CHAPTER ONE
MAP 1. POSITION OF SIKKIM IN INDIA

Sikkim

Gangtok

China

Bhutan

Nepal

West Bengal

Bangladesh

N

0 mi 50

0 km 50
MAP. 2. POSITION OF SIKKIM IN NORTH EAST INDIA

Location of Sikkim

Sikkim
Bhutan
West Bengal
Bangladesh

28°N
24°N
88°E
92°E
96°E
MAP 3. ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT OF SIKKIM
1.0 INTRODUCTION

Higher education plays an important role in the development of a country. Higher Education embraces all types of institutions that require their entrants to have completed their senior secondary school studies. It comprises all types of institutions such as general and professional institutes of higher learning centers. It is rightly said that higher education holds the key to the destiny of the nation. Higher education provides people with an opportunity to react on the critical, socio-economic, cultural, moral and spiritual issues facing humanity. Development of higher education institutions are important as it produces well informed and deeply motivated citizens, who can think critically, analyse problems of society, look for solutions to the problems of society, apply them and accept social responsibilities. Higher education provides ideas and men to give shape to the future and also sustain all the other levels of education. The quality of life and pace of development of any nations depends on the ideological climate, the widespread perceptions of history, culture, tradition and values; and the feeling of confidence in human capability to overcome material, social and spiritual problems of living. Higher Education and the intelligentsia nurtured by it, have a special role in determining the quality of the overall environment. Higher education also supplies a wide range of increasingly sophisticated and ever changing variety of manpower needed in industry, agriculture, administration and services. The self reliant and indigenous character of an economy can only be maintained when competent people are available to foresee, plan and execute research and development activity. It is also to provide the right kind of leadership in all walks of life and identify gifted youth and help them to develop their potential to the full by cultivating physical fitness, developing the powers of mind, right interests, attitudes and values. It has rightly been regarded as the backbone of an economy and a powerful instrument for the fulfillment of national aspirations. Hence, expenditure on higher education has been regarded as an important investment. Economic studies are available to show that in the longer run, every rupee spent on education brings greater returns than a rupee invested elsewhere. In fact, it is sine qua non for development
of modern society. The World Bank document states “Higher Education is a paramount importance for economic and social development”. UNESCO (1995) in its policy paper on “Change and development of Higher Education emphasizes that state and society must perceive Higher Education, not as a burden but as a long time investment, in order to increase economic competitiveness, cultural development and social cohesion”. UNESCO (1998) stressed that the far reaching changes now taking place in the world, and the entry of human values into society based on knowledge and information, revealed how overwhelming important education and Higher education are.

1.1 HIGHER EDUCATION

Higher education refers to education in post higher secondary institutions, colleges and universities. It is higher education, firstly because it constitutes the topmost stage of formal education and more importantly, because it is concerned with processes in more advanced phases of human learning. The entrants are about eighteen years of age and therefore they are mentally mature and capable of performing at the abstract level. They can analyse, synthesise and grasp concepts and ideas of all kinds. Their creative faculty is also developed adequately. Consequently the content, methods of interaction and organization of work have to be very different from what they are at the school.

Three aspects of higher education are of relatively recent origin. One of them is that social, economic and industrial development has created a pressure towards greater specialization. Because of specialization today’s student in higher education knows more and more about less and less and sometimes special efforts are necessary to create a broader understanding of subjects and disciplines. The second aspect is that as societies grew more complex, more selective and efficient means of cultural transmission evolved. The result is the formal, institutionalized system of education. The curriculum, due to specialization and paucity of time has crystallized into clear-cut ‘papers’ or courses. Formalism both in structure and content have crept in. The need of producing students of comparable base of knowledge and standard of achievement by a large number of institutions, has led to formalism in evaluating or examining of students. Thirdly, research has emerged as one of the most significant dimensions of higher education today. Creation of knowledge is a tangible output of the educational system because of
which the Universities have acquired a new social status, particularly, in the developed countries. In fact, there exists a symbiotic relation between research and specialization of knowledge and skills. Much research is a team effort of collaborative nature in which the combined intelligence of large numbers is brought to bear on the solution of a problem. Higher education offers a unique blend of two resources essential for economic and social development; knowledge and status. At the apex of the educational hierarchy, higher education makes the decision on how knowledge should be organized and what status should be attached to different knowledge areas. Further within higher education, universities act as the custodians of the selection process through their control of the examination system. Higher education is not merely at the apex of the education system, it is also the level which prepares personnel for all other levels of education and expertise for a great variety of jobs that have to be manned in the social, economic and cultural sectors. In addition to being at the frontier of knowledge, it plays a crucial role in the generation of new knowledge. Therefore, the relation between higher education and development is a crucial one.

