

# **ABSTRACT**

## **Electronic Media in Mizoram: An Interpretative Study of Its Development.**

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**By  
IRENE LALRUATKIMI  
Ph.D. Registration No.: Ph.D /1980/12 dated 01/10/12**



**DEPARTMENT OF MASS COMMUNICATION  
ABANINDRANATH TAGORE SCHOOL OF CREATIVE ARTS AND  
COMMUNICATION STUDIES  
ASSAM UNIVERSITY  
SILCHAR-788011, INDIA  
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## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

“History is a bridge connecting the past with the present and pointing the road to the future”, a great historian Allen Nerins framed it. According to author Stacia Deutch, history is full of benefits. She notes that history enhances judgment and decision making the current generation with instances where good and bad decisions were made. This eventually forms the basis of learning and virtual aid to any crucial judgment or decision making. Most judicial systems around the world borrow heavily from historical circumstances in the course of delivering justice. It presents the opportunity to learn from examples of the past. It allows one to realize where a society is coming from and just how so much it has changed. History provides or serves a good understanding of the people and their culture. It is the great philosopher George Santayana who went down on records for the famous phrase “those who cannot remember history are condemned to repeat it”. History is just as important as the present and the future. Even though a generation has left history in the past, it is very important to understand it. Historical experiences occupy a very important position as sources to which people can make reference and enhance learning. Though not obvious, history applies in the people’s daily life situations. According to Crabtree, history plays a central role in how the present is viewed. Experiences of the past largely influence today’s decisions. Crabtree holds high the understanding that history is not just about dates and past events. It is a phenomenon that is current, valid and influential to the shaping and subsequent creation of our futures.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

“No man is an island” said the sixteenth century poet, John Donne. By the very essence, human persons have been created as social creatures. Hence, as social beings, persons cannot exist without communicating with one another. Communication is the fabric of life. With the advance in technology in this twenty first century, electronic media plays an important role as the main tool for mass communication. Electronic media is defined as a communication delivered via electronics or electrochemical energy. It transmits the information electronically. In the study of mass media, the following media are classified under electronic media – Radio, Television, Film and Cinema.

### **History of North East:**

The history of the North East India has not been given adequate attention in the main stream Indian history writings. Marginal sedation of the North Eastern region could be seen in the trends of historical writings in India. Well known intellectuals of the academic world such as Peter Burke’s “*Popular culture*”, Eric Wolf’s “*People without history*”, E.P Thompson’s “*Unsung voices of history*”, Genovese’s “*Objects and subjects of history*”, Hobsbawm’s “*Social banditry*”, Ranajit Guha’s “*Subaltern studies*”, Lacan’s “*Others*”, Said’s “*Orientalism*”, Barthes’ “*Structural analysis of narratives*”, Derrida’s “*Deconstruction*”, Michel Foucault’s “*History of the historian*”, Skaria’s “*Hybrid histories*” and many more question the existing orthodoxy of historical discourse. This is also true in the context of the North East as the regional specificity has been ignored by the academic community until the recent time. The greatest challenge to the Indian historians is to incorporate regional histories in the broader framework of Indian history. There has been consistent exclusion of North East from the history of India. A well known historian from the North East Sajnal Nag pointed that, “Such

neglect prompted the historians of North East India to take up research on the area but they failed to communicate them to the rest of India. As a result North East continues to suffer from historiographical exclusion. But unless the stories of North east are integrated with the history of the rest of the country, a true national history can never be achieved”.

### **Mizoram:**

Mizoram became the 23<sup>rd</sup> state of Indian Union in February 1987. For over two decades, it has experienced peace and steady progress. Mizoram Peace Accord signed in 1986 has the distinction of being the most enduring and successful Peace Accord in the history of independent India. Perched on the southernmost tip of the north eastern region, Mizoram occupies an area of great strategic importance. It is flanked by Bangladesh on the west and Myanmar on the east of south sharing a total of 722 km international boundary with the two countries. It also shares its borders with three states – Assam, Tripura and Manipur.

