Chapter 5

CULTURAL SYSTEM
OF MEITEI-PANGALS
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Culture stands for a total way of life. It is one of the most important element of social structure. E.B Taylor, an anthropologist says that “Culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, law, customs and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society”\(^1\). This means that culture is a patterned, ordered system of symbol that are objects of orientation to actors, internalized aspects of the personality system, and institutionalized pattern in the social system.

The present study is based on the social structure of the Meitei-Pangal community of Manipur. It is necessary to know about the way of life that includes the beliefs (religious practices) and the capabilities of acquiring education, learning languages etc. by the member of Meitei-Pangal society in Manipur. Since, culture plays an important role of a guide, it lays down norms of behaviour and provides the mechanism of securing for an individual, his personal and social survival. Without culture, man would have never survive the way they have; therefore it is his liberator, it frees him from biological determinism, but only after exacting a price from him. This price is paid in the form of surrendering complete independence factions\(^2\). So, we shall study the religious beliefs and practices, education etc. as a guide to the members of the Meitei-Pangal community of Manipur under their social structure.

Religious Institution

The population of Manipur has been broadly divided into three main religious groups:- (1) The Meitei (2) The Meitei-Pangal (the Manipuri Muslims) and (3) The Hill men (Hao).

The Meitei is the majority local group, inhabiting the central valley spreaded over 700 square miles and some parts of Jiribam in the westernmost part of the state. The Muslims inhabit the fertile tracts of land on the banks of the Imphal, Thoubal and
Iril Rivers. The hills are the abode of as many as 29 tribes. There were many groups and subgroups among the Hillmans and Meities.

The Meiteis believe and have faith on many gods goddesses. Generally, we can observe in Manipur, that Meities practices and worship local deities alongwith the gods of Hindu Dharma. They believe in ancestral worshipping too. According to T.C. Hodson, the ancient beliefs of Meiteis have been described as animism. R.K. Jhalajit Singh also observes that the early people of Manipur worshipped the natural phenomenon like the sun, the moon, the sky, the water, the wind, the fire etc. From the culture and historical point of view, the beliefs were to be classified into several categories and various functions. Number of gods and goddesses who are believed to be ancestral deities were also worshipped. The worship of Sanamahi, whose seat are laid in the Southwestern corner of the household, Leimaren residing the Northern corner and Phunga-lairu occupying the central position of their household, was the daily practicing function of every Meities household. So, we can say that in Manipur there were evidences of the superimposition of a Hinduism over the bedrock of an animistic religion.

The Meitei-Pangal (Manipuri Muslims) follows and practice Islam as their religion with complete faith in God(Allah) and believe in the teachings of the Holy Quran. When we say Islam it is understood that they have faith and practice and perform the prescribed five fundamental principles and duties of Islam. They believe in one God, i.e. Allah, and so Monotheism. They belief in the unity of God by recognizing that the entire universe, both visible and invisible owes it existence to one Supreme being and is sustained by Him.

The Hillman whom Manipuris locally referred to as Hao or tribes follow Christianity as their religion. It has also been observed that there are many subgroups among them but the most interesting is that they all believe in Jesus Christ and the teachings of the Bible as their Holy book. They regard the Church as the sacred house of the god and also act as a source of interaction.
The present study has been done with a specific focus on the Meitei-Pangal community of Manipur who follows Islam as their religion. Islam means complete faith and submission to one and only “Almighty Allah”. It is a way of life and is as old as human existence on this earth and beyond. It consists of (a) beliefs (b) conduct and (c) actions. But neither one of these are, by itself, deemed enough. The Prophet(PBUH) of Islam said “Allah does not accept belief, if it is not expressed in deeds; and does not accept deeds, if it does not conform to belief”. It lays down five fundamental principles on which every Muslim has to have faith in. It also defines a set of duties which every Muslim is bound to perform or form the basis of their interactive processes in their social life. Thus, Muslims are one who has complete faith in the following five fundamental principles as:-

1. One God i.e. Allah.
2. Angels of God.
5. The day of Judgment or Resurrection.

Mohd. Yousuf Siddiqui (1970), in his book Second Premier of Islam explains that these fundamental principles of Islam are that we learn about Imaan, purity of our souls and our belief that Allah is The One and only, the mightiest and most the merciful God. He sent Prophets, through ages, as messengers to guide his Momins (believer) to the right path. He revealed ‘Books of Guidance’ over the ages to provide them with complete knowledge of his ways and right path to the Heaven. Muhammad (P.B.U.H) is the last messenger of Allah and the Holy Quran is the last Book, complete in each and every aspect and is unchangeable and unfallable. We belief that the Angels are servants of Allah. We also belief in other invisible worlds in the Universe (Gheib) like the life in Al-Jannat (The Heaven), Al-Jahanum (The Hell) and Al-Akhira (Life after Death). There will be a Final Day of Judgment. Those who obey Allah and follow the teachings of Islam in his/her life will be rewarded and those who disobey Him and do evils will be punished.
Thus, a perfect Muslim is one who believes and lead his life in the similar way as mentioned above. In order to explain these principles, a brief description of each faith is being given so that there are no misgivings or misunderstanding about them.

God: God has created the universe and all things in it. He exist when nothing existed. Similarly, He shall continue to exist when all thing would have perished. He knows no beginning nor an end. He is unlike anything we know of. He has no form, shape and structure. He cannot be compared with anything. He is all powerful, listens and can see all and everything in the universe. He can do what he wishes. He sees and hears everything, no matter where the things be. Nothing is hidden for Him. Even the thoughts of man are visible to Him.

