CHAPTER-3
GENERAL FEATURES OF THE SELECTED STUDY REGION

3.1 GENERAL FEATURES OF HIMACHAL PRADESH

"Himachal Pradesh" word is derived from to Sanskrit language words 'HIMA' (Snow) + 'ACHALA' (Mountain) meaning snowy mountains or in the lap of snow. The state of Himachal Pradesh came into being as a “Chief Commissioner Province” of the Indian Union on 15\textsuperscript{th} April 1948, by the merger of erstwhile 30 princely states of the Himalayan region. It had four districts at that time named as Chamba, Mahasu, Mandi and Sirmour with a total geographical area of 27,169 square kilometers. It was made part 'C' state in 1951. On 1\textsuperscript{st} July 1954, the fifth district of the state was carved with the integration of neighboring part 'C' state of Bilaspur (Kehloor). Himachal Pradesh maintained its part 'C' status till 1956. The reorganization of Punjab in 1966 resulted in transfer of its hilly areas to the Himachal Pradesh. With this addition state's total geographical area increased to 55,673 square kilometers and ten districts. On 25\textsuperscript{th} January, 1971 state got full statehood. It was on 1\textsuperscript{st} September, 1972, that Kangra district was trifurcated and two new districts were created named as Hamirpur and Una. Now, Himachal Pradesh comprises of 12 districts. Among these two selected districts Chamba has been characterized as tribal one district of the state.

3.1.1 Location

The State of Himachal Pradesh is bound between 30° - 22' to 33° - 12' North latitude and 75° - 47' to 79° 4' East longitude in the lap of Himalayan range in extreme North – West of India. It forms India’s border with Tibet on North and North East, Uttar Pradesh in South and South East, Punjab and Haryana in South – West and Jammu & Kashmir in the North.\textsuperscript{1} The state is mountainous with altitude ranging from 350 to 7000 meters above the Mean Sea Level (MSL).\textsuperscript{2}
3.1.2 Zone wise Division of the State

The state of Himachal Pradesh may be divided into four zones on the basis of its physiographic features viz. (1) Wet sub-temperate zone, includes Palampur and Dharamshala region of Kangra district, Dalhousie area of Chamba and Jogindernagar of district Mandi, (ii) Humid Sub-temperate zone comprising of Shimla, Kullu district some parts of Mandi, Solan, Chamba, Kangra and Sirmour districts, (c) Dry-temperate alpine highlands zone, includes most parts of Lahaul- Spiti, Pangi and Bhramour of Chamba and Kinnaur districts (d) Humid sub-tropical zone, it includes district Bilaspur and major parts of Mandi, Paonto Sahib, Nahan regions of Sirmour district, while from Chamba district Bhatiyat valley, Solan district Nalagarh area, from Kangra district Dehra, Nurpur, and Indora areas.

3.1.3 Geography

There is a general tendency of increase in elevation from West to East and from South to North. It presents an intricate pattern of mountain ranges, hills and valleys. According to a report of Surveys General of India, only 58.00 percent area i.e. 32,271 square kilometers (out of total geographical area of the state) is measured area according to the revenue records of the state.

3.1.4 Soils

The soil in the state is of varied nature as it differs from zone to zone, valley to valley, in its colours, fertility and composition. The shiwalik and lesser Himalayan region are rich of brown hill soil, and cover about half of area of the state i.e. 42.16 percent. The sub-mountain type of soil is found in the middle and greater Himalayan zones, covers approximately 46.07 percent area. The glacial and internal snow type soil covers about 11.77 percent area. These are the main soils providing food – feed and economic strength to agrarian population in the state.

3.1.5 River System

Nature has gifted the state with five perennial rivers system, provides abundance of water to the state as well as to its adjoining areas. In the epic Rig Veda, only four out of the present five rivers system was found mention. The five rivers of the state are namely Beas, it drains through district Kullu, Mandi, Kangra, Satluj
touches district Kinnaur, Shimla, Bilaspur, Mandi, Kullu and Solan. The river Ravi flow through Chamba, Chenab is the largest river of the state in terms of volume of water it passes through Chamba district while Yamuna flows through Sirmour district and also known as the Eastern most river of the state.

3.1.6 Temperature

Temperature of the state varies with the increase in elevation, mainly it increases gradually by the end of February till June, and makes June month the hottest one month of the year. The summer is mild with the arrival of monsoon, temperature starts to fall gradually. The departure of monsoon by mid of September, temperature declines gradually at first and rapidly after November. The period right from mid of December to 15th February is the coldest one all over the state. The temperature sometimes even goes down to the freezing point and even below. Consequently, it turned some parts of state into cold desert.

