

OCCASIONAL PAPER NO. 15

**HUMAN RESOURCES, CULTURE, AMENITIES  
AND QUALITY OF LIFE IN SIKKIM:  
A CRITIQUE**

**Maitreyee Choudhury**



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## HUMAN RESOURCES, CULTURE, AMENITIES AND QUALITY OF LIFE IN SIKKIM: A CRITIQUE

### Introduction:

The present work is a study on human and socio-economic resources, culture and quality of life in Sikkim. Sikkim is fortunate to have a very small population. The total population of Sikkim (550,000 approx.) is much less than any of the major cities in India. More than fifty per cent of Sikkim's total area lies uninhabited. The inhospitable terrain and harsh climate have restricted the extent of human habitation well within the altitude of 3500m. The fact that a very large portion of Sikkim lies above and much beyond 3500m makes it clear that an extensive landmass is not conducive to human settlement. Therefore, the small size of population of the state does not necessarily indicate that the state is in a position to carry a large populace.

The mountain environment of Sikkim is fragile as well as vulnerable. However, being comparatively new to modern planning processes, it has enough scope to learn from the past experiences and problems faced by other mountain states, so that there is no repetition of blunders committed by others. Since the state is breaking new grounds to tap the resources that were not reachable to the masses so far, it is important to undertake carrying capacity studies in respect of all future developmental activities. As far as the socio-economic development is concerned, it is necessary to study the demography, economy, occupational structure, civic amenities, social norms, cultural activities, and conflicting interests of various ethnic groups as well as the quality of life of the resident people. It is of utmost importance to know the human perception and aspirations for better living since the ultimate goal of any developmental activity is to improve the quality of life.

### Methodology:

The methodology adopted in preparing the present paper involved intensive use of both primary and secondary data. The principal sources of data included the published as well as unpublished official data and information gathered from key informants/representatives of the villages surveyed. Most of the secondary data were collected from the Directorate of Economics, Statistics, Monitoring and Evaluation, Government of Sikkim and Directorate of Census Operations, Sikkim Branch, Government of India. Besides, relevant data and information were collected from the Departments of Forests, Agriculture & Horticulture, Tourism and Rural Development, Government of Sikkim. For useful references, books and journals available at the Documentation Centre of the Centre for Himalayan Studies, North Bengal University, Central Library of North Bengal University, Community Centre Library, Gangtok, Library of the Namgyal Institute of Tibetology, Gangtok, etc. were consulted.

The work required a thorough understanding of the ethno-demographic as well socio-economic situations in Sikkim. For the purpose, more than three months were spent in the field at different phases. The work involved intensive field investigation, collection and analysis of primary data. A detailed interview schedule consisting of about hundred open as well as close ended questions were prepared to obtain maximum possible information. About 50 villages of Sikkim were visited and 150 individuals were interviewed. The sampling was purposive and only key informants were selected for interview. For almost every village, at least one *Panchayat*



member was interrogated. The other respondents were selected from a wide range of income groups covering the primary, secondary and tertiary sectors. Given the fact that Sikkim is home of various ethnic groups, particular attention was paid in selecting respondents from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds. A cross section of Lepchas, Bhutias, Nepalese and Plainsmen in age groups ranging from 21 to 75 was interviewed. Besides, an attempt was made to avoid gender bias. More than 25 per cent of the respondents were female.

The structure of the paper is given below:

## **1. HUMAN RESOURCES OF SIKKIM**

- 1.1. Demographic Profile
- 1.2. Economic Profile
- 1.3. Employment Profile

## **2. CULTURAL PROFILE OF SIKKIM**

- 2.1. Ethnic Diversity
- 2.2. Tribes and Communities
- 2.3. Religion
- 2.4. Social Norms
- 2.5. Community Behaviour
- 2.6. Cultural Activities
- 2.7. Festivals
- 2.8. Conflicting Interests

## **3. AMENITIES AVAILABLE IN SIKKIM**

- 3.1. Educational Institutions
- 3.2. Communication
- 3.3. Industry
- 3.4. Healthcare and Medical Facilities
- 3.5. Drinking Water
- 3.6. Energy
- 3.7. Housing
- 3.8. Markets