1.2 OBJECTIVES OF HIGHER EDUCATION

The country paper (Government of India’s) in UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education in the Twenty-First Century, Paris, 5-9 October 1998, articulating the vision of India on higher education in 1998 reflected the following views: 1

- Education aims at liberation- liberation from bondage and ignorance, backwardness and gravitational pulls of the lower human nature;
- Education, being an evolutionary force that enables both the individual and the collectively to evolve various faculties and to integrate them by the superior intellectual, ethical, aesthetic and spiritual powers, should aim at developing a new type of humanity highly humane, cultured and integrated;
- Education should be so designed as to become a powerful carrier of the best of the heritage and it should, therefore, aim at transmitting to the new generations the lessons of the accumulated experiences of the past for further progress in the present and the future.
The paper further suggested that considering the contemporary problems of environment, of conflicts and of symmetrical relationships need to be resolved as early as possible, the Indian system of Education aims at the promotion of the goals of universal peace, harmony and unity, based on the principals of liberty, equality and fraternity. Within the broad canvas of these objectives, the specific objectives of higher education that are evolving especially within the Indian context are;

- To seek and cultivate new knowledge, to engage vigorously and fearlessly in the pursuit of truth, and to interpret all knowledge and beliefs in the light of new things and discoveries;
- To provide the right kind of work ethos, professional expertise and leadership in all walks of life;
- To strive and promote quality and social justice;
- To foster among teachers and students and through them in society generally, integral development of all values inherent in physical, emotional, rational, aesthetic, ethical and spiritual education; and
- To promote synthesis of knowledge, with special emphasis on unity of scientific and spiritual pursuits that would revitalize our country’s heritage and promote the ideal of the whole world as one united family.

1.3 PROFILE OF SIKKIM

Sikkim is the 22nd State of the Indian Union. It is crowned with snowcapped mountains, covered with tropical jungles and its foot rest on the alpine valleys. Sikkim constitutes the western most part of the eastern Himalayan realm within the Great and the Inner Himalayan regions. Forty miles wide, it is 80-90 miles long enclosed between the Singhalila ridges and the Donkhya range. It is bounded on the west by Nepal, on the north by Tibet, on the east by Bhutan and on the south by West Bengal. Sikkim is located 28 degrees 07' 48" and 27 degrees 04' 46" north latitude and 88 degrees 00' 58" and 88 degrees 55' 25" east longitude. It has an area of 7,300 square kilometers.

Sikkim is a land of varied elevations, ranging from 244 meters above mean sea level at the southern foothills to over 6,096 meters along its northern and northern-western Boundaries. In the north, the State stretches unto the great Himalayan range.
which is the watershed between Tibet and Sikkim, with four main passes – Sesela or Dachila about 5,255 meters, Kongrala about 4,877 meters, Nathula about 5,270 meters and Chorten Nyimala about 5,791 meters. In the east, the Dongkya range separates Sikkim and the Chumbi Valley of Tibet. This range has a number of passes, the most notable of which are Nathula and Jelepla, just about 4,367 meters high. In the west, the Singalila range is the boundary between Sikkim and Nepal. The Mount Khangchendzonga (Kanchanjunga) of over 8,534 meters, the third highest peak in the world, is to be found in this range. In the south, there is no natural feature that marks the frontier between Sikkim and West Bengal, except a part of the border along which runs the Teesta and Rangit rivers.

However, it appears that during the reign of some of the early rulers, the territorial limits of Sikkim extended beyond the present boundaries on all sides. ‘The Kingdom was then many times its size today. In the North it extended to Thang La (near Phari, Tibet), in the East to Tagong La (near Paro, Bhutan), in the South to Titalia (near the borders of Bihar and Bengal, India) and in the west to Timar Chorten (Tamar river, Nepal). 2 Towards the close of the 18th century, the Gorkhas of Nepal advanced as far east as the Tista and beyond. Following the Treaty of Segaulee (1816) which marked the close of the Indo-Nepal War of 1814-1815, the English handed over to the Chogyal of Sikkim ‘the hilly or mountainous country situated to the Eastward of the Mechee River and to westward of the Teesta River which was formerly possessed and occupied by the king of Nepal. 3 Next, by deed of Grant on February, 1835 the king of Sikkim made over Darjeeling to the East India Company. 4 The boundaries of Sikkim towards the west and South are also said to have undergone changes from time to time till 1835. The northern boundary, whatever it was previously, was ultimately fixed by an Agreement between the British Government in India and China in 1890.

The north-western part of the state is highly elevated and therefore remains under snow cover almost throughout the year. There are numerous glacial lakes which freeze during winter. Quite an extensive area of Sikkim remains snow bound round the year especially, eastern and western part. The snow peaks of Sikkim are visible from the plains of North Bengal even during the hottest summer months. The snow fields of Sikkim give rise to several medium and small sized glaciers which are the origination of
main rivers of Sikkim. The Tista is the principal river of Sikkim which originates from a glacial lake Chho Lhamo. The tributaries of the Tista are Lachen, Lachung, Rangit, and Rangpo. These rivers pass through mountainous terrains and are not navigable, but they are used for generating hydroelectricity. There are few mineral hot springs where warm water oozes out from beneath the surface with a strong sulphorous odour. The rainfall varies from 127 cm to 600 cm annually in some areas. Sikkim receives most of its rainfall between the months of May and September. The temperature varies from 0 to 30 degree Celsius. The land is of great climatic contrasts within very short distances. Latitudinally the basin is located within subtropical climate region but due to the presence of high mountains, here one can experience climates as varied as temperate, alpine, and even artic type.

The northern portion of the Sikkim like the Lachen and Lachung valleys are used as grazing pastures by Sikkimese herdsman whereas cultivation is the mainstay of the people of the southern half. The majority of people seem to have continued shifting cultivation until the late 19th century. At present wet terraced rice cultivation is practiced. Sikkim displays an extraordinary variety of biological diversity. There are more than 5,000 species of angiosperms, 4,000 species of flowering plants, 450/500 species of orchids and 300 species of ferns and allies. The State also has a rich variety of birds and animals with over 140 species of mammals, 400 species of butterflies and moths and 500/600 species of birds. A rich variety of forests – both deciduous and coniferous – cover 82 percent of the land in Sikkim. Deciduous and evergreen forests are spread over the eastern and western parts of Sikkim while the north is dominated by coniferous forests. These forests are central to people’s livelihoods and serve as the major source of food, fuel and medicinal herbs and plants. Forests are also a major source of revenue for the government.

