CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION
CHAPTER - I

INTRODUCTION

The land, Manipur, was situated in the North-Eastern part of India. It covered an area of 22,327 square kilometer,\textsuperscript{1} with two distinct natural regions, that is, the valley and the hills. The valley occupied an area of one-tenth of the total area. The land was bounded by the neighbouring states on the north by Nagaland, Mizoram in the south, Assam in the West and in the East by a foreign country called Myanmar. A map of the state was shown in Figure No. 1 at Page No. 3 for purpose of easy reference.

The state was classified into nine districts for convenience of administrative purpose. The districts were Bishnupur, Chandel, Churachandpur, Imphal East, Imphal west, Senapati, Tamenglong, Thoubal and Ukhrul. Out of these nine districts Bishnupur, Imphal East, Imphal West and Thoubal were in the valley and the remaining five districts were in the hills. The state was populated by 23,88,634 persons of which 12,07,338 were male and 11,81,296 were female according to 2001 census.\textsuperscript{2} The number of persons in each district were 3,93,780 in Imphal East District of which 1,97,710 were male and 1,96,070

\textsuperscript{2} Ibid. p. 11.
were female; 4,39,532 were in Imphal West District of which 2,18,947 were male and 2,20,585 were female; 2,05,907 were in Bishnupur district of which 1,02,772 were male and 1,03,135 were female; 3,66,341 were in Thoubal district of which 1,83,338 were male and 1,83,003 were female; 1,22,714 were in Chandel district of which 61,778 were male and 60,936 were female; 2,28,707 in Churachandpur district of which 1,14,740 were male and 1,13,967 were female; 3,79,214 in Senapati district of which 1,96,646 were male and 1,82,568 were female; 1,11,493 in Tamenglong district of which 57,994 were male and 53,499 were female; 1,40,946 in Ukhrul district\(^3\) of which 73,413 were male and 67,533 were female. The population growth from 1901 to 2001 was shown in Table No. 1.

**TABLE NO. – 1**

**POPULATION FIGURE OF MANIPUR FROM 1901-2001\(^4\)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Total Disinannual percentage increase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>1,39,632</td>
<td>1,44,833</td>
<td>2,84,465</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>1,70,666</td>
<td>1,75,556</td>
<td>3,46,222</td>
<td>21.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>1,88,119</td>
<td>1,95,897</td>
<td>3,84,016</td>
<td>10.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>2,15,815</td>
<td>2,29,791</td>
<td>4,45,606</td>
<td>16.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>2,49,183</td>
<td>2,62,886</td>
<td>5,12,069</td>
<td>14.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>2,83,658</td>
<td>2,93,950</td>
<td>5,77,635</td>
<td>12.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>3,87,058</td>
<td>3,92,979</td>
<td>7,80,037</td>
<td>85.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>5,41,675</td>
<td>5,31,078</td>
<td>10,72,753</td>
<td>37.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>7,21,006</td>
<td>6,99,947</td>
<td>14,20,958</td>
<td>32.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>9,38,359</td>
<td>8,98,790</td>
<td>18,37,149</td>
<td>29.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>12,07,338</td>
<td>11,81,296</td>
<td>23,88,634</td>
<td>30.02</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^3\)Ibid p. 16.
\(^4\)Ibid p. 67.
The districtwise population of Manipur by 2001 census was shown in Table No. 2.

**TABLE NO. – 2**

**DISTRICTWISE POPULATION OF MANIPUR BY 2001 CENSUS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Districts</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Imphal East</td>
<td>1,97,710</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Imphal West</td>
<td>2,18,947</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Bishnupur</td>
<td>1,02,772</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Thoubal</td>
<td>1,83,338</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Chandel</td>
<td>61,778</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Churachandpur</td>
<td>1,14,740</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Senapati</td>
<td>1,96,646</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Tamenglong</td>
<td>57,994</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Ukhrul</td>
<td>73,413</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The number of literate persons of Manipur along with its percentages of literacy by 2001 was shown in Table No. 3.

**TABLE NO. – 3**

**LITERATE POPULAITON AND LITERACY RATE IN MANIPUR BY 2001 CENSUS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Percentage of Male Literacy</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Percentage of Female Literacy</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percentage of Literacy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>8,15,944</td>
<td>77.87</td>
<td>6,13,712</td>
<td>59.70</td>
<td>14,29,656</td>
<td>68.87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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5 Ibid p.16.
6 Ibid. pp. 290-292.
Out of the total population of 23,88,634, the total number of literate persons were 14,29,656 including 8,15,944 male and 6,13,712 female according to 2001 census. The number of literate persons in each districts were 2,60,573 in Imphal East district including 1,47,617 male and 1,12,956 female; 3,12,125 in Imphal west district including 1,71,350 male and 1,40,775 female; 1,27,667 in Bishnupur district including 72,751 male and 54,916 female; 2,08,464 in Thoubal district including 1,23,372 male and 85,092 female; 61,345 in Chandel district including 35,469 male and 25,876 female; 1,48,829 in Churachandpur district including 84,537 male and 64,292 female; 1,71,100 in Senapati district including 99,583 male and 71,517 female; 56,269 in Tamenglong district including 33,640 male and 22,629 female; 83,284 in Ukhrul district including 47,625 male and 35,659 female.