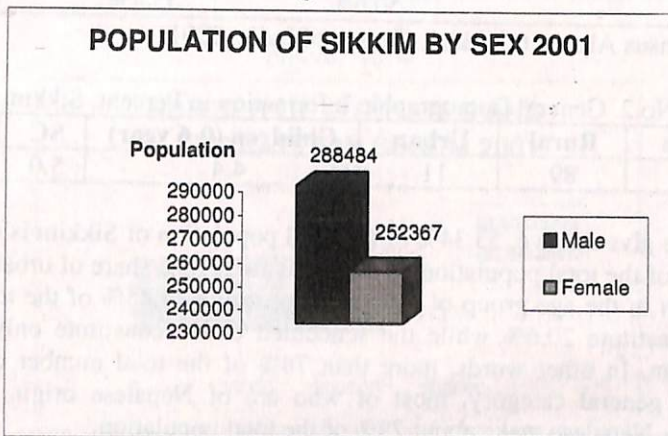
## **4. QUALITY OF LIFE IN SIKKIM**

- 4.1. Methodology of Measuring Quality of Life
- 4.2. Quality of Life Index: The Existing Scenario
- 4.3. The Aspired Scenario

# 1. HUMAN RESOURCES OF SIKKIM

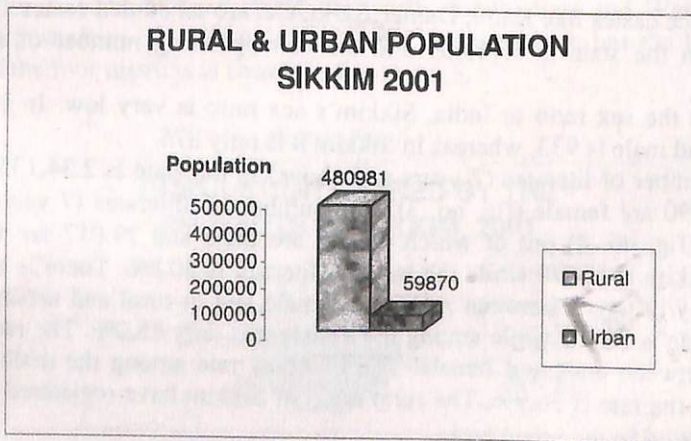
**1.1. Demographic Profile:** The total population of Sikkim as per the Census of Sikkim (2001) is 5,40,851 comprising 2,88,484 male and 2,52,367 female (fig. no. 1). The sex ratio in Sikkim is quite low. There are only 875 female per 1000 male. About 4,80,981 people of Sikkim live in rural areas while only 59,870 persons reside in urban areas (fig. no. 2). The number of children below the age of 6 years is 78,195. The total number of households in the state as of 2001 is 1,14,223. The average size of a household is 4.7, i.e. approximately five persons reside in each household. The overall density of population in the state is 76 persons per sq. km., which is one of the lowest in India.

Figure No. 1



Source: Primary Census Abstract, Sikkim, Census of India, 2001.

Figure No. 2



Source: Primary Census Abstract, Sikkim, Census of India, 2001.



The general demographic information of Sikkim is given in the table below:

Table No. 1. General Demographic Information of Sikkim 2001

Sikkim	Persons	Male	Female
Total Population	5,40,851	2,88,484	2,52,367
Rural Population	4,80,981	2,55,774	2,25,207
Urban population	59,870	32,710	27,160
Population (0-6 yrs)	78,195	39,842	38,353
SC Population	27,165	13,807	13,358
ST Population	1,11,405	56,940	54,465
Number of Literates	2,34,135	1,37,745	96,390
Literacy Rate	50.6%	55.4%	45.0%

Source: Primary Census Abstract, Sikkim, Census of India, 2001.

