CHAPTER - 5

5.1: IMPORTANCE OF VOTING:

Voting is the most important and basic activity by which the citizens get assimilated in the political process and learn how to exercise power. Elections provide an opportunity to the voters to participate directly in the making and unmaking of governments. "The general elections endow a temporary personality to the common citizens. They are crowned as "sovereign voters". In a sense this sovereignty is very real as the voters collectively decide upon the set of elite who would rule the next term of five years." Voters are the backbone of the success or failure of a democracy, the formation of either a single ruling or a coalition of ruling groups is the reflection of the choice of voters.

Large-scale studies and experiments have been carried out explaining the nature of voting behaviour. For example, the studies undertaken by the scholars of the Columbia University entitled 'The People's Choice' and 'Voting' laid emphasis on the impact of social and environmental factors on the individual choice. Thus the sociologists explain voting behaviour in terms of sociological variables such as class, ethnicity, religion as well as attitudes and orientations towards

---

2 V.M.Sirsikar, Sovereigns Without Crowns, (Popular Prakashan, Bombay, 1973), P.152.
participation. According to N.G.S. Kini, an Indian writer, voting behaviour may be regarded as:

1. A mode of legitimizing democratic rule.
2. Integrating participation in the political process involving integration into the political community.
3. Instancing an act of decision-making.
4. A role-action involving definite political orientation in a particular type of political culture.
5. A direct relation of individual citizen to the formal government.

A well known Political Scientist S.P. Verma and others held the view that the voting act is a response to internal and external stimuli, the former in terms of preferences and commitment, and the latter in the context of pressures, campaigning and manipulation. The interplay of internal stimuli and external manipulation, operate on a voter’s choice.

Voting behaviour may be defined as the behaviour which indicates the voter’s choices, preferences, alternatives, agreements, concerns, ideology, Programme and so on in respect of the various questions or issues on which the

---

various elections are fought. Voting behaviour is a vital and crucial aspect of political behaviour of men. It is this behaviour, which determines periodically, continuously or frequently, the taking or giving of power in the various senses of the term on various scales. The act of voting further begins or initiates the play of power, which is the sole means with which men operate the various process or situations of politics.

Voting behaviour can be considered as the ways in which a voter expresses his opinion on parties, candidates and issues at the polls in particular, and on the political system in general, in a specific socio-cultural and politico-economic context. The voting behaviour may depend upon the voter's own decision, or it may be an act of inducement by other fellow caste men, village notables, family heads or a "political broker", or it may also be an unthinking response to varieties of stimuli generated during the campaign.

5. 2: WOMEN AND VOTING BEHAVIOUR IN INDIA:

In the Indian context, women have been participating since 1951 in the formal channel of politics as voters, as party workers, as candidates contesting

---

various elections and as legislators and ministers involved in deliberations and policy making.\textsuperscript{12}

Voting is an indication of political participation for women in India. It has a tremendous impact on equalizing and mobilizing women. Voting requires the least initiative and internal motivation. Very often the women citizen treat the day of voting as a welcome break from her dull and tiring routine and does not appear to have a notion of why they should vote for a particular candidate.\textsuperscript{13}

Caste, personality and families of candidates appear to be more important to voters than party ideology or affiliations. Factors like education, religion, classes and traditions also seem to affect women’s participation. Consciousness regarding caste and class also affect and influence voting behaviour.\textsuperscript{14}

With the rising number of women electorate, the percentage of women voters has also registered a steady rise constantly from 37.1 per cent in 1952 to 69.70 per cent in 1971. However, in 1977 the difference was 9.7 per cent to increase further to 10.77 per cent in 1977 and 10.94 per cent in 1980. In 1984, women had polled a higher percentage of votes than the earlier polled only to fall again steadily in 1989. Since then, there has been a discernible fall from 69.17 per cent to fall again

\textsuperscript{13} Maya Majumdar, Protecting our Women: Imperatives of Empowerment: The Political Response, (Dominant Publishers and Distributors, New Delhi, 2001), P.40.
\textsuperscript{14} Ibid., P.40.
in 1989 to 43.90 per cent and 47.42 per cent in 1991. In the 1996 Lok Sabha, elections the total number of women voters in the country was 28,98,15,776 while that of male voters was 30,98,15,776.\textsuperscript{15}

The increase in the turn-out of women voters, particularly of the lower castes and classes in India may be attributed to a high degree to mobilization, rather than their own political consciousness. The Scheduled Castes and other poor and backward communities are aware of the importance of their vote, but this awareness about the issues affecting them needs tremendous mobilization in order to be translated into a political exercise like voting. More so with regard to women who have many disincentives such as poverty, daily work, violence, health and patriarchal family norms.\textsuperscript{16}

The parties have recognized the significance of women voters, and have been exerting themselves to devise various methods. Mostly adhoc promises were made to women during election campaigns. Moreover, many times no correlation was shown between the campaign promises and voting support. In 1984, much of the victory of the Congress could be attributed to a sympathy vote by womenfolk against the slaying of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi on a women-to-women basis.\textsuperscript{17}

\textsuperscript{15} Niraj Sinha, Women in Indian Politics, (Gyan Publishing House, New Delhi, 2000), P. 150.
\textsuperscript{16} Ibid, P. 155.
\textsuperscript{17} Ibid, P. 155.
5.3: FACTORS AFFECTING WOMEN VOTERS TO VOTE DURING ELECTIONS:

5.3.1: PARTY IDEOLOGY:

In the elections, the Ideology of the political Parties is considered the most important factor in determining the voting behaviour of voters. Women voters usually discuss about the Ideology of the political parties, but tend to neglect this factor at the eve of the elections.