God is one. There is no god besides Allah. All things, animate and in animate are His creations. Therefore, no man or thing should be worshipped as a God. Rather, worship of God means obeying His supreme commands. Therefore, none should be obeyed with the obedience, which is due to God. Here, we can quote Surah 112 part 30 “Surat Al-Ikhlas or Al-Tauhid.13

“Say”. He is Allah, (The) one Allah - the self sufficient Master, who all creatures need, (He neither eats nor drinks). He begets nor was He begotten” and there is none equal or comparable to him.14

ANGELS OF GOD: The Angels are the servants of God who worship Him day and night and carry out his commands in any form without a single question or complaint. They are sin-less because they did not have the power and ability to disobey God. They differ from man who has the freedom and ability to break the laws of God and disobey His commands. Man commit sins which the Angels are unable to. Therefore, man can become superior to the Angels if he is obedient to God as even if the way of evil is being open to him, he still refuses to do evil out of love of God. But the Angels of God have no choices. They neither have the desire nor the inclination towards evil. So to be a Muslim it is necessary to believe not only in God but also in the Angels of God. The Angels are the servants of God and helpers of man who believe in Allah and do good deeds.14
**BOOKS OF ALLAH:** Allah reveal commandments and codes of the religion to all Prophets at different stages of history for the guidance of mankind. There are four codes of the religion or the Books of Allah viz.(1) Tauraat (Old Testament) (2) Zaboor (Psalms), (3) Injeel (New Testament) (4) The Holy Quran.

Tauraat was revealed to Prophet Moosa (Moses), Zaboor to Prophet Dawood (David), Injeel to Prophet Isa (Jesus) and the Holy Quran to Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H.) through Angel Jibreel (Gabriel), and they are still preserved intact in their original form in the Arabic language. The Holy Quran teaches Muslims to worship Almighty Allah - Him and Him alone, to obey His orders contained therein, to follow the teachings and examples set by the Prophet Muhammad(PBUH) to do good to others, specially to parents and relatives and to be honest and truthful in all actions and dealings. In short, it gives a complete code for the rightful guidance of life.

**Apostles of God:** At different historical stages of mankind, Allah sent Prophets as His messenger for the guidance of mankind. The Muslims believe in all of them and in those who are mentioned in the Holy Quran in particular. Some of the great Prophets are mentioned in the Holy Quran. Among these Prophets, the most important are Adam, Noah, Ibrahim, Moosa, Isha and the last and the greatest of all prophets-Muhammad (PBUH).

A Prophet is a servant and a messenger of Allah who receives the divine revelations. He is a model for all human beings and teaches and practices the command of Allah.

Since, Allah says that there is no need for any Prophet after Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H) for the last and most complete and divine message that is the Holy Quran, had been revealed to him. It was spread to the whole world and is the final and the complete code of the Religion and will be preserved for all times completely intact in its original form, besides the authentic records of the Prophet’s eventful life. His life covered all activities of human life to an extent and will always
THE DAY OF JUDGEMENT OF RESURRECTION:

The day of Resurrection and Judgement is the Day on which Allah will resurrect the dead i.e. make the dead alive again. He will then judge each person according to the good or bad actions he/she did on earth through the account of his/her deeds. He will reward those who had pleased him and led a righteous life by sending them to Al-Jannat (the Heaven). He will also punish those who had disobeyed His commands and incurred his displeasure by committing sins and bad actions by consigning them to Al-Jahannum (the Hell). The Heaven is an abode of peace and happiness where every wish is fulfilled. Hell is a place of torture, pain and agony.

Whosoever will choose the hardest Path of life to come to Him will be given greater rewards even in His own life. Thereof, will we give him, but not portion shall there be for him in the life to come. This has been quoted in Quran (29:64) as:

“The life of this world is but a play and disport; but of the abode of hereafter is life indeed. Would that they knew this”.

So, these are the five fundamental principles that a Muslim has to have faith in. Apart from these faiths, a Muslim is to practice the following duties.

1. Recitation of Kal-mah.
2. Prayer (Namaz, Salat)
3. Alms-Giving (Zakat)
5. Pilgrimage to Mecca (Hajj).

(1). Recitation of Kalimah: Recitation of Kalimah is the first and foremost tenet of Islam. There are five Kalimah. The first Kalimal is the most important which declares:

“La illah illallahu Muhammad-ur-rasool-ullah”.
It declares that there is no deity but Allah and Muhammad is the Apostle of Allah.

There are four other forms of the declaration of faith viz. (1) Kalimat-ul-shahadat; (2) Kalimat-ul tamjeed; (3) Kalimat-ul tauhid; (4) Kalimatul-Raddil-Kufr.  

Apart from these five basic declarations, there are two additional declarations referred to as: (1). Imaan-e-Mujmal; (6) Imaan-e-Mufassal.

*Prayer (Salat):* To offer the obligatory prayers or *salat* five times a day is the second-most important duty of a Muslim. Prayer is the act of worshipping Allah according to the teaching of the Holy Prophet. They are supposed to be offered in the early morning before sunrise (*Fajr*), in the Mid-day (*Zuhr*) just after noon, in the late afternoon (*Asr*), in the Evening (*Magrib*) and night (*Isha*). When offering Namaz (*salat*), few essential requisites need to be fulfilled. Non compliance of these pre-requisites will render the Namaz worthless and ineffective. Besides, the Juma Namaz (Friday Prayer) is also an obligatory prayer offered every Friday in congregation in the Masjid (Mosque). Apart from these, pre-festivities prayers like -Namaz-e-Eid-ul-Fitr, Namaz-e-Eid-ul-Azha and Funeral prayers is also a duty of every Muslim.

3) *Fasting in the month of Ramdhan (Roza):* Fasting during the month of Ramdhan is a must for every Muslim which cannot be exempted by observing fast on the other days. Roza means abstaining oneself from having anything, drinking any liquid food (water included), smoking or allowing anything whatsoever from entering into what is considered to be the interior of our body through our mouth between the break of dawn and sunset. The abstinence should include even any type of voluntary vomiting, self pollution, sexual intercourse etc. It is obligatory for all Muslims to observe Roza in the month of Ramdhan as it is the blessed month of the year during which the holy Quran was revealed.