Table No.2. General Demographic Information in Percent, Sikkim 2001

Male	Female	Rural	Urban	Children (0-6 year)	SC	ST	Others
53.34	46.66	89	11	4.4	5.0	20.6	74.4

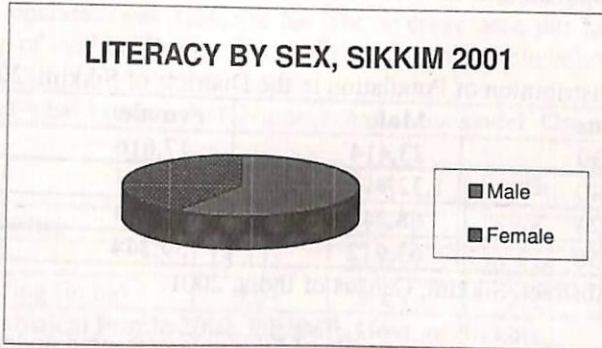
As per the table given above, 53.34% of the total population of Sikkim is male and 46.66% is female. About 89% of the total population of Sikkim is rural. The share of urban population is only about 11%. Children in the age group of 0-6 years constitute 14.45% of the total population. The scheduled tribes constitute 20.6% while the scheduled castes constitute only 5.0% of the total population of Sikkim. In other words, more than 74% of the total number of persons living in Sikkim belongs to general category, most of who are of Nepalese origin. Together with the scheduled castes, the Nepalese make about 79% of the total population.

The major ethnic groups living in Sikkim are the Lepchas, the Bhutias and the Nepalese. Besides, there are plainsmen most of who are temporary residents of the state. The Lepchas, the Bhutias, the Sherpas, and of late, the Limboos and the Tamangs constitute scheduled tribes while a few Nepalese service castes like Kami, Damai, Sarki, etc. are scheduled castes. The total number of scheduled tribes in the state is 1,11,405 and the corresponding number of scheduled castes is 27,165.

Compared to the sex ratio in India, Sikkim's sex ratio is very low. In India the number of female per thousand male is 933, whereas in Sikkim it is only 875.

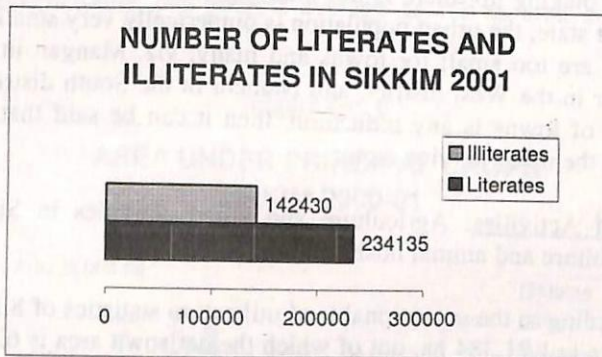
The total number of literates (7 years and above) in the state is 2,34,135 of whom 1,37,745 are male and 96,390 are female (fig. no. 3). The number of illiterates (7 years and above) in the state is 1,42,430 (fig. no. 4) out of which 63,413 are male and 79,017 are female. The overall literacy rate in Sikkim is 50.6% while the rate of illiteracy is 30.8%. There is a visible disparity in the rates of literacy/illiteracy between male and female and in rural and urban areas. The literacy rate among the male is 55.4% while among the female it is only 45.0%. The rate of illiteracy too is vastly different between male and female. The illiteracy rate among the male is 25.5%, whereas, among the female the rate is 36.9%. The rural areas of Sikkim have registered only 46.7% literacy while the same is 80% in the urban areas.

Figure No. 3



Source: Primary Census Abstract, Sikkim, Census of India, 2001.

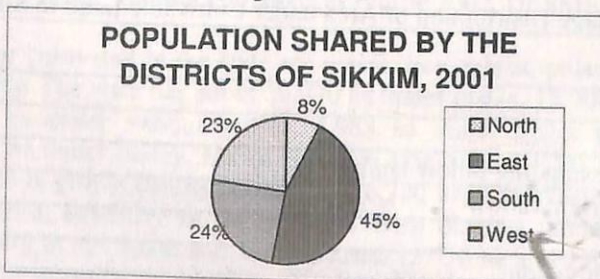
Figure No. 4



Source: Primary Census Abstract, Census of India, Sikkim, 2001.

The state of Sikkim has four districts, nine subdivisions, 8 towns and 450 revenue blocks (villages). The four districts of Sikkim are the North, South, East and West districts. The East district has the largest share of the state's population and the North has the least. The population shared by each of the four districts is shown in figure no. 5.

