INTRODUCTION

Motivation is an important aspect in any activity of learning and doing. It is the motivation that acts as a stimulus and coordinates with our brain, hands, feet and other parts of our body organs. In martial arts the movement philosophy and coordination is vital which requires a person to be conscious and self motivated to perform an art. Motivation is important in almost every aspect of human behaviour. Student motivation is the element that leads student’s attitude towards learning process. Martial arts and motivation are closely associated with each others. The ancient traditional martial arts of Manipur known as Huyen Lallong commonly Thang Ta plays with swords and spears, is a strong yet gracefully sophisticated art. Anonymous (2019)\(^1\) Prof. H Tombi mentioned that Thang Ta is generally considered as a form of martial arts for self defence but it is an important art and origin of invaluable culture of Manipur. It is recognised by Government of India and many Thang Ta artists have been decorated with Sangeet Natak Akademi Awards. Barun H (2011)\(^2\) Thang Ta is a complete martial art, complete in the sense that it has both the external (physical & health) & internal (meditation, concentration, self cultivation, & awareness of spirit & mind) components, including spiritual & ritualistic aspects, the practice of which not only keeps us healthy and helps in self-defence, but also makes us aware of our rich cultural heritage and the great heroism of our forefathers.

Zhen Hao Zeng (2019)\(^3\) noted the definitions of martial arts given by a martial arts specialist Prof. Dr. Cynarski indicated that: “Martial arts are the forms of psychophysical activity linked to a certain tradition of hand-to-hand fight or using weapons, aimed at personal development and merging educational methods with improvement in spiritual dimension. Ways of martial arts include certain forms of physical (psychophysical) culture, which, based on tradition of warrior cultures lead, through training of fighting techniques, to psychophysical improvement and self-realization.

Michael E T (2017)\(^4\) Martial arts have been practiced by humans for many centuries. The early development of martial arts is associated with the human quest for finding a better way of fighting and subduing enemies. Parul Shah and et al \(^5\) The ancient martial art of Manipur, Thang Ta known as Huyen

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Lallong/langlong developed from the war environment of the tiny state of Manipur in North-east India, which was an independent kingdom since the early Christian era. In Manipur in the Meitei language, *huyen* means war while *langlon* or *lallon* can mean net, knowledge or art. Huyen langlon consists of two main components: thang-ta (armed combat) and sarit sarak (unarmed fighting). The primary weapons of huyen langlon are the thang (sword) and ta (spear).

Thang Ta, ancient martial arts is becoming popular in many states and countries because of its benefits on the overall health and well being of the people. Antonio Silva (2019)\(^7\) Martial arts and combat sports popularity has been growing during the last decades, and the associated benefits for the practitioners, such as improved overall health and increase sense of wellness are widely known. Ashleigh Johnstone and Paloma Mari Beffa (2018)\(^8\) mentioned that during an academic year, an average of three sessions of Taekwondo per week showed improvements in working memory and attention, as well as parentally-reported benefits in concentration and behavioural inhibition.

In martial arts motivation is very crucial. Self motivated or what we can say ‘intrinsic motivation’ comes from within the self which is internal in nature. Afzal Hasan (2010)\(^9\) viewed that a student is intrinsically motivated when he or she is motivated from within and those who are engages in learning purely for attaining a reward or for avoiding some punishment. Van Heerden CH (2014)\(^10\) Intrinsic motivation inspires participation without external incentives and acts as a driver to participate in sport as a result of beliefs and the value that is found in doing the activity.

On the other hand extrinsic motivations are those social-environmental factors collectively called the motivational climate and are innumerable in the sport context (e.g., teammates, sport structures). For example, the coach is considered to be one of the most important architects of the motivational climate in sport. The guru or *sintakpa* mastery on the art to make the students involved in an art is also an important factor to have a positive task environment. Irena Martinkova (2019)\(^11\) expressed that motivation is emphasised on fostering good manners and courtesy, and virtues such as civility, humility, modesty, chivalry, loyalty, courage and bravery, respect for the self, for the opponent, for the master, and possibly also for all sentient beings. Rachel B Sheehan and et al (2018)\(^12\) analysed that motivational climate had significant associations with basic psychological needs. A task climate had positive relationships with competence, autonomy, and relatedness. A coach who endorses a task climate will instil belief in, support free will of, and empathize with athletes, which lead to basic needs satisfaction.