If one does not fast on any day during the month of Ramdhan without any cogent reason, one will be committing a sin, but all the same he or she must fast on some other day to make amends for the omission.
4. **Alms-Giving (Zakaat):** Alms is the amount in kind or coin which a Muslim must distribute every year amongst needy and deserving fellow-Muslims. It is obligatory on all Muslims who have in their possession, for one complete year, gold of a minimum weight of seven and a half tolas or silver of a minimum weight of 52 and a half tolas (a tolas is equivalent in weight to an Indian rupee). It is obligatory not only on gold or silver but also on camels, cattles, goats and all articles of trade. It should be distributed to (1) The Poor Muslim, (2) The needy Muslim, (3) The Muslims in debt (4) The Muslim wayfarers (5) The Muslim prisoners.

The moral that this institution conveys is that we must not be selfish and get too fond of worldly possession, but must always be ready and willing to help our brethren by all means at our disposal.\(^{21}\)

5) **Pilgrimage to Mecca (Hajj):** The performance of Hajj is incumbent on all Muslims, at least once in a life-time, if circumstances permit. This means that if they are all in a position, both physically and materially, to undertake the journey to Mecca, and make sufficient provisions for their dependents during the period of their absence.\(^{22}\)

When we talk about Meitei-Pangal (Muslims of Manipur), they also have faith on these mentioned fundamental principles (Imaan) and perform the above-mentioned duties properly according to what the Holy Quran prescribes and how life should be lived in these worldly life. So, they are also a strong believer and practicing Muslims following Islam like anyone on the globe. However, some cultural influence of the neighbouring community can be traced amongst the Meitei-Pangal society. Therefore, this discussion can be concentrated on the daily and occasional practices that the Meitei-Pangai generally practices in Manipur. There are a number of School of Thoughts or Jurisprudence say –

1. Hanafi
2. Shafi
3. Maliki
4. Hambali
Out of these four schools of Islamic thoughts, Meitei-Pangals are entirely the followers of Hanafi Jurisprudence. There are no follower of Shia and other schools of Islamic Jurisprudence in Manipur. There are no differences in the mode of worship of God and belief that is, Allah and “Allah is one”.

The Holy Qura’n is the basis of the Meitei-Pangal’s social life. Pangal children are educated about this holy book at their home, Maktabs and in depth at different Madrasas (religious school) with the help of Moulvis (Islamic scholar) set up for the purpose. They pray in their homes or collectively in Masjids (Mosques). The Sunnah, the second foundation of Islam is held next in importance to the Holy Quran. The Sunnah deals with the usages, habits and traditions practically applied by the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) himself throughout his life.

Although the Meitei-Pangal of Manipur are supposed to be strictly following all the doctrines and Islamic precepts (with no exceptions), we can divide the Meitei-Pangal population into a strictly religious and a not so religious group. Most of them offer prayers daily for five times but some don’t pray regularly although they are aware that Allah will punish them for that. Once Prophet (P.B.U.H.) said”. The worst of men is who steals his salat; the holy companions. Thereupon asked “O Prophet of God, how can a person steal his own salat?”, the Prophet replied “He neither performs the Wadu (ablution) properly nor does the Sajda (Prostrate) completely”. Even during the month of Ramdhan we can find some people not observing roja (fasting during in the month of Ramdhan). Such people are generally the youngsters. But those who do not observe fasting are looked down upon by the members of the community (Pangal). Majority of the Meitei-Pangal are unable to go for their Hajj pilgrimage to Mecca due to various reasons. The main reason as can be seen is mostly the financial constraints.

One more obligation (fard), prescribed by Allah on those Muslim men and women who possesses enough means to distribute a certain percentage of their annual savings, capital goods or monetary amongst the poor and needy is Zakat. One is obliged to pay “Zakat” at the rate of 1/40th (one fortieth) of their yearly savings as a
charity towards upliftment of the society or needy people. It should also be remembered that “Zakat” or “Sadaqah” in Islam is not a voluntary act of charity which a rich man gives to the poor out of his will, but is an obligatory act which every Muslim is supposed to perform. It seems, the Meitei-Pangals do not have the habit of paying Zakat except a few. Some scholars of Meitei-Pangal opined that it is indeed a gross violation of a tenet of the religion. But the Prophet(P.B.U.H.) had said that Zakat should be collected from the well-to-do members of the community and distributed to the needy and poor fellow-Muslims. This should be taken as the legal position of Zakat, which was well evident during the first and second centuries of Islam and must be maintained till the end of time. Zakat ought to be collected from the moneyed people who fulfill the conditions, which make it an obligatory duty and possess the minimum taxable amount of wealth (as laid down by the Shariat) and spent on items prescribed for it in the Holy Quran. No worldly power of authority can amend or alter the legalised structure of Zakat on its own. The Quran declares, “the alms are only for the poor and the needy”.

From the Shariat and the practices of the Prophet (P.B.U.H.), it appears that the above verse applies to the poor and the needy of the place.

So, since the Meitei-Pangal mostly earn for their self sufficiency and not for surplus, they couldn’t perform the pilgrimage. It doesn’t mean that they are totally ignorant and reluctant about the concern of Hajj.

Besides these obligatory tenet, there are a few strict prohibitions, which were looked down upon by the Holy Prophet such as Idol worshipping, infanticide, gambling, usury, use of liquor etc. Pork meat is prohibited in Islam. As far as Meitei-Pangal is concerned they strictly observe the taboo on eating pork, portrayals of god as well as any living creature, a person or animal while worshipping and prohibitions of drinking wine. But a few unreligious ones, especially misguided youths indulge in these forbidden activities (liquor) and adopt to gambling and usury as their routine works. There are also many drug addicts and drug traffickers.
The elders and the Moulvis are in constant efforts to guide these youths and bring them back to the right path. Sometimes, they are punished or isolated or even ostracized from the society. Through these efforts, in accordance to the Islamic code of conduct they have been able to check them to a large extent. They are convinced to confess, which is called “Taubah” in Arabic, meaning repentance. It is the turning of their heart from these sins”.

The Meitei-Pangal observes a few basic rituals, customs and tradition in their life span from birth till death mainly on three occasions, viz, at birth, marriage and death. For example, the name-giving ceremony(Aqiqah), circumcision (Khatnah) etc.

