mizo tradition and modernization have brought tremendous changes on the position of women in the Mizo society. The silent struggle that women felt from the Church, social and the political sphere has also been tackled in this book. The author had also included the impact of education on women, on the economic environment of post modern Mizo society. The book has been written on account of the author's observation from her numerous visits to Mizoram as well as her encounter with eminent Mizo women liberators and her perception on the women of Mizoram from all walks of life. Her observations on the social attitude, women within the structural patriarchy, pre-modern life including the customary laws concerning inheritance, the high role played by Religion had been carefully look into by the author in this book. This book also contains certain graphs and tabulations depicting a comparative analysis of both the gender in various contexts Of the Mizo society.

Lalneihzovi, (2007) '*Women's Development in India*' book contains a collection of fourteen papers/articles based on the theme Women's development in India. The cause which debarred development of women, the reason behind the urgency for such enhancement and various related documents in emancipating their status has been included in this book. The major concern of this book is the urgency for the attainment of socio-economic development of women in Mizoram. The status of women in the sphere of education, family planning, decision making in the society, employment to their status based on population distribution in the rural and urban areas have also been tackled in this book. It also contains the problems and challenges associated with the barrier faced when it comes to the developmental condition for women in India. It is a well craved book with great empirical insight and a collection of reliable information for scholars and researchers who are interested in the developmental prospects of women.

Lalneihzovi, (2007) '*Women's Development in India*' book contains a collection of fourteen papers/articles based on the theme Women's development in India. The cause which debarred development of women, the reason behind the urgency for such enhancement and various related documents in emancipating their status has been included in this book. The major concern of this book is the urgency for the attainment of socio-economic development of women in Mizoram. The status of women in the sphere of education, family planning, decision making in the society, employment to their status based on population distribution in the rural and urban areas have also been tackled in this book. It also contains the problems and challenges associated with the barrier faced when it comes to the developmental condition for women in India. It is a well craved book with great empirical insight and a collection of reliable information for scholars and researchers who are interested in the developmental prospects of women.

Mary.E.John, (2008) '*Women studies in India*' is a cluster of essays depicting the kind of struggles faced by women, the various women movements in the early and late 1990's. It ponders upon certain social evils like Sati, Purdah system, rape and other violence against women; domestic violence, murder etc which impacted the social standings of women. The author recorded the divisions and conflicts among women that challenge easy conceptions of their collective struggle and identity. The efforts of certain women activists in raising an awareness of the struggle faced by women in society, the role of new technologies in eliminating gender biased society, the need for flexibility in organisation, empowerment of women, family scenes from the internal screenings have all been tackled in this book. The new challenges faced in order to strengthen women's interests, demarcating of roles in family etc have also been highlighted in this book. It gives the existing evidence of women conditions from all walks of life. The interesting issue covered by this book is therefore how one ought to think about the relationship between women studies, the women's movement and the question of education for women.

Raka Ray (2012) Handbook of gender book describes the normal functioning of most women's bodies. It tackled the reason behind women's movement, the ideas and questions behind the activism. It also showed a documentation which explains the reason behind the seriousness of women oppression in societies. The author also highlighted the various motivation behind gender scholarship, conditions being faced by women's movement in the late 1970's and 1980's to the extent of the economic rights of married women in India today. The book also examine the economic entitlements which arise out of a matrimonial relationship, the various debates which arise because of the payment of maternity benefit a decade before the Act passed, women's employment condition etc. The author also gave a sketch of the gender and environment debates, women's politics in India and certain Feminist's theory.

Apurva purohit, (2013) in her book '*Lady you're Not a Man*' mixed reality with humour and talks about what it takes for a woman to live a balanced life juggling household chores with career. It narrated lists of examples which focussed on certain criteria that had happened to any women in general or any working women in particular. The stories had been narrated in such a manner that any women, who faced hurdles while multi tasking house work and career could find solace from this book, could relate to it, laugh about it and find inspiration from the numerous well scripted eyes opening message which aptly gave a ray of hope to every women. The book has been written in such a way that it is not biased to any gender and is a thought provoking journey to the actual settings of real life drama. It is humorous, inspiring, simple, a must read for anyone who wants all round advancement in today's world.

Hirendra Sinha, B. Lalrinchhanni (2013) '*Women in Mizo Society*' consists of an in depth study of women condition in Mizo society. The actual status of women under the customary traditions and laws, their journey from being victim of secondary citizens in the society to reformers in the present society has been highlighted in this book. The subject of bride price, the Mizo's popular image of marriage in the society as an institutionalised practise and the various term and conditions brought about it on women has also been tackled in this book. The biological bias or determinism based on masculinity and feminism and the challenges faced concerning this denomination had also been eloquently been look into in this book. It has been written in such a knowledgeable manner and is a suggestive read for researchers and scholars who wants to do further studies on the condition of women in Mizo society.

Commendable though they are in their respective areas of study, these published works have not given a specific way to the particular case of women government officials in

Mizoram. Therefore, it is required to conduct research on the actual conditions of working women in government offices in Mizoram.

Objectives

1. To study the present status of women governmental employees in Mizoram.
2. To study the various schemes and legislations for women in government services with a view to understanding their status.
3. To study women government employee's perception of their work environment.
4. To analyse the constraints which act as barriers to women government employees and to provide remedial measures.

Area of study

The scope of study will include a brief sketch of the role played by women in the governance of Mizo society in the past and the certain initial advances which began to associate women in administration. The present study will lay emphasis on finding out the status, problems and challenges faced by the contemporary women government officials and the perception of their work environment. Over the years, there have been certain Legislations, Rules and protective measures for women government employees which strive to emancipate them off their hurdles. The implementation and the provisions of these schemes will be under scrutiny. The present working women of higher and middle officials from three offices namely; Industries Department, Local Administrative Department and Social Welfare Department under Directorate of Mizoram will be taken as samples.

Statement of the problems

The valuable role played by women in administration whether political, social, economic cannot be neglected. '*Women*' the other half which makes a society cannot be unheeded. The biological determinism based on sex that '*women are weaker than men*' and the psychological determinism that '*women are secondary citizens*' oppressed the capabilities of women in general and working women in particular and thus, needs to be challenged. The contemporary era showed women coming out of their confined zone in dealing with certain administrative tasks and have valued their outlook towards their roles in being a more responsible citizens. However, women are still under represented at decision making levels and still have to perform their multi task role of juggling between work and home.

Mizoram being a patriarchal society, the gender stereotype which placed women as inferior to men is still instilled among both sexes and this cause a major step back which undermine the potentials in women. The social acceptance of women to perform their purely functionary role inside the four walls of the house is still what creates confusion in the mindset of women officers, administrator, clerks, entrepreneurs today. This frets their decision in choosing between a closed life within a home and their career. The numerous years of hardships, insurmountable disability made Mizo women question their existence with conflicting emotions. Despite the shift to a better life, it is still debatable whether she has broken down all the customary norms which limit her existence or whether she has commuted the orthodox societal image of what a woman should be. There is no denying the fact that Mizo women have advance tremendously even in governmental offices however there is a need to wipe out the inconveniences that belittle her ambitions. The barrier that might prevail in negating her progress needs to be explored and diagnosed with possible solutions for a sustainable development of Mizoram. A study pertaining conclusively to the

working condition of women government officials in Mizoram is relatively new and thus a research on this subject is required.

Research questions

1. Are there any obstacles to working women in government offices?
2. How do the laws, schemes provided affect the environment of working women?
3. What are the factors affecting women government employees perception of their work environment?
4. What are the measures which can be taken for a right work-life balance for women government employees in Mizoram?

Methodology

The methodology for the study will include both primary and secondary data. The primary data will be based upon structured questionnaires and schedule interviews which will be obtained from the present women officials within three departmental offices namely; Industries Department, Local Administrative Department and Social Welfare Department of Directorate, Mizoram.

Secondary data will be collected from information available in the form of books, magazines, articles, journals, internet sites and governmental documents adhering to the study. Collected data analysis will provide a better understanding of the research under study.

Chapterisation

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER II: WOMEN GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES IN MIZORAM: AN OVERVIEW

CHAPTER III: PROGRAMMES AND SCHEMES RELATING TO WORKING WOMEN
IN MIZORAM

CHAPTER IV: WOMEN EMPLOYEE'S PERCEPTION OF WORK AND WORKPLACE

CHAPTER V: CONCLUSION

CHAPTER - II

WOMEN OFFICIAL'S IN MIZORAM: AN OVERVIEW

The contemporary era has a more female friendly environment than the past years in the Mizo's culture and tradition. The society is now willing to give equal opportunities to girls as they have been giving to their sons.¹ Women are now holding numerous posts whether low, or high graded positions. The women of Mizoram have made their mark in all economic activities from small business ownership to large private business, from quarry to butcher shop etc. They are to be found in large numbers. In acknowledging active and remarkable economic contribution of Mizo women, Mr. Vanengliana wrote a book "*Where are the Mizo men?*" In asking what the male members are doing while their women are found in all trades of economy in Aizawl town.² This highlighted the ever growing capacity and increasing participation of the women of Mizoram in all walks of life.

The increased entry of women in the labour market and the changing economic role of women in the household have led to a substantial impact on the work structure. With the increase participation of women in the labour force, the economic role of women has improved over the years in India as well as in Mizoram. However, they are concentrated heavily in agriculture, manual and clerical.³ Women's capabilities have been expanded over the years but this expansion has not been harnessed effectively in service more so in jobs requiring professionals, technical, administrative and managerial skills.⁴

¹ Purohit Apurva, *Lady, you're not a man*, Rupa Publications, New Delhi, 2013, p. 126.

² Lalneihzovi, *op.,cit.*, 2009, p.53

³ Lalhriatpuii, *Economic Participation of Women in Mizoram*, Concept Publishing Company Pvt., Ltd, New Delhi, 2010, p. 25

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 112.

Progress in Literacy level among the Mizo Women

The latest population Census of India of 2011 showed that the literacy level of women have undergone a positive changes as compared to the previous years. It also showed the declining disparities between the literacy levels of both the sexes. In the initial coming of the Missionaries in Mizoram, the amount of the educated was very less and could be easily counted and pick pointed. Fig 1.1 showed that as of the year 1901, those considered to be literate was not even one per hundred persons of the population of Mizoram where only a merger amount of 0.93 per hundred persons was considered literate. However the need for being educated fail to decline with the gradual growing awareness among the Mizo's. As per the Population Census of 2011, the literacy level among the Mizo's was an applauding 91.33% where the male accounts for 93.37% as against 89.27% female literates.

Table. 1.1

Progress of Literacy rate in Mizoram (Compiled from the population census 2011)

PROGRESS OF LITERACY IN MIZORAM						
<i>Census Year</i>		<i>Persons %</i>		<i>Male %</i>		<i>Female %</i>
1		2		3		4
1901	—	0.93	—	n.a.	—	n.a.
1911	—	3.98	—	n.a.	—	n.a.
1921	—	6.28	—	n.a.	—	n.a.
1931	—	10.7	—	n.a.	—	n.a.
1941	—	19.5	—	n.a.	—	n.a.
1951	—	31.6	—	46.8	—	16.9
1961	—	42.7	—	49.5	—	36.0
1971*	—	53.8	—	60.5	—	46.7
1981	—	59.9	—	64.5	—	54.9
1991	—	82.3	—	85.6	—	78.6
2001	—	88.8	—	90.7	—	86.7
2011	—	91.33	—	93.35	—	89.27

Here, one could not help but appreciate the outstanding increase in the level of female literacy as against the previous census years. Further, this shows that the development between both the sexes have been levelled though none of the census years showed women literacy level higher than men. This rise in the level of literacy of both sexes makes it easier for attaining prosperity for the Mizoram State as the increase grass root level development is a need for fulfilling the development goals. Till 1969, the number of male graduates from different stream outnumbered the number of female graduates. However, since 1970-71, 1973, 1974, female graduates started outnumbering male graduates and the intense efforts put in by the females can on no account be ignored⁵ Education stands the main criteria and reason for the growing amount of women government officials in Mizoram. The government jobs are now mainly merit based on qualifications and the women are occupying such posts with the help of the changing opportunities given to them by education and awareness. A recent study conducted by the Synod Social Front claimed that women officials occupied about 54% of the posts in government offices.⁶

Women in the Leadership status in contemporary era

Mizoram as of the contemporary era had witnessed few women in the leadership posts in various government offices. The present Chief Secretary L. Toehhong is a woman. The Department of Social Welfare, Art and Culture, Tourism once had a female official named Sairengpuii a Mizoram Secretariat Service as the department Director. She was also once handed a pivotal leadership role to the extent of being the Secretary of the Government of Mizoram. Apart from these women leaders, Esther Lalruatkimi (Indian Railway service) had been given an important official status of being as the Director of School Education, Higher and Technical Education and further the role of Secretary to the

⁵ Aleaz Bonita., *op., cit.*, p. 108.