The percentage of literacy for the state was 68.87 by 2001. The rate of literacy for males and females were 77.87 and 59.70 respectively. The districtwise percentage of literacy was 76.38 for Imphal East district; 80.61 for Imphal west; 71.59 for Bishnupur; 67.90 for Thoubal; 57.38 for Chandel; 74.67 for Churachandpur; 50.47 for Senapati; 58.46 for Tamenglong and 68.96 for Ukhrul district.

The percentages of female literates were 66.30 and male literates were 86.44 in Imphal East district. In Imphal West district the percentage of female and male literates were 72.24 and 89.10 respectively. The percentage of female and male literates for Bishnupur were 61.09 and 82.25; for Thoubal 55.34 and
80.50; for Chandel 48.57 and 66.12; for Churachandpur 64.40 and 84.98; for Senapati 44.04 and 56.39; for Tamenglong 49.11 and 67.04 and for Ukhrul district 61.91 and 75.40 respectively. The districtwise literacy percentage for both the sexes of the nine districts of Manipur was shown in Table No. 4.

**TABLE NO. – 4**

**DISTRICTWISE LITERATE POPULATION AND LITERACY RATE IN MANIPUR BY 2001 CENSUS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Number of Literate</th>
<th>Literacy Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imphal East</td>
<td>1,47,617</td>
<td>1,12,956</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imphal West</td>
<td>1,71,350</td>
<td>1,40,775</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bishnupur</td>
<td>72,751</td>
<td>54,916</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thoubal</td>
<td>1,23,372</td>
<td>85,092</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chandel</td>
<td>35,469</td>
<td>25,876</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Churachandpur</td>
<td>84,537</td>
<td>64,292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senapati</td>
<td>99,583</td>
<td>71,517</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamenglong</td>
<td>33,640</td>
<td>22,629</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukhrul</td>
<td>47,625</td>
<td>35,659</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The districtwise percentage of literacy along with male and female literacy percentage during 2001 was graphically presented in Figure No. 2 at Page No. 7.

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7 Ibid Pp. 288-289.
DISTRICT-WISE PERCENTAGE OF LITERACY BY 2001 IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER

Fig. No. II
Out of the total number of 8,15,944 male literates, the number of male applicants registered on live for job in the Employment Exchange Department of the Government of Manipur were 2,92,023. This was against a total male population of 12,07,338 according to 2001 census. Out of 2,92,023 male candidates registered for employment in Manipur through Employment Exchange, 64,029 were employed by March 2001. It was shown in Table No. 5.

**TABLE NO. – 5**

**TOTAL NUMBER OF MALES IN POPULATION, LITERACY, REGISTERED FOR EMPLOYMENT ON LIVE AND EMPLOYEES BY 2001 IN MANIPUR**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>Male Population</th>
<th>Male Literacy</th>
<th>Male Registered for Employment</th>
<th>Male Employees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23,88,634</td>
<td>12,07,388</td>
<td>8,15,944</td>
<td>2,92,023</td>
<td>64,029</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Out of the total number of 6,13,712 female literates, the number of female applicants registered on live for job in the Employment Exchange Department were 1,05,281. This was against a total female population of 11,81,296 by 2001 census. Out of 1,05,281 female candidates registered for employment in Manipur through Employment Exchange, 18,975 were employed by March 2001. It was shown in Table No. 6.

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* Source: Government of Manipur; Directorate of Employment, Employment Exchange Complex, Lamphel.
TABLE NO. – 6
TOTAL NUMBER OF FEMALES IN POPULATION, LITERACY
REGISTERED FOR EMPLOYMENT ON LIVE AND EMPLOYEES BY
2001 IN MANIPUR9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>Female Population</th>
<th>Female Literacy</th>
<th>Female Registered for Employment</th>
<th>Female Employees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23,88,634</td>
<td>11,81,296</td>
<td>6,13,721</td>
<td>1,05,281</td>
<td>18,975</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The total number of persons registered for employment in Manipur through Employment Exchange of the Government of Manipur were 3,97,304. Out of these, 83,004 persons were employed by March 2001. The total number of job seekers of Manipur were 3,97,304. Out of the total number of job seekers 2,92,023 were male and 1,05,281 were female.

Against a total male population of 1,97,710 in Imphal East District 1,47,617 males were literate, and of the number of male literates 20,156 applicants were registered on live for job in the Employment Exchange by 2001 census. Out of 20,156 male candidates registered for employment 11,863 were employed by March 2001. It was shown in Table No. 7.
### TABLE NO. – 7

**TOTAL NUMBER OF MALE IN POPULATION, LITERACY, REGISTERED FOR EMPLOYMENT ON LIVE AND EMPLOYEES BY 2001** in IMPHAL EAST DISTRICT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>Male Population</th>
<th>Male Literacy</th>
<th>Male Registered for Employment</th>
<th>Male Employees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3,93,780</td>
<td>1,97,710</td>
<td>1,47,617</td>
<td>20,156</td>
<td>11,863</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Out of the total Female population of 1,96,070 in Imphal East District, 1,12,956 female were literate, and the number of female applicants registered on live for job in the employment exchange were 7,779 by 2001 census. Out of 7,779 female candidates registered for employment in Imphal East District through Employment Exchange, 4,209 were employed by March 2001. It was shown in Table No. 8.