Some of the religions practices of Meitei-Pangal purely on the Islamic traditions are as follows:

**At the time of Birth:** Due to their habitation in rural and remote areas where there is no medical facilities, the Manipuri Muslim first prefer to get their children born with the help of local mid-wife or Maibi who though are experienced but are not trained properly. It is only when complications arises that they rush to the hospital which are mostly located in far off places. However, nowadays with the spread of modern education and medical awareness and facilities among them, they prefer to go to hospital for medical check-up and delivery.

a) Immediately after delivery, the child is given a bath and a male member of the family, preferably the father of the child, would recite into the ears of the child, the “Azaan”(Call for prayer) into right ear and the “Iqamah”, left ear of the child. During the period of parturition (pertaining to child birth), which consists of forty days, mother is confined to the bed, taking restricted food and health care similar to the customs of the neighbouring community.

b) **Aqiqah:** The ceremony of name-giving to a new born child is known as Aqiqah. It is generally performed on the seventh day of the child’s birth. The performing of this rite on the seventh day is not necessary but it depends on the Niyat(intention), the capability and the convenience of the parents. It is usually performed by sacrificing a cow or a goat to Allah.
The non-cooked meat is distributed to their relatives and neighbours. It is however preferable to organize a feast for the orphans and poor to the locality besides the distribution to their relatives and neighbours.

**Sinnat-touba (Khatnah):** When a boy reaches 7 to 12 years of age, they need to undergo circumcision done by a local specialist known as Napit. Nowadays, circumcision is done by a doctor.

**Marriage (Nikah):** The marriage system is a closely associated with the Islamic system or practice for the Meitei-Pangal society. Marriage is an institution which legitimize the relationship of a man and a woman to live together as husband and wife as a family. It is a socially sanctioned union of a man and a woman. Marriage, since ancient times, has been a very effective instrument of creating and consolidating ties between families.

The pronouncement of a man and a woman to be a lawfully and socially accepted husband and wife in the ceremony of marriage is called “Nikah”. According to the Muslim law, marriage is a civil contract and not a sacrament, unlike the Hindu custom. Like all contracts, it is also a relationship of love based on mutual willingness of both the bride and groom to have the union. It is believed to strengthen the faith and further the cause of Islam. Besides the “Nikah” which is performed strictly according to Islam, the Manipuri Muslims adopt some customs of the Meitei community prominently in the procedure of consultation between the parents for the engagement of the boy and the girl by performing the engagement ceremony called “Kwa-Khaiba”. In this custom, the parents and relatives of the boy go to the house of the girl carrying betel-nuts and sweet meats (Thaodan) as a token of acceptance of engagement for the marriage. This is followed by another ceremony called “Pana-kwa Puba” or “Heijingpot Puba” on the day on which the date of marriage is generally fixed. On this day too, the parents and the relatives of the boy visit the bride’s place again with sweets, betel nuts and leaves, sweetmeats and snacks and have them together. Another type of marriage which has become more popular is marriage by elopement. In this type of marriage, the “Nikah” is generally performed at the
husband’s place after “Tauba” (confession), if the parents of the girl do not agree to it. Although rare, among such type of marriages, the most common is that of cross cousins. Polygamy can be seen only in a few localities of this community. Cases of divorce are very rare. The Meitei-Pangal strictly follow the payment of Mehar (dower money) by the husband to the wife at the time of their marriage. However, it may be prompt or deferred depending upon the agreement.

**Death:** The dead bodies of Pangals are buried in “Kabaristan” (grave-yard) with full Islamic rites and customs. Before the bodies are buried, they are given proper bath (Ghusal) with water performing wudu (ablution). After this, the first Kalimah is written on the forehead of the body. Then, they are wrapped with Grave cloth or “Kafan-fi” {a white sheet of cloth sprinkled with ittars (perfumes)}. The ittars are also sprayed over the body. Thereafter, a procession of people carry the dead body is to the graveyard in a “Kaf” generally made of bamboos or woods (meant for carrying dead bodies). Only the male members of the family and relatives are allowed to join the final burial or the funeral process. Just before the final burial, a special funeral prayer session known as Namaz-e-Janazah is performed by the male relatives and all people (male only) present for the burial. Finally the dead body is buried with full respect and rituals. After the body is buried, people recite special verses from the Holy Quran invoking Dua (prayer) for the peace of the departed soul. Special mention should be made here that at the time of burial there are some strict rules to be followed as prescribed in the Holy Quran such as the head of the body should towards the Kabah (West) and Kafan-fi or grave cloth should be properly wrapped over the body etc.

After the third day of the burial, a small gathering with the recital of Quranic verses by all present is performed which is known as “Tasbih Chatpa” or Quran Khani. That is normally followed by light refreshment or a small feast. Generally, Ziarat–Darud sharif, A small or large feast is organised on the 40th day after the burial depending on the capability of the family.
The foods and drinks of the Meitei-Pangal are based on the sanctions made in the Holy Qura’n. They are non-vegetarians. Foods and drinks are divided into (a) 
*Haraam* (forbidden) (b) Halal (permitted). The foods and drinks listed in “Haraam” are prohibited from use and includes eating meat of pork, dog, cat, horse, elephant, kite, crow, parrot etc. and drinking alcoholic beverages etc. Though buffaloes are permitted in Islam, Pangal hardly use it’s meat.

The Holy Qura’n has prohibited the flesh of dead animals that die a natural death since it affects both the physical health and the morale. Animals strangled or killed by a blow are treated like those that die a natural death and are therefore prohibited too.

**Festivals:** The festivals of Meitei Pangal are not many. The most popular ones are the two Eids: *(Eid-Ul-Fitr)* and *(Eid-ul-Azha)*. Irrespective of the age, men, women and children enjoy them with new cloth and festivities. Varieties of eatables are prepared. The women folk along with their husbands go to their natal parents during these two Eids with cooked meat, coconuts, sweets etc. We can notice a difference from the other Islamic communities in this practice. However, the celebration of the Eids are by and large almost similar among all Islamic communities. It is also similar to celebration of *Ningol-Chakkouba* (Feast day for the married daughters) by the neighbouring Meitei community. On the day of Eid, people (only men) go to the Mosque or Idgah to perform Namaz-e-Eid-ul-fitr or Eid-ul-Azha in congregation and go to *Kabaq še an*” (grave yard) to pay homage to their ancestors by reciting verses from the Holy Qura’n.