⁶ Sinha Hrendra, Lalrinchani. B., *op., cit.*, p. 47.

Government of Mizoram powerful woman like Boihchhingpuii had also held the post of the Director of the Department of Art and Culture and is also the first woman to occupy the post of the Director of Art and Culture Department among the Mizo.

So far, Mizoram has witnessed a number of women officials at the leadership posts. However, their number as compared to their male counterparts is still very low and could not account to even a scale of being one tenth as against the amount of male leaders. It is, however, worth mentioning that there are now few Mizo women in the Indian Administrative Service, Indian Railway Service, Indian Revenue Service, Indian Information Service, Indian Postal Service etc. The present Joint Director of the SCERT, Laldawngliani Chhawngthu is a woman, the present Deputy Director (Accounts) of Industry Department is also a woman, the present Director of the Directorate of Social Welfare Department is also a woman. To a certain extent it can be noted that women officials are not so much demarcated purely based on gender and other inequalities that may tend to exist. High literacy rate among the Mizo women enable them to make choices in areas like education, employment and health and enhancing access to legal literacy and equal participation in developmental process.⁷ However, the traditional patriarchal mindset is found not to be wholly wiped out among the people of Mizoram. The status and role of the women among the Mizos have been uplifted especially in the urban areas though the women of the rural areas are still regarded more to be juggling their roles inside the household with their career. The work participation is also seen to be lower among the rural areas as compared to the capital city like Aizawl. The concept of modernity could also be considered as a necessary harbinger which depicts the growing status of women in Mizoram and the increase role played by them in certain governance as shown in Table 1.2

⁷ Lalhriatpuii., *op.,cit.*, p.112.

Growing number of Women Officials in Administrative Status:

Table no. 1.2 Growth of State Government Employees in Mizoram. (Reference Statistical Handbook of Mizoram 2006)

GROWTH OF STATE GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES						
<i>Filled in Posts</i>						
<i>Year</i>		<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>		<i>Total</i>	<i>Index Base 1972+100</i>
● 1972	—	n.a.	n.a.	—	10,834	100
● 1983	—	17,058	3,536	—	20,594	190
● 1987	—	24,007	5,637	—	29,644	274
● 1998	—	37,002	9,672	—	46,674	431
● 2000	—	38,919	10,973	—	49,892	460
● 2002	—	39,564	11,157	—	50,721	468
● 2009	—	40,357	13,296	—	53,653	495
● 2012	—	41,400	14,065	—	55,465	512

According to the Statistical Handbook of Mizoram 2006, the percentage of female employees to the total government employees of the State Government has become 24.83%. Though the number of male employees increases in the first two decades i.e. 1976-1986 and 1986-1986, the percentage of male employees of the State declined decade by decade.⁸ This brought into consideration whether the growing provisions and Schemes available for the employment status of Mizoram. The population census conducted in the year 2011 divided the workers into two categories; marginal workers and real workers as shown in the Table 1.3

⁸ Lalneihzovi, *op.,cit.*, 2009, p.76.

Table 1.3

Categorisation of Employment status of Mizoram (data extracted from Census 2011)

NUMBER OF WORKERS (2011 Census)			
Category	Male	Female	Total
Main Workers	2,63,305	1,51,725	4,15,030
Marginal Workers	27,435	44,240	71,675
Total Workers	2,90,740	1,95,965	4,86,705
Work Participation Rate	52.4	36.2	44.4

The term 'workers' refers to those people who have proper economic activity and have worked for the major part of the reference period that is a period of not less than six months or more. Marginal workers on the other hand are those who had not worked for the major part of the reference period. This 2011 Census showed that among the total population the percentage of female workers both main and marginal combined i.e. 4, 86,706 persons combined are 44.4% of the total population. This broad categorisation of workers does not limit itself into only female government employees in administration and thus, the female participation is rather considered a maximum in these criteria as compared to the status of women officials in government offices.

Growing Number of Women Government Employee's in Mizoram

Being particular to the status of women Government employees in Mizoram, a proper data on this subject is very few and limited. The most reliable among the Statistical Survey of the Mizoram regarding the State Government Employee's is the one conducted in the year 2012. Till the year 2012, the total number of government employees as a whole amounted to 44,557 persons. Among the total government employees, women officials accounted for 10,989 persons while the remaining 33,568 persons are male employees. With regards to the women employee's alone, the maximum post occupied are under the group category 'C', where 3039 women employees (16%) as against the 15,244 male workers are there in the total 18283 employees. In the group 'A' category, the female employees accounted for 1160 persons which are 28.3% as against the male 2931 workers. In the group 'B' and 'B' Non gazetted Government Employees, the amount of women officials as against the total number officials is 33.5% and 37.47% respectively. The group 'D' category showed 19.5% female employees i.e. 1589 persons against 6537 male employees among the total 8126 government employees. (Fig. 1.4).

The overall statistics showed that the government employees both gazetted and non-gazetted account to 55,465 persons. Further, out of each 1000 persons in Mizoram, statistics showed that 50.6 persons are employed under the government of Mizoram which is a mere 5% of the total population of Mizoram. It is worth mentioning that there are 34 women government employees as against 100 male employees i.e. 14,065 women employees as against 41,400 male government employees in Mizoram.⁹

⁹ HrahseL Lalhuanawma, *Census of Mizoram State Government Employees, Mizoram Statistics 2014*, Published by Lalhuanawma HrahseL , Aizawl, 2014, p. 132

Table 1.4

Total number of Government Employees categorised in Group wise (compiled from 2012 Statistical Survey of Mizoram)

GROUP WISE NUMBER OF MIZORAM STATE GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES (Ref Year : 2012)				
Group	Male	Female	Total	% to G.Total
1	2	3	4	5
A	2931	1160	4091	7.4
B'G*	1135	574	1709	3.1
B'NG**	7721	4627	12348	22.3
C	15244	3039	18283	33.0
D	6537	1589	8126	14.7
Sub Total	33568	10989	44557	

OTHERS				
Contract	899	766	1665	3.0
Work charge	454	171	625	1.1
Muster Roll	6112	2001	8113	14.6
Officiating	6	5	11	0.1
Co-terminus	361	133	494	0.9
Sub Total	7832	3076	10908	
Grand Total	41400	14065	55465	

In the preface of *'The Statistical Profile On Women Labour 2008,'* the Director General B.N. Nanda quoted women labour as an important segment of labour force in India and that there are certain occupations where one can find distinction between men's and women's work mainly based on sexual lines.¹⁰ The publications however are dedicated upon showing the important aspects covered by women labour in India and the need for exposing the certain variations. The significance of female work force in the contemporary economic structure of Mizoram can also be shown by the dependency ratio of certain States of India as well. The dependency ratio is an estimated measure of the magnitude of the dependency burden borne by the working population. On the whole, the dependency ratio for India is 85:36 and Mizoram has a dependency ratio of 79:20 while the lowest ratio is recorded by Nagaland which is 74:78. Hence, the participation of women labour could be considered high both in these states as the lower dependency rate is due to large- scale participation by women.¹¹

Changing Status of Working Women in Mizoram:

The role played by women in administration has changed from *'the womb of the mother to the tomb'*. From the government offices to the status of being a member of important local government institutions women in Mizoram have occupied important posts. The Census 2001 Map Profile, State and Union Territories, Office of Registrar General, India showed that among the North Eastern States, Mizoram has the highest female work participation¹². (Table 1.5)

¹⁰ Labour Bureau , *op.,cit*, p.1.

¹¹ Aleaz, Bonita ,*op., cit.*, pp. 107-108.

¹² Census of India , *' Map Profile 2001 India, States and Union Territories,'* Office of the Registrar General , India, 2004, pp. 166-170.

Table 1.5.

Female Work Participation of Women in North East India (Census 2001 of India)

MALE - FEMALE WORK PARTICIPATION (in %) IN THE STATES OF N.E. INDIA 2001				
<i>State</i>		<i>Person</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>
● Arunachal Pradesh	—	44.00	50.60	36.50
● Assam	—	35.80	49.90	20.70
● Manipur	—	43.60	48.10	39.00
● Meghalaya	—	41.80	48.30	35.10
● Mizoram	—	52.60	57.30	47.50
● Nagaland	—	42.60	46.70	38.10
● Tripura	—	36.20	50.60	21.10
<i>India</i>		<i>39.10</i>	<i>51.70</i>	<i>25.60</i>

Additionally as per the information given by the Directorate of Local Administration Department as on June 27, 2007, there have been four elected women Village Council Presidents for instances; Lalenveli Khiangte at Khanpui Village in Tlungvel Constituency, C. Lalrinsangi at Durtlang Village in Aizawl North- I Constituency, Lalbiakthuami at Lungpuizawl Village in Lunglei South Constituency and Laldinpuii at Tualthu Village in Tawipui Constituency.¹³ The actual roles played by the women in the Sixth Scheduled areas in village administrations were once regarded to be unknown. However it is no longer the case in the present contemporary Mizo society. The reservations given through quotas system

¹³ Lalneihzovi, *op., cit.*, 2009, p. 67.

and other remedial measures for women sustenance had to a certain extent wiped out the demarcation based on sexes.

Additions to women employment in Mizoram, in the last decade have been confined to agriculture, small business. However more and more women are now freely joining government jobs. Middle class women have sought employment due to various reasons. The most significant ones are to supplement the family income and utilize their education.¹⁴ However, women in certain societies like Mizo society are considered to be engaged in two types of work- home based work and outside work. Though the home based work is not considered fit for a constructive wages. It is what society expects of women to perform and be good at. This understanding is what was considered a major error which hides women off outside household jobs in general and government posts in particular. This lead to a situation of women becoming a focus of national and international concern and a variety of proposals, programmes and policies were advanced or designed for the benefit of women, the call for reliable statistics on women became more insistent.¹⁵ The need for equality between both sexes further expands which further loosened the categorisation of labour in certain societies. The equality between men and women is enshrined in the Constitution of India. The basic principle of equality between the sexes was provided in the Preamble to the Constitution of India. In order to translate the Constitutional goals into practice, several Programmes and Policies have been framed by the Government of India but women in independent India continued to be victim of several forms of discrimination in and out of the home.¹⁶

¹⁴ Sharma Anita, *Modernisation and Status of Working women in India*, 1st Edition, Mittal Publications, New Delhi, 1990, p. 75.

¹⁵ John. E. Mary, *op., cit.*, p. 169.

¹⁶ Ray Raka, *Handbook of Gender*, Oxford University Press Publication, New Delhi, 2012, p. 521

In conclusion to all these and because of the concern given by Independent India to the needs of women often considered as the weaker sections of the society, welfare programmes and schemes have been put forward to pull them out of their hurdles and emancipate them. A number of such schemes have been validated over the years and put to use as a levelling criteria between male and women workers pertaining to domestic environment, society and even government jobs. To uphold the Constitution mandate and to take note of the commitments made by India at the international conventions and human right instruments, the Government has enacted various Legislative measures intended to ensure equal rights to encounter social discrimination and various forms of violence and atrocities and to provide support services especially to women .¹⁷

¹⁷ Lalneihzovi, *Women's Development in India*, Mittal Publication, New Delhi, 2007, p. 31.