1.4 THE PEOPLE OF SIKKIM

With their typical population, idiosyncratic settlement patterns and unique economic system the Sikkimese have been able to preserve their cultural individuality to a great extent. According to 1991 census, Sikkim had a population of over 4 lakh as on
March 31 whereas it reached 540493 (288,217 Males and 252,276 Females) and the density of population is 76 persons per sq.km according to 2001 Census.

The main stream comprises three ethnic groups, namely, the Lepchas, the Bhutias, and the Nepalese. “There is a sprinkling of plains folk, who had settled in Sikkim generations ago. They form part of the business community who live in perfect harmony and mutual understanding with the rest of the people in the state.”6 According to the Government of Sikkim Act, 1974, various sections of the population were divided into two principal groups: “Sikkimese of Lepcha-Bhutia origin” and “Sikkimese of Nepali origin.”7

1.4.1 LEPCHAS

The Rong-Pas who are known as Lepchas, are original inhabitants of Sikkim. According to general tradition existent among Rongs, they claim to have been originally a race of hunters. In the very early times, before the Tibetans or the Bhutanese or the Nepalese infiltrated into their country, they lived as the free rulers of the immense forest which was their home.8 Their physical characteristics showed them to be a member of the Mongolian rade.9 But later it was supposed that they had come from the east, from the direction of Assam and Burma. The Lepchas are markedly Mongolian in features and differ from Tibetans. It is also said that the Lepchas have similarity with tribes of Hangrang in the North West Frontier Province and with the mountain tribe of the Laree area in Ladakh. Others contend that the Lepchas and the Khasis of Khasi-Jyantia area are two different branches of the same ethnic group;10 “what or what-so-ever might have been their original source, they here appeared in the most simple primitive state, living in the midst vast, wild magnificent forests, old as the hills themselves.” The Lepchas are primarily animists. They acknowledge the existence of good and bad spirits and do a lot of appease the bad one. They have priest doctor who is in fact exorcist. The male priest doctor is called bon and female is generally called monn. The Lepchas have their own language which according to Mainwaring, is the oldest of all the hill dialects.11 It is contended that the language they speak is of the Tibeto-Burmese family. However Chie Nakane in her article “A plural Society in Sikkim” says that it is more akin to the Khasi language of Assam, which is considered Austro-Asiatic. The languages of the Bhutias,
Limbu, Murmi, Mangar, khamba and Newar also belong to it. The Lepcha men wear Tego, Tomo (Gyado), Thokro, Tringip Nyiamarik, Thektuk. They always carry knife popularly known as Ban. The women put on full sleeve blouse and a wrap a long piece of cloth called Gadha pinned at shoulder like Khasi tribe of Meghalaya. Women also wear dungdem, Tego, Thekuk, Nyiamarik, ornaments Chyap-Chyap Shambrang Bur, Kukip alyak, Nay-kong, Akager. They are basically non vegetarian. The Lepcha tribe follows their own religion of worshiping nature, some follow Buddhism and also Christianity. The tribe has no caste distinction. In their marriage customs men pays bride in cash or material. The Lepchas are intelligent, amiable, innocent, and good humoured. They are modest and hospitable people.

1.4.2 BHUTIA

The Bhutias belong to an ethnic group resembling the Lepchas with whom they have had centuries-old contacts and brotherhood. The Bhutias are considered good traders and agriculturists and many of them were herdsman looking after the valuable herds of yaks and sheep. The Bhutias are mostly traders and herdsmen. But many of them are accustomed to cultivation now-a-days. They are good at weaving carpets, woollen carpets, craftsmanship, delicate Sikkimese carpentry, intricate paintings of Buddhist Thankas, carving statues etc. They are not so fond of isolation and prefer cold climate and high altitude. They are physically well built, tall, possessing good physique, fair in complexion with Mongoloid feature. Bhutia men wear Hentachi Kho tied by Kera Gyaado Jaja, Thuri Shyambo, Tapsu (hair band) and Shampo. Women wear Hanju, Kho tied by Kera Ceiling Shyambo, Tapsu (hair band) and Shampo. The married women wear Pangden below the waist in the front. The social structure is patriarchal. In olden days the practice of polyandry was common very common among them but now this practice finds no favour. Polyandry served to prevent the family from being split up and the property from being divided. There is no caste distinction among the Bhutias. Bhutia women generally enjoy a great deal of independence and they are treated as equal to men. Marriage is normally arranged and settled by the parents. The Bhutias are mostly Buddhists, while there are a few who are Christians and Mohammedans. They are non vegetarian and fond of taking special tea made with salt and butter.
1.4.3 NEPALI

