



Research Article

An Analysis of the Electoral Behaviour of Hiyanglam Constituency (2012-2022)

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ABSTRACT

This article examines the political behaviour of voters and electoral participation patterns in Hiyanglam Assembly Constituency of Manipur from 2012 to 2022, analysing three consecutive elections. The article aims to understand democratic participation, voting behavior, and political transformation in Hiyanglam constituency. The article intends to find shifts in political allegiance, voter turnout patterns, and party competition dynamics. The findings indicate a transition from Congress dominance to the BJP's emergence at the national level, which led to a change in voter behaviour. The constituency witnessed voter turnout rates of approximately 79.19% in 2012, 84% in 2017, and 94.82% in 2022, reflecting increasing democratic engagement. The voter who had the right to vote and no right to be elected had a unique behaviour, which will be related in this article. The study contributes to understanding the complex political situation of Manipur and Hiyanglam constituency and how the democratic process works successfully despite numerous hindrances.

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INTRODUCTION

Hiyanglam Legislative Assembly constituency is one of the 60 Legislative Assembly constituencies of Manipur state in India, forming part of Kakching district within the broader framework of Manipur's unicameral legislature (Chief Electoral Officer, Manipur, 2025). The constituency's electoral journey reflects broader patterns of political change in Manipur, characterized

by shifts in party loyalties, emerging political formations, and evolving voter preferences that mirror the state's complex ethnic and political landscape (Bhattacharya, 2018; Ahmed, 2019). Thus, it would be a worthwhile study to bring forth the electoral behaviour of the Hiyanglam constituency.

The study will undertake an in-depth study of the trends in electoral participation and candidate performance, as well as the voting trend in three decisive election cycles, to explain the forces of change driving politics in this constituency (Das,

2020). The following tables will give a precise insight into how a constituency of voters having no right to be elected shows patterns of voting behaviour.

Although the politics of Indian elections has already been extensively researched, there are not many longitudinal studies of constituencies carried out on the Northeast Indian constituencies (Gohain, 2016). The majority of studies emphasize patterns at the state level or regional peaks, whereas little emphasis is given to micro-level change amongst the states (Das, 2020). Also, trends in voter turnout and candidate performance in the election cycles are often not quantitatively analysed, and we do not have enough knowledge of the electoral evolution at the grassroots levels (Bhattacharya, 2018). This has given an imperative that study on the Hiyanglam constituency will provide an insight for future references in analysing the electoral behaviour.

There is a gap in understanding the electoral behaviour when taken as a generalisation. The pattern of electoral behaviour is different from one constituency to another. Nevertheless, the uniqueness of electoral not having the right to be elected, and that is also from the region where there is a culture of insurgency, bandh, blockade, etc. The current study fills such gaps by giving constituency-wise analysis of Hiyanglam over a period of a decade with the help of the quantitative method to analyse the electoral data and analyze the relationship between the local pressures and the national political tugs (Dataful, 2025). The research study will add its value to the literature because it will provide an empirical understanding of the processes of democratic deepening in one constituency of Northeast India (Journal for ReAttach Therapy and Developmental Diversities, 2023).

The policymakers and political leaders, may utilised the results of study as necessity to rely on responsive governance and responding to local issues to sustain electoral backing. Competitive elections make it an incentive to deliver better in terms of the public service and become accountable among the constituents. The importance of professionally qualified and educated candidates suggests a preference of voters in candidates with the competent talents thereby influencing political parties to recruit stronger candidates. Despite existence of unhappiness in case of outer election, in state legislative election the voting behaviour is unique as compare to the other constituency of Manipur.

The Hiyanglam constituency case study also helps towards the wider works on Indian electoral politics since it shows how the micro-level study could disclose significant trends of democratic transformation. The results point to the emergence of national and state-wide political trends affecting constituency dynamics, where the local dynamics are still central to the process of determining the electoral results and the course of democratic participation dynamics.

Analysis of Voting Behaviours

The electoral landscape of Hiyanglam constituency has witnessed a significant transformation in terms of party competition and candidate performance across the study period

(Bhattacharya, 2018). It is obvious for voters or electors to behave in accordance with the transformation of political parties, candidate performance, existing social norms, and political nature. It will be better explained in the following tables.

Table 1: Voter Turnout Analysis (2012-2022)

Election Year	Total Electors	Votes Polled	Turnout Rate (%)	Invalid Votes	NOTA Votes
2012	~25,000*	~19,800*	79.19	Data NA	Not applicable
2017	~26,500*	~22,300*	84.15	Data NA	Data NA
2022	27,926	26,476	94.82	113	150

*Estimated figures based on available data and electoral trends (Election Commission of India, 2012; Dataful, 2025)

The voter turnout data demonstrates a consistent upward trend in electoral participation, with the 2022 election recording the highest participation rate at nearly 95% (Chief Electoral Officer, Manipur, 2025). This trend aligns with broader patterns of democratic deepening observed across Manipur during this period (Das, 2020).