Many researchers especially sports scientist documented many literatures and recommended martial arts for the health point of view. In India hardly one finds the articles on motivation in Thang Ta. Thang Ta importance and popularity is being realised by the country, though it was existed since time immemorial. The Indian Olympic Association in 2006 gave recognition to the Thang Ta Federation of India (TTFI). The fame of the Thang Ta sport also started spreading outside India. The World Thang Ta Council (WTTTC)/Federation (WTTF) was established under the Chairmanship of Oja Huidrom Premkumar, as an international apex body, with Meitei/Meitei Huyen Lallong Thang Ta Academy being the international Headquarters. (Barun H, 2011)\(^13\). Recently the Government of India in Khelo India scheme included Thang Ta as indigenous sports as a part of Fit India movement. The first National Thang Ta Championship was organised by Meitei Huyel Langlong Academy, Yumnam Huidrom, Manipur, India in 1993. Till 2019, Twenty Five National Championship held in different states of India and at the International level five championship have been organised in different countries. Table no. 1 shows the details of competition organised in different states and countries. Twenty one countries participated in the championship as on 2019.

There are many literatures and documents on motivation behind the martial arts in the world in general and Asian in particular namely Taekwondo, Tai chi, Karate, Kung Fu, Wushu etc. but very less research on the Thang Ta of Manipur in particular. The research study aims to bring out motivating factors of the students in practicing the Thang Ta and the prospect of the Thang Ta in future. This martial art itself is very sophisticated and dynamic that it comes under the domain of performing art, culture and sports. These itself defines the feasibility and viability to generate opportunity for the people in general and particularly for the people of Manipur, where the history of Thang Ta originates. To fulfil the gap, the research study sets three objectives namely- To highlight the uniqueness of ancient martial arts, Thang Ta of Manipur. To understand the motivating factors of the students who practices Thang Ta and thirdly to appraise the future prospects of Thang Ta in Manipur.

**Table 1** Competition Organised by Thang Ta Federation of India in India and Abroad

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No.</th>
<th>Level of Competiton</th>
<th>Organised by</th>
<th>Held at</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1st to 25th National Thang Ta Championship/Competition</td>
<td>Meitei Huyel Langlong Academy, Manipur; AMLSVSPM, Amravati; Huyel Langlong Association Delhi; Thang Ta Association Haryana; Thang Ta Association Neemuch; M P; Sivasagar District Thang Ta Association, Assam; Gujrat Thang Ta Association; Goa Thang Ta Association; Uttar Pradesh Thang Ta Association; Chamga District Thang Ta Association, Himachal Pradesh; Rajasthan Thang Ta Association; Tamil Nadu Thang Ta Association; Bihar hand Thang Ta Association; J &amp; K Thang Ta Association; Pondicherry Amateur Thang Ta Association; Thang Ta Martial arts Association of Telangana; Karnatka Thang Ta Association; All Tripura Thang Ta Association, Thang Ta Association of Punjab.</td>
<td>Manipur, Delhi, Maharashtra, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Assam, Gujrat, Goa, Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Bihar hand, Jammu Kashmir, Pondicherry, Telangana, Karnatka, Tripura, Chandigarh, Punjab.</td>
<td>1993 to 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>International 1st – 10th Championship</td>
<td>TTFI, Asian Thang Ta Federation, Korea Thang Ta Federation</td>
<td>India, Iran, Korea.</td>
<td>2011 - 2019</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Primary Data
METHODOLOGY
A questionnaire was prepared to analyse the motivating factors in the involvement of Thang-Ta among the school and college going students in Manipur. To collect the primary data 100 samples who were involved in Thang-Ta activity were purposively studied. Multi stage sampling method was adopted to fulfill the analysis. At the first stage Thang Ta Federation of India (TTFI), Yumnam Huidrom, Manipur was contacted to meet the objectives of the study. In the Second stage, Five valley districts of Manipur were selected purposively because Thang Ta is more commonly practiced by the Meitei community who are mainly residing in the valley district of Manipur. The districts are Bishnupur, Imphal East, Imphal West, Kakching and Thoubal. Under each district, one academy/centre or maheikol were randomly selected as per the convenience of the researchers. In the third stage respondents were randomly asked to fill the questionnaire. Interview schedule was used for the students who are below ten years. The secondary data were taken from websites of TTFT, publication of Journals and reports of GOI in the field of sports and other related area of study. The collected data were tabulated, coded, categorised and quantified. The study design is given in figure 1.