The Nepali settlers today constitute almost three-fourths of Sikkim’s population. The Nepali community is composed of different sub-cultural groups with considerable differences in physical characteristics and customs. Each tribe is sub-divided into many classes. The most important of these tribes and rests are: Limta, Gurung, Mangar, Rai, Tamang, Mewar etc. of the caste Hindus there are the Brahmins, Thakur, and Chettris etc. Among the low caste tradesman there are the Sarki, Kami, Damai etc. The Nepalese are migrated from Nepal and spread throughout the east, south, and west of Sikkim. They are mostly Hindus, but some of them are Buddhists. They are good at trade. They are ahead in education, hardworking and have talent in different activities like in agriculture, carpentry etc. They are highly responsible for the fast promotion of agriculture in Sikkim. The Nepali men wear Daura and Suruwal (coat and pant), topi (cap), and tie Patuka around the waist carry Khukuri (dagger) and women wear Chowbandicholi (blouse), Gunew (saree) tied by patuka around the waist, Hembari and put majetro (shawl). The married women put sindur (vermilion) and Potey (bottle green beads). They are fond of wearing lots of ornaments made of gold and silver. The staple food of the Nepalese is rice. They are both vegetarian and non-vegetarian. The Brahmins are strict vegetarians. They follow the Hindu marriage but there is no dowry system.

Yet another community in Sikkim are Tibetans, they have same position as elsewhere in India. They feel at home in Sikkim owing too the fact that the Sikkimese follow Lamaist Buddhism and the prevalence of monastic culture in Sikkim. There is various community of plainsman who is from different state of India who serves in Central and State government offices and some carry out private jobs.

In spite of existing complexities in Sikkim, peace, communal harmony exists. Unrest and strikes are unheard in Sikkim.

1.4.4 LANGUAGE

English is the official language of the State. On October 12, 1977 the Sikkim Assembly passed by voice vote an official Bill seeking to declare Lepcha, Bhutia, and Nepali, as State languages for official purpose and received support from all sections in
the House. Presently there are three language formulas in Sikkim, they are; English is the first language, Hindi is the second language and regional vernacular language is the third language. From the year 2002, Sanskrit is also taught in the government schools of Sikkim from primary to higher secondary classes.

1.5 OVERVIEW OF THE HISTORY OF SIKKIM

The history of Sikkim of its remote past has not come to light. Sikkim did not appear in the historical complex of the Himalayan border countries until the early 1640’s. A ‘country of contrast’ this is Sikkim. A minute dot on the school child’s map, yet unquestionably occupying one of the most vital spots in the world today. Enormous in importance though tiny in size, it is a microcosm of the problems facing small countries which lie in strategic places. Sikkim, although settled as early as the thirteenth century by the Lepcha migrants from the Assam hills, came into being as a political entity in 1641. And its early history is mainly a story of invasions from her eastern and western neighbors, Bhutan and Nepal. In the early years Sikkim was overrun by the Bhutanese, who were only expelled with the help of Tibetans and from that time on up to 1888, the latter power exercised great influence on her small neighbour. Towards the end of eighteenth century, Sikkim was again invaded, this time by the Gurkhas who stripped from her what is now the Nepalese province of Limbuana, besides certain other territory. Tradition tells one how the three lamas of the nyingma pa or red hat sect of Buddhism eventually after many years of wandering met at the village of Yaksum in Sikkim under the shadow of Kanchendzonga. From here in AD 1642 they sent for the ancestor of the Rajas of Sikkim by the name of Phuntsog Namgyal for taking over as the Chogyal (king). The first king reigned for twelve years and little is known of his successor, Chagdor Namgyal, the third king, came to the throne in 1700. The “All Victorious Thunderbolt Bearer”, as his name translates, was a pious Buddhist. He augmented the annual autumn offering to Sikkim’s mountain deities by the great masked dance of the lamas, which is still performed. During the reign of the fourth king of Sikkim, Chogyal Gyurme (1717-1734), the “All Victorious Inimitable King of Religion”, hordes of warlike Bhutanese surged into Sikkim from east, plundering the settlement and carrying off their inhabitants as slaves to Bhutan, the “land of dragons”. After his death,
Gyurme was succeeded by his minor son. During his minority Sikkim was governed by a regent from Tibet. The regent reorganized the kingdom’s administration, levied annual taxes, and drafted a code of law establishing the rights and duties of the citizens of Sikkim. In 1780 Tensing Namgyal (the “All Victorious Preserver of Religious Doctrine”), the sixth king of Sikkim, succeeded to the throne. His reign was ill-started; the territorial integrity of Sikkim was threatened by the frequent attacks of the Bhutanese and Gurkhas on the Kingdom’s eastern and western frontiers, respectively. The fight from the east and west forced Sikkim to fight a desperate two-front war against the invaders. In those early years Sikkim was much larger in area. It included the eastern section (Illam district of Nepal), the Chumbi valley of present day Tibet, and the Ha valley of Bhutan. Its southern frontiers reached the plains of India and included Kalimpong and Darjeeling districts. But strategically placed as it has always been and sandwiched between warring nations, Sikkim lost much of its territory to invading Bhutanese and Nepalese in 1788 and 1789. In 1793, the seventh king Tsugphu Namgyal was reigned. Sikkim came in contact with the British. In 1814 a powerful British force came to the aid of Sikkim; the Gurkhas were defeated, and the subsequent peace treaty (1817) established the Nepal-Sikkim boundary. By this treaty Sikkim surrenders all her rights to deal with any foreign power and conceded unhindered right of free access to the British to Tibetan borders. In 1835 the king of Sikkim “presented” the hills of Darjeeling “out of friendship” for the Governor General of India, Lord William Bentick, to the East India Company. Thus all the land south of the Great Rangit River was ceded unconditionally to India, but the British government granted the king an allowance of 3000 rupees per annum as compensation, and this was raised in 1846 to 6000 rupees.