### **History of the Mizos:**

On tracing the ethnic background of the Mizos there is confusion over the question of the common nomenclature and origin. This is mainly because that the oral sources are not studied in comparing the relevant information with the prevailing archaeological findings, that are available in the form of big memorial stones, that reveal about the past. However, the literary sources of the Mizos today belong to the British period, brought by the British officials during their short term rule in Mizoram. Another limitation is that Mizo did not form a homogeneous group with a single culture, as there are different clans within the Mizos, therefore in each practice of the clans there are also several variations. There is a lack of recorded history in the case of Mizo history writing. The literary sources among the Mizo became available only in the later part of the nineteenth

century after the advent of the British, when the two missionaries, JH Lorriane and FW Savidge introduced the Roman alphabet for the Mizos and started education in Mac Donald Hill, Aizawl in 1894, which has shouldered the mantle for existence of literature among the Mizo. Tradition has it that once the Mizos were given a book (script) but due to carelessness, the dog carried it away. That was how the script was lost. Therefore, the first sources available are credited to the English.

### **Impact of Christianity on the Mizo.**

The study of the impact of Christianity upon Mizo Society has been undertaken by a numbers of writers, both westerners and the Mizos. The perspective from which such writing is usually done is that of missionary expansion. The earliest works of this type were Grace R. Lewis' *The Lushai Hills: The Story of the Lushai pioneer mission* (1970), M.E. Bowers' *Light on the Lushai Hills: The Story of our Foreign Mission* (1930), David Kyles' *Lorrain of the Lushaia: Romance and Realism on the North-East Frontier of India* (1944). In common with most book of this type were written mainly to inform western readers and to solicit their support for the agents, the missionaries – especially those activities that were successful.

### **Print Media in the state**

The emergence of print media in Mizoram is traced back to the late 1890s. The Christian Missionaries from Britain pioneered and nurtured education among the tribes of Mizoram. The consciousness on communication through print media such as books, journal and newspapers began with the formation of *Lushai Grammar and Dictionary* and the publication of Christian literature like Biblical tracts. In the early days, printing machine was not available in the area, so most of it was printed

outside the region and the local publications were mostly of handwritten or done with typewriter.

The print media in Mizoram as a whole is vibrant and active in its operation. Though extensive coverage of entertainment slanted stories and contents has often been raised as an issue of concern. One local journalist quoted, “Hollywood and international celebrities’ stories need to be widely covered, that is the main way for us to lure the young readers and sell our papers...” Such is the case for many weekly magazines; they need sensationalized stories so as to entice readers to whom a great deal of their survival also depended. It must also be noted that majority of personnel engaged in the media industry are not trained professionals who learn on the job. On a positive note, the growth of Mass Communication and Journalism in the country as a whole has given rise to the growth in the number of trained professionals possessing enthusiasms and skills. A professional approach to the field is on the rise. There has now been a steady growth in the number of journalists having good experience and competency. The print media has also opened up job opportunities for many young educated Mizos which, to a great extent, would help solve the employment problem facing the state. This would, no doubt, make constructive contribution to the on-going progress and development of print journalism in Mizoram.

## **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The specific objectives of the study are:

1. To construct a research base timeline of electronic media in Mizoram.
2. To study the comprehensive and critical account of recent developments.
3. To highlight the important transitional time of electronic media in Mizoram.

## **SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY.**

Mizoram has witnessed certain developments in all fields in the recent years. One of the most important is the development in the field of media. Starting from the print media, now in the world of electronic media it is seen that Mizos are no longer away from the other parts of the world witnessing its revolution.

Research may be simply understood as an attempt to discover something new. The Mizo society like anywhere is experiencing the effect and impact of electronic media. Therefore it becomes important to study its history and gradual development for further development and to understand it better.

## **RESEARCH SETTING**

The research setting of the study is the State of **Mizoram**, in the **North Eastern** part of India.