Figure No. 5



Source: Primary Census Abstract, Sikkim, Census of India, 2001

The distribution of population in the North, East, South and West districts of Sikkim is given in the table below:

Table No. 3. Distribution of Population in the Districts of Sikkim, 2001

Districts	Persons	Male	Female	Sex Ratio
North	41,030	23,414	17,616	752
East	2,45,040	1,32,917	1,12,113	844
South	1,31,525	68,241	63,284	927
West	1,23,256	63,912	59,344	929

Source: Primary Census Abstract, Sikkim, Census of India, 2001.

**1.2. Economic Profile:** The economic profile of Sikkim is presented under three broad heads, namely, I) Agriculture and allied activities, II) Industries, and III) Services. The economic profile of the state shows an overwhelming dependence on agriculture and allied activities. While the industrial sector is slowly picking up, there is not much increase in the tertiary sector. Although there are eight towns in the state, the urban population is numerically very small. Barring Gangtok, all other towns in Sikkim are too small for towns and many, viz. Mangan in the North district, Gyalshing and Naya Bazar in the West district, and Namchi in the South district are smaller than some villages. If the size of towns is any indication, then it can be said that the state has very limited scope of growth in the urban service sector.

I) Agriculture and Allied Activities: Agriculture and allied activities in Sikkim include crop culture, horticulture, sericulture and animal husbandry.

*Crop Culture:* According to the provisional land utilization statistics of Sikkim (1995-96), the total area under agriculture is 1,21,384 ha, out of which the net sown area is 62,043 ha, area under current fallow is 5,068 ha, other uncultivated land (excluding fallow land) is 9,807 ha, fallow land other than current fallow is 29,573 ha, cultivable waste land is 2,389 ha and land not available for cultivation is 12,494 ha. There has been a marginal decrease in net sown area since 1990-91 but almost threefold increase has been registered in fallow land other than current fallow. (Source: Sikkim: A Statistical Profile 2002. Directorate of Economics, Statistics, Monitoring & Evaluation (DESME), Govt. of Sikkim, p. 64). As per the table given below, only 52% of the cultivable area is net sown and 24% is fallow land other than current fallow.

Table No. 4. Percentage Distribution of Area under Cultivable Land in Sikkim, 1995-96.

Classification of land	Area
Net area sown	52%
Area under current fallow	4%
Other uncultivated land (excluding fallow lands)	8%
Fallow land other than current fallow	24%
Cultivable waste land	2%
Land not available for cultivation	10%

Source: Sikkim: A Statistical Profile 2002. DESME, Govt. of Sikkim.



The total number of operational holdings in Sikkim during the period 1995-96 was 52,697 while the total area operated was 1,11,302 ha. The average area per holding was 2.11 ha. The district-wise break up of land holdings in Sikkim is given in the table below.

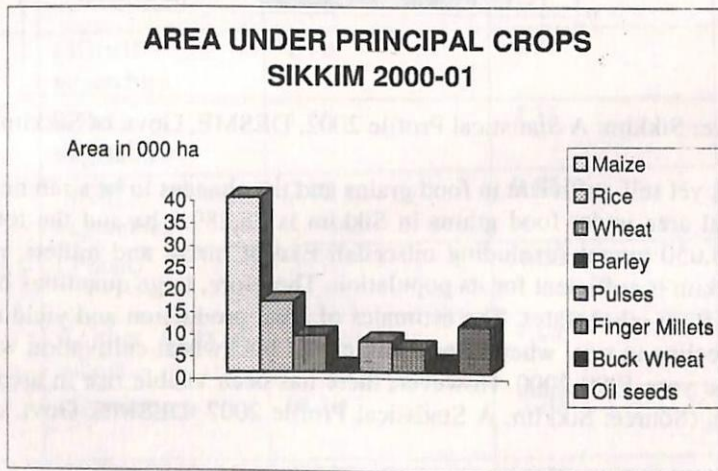
Table No. 5. District-wise break up of Number and Area under Operational Land Holding in Sikkim (1995-96).

Districts/State	North	East	South	West	Sikkim
No of operational holdings	5,124	20,271	12,854	14,448	52,697
Area operated (in ha)	15,444	34,450	29,336	32,072	1,11,302
Average area per holding (in ha)	3.01	1.7	2.22	2.28	2.11

Source: Sikkim: A Statistical Profile 2002. DESME, Govt. of Sikkim.