Despite territorial losses to Nepal, Bhutan and British India, Sikkim survived as a distinct political entity. By the Treaty of 1861, Sikkim’s political integrity as British India’s protectorate was confirmed by the British. The period of active and effective British influence on Sikkim commenced with the establishment of the British residency in Gangtok under John Claude White, the political officer, in the year 1889. John Claude White, the first British political officer, has described this period as “Chaos reigned everywhere, there was no revenue system, the Maharaja taking what he required as he wanted it from the people, the nearest the capital having to contribute the larger share,
while those more remote had to be taken from them by the local officials in the name of Raja, though little found its way to him; no courts of justice; no police, no public works, no education for the younger generation. The task before me was a difficult one, but very fascinating; the country was a new one and every thing was in my hands. Later in 1892 as a protest against the high handedness of the British Resident, the ninth king of Sikkim fled to Tibet. The quarrel between the king and the Resident Political Officer was eventually settled. Since the little Himalayan kingdom, forming bridge between India and Tibet, was of considerable commercial and military importance to the British, visitors from Europe and America were allowed into Sikkim only by special permission. In May, 1946, the Viceroy of India, Lord Wavell, declared on behalf of the British Government that under the new Indian constitution Britain would cease to exercise the powers of paramount in relation to the Indian States. From 1947 to 1950 Sikkim existed as an independent kingdom without being a protectorate of any big nations. On 5 December, 1950 an India- Sikkim peace treaty was signed in Gangtok which clarified Sikkim’s political relation with free India. Confirming that Sikkim was a “protectorate” of India, “enjoying autonomy in regard to its internal affairs”, the treaty restated that the Government of India shall be responsible for her defence and territorial integrity toward which end it shall have the right to take such measures as it considers necessary.

The first general election was held in Sikkim in 1953 on the basis of parity formula. Of the twelve seats of the State Council, six were reserved for the Nepalese and the other six for Bhutia- Lepchas. The Maharaja was to nominate five members and the Dewan was the President of State Council. The next election of the State Council was due in 1956, but the term of the existing Council was extended. In March 1958, the composition of State Council was changed through a Royal proclamation. The number of counselor was raised to twenty but the six Bhutia-Lepcha and the six Nepali seats remained unaltered. Two new elective seats, one general and the other was reserved for the Sangha (monastery), were included and the number of nominated members was raised from five to six. This proclamation also laid down a very complicated mode of election. The third general election in Sikkim took place in 1967. The proclamation of 1966 added four more seats to the State Council. The seats reserved for the Bhutia-
Lepcha and the Nepali people were raised from six to seven while two new seats, one for Tsongs and one for the scheduled castes were created. Sikkim, the microcosm of the Himalayan borderland, went to polls for the fourth time in April, 1970. The political activity was accelerated by the proclamation of the Chogyal Palden Thondup Namgyal on December 31, 1969 when he promulgated the Representation of Sikkim subjects Act, 1969.

The 1973 elections to the State council have proved to be a turning point in the political and constitutional development of Sikkim. The Sikkim National Congress and Janata Congress joined together and formed a Joint Action Council. Their agitation rocked the State and completely transformed the direction of the political life in the State. An agreement between the Chogyal, leaders of political parties in the kingdom and the government of India was signed on May 8, 1973 at Gangtok about the administrative and political setup of the State. The Chogyal has been made a constitutional ruler. The agreement calls for the establishment of a fully responsible Government in Sikkim, with a more democratic constitution, the guarantee of fundamental rights, the rule of law, an independent judiciary, and greater legislative and executive powers for the elected representative of the people. It meant the ushering of a representative and responsible form of Government in place of the paternalistic “guided democracy”. In sum, the political reforms are the beginning of a new phase in Sikkim.

The first general election for a 32 member Assembly was held in April, 1974. Fifteen seats were declared reserved for each of the Bhutia- Lepcha and the Nepali communities, of the other two seats one was reserved for Sangha and one for the Scheduled castes. The Sikkim National Congress and Sikkim Janata Congress, in the meantime, merged into a single party, the Sikkim Congress, which swept the poll by securing 31 seats while the National party could secure only one seat. Five member ministry was formed on July 23, 1974 under the Chief Ministership of Kazi Lendup Dorji. Whereas the mutual distrust and antagonism reached such intensity that on the 10th April, 1975 the Sikkim Assembly unanimously passed a resolution seeking the abolition of the institution of Chogyal and demanding merger of Sikkim with India. The Sikkim Congress once again started mobilizing the opinion of the people by organizing meetings in favour of the resolutions adopted by the assembly. The opinion poll overwhelmingly
supported the resolution seeking the abolition of the rule of the Chogyal and making Sikkim a constituent unit of the Indian Union. The political leaders, along with the ministers visited Delhi and requested the Government of India to give immediate effect to the unanimous decision of the assembly through necessary parliamentary process. The Government of India accordingly proposed a Constituent Amendment Bill seeking to make Sikkim 22nd State of the Indian Union. The Bill was passed by the parliament on 26th April, 1975. On the 16th May, 1975 B.B.Lal, was appointed the first Governor of Sikkim.