The study includes all available electronic media houses from government owned to private owned such as Doordarshan Kendra, Aizawl Station, All India Radio Aizawl station, ZOAWI FM Radio, and local cables like ZONET, LPS and Skylinks. Skylinks even though is the first cable television it is not functioning anymore.

From the very beginning the researcher was aware of the fact that there is less materials in written form for data collection.

In the **first phase**, official documents both from government and private media firm were collected. Different libraries were browsed. As the study area is quite new, media houses were at first reluctant to share information and moreover they don't have much written documents which are important. Likewise libraries have less information about the electronic media of the state.

The **second phase** of data collection was having an interpersonal interview with the owners of the local cables and official of the government owned media like Doordarshan Kendra, Aizawl and All India Radio, Aizawl. Since the interview method was unstructured the interviewee got full freedom to speak out what he thinks is important to mention. This enriched the researcher to get more information than what was expected.

The **third phase** of data collection was having interpersonal communication with prominent citizens and people who had experienced working in the electronic media field. This is also based on non structured interview, where the interviewee felt free to express what he/she wanted to say which is important in the study area.

In the **fourth and final** phase a micro survey was conducted in the capital city of Aizawl. A sample of 110 respondents was selected using a convenience sampling. Of the total respondents, 60 were men and the remaining 50 were women.

In the absence of any rigorous data resources, the researcher opted for the convenient sampling method. Though the convenient sampling method has its own drawbacks, yet it reflects the general trend among the audience.

## **DATA ANALYSIS**

Since the research is based on both historical and explanatory research, the data was analyzed from all the available information collected. The information collected was collated, and interpreted to bring out the objective of the study in its best.

The data collected from the 110 respondents is analyzed both in terms of percentage and chi-square test. Since the data collected is nominal in nature, the chi-square test (a non- parametric) test is employed. The results are interpreted accordingly. The independent variables selected for analysis are sex, age and education.



## **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The main research questions designed for the purpose of analysis are:

1. What is the time spent on listening to radio and the part of the day preferred for listening?
2. What programmes are preferred by the listeners?
3. What is the duration of time spent by the viewers for watching television programmes?
4. What do the respondents think of TV channels, whether they are more entertainment- oriented?
5. Whether the respondents perceive that TV news channels are resorting to sensationalism in their presentation?
6. Whether television channels emphasize more on politics?
7. Whether any code of ethics is need for electronic media in Mizoram?
8. What is the perception of audience as regards the quality of programmes in local cable TV channels?
9. What TV channels and types of programmes are preferred by the audience?
10. What is the audience perception of objectivity in news presentation by TV channels?
11. Whether TV channels emphasize more on politics according to the audience view?
12. Do TV news channels resort to sensationalism in their presentation?
13. What is the view of audience to the suggestion that electronic media in Mizoram should be supported by the state government?
14. What is the view of audience on the professional aspect of electronic media in Mizoram?

## **HYPOTHESIS**

The hypotheses designed for statistical test of the data are:

RH1: There is a relationship between the gender of the respondent and listening to radio.

HO1: The gender of respondents and listening to radio are not related.

RH2: Age of respondents and radio listening are related.

HO2: Age of respondents and radio listening are not related.

RH3: Education of respondents and radio listening are related

HO3: Education of respondents and listening to radio are not related

RH4: Time spent on television viewing and the genders of respondents are related.

HO4: Time spent on television viewing and the genders of respondents are not related.

RH5: There is an association between the gender of respondents and their perception of television channels being objective in news presentation.

HO5: There is no association between the gender of respondents and their perception of television channels being objective in presentation.

RH6: There is an association between the age of respondents and their Perception of television channels in news presentation.

HO6: There is no association between the age of respondents and their perception of television channels in news presentation.

RH7: There is an association between the education of respondents and their perception of television channels being objective in news presentation.

HO7: There is no association between the education of respondents and their perception of television channels being objective in news presentation.

RH8: Respondent perception of orientation of television channels and gender are related.

HO8: Respondent perception of orientation of television channels and gender are not related.