In *Baqra-Eid (Eid-ul-Azha)*, the tradition of *Qurbani*(sacrifice) is followed by sacrificing a cow or goat or any animal very dearly reared by the family. In Islamic history,* qurbani* was performed by Hazrat Ibrahim (mentioned in the Quran). 1/3rd of the uncooked meat is distributed to the poor and the remaining to the relatives, friends and neighbour. It is not compulsory for all the Muslims but is customary on those who can afford (in terms and material and man power) to do so.
Dress: The dresses of Meitei-Pangals can be broadly divided into Islamic, traditional and modern. There are similarities as well as difference in dress between a Meitei-Pangal and other communities in the state. However, we can see the influence of the Meitei culture in the dress code of Muslims of Manipur (Meitei-Pangal). The younger generations of Pangal are not distinguishable from the Meitei is due to the influence of modern fashion, which they share with them. There has been an increased craze of aping the west which is seen in both the Meitei-Pangal and Meitei communities. The few slight difference being that “the Meitei- Pangal women wear Phaneks, with Kurta (which they fasten at the chest level. Now, the Pangal women fasten their phaneks on the left waist. Some affluent persons make their fashions more or less modernized. The Meitei women generally wear Phanek with blouse.

Generally, Moulvis, Hajis and other old and learned persons (males) wear Kurta-Pajamas or Lungi with a cap (Topi). Younger people also wear such garments during social, at least, during social occasions and ceremonies. Old women and house-wives wear loose shirt, Phaneks, veils (Burkha), umbrellas, Dupatta or Shawls. An unmarried girl wears full blouse with Phanek or Salwar-Kameej, local made cloths etc. Every women generally covered her head with a piece of cloth (Khudei).

There are specific cloths for specific occasions, at least, for wealthy families. Poor families who cannot afford more than the primary necessities do not follow this trend. Still, there are some villages of remote area where hard coloured clothes are in vogue.

In marriages, the bride and the groom used to wear specific cloths. The brides are dressed in the same way as that of Meitei brides with a special crown of Kajenglei, more particularly in earlier days. As for the bridegroom, while clothing, a traditional turban called Kokyet or Koyet is tied over his head. Over the ages, it has gradually changed over to the woolen Kashmiri caps in the recent times. His friends also wear white clothes. Caps are used in most ceremonies and during prayers. Trousers are also commonly used.
Purdah system is partially observed. In order to cover face and body, the Pangal woman used a veil called “Burkha” but generally young girls do not use them. Nowadays, women go out with only a piece of cloth on their head in crowded markets and in field for work even though the veil is not used so prominently.

Family Planning: Family Planning is discussed here because it is debated and well discussed topic through out the Muslim world by theologists and educated people. There are two schools, one supporting and other opposing the system of family planning. The Muslims of Manipur, more or less adopt family planning system. Some Muslims however, resist the practices by saying that the purpose of marriage according to Islam is procreation. Therefore, birth control cannot be ordinarily permitted. Sometimes the elders of family discard family planning as “Haraam” because it is not permissible in Islam.

We found that the Meitei-Pangal adopted the various methods of birth control. Only a refuse to use or adopt it because of the fear of elders and cited religious prohibitions as reason. Moreover, they are not well aware or informed about the sophisticated methods and are ignorant and uneducated about the scientific method.

Respect of elders, teachers, seniors and learned ones is a tradition held with high values by the Meitei-Pangal. The relatives and friends expressed their respect by saying and doing “Salam” to the seniors and learned people. As a respect, the common people usually address the seniors and elderly as “Chacha”.

Superstitious beliefs and practices prevalent among the Meitei-Pangal:

The Meitei-Pangals are the followers of Islam with complete submission to Allah. Although, Islam is the most rational religion in the world however, the culture and daily practices of the Meitei–Pangals have been influenced by the different cultures and practices of the land where these followers of Islam live and dwell. And along with them comes several superstitious beliefs and practices. The Manipuri Muslim are no exception to this social trend and thus, they too have several superstitious beliefs and practices.
The blending of both the culture of the Meitei society and the Islamic ideology made a unique culture for the followers of Islam in Manipur. We can see the combination of both the rational and irrational behavior of the individuals whether it (action) carries any meaning or not in the Meitei-Pangal society.

Some of the superstitions observe in this particular society are as follows –

While going for work, a cat crossing the way (black or white) or an empty vessel or a broom kept in the way is considered a bad omen. These are interpreted as a sign that he would not succeed in doing anything that day.

Usually travelling southwards on Thursday and Northwards on Tuesday is said to bring ill luck, misfortune and accidents. It is believed, to an extent, that if 3 persons travels southwards then one of them would become ill and may even die (as narrated in old folklore).

The Meitei-Pangals never start an important work before Juma Namaz (Friday Salat), on Friday with a belief that it deemed to bring bad luck to the person for the day and that he would not succeed in doing anything that day.

The Meitei-Pangals also have faith on Maibas and Maibis (traditional physician) at the time of illness of a person.

People generally take into consideration the new moon while fixing a date of marriage and also taking journey.

Cutting of wood, bamboo, nailing etc. on his/her birthday is prohibited. Also giving and selling turmeric, needle etc. are not widely acceptable. It is believed that cutting nails and hair on his birthday cause whitening of nail (Koilonychia) and premature greying of hair respectively.

Pregnant woman are generally given ‘Sareng’ (a fish with the scientific name Wallago attu) with a belief that it would make the delivery of the child easy. It is believed that it (the fish) gives her more energy to bear the pain/problem during delivery. There are certain do’s and don’ts among the Meitei-Pangal which are being discussed as under:
After the delivery, the Naval Cord of the child is buried in the Courtyard. The boy child’s naval Cord is to be buried in right side and the girl child’s Naval Cord is to be buried in the left side of the courtyard, with a belief that male’s position is to the right and female’s position is to the left.