Thus Sikkim had a chequered history encompassing a kingdom ruled by generations of Chogyal, existed as a British protectorate, and then as an Indian protectorate from (1950-1974) that culminated in its merge as the 22nd State of the Republic of India in 1975. Now Sikkim is one of the smallest state of India, gradually absorbing Indian influence and values. As a part and parcel of the Indian Union, its people have become the citizens of the biggest democracy in the world.

1.6 LITERACY RATE IN THE STATE

According to census 2001, Sikkim has total population 540,851 of which 480,981 persons are from rural area and 59,870 persons are from urban area. Of the total population of Sikkim 318,335 are literates therefore the total literacy rate of Sikkim is 68.8 percent. The literacy rate of male and female is 76 and 60.4 percent respectively. A comparative picture of the literacy rates in the state from 1981-2001 is shown in the table below.

Table No.1 Literacy rate by 1981 - 2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Persons</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>41.6</td>
<td>53.0</td>
<td>27.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>54.39</td>
<td>63.44</td>
<td>44.06</td>
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<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>68.8</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>60.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Compared to the national level literacy rates, those at the state level are higher. In 2001 the literacy rate of males is 76 percent and the literacy rate of females is 60.4 percent. The rising graph showed that literacy rate is gradually improving in the state, in 1981 it was 41.6 percent and in 2001 it reached 68.8 percent. Literacy rate of female has increased 2.2 times in 2001 than in 1981. A detailed picture of the literacy rates in the four districts of the State is shown in table below.

Table No.2 District wise literacy rate in 2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State/Districts</th>
<th>Persons 2001</th>
<th>Male 2001</th>
<th>Female 2001</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sikkim</td>
<td>68.8</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>60.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North District</td>
<td>67.2</td>
<td>75.7</td>
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<td>West District</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>South District</td>
<td>67.3</td>
<td>74.3</td>
<td>59.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East District</td>
<td>74.7</td>
<td>81.2</td>
<td>66.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Graph 2. Districtwise Literacy Rates in 2001
Ranking the districts in terms of literacy percentage shows that as in 2001, the East district has the highest percentage of literacy 74.7 percent and the west district, the lowest percentage of literacy i.e. 58.8 percent. Compared to the total literacy rate at the all-India level that the state level is higher by about 3.42 percent. The female literacy has also improved and it is higher than the national average.

Table No.3: Literacy rate in North East India

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>States of North East India</th>
<th>1991 census</th>
<th>2001 census</th>
<th>% of growth of literacy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Arunachal Pradesh</td>
<td>41.6</td>
<td>54.71</td>
<td>13.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Assam</td>
<td>52.6</td>
<td>64.28</td>
<td>11.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Manipur</td>
<td>59.9</td>
<td>68.87</td>
<td>8.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Meghalaya</td>
<td>49.1</td>
<td>63.31</td>
<td>14.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Mizoram</td>
<td>82.3</td>
<td>88.49</td>
<td>6.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Nagaland</td>
<td>61.6</td>
<td>67.11</td>
<td>5.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Sikkim</td>
<td>56.9</td>
<td>69.68</td>
<td>12.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Tripura</td>
<td>60.4</td>
<td>73.66</td>
<td>13.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>52.2</td>
<td>65.38</td>
<td>13.18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to census 2001, Mizoram has the highest literacy rate as it holds second position in the highest literate state in the country. Sikkim stands at the third place among North East states in the literacy rate and its literacy rate is above the national average literacy rate of 65.38.
1.7 DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Till the major part of 19th century, education in Sikkim was monastic in nature and only in the later part of the century modern education was introduced in the kingdom by the Christian missionaries. Then the royal durbar started taking interest in education and took it as a social service so one of the councilors of the royal durbar generally looked after it. In 1920, the Chogyal (King) of Sikkim reorganized the Education Department and placed it under the administration of a full-fledged Director of Education who was assisted by a ‘board’ under the headship of a president. In 1922, the Education Department was placed under the Judicial Secretary. 36

In 1945 the first Inspectors of Schools was appointed in Sikkim. In 1950, an officer was given the charge of the Education Department, and in 1953 the first Executive Councillor of the department was appointed. In 1954, the first Director from outside the Kingdom was appointed and he was assisted by three Inspectors of Schools. One such inspector was posted at the headquarters and the others in the districts. In the same year, with the assistance of the Government of India, the First Seven-Year Plan was launched in Sikkim to set the stage for an all-round development of the state and under this development plan, an educational administrative set-up was created. In 1960-61 when the Second Five Year Development Plan (1960-65) was launched, two more Inspectors for primary schools were appointed so that each inspector could look after one of the four districts. In the early sixties, at the directorate level the administration set up comprising the Director of Education, an Inspector of Schools in charge of planning and administration, an Office Superintendent and about a dozen clerical staff. In 1975 when Sikkim became the twenty-second state of the Indian Union, efforts were made to further strengthen the educational administrative set-up and certain new post which include the posts of Joint Director (Planning), Joint Director (Administration), Joint Director (Academic) and four Joint Directors one for each district were created. In 1975-76, a Sports Cell was also created in the department with an Assistant Director of Sports appointed on deputation from the National Institute of Sports, Patiala. In 1987-88 an Engineering Cell was established with the creation of five posts of Junior Engineers. It was further strengthened in 1989-90 with the addition of one post of Divisional Engineer and four posts of assistant Engineers, one for each district. 37
According to notification passed by Government of Sikkim, dated 24th May 2004, the Education Department was renamed as Human Resource Development Department. 38

1.8 ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE OF EDUCATION IN THE STATE

The department of education of state was renamed as the Human Resource Development Department in 2003. The educational administrative machinery is at two level Secretariat level and Directorate level.