CHAPTER – III

PROGRAMMES AND SCHEMES RELATING TO WORKING

WOMEN IN MIZORAM

Women official's participation in administration and the roles played by them are an important part and parcel of the Government organisations, and this could not be neglected. Although women are considered to have a hold of better standings than the past whether it is in the ground of societal administration, political activities etc they are somehow considered to be weaker sections in the society. To increase the self reliance and autonomy of women officials and for enhancing their productivity for enabling them to take income generation activities, it is the need of the hour to set up *Welfare Programmes* wholeheartedly. Empowerment has to be in terms of information, knowledge, skills awareness and it has to be against powerful forces of domination and exploitation. ¹

There is, no doubt, that numerous Schemes have been formulated and that our country's eminent thinkers and scholars have always considered such schemes in uplifting the status of women. However, it is worth mentioning that due to many years of having been the weaker sections of the society, women have not been able to attain an equal standing with men in certain administrative posts and leaderships status. 'Human Right is a dynamic concept and this fact has significant implications for women'. ² The Legislative interventions providing protective Schemes have thus prove their essence as an instrument for bringing out women from certain fronts that might hamper her Rights.

¹ Lalneihzovi, op., cit.,2007, p. 12

² Kumari Prasanna, *Status of Women in India; A brief study of women in Church and society- Essay in honour of Florence Robinson*, edited by Prasanna Kumari, Published by Gurukul Theological College, Chennai, p.2, 1999.

The Constitution of India and its subsequent amendments ensured the equality of the sexes to improve the status of the women.³ The focus here is on empowering women through welfare schemes and programmes which will lead to a sustainable affect on societies. A united effort to enhance the capabilities of women is the moral and constitutional responsibility of the society so that there could be equal rights and opportunities between both sexes. The greatest revolution in a country is the one that affects the status and living conditions of its women.⁴ Having said that, empowerment opportunities have been given to women and such schemes have impacted their lives immensely in one way or the other.

Lists of Provisions for Welfare of Working Women Provided by the Government of India

While all the provisions of the Constitution are applicable equally to men and women, and can, therefore, be invoked by women for the assertion of their rights ; Parts III and IV need special mention; as these are the backbone on which protective legislations for women have been based. Part III of the Constitution recognises and confers fundamental rights to citizens. And, some of these are enjoyed by non-citizens also. These rights have a special status in the Constitution, as according to Article 13;

- a) All law in force before the commencement of the Constitution , so as far as they are inconsistent with the provisions of Part III, have been declared, to the extent of inconsistency, void; and
- b) The state has been prohibited from making any law which takes away the right conferred in Part III and any law made in contraventions of this part, is to the extent inconsistency or void.

³ Vijayalakshmi G, *Sex role perception and occupational choice*, First edition, Mittal Publications, New Delhi, 1989, p. 12.

⁴ Sharma Anita, *op.cit.* p. 89.

Article 14 of the Constitution guarantees equality before law, of female and males, castes and creeds, religions - Hinduism, Aryanism, Christianity or Mohammedanism, etc. It provides that the State shall not deny to any person equality before the laws. The status of women as half to men under the Muslim; law has not been accepted as true law under the Constitution of India. Disproportionate remunerations males and females under Industrial or any employment has been refuted under this article.

Article 15 is more specific on treatment on discrimination of any sort. It provides prohibition of discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste sex or place of birth. It mandates that:

The State shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them, be subject to any disability, liability, restriction or condition with regards to access to shops, public restaurants, hotels and places of public entertainment; those of wells, tanks, Ghats, roads and places of public resort maintained wholly or partly out of state funds or dedicated to the use of general public.

Nothing in this Article or clause (2) of Article 20 shall prevent the State from making any special provisions for the advancement of any socially backward classes of citizens or for the Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribes.

Article 16 mandates for equality of opportunity in matters of public employment, that; There shall be equality of opportunity for all citizens in matters relating to employment or appointment to any office under the State. No citizens shall on grounds only of religion, race,

caste, sex, descent or any of them be ineligible for, or discriminated against in respect of any employment or office under the State.⁵

Directives Principles of State Policy and Women

The Directive Principles of State Policy contained in Part IV of the Constitution incorporate many directives to the State to improve the status of women and for their protection.

Article 39 (a) direct the State to direct its policy towards securing that the citizens, women and men; equally have the right to an adequate means of livelihood.

Article 39 (d) directs the State to secure equal pay for equal work for men and women. The State has enacted 'The Equal Remuneration Act, 1976 to give effect to this Directive Principle.

Article 39 (e) specifically not to abuse the health and strength of workers , men and women.

Article 42 of the Constitution incorporates a very important provision for the benefit of women. It directs the State to make provisions for securing just and humane conditions of work for maternity relief. The Government had implemented this directive by enacting the 'Maternity Benefit Act, 1961'.

Apart from these specific provisions all the other provisions of the Constitution are equally applicable to the men and women. This clearly establishes the intention of the

⁵ Chawla Monica, *Gender Justice: Women and Law in India*, Deep and Deep Publications Pvt Ltd, New Delhi, 2006, p. 22-24.

framers of the Constitution to improve the social, economic, educational and political status of the women so that they can be treated with men on equal terms.⁶

Reservation in Panchayats and Municipalities

According to Article 40 of the Constitution of India, the State shall take steps to organize village panchayats and endow them with such powers and authority as may be necessary to enable them to function as units of self- government. Reservation of seats for women in the Panchayats and Municipalities have been provided in Article 243-D and 243-T of the Constitution of India. Part IX and Part IX – A have been added to the Constitution (73rd Amendment) Act, popularly known as the Panchayati Raj and the 74th Constitutional Amendment Act with Article 243,243-A to 243-D and Article 243-P to 243-ZG.

Reservation of Seats for Women in Panchayats – Article 243-D

- 1) In every Panchaya, seats shall be reserved for the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes. The number of seats so reserved shall bear, as nearly as maybe, in the same proportion to the total number of seats to be filled by direct election in the Panchayats as the population of the Scheduled Caste in that Panchayat area or of the Scheduled Tribes in that Panchayat area bears to the total population of that area in such seats may be allotted by rotation to different constituencies in a Panchayat.
- 2) Not less than one- third of the seats reserved under Clause (1) not less than one third seats shall be reserved for women belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribe's.
- 3) Not less than one- third (including the number of seats to be filled by women of the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes) of the total number of seats to be filled by

⁶ Chawla Monica, *op.,cit.*, p.27.

direct election in every Panchayat shall be reserved for women and such seats may be allotted by rotation to different Constituencies in a Panchayat.

- 4) The offices of the Chairperson in the Panchayats in the village or any other level shall be reserved for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and women in such manner of the Legislature of a State may, by law, provided that :
 - a) The number of offices of Chairpersons reserved for the Schedules Castes and Schedules Tribes in the Panchayats at each level in all the States shall bear as nearly maybe in the same proportion to the total number of such offices in the Panchayat at each level as the population of the Scheduled Castes and Schedules Tribes in the State bears to the total population of the State.
 - b) Further that not less than one third of the total number of offices of the Chairpersons at each level shall be reserved for women:
 - c) Also that the number of the offices reserved under this clause shall be allotted by rotation to different Panchayats at each level.
- 5) The reservation of seats under clause (1) and clause (2) and the reservation of the offices of Chairpersons (other than the reservation of women) under clause (4) shall cease to have effect on the expiration of the period specified in Article 334(i.e 50 years).
- 6) Nothing in this Part shall prevent the Legislature of a State from making any provision of seats in the Panchayats offices of Chairpersons in the Panchayats at any level in favour of backward class of citizens

Reservation of Seats for Women in Municipality

According to Article 243-T of the Constitution of India;

- 1) Seats shall be reserved for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in every Municipality and the number of seats reserved for them shall as nearly as maybe, in same proportion to the total number of seats to be filled by direct election in the Municipality as the population of the Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes in the Municipal area bears to the total population of that area and such seats maybe allotted by rotation to different constituencies in a Municipality.
- 2) Not less than the total number of seats reserved under clause (1) shall be reserved for women belonging to the Scheduled Caste, or as the case maybe, to the Scheduled Tribes.
- 3) Not less than one –third (including the number of seats reserved for women belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes of the total number of seats to be filled by direct election in every Municipality shall be reserved for women and such seats may be allotted by rotation to different constituencies in a Municipality.
- 4) The Offices of the Chairpersons in the Municipalities shall be reserved for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and women in such manners as the Legislature of the State may, by law, provide.
- 5) The reservation of seats under clause (1) and clause (2) and the reservation of offices of the chairpersons (other than the reservation of women) under clause (4) shall cease to have effect on the expiration of the period specified in Article 334 (i.e. 50 years).
- 6) Nothing in this part shall prevent the Legislature of a State from making any provision for reservation of seats in any Municipality of offices of Chairpersons in the Municipalities in favour of backward caste of citizens.

Fundamental Duties towards women

Part-IV- A which consists of only one Article 51-A was newly added to the Constitution by the 42nd Amendment Act, 1976. This Article for the first time specifies a code of ten fundamental duties for citizens. Article 51-A (e) is related to women. It states that ‘ it shall be the duty of the citizen of India to promote harmony and the spirit of common brotherhood amongst all the people of India transcending religious, linguistic and regional or sectional diversities; to renounce practices derogatory to the dignity of women.’⁷

Five Year Plans and Women Empowerment

The First Five Year Plan (1951-56) envisaged a number of welfare measures for women. Establishment of the Central Social Welfare Board (CSWB), organisation of mahila mandals or women’s club and the community development plan period as well.

The Third Five year Plan (1961-66) supported female education as a major welfare measure. Rural welfare services and condensed course of education had priority besides provision of services for maternal and child welfare, health, education, nutrition and family planning.

Similarly, the Fourth Five Year Plan (1969-74) continued emphasis on women’s education. Here the basic policy was to promote women’s welfare within the family. The outlay for family planning was stepped up and a high priority was accorded to immunisation and supplementary feeding programmes.

The Fifth Five Year Plan (1974-1979) emphasised training women in need of income and protection. Functional literacy programmes got priority. This plan coincided with

⁷ Chawla Monica, *op.,cit.*, pp. 28-31.

international women's decade and the submission of report of the committee on the status of women in India. In 1976, women's welfare and development bureau was set up under the Ministry of Social Welfare. It was to act as a nodal point to coordinate policies, programmes for women development.

The Sixth Five Year Plan (1980-85) saw definite shift from welfare department. It recognised women's lack of access to resources as a critical factor negating their growth.

The Seventh Five Year Plan (1985-90) highlights the concern for equity and empowerment. For the first time emphasis was laid on qualitative aspects such as inculcation of confidence, generation of awareness with regards to rights and training in skills for better employment.

The Eighth Five Year Plan (1990-1995) has focused on empowering women especially at the grassroots level through Panchayati Raj Institutions.

During the Eighth Five Year Plan period, a number of programmes were envisaged such as (Yadav, 2000)

- i) Women's Development Corporation (WDCS).
- ii) Support to Training and Employment Programmes (STEP).
- iii) Training-cum-production Centres for Women.
- iv) Awareness Generation Camps for Rural and Poor Women.
- v) Women's Training Centres (WTC) or Institutes for Rehabilitation of Women in Distress (IRWD)
- vi) Voluntary Action Bureau (VAB) and Family Counselling Centres (FCC).

- vii) Short Stay Homes (SSH) For Women and Girls.
- viii) Free Legal aid and Para-Legal Training
- ix) Working women's Hostel (WWH)

The thrust of all these programmes was on provision of employment and income generation, educational training, support services, general awareness and legal support.