RH9: Age and perception of more entertainment orientation of television channels are related.

HO9: Age and perception of more entertainment orientation of television channels are not related.

RH10: Education of respondents and perception of television channels being more entertainment oriented are related.

HO10: Education of respondents and perception of television channels being more entertainment oriented are not related.

RH11: Gender of respondents and their perception that television channels are resorting to sensationalism are related.

HO11: Gender of respondents and their perception that television channels are resorting to sensationalism are not related.

RH12: Age of respondents and their perception that television channels are resorting to sensationalism are related.

HO12: Age of respondents and their perception that television channels are resorting to sensationalism are not related.

RH 13: Education of respondents and their perception of television channels resorting to sensationalism are related.

HO13: Education of respondents and their perception of television channels resorting to sensationalism are not related.

RH14: Gender of respondents and the perception that TV channels emphasize more on politics are related.

HO14: Gender of respondents and the perception that TV channels emphasize more on politics are related.

RH15: Age of respondents and the perception that TV channels emphasize more on politics are related.

HO15: Age of respondents and the perception that TV channels emphasize more on politics are not related.

RH16: Education of respondents and the perception that TV channels emphasize more on politics are related.

HO16: Education of respondents and the perception that TV channels emphasize more on politics are related.

RH17: Gender and opinion of respondents on code of ethics for electronic media in Mizoram are related.

HO17: Gender and opinion of respondents on code of ethics for electronic media in Mizoram are related.

RH18: Age of respondents and opinion on code of ethics for electronic media in Mizoram are related.

HO18: Age of respondents and opinion on code of ethics for electronic media in Mizoram are not related.

RH19: Education of respondents and opinion on code of ethics for electronic media in Mizoram are related.

HO19: Education of respondents and opinion on code of ethics for electronic media in Mizoram are not related.

RH 20: Gender and perception on quality of programmes in local cable television channels are associated.

HO 20: Gender and perception on quality of programmes in local cable television channels are not associated.

RH 21: Age of respondents and perception on quality of programmes in local cable television channels are associated.

HO21: Age of respondents and perception on quality of programmes in local cable television channels are not associated.

RH 22: Education of respondents and perception on quality of programmes in local cable television channels are associated.

HO 22: Education of respondents and perception on quality of programmes in local cable television channels are not associated.

RH 23: There is a relation between the gender of respondents and the view that Mizoram electronic media should be supported by state government.

HO23: There is no relation between the gender of respondents and the view that Mizoram electronic media should be supported by state government.

RH 24: There is an association between the gender of respondents and the view on electronic media in Mizoram as professional.

HO 24: There is an association between the gender of respondents and the view on electronic media in Mizoram as professional.

## **SUMMARY AND FINDING**

In order to bring out the objective of the study, documents from government offices, private offices, journals, and archives were collected and also data from in depth interviews with people working in the field and people who had experience of working with the media but are no longer engaged with it. The summary and important findings are classified under sub heads like Radio, Television and Cable Television. Apart from it other interesting and important points came up:

1. Mizoram has one common dialect called Mizo dialect. This becomes an advantage point for the media to progress. Also it becomes easier in producing more local programs.
2. English being the second language of the state, English channels becomes the most watched other than the local programs.
3. Hindi the national language is not understood by the majority, therefore Hindi channel are not at all watched. But serials and films dubbed in local language is quite popular.

In the summary and findings chapter the following points are also discuss as well:

1. Advertising
2. Access and reach
3. Media management
4. Professionalism
5. Electronic media and Audience

## **FEW TABLES FROM THE FINDINGS**

**Table 4 (a): Listening to radio: Sex wise distribution of respondents**

<b>Sex</b>	<b>Listening</b>	<b>Not Listening</b>	<b>Total</b>
Male	66.67 % (40)	33.33% (20)	54.55% (60)
Female	40.00% (20)	60.00 % (30)	45.45% (50)
Total	54.55% (60)	45.45% (50)	100.00 % (110)

In the sex wise distribution of respondents as to radio listening, 66.67% men and 40.00 % of women respondents in the affirmative while 33.33% of men and 60% of men answered in the negative. The data shows that men listen to radio more than women.