### TABLE NO. – 8

**TOTAL NUMBER OF FEMALES IN POPULATION, LITERACY, REGISTERED FOR EMPLOYMENT ON LIVE AND EMPLOYEES BY 2001 IN IMPHAL EAST DISTRICT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>Female Population</th>
<th>Female Literacy</th>
<th>Female Registered For Employment</th>
<th>Female Employees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3,93,780</td>
<td>1,96,070</td>
<td>1,12,956</td>
<td>7,779</td>
<td>4,209</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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10 Ditto.

11 Source: Govt. of Manipur, Directorate of Employment, Employment Exchange Complex, Lanphel.
In total the number of persons registered for employment in Imphal East District through Employment Exchange was 27,935. Out of these 16,072 were employed by March 2001. The total number of job seekers of Imphal East District was 27,935. Out of these 20,156 were male and 7,779 were female.

The total male female population, literacy, registration for employment and employed in the state and in the Imphal East District was given in Table No. (9), (10) and (11) respectively.

**TABLE NO. – 9**

**MALE AND FEMALE POPULATION, LITERACY, REGISTERED ON ROLL FOR EMPLOYMENT AND NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES IN MANIPUR BY 2001.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Literacy</th>
<th>Registered on Roll</th>
<th>Employees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>12,07,388</td>
<td>8,15,944</td>
<td>2,92,023</td>
<td>64,029</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>11,81,296</td>
<td>6,13,712</td>
<td>1,05,281</td>
<td>18,975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>23,88,684</td>
<td>14,29,656</td>
<td>3,97,304</td>
<td>83,004</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TABLE NO. – 10**

**MALE AND FEMALE POPULATION, LITERACY, REGISTERED ON ROLL FOR EMPLOYMENT AND NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES IN IMPHAL EAST DISTRICT BY 2001.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Literacy</th>
<th>Registered on Roll</th>
<th>Employees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>1,97,710</td>
<td>1,47,617</td>
<td>20,156</td>
<td>11,863</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>1,96,070</td>
<td>1,12,956</td>
<td>7,779</td>
<td>4,209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3,93,780</td>
<td>2,60,573</td>
<td>27,935</td>
<td>16,072</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Job Seekers</td>
<td>Employees</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manipur</td>
<td>3,97,304</td>
<td>2,92,023</td>
<td>1,05,281</td>
<td>83,004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imphal East</td>
<td>27,935</td>
<td>20,156</td>
<td>7,779</td>
<td>16,072</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Graphical representation indicating total population, literacy, registered for employment on live and total number of employees of the Manipur and Imphal East District by 2001 census were shown in Figure No. 3 at Page No. 13.

Imphal was the capital of Manipur. It covered an area of 1228 square kilometer. It covered nearly 50 percent of the valley area of the state. The district was surrounded by Senapati district in the north, Thoubal and Bishnupur district in the south, Senapati district in the west and also Senapati district in the east. Imphal district was the most thickly populated area with a density of population of 579 per square kilometer which was placed in the first position among all districts of Manipur.

For administrative convenience, Imphal district was divided into two namely – Imphal East and Imphal West District by 1997\(^{12}\). Imphal East District was populated by 3,93,780 persons of which 1,97,710 were male and 1,96,070 were female. The district was partly urbanized which was supported by census.

\(^{12}\) Source: Office of the Deputy Commissioner, Government of Manipur, Imphal East Porompat.
POPULATION, LITERACY, JOB SEEKERS AND EMPLOYEES OF MANIPUR AND IMPHAL EAST DISTRICT

Fig. No. III
figure as 2,85,540 for rural area and 1,08,240 for urban area.\textsuperscript{13} The Imphal East
district was populated by various groups of people representing Meiteis, Tribals,
Meitei Pangals (Manipuri Muslim), Assamese, Bengalis, Nepalis, Marwaris,
Punjabis and Biharis etcetera. Of the total population in this district Meiteis were
in majority and had inhabited in the area with her rich cultural heritage.

\textbf{POSITION OF WOMEN}

The statutorial position of women in Manipur, it could be divided into
pre-independence period and after independence period. E.W. Dun in his
"Gazetteer of Manipur" stated that women in Manipur during 1880’s whether
married or unmarried were not confined to Zenanas as they were in Bengal or
Hindusthan. They neither cover their faces before strangers. In Manipur all the
married women covered their head in front of their father-in-law, brother-in-law
and also the ones whom they respect most. They also covered their heads while
attending to any religious functions or ceremonies like Shradah, marriage
functions etcetera inorder to show their respect to the elders. They also have to
cover their heads while offering or attending pujah or doing any religious
functions. He praised the industriousness of the women of Manipur and stated
that they were very industrious; in this respect the opposite of men. He made a
comparative study on the characteristics of both men and women. He described
men as ‘lazy and indolent.”

\textsuperscript{13} Statistical Handbook of Manipur 2002 : Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Government of
Manipur, p.18.
Women performed most of the work of the state except the heaviest and as such they were the mainstay of the family circle. All the marketing was done by men. All the works of buying and selling in public and in carrying to and fro of the articles to be sold were done by women. At home also they were busily employed in weaving and spinning. E.W. Dun in his “Gazetteer of Manipur” stated that “It would be difficult to find a more industrious women in India than the Manipuri.”