The Ninth Five Year Plan (1997-2002) adopted a strategy of women's component plan, under which not less than 30% of funds / benefits are earmarked for specific Programmes. Review by the Planning Commission of progress of women's component Plan during Ninth Plan (1997-2002) has confirmed that nearly 42.9% of the Gross Budgetary Support (GBS) aggregating a total amount of Rs.50,942,53 cores, has been spent on women in five Ministries / Departments, namely, Family Welfare , Health, Education, Women and Child and Indian System of Medicine and Homoeopathy.

The Tenth Plan approach on empowering women through translating the recently adopted National Policy for Empowerment of Women (2001) into action and ensuring survival, protection and development of children through Rights based approach.

Eleventh Five Year Plan (2007-2012) approach paper: The theme of the draft approach paper to the Eleventh Five Year Plan titled 'towards faster and more inclusive growth' is indeed very attractive' At this stage of development, India definitely needs faster and more inclusive growth . The question, however, is more inclusive growth or not. That is whether the underlying approach will be able to include the excluded- the poor, the women, dalit and others.⁸

⁸ Gupta Sunita, Gupta Mukta, *Role of Women in the 21st Century*, 1st edition, Anmol Publications Pvt. Ltd, New Delhi, 1996, pp. 107- 111.

The Government of India have also implemented welfare schemes for working women such as

a) Rajiv Gandhi National Creche Scheme for Children of Working Mothers

It provides day care facilities to the children between the age group 0-6 years from families with monthly income of less than Rs. 12,000. In addition to being a safe place for the children of working mothers the creches provides such services as supplementary nutrition, pre-school education, emergency health care etc.

b) Family Counselling Centres

It was introduced in 1983 by the Government of India; the centres provide facilities such as counselling, referral, rehabilitative services to women and children who are victims of atrocities, family maladjustment and ostracism. It also provides counselling and trauma intervention in case of natural disasters.

c) Awareness Generation Programmes

This Scheme aims at providing awareness among women and the community at large on rights, status and problems of women in particular and other social concerns.

d) Condensed Courses of Education for Women

This scheme caters to the needs of women who could not join mainstream education system of who were drop outs from formal schools. The scheme aims at giving education to girls / women above 15 years of age along with additional inputs of skills/ vocational training. The condensed of the course are needs based and could be modified according to local requirements.

e) National Mission for Empowerment of Women(NMEW)

It is an initiative of the Government of India to develop women holistically. It is a centrally sponsored scheme introduced by the Government in the year 2011 and acts as an umbrella mission with a mandate to strengthen inter-sectored convergence and facilitate the process of coordination of all the women's welfare and social economic development programmes across Ministries and Department. NMEW is implemented in all the States and Union Territories.

f) Working Women's Hostel (WWH)

This Scheme envisages provisions of affordable hostel accommodation to working women, single working women, women working away from places of their home towns and for women being trained for employment. This scheme has been revised recently.

g) Support to Training and Employment Programme (STEP)

It was previously launched as a centrally sponsored scheme in 1986-87. It aims at mainly providing significant impact on women by upgrading skills and training for self and wage employment. The group includes the marginalised and asset less of rural and urban poor. This also includes wage labourers, unpaid workers, female headed households, migrant labourers and other dispossessed groups with special focus on Scheduled Castes / Scheduled Tribes households.

h) Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojana

It is a conditional cash transfer scheme for pregnant and lactating mothers (Pregnant and Lactating) to contribute to better environment by introducing cash incentives for improving lives and nutrition to pregnant and nursing mothers. It envisages providing cash incentives to P&L mothers during pregnancy and lactation in response to individuals fulfilling special conditions. It addresses short term income support objectives with long term objectives of attitude change. The scheme aims to partly compensate for wage loss due to P&L women both prior and after delivery of the child. The beneficiaries are paid Rs. 4000 on instalment between the second trimesters till the child attains six months on fulfilling specific conditions related to maternal and child health.

i) Swadhar Greh Scheme (SGS)

The Ministry of Women and Child Development has been administering Swadhar scheme since 2001 for women in difficult circumstances. It provides temporary accommodation, maintenance and rehabilitative services to women / girls who are homeless due to family discord, violence, crime, mental ostracism etc. Another scheme of target group which is SSH was being implemented by the Central Social Welfare Board (CSWB). Having similar objectives both the schemes have been merged to Swadhar Greh Scheme with revised financial parameters.⁹

⁹ <http://pib.nic.in/release/release.asp?relid=82016>. Accessed on 3rd October 2014.

The Equal Remuneration Act, 1976

This rule applies to the whole India and this Act provides for the payment of equal remuneration to men and women workers for same work or of similar nature and for the prevention of discrimination on the ground of sex against women in the matter of employment.

Applicability:

It extends to the whole of India and applies to all establishments. No employer shall show any discrimination against women while recruiting or framing service conditions after recruitment except where the employment of women in such work is prohibited or restricted under law.

Provisions under Remuneration Act 1976

a) According to this Act, it is the duty of employer to pay equal remuneration to men and women workers for same work or work of a similar nature. According to this Act, no employer shall pay to any worker, employed by him in an establishment or employment, remuneration, whether payable in cash or in kind, at rates less favourable than those at which remuneration is paid by him to the workers of the opposite sex in such establishment or employment for performing the same work or work of a similar nature.

b) Further, no employer shall, for the purpose of complying with the provisions of sub-section (1), reduce the rate of remuneration of any worker.

c) Where, in an establishment or employment, the rates of remuneration payable before the commencement of this Act for men and women workers for the same work or work of a similar nature are different only on the ground of sex, then the higher (in cases where 4 there are only two rates), or, as the case may be, the highest (in cases where

there are only two rates), of such rates shall be the rate at which remuneration shall be payable, on and from such commencement, to such men and women workers

d) This act prohibits any discrimination while recruiting men and women workers. -- On and from the commencement of this Act, no employer shall, while making recruitment for the same work or work of a similar nature, or in any condition of service subsequent to recruitment such as promotions, training or transfer, make any discrimination against women except where the employment of women in such work is prohibited or restricted by or under any law for the time being in force:

The provisions of this section shall not affect any priority or reservation for scheduled castes or scheduled tribes, ex-servicemen, retrenched employees of any other class or category of persons in the matter of recruitment to the posts in an establishment or employment.¹⁰

The Maternity Benefit Act, 1961

The maternity protection was, at the time of introducing the Bill, provided under the different State Acts on the subject and the three Central Acts, namely the Mines Maternity Benefit Act 1941, the employees' State Insurance Act, 1948 and the Plantations Labour Act, 1951. There was considerable diversity in their provisions relating to qualifying conditions, period and rate of benefit, etc. As such the Bill sought to reduce as far as possible the then existing disparities in this respect. It was sought to apply to all establishments, including mines, factories and plantations, except those to which the

¹⁰ http://pblabour.gov.in/pdf/acts_rules/equal_remuneration_act_1976.pdf. (Accessed on 7th August 2014.)

Employees' State Insurance Act, 1948 applies and its provisions approximate as nearly as possible to those of that Act.¹¹

Accordingly, the Maternity Benefit Act, 1948 came to regulate the employment of women in certain employments for certain periods before and after child birth and to provide for maternity benefit and certain other benefits. The Act applies, in the first instance, to all establishments as defined in the Factories Act, 1948, The Mines Act, 1952 and the Plantations Labour Act, 1951, respectively including such establishments belonging to Government. The State Governments have also been empowered to apply the legislation to any other establishment or class of establishments. However, it does not apply to any factory or establishment to which the Employees' State Insurance Act, 1948 applies. Vide S.O.R

Woman worker's right to payment of maternity benefit. Section 5 enumerates the following benefits of maternity:

- (1) Every woman worker shall be entitled to maternity benefit and her employer shall be liable for payment at the rate of average daily wage; for the period of her actual absence immediately preceding and intending the day of her delivery and for six weeks immediately following such day.

In this connection, paying the maternity benefit to a woman worker shall remain the average daily wages payable to her for the days on which she worked during the period of three calendar months or one rupee per day, whichever is higher.

- (2) No woman shall be entitled to maternity benefits unless she has actually worked in an establishment of the employer from whom she claims maternity and sixty days in the twelve preceding months.

¹¹ *Gazette of India*, Extra II, Section 2, 1960, p.816.

In other words,-- A woman will be eligible to maternity benefit only if she has actually worked for not less than 160 days during the 15 months preceding the date of her expected delivery. Those days in which she was laid off are also included in these 160 days.

The maximum period of maternity benefit is fixed for 12 weeks; six weeks before the delivery and six weeks after the delivery. If the woman dies during this period, the maternity benefit will be confined to date of her date. If she dies after child delivering the child, then the maternity benefit continues to the entire period. If the child also dies, then the benefit will extend to the date of death of the child.¹²

Health and Nutrition of Women

Measures to uplift health and nutrition standards of women, under the ICDS, include health check up for pregnant women and new mothers, immunisation, pre- and post- natal care and supplementary nutrition. Under the Nutrition Plan Adolescent Girls (NPAG), special attention is being given to nutrition requirements of the potential mothers of the future. DWCD has been operating NPAG as a pilot project in 51 districts with the ultimate objectives of universalising the Scheme.

Training and Employment of Women

Empowerment of women cannot happen unless they are provided with income generating activities through wage and self-employment. A number of schemes such as Swayamsiddha , Swavlamben and Support to Training-cum-Employment Programme (STEP) are in progress where women progress as viable SHGs are utilising micro-credit with the help of activities or getting trained like Rashtriya Mahila Kosh for income generating activities or getting trained in various traditional trade and crafts (such as poultry , bee keeping and weaving) as well as newly emerging vocations (such as IT sector) or skill up

¹² Chawla Monica, *op., cit.*, p. 244-249.

gradation and capacity building . To facilitate the employment of women away from their homes/ towns, schemes such as working women hostels with day-care centres and creches are also being implemented. Care and protection for women in distress is the focused area for attention.

Legal safeguards

The National Commission for Women (NCW) safeguards the interests of women with a mandate covering all aspects of women's rights. There are about 42 Central Acts concerning women, of which 32 Acts have been reviewed by the NCW for their efficiency and removing gender bias provisions. In addition, the DWCD is also in progress of initiating new legislation amending existing ones so that they become more potent in protecting women. These include protection of women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005, which came into force on September, 2005. The act seeks to provide immediate and emergent relief to women who face situation of violence in their homes. Protection of Sexual Harassment of Women Bill, seeking to confer on women the right to be protected from sexual harassment is being drafted at the moment.

Gender Budgeting

The tenth plan reinforced the commitment to gender budgeting to establish its gender – differential impact and to translate gender commitments. It is perceived as a powerful tool not only for tracking allocation of resources for women but also covers implementation issues and outcomes. The Union Expenditure Budget 2005-06, has institutionalised Gender Budgeting in the budget document through statement 19, Expenditure Budget Vol. 1 wherein it has been indicated that the budget provision in the BE-

2005-06, substantially meant for women and children, is Rs, 14, 378.68 crore. At present Gender Budget cells have been set-up in 35 Departments of the Government of India.¹³

The Constitution of Independent India declared that there should be no discrimination against the employment of women. This created further opportunities for employment of women and an increase in their employment rate was seen more particularly among educated and upper caste women. This is a very significant development and is a characteristic of Independent India.¹⁴ After decades of work aimed at achieving equality between men and women, after the adoption of numerous international resolutions and instruments and after the passage of National Legislations seeking to attain this goal, it seems that there has been progress towards the elimination of sex discrimination in employment.¹⁵

¹³ Thakur Kumar Anil, Kumar Dalip, *Gender Empowerment and Development*, Deep and Deep Publications, New Delhi, 2008, p.p. 294-295.

¹⁴ Sharma Anita, *op., cit*, p.35.

¹⁵ Lalhriatpuii, *op.,cit*, p. 34.