3.1.7 Rainfall

The rainfall in Himachal Pradesh ranges from 35 cm to 300 cm at Pooh and Dharamshala respectively. It is recorded about 18 cm in the interior of the Spiti Valley. On an average the state received an annual rainfall of 150 cm and most of it is received during monsoon season. The state can be divided into three major zone on the basis of annual rainfall, namely outer Himalayas, Inter Himalayas and Alpine zone is last one. The Alpine zone is also known as cold desert as it remains under snow cover for five to six months in the year. The volume of rainfall varies from 150 mm to 175 mm in outer Himalayas and from 75 mm to 100 mm in inner Himalayas.

3.1.8 Crop Seasons

In the state of Himachal Pradesh there are two crop season namely Kharif and Rabi. The most common Kharif crops are maize and paddy grown throughout the state except Lahaul- Spiti and Kinnaur Districts. The Kharif crop is sown in the month of June and harvested by September, while Rabi crop is sown in October and harvested in the May. In addition to the traditional wheat, barley crops, a range of Rabi pulses, gram, peas, massor, beans are commonly grown while during Kharif
season main pulses grown are as like urd, kulth and bharat etc. The main cash crops grown during kharif season are apple and potato.

3.1.9 Administrative Profile

Himachal Pradesh is divided into 12 districts, three divisions, fifty one subdivisions, sixty eight tehsils, thirty three sub-tehsils and 72 blocks. Thus it shows that Himachal Pradesh is progressing rapidly in order to make administration easily approachable.

3.1.10 Population

The population of Himachal Pradesh was 60,77,900 and over all density of population was 109 persons per square kilometer. It ranges from 2 persons per square kilometer to 369 persons per square kilometer in the district of Lahaul- Spiti and Hamirpur respectively. The volume of rural population was 54,82,319 while only 5,95,581 were residing in urban areas. The average sex ratio was 970 in the state and Hamirpur district was observed with highly positive sex ratio. The literacy rate in the state was 77.13 percent according to 2001 census. The literacy rate was highest in district Hamirpur 82.5 percent. On other hand literacy in district Chamba was lowest in the state that is 62.9 percent.

3.1.11 Scheduled Cast and Scheduled Tribe

An under privileged and poorest class of population inhabiting the most difficult and accessible tribes are tribal. These areas are characterized by their aloofness, low level economic activities, lack or low communication level, low population density, dense forest and lacking irrigation facilities.

The total scheduled casts population in the state was 1,50,2170 according to census of 2001, i.e. 24.72 percent of total population. The scheduled tribe population of the state was 2,44,587 with its concentration in Kinnaur, Lahaul- Spiti, Pangi and Bharmour of Chamba excluding gaddi and gujjars. The scheduled tribe population is about 4.02 per cent of total population. The 42.49 percent area is tribal while it is feeding and providing homes to just 2.74 percent of states total population. In the total population of this state scheduled tribes are 68 percent and 9.61 percent.
scheduled castes and rest are others? According to census 2001, literacy percentage among schedule cast and schedule tribe is on the increase as this level had reached 70.38 percent as compared to states overall average 77.13 percent.\textsuperscript{13}

3.1.12 Economy

Agriculture being the largest industry and main occupation of the people of the state has special significance in the development of Himachal Pradesh. Thus, the economy of the state is agro-based one this fact can be explained as under;

3.1.13 Agriculture

Agriculture sector of the economy is providing employment to about 69 percent of total workers of the state, out of the total geographical area of 55.67 lacks hectares, the area of operational holding is about 9.99 lacks hectares, and operated by 8.63 lacks farmers. The modes of farming are traditional and mixed nature. Himachal Pradesh with abundant rainfall and rich forests has not been able to keep pace in development rest of India, due to its inherent topographic problems. Despite this fact, this sector is contributing about 19.99 percent of the gross state domestic product.\textsuperscript{14} The sector wise share of primary sector has remained 24.05 percent in Gross State Domestic Product including agriculture and allied sectors like fisheries, forestry, mining and quarrying etc.