With all their industry and usefulness women hold a very inferior social position as recorded in 1886. They were considered more in the light of goods and chattels than as persons to be treated with honour and consideration. This as argued by Dun was partly owing, no doubt, to the laxity of their marriage customs. Marriage customs were regarded as loose in the extreme but still more to be baneful system of domestic slavery which was the prevailing custom of the state.

Regarding marriage custom T.C. Hodson in his “The Meiteis” had written as the Meiteis were polygamous and the Raja might have three principal wives, with as many as one hundred and eight subsidiary partners. In one instance, Devendro Singh, in a short reign of three months, managed to amass 96 wives but it was implausible that they were simultaneously members of royal households. The titles of Raja’s wives in order of precedence were (a) Maharani,

(b) Apanbi and c) Leimakhubi.  
However, the Meiteis were patriarchal and patrilineal in social system.

Contrary to the record given by E.W. Dun in his Gazetteer of Manipur regarding the social position of women in 1886 T.C. Hodson in his "The Meithei" had written in 1901 that women of Manipur hold a high and free position. Perhaps, there were gradual changes in the social systems within a period of 15 years.

All the internal trade and exchange of the produce of the state was managed by women as recorded by Hodson. Nearly every housewife was capable of weaving all the clothes needed by her family, and the simple loom stands in the verandah of the house. These clothes were mainly intended for wear and not for decorative purposes, yet since the occupation of the state a trade in fancy and decorative cloths had sprung up. In every house the wife had woven all the cotton cloths for the family and the husband. The qualification of the bride was judged by the quality of the cloth she could weave.

All the girls whose positions were at all respectable learnt to dance as recorded by Hodson. In Manipur the dancing profession was often a rode to royal dignity and was not despised in any way as was the case in India. Parties of girls with a master in charge travelled to Assam, Cachar, Sylhet, even as far as

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16 Ibid. p. 23.
Calcutta where they gave public performances which were very attractive to the Manipuri exiles.  

Regarding the economic contribution of women and spending of leisure time, it was written by Hodson as "The habit of state during those days was to have bazars at the convenient spots by the road-side, where a handful of women congregate at an early hours, whiling the time away with gossip and light work, and attending to chance customer when one offers herself."  

One fact was certain from the two comments given by E.W. Dun and T.C. Hodson in their respective records that women of Manipur were very skilful and industrious in making the cloth, spinning, pottery, and performing their work except the heaviest one. Even in fishing women played a very important role. "The women fished with a square net suspended from the central pole by four strings at each corner and dip the net well under the turbid waters of the edges of lakes or ditches and slowly raise it till the catch rises above the surface of the water, when they smartly bring it out."  

Regarding the form of dwelling houses and the side where the daughters usually sleep Mc Cullock in his "Account of the valley of Munnipore and of the hill Tribes" recorded that "the dwelling houses of the Manipuris during these days were all of the same form, but those of the rich were larger and constructed of better materials than those of the poor, that is, the posts of the beams of the

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17 Ditto.
18 Ditto.
19 Ibid. p. 45.
former were of woods while those of the latter were of bamboo. The walls of both the houses were of reeds plastered with a mixture of earth and cow dung, and the roofs of all were thatched with grass.  

He elaborated on the position of the house. All the dwelling houses faced to the eastward, in which direction they had a large open verandah. In this Verandah the family sit together during the day, and in it all the work of the household is carried on, except cooking, which is performed inside; in the southern side of the verandah is the seat of honour. Here a mat or cloth is laid for the head of the family upon which no one intrudes. Inside the house was without partitions. The bed of the head of the family was placed in what was called the Luplengka close to the wall on the southern side about the middle. It was usually screened by mats.

There was a special side for the daughters to sleep in the house. The daughters usually slept on the northern side. There were no windows in the houses. The only light admitted were through the two doors, one opening in to open verandah, the other to the north near the north-eastern corner of the house.

Whether the social system was patriarchal or matriarchal women of Manipur particularly Meitei women played its role on the major problem of the state in 1904. They challenged the harsh punishment of the government to all the male members when the Assistant Superintendent’s house was burnt for the

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20 Mc Cullock: Accounts of the valley of the Munipore and of the hill Tribes.
second time. Instead of punishing or arresting the culprits all the male members of Imphal were ordered to take teak wood from Kabow (present valley in Myanmar) and constructed the house of the Assistant Superintendent. People protested against the wrong judgement of the government and injustice done to all the male members of each family. Punishing all people for their misdeeds committed by few was resented by all sections of the society. They assembled at the Khwairamband Bazar. Seeing the situation the government did not allow to assemble more than five persons. Resenting at this situation all the women revolted to strike and bazaar was completely at the stroke. It showed women’s reaction to the overall situation. They could no longer remain as silent spectators. At this stage they were more courageous in their spirit and action.

Women disobeyed the orders of the government and entered the residency to see the British Political Agents and the Superintendent in thousands. The demonstration continued for several days. It came to such an extent that the government was to import Army from outside. In the demonstration or rather agitation they got injuries including the dislocation of their teeth. Peace was restored at last through negotiation. This agitation made by womenfolk of Manipur had been known as the First Nupilal (first women’s war) of Manipur. Photograph No. 1 at Page No. 24 had shown the position of Nupilal.