CHAPTER – IV

WOMEN EMPLOYEE'S PERCEPTION OF WORK AND WORKPLACE

Mizoram had seen tremendous Constitutional, Political and Administrative changes during the past years. It can be assured that these changes have brought up remarkable shift in the status of women in the Mizo Society. The women's efforts and role played in societal administration, political governance etc have now been acknowledged tremendously. The Mizo women in the past did a lot of hard work and various responsibilities at home and never had free time at all throughout the day¹. Their role in administration of the village in the traditional era though may be somewhat unheard of but now their advancement had placed them in the status of securing official posts and working as an independent woman, wife, sister or a daughter. It is hard to allocate individually a particular women government employee just by name. It is even harder to categorise a group of women as coming from a deprived family or rich family as the education, training, exposure received by women officials is now immense without much demarcation based on class, age, religions etc. We are blessed to have lived in an era and in this environment, where no one questions whether their daughters should go to school or not, or whether the young lady who graduated from college should work or not.²

The modern Mizo women having education and job have vastly brought about a different change in their perspectives and a whole new meaning to their existence in the society. The opportunities available for Mizo women to participate in economic, societal, political activities have been increased simultaneously. One could not however assume that the status of women in Mizoram could be equally represented based on theories and few observations as Mizoram is a heterogeneous society which consists of numerous villages,

¹ Sinha .Harendra, Lalrinchhani.B., *op. cit.*, p. 46.

² Purohit Apurva, *op., cit*, p.126.

districts, towns etc. Indian society is a fragmented society which never united its people on a common social platform and caused to differentiate people on the basis of their caste and class in particular and men and women in general. Such traditions are prevalent throughout the country and in all religions ³

The situation of more deprived or demarcated though is still being seen in certain States in India based on statistical survey and other data's, these biases is fewer in Mizoram. The opportunities given to women towards the drive of using their free will in taking decisions such as working outside the four walls of the house is now done comfortably, a situation which was considered not ideal for women in the past. From the home bounded lifestyle, the Mizo women have now made use of her education in becoming the women she has become today. In regards to the immense changes brought about in the status of women in the Mizo society, it is to be considered that despite such positive changes, there still could be double standard and attitude towards women on a degree of perception of women in the society and their work environment ⁴

The numerous statistics have shown the shift and changes claiming women status have wide positive changes in the recent era or provoke a question that women might be still deprived in this so called 'Patriarchal' Mizo society. Above all the assumptions and conclusions, a perception of their workplace would be best drafted out by analysing questionnaires to the main target i.e. the women officials of three important government departments of the directorates of the capital city of Aizawl. This chapter will be based on the data's collected through questionnaires which will seek to put forward the perceptions of women government employees in Mizoram. Such data's will be collected from three

³ Sharma Anita, *op. cit.*, p.37.

⁴ Sinha . Harendra, Lalrinchhani.B., *op. cit.*, p. 27.

Department Directorates namely: Directorate of Local Administration Department, Directorate of Industry and Directorate of Social Welfare Department.

The first Department for collecting samples for the research is Directorate of Local Administrative Department which is located in Thakthing Veng Aizawl, Mizoram and the Department has an employee of 60 women and 126 male. While the Directorate composed of 43 females and 34 male employees who mainly deals with Implementation of developmental programmes of the people. This Department has been constantly empowered through massive transfer of power, programmes, decentralisation as well as administrative powers. It caters to almost all the ongoing activities of local self governing institutions from the Panchayats, Urban governing institutions, grassroots governance etc and women officials being a part and parcel of such is a manifold change as compared to their status in the past years. Women officials occupy important posts in the office of the Directorate and even outnumbered male workers. The reason here is that male workers are often posted on field's offices of the Department as it was thought more ideal for vulnerable groups like women to work at the Headquarters. ⁵

The other Directorate chosen as sample is the Directorate of Social Welfare which is located at Aizawl, Mizoram. This department is mostly considered to be a more women centric department as the functions of the department is mostly inclined to diverse ranges such as child development to promotion of women status through welfare and development programmes, preservation and strengthening of family, providing aide facilities to handicapped persons, management of correctional institutions etc. The Department employee's strength is 241 male and 219 women. The Directorate consists of gazetted 35 male employees and 36 female employees. The hierarchical position classification showed numerous women at the leadership status as for instance: the Director of the Department

⁵ H. Zothanmawii, LDC, LAD Department interviewd on 7th October 2014.

Vanlaldini is a woman, so are the two female Deputy Directors; Laldikkimi (Deputy Director of Accounts) and A. Vanlalzawni (Deputy Director of Establishment). Moreover, The Assistant Director of the Department Chauzikpuii is also a woman and so is the Special Officer (Nutrition) Zonunpari. The Directorate like the previous case consists of more female employees as to male employees. ⁶

The third and last chosen sample for studying the status of women officials is one of the oldest departments in Mizoram which is the Directorate of Industry located in Khatla, Aizawl, Mizoram. The Department has a total strength of about 570 gazetted officials where about half of the officials are women. The main roles of this department is to work for an inclusive and sustainable achievement of employment generation, utilization of local human capital and resources, to maximise Investments, output growth through development infrastructure, domestic and Foreign Direct Investment. The Directorate consists of a massive 46 gazetted women officials as compared to the remaining 35 male employees. The department Deputy Director (Accounts) Malsawmdawngliani is a woman and so is the Superintendent of the Department. This department continued to endeavour female employees and male employees like two sides of the same coin working for the department without much bias on gender concern issues. ⁷

The Deputy Director (Accounts) of Industry has also connoted that the traditional narrow mindedness has been more or less wiped out and women government employees have been living a problem free or rather way to high status in their work environment as compared to those olden days. ⁸

⁶ C. Lalhmingangi, Project Officer, SWD, interviewed on 10th October 2014.

⁷ Malsawmdawngliani, Deputy Director (Accounts) Industry Department interviewed on 29th September 2014.

⁸ *ibid*

The women officials from these three Directorates have been given a questionnaire which composed of lists of topic that would highlight; their attitude towards their work environment, whether they receive any resistance from their family side in their initial stage of joining their jobs, whether they are comfortable multitasking between home activities and their career, if there is any demarcations in their work environment based on gender issues, and a confirmation of the questions which are still instilled among the society that *'women are still been considered a secondary citizen'* and the opposing statement that *'the working women in Mizoram have been very much empowered'* etc.

The data for the research have been taken in the form of structured questionnaires from 85 women officials from the three mentioned Directorates which are; 30 samples from the Directorate of Industry, 25 samples from Directorate of Social Welfare and another 30 more samples from the Directorate of Local Administrative Department. Thus, a list of 85 samples have been attained from these department altogether. The questionnaires so collected brought forward information's as under:

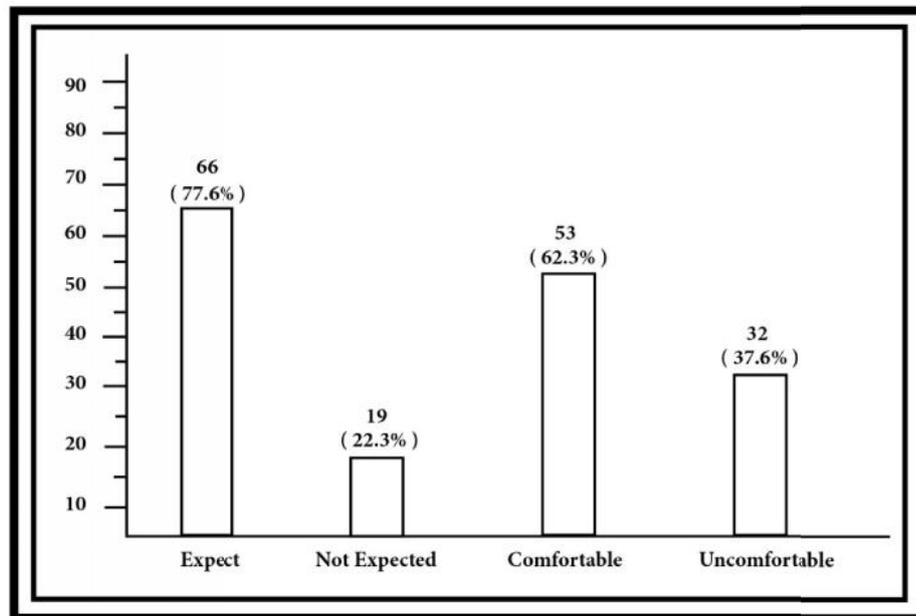
i) From all the data's collected or to be precise, the Standard questionnaires collected from 85 women government employees from all the three Directorates combined, the information showed a number of 16 employees from the age group of 26-35 years , 22 employees between 36-45 years , 33 employees from 45-55 years and 5 employees from 56-65 years. The women government employee's educational qualification range from 14 High School pass out, 26 women who have education till Higher Secondary, 34 Graduates and 11 Post Graduates. Along the hierarchical order of such Directorates , the grade of all the women who have answered the questionnaires were 17 persons from Grade-A, 27 persons from Grade-B, 27 persons from Grade-C and 10 persons from Grade-D.

Among the 85 women officials, 55 women are married and the remaining 30 are Single.

ii) Firstly, the women officials were questioned whether they faced any resistance from the side of their family before they join the job and whether they were being expected to juggle household chores and office work. They were further asked whether she is comfortable multitasking between office work and domestic work. (Table 1.6)

Table 1.6

Data showing whether the family expects the women officials to do household work and whether they are comfortable multitasking it with their jobs.



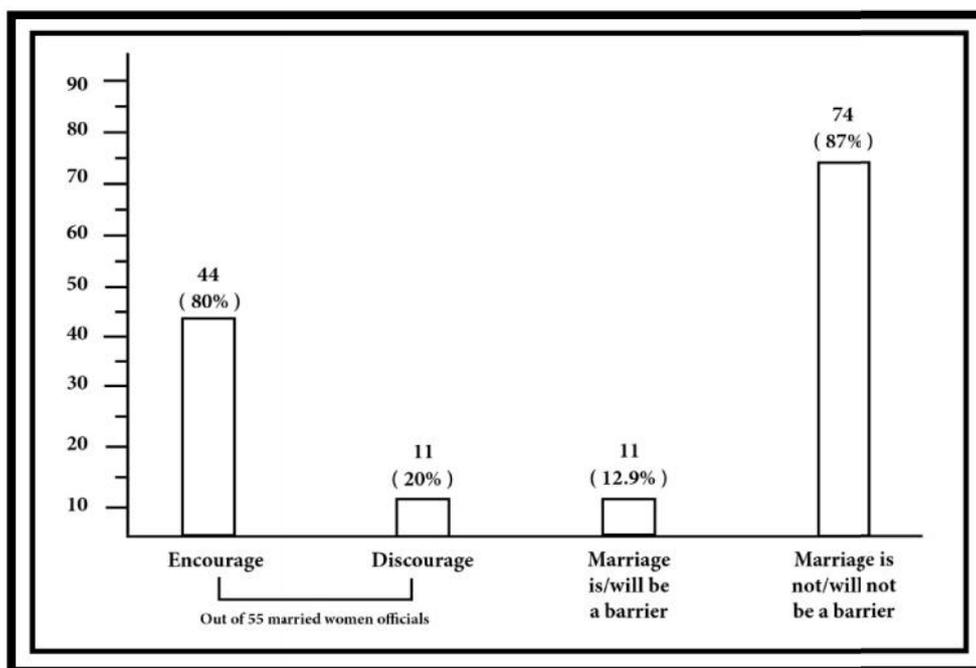
From the total 85 respondents, a massive 66 women said that they have to perform household chores a part from office work while 19 persons responded Negative. Further, 53 women were comfortable in multitasking between their career and domestic work while the remaining 32 females seemed to be uncomfortable with the main reason being, juggling household work and job is what the society considered 'Ideal' for women and they have to manage both tasks even if they are comfortable or not. This shows that the women respondents tried to adopt to modernisation but not at the cost of the society's tradition. Our

society has shifted from traditional mindset and has changed with the changing complexities and development of the Mizo society. Since in a so called patriarchal society, there still seemed to be role based on gender as it is still the case as to why women's role are still somehow confined to the household.⁹

ii) The second part of the questionnaire composed of a question to be answered by those 55 married women officials. They were asked whether her husband encourage or discourage her being a wife and an employee. The remaining unmarried officials were also asked whether they considered marriage as a barrier or will be a barrier in their career. The women officials responded as shown in table 1.7

Table 1.7

Figure showing if the married women officials consider themselves encouraged by their husbands at their being employed and if marriage is considered as a barrier by the respondents.