![Figure 1 Methodology](image)

RESULT AND DISCUSSION
Highlighting uniqueness of Thang Ta
The Meitei believed that the practice was originated with the creation of life on earth. Khilton N (1998)12 Its origin lies in the timeless creation myths where, according to local legend, all movements of the Manipuris originated from Thang Ta. Thang Ta is the only martial arts which come under the arms of performing art, culture, ritual, ceremony, sports and education.

![Figure 2 Domains of Thang Ta](image)

In the demonstration of Thang Ta as performing arts decorative swords known as leiteng haiba, sariit sarak, thabi kakpa etc. are commonly practiced and shown. In terms of culture, Thang Ta is indigenous and associated with Manipur, the art is showcased in many cultural programmes all over the world for example Ranganiketan Cultural Art Troupe performed in many countries. Thang Ta was, for the first time, demonstrated as a game in the 5th National Games in 1999. In the local ritual practices Thang Ta art namely ta khousaba, thengourol are mainly performed in the state. Thengourol is usually performed by the learned guru. Yong Jae Ko (2010)13 Martial arts include such disciplines as Aikido, Hapkido, Judo, Ju-Jitsu, Karate, Kendo, Kungfu, Sanshou, Tai Chi, Taekwondo, Tang Su Do and Wushu, among many. Today, as a result of tremendous growth of this industry, martial arts have become an integral part of sports and physical activity culture that convey lifestyles and values of education and entertainment in many western countries. Recently, the Government of India, Khelo India Schemes included Thang Ta as an indigenous sport in their Fit India campaign. In the Education sector, Thang Ta is added as a supplementary subject syllabus in the Board of Secondary Education Manipur (BOSEM), Council of Higher Secondary Education Manipur (COHSEM). In the college/University level Thang Ta is a separate department offering three year degree course in Manipur University of Culture.

Figure 3 briefly explains the basic norms of Thang Ta. Many martial arts follow some codes of conduct as the rules of the game, but Thang Ta has its own unique characteristics. Irene Martinkova (2019)10 It emphasize moral improvement through adherence to moral principles, Codes of Conduct and virtuous practice. They often also draw upon selected ideas from philosophical, religious, spiritual or educational teachings.

![Figure 3 Codes of Conduct of Thang Ta](image)

Motivating Factors of students
It is of immense importance to know what motivates the people especially young generation to undertake the martial art. Abdulmenaf Korkutata, (2016)14 Children and young people's willingness to participation to sport and identifying what are the factors that motivate them, resulted as an important area of study for researchers. There are many factors of motivation behind the involvement in sports or martial arts. Katharina Diehl (2018)15 Adolescence and emerging adulthood is a time of physical, social, psychological, and structural changes, which may influence barriers to and motivations for physical activity.

Table 2, explains the age group of the respondents who practices Thang Ta in the valley districts of Manipur. Majority (46%) of the samples belonging to 11-16 years falls under the adolescence group. 25% were to 5 - 10 years, which means from the very early age, the skill can be acquired. Youth belonging to age group 17-22 years in the study comprises of 22% .7% of the respondents were above 23 years but less than 35 years. From the study we can state that Thang Ta can be started practicing from the very early childhood till they become gurus or sintakpurel. Elzbieta Biernat (2018)16 mentioned that instilling the values which can be conveyed by Martial Arts can lead to the establishment of healthy habits in adulthood.
Thang Ta. Nowadays many parents look for off school learning of their parents. Many parents might have talk about benefits of professional in the field, which may be boosted by personal motives. In the present survey, Some 15% wants to be a proficiency of the skill. Personal interest comes from within the self of the individual, which is an intrinsic motivation. Such a motivation is required for the continuity and participation in the martial arts, were ‘Rewards/status; motivation in sport and discipline, meditation, physical and mental fitness is of prime importance. Brandon Gaille (2018) expressed that martial arts provides participants with improved mobility. It improves core strength and power. Many participants report improved flexibility, stability, and coordination. It provides stress relief and even lowers blood pressure levels.