5.3.2: ROLE OF MONEY:

Money becomes an important part of the bargaining between certain sections of the electorate and the candidate, or the party. In some quarters, the expectation to receive payment for casting votes is considered a part of the routine. It is considered a sort of business opportunity that comes and soon goes away. This was the voter’s attitude usually in poor and backward areas, but it was also found in more prosperous localities. The vote, instead of being considered a political right, was often considered a ‘deal’, a benefit to be conferred on the recipient, although a mixture of the two attitudes was also found18. “Money Politics” is an important

lubricant of the Indian political machine. In many constituencies voters have come
to expect payment of money by all candidates.  

One of the reasons why voters took money during elections is the
poverty of the people. For the poor, “Campaign period is a time when the market
value of their support appears to rise and when the clever seller may turn the value
of his vote or the votes of his followers to good advantage. The poor are wined and
dined, wooed with gifts and bribed with cash.” Poor political awareness is another
factor. Most of the women voters do not care to understand the meaning of the vote.
They take it as a private act rather than a public one. It is a serious reflection on the
working of Indian democracy. The electorate feels that their representatives are more
interested in feathering their own nest and keep the electorate hibernating in between
the elections. Moreover, the political parties confine their job of educating the voters
only to electoral politics. This leaves the voters unconcerned about realizing the full
significance of their votes, and apathetic towards the candidates or their political
parties.

5.3.3: POLITICAL PARTIES:

Political Parties also play an important role in determining a voter’s
decision to vote for a particular candidate. Women voters examine the political trend

---

19 Robert Hardgrave Jr., India: the Government and Politics in a Developing Nation, (Freeman, New Delhi,
20 Robert G. Wirsing, “Strategies of Political Bargaining in Indian City Politics”, in Donald B. Rosenthal
at the national as well as at the state level. They then form their own political opinions about the party or parties likely to form government in the State and in the Centre. In some cases, whether the political party that the candidate belongs to is a national or a regional party influences a large number of voters to vote for a particular candidate.

5.3.4: PERSONALITY:

The personality of the candidate is also one of the most important factors determining voting behaviour. This may be the most influential factor in every election in determining women’s voting behaviour.

5.3.5: KINSHIP TIES:

Kinship ties play an important role in determining women’s decision to vote for a particular candidate. A candidate’s support base is built first among his or her kith and kin. These people in turn help the candidate in expanding his or her support base in other localities.
5.3.6: ROLE OF MASS MEDIA:

Mass media like newspapers, radio and TV also play an important role in determining a voter’s decision. It has comparatively little influence upon the women’s voting decisions.\textsuperscript{21} It influences only a small percentage of voters.

5.4: FACTORS AFFECTING MANIPURI WOMEN’S VOTING BEHAVIOUR UPTO 2000 ELECTIONS:

Many factors affected the voting behaviour of Manipuri Women upto the 2000 elections, some of them were:

5.4.1: PARTY IDEOLOGY:

Table No. 48: Women Influenced By Party Ideology:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl.No.</th>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Working Women</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Social Worker / Meira Paibi</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Women Vendor</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>100\textsuperscript{22}</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{22} Questionnaires distributed to 100 women sample voters during November 2001.
As shown in the table above, ideology of the political party did influence some of the women voters in the earlier elections, but majority of the Manipuri women voters were not influenced by it. Only two women out of the total twenty sample women voters were influenced by it in the working women category. In the student category, only eight out of twenty sample women voters were influenced by it. Eight women voters were influenced by it out of the twenty women sample voters in the Social Worker category and in the Women Vendor category, only two sample women voters were influenced by it. But in the Housewife category, four out of the total twenty sample voters were influenced by it. In short, out of the total sample of 100 women voters, 24 per cent said they were influenced by party ideology during elections while majority of them i.e., 76 per cent said they were not influenced by this factor.

5.4.2: PARTY MANIFESTOES:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl.No.</th>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Working Women</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Socialworker / Meira Paibi</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Women Vendor</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As shown in the table above, few women were influenced by party manifestoes. In the working women category, 2 women were influenced by party manifestoes and 18 Women Voters were not influenced by it. Out of the twenty sample voters in the Student category, 12 women voters were influenced by it and 8 were not influenced by party manifestoes. In the Social worker category, 4 were influenced by it and 16 were not influenced by it. Out of the twenty sample voters in the Women Vendor category, 2 were influenced by it but majority of them i.e., 18 women voters were not influenced by it. In the Housewife category, 5 voters were influenced by party manifestoes and 15 women voters were not influenced by it out of the total 20 women voters. Thus, majority of the women voters i.e., 75 per cent were not influenced by the party manifestoes but 25 per cent were influenced by it.

\[ \text{5.4.3: PERSONALITY:} \]

\[ \text{Table No. 50: Women Influenced By Personality Factor:} \]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl.No</th>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Working Women</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Social Worker/Meira Paibi</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Women Vendor</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>80</strong></td>
<td><strong>20</strong></td>
<td><strong>100(^{23})</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{23}\text{Questionnaires distributed to 100 sample voters during November 2001.}\)
Majority of the Manipuri women were influenced by the personality of the candidate. Out of the total twenty sample working women, fifteen were influenced by the personality of the candidate. Fourteen sample students were influenced by it and in the Social Worker category, eighteen sample women were influenced by it. In the women vendor category also, fifteen sample women were influenced by it and eighteen sample women out of the total twenty were influenced by the personality of the candidate in the Housewife category. In short, 80 per cent were influenced by the personality of the candidate and 20 per cent were not influenced by it.