If a child is delivered at hospital and crossed a four corner street on their way back home, then they should throw away puffed rice (Mouri) and are not allowed to look back again. According to the Meitei-Pangals, this is done in order to save and defend both the child and the mother from the evil or Saitan (Devil).

Generally, it is seen that the mothers or the elders are not allowed to take the child or stand along with the child at the last margin of the corridor of a home. Moreover during noon and magrib time (Sunset), the child is not allowed to be taken out in the open by explaining that Saitan will attack the child.

Entering a newly built house has always been a reason of celebration, however the Meitei-Pangals generally believe in entering the house carrying the Holy Quran, a pot full of rice, a pot containing water to the brim and a fire/flame usually called Meibun. This according to folks is believed to bring peace, safety and prosperity to the family.

During the rainy season or monsoon, if some rice is spread out at the courtyard, it is believed that leech will not be there in the courtyard.

Moreover, we can see the constant consultation of Maiba/Maibees in some aspects of life. In this way the cultural overlapping i.e. influence of one culture to another can be seen in the Meitei-Pangal society. This means that, the foremothers of the Meitei/meitei-pangals were originally Meitei women. So, the socialization of the children result in the imitation and adoption of some common cultures and habits from the mother – the primary agency of socialization.

It is a superstition that the member of Meitei-Pangal constantly go and consult their Maiba or Maibees, who earn their livelihood by prescribing remedies pacify their fears their fears.
Thus, we can say that religion can give a clear vision of the ultimate goal and provide sufficient incentive to strive towards it. Religion provides moral and spiritual values and is a part of one’s culture in every society. It is the spiritual or religious attitude that gives us a complete picture of man that can bring harmony to the human mind – the harmony that is very much needed in this world full of discord and restlessness, the harmony that education seeks to achieve for us.

**LANGUAGE**

Language is an integral part of the cultural system of every society. Therefore, we need to study its socio-cultural functions on the Meitei-Pangal society. The field of study which deals with the socio-cultural functions and construction of language is known as socio linguistics.

Language means any verbal or non-verbal communication humans or animals engaged in. The ability of human race to structure sentences out of essentially arbitrary words which are themselves constructed from individually meaningless sounds (phonemes) is sometimes thought to be the feature that distinguishes it from other species most distinctly. All the human societies have languages that allow humans to express ideas of equal complexities. There is no such things as a ‘primitive’ language although societies may need to borrow or invent new words, in order to express new concepts. Language is acquired through learning in early childhood.

The Meitei-Pangal of Manipur are the closest community to the majority Meitei community of Manipur as they are the children of Meitei women. It is because of this reason that they (Meitei) called the Muslims as the Meitei-Pangal. Muslim started settling in Manipur since the reign of Khagemba Maharaj. Since then the Muslims are trying to adapt to the environment and culture of the area. The Muslims started using Meiteilon (Manipuri) in order to interact within the members of their own community as well as with the neighbouring community. While they interact
with others, they used Urdu, Persian, Arabic, and Turkish as suffix to the Manipuri language. Infact, we can see the using of Maharaja’s title as ‘Garib Niwaz’ (kind to the poor) used by Meitei King Pamheiba. This word originally belonged to the Persain vocabulary. In this way, there are many other words of Manipuri Language too which are derived from Arabic or Persain as for example, Izzat (prestige), Haq (right), Hukum (order), Kalam (pen), Kameez (shirt), Tarikh (date), Patta, Amin, Karkhana, Aynak, Wakeel, Shaheed, Namuna, Kuli, Purdah, Dalal, Pyjama, Bazaar, Hisab, Baki etc.

Thus, the Meitei-Pangal (Muslims) of Manipur started using Manipuri (Meiteilon) as their mother tongue which has continued till now. They even started using it in writing their literature, prose, poem etc.

In this way they (Muslims) acquire the knowledge of language to express their ideas, thoughts and feelings. The people or the members of the society can bind together and bring the solidarity and harmony in the society.
EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM AMONG MEITEI-PANGAL

An individual is born only as a biological being but soon become a social being. This transformation from biological being to social being take place through education and socialization. Education plays a pivotal role in integrating an individual with his society and in maintaining the perpetuation of culture. Emile Durkheim defines education as “The influence exercised by the adult generation to those who are not ready for adult life”\(^\text{28}\).

He maintains that the society can survive only if there exists, among its members, a sufficient degree of homogeneity. The homogeneity is perpetuated and reinforced by education.

Sociologist had always been interested in the study of education particularly in its interface with society, that is mainly on the influence of social situation on the nature of education system and the role of education in bringing about a social change.

Broadly speaking, there are two system of education; formal and informal. The education which is imparted in a well-defined institutional setting is referred to as formal education. On the other hand, the education which an individual acquires in the course of his day-to-day life, from activities inside the family and outside, in the company of others is the informal system of education.

Informal education dominates mainly in societies where there are no schools or insufficient number of schools to provide education to children.

Formal education are characterized by modes of education system like we have today. It has three important components:

- An organizational structure,
- A definite and properly spelt out content of education,
- Definite rules and regulations.

Islam gives importance to the acquisition and extension of ‘Ilm’ that is knowledge. The only road to understand the truth is The Holy Qura’n, the Al-Hadith and the Science. The teachings of Islam are universal and the Prophet(PBUH)
emphasized the acquisition of learning and made it compulsory for men as well as women. Both religious and secular education is necessary for the mental and physical development and Islam makes no distinction between theological education and secular education.