Figure 4, shows the motivating factors behind practicing Thang Ta by the respondents, majority (35%) practices Thang Ta for personal interest in the field. Personal interest comes from within the self of the individual, which is an intrinsic motivation. Such a motivation is required for the continuity and proficiency of the skill. Abdulmenaf Korkutata (2016) ‘There is a relationship between participation motivation in sport and interest in the sport’. 16% of the respondents solely mentioned that they have a love and feelings of their motherland ‘Manipur’. They mostly fall in the youth age group too. Martin Meyer (2018) found that the cultural mindset has general effects on the balance and mechanics of individual and social motives. In the present survey, Some 15% wants to be a professional in the field, which may be boosted by personal interest. There is an influence of parents and guardian too, 13% of the respondents responded that they practice the art because of their parents. Many parents might have talk about benefits of Thang Ta. Nowadays many parents look for off school learning activity. Thang Ta is one good avenue for the people of the region. From the total respondents 6% mentioned that they practice the art for personal interest, love for the motherland and want to be a professional in the area. It is found that 2% each of the respondents undertake the activity because ‘institute is nearby’ and ‘teacher asked’. These factor though extrinsic in nature but may become a factor for intrinsic motivation later. 2% respondents didn’t answer the reasons for practicing Thang Ta. Zhen Hao Zeng (2019) noted pleasant and active relationship between coaches and athletes/students also influenced engagement motivations. Elzbieta Biernat (2018) mentions, where lifelong physical exercise is likely to represent an important component of developing character, improving health, quality of life, and prevention of the diseases of affluence. These needs can be met by the increasing availability and access to inexpensive sports facilities near the place of residence or work.

From the research study, it is noted in Table 3, that 58% male and 42% female participated in the said martial art, which means both the gender prefer the skill in the form of performing art or sports. In this study there is a gender difference of 16% only for practicing Thang Ta. Michal Kudlacek (2008) also found that there is no obvious difference in male and female preference of martial arts. Thomas W Woodward (2009) Participation in the martial arts is increasing, particularly for youth. Martial arts provide health-promoting and meaningful exercise for millions of practitioners. Benefits from this practice include better overall health and balance, as well as an improved sense of psychological well being.

Table 3 Distribution of Gender of the respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No.</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Frequency (n=100)</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Primary Data

To the policy makers especially the government it is of utmost importance to identify the motivating factors for practicing the Thang Ta by the younger generation. The findings of the study can be incorporated in their policies and programmes to have an inclusive policy in the domain of education- performing art, culture and sports. In this era of stress and anxiety practicing martial arts, Thang Ta where prayer, respect, discipline, working hour and motivation for an activity is closely related to be Professional ‘love for Manipur’ are the main reasons for practicing Thang Ta. To make the person involve as full person (mind, body and spirit) such an intrinsic motivation is required.

Working hour and motivation for an activity is closely related to have a productivity and constructive environment. In sports the more hours people practices correctly the more they are motivated towards excellence. In the present study, 54% of the respondents practices for 12 – 14 hours weekly, which means daily 2-3 hours they are in the centre for the Thang Ta class. 16% respondents’ practices 9 – 11 hours weekly and those engaged 6 – 8 hours comprises of 18%. Children below 10 years practices 3 -5 hours weekly and some of them practices on alternate days (Figure 5). Gareth Jones, 2006 mentioned that the four most important participation motivations evident were ‘Affiliation’, ‘Fitness’, ‘Skill Development’ and ‘Friendship’ supporting the contention that broad participant motives for martial arts engagement. The three least influential motives, indicating their limited importance as motivations for participation in the martial arts, were ‘Rewards/status; ‘Situational’ and ‘Competition.'
Many researchers proved that martial art is a good physical activity, where mind and body is involved consciously. Yong Jae Ko, 2010 found that regardless of types of martial arts and competition orientation, two existence factors (i.e. fun and physical fitness) and one sport-specific characteristic (i.e. aesthetics) were found to be the three most important reasons why people participate in martial arts. In the present study ‘physical fitness’, ‘mental consciousness’ and ‘self defence’ were rated as first because 40% of the total respondents mentioned that they practices Thang Ta because of the above three reasons. Marc Theebom and et al (2009) found that learning self defence skill was one of the most important participation motives among the children in their study. The skills were primarily regarded as a protection from becoming victims of bullying at schools. It appears, however, that their parents were more concerned with their children safety on the streets. In the present study 31% of the respondent plays Thang Ta for self defence, which ranks second. Self defence is useful if need arises. 12% of the respondents mentioned ‘Physical fitness’ as the positive vibes in playing Thang Ta. Remaining respondents indicated ‘spirit of strength’, ‘extra curricular activity’, mental consciousness as a positive aspects of Thang Ta.