5.4.4: FAMILY INFLUENCE:

Table No. 51: Women Influenced By Family:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl.No</th>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Working Women</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Social Worker/Meira Paibi</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Women Vendor</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>53</strong></td>
<td><strong>47</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Many women were influenced by family to vote for a candidate. In the Working Women category, eleven women out of the total twenty sample women were influenced by family. In the Student category, twelve sample women out of the twenty sample women were influenced by it. Eight women in the Social worker category out of the twenty sample women were also influenced by it. Ten women out of the twenty sample women voters were influenced by it and in the Housewife category, twelve women were influenced by family out of the twenty sample voters. In short, 53 per cent of the women voters were influenced by family to vote and 47 per cent were not influenced by it.

5.4.5: MASS MEDIA:

Table No. 52: Women Influenced By Mass Media:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl.No.</th>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Working Women</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Social Worker/Meira Paibi</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Women Vendor</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mass media could hardly influence the women voters of Manipur. Out of the total 20 sample women in the working women category, only three could be influenced by it. In the student category, only eight were influenced by it. And
another four women were influenced by mass media in the Social Worker category.
In the Women vendor category, only two sample women were influenced by it and also in the housewife category, two sample women were influenced by it. Thus, mass media influenced only 19 per cent of the sample voters while it had no influence on the majority of them i.e., 81 per of the voters.

5.4.6: KINSHIP TIES:

Table No. 53: Women Influenced By Kinship Ties:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl.No.</th>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Working Women</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Social Worker/Meira Paibi</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Women Vendor</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Kinship ties were another factor influencing the women voters of Manipur. Out of the twenty sample working women, fourteen women were influenced by kinship ties. In the student category, twelve women were influenced by it and another eight sample women were influenced by it. In the women vendor category, twelve sample women voters were influenced by it while in the Housewife category, it influenced another fourteen women. In short, 60 per cent of the sample
women voters were influenced by kinship ties and 40 per cent were not influenced by it.

5.4.7: LOCALITY:

Table No. 54: Women Influenced By Locality:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl.No.</th>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Working Women</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Social Worker/Meira Paibi</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Women Vendor</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Few women were influenced by locality in Manipur during election. The Meira Paibi and Clubs members mobilized women and campaigned in their respective locality during elections. Two women out of the twenty sample women voters were influenced by it in the working women category. In the student category, eight women out of the twenty sample women were influenced by it. In the social worker category, four women were influenced out of the total twenty sample women and eight women out of the twenty sample women were influenced by it in the women vendor category. In the housewife category, only two women were influenced by it. Thus, 24 per cent of the sample women voters were influenced by locality and 76 per cent were not influenced by it.
5.4.8: CURRENT ISSUE:

Table No. 55: Women Influenced By Current Issue:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl.No</th>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Working Women</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Social Worker/Meira Paibi</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Women Vendor</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Current issues such as the socio-economic conditions of the society influenced many women. In the working women category, thirteen women were influenced by it. In the student category, only eight were influenced by it while twelve women out of the total twenty were not influenced by it. In the women vendor category, twelve women out of the twenty women were influenced by it and another sixteen women were influenced by it in the Housewife category. Thus, 61 per cent of the women voters were influenced by locality factor and 39 per cent of the women voters were not influenced by it.
5.4.9: MONEY:

Table No. 56: Women Influenced By Money Factor:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl.No.</th>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Working Women</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Social Worker/ Meira Paibi</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Women Vendor</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some scholars are of the opinion that money played the most important part during elections but no women admitted that they took money. All the hundred respondents in all the five categories responded that they did not receive any money during elections.

5.5: GENERAL OBSERVATION ON MANIPUR WOMEN’S VOTING BEHAVIOUR UPTO 2000 ELECTION:

Manipuri women’s voting behaviour was determined by many factors in the past elections. The observation on the women’s voting behaviour are different from person to person. But, some Intellectuals in Manipur have observed few important common factors which determined the voting behaviour of women in
Manipur in the past elections. According to them, some of the important factors were – (1) Party Ideology, (2) Personality (3) Money Factor (4) Kinship Ties (5) Locality’s Influence (6) Ethnic Identity.

According to Prof. Islamuddin, among the Muslim Community, majority of the Muslim women were influenced by their husbands or the male members of the family to vote. But some sections of the women who are educated were not influenced by them. They voted independently. Sometimes, religious leaders also influenced many women during elections among the Muslim Community. Political Parties also played an important role in determining the women’s voting behaviour. For instance, in the earlier elections, Political Party like BJP (which is a Hindu-based party) was not preferable among Muslim Community. Kinship ties were also another factor determining women’s voting behaviour. “If the women have any blood relations/personal relations with the candidate, then the women definitely voted for that candidate”. Therefore, this was the most important factor in the earlier elections.