1.8.1 Secretariat Level

At the secretariat level, Minister of Human Resource Development is at the top. Below him is the Secretary of Human Resource Development Department who is in charge of the whole department. He is the administrative head of all the educational establishments in state.

The Secretariat is responsible for policy formation, making policy decisions and for the provision of guidelines and decisions in all matters pertaining to education from pre- primary to college level, including higher and technical education. It is also responsible for the recruitment, posting, transfer, promotion, conduct, grant of leave, pensions etc, and of all gazetted officers of the Human Resource Development Department. It is also responsible for coordination with other departments and planning, implementation of projects and other matters related to establishment. The other functions include matters pertaining to framing of rules, ordinances related education and sanction on items of expenditure for which the administrative departments are empowered under the Delegation of Financial Power Rules of the state government. The Secretary is assisted by a Special Secretary, an Additional Secretary, two Joint Secretary and the Directors. The secretariat also looks after functioning from senior secondary level to college level. The Joint Secretary I is given responsibility to look after higher education in particular since the State do not have any board or committees for higher education.
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Figure 1: Educational Administrative setup at the Secretariat Level

Minister of Human Resource Development Department

- Secretary
- Special Secretary
- Additional Secretary

Joint Secretary I (Higher Education Administration)
  - Deputy Secretary
  - Under Secretary
  - Office Superintendent
  - Head Assistant
    - UDC
    - LDC

Joint Secretary II (Vacant) (Elementary Education Administration)
  - UDC (at present)
  - LDC

1.8.2 Directorate Level

Earlier Human Resource Development Department of Sikkim had only one Directorate which dealt with general school education up to secondary level. The State Government, in 1998 established one more Directorate of Technical Education. The two Directorates are:
a) Directorate of Education: This level takes care of school education from pre primary to secondary level. Director is the administrative head of the school educational establishments in state. The Director of education is assisted by four Additional Directors who look after Training, Text Books/Language, Sanskrit, Sarva Siskha Abhiyan respectively, six Joint Directors of planning, administration, examination/scholarships, accounts and monitoring evaluation section respectively. The Additional Directors are assisted by Joint Directors of four districts, Deputy Directors, then Assistant Directors (AD) and then Assistant Education Officers (AEO) or Assistant project Officers (APOs).

The engineering cell of Human Resource Development Department is under the overall charge of Divisional Engineer. Two Divisional Engineers looks after one district in the State. Engineering cell of Human Resource Development Department takes charge of construction and repair of school infrastructure such as buildings, hostels, playground etc. (Fig 2)

b) Directorate of Technical Education: This directorate is administratively charged with dealing with matters relating to the two private colleges set up by the Sikkim Manipal University- Sikkim Manipal Institute of Technology (SMIT) at Majhitar and Sikkim Manipal Institute of Medical Sciences (SMIMS) at Tadong. The directorate also looks after the technical education in the State like polytechnics, computer course centers and advice technical colleges of State. Now the directorate is overseeing the implementation of the World Bank Project as Third Technician Education Project which has established two polytechnic institutes in the State. The Director is assisted by a Deputy Secretary, an Under Secretary and two Assistant Directors.
Figure 2: Educational Administrative set up at Directorate Level

- Director
  - Joint Director (Planning)
    - Joint Director IEDC
      - Joint Director (SCERT)
      - Joint Director (DIET)
        - Joint Director S/W/E/N
          - Joint Director Administration
            - Deputy Director
              - Joint Director (Examination/Scholarships)
                - Joint Director (Accounts)
                  - Joint Director (Monitoring, evaluation) Section
  - Joint Director (Additional Director of Training)
  - Joint Director (Additional Director of Text Book/Languages)
  - Joint Director (Additional Director of Sanskrit)
  - Joint Director (Additional Director of SSA)
  - Deputy Director
    - Assistant Director
      - APO
      - Coordinators
      - Dy. Director (Population Edn)
      - Dy Director (Extension service)
      - Administrative officer
      - Resource Persons
      - Lecturers
        - Text Book Officers
          - AD
          - OSD
          - Lecturer
        - AEO
          - APO
          - APO
        - APOs
          - APO
          - APO
1.8.3 Organizational set up at the District Level

At the district level Joint Director is the head of the District Education Office, assisted by a Deputy Director, Assistant Directors and Assistant Education Officers.

In Sikkim there is no separate Inspectorate of Education. The Assistant Director supervises school inspection up to the Junior high school level with the help of Assistant Education Officer (AEO) and also through Assistant Project Officer (APO). The District
Sports Officer (DSO) also works under him. The accounts officer takes care of routine accounts work, salary of teachers and other staff at the district office.\(^{43}\)

Inspection and supervision of schools is conducted by the officers at different hierarchical levels of the administrative system, but there are no norms about number, frequency etc., of inspection to be conducted by each officer. There are no guidelines or specific proforma for preparing inspection reports or for their follow up actions. To inspect and supervise schools in a systematic manner, the officers should be enlightened about their duties and responsibilities.\(^{44}\)

**ORGANIZATIONAL SET UP AT DISTRICT LEVEL**

**(EAST/WEST/SOUTH/NORTH DISTRICT)**

![Organizational Setup Diagram](image)

Figure 4. Organizational Setup at District Level\(^{45}\)
1.9 NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

In the beginning the development of modern education in Sikkim remained largely dependent on the initiative taken by the royal durbar and the encouragement provided by the enlightened people of the society. For the major part of the 19th century, education in Sikkim was monastic in nature. Education being religious in nature was taken care of by the monks. The number of Schools increased very slowly. After its integration with the Indian Union in 1975, the educational policy and programmes of the government of India were applied, adapted and implemented in the state. There was substantial growth in terms of the number of educational institutions at all levels and according to census 2001, literacy rate in the state is 69.68%.