After the first Nupilal in 1904 the second Nupilal (Second Women War) occurred in 1939 due to price rise in rice. Prior to 1939 movement were taken

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place due to high tax on salt in 1932. From the movements launched by the women of Manipur it could be ascertained that women played a vital role in the economic and social life of the state. They took a major part in the economic and social life of the state in which they enjoyed maximum independence. The success of this agitation of the womenfolk against the price rise of rice due to exportation had been regarded as one of the greatest pride of Manipur. The outbreak of the agitation was a turning point in the emergence of new trend of political and national consciousness in the state.

The deep rooted cause of the movements was directly related to the irregularities and malpractices in the administrations of the state. Another factor was the economic exploitation by the authority aided and abetted by the ill-treats of a section of colonial exploitators. This situation was created by the feudal rulers who wielded power with the support of Imperialists. The outbreak of the agitation was directly related to the existing social, political, and economic conditions of the state which developed after the instruction of the colonial administration system. It would be highly appreciated if women were given and could enjoy political and administrative responsibilities and also they participated in the decision making bodies. These movements were made during the pre-independence period against the British colonialism in Manipur against the wrong decision of the government and against the price hike in rice.

With this background the agitations made by the women in 1904, 1932 and 1939 provided a moral boost and encouragement to all the sections of people
particularly the women section in the society. Women become bold and vibrant and could play effective roles in the socio-economic development of the society.

It was during such a time that a social code in which women had hardly any rights in property, marriage and divorce came into existence at the Indian Scene. Customs like enforced widowhood and Sati were evolved through religious concepts then prevailing. Although it happened in other parts of the country such system were not prevailed in Manipur except one case. In the other spectrum of the country, in the past, the sphere of life of the average women was restricted to her home and her social status was one of subjection with a few exceptions. Illustrious women who, inspite of such adverse social conditions made their marks as statesmen, rulers, soldiers or saints approved in all parts of the country from time to time and were honoured by men and women alike. But even such exceptions did not reduce the gloom of those who were denied opportunities for education.

The National Committee on Women's Education set up by the Government of India in the Ministry of Education on 19th May, 1958 recommended for appointment of a suitable committee for examining the various aspects of the nature of education for girls.23 The education of girls in Manipur during this period was not very high.

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However, a new dimension was made in the role of women of Manipur with the establishment of women’s organization called as Manipur Chanura Leishem Marup which was popularly known as Macha Leima on 21st April 1969. It was organized by a group of educated women from various parts of the state.\textsuperscript{24} The women’s organization became very forceful in its efforts to work against atrocities of women at home, eve-teasing, kidnapping, misbehaving and other social evil towards girls by malefolk of Manipur.

The committed objectives of the organisation were emancipation of Manipuri women, upliftment of the socio-economic and legal status of women, active participation in nation building and realization of both women’s rights and human rights. Their initial energies were directed towards the upliftment of the socio-economic conditions of Manipuri women. It started weaving centre for its members and helped other weavers in marketing their products. It also started a campaign for self-reliance and encouraged the use of home-made products among the general people.\textsuperscript{25}

The organization had also assessed their programmes on socio-economic activities. It also stated that “MACHA LEIMA was able to create an awakening among the Manipuri women as to their proper place in the society.”

Another group of local women’s organization called “Nisha Bandh” came into existence in Manipur in order to control the evil practice of drinking liquor

\textsuperscript{24} In defence of our Rights (MACHA LEIMA : A profile) : Manipur.
\textsuperscript{25} Ditto.
by the general public in the society. Till the early 1970's consumption of liquor
by general public was very rare in Manipur society. Only a few scheduled caste
and tribe villages in Manipur were selling liquor freely. But from 1970 onwards
drinking in Meitei society become a common feature and this affected the family
and the society. As a result, in 1975 women in different areas came out to fight
against this evil practice in the society and also to prevent other anti-social
activities in the state. This Nisha Bandh was started on December 29 from
Kakching.  

In 1980 another movement was started by women of Manipur against the
imposition of Armed Forces Special Power Act 1958 and also against the
atrocities of women, children and youths by Armies. These groups of women
came out voluntarily at night with torch in their hands and spend the whole night
outside their homes sometimes in the respective clubs of their locality or at their
convenient place for protecting the innocent people from the hands of atrocities
by the organised and unorganized groups or individuals. These groups of women
were known as "MEIRA PAIBEES." Photograph No. 2 at Page No. 24 had shown
the Meira Paibees in the MEIRA PAIBE SHANGLEN.

The outbreak of "Meira Paibees" literally meant "Women torch
bearers" launched purely by women folk of Manipur whether literate or illiterate
was a new line of women's role in the social, political and economic history
of Manipur. It might be considered as one of the feminist activities for the

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26 MACHA LEIMA : Special publication on NUPIGI NUMIT (women's day), December 12, 1991, p. 172.
Photograph No.1: Position of Nupila

Photograph No.2: Meira Paibees in the Meira Paibee Shanglen
protection, preservation and development of their sons and daughters as a mother. It now became a very forceful movement in Manipur. These groups of women have been scattered in every parts of the valley area. In some area it made compulsory to volunteer at least one woman from one family. Most of the women of Meira Paibi were illiterate. Very few literate joined in this group. The age-range of the Meira Paibees were approximately from 35 to 65 years. Most of the women who belonged to the Meira Paibees did not have small babies even if they have the babies were taken care by the family members. They were mostly engaged in the business of selling goods in the market.