Women are very much aware of their important status as part of the society. Men no longer are able to push women according to their patriarchal mindset like it was in the

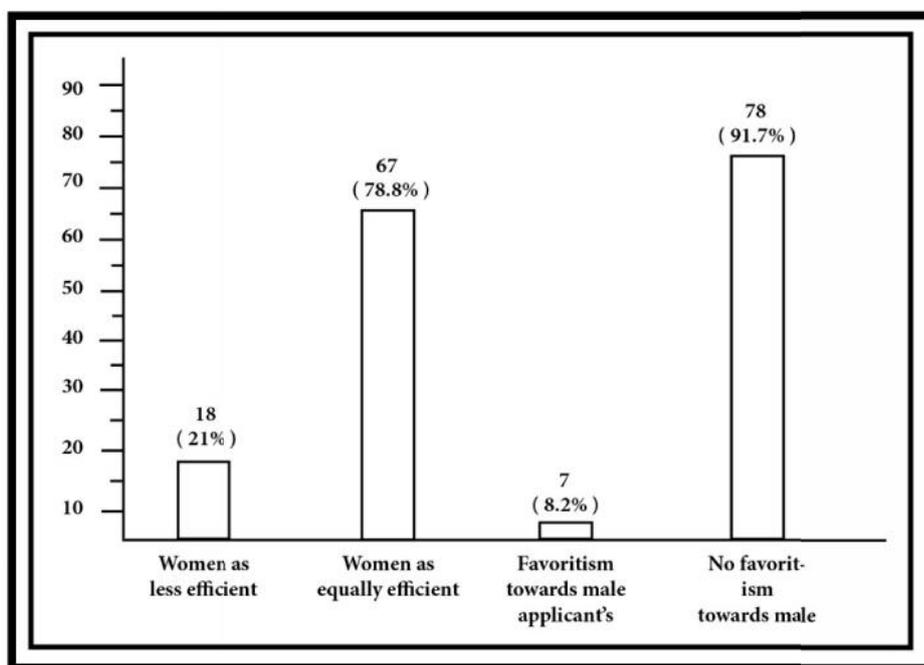
⁹ Vanlaldini, Director of SWD interviewed on 10th October 2014.

past. Men no longer have 100 % control towards their wife in the family. With the wife now being employed, she has now consider herself with much zeal as the joint provider of the family's economy and this immensely increase their outlook. Marriage is now shared equally depending on the relationship taht exists between the husband and the wife.¹⁰ Most of the women are satisfied with the job and get due encouragement from their life partners. This is beacause they feel that money has come to play an important role and the burden of managing the house equally reduces the responsibility of one person.¹¹

iii) The respondents were further questioned whether their being a 'woman' and a 'government employee' makes them appear as being less efficient because of their gender. They have also been questioned whether they feel there can be favouritism towards male applicant's in vacant Government jobs. (Table 1.8)

Table 1.8.

How the working women felt they are being considered at their work environment and if there is any favouritism towards male applicant's in vacant government jobs.



¹⁰ C. Lalmingsangi project officer Special Project Support Unit, SWD interviewed on 13th October 2014.

¹¹ Sharma Anita, *op.cit*, p.106.

The figure showed that 18 respondents felt that they have been regarded less efficient based on their gender in their work environment while 67 persons feel they are regarded as equally efficient. A large number of 78 officials are opposed by a merger amount of 7 people who felt that there is favouritism towards male applicant's in vacant government jobs. The attitude towards women has positively changed in our society.¹²

In office administration, women are no longer considered less efficient than men just based on gender. But there are cases depending on the work to be done where women are considered to be weaker. If men are broad minded regarding the role play in society, there would be less complications in the work environment. But it is hard to neglect the fact that Mizoram is a patriarchal society where men tend to consider themselves superior to women whether it is in family, work environment or society.¹³

Another note worthy change observed is that by working outside the four walls of the house, women are thrown in the open world. Every day they have new experiences and face new situations. Their mental horizons are widened, new aspirations aroused. Their ways of thinking is also changed. They want to give a new shape to their lives. They try to find new solutions to their problems.¹⁴

There is a fundamental transformation in the gender relations in the contemporary world affecting the economy and all forms of social relations. The propelling forces behind all these changes are the women's education, women in paid employment and representation in decision making and polity. These changes have wide implications on the position of women in the society.¹⁵ The women are more aware of their roles now and are

¹² Vanlaldini, Director of SWD interviewed on 10th October 2014.

¹³ Zohmangaihi, Master roll, Industry dept. Interviewed on 29th September 2014.

¹⁴ Mishra A.D., Problems and Prospects of Working Women in Urban India, Mittal Publications, New Delhi, 1994, p.57

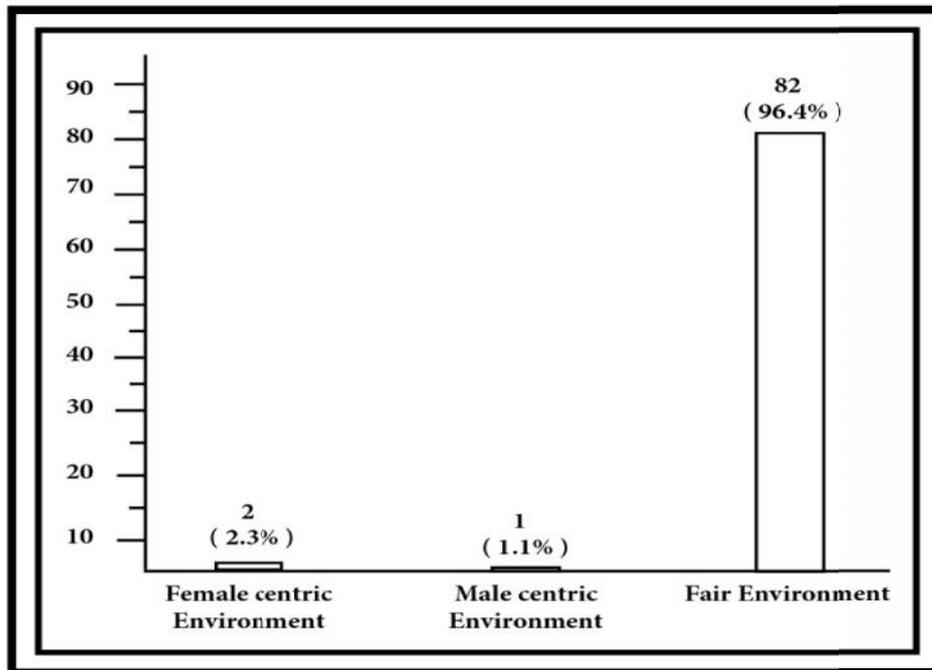
¹⁵ Lalneihzovi, *op., cit*, 2009, p.117.

very much willing to advance with their male counterparts along the lines of societal and individual advancements.

iv) The women officials were also asked their perception of their work environment where 82 respondents considered it to be a fair environment, 2 persons regard it as a female centric environment while 1 respondent thought it to be a male centric environment. (Fig 1.9) With reference to today's generation results of various Competitive examinations, it is no longer shocking to see women excelling leads and bound. In the traditional Mizo days, women were not very much alert with the role play in the society. However as compared to the past, it is now very clear how women status have been lifted up especially in administrative roles.¹⁶

Table 1.9

Figure showing the perception of women regarding their work environment.

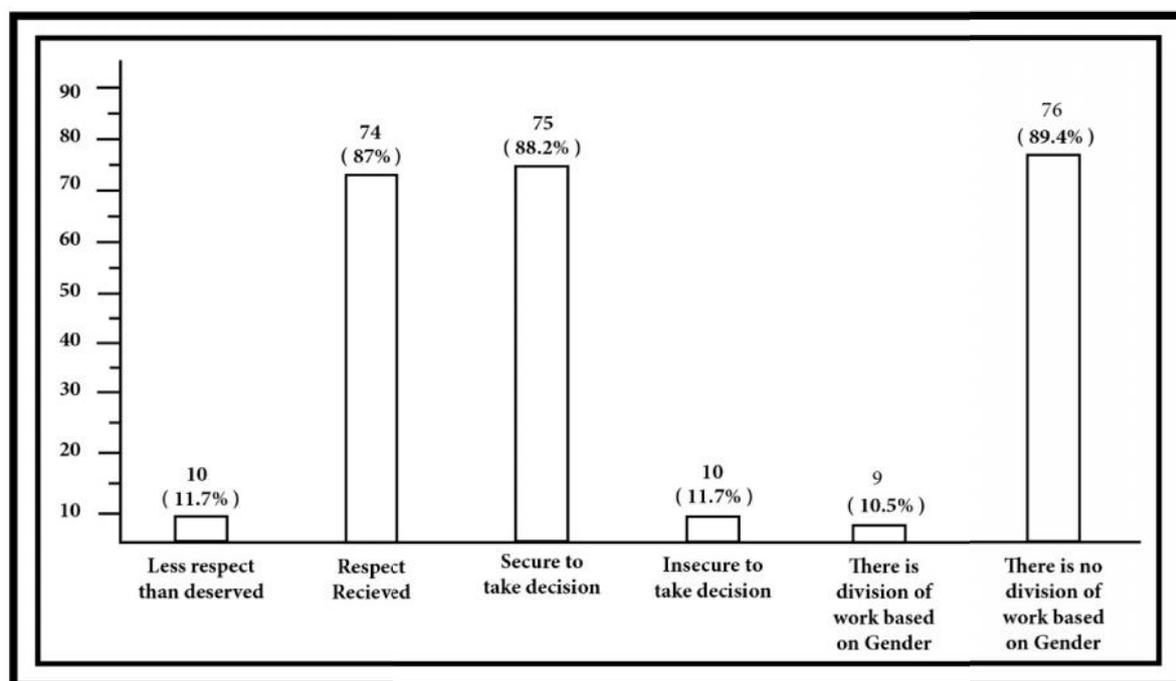


¹⁶ Zonunpari Sailo, Special Officer (Nutrition) SWD interviewed on 13th October 2014.

v) When they were asked regarding if there is any division of work in their environment or are receiving less respect they deserve based on their gender, 6 persons said there is such division while the other 76 employees responded there is 'No' division whatsoever. Further 75 against 10 respondents noted that they were mentally secure to take decisions in their areas of work. (Table 2.0) In this contemporary era, there is immense understanding towards women officials. There are no such problems in work environment especially in the urban cities however if we consider the situation of working women in the rural areas, the women are still very much deprived as compared to the former in the work environment.¹⁷

Table 2.0.

Women employee's outlook towards the respect they receive in their workplace, whether they are secure to take decisions freely in their areas of work and if there is any division based on gender.