3.1.14 Horticulture

The topographical variations and altitudinal differences coupled with fertile deep and well drained soil favours the cultivation of temperate to sub-tropical fruits in the Himachal Pradesh. The area under fruit crops has ever increased which was just 792 hectares in 1950-51, increased up to 2,22035 hectares by 2001-02 than after wards it has declined to 1,86,902 hectares by 2004-05.\textsuperscript{15}

3.1.15 Animal Husbandry

Himachal Pradesh being an agro-based economy, animal husbandry as allied activity of agriculture plays an important role in ensuring the sustainability of the economy. The animal husbandry's contributions, specially major live stock products for the year 2005-06 8.69 tons of milk, 1,603 tons of wool, 7503 million eggs and
2,634 tons meat. In the year 2006-07, it was 870 lacks tons of milk, 1,650 tones of wool, 99.00 million eggs and 3,000 tones of meat. \(^{16}\)

### 3.1.16 Fisheries

The state of Himachal Pradesh is blessed with vast and variegated fishery resources in the form of state wide networks of rivers, reservoirs, lakes, ponds etc. The state has Asia’s largest fish breeding centre at Deoli, district Bilaspur. It was about 10,906 license holder fishermen in year 2004-05, deriving that livelihood directly from fishery, and fish production was 6.902 metric tones in the same year. \(^{17}\)

### 3.2 GENERAL FEATURES OF THE SELECTED DISTRICT CHAMBA

The Chamba is a name derived from Champawati, daughter of the Raja Sahil Verman founder of erstwhile princely state, on whose instance the town of Chamba was founded in 1930 A.D. The district forms boundaries with ‘Jammu and Kashmir’, on North-West and West, Lahual and Bara Banghal on the North-East and East, Kangra on South-East and Gurdaspur of Punjab on the South. The boarder areas with the Jammu-Kashmir has its clear concern on socio-economic status of habitants. It was Kala-ban forest areas which had been major source of livelihood earnings for the people, as have deposited with variety of precious herbs like doop, bhoj patra and guchi etc. But ever increasing tension and large cases of intrusion on the state boarder has badly affected herbs collections as well as livelihood concerns of the people in the district since 1990’s.

#### 3.2.1 Past and Present

It came into existence around 6th century A.D. Out of turmoil’s caused by Huns invasion and disintegration of The Gupta regime. It was among the four districts of Himachal Pradesh on the day 15th April, 1948. Presently, the district comprises of six tehsils named as Chamba, Pangi, Churah, Salooni, Bhattiyat, Bharmour, and four sub-tehsils namely Bhralai, Dalhousie, Sinhunta and Holi. For the over all development the region has been delineated into seven development blocks.
3.2.2 Location
The district is located between 32°10' and 33°13' North latitude and 75°45' and 77°33' East longitude. The district is mostly rough, oblong in shape contracted towards the North.

3.2.3 Geography
The district is mountainous with altitude ranging from 2,000 feet (610 meters) to about 21,000 feet (6400 meters) above the Mean Sea Level (MSL). Ravi valley forms natural divider of the district. The total geographical area of the district is 6528 square kilometers. There are Pangi, Chamba and Lahaul sections which remains cut-off from rest of the world for 4 to 6 months during winter season.

3.2.4 Soils
It is generally clay or clay loan with or without gravel. Its depth varies reciprocally with slope. Especially on ridges, spur, precipitous slopes and southern aspects, the soil tends to be sallow and dry with barren rocks and boulders. Although in general most of tract bears fertile deep and drained soil.

3.2.5 Valleys
The Ravi valley works as natural divisor of the district despite this another two important valleys are Beas and Chenab or the Pangi- Chamba and Lahaul -valley. Ravi valley is open and presents many delightful contrasts. The vegetation is semitropical in the lower areas and trees are belonging to pinus long folia, oak and chestnut etc. at the higher elevation.

3.2.6 Ridges and Mountains
There are three well known snowy ranges of Himalayas in district Chamba. The outer Himalayas is nearest to the plains known as Dhauladhar, it separates basin of Beas from Ravi. The mid Himalayas or Pangi range and Pir Panjab, between the basin of Ravi and Chandra-bhaga it forms water shed between the Ravi and Chenab. The last one is zanskar range or inner Himalayas between Chenab and Indus.
3.2.7 Rivers System

The Ravi and Chenab are important rivers of the district. Ravi is the main river which drains through whole of the Chamba valley from Dhauladhar to Pangi ranges. Budhil and Tundah are its two main tributaries which flows on with augmented force and volume through a narrow George near Chitrari. The Chamba town is situated on the right bank of the Ravi it enters to plains at Shahpur and leaves the district at Kheri.

3.2.8 Population

Total population of district Chamba According to the census 2001, was 4,60,887, comprises 4,26,345 rural and just 34,542 urban habitants with a density of 71 persons per square kilometers. Besides this, Hindu is dominating community in the district as (92.31 percent) 4,28,134, next Muslim 26,801, Christians 1048, Sikh 2,497, Buddhist 2,356, Jain 15 and others 10 and a few from unclassified religions. It is Pangi Brahmour and other regions were scattered schedule tribe population was totaled to 1,17,569, and scheduled caste population was 92,359.