**Table 6 (a): Hour of time of listening to radio and sex wise distribution of respondents.**

<b>Sex</b>	<b>Morning</b>	<b>Afternoon</b>	<b>Evening</b>	<b>Whenever I find time</b>	<b>Total</b>
Male	05.00 % (02)	-	-	95.00% (38)	66.67% (40)
Female	05.00% (01)	-	05.00% (01)	90.00% (18)	33.33% (20)
Total	05.00% (03)	-	01.67 % (1)	93.33 % (56)	100.00 % (60)

When the hour of listening to radio is considered, 95.00 % of men and 90.00 % of women respondents averred that they listen to radio whenever they find time. This clearly shows that there is no fixed time slot to listen to radio broadcasting among the respondent of Aizawl.

**Table 6 (b): Time of listening to radio and distribution of respondents age wise.**

<b>Sex</b>	<b>Morning</b>	<b>Afternoon</b>	<b>Evening</b>	<b>Whenever I find time</b>	<b>Total</b>
18 – 30 years	-	-	-	100.00% (32)	53.33% (32)
31 – 50 years	5.26% (1)	-	5.26% (1)	89.48% (17)	31.67% (19)
50 years and above	22.22% (2)	-	-	77.78% (7)	15.00% (09)
Total	05.00% (3)	-	1.67 % (1)	93.33 % (56)	100.00 % (60)

When different age groups were asked about the time of the day they listen to radio, 100.00% of 18 – 30 years, 84.48% of 30-50 years and 77.78% of 50 years and above posited that they listened to radio whenever they found time. It shows that there is no fixed time slot for radio listener to listen to programmes broadcast.

**Table 6 (c): Time of the day for listening to radio and education wise distribution of respondents.**

<b>Education wise</b>	<b>Morning</b>	<b>Afternoon</b>	<b>Evening</b>	<b>Whenever I find time</b>	<b>Total</b>
Upto matriculation	-	-	-	100.00% (04)	6.67% (04)
Graduation	-	-	-	100.00% (33)	55.00% (33)
Post graduation	13.04% (3)	-	4.35% (1)	82.61% (19)	-
Total	05.00% (3)	-	1.67% (1)	93.33 % (56)	100.00% (60)

As is the case with the groups of other classification, most respondents belonging to various education groups listen to radio broadcasting whenever they find time. This category of reponse includes 100.00% each of matriculations and graduates and 82.61% of post graduates.



**Table 10 (a): Perception as to whether television is entertainment-oriented and the sex wise distribution of respondents.**

Sex	Entertainment oriented	Entertainment oriented	Total
Male	91.67% (55)	8.33 % (5)	54.55% (60)
Female	86.00 % (43)	14.00% (7)	45.45% (50)
Total	89.09% (98)	10.91 % (12)	100.00 % (110)

The too much emphasis of television channels on entertainment has received flat from media watchers. 91.67% of men and 83.00% of women agree that the television channels are more entertainment oriented than education. Only 14.00% of women and 8.33% of men do not consider so.

**Table 10 (b): Perception as to whether television is entertainment-oriented and the age wise distribution of respondents.**

Age wise	Entertainment oriented	Entertainment oriented	Total
18 – 30 years	88.57% (62)	11.43% (8)	63.64% (70)
31 – 50 years	36.67% (26)	13.33 % (4)	27.27% (30)
50 years and above	100.00% (10)	-	09.09% (10)
Total	89.09% (98)	10.91% (12)	100.00% (110)

All the age groups of respondents have the perception that television is heavily entertainment-oriented. 100.00% of 50 years and above, 88.57% of 18-30 years and 86.67% of 31-50 years have this opinion. In fine, 89.09% of respondents feel so.