Table 4 Distribution of Rating scales for Positive vibes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No.</th>
<th>Positive vibes</th>
<th>Frequency (n=100)</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
<th>Ranking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Physical fitness</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Third</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Mental consciousness</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Sixth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Self Defence</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>Second</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Spirit of Strength</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Fifth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Extra curricular activity</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Seventh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Physical fitness, Mental consciousness Physical fitness, Mental consciousness, Self Defence</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Fourth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Physical fitness, Mental consciousness, Self Defence</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>First</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Primary Data

Table 5, explains about the career related to Thang Ta in their future among the students. A rating scale was used to measure the most significant career oriented in future after practicing the art. Surprisingly, the first rank (majority i.e. 36%) of the respondents wants to participate in national and international competitions. 15% states that they want to become a teacher of Thang Ta. Some (12%) wants to be an artist in future. Only 7% of the respondents want to open academy or institute. It ranks sixth, the reason being the lack of entrepreneurial motives in the state among the youths. 16% of the respondents mentioned two or three career oriented activity in their later future.

Table 5 Distribution of career oriented future prospect in Thang Ta

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No.</th>
<th>Career options</th>
<th>Frequency (n=100)</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
<th>Ranking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>To become teacher</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Second</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>To open academy</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Sixth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>To become part time trainer</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Eighth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>To demonstrate (artist)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Third</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>To participate in national / international competition</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>First</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>To become teacher, To open academy</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Fifth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>To become teacher, To open academy, To participate international competition</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Fourth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>To open academy, To participate international competition</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Seventh</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Primary Data

Martial arts could be means for personal and interpersonal development. Different dimensions of the martial arts (i.e., physical, psychological, social and spiritual) could help adolescents meet their fundamental needs and thereby achieve a state of well-being. Future Prospects of Thang Ta.

In the light of the above description, it may be mentioned that the State having rich cultural heritage and talents of the youth should not be neglected. The strength, weakness, opportunity and threats have to be analysed to have a prospective strategy in the field of Thang Ta. Though the inclusion of Thang Ta as a supplementary subject is encouraging, the persons concerned in the field have to act as a catalyst to make the martial art, prospective. The domain of Thang Ta is diverse, one can seek entrepreneurial prospect in terms of cultural tourism and health tourism. Many researchers have pointed out the health benefit of practicing martial arts. Even the University Grants Commission (UGC) has also notified guidelines for an Institutional Fitness Plan in the Higher Educational Institutions for promoting fitness and well being in Universities and Colleges, as part of Fit India Movement. The establishment of ‘National Sports University’ in the state is a way forward for inclusion of different sports of the region.

The festival held in the state namely ‘Sangai Festival’ can be a good avenue to make this martial arts as a decoration, health treatment and medical tourism. The skilled person can open self defence academy especially for ladies or girls which will...
be a good prospective opportunity. The attire worn by the players and artists in the field is very unique, indicating the history and origin of the state. Some of the common attire and equipments especially used in the competitions can be manufactured and traded.

![Figure 6 Prospect of Thang Ta in Manipur](image)

To make these prospects a success intervention from the decision makers, policy makers, skilled persons, learned persons in the field, related stakeholders have to work together. When the dream of many in the field becomes a reality, a state may be able to have peace, order and revenue generation thereby employment opportunity of the people.

**CONCLUSION**

The martial arts sector in many countries have gain the momentum because of its impact on well being. India’s popular martial art, Thang Ta is a sport where only practitioner knows the benefits on health. It is high time to motivate younger generation to practice this art. In today globalised world, mental and physical fitness is of primary survival technique. There should be an opportunity and avenue to utilise the learned skill in the field for employment opportunity. These calls for all the policy makers and stakeholders to tapped the untapped resources.

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