3.2.9 Language or Dialects Generally Spoken

It is western Pahari dialect which is commonly spoken in the district Chamba. Gaddi or Bhramauri is the dialect of the upper Ravi valley including Bharamour tehsil and holi- sub tehsil. Chambiali is spoken in Chamba town and adjoining areas. In Bhattyat tehsil and Sihunta sub-tehsil commonly spoken dialect is Bhattiyati. It is Pangwali which is spoken in the Pangi tehsil except few areas of Bhots who speaks a language which resembles with Tibetans.

3.2.10 Occupation

Agriculture is the mainstay of majority of population in Chamba, particularly, it is subsistence agriculture. Despite this, agricultural produce are neither sufficient to fulfill food - feed requirements nor provide year around employment in the fields. Consequently, people opted to migrate to perform agricultural and allied activities as well as non- agricultural labour works in adjoining feeding areas. Main crops grown are maize, wheat, paddy, mass peace and variety of vegetables. In the Chamba
district villages up to an altitude of 2,100 meters double crop system is prevailing, while in the village up to above 2,100 meters only single crop is grown.\textsuperscript{26}

3.2.11 Livestock

In the Chamba district every household usually keeps cows, buffaloes, sheep, goats and ponies etc. as livestock is considered as the basic assets of households. Animals are kept for milk, meat, wool, agricultural activities and manures. The rearing of sheep and goats had been remained their traditional vocation.

3.2.12 Horticulture

The nature has gifted with suitable climatic and soil conditions to the Chamba district for the product of apple, plums, peach, pear, and walnut as the main cash crops which work as stimulator for the socio-economic upliftment of its people, despite the tough topography of the region.

3.2.13 Industrial Setup

The district Chamba is lacking in the establishment of any medium or large scale industry. However, the small and cottage industries like Chamba- rumal, Chamba- Chapal, handlooms and other handicrafts are most rapidly growing and flourishing industries with large potential for exports and home demand.

3.2.14 Food Habits

The staple food of the people consists of maize chapattis with dal or mixed vegetable. People generally take meal thrice a day. In the morning full cup of saline tea with some snacks, lunch comprises rice and dal and dinner consists of either rice or chapatti or mixed and same time meat and wine also. Most of the people are habitual bidi smoker, and huckka (traditional locally made smoking instrument) has also been in use.

3.3 GENERAL FEATURES OF THE SELECTED DISTRICT SHIMLA

The name of Shimla was derived from ‘Shyamalaya’ means ‘Blue house, said to be the name of house built of blue state by a Faquir Jakhu.\textsuperscript{27} Shimla is the capital
of the State and also remain capital of British regime. Earlier, it was the summer
capital of India.

3.3.1 Past and Present

History of Shimla is almost unknown (untraced) till today but it goes back to
the period of Anglo- Gurkha war in the beginning of 19th century. It was known as
best seat for the English men. It became a part of Himachal Pradesh on 15th April
1947. The present Shimla district includes erstwhile numerous princely states namely
major ones are Balsan, Bhajji, Koti, Bushar, Darkoti, Tharoch, Kumarsain, Dhami,
Jubbal, Ratesh - Keonthal etc. The shimla district has twelve tehsils, five sub- tehsils,
and seven sub- divisions. 28

3.3.2 Location

Shimla district lies between Longitude 77°0' and 78°19' East, and latitude
30°45' and 31°44' North. Its elevation ranges from 300 to 600 meters. The district is
topography very rugged, tough, deep and narrow valleys leads to variation in climate
from valley to valley. On the basis of physiographic features district Shimla falls
under humid sub- temperature zone. 29

3.3.3 Geography

The total geographical area of district is 5,131 square kilometers, the elevation
of the district upto 6000 meters. 30 The prevalence of interlocking spurs, narrow and
steep sided valley with high peak and dense forsts of kail and deodar adds another
feather to the beauty of the district. The months of December January, February are
of severe cold months in district.

3.3.4 Soil Texture

The soil texture ranges from silty loam to clay loam with dark brown colour.
The organic matters are very rich. In some parts of district, it is dark brown to light
brown in colour. Thus soil is best suited for cultivation of potato, plantation crops
and especially for apple orchard at high altitude.
3.3.5 Valleys

There are three valleys and sub-valleys in the district. The Satluj valley is most important and larger one Rampur Bushar town is situated in this valley. Suni sub-valley is located about 53 kilometers West of Shimla, Dhami valley, Pabbar, and Jubbal Spail valley. The Chuhara valleys are other important valleys known for red rice and apple crops.