As per the table no. 5, the number of operational holdings is maximum (20,271 nos.) in the East district and minimum in the North district (5,124 nos.). The East district also has the largest area operated under agriculture but poorest average as far as area per holding in Sikkim is concerned.

Figure No. 6



Source: Sikkim: A Statistical Profile 2002, DESME.

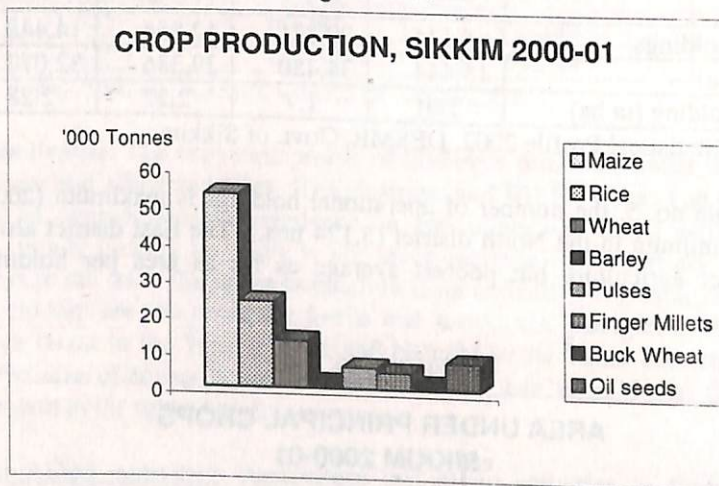
The major crops cultivated in the state are maize, rice, wheat, pulses, finger millets, barley, buckwheat and oilseeds. The state has about 39,930 ha under maize, 15,908 ha under rice, 8,100 ha under wheat, 6,710 ha under various pulses, 4,988 ha under finger millets, 2,050 ha under buckwheat and 1,140 ha under barley. Maize is grown extensively in the South and West districts (13,300 ha each). Rice is grown chiefly in the East (6,720 ha) and West (5,380 ha) districts. The area under wheat is most extensive in the East and West districts (about 2,550 ha each), while pulses are grown mostly in the South and West districts (2,350 ha and 2,540 ha respectively). The East district too has considerably large area under pulses (1,740 ha) but the North district has very limited area (80 ha) under the same. Finger millets (4988 ha) and buckwheat (2,050 ha) are grown



in all four districts, but their extents are very limited since they are grown as marginal crops. Oilseeds (9,990 ha) are grown mostly in the East, South and West districts.

Sikkim produced 52,834.4 tonnes of maize, 23,439.3 tonnes of rice, 12,849.8 tonnes of wheat, 1,677 tonnes of barley, 5,946.1 tonnes of pulses, 4,713.3 tonnes of finger millet, 1,590.1 tonnes of buckwheat and 7,605.4 tonnes of oilseeds in the year 2000-2001 (fig. no. 7).

Figure No. 7



Source: Sikkim: A Statistical Profile 2002, DESME, Govt. of Sikkim.

Sikkim is not yet self-sufficient in food grains and the chances to be so in near future are also very slim. The total area under food grains in Sikkim is 78,289.6 ha and the total production of food grains is 1,03,050 tonnes (excluding oilseeds). Except maize and millets, none of the food crops grown in Sikkim is sufficient for its population. Therefore, large quantities of rice, wheat and pulses are brought from other states. The estimates of area, production and yield rates for the year 2000-2001 show decline in rice, wheat, finger millet and buckwheat cultivation when compared to the same during the year 1999-2000. However, there has been visible rise in area, production and yield rate of maize. (Source: Sikkim: A Statistical Profile 2002, DESME, Govt. of Sikkim, p. 68-71).