The Meira Paibees participated at various levels sometimes at the issues, sometimes at the issues of the locality and sometimes at family disputes. They even participated at the International conference of Women at Beijing. Women thus took different roles in the society. Even one girl named Sharmila started fasting until death against the imposition of Armed Forces Special Power Act since 2001 although the fasting of the girl had its relevance to Malom massacre in 2001. It becomes a record and almost all the people in the state had been aware of her fasting.

In short, the women of Manipur in their participation in social and economic field could be viewed under two platforms. In one platform, the illiterate women participated, controlled and occupied the market place, known as IMA MARKET (Mother’s Market) at Khwairamband Bazar. It was a big contributory factor towards economic development. It played big roles on issues
and immediate man-made problems like price-rise in essential commodities, economic blockade, mass movement etcetera. Photograph Nos. 3 and 4 at Page No. 27 had shown some section of Ima Market.

The educated working women and the educated girls' played its role through another platform. They played their role in multipronged approach as an economic contributor, as a wife looking after the household duties and the family, as a working women, as a resource person in the academic and social organizations, as a participant in the organizations etcetera. The educated working women formed organizations and took loan through Non-government Organisations. They framed policies, programmes, developmental works with legal framework through different fundings and their own contributions were issue based in addition to their own organizational structure.

Among other working women's organizations a group of educated working women organized the All India Women's Voluntary Services, Manipur Branch, 1999. The organization among other activities had been providing boarding facilities through the construction of one women's hostel, at Paona Road, Imphal for those working women who came from far flung areas for purpose of security, protection and safe-guard. Locating at the heart of the city the hostel provided shelter to those working women from distant places having special problems. The organization had also been contributing to women's welfare and development through various programmes like women's health awareness campaign, legal awareness, group discussion etcetera. These
Photograph No.3: Woman Selling Clothes at the 'Ima-Market'

Photograph No.4: Woman Selling Fruits at the 'Ima-Market'
organizations also provided boarding facilities to the girl students from far and distant place for the purpose of security, protection and safeguard.

In this way women's organizations had been taking up programmes for the upliftment of the position of women in the state. In short, women in Manipur were not only bread earners but also distributors which became a distinctive feature in comparison to other states of the country.

On the other spectrum of the society in the globe particularly of Asian and Pacific development of women were discussed and considered including action for equality, development and peace from 16th to 20th November 1993 at Manila, Philippines under the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific (ESCAP) and Co-convened by the National Commission on the roles of Filipino women (NCRFW) in co-ordination with Asian and Pacific NGO working group and sponsored by the Government of the Netherlands International Development Programme and Swedish International Development Authority (SIDA).

It would be proper to mention in the context of the present study the preamble of the Asian and Pacific symposium of the Non-Government Organisation (NGO) on women and Development for the purpose of reference. It stated that "Women of the Asian and Pacific region question the pursuit of Economic growth as a model of development which has resulted in environmental degradation, increasing poverty and gender inequality. Faced with various crises, we are building new environmentally sustainable vision of
development center on rights and needs of people. This vision emanates from the experiences of women engaged in the struggle for survival. It expressed abiding value of social and gender justice. It is holistic and it empowers women.27

Drawing upon the realities and priorities of women from countries of Asia and the Pacific, this Action plan expressed critical concerns of women like agriculture, culture and education, economic empowerment, environment, family health, indigenous women, labour rights, political empowerment, science and technology, violence against women, human rights etcetera were focused. The action plan contained recommendations and strategies which defined what development mean to women. Many of these strategies sought to restructure oppressive, dehumanizing and impoverishing system and relationship. They call for new ethics, accountability, process and mechanisms. Through the implementation of these recommendations and strategies, women of Asia and Pacific sought to achieve their vision of human-centered, equitable, sustainable and peaceful world.

It would also be proper to mention in the context of the present study the second Asian Pacific Ministerial Conference on Women development for the purpose of reference. It was held at Jakarta from 7-15th June 1994 on Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific under the United Nation, New York. The Jakarta Declaration for the advancement of Women in Asia and Pacific

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reviewed and appraised the implementation of the Nairobi forward looking strategies for the advancement of women adopted by the World Conference to review and appraise the achievement of U.N decade for women on equality, development and peace which was held in Nairobi in 1985. The declaration also prepared for the fourth world conference on women on action for equality, development and peace to be held in Beijing from 4-15th September 1995. Among other aims of the declaration were aiming at achieving the full realization or the advancement of women as equal partners with men in the family and mutually beneficial partnership between men and women. It also aimed at enhancing women’s full involvement and active participation in policy and decision making processes at all stages.28

In 1995 the fourth World Conference on Women was held at Beijing in which a country paper was drafted by the department of women and child Development, Government of India in 1994. It contained among others national machinery for women Development, an alternative education framework for women’s empowerment, gender issues in development, women in extreme poverty, new economic policies and their impact on the status of women, environment, health and education, women in decision making process, constitutional and legal rights guaranteed to women, social reorientation, gender sensitisation and advocacy.29

28 Jakarta Declaration for the Advancement of Women in Asia and the Pacific.
29 Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing 1995 country paper India (A Draft) - Department of Women and Child-Development, Government of India.
Women in Manipur, on the other hand, had also participated in various fields, organizations and statutorial positions either in administration or in active service or in teaching or in ministerial work or so according to their educational levels and status. Thus, the educated women of Manipur participated in various movements. However, they lacked participation in politics and decision making bodies.