3.3.6 Mountains

In Shimla district rise in elevation of mountains and ridges is more abrupt as it falls in the lesser Himalaya. The Churchandni peak is about 3647 meters high lies in the South of Shimla. Shimla ridge runs in north-east-south westerly directions, it forms water divider between river Yamuna and Sutlej. The major peaks are Churdhar, Jakhu hill, Kupar etc. of Shimla.

3.3.7 River System

River Satluj enters into the Shimla district near Chaura, and joined by nogli stream near Rampur. It provides a large potential for hydel power projects in the district. Chandra Nahan lake source of Pabbar river is originated from the height of 4267 meters in Chirgoan. The main tributaries of river are Beeshkulti which meets Pabbar river at Hatkoti, Shekhal Khud, Dogra stream, Andhra rivers etc are the other tributaries.

3.3.8 Population

The district is ranked third in the state on the basis of population i.e. 7,22,502 with a density of 141 per square kilometer. The total area is 5,131 square kilometers. The average family size is 5.0 and 3.8 in rural and urban areas respectively. In Chirgaon tehsil total population was 39,513 persons, and 28,387 persons in Chopal tehsil. The population is scattered in tough and physical difficult areas. A large portion of the population is residing in rural areas, i.e. about 5,55,269 persons and only 1,67,233 persons in urban areas.
3.3.9 Language or Dialects Generally Spoken

In the early days, Pahari was written in Tankri-script. Bhatakshri was also an earlier form of Tankri in Shimla and Sirmaur areas. Nowadays Devanagri is the script of Pahari. Pahari language can be seen in its folk literature, folk songs, tales, dramas and dances etc. Bura sain is a combination of folk song and dance performed in Jubbal and Rohru tehsil of the district. Laman, Mala dances and Natti are commonly performed dances in the whole district.34

3.3.10 Occupations

The main occupation of people has been agriculture and allied activities i.e. commercial agriculture. But the miniscule size of land holdings and tough physiographic makes them food insecure or vulnerable or un-viable. Consequently, some people prefers to migrate frequently during apple season towards apple growing areas of district to perform agricultural activities i.e. harvesting, packing, loading etc..

3.3.11 Livestock

Livestock profile is the part and parcel of agro based economy of the state. The numbers of buffalo in the district was 22450, out of total cattle profile of 327690 animal.35 Other cattle profile consists of cows, (local and cross-breed), sheep goats, ponies, pottery etc. There is a sheep breeding farm at Jeori in Shimla.

3.3.12 Horticulture

Diversity of agro-climatic conditions in the district favours for the cultivation of variety of temperate to sub-tropical fruits. It witnessed shifting of land use pattern from agriculture to horticulture in past decades. Apple is most important cash crop under horticulture crops. The Shimla district leads in apple production and area under apple crops in the state i.e. 35905 hectares. The state of Himachal Pradesh, which enjoys the prestigious status of the “Apple state of India”, is now leading towards its cherished goal of becoming the “Fruit state of India”. 36 The state contributes to about 25 percent of total apple production of India with a share of 1.29 percent of Asia’s apple production and 0.64 percent in the world apple production.37
3.3.13 Industry

The total numbers of established industrial units in the district was 154 while the counting of small units has increased over the years from 72 units to 90 units during 2002-03 to 2004-05 respectively. The district is lagging far behind on the industrial establishment front as compare to other districts, despite a large potential for varied industrial (agro and non-agro based) establishment.38

3.3.14 Food Habits

People of the district are generally non-vegetarian, conditioned by long and sever winter season. Thus meat and wine had been the major constituents of their meals or food. Despite this variety of vegetables are consisting of their meal Thali are like Potato, Peas, Apple, ginger, Tomato etc. Generally, Red rice are produced and consumed throughout the year in cocked as well as in boiled, dried, fried rice as food supplement and for gift exchanges. The local breed of Rajmash is also very popular in the region and fetches higher price in the market than to commonly consumed rice provided through market and various government agencies.39

3.4 SUMMING UP

Agriculture has remained the mainstay of agrarian population in the state of Himachal Pradesh. Although, agricultural activities subsistence farming region as well as in commercial farming region are still traditional and primitive as ages old, mainly constrained by hilly topography, marginality and fragmentation of holdings. Moreover, varied-agro-climatic conditions provides for the production of high value cash crops and allied activities, but all seems in vain because of ever declining home production and non-availability of off-farm employment in absence of proper industrial set-up. It is livestock or animal husbandry and allied activities which have vast potential for employment generation and income augmentation in rural areas of Himachal Pradesh. Thus lack of infrastructural development, education, industrial development and low extension services and tough physiographic conditions are main features of the region.
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