According to Prof. Amar, in the context of Manipur, women’s voting behaviour was determined by many factors. Some of the important factors were kinship ties, money, locality’s influence, etc. “Kinship Ties is very strong, the candidate himself may or may not be good, but if he or she is related to her, then not

24 Interviews conducted with some academicians in the state of Manipur, during January 2005 at Manipur University.

25 Interview with Prof. Islamuddin, Department of Economic, at 11:00 A.M. on 24th January 2005 at Manipur University Campus.
only women but all the male members of the society voted for the candidate”. “I
don’t think Meitei women could be influenced by any muscle power since the
women of Manipur seem to be experienced about how to retaliate to the muscle
power in our society”. “Money power played the most important role than any other
factor in determining their voting behaviour”, he added. Prof. Amar further felt that
current issues like the socio–economic conditions of the society did not influence
them much. Thus, according to him, Meitei women exercised their voting rights
independently.26

Prof. N. Joykumar Singh, Dean of Social Sciences, made one very
interesting observation. He felt that 99% of the women’s voters were influenced by
locality. The Meira Paibis, Clubs etc. played very important roles in determining the
voting behaviour of women. A kinship tie was another factor, which influenced the
women voters. Even if the voters have no relations with the candidate, personal
relations play very important in determining their voting behaviour. Sections of
women who are educated were more likely to be influenced by current issues like
the prevailing socio-economic condition of the state. Other factors like Party
Ideology, Money etc. could influence only a few sections of women’s voters. Money
could influence only the uneducated women but Party Ideology could influence the
educated women. “Women do not support women candidates,”27 he added.

26 Interview with Prof. Yumnam Amar, Department of Economics, on 24th Jan. at 12:00 at his office, Manipur
University.
27 Interview with Prof. N. Joykumar Singh, Dean of Social Sciences on 24th January 2005 at 2:00 P.M at
Manipur University.
Prof. Bimola Devi categorized women voters into four groups while observing their voting behaviour.

1. The educated working women - They were influenced by
   (i) Party Ideology
   (ii) Personality of the candidate.

2. Household-wives - In this category, majority of the women were influenced by husbands or sons who are the male members of the society.

3. Meira Paibi Groups – They were influenced by
   (i) Locality
   (ii) Money was the most important factor among these groups, which influenced them to vote.

4. Women Vendors – This category was again divided into two groups:
   (i) Those affiliated to Political Parties – they were influenced by their respective parties, ideologies etc.
   (ii) Those who are uneducated – They were influenced by money factors, locality etc.

But, in all these categories, kinship ties played the most important role.

She added that small sections of the women could be influenced by ethnic identity issues.

---

28 Interview with Prof. Ksh. Bimola, Department of Political Science at 2:30 PM at her office, on 24th January 2005, Manipur University.
According to Dr. Kunjeswori Devi, majority of the women voters were influenced by the male members of their families. Locality and kinship ties were also important factors which influenced the women voters. "Meira Paibis play an important role in mobilizing women voters during elections". But, the most important factor was the money factor which influenced the women's voting behaviour. Other factors like Political Parties, Party Ideology, Current Issues, Religion etc. could influence only small sections of the women voters in Manipur. They could not be influenced by any muscle power, and in cases where they faced it, they retaliated by opposing the muscle power.

According to Dr. Ch. Madhuri, majority of the educated women were influenced by Political Parties. Meira Paibis and women's vendors went along with the decisions of their leaders. According to her, money could not influence women. "Even if they took the money from some candidates, they voted for the one whom they decided to vote". Then, the personality of the candidate, which influenced many women come in the second place. Kinship ties and personal relations were also important factors determining their voting behaviour. Other factors like current Issues, Caste, Party Ideology and Manifestoes etc. did not influence them.

29 Interview with Dr. Kunjeswori Devi, Department of History at 1:00 PM on 24th January 2005 at Manipur University.

30 Ibid.

31 Interview with Dr. Ch. Madhuri at her office, Department of Commerce, Manipur University on 24th January at 3 PM.
According to Dr. Bilasini Devi, women should be categorized into three groups while observing their voting behaviour – (1) Educated women (2) Uneducated women and (3) Housewives. Educated women were influenced by Parties, if they are affiliated. Educated women could give good judgment. They studied the manifestoes and analyzed their objectives, and they observed the personality of the candidates. Thus, they were influenced by Ideology of the Parties, Manifestoes, and Personality.