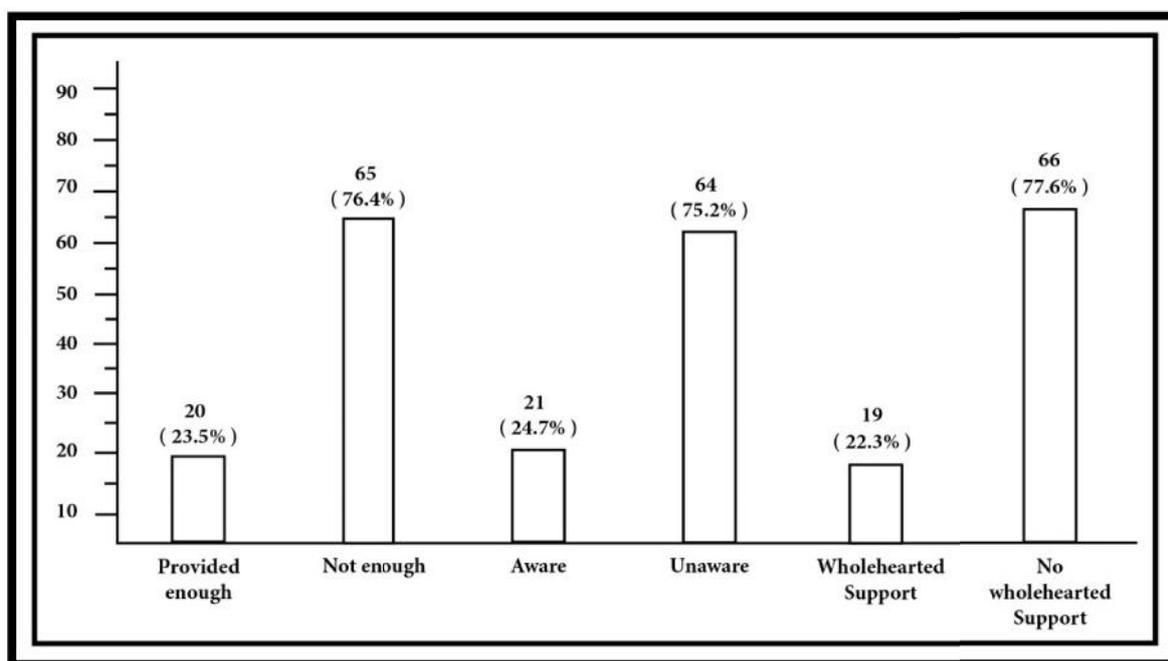
vii) The women officials were asked about their familiarity with various schemes provisions which have been claimed as being provided by the Government for women

¹⁷ Lalremthangi, Extension Officer, Industry Dept interviewed on 29th September 2014.

welfare. Here, 65 as against the remaining 20 are of the belief that the available provisions are not enough. Further, 64 women officials claimed they are unaware of such women welfare schemes and 66 persons of the 85 women respondent regarded the government of not giving full support in the realisation of such schemes and provisions. (Table 2.1) It is however unfortunate that the socio- economic reforms towards the upliftment of women have awakened only a few of them about their rights and duties.¹⁸ Rights for welfare of Women do exist but still we prefer to know it for namesake instead of learning the reasons for its existence. It is also not being implemented wholeheartedly by the Government and not considered enough by women too.¹⁹

Table 2.1

Women's outlook towards the schemes provided by the Government and how they consider the government's support.



viii) The women officials were then questioned regarding their attitude towards their jobs and how they consider themselves as a member of the society. Among the 85

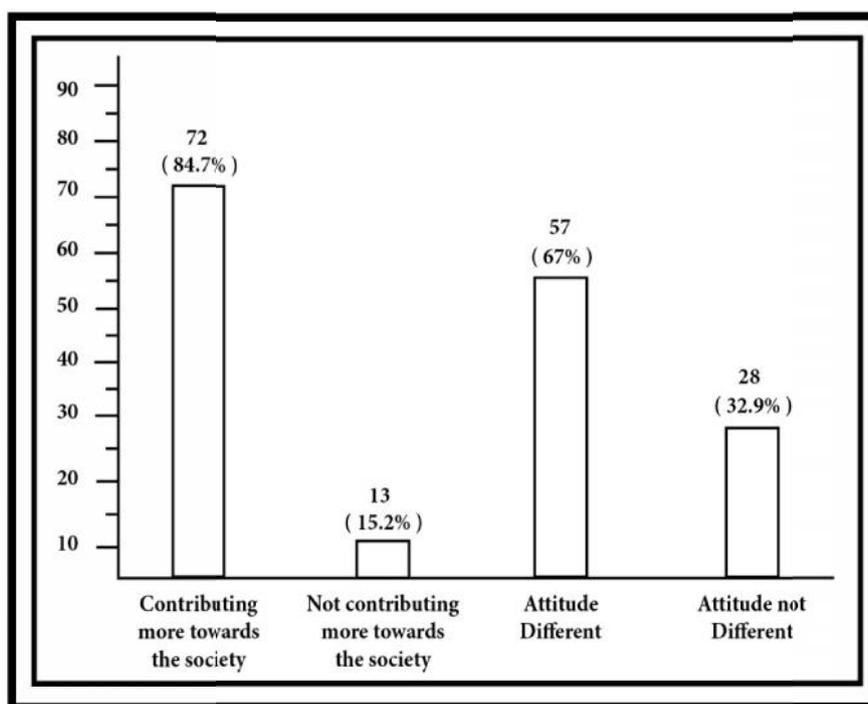
¹⁸ Gupta Sunita, Gupta Mukta(ed), 'Role of Women in the Twenty First Century,' Anmol Publications, New Delhi, 1996, p.5.

¹⁹ Laldikkimi, Deputy Director (Accounts), SWD interviewed on 7th October 2014.

respondents 72 women considers themselves contributing more for societal advancement compared to stay at home women while 57 respondents noted that being a working women makes their attitude different then the former. The remaining 28 person are of the belief there is no difference in attitude as such. These change in attitude are based on the process of having more opportunity of exposure to the techniques of planning, organising and working in the ever growing, training ground and facilities, the status of being more economically independent, with the ability to earn they try to live a more standardised lifestyle. (fig 2.2)

Table 2.2.

The women official's attitude towards being a government employee and if they consider their attitude different from unemployed house wives.



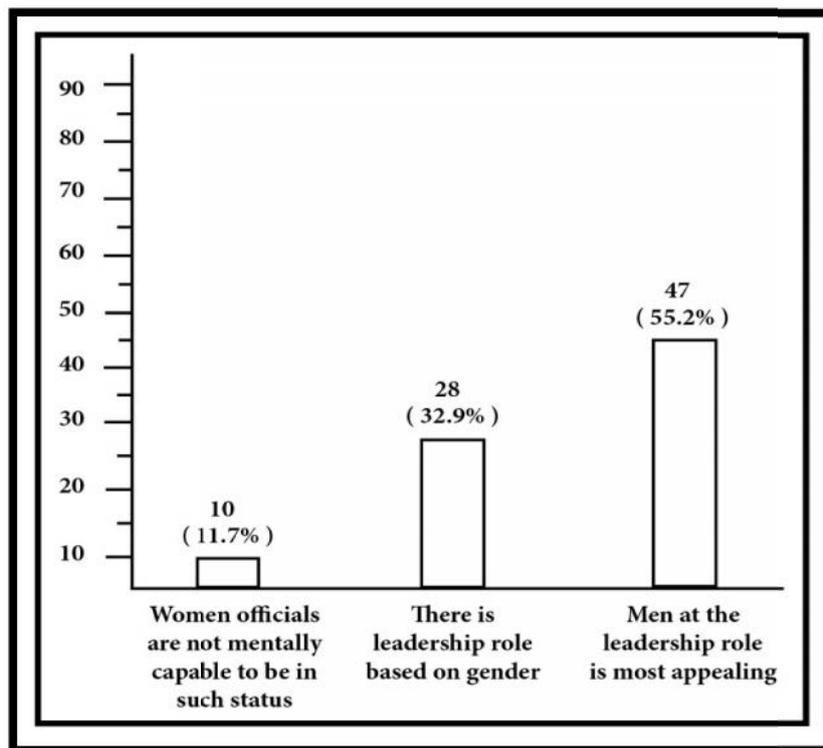
ix) The women were then asked their perception towards the statement that though the women officials have been constantly growing in numbers, they are still very few women in the leadership status. Among the 85 respondents, 47 women lean towards the thinking that *'men in the leadership status are more appealing'*. The major reason why there is still less women in the leadership status is that confidence and self- esteem is still lacking among a

majority of women officials. Further, there are still so many who are still opposed to women occupying such status, be it among the men and even women. Our attitude has to be changed.²⁰

28 respondents felt there is 'leadership role based on gender' while the remaining 10 respondents regarded 'women officials as still not mentally capable to be in such statuses'. (Table 2.3). There is still much prevalence of considering women's mentality to not be in par with the required quality the leadership holds. This mentality is still there even among the female officials.²¹

Table 2.3.

Women official's attitude towards leadership status.



x) The women officials were questioned about their connection with their fellow female workers. 53 women noted that there is 'enough support and respect', between them.

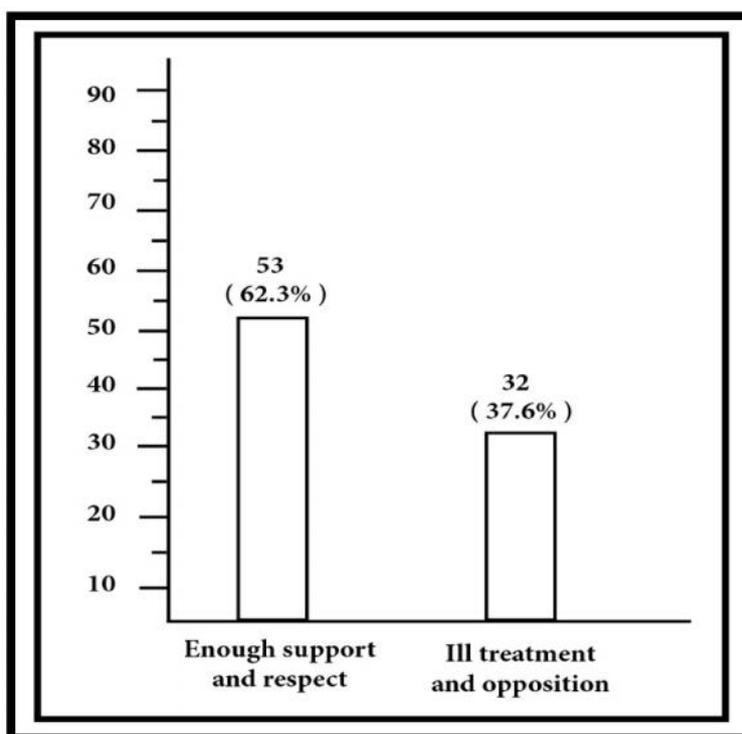
²⁰ Vanlaldini, Director of SWD interviewed on 10th October 2014.

²¹ *Ibid.*

Whereas more than half of the respondents claimed that there seemed to be more *'ill-treatment/ oppositions'* between female colleagues. (Table 2.4). In the midst of every increasing and ever progressing woman's emancipation movements the patriarchal attitude remains unchanged. One reason seems to be due to the women's lack of support to her own sex. It is not unusual that women often stand in the way of other women's progress.²²

Table 2.4

The relationship between women officials with their fellow women government employees.