With active participation in every movement of the society women had its role in politics like in their political attitudes-awareness, commitment and behaviour, participation in the political process as voters, canvasses, campaigners and contesting election as candidates and their impact on the political process of the state. The women of Manipur participated as voters in the election of 1946 which was held under the Manipur State Constitutions Act 1947 for framing a responsible government. From this time onwards, the women of Manipur had been participating in the political process of the state as voters in every election.

Women voters always outnumbered male voters in every election. But no woman was elected either in the Assembly or parliamentary elections till 1990. Of course, one woman Shrimati M.K. Binodini Devi was the lone exception to be elected as a member of the Electoral College which was formed for the election of Rajya Sabha Member from Manipur in 1952. She contested from Khurai Constituency and got elected by defeating three male rival candidates.\(^{30}\)

\(^{30}\) Government of Manipur, Office of the Chief Electoral Officers, Election Results, 1952.
Women participants in the political life of the state were collective and they were mainly from the capital district itself. Gradually it reached the other valley districts also. Perhaps education and urbanisation have also influenced in making awareness.

**EDUCATION**

Education was the most powerful instrument not only of personal realization but also for national development. Education could play two roles: (i) it may strengthen and perpetuate the status quo with some marginal modifications as may be necessitated from time to time merely in the interest of the survival of the status quo itself; or (ii) it may create a new social order based on national needs and aspirations.\(^\text{31}\) Taking into consideration of the close link between education and development an attempt was made to reveal the educational background of the girls and their relative positions and status in the society of Manipur.

Although the Charter Act of 1813 was passed which merely compelled the East India Company to accept the responsibility for the education of the Indian people, and although the Despatch of 1854 prescribed an educational policy for India in detail which formed the second important period in the history of education in India during the British rule, formal education in Manipur was not

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started before 1885. It was only after 1885 that the first Middle English School was started at Imphal.  

Although the Despatch of 1854 and the Hunter’s Education Commission Report recommended for girls’ education, the education for girls in Manipur was first started with the enrolment of two girls in 1898 in the school of Imphal area. It did not signify that efforts were made for contacting lady teachers from other states and other districts like Cachar of Assam and Sylhet of Tripura during 1894-95. As such by December 1899 one girls’ L.P. School was established at Moirangkhom of Imphal District with 12 girls with the availability of one lady teacher. And the number of enrolment was increased to 53 by 31st March, 1900. This was the first girls’ school in Manipur.

The late and poor enrolment of girls was because of social stigma. The education of women could not be said to have made equal progress although it was hoped, not without reason, that in a state like Manipur where women hold such an important position in the economic activity of the state, the efforts to establish a good school for the daughters of high classes had been attended with more success than had actually been the case.

In this case T.C. Hodson stated in his book entitled “The Meitheis” that the failure is not probably due to the rumour, started by malignity and disseminated by stupidity that “as soon as the girls had been satisfactorily taught

33 Ditto.
34 Ibid, p. 18.
to read, write and speak English, they were to be shipped off to England where there was said to be a scarcity of marriageable women. The role basis of this untoward myth lay in the fact that at that time among all the officers of government, Civil and Military, then serving in Manipur, not one, was married. Such rumours were constantly occurred in Manipur and derived their wide circulation through the agency of the bazaars, where time hangs so heavy that such gossip was eagerly retailed and received too often ready acceptance.\textsuperscript{35}

Thus lack of awareness of the value of education by the society and also due to social stigma slowed down the progress of girls’ education in Manipur. Consequent on this rumour the number of enrolment was reduced to 22 during 1900-1901 and the number of enrolment was increased to 24 with an attendance percent of 18.29 during 1901-02.

In connection with the non attendance of girls to school the Political Agent of Manipur A.E. Woods was not satisfied and written in the Administration Report of the period as "the girls' school can hardly be considered a success, the attendance is very poor (average daily attendance is 18.29 and only about half are Manipuri subjects), and if it does not improve this year. I shall have to close it, as the expense is altogether out of all proportion to the benefit it confers. The Manipuries apparently see no benefit in educating their female children and I cannot incline to disagree with them."\textsuperscript{36}

\textsuperscript{35} Hodson, T.C. Meithis, Delhi, 1987, p. 25.
\textsuperscript{36} Administration Report, 1991-02, Government of Manipur, p-17.
The Report had shown lack of administrative will power and it also seemed to weigh more on expenses than on the real value of imparting education to the girls. It also showed lack of psychological and delicate handling of the social position of the state during those days. Discouragement, perhaps, might have been resulted from the introduction and the study of Manipuri subjects. If the administration was fair enough to spread knowledge and impart education to the girls of Manipur more efforts and more contribution towards the introduction of education to the girls could have been given. It showed lack of effort, firm decision and strong will power of administration.

The administrative report of 1902-03 recorded that “The girls school succeeded no better that I thought it would and it had to be closed at the end of the year.” This was recorded in view of the low percentage of the attendance of the girl in the school and also completes absence of the girls from the school for sometime because of rumour and also social stigma. The nature of rumour and social stigma was almost same as it had been prevalent in other states of the country.