On the other hand, uneducated women were influenced by money. Many of them were divided into groups to distribute money among women voters but in both the categories, they took decisions independently. They were not influenced by factors like caste, religion etc. but some sections of the women were influenced by ethnic identity, current issue, muscle power in the rural areas etc. In the third category i.e., the housewives, these women do not have much awareness but they were influenced by their husbands or sons.32

Dr. M.C. Arun is of the opinion that “Women were generally influenced by the male members of their families while voting for a particular candidate”. Money played the second important role next to family’s influence. Another two very important factors were the kinship ties, and personal relations, which influenced the women voters of Manipur. “Usually women go for the candidate who is the relative of her husband rather than going for the person who is

32 Interview with Dr. Bilasini Devi at her office, M U Museum, Manipur University on 24th January 2005 at 3:30 PM.
her own relative”. Other factors like personality, current issues, and party ideology could influence some section of the women voters. But, no religious leaders could influence the women of Manipur.33

5.6: MANIPURI WOMEN’S VOTING BEHAVIOUR IN THE GENERAL ELECTIONS 2002:

The vote-choice of a voter is the result of interaction of psychological, social, economic and political factors. It is the end product of many factors which are operating upon the mind of a voter in a “conjunctural and cumulative fashion”.34 Some of the factors which determined how the women voters voted for a particular candidate during the Assembly elections 2002 are presented here.

5.6.1: FACTORS DETERMINING MANIPURI WOMEN VOTERS TO VOTE:

There were many factors which motivated the women voters of Manipur to vote for a particular candidate during elections. Some of the factors were:

1. Party Ideology.
2. Role of Money
3. Political Party.

33 Interview with Dr. M.C.Arun at his office at Manipur University on 25th January 2005 at 2:00 PM.
4. Election Manifestoes

5. Personality

6. Locality's Influence

7. Family's Influence

8. Religion/Caste

9. Current Issue

Table No. 57: Factors Influencing Women Voters To Vote:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Party Ideology</th>
<th>Personality</th>
<th>Family Influence</th>
<th>Local Influence, Money, Caste, Current Issue</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meitei Women</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tribal Women</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in the above table, out of the 200 sample women voters, 93 women belonged to both Meitei Community and Muslim (Meitei-Pangal)

---

33 An attempt was made to gauge the degree of political awareness and a number of factors responsible for the voting behaviour of Manipuri women. In order to examine the voting behaviour of women in Manipur, a survey was undertaken covering both the Hills and Valley areas of Manipur. The method used during the survey was Structured Questionnaires. It was administered on 200 selected voters representing the cross-section of the society. The persons chosen for the respondents of the Questionnaires were women voters of Manipur. The women voters chosen were working women, students, housewives, business women etc. They were chosen from the various communities viz. Meiteis (Hindus), Meiteis (Muslim), Scheduled Tribes (Christians) and other Communities from both the Hills and Valley of Manipur.
Community, 61 women voters belonged to tribal Community and 49 women voters belonged to other communities, which includes Nepalese, Marwaris, Punjabis etc.

Out of the 93 Meitei and Muslim women voters, 81 women voters responded that they were influenced by personality of the candidate when they voted for a candidate, 2 women voters were influenced by the Party’s Ideology, 2 women voters were influenced by family members and the remaining 8 voters were influenced by other factors like locality’s influence, money, caste, current issues etc. Among the 58 tribal women voters, 6 women voters were influenced by party’s ideology, 36 women voters were influenced by the candidate’s personality when they voted for a candidate, 6 women voters were influenced by family members. Among the 49 sample women voters from other communities, 3 women voters were influenced by the Party ideology, 28 women voters were influenced by Personality of a candidate, 10 women voters were influenced by other considerations like locality’s influence, money, caste, current issues etc.

It may therefore be observed from the above table that majority of the women voters from all the communities in Manipur were influenced by personality of a candidate during the 2002 General elections in Manipur. It seems that Political Party’s Ideology, Party’s Manifestoes and other factors did not play an important role in the voting behaviour of women voters.
### 5.6.2: PARTY MANIFESTOES:

Table No. 58: Women Influenced By Party Manifestoes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Profession</th>
<th>Working Women</th>
<th>Women Vendor</th>
<th>House Wife</th>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Those influenced by Party Manifestoes</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who were not influenced by Party Manifestoes</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>200(^{36})</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in the above table, out of the total 200 sample women voters, 80 voters were working women, 38 were business women (includes those involved in small trades), 33 were housewives and 49 voters were students. Among the working women, 11 voters believed in Party Manifestoes and 24 women voters did not believe in Party Manifestoes. In the category of students, 15 voters believed in Party Manifestoes and 34 women voters did not believe in Party Manifestoes. But among the housewives, out of the sample 33 voters, 9 women voters believed in Parties manifestoes and 24 voters did not believe in Party Manifestoes. Thus, it may be observed that majority of the women voters from all the categories did not believe in Party Manifestoes.

\(^{36}\) *Ibid.*
5.7: PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN VOTERS IN 2002 GENERAL ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS:

Table. No.59: Women’s Participation In Elections:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Election Participation</th>
<th>WORKING</th>
<th>BUSSINESS</th>
<th>HOUSE WIFE</th>
<th>STUDENT</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women who Participated in Election</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women who did not Participate in Election</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>20037</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above table shows the participation of women in the General elections 2002. The respondents belonged to different sections of society. Out of the total 200 respondents, 48 responded that they participated in elections. But, 155 respondents responded that they did not participate in elections. Out of the total 48 respondents who said that they participated in elections, 8 respondents were working women, 12 respondents were business women, 13 respondents were housewives and remaining 15 respondents were students. Among the 155 respondents who did not participate in elections, 72 respondents were working women, 26 respondents were business women, 20 respondents were housewives and 34 respondents were students. Out of the total of 200 respondents, 80 were working women, 38 respondents were business women, 30 respondents were housewives and 49 respondents were students.