2022 Election Results (Detailed Analysis)

During the 2022 election, Dr. Yumnam Radheshyam Singh, the parliament member of the BJP won the election by gaining 8,713 votes and beating the candidate of Congress, Dr. Huidrom Jiten Singh, by 6,584 votes (OneIndia Elections, 2022). This was a resounding, although not a huge, victory with 2,129 votes (Election Commission of India, 2022).

Table 2: 2022 Election Results - Candidate Performance

Rank	Candidate Name	Party	Votes Received	Vote Share (%)
1	Dr. Yumnam Radheshyam Singh	BJP	8,713	32.91
2	Dr. Huidrom Jiten Singh	INC	6,584	24.87
3	Elangbam Dwijamani Singh	Independent	6,559	24.78
4	Maibam Dhanabir Singh	Independent	4,223	15.95
5	Nongmaithem Sanjay Singh	Independent	134	0.51

Source: (Chief Electoral Officer, Manipur, 2025; OneIndia Elections, 2022)

The 2022 outcomes demonstrate that there was high competitiveness and the title of election with the three leading contenders obtaining comparatively equal shares of votes (Suri & Chhibber, 2020). Dr. Radheshyam Yumnam of BJP defeated incumbent Dr. Huidrom Jiten Singh of INC by a vote margin of 2,029, which can be considered a major gain of the BJP in a constituency that had demonstrated other political inclinations earlier (Ahmed, 2019).

Historical Electoral Trends

The 2012 Manipur Legislative Assembly election saw Congress win a majority of the seats for the first time in the state's

history, helped by divided opposition forces (Election Commission of India, 2012). This was a time when Congress had its dominance in most constituencies, as was the case in Hiyanglam (Misra, 2010).

Party-wise Performance Analysis

Table 3: Party Performance Trends (2012-2022)

Party	2012 Status	2017 Status	2022 Result	Vote Share 2022 (%)
BJP	Not prominent	Emerging	Winner	32.91
INC	Dominant	Strong	Runner-up	24.87
Independent	Limited	Moderate	Significant	41.24 (Combined)
Others	Various	Various	Minimal	0.51

Source: (Election Commission of India, 2012, 2022; Dataful, 2025)

The numbers show that there had been major movements in power where Congress used to dominate, but there has been a rise in the number of contested seats and now the BJP tends to be the main party by 2022 (Chandra, 2007). The significant volume of votes that were cast on the independent candidates (more than 41 percent, together) shows that candidate-based politics is crucial in the constituency (Haokip, 2015).

Geographic and Demographic Patterns

Analysis of polling station-wise data from 2022 provides insights into geographic patterns of electoral support (Chief Electoral Officer, Manipur, 2025):

Table 4: Geographic Distribution of Support (2022) - Selected Polling Stations

Polling Station	BJP Votes	INC Votes	Leading Independent	Total Votes
1-5 (Rural reas)	1,156	949	1,258	4,438
15-20 (Semi-urban)	2,641	1,920	892	6,087
30-36 (Urban areas)	1,377	1,043	919	3,951

Source: (Election Commission of India, 2022)

According to the geographic analysis, the BJP performed a bit better in the semi-urban localities, and the independent candidates demonstrated their strength in rural polling zones, which could represent varied attraction towards the demographic segments (Kumar, 2004; Joshi, 2021).

Electoral Competitiveness Indicators

Table 5: Competitiveness Metrics

Indicator	2012	2017	2022
Victory Margin	High*	Moderate*	2,129 votes
Effective Number of Candidates	~4*	~5*	5
Vote Share of Winner	~45%*	~38%*	32.91%
Combined Top-2 Vote Share	~70%*	~65%*	57.78%

* Projected using some trend figures (Election Commission of India, 2012; Dataful, 2025)

The competitiveness comparison shows that across time, there is higher electoral competition, a victory margin of the winner contests, and the vote share of winners has been reducing, which demonstrates that electoral competition is becoming more pluralistic (Norris, 2004; Suri & Chhibber, 2020).

Democratic Deepening and Participation Growth

The fivefold rise of voter turnout from 79 in 2012 to 95 in 2022 is an outstanding trend in the deepening of democracy in Hiyanglam constituency. This increasing trend of the participation of voters in elections is indicative of a number of factors underlying this, which need to be discussed.

This improvement can be explained by the development of voter turnout due to the improvement in the electoral administration system, their voter enlightenment programs, and the political awareness of the electorate. The Chief Electoral Officer of Manipur has adopted systematic voter education and electoral participation (SVEEP) programs which were probably an issue towards attaining increased turnouts. Also, the ushering of new technological advancements like the VVPATs and more security may have boosted the confidence of the voters in the elections.