Since Meitei-Pangal being the Muslim group, it is necessary to know something about the Islamic system of education in India. It was in accordance with the customs and traditions prevalent in Islamic countries. During the Sultanate period, the Ulema (the educated section) occupied a prominent position in the state and monopolized all judicial and ecclesiastical post in the empire. But the Sultan exercised the supreme authority and in case of divergence in views between him and the Ulema, the Sultans’ views prevailed naturally. The culmination of these developments are the promulgation of the Mahzar in 1579 followed by the establishment of *Din-e-Ilahi* by Akbar. The credit for organizing education on a systematic basis goes to Akbar the Great (1542-1605). Akbar opened a large number of schools and colleges for both Hindu and Muslims and treated them alike. The scope of the curriculum was widened and education became more eclectic and dynamic in content.

The “Sadr” was appointed as the head of education department. Muslim educational institutions were of two types – a Maktab or elementary school and a Madrassa or institution of higher learning\(^{29}\).

But the rulers of Manipur were quite indifferent to the need for education and the first school begun was a failure. Learning was confined mainly to the traditional priestly class and to the Brahmins. Because of Manipur’s peculiar geographical location it was of great strategic importance and in consequences to this education meant primary learning of the art of warfare and excelling in martial arts. So, education in Manipur was of males and centered around military warfare. However, there were no public military schools or colleges and knowledge was transmitted from father to son and those already proficient in this sphere provided some kind of
knowledge. King Loiyamba introduced the ‘Pana’ system in 1074 A.D. only for this purpose.

Likewise, education among the Muslim community also made a late beginning. After Manipur’s merger with India, the Muslim realized the need of education and began sending their children to the various schools and colleges run by both the government and missionary institutions. Even Muslim women entered the educational arena but the numbers were minimal. At the end of the 19th century, the first Muslim Maulvi had made its appearance in Manipur. The years 1907-1908 were of great significance because the first Madrassa was established at Lilong, the curriculum inclusive of Arabic, Urdu, and Persian.

The modern system of education was introduced during the period of British paramountcy. But the Muslims were afraid to adopt the western education system, as they believed that learning English would defile the purity of their creed. So, the initial stage of education among Muslims were only confined to the learning of Arabic, Urdu and the knowledge of The Qura’n that remained theoretically oriented.

The real start of Muslim education began in the year 1910 A.D. with the appearance of the Maulvis in Manipur. Prior to the return of the Maulvis, the Manipuri Muslims were ignorant of even some of the essentials of the religion. But these Maulvis proved insufficient numerically to satisfy the aspiration of the Muslims for education. They taught the fundamentals of Islam such as Kalimah, Namaz, Roza, Haz and Zakaat. Before the introduction of formal education in Madrassa, the Maulvis taught children at their homes, free of cost. Education of the Manipuri Muslims moved at an extremely slow pace. The Johnstone School was the center of higher learning but the number of Muslims enrolled was almost negligible. Gradually, the outlook of the Muslims changed and all the Madrassa schools were included in the list of the primary schools of the Government of Manipur. Still, the Lower Primary schools remained the heart of Muslim education in Manipur. Early religious education remained of paramount importance to the Muslim community. But some Muslims
bestirred themselves to avail of the opportunity of higher education in regular schools whether run by government or missionary enterprise.\(^{36}\)

The contribution of eminent Maulvis to education of the Muslim was very significant especially that of Maulvi Ebadullah and Abdul Jalil. They introduced the Purdah system, which however is not acceptable in every aspect as it restricted the movement of Muslim women, movement necessary for earning of their daily livelihood in the market and the fields.\(^ {37}\)

Maulvi Moinuddin went from house to house to ensure that every Muslim should perform the obligatory duty of “Namaz”. Maulvi Saifuddin Ahmad Khan taught the art in writing in the Haoreibi Makha Leikai Madrassa. This was of great significance, for earlier Maulvis only taught how to read and speak Arabic and Urdu but not how to write.

For the first time, English was introduced in the curriculum of the Madrassa so that modern education was now available to Muslims. The emphasis and slant of education gradually changed to keep pace with changing time and new forces entered the traditional and religious oriented education of the Muslims.\(^ {38}\)

Education was quite liberal and knowledge was transmitted orally and practically. In ancient Manipur, education of women were not neglected and they were trained in etiquette, court language, administration and even martial arts. The education of women cannot be said to have made equal progress but the girls were taught to read, write and speak English. After the Yandaboo treaty of 1826, the relation between Manipur and the British become more formal. Western civilization began spreading its influence on the education system of Manipur, which had been started from the family of Maharaja.\(^ {39}\)

There were two Lower Primary schools by the end of 1893-94. In the following years the number of schools had been increased to six and in 1896 there were nine schools in the valley. A girls school was opened in December 1899 with twelve pupils but the number of girls had been increased to fifty-three at the end of the academic year. Gradually, in the year 1904-05, the number of Lower Primary
schools were forty-eight, of which thirty-nine were in the valley and nine new primary schools (pathshalas) had been opened in the valley in 1906-07. So, the total number of school prior to Independence was only ninety-six in number.\(^\text{40}\)

The growth of secondary education begun with the re-establishment of Johnstone into Middle English school (M.E. school) in Manipur by the year 1892. It was the only recognized high school till 1930. A school committee was formed in 1929 and through this committee more new “High school” had been started. Two new Middle English Schools were opened by private enterprise in 1934-35 and Faiza M.E. Madrassa was established in 1935-36.

For every Muslims inhabiting in Manipur, these few L.P. schools, which were commonly known as the Madrassa, remained the hardcore center of learning. There were no separate M.E. schools run by the Muslims in the state records but for the whole state too the number of school were negligible. Johnstone School was the center of western education but the number of Meitei- Pangal student were minimal even though a few Muslims forced ahead and became graduates and even post-graduates.\(^\text{41}\)

But later on, realizing the significance and benefit of education, children were encouraged to go to school and colleges. Even then only the males had the liberty of attending educational institutions while the females were not allowed except for a few of them mainly the daughter of educated parents. However, this outlook have changed to a large extent. The changing attitude of the community towards the education is evident from the increasing number of school and college going students both male and female not only within but also outside the state. Out of the total people staying outside the state for education, the percentage of male and female pursuing education are found to be 86.36% and 13.64% respectively. (Survey of Socio-economic of Meitei-Pangal, 2004).