## CHI-SQUARE TEST (Few results).

**H01: The gender of respondents and listening to radio are not related.**

Gender	Listening (O-E)	Not Listening (O-E)	Total
Male	40 (32.71)	20 (27.3)	60
Female	20 (27.3)	30 (22.7)	50
Total	60	50	110

$$d7 = (2-1) (2-1) = 1$$

$$(O-E) (O-E)^2/E$$

$$40-32.7 \quad (7.3)^2 = 53.29 \quad = 1.629$$

$$20 - 27.3 \quad (7.3)^2 = 53.29 \quad = 1.952$$

$$20-27.3 \quad (7.3)^2 = 53.29 \quad = 1.952$$

$$30 - 22.7 \quad (7.3)^2 = 53.29 \quad = 2.347$$

$$X^2 = 7.880$$

The table value at 0.050 level of significance with  $d7= 1$  is 3.841. the calculated chi square value is significant and the stated null hypothesis is rejected.

RH: The gender of respondents and listening to radio are related.

RH is accepted.

**RH10: Education of respondents and perception of television channels being more entertainment oriented are not related.**

Education	Objective (O-E)	Not Objective (O-E)	Total
Upto matriculation	4 (3.6)	0 (0.4)	4
Graduation	56 (58.8)	10 (7.2)	66
Post graduation	28 (26.7)	2 (3.3)	30
Professional degrees	10 (8.9)	0 (1.1)	10
Total	98	12	110

$$d7 = (2-1) (4-1) = 3$$

O-E	= 4-3.6	= (0.4) <sup>2</sup>	= 0.16	= 0.044
	56-58.8	= (2.8) <sup>2</sup>	= 7.84	= 0.133
	28-26.7	= (1.3) <sup>2</sup>	= 1.69	= 0.063
	10-8.9	= (1.1) <sup>2</sup>	= 1.21	= 0.135
	0 - 0.4	= (0.4) <sup>2</sup>	=0.16	= 0.400
	10-7.2	= (2.8) <sup>2</sup>	=7.84	= 1.088
	2-3.3	= (1.3) <sup>2</sup>	= 1.69	= 0.512
	0-1.1	= (1.1) <sup>2</sup>	=1.21	= 1.100
		= 21.80	X <sup>2</sup>	= 3.395

The table value at 0.050 level of significance with d7=3 is 7.815. Whereas the test statistic is 3.395 which is not significant. The null hypothesis is accepted, that the education of respondents is not related to their perception that the television channels are more entertainment- oriented.

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The last chapter of the study ends with Conclusion and Recommendation.

### **Conclusion**

The electronic media in Mizoram has progressively moved up along with the rest of the world. Even though Mizoram state situated in the far flung northeast state of the country, it is no longer left behind in terms of use and development of electronic media such as the radio, FM radio, television and cable television.

Great historians have mentioned that, history is a bridge connecting the past with the present and pointing to the road to future. History is full of benefits and that history enhances judgment and decision making. History serves current generation with instances where good and bad decisions were made in the past. Therefore, even though proper documents and achievements of electronic media in the state Mizoram are not maintained, the present study can be used as a reference for the historical study of electronic media.

### **RECOMMENDATION.**

1. It is recommended that all electronic media both government and private owned, should maintain documents properly. Each and every detail of the achievement and activities if maintained will be of great help for further improvement and also for an in depth study of their own media.
2. The study proved that electronic media in the state is not at all aware of or neglect the copyright act and lack professionalism in this area. Therefore, it is recommended strongly that they should know and learn more about of copyright and the various issues involved in it.
3. Mizoram state is in an urgent need for a Media Academy. The government should see that the state should also have Media academy

like Kerala, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh where more professional would come up and the development of Media will excel.

4. Mizoram media should try to have subscriptions to national and international news agencies to be more informative, accurate and for improvement of quality and professionalism.
5. In order to have better and more professional media in the state, the government should established a strong media development finance corporation, who would help in internship or training for working journalist in reputed channels both in India and abroad. Creating an environment of healthy competition among various media outlets. Forming association of broadcasters having its affiliation to national organization, presenting awards and recognition for journalists.