37 Questionnaires distributed to some selected sample women voters during 2002.
5.8: GENERAL OBSERVATION ON MANIPUR WOMEN'S VOTING BEHAVIOUR DURING 2002 ELECTION:

Prof. Islamuddin is of the opinion that in the recent elections, money and muscle power were the most important factors in determining women’s voting behaviour. Other factors like political party, party ideology, ethnic Identity, kinship ties etc. did not influence much on the Muslim women voters. The religious leaders who used to influence women voters in the past elections did not have much influence on women during the recent elections. He further expressed that the reason why money played the most important role in determining women’s voting behaviour may be because of the overall new trend during elections. “It was not because of the backward conditions of the Muslim people, even the rich people also took money”\(^ {38} \), says Prof. Islamuddin.

According to Prof. Amar, money and kinship ties or personal ties with the candidates influenced the women voters in the elections. “Ethnic consciousness was a new trend during elections which determined women’s voting behaviour”. “I don’t think there’s any political awareness in the society. But, there is politicization in various sectors in order to have private gains during elections”, he added.

\(^{38}\) Prof. Islamuddin, Op. Cit.
According to Prof. N. Joykumar, locality’s influence was the most important factor determining the women voters’ voting behaviour. Personal relations come in the second phase. Other factors like money could not influence much.⁴⁹

According to Prof. Bimola, some of the important factors which influenced the women voters in the recent election were party ideology, personality and money. Educated women were influenced by party ideology, personality, and political parties but the housewives were influenced by their husbands or sons. And among the Meira Paibis and Women vendors, money was the most important factor determining their voting behaviour.⁵⁰

According to Dr. Kunjeswori Devi, in all the elections as in this election too, money plays the most important role in determining women’s voting behaviour. After money, kinship ties and locality’s influence were the most important factors.⁵¹

According to Dr. Bilasini, women were influenced by money, but some sections of the women were influenced by the current socio-economic conditions of their respective constituencies. In the recent elections, muscle power influenced the voters in the rural areas but not in the urban areas.

---

⁵¹ Dr. Kunjeswari, Op. Cit.
According to Dr. Madhuri Devi, kinship ties or personal relations were the most important factors which influenced women to vote for a candidate while educated women were influenced by the party.\textsuperscript{42}

\section*{5.9: WOMEN’S VOTING BEHAVIOUR IN THE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (2004):}

\begin{quote}
In the recent Parliamentary elections, which were held on 20\textsuperscript{th} and 26\textsuperscript{th} April, the above mentioned factors did not play an important role. These elections were totally different from the elections held earlier because there was a drastic change in the voting behaviour of women in Manipur. Eleven women’s organizations or Meira Paibis boycotted the elections. Some of the women’s organizations were:

1. Nongpok Leingak Nupi Lup.
2. Wangkhei Ningthem Pukhri Mapal Nupi Khunai Chaokhat Kanglup.
3. Keishampat Top Leirak Maning Nisha Band.\textsuperscript{43}

Twenty seven other women’s organizations in the areas of Sagolmang Haotal extended their support to the resolution passed by eleven women’s groups on 11\textsuperscript{th} April 2004, with regard to boycotting the Inner Parliamentary Elections. Lamenting the reason why they were boycotting the Parliamentary elections, Assistant Secretary of the Association Th. Renubala told the Media-person at the

\textsuperscript{42} Dr. Madhuri, Op. Cit.,  
\textsuperscript{43} The Imphal Free Press, Local English Newspaper, 25th April 2004, Imphal.
office of the Women Welfare Association at Sambei that Imposition of Armed Forces Special Powers Act in the State have encouraged the security forces to commit all sorts of atrocities in the name of counter insurgency. The women of Manipur earlier demanded for the withdrawal of AFSPA from the land of Manipur to the government of Manipur. Since their demands were not met, they therefore decided to boycott the Parliamentary election, which was held on 26th April 2004, as a mark of protest against the state government’s apathy towards the atrocities committed by the security forces.44

Another woman, Assistant Secretary of the Tangkham Awang Leikai Women Welfare Association, Smt. Kangabam Ibeyaima Devi expressed at the press conference held on 22nd April, that it was meaningless to participate in the Lok Sabha polls as the elected MPs have never been able to address the problems of the people of Manipur in the Parliament.

Various other women’s organizations in other parts of Manipur Valley, namely Wangmataba Women’s Development Association, Meira Paibi Women Development Association, Thoubal Wangmataba, Laimingthou Khamlhangba Women’s Welfare etc. had also resolved to boycott the Parliamentary Election as a mark of protest against the state government’s apathy towards the atrocities committed by security personal.45

44 *The Sangai Express, Local English Newspaper* 23rd April 2004, Imphal.
45 Ibid.
5.10: ELECTORAL CAMPAIGNS IN MANIPUR DURING ELECTIONS:

The dictionary meaning of the term “campaign” is ‘connected with series of operations designed to bring about a particular result’. According to Ravindra Pratap Singh, an Indian author, election campaign is a kind of strategy and tactics involving a two-way process in which, negatively, the adversaries or opposite party candidates are to be pulled down and given a smashing blow, and positively, to build up his success and emerge victorious. This battle of ballots is a merciless competition in which one advances at the expense of others.\(^{46}\)

