In this study, an attempt has been made to understand and analyse the political empowerment of women in general and specifically with reference to the empowerment of Manipuri women. An effort has been made to understand the term empowerment of women and its various socio-economic and political dimensions. Two major means of women's empowerment—education and mass media—have been studied. Apart from this, the study examines the major aspects of women's empowerment and the steps taken by the government of India to empower women in socio-economic and political aspects of society. The United Nations Organization's efforts to empower women are also covered. This study further highlights the historical struggle launched by Indian women's organizations for empowerment which started during British era. It also examines the efforts made by Mahatma Gandhi to empower women during the freedom struggle of India. In addition to this study, the attempt has been made to evaluate the political parties' efforts to mobilize women to empower them after India's Independence. It also highlights women's struggle for their reservation since pre-Independent India. It further presents the arguments for and against women's reservation in the Legislative Assembly and Parliament.
In the context of the state of Manipur, the study focuses on the roles played by Manipuri women in the political affairs during the Monarchical as well as the British period. Two of the well known instances are the first and the second Nupi-lan (Women’s agitation) of 1904 and 1939 are also covered. Women of Manipur have been enjoying voting rights since the first elections of 1948 which took place in Constitutional monarchical era. But since the merger of Manipur to the Indian Union, women of Manipur started contesting in the elections. The study also analyses the Manipuri women’s representations in the Legislative Assembly, Parliament as well as in the Local Elected Bodies at the grass root level, following the implementation of the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments of India. In this study, the factors which motivated the Manipuri women voters and the methods of campaigning by Manipuri women are also examined.

The Thesis contains six chapters. The first chapter deals with the meaning, concept and different aspects of women empowerment in general. This chapter examines the Constitutional steps and other provisions taken by the government of India to empower Indian women. It also highlights the United Nations Organization’s efforts to empower women and also covers some western political thinkers who pleaded for gender equality.

In the second chapter, women organization’s struggles for empowerment through reservation are highlighted. It also examines the initiatives
undertook by Mahatma Gandhi during freedom struggle to empower women. This chapter also covered the recent steps taken by the political parties to empower women and the struggle for reservation launched by women since pre-independent India. It further analyses the argument for and against the women’s reservation Bill in the Legislative Assembly and Parliament.

The third chapter deals with Manipuri women’s historic role in protecting the territory of the Manipuri Kingdom. The chapter also highlights the active participation of women in Manipur in the political affairs of the state even during the British period. It also covered their political participation since the merger to present time.

In the fourth chapter, Manipuri women’s representations in the elected bodies of Manipur are examined. In this chapter, an effort is made to focus on the nature of the working of the elected women members at the higher as well as the grass root levels.

In the fifth chapter, attempts have been made to understand the concept of voting behaviour in general with special reference to Manipuri women’s voting behaviour. The factors which motivated the women voters to vote in general are covered. It also specifically covers Manipuri women electoral campaigning during elections.
The sixth chapter is based not only on the observations of all the chapters but also offers some suggestions to empower women politically through quota system which would ultimately enable them to secure socio-economic empowerment too.

This research is based on both primary and secondary sources. Primary sources such as the election results, Office of the Chief Electoral Officer, publications of Manipur Legislative Assembly, State Election Commission, Election Office, DIPR Journals, government of Manipur, Directorate of Economics and Statistics Publications, Central Statistical Organisation, Department of Social Welfare, government of India and the United Nations Organisation's publications were used. Interviews conducted with some women who were elected in the Legislative Assembly, Parliament, Municipal Councils, Nagar Panchayats, Zilla Parishads and Gram Sabhas in Manipur are included in the primary sources. It also included Interviews conducted with some Intellectuals of Manipur, findings of the Questionnaires sent to some selected sample women voters. The consulted secondary sources were Books, Articles in Journals, Seminar papers, Local/ National dailies, Ph.D Thesis.