However till now Sikkim has not yet established any high level education board, council or committee to advise and provide expert guidance in matters related to higher education. In Sikkim access to higher education is limited due to various reasons. People of Sikkim have no access to the general academic university education i.e. post graduate and research education (M.Phil and PhD) at their own place. Till date the colleges of Sikkim do not conduct postgraduate classes in the field of humanities, only the private constituent colleges of Sikkim Manipal University provide M.Sc in Physics, Chemistry. A large number of students from Sikkim go out to other parts of the country for degrees such as, M.A, M.Phil, and PhD in humanities and social sciences, sciences and professional courses respectively. These pose great difficulties and financial burden to students to pursue for higher education elsewhere. In fact it is seen that many of them stopped their post graduate and research education after college education due to various factors.

Till date Sikkim does not have regular general university of its own, however higher education from college level leading to Masters and research in arts subjects are obtainable through Open Universities and correspondence courses operated in Sikkim. Currently the following Open Universities and correspondence courses operating in Sikkim are:

(a) Study Centers under Indira Gandhi Open University, New Delhi.

(b) Study center for correspondence course under Madurai Kamraj University, Tamil Nadu.
(c) Study center for correspondence course under Annamalai University, Tamil Nadu.
(d) Distance Education by Sikkim Manipal University.

Higher education especially post graduate and research education in Sikkim is in a state of crisis. Higher education will have to play a great role for social and economic development of the state thereby to bring about social transformation as well. Higher education and research now act as essential components of the cultural, socio-economic and environmentally sustainable development of individuals, communities and nations. In this context there is an urgent need for establishment of general and professional university to cater to the growing demands of higher education in the state. It is found that colleges are mostly located in the east district and in the south district only hence there is need for establishment and growth of more colleges in other parts of the state too.

There is a lack of research on all fronts in education in the state. For development of Sikkim in its totality, researches in the entire fields are necessary but Sikkim is still found to be backward especially in the field of Higher Education. As a matter of fact, very less research in education has been carried out even after its integration with the Indian Union in 1975. When compared with the national level the picture of Sikkim is very discouraging. Till date practically there is no systematic research being conducted with reference to higher education in Sikkim. Today there is an urgent need of research to be conducted in higher education towards solutions associated to its various problems. To conduct a scientific survey of higher education enterprises of the state these items should at least be dealt with, although other items too need discussions in order to promote quality higher education in the State, they are

- Development of higher education in Sikkim
- problems of higher education in the context of Administration, Infrastructure, Finance and Academic
- the problem of teachers.
- the problem of students.

The report, Higher Education in Developing Countries: Peril and Promise, published in 2000, presents a powerful message: higher education is no longer a luxury; it is essential for survival.
1.10 STATEMENT OF PROBLEM
A study of Higher Education in the State of Sikkim

1.11 DEFINITION OF THE TERM
HIGHER EDUCATION: Higher Education is defined as all types of education provided in institutions such as universities, colleges, technological institutes and teachers' colleges for and in which the courses lead to the giving of a named award (degree, diploma or certificate of higher studies). The entrants are about eighteen years of age and have completed 12 years of schooling. The stage of higher education covers the following stages graduate, post-graduate and research.

1.12 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY
The objectives of the study are as follows:
I. To study the development of Higher Education in Sikkim such as general and professional.
II. To investigate the status of the following in Higher Education
    (a) Infrastructure (b) Finance (c) Administration (d) Academic
III. To study the problems of college teachers.
IV. To find out the problems of students.
V. To assess the feedback from the former students.
VI. To suggest measures for improvement in the field of Higher Education in Sikkim.

1.13 SCOPE OF THE STUDY
The scope of the study is comprehensive. It covered the development of Higher Education in Sikkim from the time Sikkim became a part of India. It also includes the status of Administration, Infrastructure, Finance and Academic on Higher Education. It also deals with finding out the problems of teachers and students of the institutions of Higher Education and suggests some remedial measures.
1.14 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The study was carried out in the government and private colleges which offer general and professional courses in Sikkim. Till date Sikkim is not having general University in its own State.

1.15 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

Some of the limitations of the study are as follows:
1. One hundred forty Questionnaires which were given to the teachers of the different colleges and only one hundred thirty questionnaires were returned. Eight hundred and fifty two questionnaires which were given to the students of the different colleges and only eight hundred questionnaires were returned.
2. Only little statistical official records related to the development of Higher Education in Sikkim were available. Therefore the investigator had to meet the retired principals and retired officials of Department of Education for information.
3. Since most of the colleges in Sikkim are private, they didn’t want to share their confidential statistical and other information with researchers.

1.16 CONCLUSION

In the introductory chapter, the objectives of Higher Education, Profile of Sikkim, The People of Sikkim, Overview of History of Sikkim, Administrative Structure of Education in the State, Need and Significance of the Study, Statement of the problem, Objectives of the Study and Limitation of the study was highlighted.
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