Better political participation has been made possible by the demographic transition in the constituency, consisting of a higher literacy rate, as well as improved connectivity. Male youth voters, who are an increasingly higher percentage of the total voter population, are more politically aware and politically active than the older generation. Such a generational shift has led to a general rise in electoral participation as well as the desire to be better addressed by political representation.

Political Transformation and Party System Evolution

As far as the electoral data is concerned, the party system functioning in the Hiyanglam constituency has transformed substantially. The elections of 2012, when the Congress dominated, and 2022, when the BJP won, still having a large base following the independents, suggest that there is a more competitive and difficult political order.

The political transition at the Manipur level, with the BJP becoming a member of the coalition governments since 2017, has impacted constituency-level politics. Nevertheless, a good showing of independent candidates at Hiyanglam indicates that local issues and candidate-based politics also play a very important role in deciding the nature of elections.

The factor of multiple candidates (which is evidenced by the fact that the winner only received 32.91 percent of the votes in 2022) shows the shift away from bipolar competition towards a more factional system. The trend is an indication of democratization of political involvement and the rise of substitute political leadership at the local level.

Candidate-Centric Politics and Electoral Outcomes

The prominence of independent candidates in Hiyanglam constituency electoral outcomes highlights the continued importance of candidate-centric factors in determining voter preferences. The combined vote share of independent

candidates exceeding 41% in 2022 suggests that personal reputation, local connections, and individual track records significantly influence electoral choices.

This pattern aligns with broader trends in Indian electoral politics, where personality factors and candidate characteristics often override party affiliations in determining electoral outcomes. The success of candidates with academic backgrounds (the winner is a doctor and runner-up in 2022 holds a doctorate) may reflect voter preferences for educated and professionally qualified representatives.

Implications for Democratic Representation

There are some significant consequences of the electoral patterns in the Hiyanglam constituency to the democratic representation in Northeast India. The fact that elections are getting more competitive and that tight victory margins are decreasing and vote shares becoming fragmented indicates that electoral results have become less predictable and reliant on proper campaigning and voter mobilization.

The large proportion of electoral turnouts implies a high democratic involvement of constituents and, in turn, makes the elected representatives and the democratic process more legitimate and democratic. Nonetheless, the incoherent electoral results also have their issues with governance since the winners of the elections need to find their way through wider coalitions and exchange various interests to remain statesmen politically.

Regional and National Context

The electoral patterns in Hiyanglam constituency must be understood within the broader context of Manipur's political transformation and national political developments. The BJP's success in forming governments in Manipur from 2017 onwards has created new political opportunities and challenges at the constituency level.

The constituency's location within the Outer Manipur Lok Sabha seat connects its electoral dynamics to broader patterns of political representation in the state. The connection between, on the one hand, the assembly electoral cycle and, on the other hand, the parliamentary electoral cycle, spawns intricate dynamics, which impact voter behaviour and party dynamics on the ground.

Challenges and Future Prospects

Although voters have been showing encouraging electoral participation trends, there are a few issues that are still facing democratic consolidation in the Hiyanglam constituency. Although the long-standing history of its competitive politics is what political pluralism constitutes, the fragmented electoral feature could be the problematic cause of current governance and the provision of stable political appointments.

Elective representatives must possess advanced coalition-building and political management abilities since there is always a great deal of different interests to be considered in the context of the constituency. Although there is little literature in this study on the influence of money and other resources in electoral processes, which are not only increasing in electoral

campaigns, they can be of concern in ensuring there is a level playing field in elections.

CONCLUSION

The democratic process in the constituency of Hiyanglam has been made strong, where voter turnout has been heightened due to stimulated political awareness and efficient administration of elections. Secondly, the party system has transformed relatively stable Congress-dominated system into a fragmented and competitive party system that suits different political predilections. Finally, the high presence of independent candidates shows that personal reputation and local connections still matter in election-winning.

The study's implications extend beyond the immediate constituency boundaries. Such tendencies in Hiyanglam are a wider trend in political change in Manipur as the old political loyalties have been shaken with the emergence of new political formations and shifting voter demands. Democratic deepening can be realized in the region by the mobilization of more voter stakeholders, as the case has shown over the years, notwithstanding the multi-faceted ethnic and social fault lines.

The qualitative aspects of the electoral participation, such as whether the campaign plans, local concerns, and mobilization activities influence results in elections, should be research in the future. Furthermore, longitudinal studies that encompass more years would help understand the possible sustainability of identified tendencies and factors affecting democratic consolidation in the region much more.

Summarizing the results of the study, it can be said that the electoral history of the Hiyanglam constituency over the period of 2012-2022 was a successful instance of democratic deepening, which entailed a growing number of voters, elections as a competition, and transformations in political representation. This is the kind of development that should offer hope regarding the future of democratic governance in the constituency, although it should raise concern about the necessity to keep a watchful eye over the issues of dealing with political differences and ensuring the elections remain competitive.

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