The number of literates and literacy rate in Manipur for the Muslim population and the state as a whole according to the 2001 census are presented in table number 10(A & B).
TABLE NO: 10 (A)
LITERACY RATE AMONG THE MEITEI-PANGAL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Literacy Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Muslims</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Rural</td>
<td>72.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Urban</td>
<td>82.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Total</td>
<td>75.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE NO. 10 (B)
EDUCATIONAL STATUS OF THE MEITEI-PANGAL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Number of literates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Muslims</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Rural</td>
<td>36,619</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Urban</td>
<td>18,570</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Total</td>
<td>58,189</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In the following Table No. 11, we can also see that 45.7% of the students are enrolled government schools while 54.3% have joined the private schools. These may be because of the fact that the private schools are more organized and provide better opportunities.
# TABLE NO. 11
MEITEI-PANGAL STUDENTS ENROLLED IN VARIOUS LEVELS OF SCHOOL EDUCATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Institution</th>
<th>District</th>
<th>P.P (Below Class-I)</th>
<th>Primary (I-V)</th>
<th>Middle (VI-VIII)</th>
<th>Secondary (IX-X)</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government school</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Imphal East</td>
<td>1.70</td>
<td>9.31</td>
<td>2.62</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>14.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Imphal West</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>3.66</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>4.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bishnupur</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>2.42</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>3.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thoubal</td>
<td>1.14</td>
<td>14.88</td>
<td>5.23</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td>22.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Churachandpur</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chandel</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3.42</td>
<td>30.61</td>
<td>9.44</td>
<td>2.19</td>
<td>45.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary School</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Imphal East</td>
<td>4.48</td>
<td>11.01</td>
<td>4.23</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>20.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Imphal West</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>2.46</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>3.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bishnupur</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>2.44</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>3.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thoubal</td>
<td>3.66</td>
<td>15.08</td>
<td>4.99</td>
<td>1.99</td>
<td>24.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Churachandpur</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chandel</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>9.45</td>
<td>31.46</td>
<td>10.63</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>54.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Imphal East</td>
<td>6.18</td>
<td>20.32</td>
<td>6.85</td>
<td>1.94</td>
<td>35.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Imphal West</td>
<td>0.97</td>
<td>6.12</td>
<td>1.52</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>8.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bishnupur</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>4.86</td>
<td>1.35</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>7.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thoubal</td>
<td>4.80</td>
<td>29.96</td>
<td>10.22</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>47.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Churachandpur</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chandel</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>12.87</td>
<td>62.07</td>
<td>20.07</td>
<td>4.99</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Considering the total number of 35,930 students currently enrolled maximum number of students of Thoubal District is found to be studying in government schools constituting 22.46%. It will be seen from the above table that of the total schools going children, only 4.99% were found at secondary level. Out of which 2.40% were found in Thoubal District and 1.94% in Imphal-East District. It seems that the tempo for sending little boys and girls in pre-primary school for nursery classes is lesser amongst the Meitei-Pangal community of Manipur.

The medium of education has enabled the Manipuri Muslims in contributing their share in the area of economics, society, politics and culture without changing their basic nature. Different Muslims sageis made significant contributions in various spheres. For example the Phundrei sagei introduced and implement what is known as ‘Lathe’ as an outcome of their proficiency in carpentry. Especially their artistic palanquins were in great demand in Manipur.\(^1\) Other Muslim sageis who were equally proficient in their respective trades such as horticulture introduced and cultivated new fruit, vegetables and crops viz, sugarcane, new varieties of flowers, mango, corianders, opium, mustard seed, garlic, onion etc., Tobacco too was introduced in 1609 and thereon became very popular.\(^2\) The Muslims introduced the transplantation of rice for the first time in Manipur.\(^3\) The Aribam clan was especially instrumental in the manufacture of guns.\(^4\) Thereby strengthening the armoury of the state.

The Manipuri language was enriched by words derived from Arabic and Persian vocabularies such as for example Ijjat, Kalam, Tarika, Patta, and many more.\(^5\) In the Manipuri Muslim society, education acted as a factor of social change but to a very limited extend. Here again, it was the Maulvis who took the initiative especially Maulvi Ebadullah. They laid emphasis on the Shariat. The Maulvis tried and made the implementation of the purdah system effective in the the social circle. Free mixing of the opposite sexes was restricted. The post of the Qazi was established to adjudicate cases arising among the Muslims by the application of Muhammadan law or Shariat. The Qazi acted as a deterrent to immoral practices in the society and
did his best to uplift the moral standard of the people and to preserve the norms and traditions of Islam. Likewise; the Muslim community too realized the necessity to participate in the state administration and to play an active role in politics. The Pangal, in fact became the best politically organized community in the state. In 1972, a Muslim Chief Minister Muhammad Alimuddin was elected for the first time. The election of a Muslim candidate to the highest office of the state encouraged the Muslims to assert them in the political sphere. We can also witness significant increase in the active participation and a greater political consciousness among the Muslim community.

Although, education in Manipur especially of the Meitei-Pangal moved at a slow pace, it became accelerated after Manipur’s merger with the Indian union, and its impact was felt in various spheres. The Manipuri Muslims, as a result of this education brought some real, continuing and significant contributions to society and state especially in the economy sphere without changing the content or impairing its structure. So, education has been a creative force that can bring changes in the society in the past as well as the present day. In short, we can say that it is education that bring changes to the religious, socio-economic and political participation, and seeks to achieve harmony in the society. Thus, from the above discussion we can say that culture is the capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society. It is the whole complex including the belief, knowledge, moral, law, language and custom etc. All these factors in the culture guides the human being to behave in a disciplined, ordered pattern during the individual interaction. Culture provides the mechanism for securing the individual’s personals and social survival.
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44. Bhogeshwar and M. A. Janab Khan; *Nongsamei Puja*; The Manipur and Stationary and printing industries Naga Mapal (1973); PP. 48-52

45. Riyazuddin Chaudhary; Seminar presented on ‘Contribution of the Manipuri Muslims’. P. 5

46. Soveneir; Ibid; PP-47-48