It could be analysed from various angles. First, it was the medium of instruction. Instead of taking up steps for the introduction of education through mother tongue, Bengali medium of instruction was introduced. Second, instead of nurturing the mother-tongue it nurtured a different language which was foreign to the child. Third, lack of will power, effort and commitment on the part of administrator. Further, lack of creating awareness of the importance of
education and also making confidence could have helped in erasing social stigma during 1920-1930. This was evident in the following years as the number of enrolment and number of attendance was increased.

During 1930-31 the numbers of girls enrolled in M.E. schools in the hills were 41. From 1915-16 to 1920-21 no girl was enrolled in L.P. schools in the hill. In the enrolment of girls in the valley also there were ups and downs having 45, 31, 40, 41, 39 and 24 up to 1920-21. The number of girls' enrolment was increased in L.P. school during 1929-30 and 1930-31 with the enrolment of 57 and 56 respectively. By this time the numbers of girls' enrolment in the hills was also increased.

There were ups and downs in the enrolment of girls from 1921-30 in the Middle vernacular schools. In the L.P. school there was no enrolment of girls in the hill by 1908-09. However, in the plain area 13 girls were enrolled. During 1909-10 two girls were enrolled in the hills in the L.P. school and 11 girls were enrolled in the valley as such there were ups and downs in the enrolment of girls having a number of 54 girls up to 1914-15.

The number of girls' L.P. school was increased to three. However, by 1933-34 there were cancellation of three girls L.P. school and establishment of another girls' L.P. school by 1934-35. Although there were adjustment here and there in the location of the schools the total number of L.P. school were four during 1934. From 1939-40 to 1942-43 no administration report was published because of the World War II.
During 1934-35 one girls' High School named Manipur Girls' High School was established and in the next year another girls' private High School was established in the month of May. The school was named after the princess of the State as Tamphasana Girls' High School at Purcilomba Khongnangkhong, the venue of which had now been changed to Nityaipat Chuthek. As such, the school was aided by the State Darbar. The former girls' High School was abolished. With the gradual expansion of educations of the girls, there was one girls' high school during 1945-46 with an enrolment of 149 girls which increased to 299 in 1946-47. In 1946 the State established one co-educational College called Dhanamanjuri College (D.M. College) which was named after Dowager Maharani Dhanamanjuri Devi.

Expansion of education had been made in the post independence period with the constitution of Territorial Council and installation of Popular Government by 1948-49. The numbers of government girls' school were eight and the number of girls enrolment was also suddenly increased to 4527. The total number of girls' educational institution was also increased.

From 1951 onwards there was a rapid growth of colleges in Manipur. There were two colleges during 1952 with an enrolment of 1194 including 75 girls. It was increased to 48 colleges including six girls' colleges with an enrolment of over 35,000 students including 11,000 girls during 1987 and 1988. Of these 48 colleges, 24 were government and the rest were aided and unaided private colleges.
By 2001, the numbers of colleges were 58 including six girls college with an enrolment of 31,801 students including 16,312 girls. Of these 58 colleges 25 were government and the rest were aided and unaided private college. By 2001, there was a professional college for girls with an enrolment of 677 girls.

Thus, by 2001 the number of high and higher secondary schools were 56 with an enrolment of 1,06,732 girls 20, Middle/Junior High/M.E Schools with an enrolment of 65,721 girls student, 163 Junior Basic/U.J.B/Primary schools for other education with an enrolment of 1,00,499 girls student, 78 schools for other education with an enrolment of 352 girls and one Nursery School with an enrolment of 34 girls. Thus, by 2000-2001 the total number of enrolment of girls in different institution were 2,90,755.

In 1980 a University was also established at Canchipur. Prior to the establishment of the University all colleges were affiliated to Guwahati University By 1993 the number of University were increased to two with the establishment of Central Agricultural University at Iroisemba. The numbers of girl scholars in both the University during 2000-2001 were 428.

**EMPLOYMENT IN TEACHING PROFESSION**

The number of lady teachers employed in different educational institutions were 30 in the University; 1,078 in the colleges for general education, 72 in the colleges for Professional or other education; 4,179 in High/Higher Secondary Schools; 2,843 in the Middle/Junior High Senior Basic School; 3,476 in the U.J.B/J.B. and Primary Schools; 69 in the schools for Professional education;
1,625 in the schools for other education and 04 in the nursery schools. Thus the total numbers of lady teachers employed in different institutions of Manipur during 2000-2001 were 13,376.\(^{37}\)

**EMPLOYMENT IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS**

The total numbers of Women employees in Manipur by 2001 were 18,975.\(^{38}\) This figure was inclusive of both Public Sector and Private Sector. Under the Public Sector the total number of women employees were 18,024 and under Private Sector it was 951. Thus the total figure for both Public as well as Private Sector for Women employees came upto 18,975 out of a total of 64,029.

Thus the land of Manipur having 23,88,634 populations, with 11,81,296 females had the literacy percentage of 68.87 with female literacy rate of 59.70. The dual roles performed by the working and non-working women in sharing household responsibilities with the help of husband, in the educational development of their children, in taking physical care of their children and sharing of leisure time with husbands together in the Imphal East District of Manipur would be explored, revealed, discussed and analysed. It would also compare the dual responsibilities of the working and non-working women as wife and as mother in Imphal East District of Manipur. It would also review the related literature in the following chapters.

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\(^{37}\) Ibid. p.53.