Campaign constitutes a vital phase of the electoral process. The major aims are to strengthen loyal voters, win as many as undecided voters as possible, and convert or demoralize rival party supporters. Campaign also produces a greater degree of politicization and involvement ultimately leading to political participation.\(^{47}\) Formally, the election campaign starts as soon as the election schedule is announced. The campaign starts at a slow pace, gathers momentum as the polling day gets nearer and nearer, and formally ends 48 hrs before the poll. But, informally the election campaign starts long before the election schedule is announced and continues till the last moment of polling. The political parties, candidates and campaigners employ different overt and covert techniques to influence the choice of the voters. But the campaign techniques may be different


from party to party', from candidate to candidate and from constituency to constituency.⁴⁸

Some of the well known campaign techniques to influence the choice of the voters are:

1. Party Flags
2. Posters
3. Election Meetings
4. Door-to-Door Campaigning
5. Group feasting
6. Role of Money

5.10.1: PARTY FLAGS:

The first sign of electoral campaign is when the people suddenly find the party flags fluttering in different house tops. One starts gauging the popularity of the party or its candidate on the basis of competition of the flag-flying contest. This method is popular in most of the places in the Manipur valley as well as in the Hill areas. The flag-flying contest has a visual impact. If a particular house fluttered a flag of a particular political party or candidate at the top of a bamboo on his house, it is believed that the family is identified as supporters of that particular candidate.

5.10.2: POSTER CAMPAIGNS:

Poster campaigns are an important and popular form of campaigning during elections in Manipur as in other parts of India. The national parties like the BJP and Congress always top the list in this kind of method. Posters of National Parties could be found even in the remotest areas of villages in Manipur as well as in other parts of India. The regional party’s posters were rarely seen in remote areas of Manipur. The poster campaigning is mostly done during night-time. Usually groups are formed and they are assigned to paste the posters and do some paintings on the walls in various localities within the constituency. The campaigners usually take the posters to show the symbol, name of the party and name of the candidate to the voters while campaigning.

5.10.3: ELECTION MEETINGS:

In Election campaigning, Public Meetings play an important role. The core of election campaign is the public meeting. Election meetings are one of the most important media through which the electorates are approached collectively. The meetings are used to inform the electorate about the party, its programmes and symbols and to introduce the candidates to the electorate. An election meeting is also important because it gives an opportunity to the candidate and party to demonstrate to the rival candidates their strength and support that they command. For this reason,

---

candidates would try to mobilize as large as possible number of people to attend a public meeting.\textsuperscript{50}

\textsection{4} Public meetings are supposed to end 48 hours before the Election Day. According to the rules of the Election Commission, “No person shall convene, hold or attend any public meeting in any polling area during the period of 48 hours ending with the hour fixed for the conclusion of the poll for any election in the polling area”.\textsuperscript{51}

5.10.4: DOOR-TO-DOOR CAMPAIGNING:

This particular method of campaigning is very important and effective in every election in order to elicit votes. Informal face-to-face contacts are often more effective than mass media communication. The campaigners move from house to house by carrying manifestoes and leaflets and personally distribute them directly to the voters with an appeal to vote. Party workers with some voters usually go for door-to-door campaigning. In most cases, even the candidates themselves go for this campaigning. The voting behaviour of voters was seen to be influenced by these personal contacts. Even educated voters have been found to disclose in confidence that only so and so candidate personally approached them and so he or she voted for him in the absence of any alternative appeal.\textsuperscript{52} Some kind of genuine fraternization

\textsuperscript{51} Election Commission of India, A Handbook of Candidates, (Government of India, New Delhi,1984), P.88.
takes place in this face-to-face contact method between the contestants and the electorates.\textsuperscript{53} Thus, it is also a very effective method of campaigning.

5.10.6: ELECTION FEASTINGS:

Holding of community feasts is another popular method used for getting votes. Election may be called as the season of feasting. Both the voters and the candidates accept this fact as a necessary part of the election campaigns. There are certain sections of voters (both male and female) who expect that the candidates and campaigners or the relatives of the candidates should finance for the feasts if they want votes. These feasts were organized by the candidates through their agents or active workers. They would sanction certain amounts of money corresponding to the number of persons to be gathered for the lunch. In such gatherings the candidate concerned or the close associate of the candidates try to win over the voters on their side. The size of the community feasts varies from time to time, and from place to place.

5.11: ELECTORAL CAMPAIGNS OF MANIPURI WOMEN DURING ELECTIONS:

These are some of the ways adopted by Manipuri women for electoral campaigning.