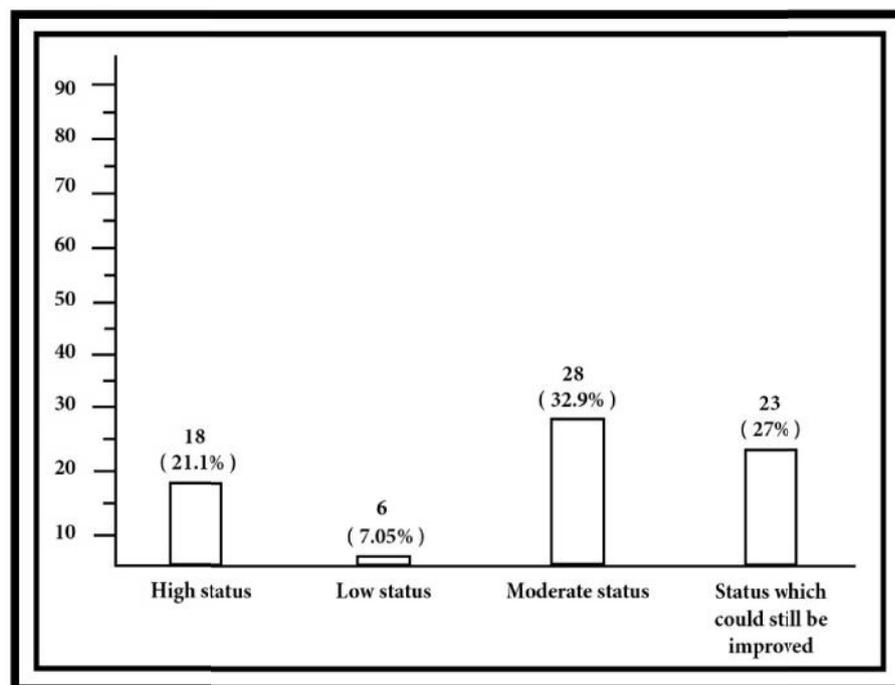
xi) Lastly, the respondents were also questioned regarding their perception of their status as a government employee of Mizoram where, 18 women considered themselves as having a high status, 6 persons felt they are still at a low status, 28 persons felt their status being moderate and the remaining 23 were of the belief that their status could still be improved. (Table 2.5) In advancement wise, the status of women officials in Mizoram have

²² Sinha Harendra, Lalrinchhani .B., *'Women in Mizo Society,'* op.,cit,p. 15.

very much been uplifted as compared to the past even the work environment are even now more female friendly.²³

Table 2.5

Depicting the status being occupied by the women government employees in Mizoram.



On the basis of the findings of the study, the perception of women towards their work environment could be analysed and be regarded as a hypothesis. Due to the unavailability of research that tries to put forward the actual attitude of the main target i.e. Women government employees, the varying outlooks of women could not be known. The overall picture of their status continued to be, domination and discrimination.

A number of contemporary trends and socio, economic, political changes have brought forward numerous changes in the culture and lives of the ones who were once been considered weaker and deprived sections. Thus, the study based on these theoretical conceptual frameworks will bring forward certain underlying condition of women officials in

²³ Laldikkimi, Deputy Director (Accounts) SWD interviewed on 7th October 2014.

Mizoram. Although it will not be absolutely right to place the conditions of all working women on a similar platform based on the finding, reliable information based on sample's perception however will be acquired for the understanding of their social structure.

Chapter - V

Conclusion

The final Chapter is divided into two parts. The first Chapter contains brief summary of the entire preceded Chapters. The second part contains the findings and suggestions for the improvement of the work environment of the Women Government Officials.

Part -1

The dissertation has been divided into five Chapters. The first Chapter introduces the present study in brief. This Chapter started off with the conditions and role played by women during the traditional chieftainship era and gradually touched the changes brought about by Christianity and Education in the status of women as a whole. It gives a brief introduction of administration in Mizoram during the transition of chieftainship to District Council period. The history of Mizoram during the Union Territory regimes and the current position of women and the tremendous changes brought in their conditions have also been noted. It also introduces the Scope of the study as well as the aims and objectives of the study.

The Second Chapter provides an overview of Women Government Employees in Mizoram. The gradual increased entry of women in the labour market and the changing economic role of women in the household have also been briefed out. This Chapter gives a view of the progress of literacy level among the Mizo women, women in the leadership status in the contemporary era and the growing number of women officials in Government Offices. The changing status of Women Government Employees in particular has also been highlighted in this Chapter.

The third Chapter listed out numerous Programmes and Schemes which have been implemented by the Government of India for the welfare of Working Women in general. The welfare provisions which are considered to be best suited for the Working Women in Mizoram has been listed out. The focus here is empowering women through welfare schemes and provisions which will lead to a sustainable affect on the Mizo society as a whole.

The Fourth Chapter showed the women's perception of their work environment based on structured questionnaires and unscheduled interviews of a few women officials which has been picked randomly. The findings are then interpreted using stratified sampling data's for a better understanding of such findings.

The final chapter is the Conclusion. It is divided into two parts. The first part consists of the summary of all the previous chapters. The second part of the chapter contains the findings and suggestions for the improvement of the workings of local self government, with which the research is concluded.

Part II

While there is a considerable amount of information available on women on political scenario and the growing concerns that women participation are still lacking in the political leadership in Mizoram, much less study and data is known about women officials, their attitude towards their work environment and whether there are still constraints by barriers that might belittle her ambitions and such remedial suggestions seemed to be still lacking. The work participation rate of women in Mizoram though have been used in a number of studies prepared by various scholars, researchers, the various work categorisation is usually on a general term and are often not based upon a particular study of women officials in Mizoram. The immense changes that had been brought about in the outlook of

women of Mizoram and their attitude towards wanting to explore more a part from the traditional chains that once bounded her upon the household have to be considered as a major shift in the structure of society.

In many countries and States, women are still very much deprived off and are still barred by the shackles of gender discrimination. The participation of women in public life in some societies is still not visible. The manifold change in the Mizo women whose decision was once not considered irrelevant have now a tremendous worth in the societal administration of Mizo society.

The results achieved based on the samples of the study have been positive. The research shows a significant achievement of benefits in the status of women officials in Mizoram. The glass ceiling of cultural and traditional mindsets that once act as a barrier which demarcate women to attain equality, the once prevalent discrimination with their male counterparts and the 'ideal' ways according to which a woman should behave needs to be loosened and be done away with to have '*Equality*' to the fullest.

Major Findings

The findings of the research is mostly based on the structured questionnaires collected from a total of 85 respondents (25 from the Directorate of Social Welfare, 30 from Local Administration Department and 30 from the Directorate of Industry) and Scheduled interviews of few working women within these offices . The findings based on the responds of these 85 women government employees done through stratified random sampling method is considered to be enough to highlight the status of women government officials in Mizoram.

The status of women government employee's have very much improved over the years and are more content with such changes which brought forward a more improved status in their social position. The obstacles once faced have been narrowed down to an extent that women officials in Mizoram are very much relaxed and are enjoying their current status in their work environment. A massive 81 out of 85 respondent noted that they did not receive any resistance from the side of their family at their being employed.

The attitude of women and family members towards taking a job has undergone tremendous changes. A majority of 74 respondents no longer considered marriage as a barrier. Nowadays even after marriage, women find it hard to put up with narrow domestic round and prefer to take congenial job. The traditional notion that women are best stay at home seem to be erased to wide extend as shown by the response given by a 46 married working women that the family, husband etc encourage them being employed. While there are still 11 married women who feel they are not being encouraged. 82 women officials consider their work environment as a free and fair one where they can make decisions and carry out authority without any demarcations based on gender. Even though there a few 11 women who thinks women are still regarded as less efficient in their workplace, 67 samples considered themselves as being regarded as equally efficient in their work environment like their male counterparts.

The various Programmes and Schemes provided by the government though act as a driving force which emancipate and empowered the status of women today, more than half i.e. 64 of the women officials were unaware of such welfare schemes. A majority of the 66 out of 85 women officials also felt that the government though formulate them, a wholehearted implementation is lacking.

Since there are a number of 23 among the 85 respondents who think that there is more opposition and ill-treatment between the fellow women workers, the situation might hamper the women official's need to be more advanced than her present status. Women are often prone to a situation of being submissive in the family; in the job environment and thus when their fellow colleagues are placed at the leadership status there can be a mentality that made them unwilling to submit to such leaders.

The fact that women are very much content in men at the leadership posts is mostly because the majority of the women respondents find '*Men at the leadership status more appealing*' while others still think there is, '*leadership based on gender*'. A minimum of the women respondents are of the thinking that '*women are still not mentally capable enough to be at such status.*' Further, the fact that women prefer to be at a stable and comfortable environment where they can easily balance their career and family could be considered as another reason. The lack of training, exposure, confidence and support to leadership status are another reasons for them having this mentality. Their outlook and attitude have also changed positively as compared to the women of the traditional era. Although more than half of the respondents still find multitasking hectic. They do not end up sacrificing their jobs at the cost of household work. Among the 85 respondents 72 women considers themselves contributing more for societal advancement compared to stay at home women while 57 respondents noted that being a working women makes their attitude different than the former. From the study it is obvious the women consider themselves not only advancing their status but also enhance the Mizo society at the same time.

With regards to the study conducted, women employees are having a more positive vibes. They best believe that their status could still be improved. Although there are more women respondents who think that they now are enjoying a high status than low.

SUGGESTIONS

Remedial measures for improving the condition of the women government employees have been considered mainly based on the findings of the study as follows:

A gender role stereotypes and other socio- cultural beliefs that women's place is at home raising a family, needs to be done away with. This traditional conservative belief hinders major participation of women in public life. Though women are content being a follower then leaders in certain work environment, they usually lacked confidence to see themselves as leaders. Thus, capacity building and more exposure to leadership status needs to be provided.

As a majority of the respondents are still unaware of the Schemes/ programmes for their welfare, awareness and the terms and conditions of such needs to be made known to them. The government may give more efforts in the implementation of such schemes and make an effective evaluation of the impact of such schemes on working women.

Women often select certain sectors of work and lower levels of responsibility because it allows them to balance their career and family lives. Thus, the division of work in the family are required to be made more flexible. Further, Women are usually regarded not very active in public welfare activities because of certain family obligations. Setting up better facilities for child care system and providing mentoring facilities for them to continue their job without less stress is required.

In a so called patriarchal society, there is a need for a systematic way of thinking gender equality as a human rights issue. A support of the media, gender equality awareness education in schools is a need of the hour.

The government may provide better transparent job intakes facilities, promotion and leadership development process that might deny women equal status through widespread grassroots initiatives. Additionally, there is a need for ensuring that affirmative action quotas for women are in place and enforced. This system is particularly important for women where they are competing for seats for contesting certain grand elections.

Apart from these suggestions, there is a need to promote a positive mindset between the relationships of the female workers to promote each other as this gender stereotype is not only between the two genders. It could also be between the same sex where ill treatment and opposition may arise if freedom of outlook, positivity, equality etc are not the base for which governing institutions exist.

In answering the first question, “Are there any obstacles to Working Women in Mizoram, it is worth mentioning that as compared to the past, the women’s condition have very much improved. It is found out from the research that though some problems such as being uncomfortable with multi-tasking between household work and career, reliability on men at the leadership status, lack of confidence and lack of self-esteem, traditional patriarchal mindset not being able to be fully done away with and the tendency of categorisation of role play based on gender were still prevalent. It is found out from the research based on the responses of few sampled women that there were more women who considered their work environment favourable instead of problematic.

So far as the second question, “How do the laws, schemes provided affect the environment of working women?” is concerned, numerous Laws in the form of equal rights and numerous protective which have guided their essence as being a part of the labour force have been highlighted. Numerous Schemes and provisions over the years have acted as a harbinger to the status of working women in India in general and Mizoram in particular. It is

found out that a majority of the women respondents were quite unaware of the lists of provisions available for them. This case to a certain extent maybe because of their improved status as a result of being emancipated by these Protective provisions which had led to their excellence with the change in time.

With regards to the third question, “What are the factors affecting women government employees perception of their work environment?” it could be noted that women now consider to be a part and parcel of the administrative scenario of the society. As the majority of the women respondents consider their work environment to be a compatible one where equality between the two genders exists and where they are mentally capable to perform their duties. Though it is a major perception by women that multitasking could be hectic, the 21st generation working women consider themselves to be a part of the provider of family’s economy. They no longer want sacrifice their career at the cost of household work. They consider themselves being able to enhance their status and the society equally by being a working woman.

In answering the final question which seeks to find out, What are the measures which can be taken for a right work-life balance for women government employees in Mizoram? A lists of suggestions such as; more flexible division of role based on gender in family, transparency in job intakes, better child care facilities for children of working women, awareness campaigns regarding certain rights and provisions, providing mentoring facilities for them to continue their job without less stress, Capacity enhancement training facilities, exposure to leadership status etc needs to be provided.