\textsuperscript{53} Ravindra Pratap Singh, Op. Cit. 91.
5.11.1: **HOUSE-TO-HOUSE CAMPAIGNING:**

**Table No. 60: Women’s Participation In House-Campaigning:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SL.No.</th>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Working Women</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Social Worker</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Women Vendor</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>49</strong></td>
<td><strong>51</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in the table above, seven women in the working women category participated in the house-campaigning. In the student category, only eight sample students participated out of the twenty sample voters. In the social workers category, six women participated in the house-campaigning. In the women vendor category, twelve women participated in the house-campaigning. Sixteen women participated in the house-campaigning in the house-wife category. Thus, 49 per cent of the women voters participated in house-campaigning and 51 per cent did not participate in elections house-campaigning.
5.11.2: ELECTION FEASTINGS:

Table No. 61: Women's Participation in Election Feastings:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SL-No.</th>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Working Women</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Social Worker</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Women Vendor</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>46</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in the table above, four women out of forty participated in the election feastings in the working women category. In the student category, twelve women participated out of the twenty sample women voters. Another six women participated in the election feastings in the social worker category. In the women vendor category, only eight women participated in the election feastings and sixteen women participated in the Housewife category. Thus, 46 per cent of the sample women voters participated in elections feastings and 54 per cent did not participate in it.
5.11.3: ELECTION MEETINGS:

In the context of Manipur during the election period, Election Meetings were organised by various political parties. Women voters in Manipur outnumbered their male counterparts in some public meetings held during elections in Manipur. Some women workers of political parties organized small or big meetings in various places of Manipur including their localities where candidates used to go and give speeches during the course of election meetings. In many public meetings, the political parties usually invite their senior leaders whether they are from the Centre or from other constituencies of Manipur. For example, in the 1972 Assembly elections, Smt. Indira Gandhi arrived at the Imphal airport by an Indian Air Force plane, and from there, flew down to Lamphel in a helicopter where she addressed an election meeting. After that she flew to Churachandpur and Kakching.\(^{54}\)

Table No.62: WOMEN’S PARTICIPATION IN ELECTION MEETINGS:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SL.NO.</th>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Working Women</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Social Worker</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Women Vendor</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{54}\) *Ibid*. P.90.
As shown in the table above, eight working women out of the total twenty participated in election meetings. In the student category, twelve women out of the twenty sample women voters participated. Six women voters from the social worker category participated in the election meetings. In the women vendor category, twelve women participated in the election meetings and in the Housewife category, sixteen women participated in the election meetings. Thus, majority of the women voters participated in the election meetings. Thus, 54 per cent of the sample women voters participated in election meetings and 46 per cent did not participate in elections meetings.

5.11.4: FLAGS HOISTING CEREMONIES:

Table No. 63: WOMEN’S PARTICIPATION IN FLAG HOISTING CEREMONIES:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SL.NO.</th>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Working Women</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Social Worker</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Women Vendor</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As shown in the above table, eight women out of the sample twenty in the working women category participated in the flag hoisting ceremonies. Twelve sample students participated in the flag hoisting ceremonies held at the candidate’s residence. Another six women in the social worker category, twelve women in the women vendor category and sixteen in the Housewife category participated in the flag hoisting ceremonies. Thus, 52 per cent of the sample women voters participated in flag hoisting ceremonies held in the candidate’s residence and 48 per cent did not participate in flag hoisting ceremonies.

5.12: ELECTORAL CAMPAIGNS DURING THE 14TH PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS 2004:

In the recent Parliamentary elections of 2004, the electoral campaigning of Manipuri women as well as men was totally different from the previous elections. In the early part of the Parliamentary elections of 2004, a visible campaigning was done by some of the political parties for their respective party’s candidates. But, in the later phase of the elections there was no sign of campaigning done by political parties due to the ban imposed by various organizations of Manipur. One new form of campaigning was introduced by some candidates through postal campaign. According to the Imphal Free Press, “A novel way of election campaigning has been invented by the candidates and political parties who are in the fray for Inner Manipur Parliamentary seat elections scheduled for April 26th 2004
after UGs have boycotted and banned the LS elections. Since the UGs and many women organizations boycotted the Lok Sabha elections of 2004, no women were seen participating in electoral campaigning.

Following the threats of the underground forces and several other organizations including women's organizations, public meetings, flag hoisting ceremonies and rallies related to the elections were not taken up. The candidates and parties in order to update their voters wrote down their ideas, serial numbers and symbols, posted their information sheets through the mail and trusted couriers.

5.13: CONCLUSION:

To conclude, it may be stated that voting behaviour may be defined as the behaviour which indicates the voter's choices, preferences, alternatives, agreements, concerns, ideology, programme and so on in respect of the various questions or issues on which the various elections are fought. Voting behaviour begins or initiates the play of power, which is the sole means with which men operate the various processes or situations of politics. Voting has a tremendous impact on equalizing and mobilizing women. Caste, personality and kinship ties with candidates appear to be more important to voters than party ideology or affiliations in some of the states of India.

56 Ibid.
In the context of Manipur, women voters in Manipur have been enjoying their voting rights since the first election which was held in 1952. There were many factors which motivated the Manipuri women voters to vote. Some of the factors were party ideology, political parties, party manifestoes, family’s influences, and locality’s influences. Majority of the women voters were influenced by family, kinship ties, and personality factor of the candidate, Political party ideology, manifestoes, or locality could influence only a few section of the women voters.

Many women voters took part in campaigning during the pre-2004 elections. Some of the common aspects of campaigning done by the womenfolk of Manipur are house-to-house campaigning, election meetings, group feasting. But, the voting behaviour of women in Manipur changed from time to time.

In the recent Parliamentary elections held in Manipur in 2004, the voting behaviour was quite different from the previous ones. Some women organizations boycotted the elections held in 2004. Women hardly took part in campaigning during this election unlike the elections in the past.