*Horticulture:* Sikkim enjoys certain privileges as far as horticulture is concerned. The range of sub-tropical to cold-temperate climate in the state has favoured cultivation of a wide variety of fruits, vegetables, root and tuber crops, spices and flowers. Sikkim is a prolific grower of mandarin oranges, plums, peaches, pears, avocado, guava, banana etc., vegetables such as, cauliflower, pumpkin, bitter gourd, cucumber, tomato, a large variety of beans and leafy vegetables, and root and tuber crops like potato, radish, carrot, turnip, cassava, sweet potato, yams, etc. Among the spices grown in Sikkim, large cardamom is by far the most important. Other than cardamom, ginger and turmeric are also grown profusely. Potato is the single largest horticultural crop in Sikkim, followed by ginger. In the year 2001-2002, the production of potato and ginger was to the tune of 16,830 tonnes and 15,500 tonnes respectively. Both the crops are surplus crops and are exported to other states in India. However, large cardamom is the major cash crop of the state



and its plantations are spread over 16,100 ha. Cardamom, a low volume high value crop, fetches handsome revenue and is a major source of earning for local inhabitants. Sikkim mandarin orange is the other most important cash crop. The state annually produces about 6,550 tonnes of oranges, but its supply falls far short of demand. Although Sikkim grows a variety of vegetables in three seasons, namely, kharif, rabi and off-season, and the volume of production is much more than any other horticultural crops, it has to import vegetables round the year. The climate of Sikkim is also favourable for the cultivation and propagation of decorative flowering plants. Sikkim is home of a very large variety of orchids, ferns and flowering plants. Floriculture, especially the culture of orchids and decorative plants is gaining ground in Sikkim. The area, production and productivity of major horticultural crops of Sikkim are given in table no. 6.

Table No. 6. Area, Production and Productivity of Major Horticultural Crops in Sikkim, 2001-2002.

Sl. No.	Crop	Area ('000 ha)	Production ('000 tonnes)	Productivity (tonne/ha)
1. Fruits	i.Sikkim Mandarin	4.25	6.55	1.54
	ii.Other fruits	1.75	2.45	1.40
2. Vegetables	i.Kharif vegetables	1.70	8.08	4.75
	ii.Rabi vegetables	1.65	7.35	4.45
	iii.Off season vegetables	2.02	9.55	4.73
3. Roots & tubers	i.Potato	3.55	16.83	4.74
	ii.Other roots & tubers	1.06	1.85	1.75
4. Spices	i.Cardamom	16.10	3.20	0.20
	ii.Ginger	2.75	15.50	5.64
	iii.Turmeric	0.46	1.52	3.34
5. Flowers		NA	0.36	

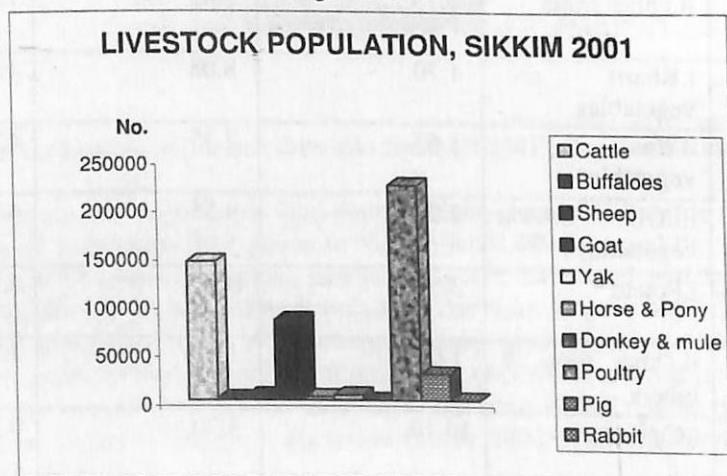
Source: Sikkim: A Statistical Profile 2002, DESME, Govt. of Sikkim.

*Sericulture:* In terms of sericulture Sikkim is still in a state of infancy. Sericulture is not a traditional economy of the state. It was introduced in Sikkim in late 1970s, i.e. after Sikkim's merger with India. Due to non-traditional nature, sericulture is not widely spread as yet. Although

it is introduced in three of the four districts of Sikkim, the total area under sericulture is only 430 acres (Source: Department of Forests, Govt. of Sikkim). Of the 430 acres, 370 acres are under mulberry plantation, 30 acres are under *muga* plantation and another 30 acres are under the plantation of tapioca and castor. Sikkim is believed to have good potential in this sector, especially, for *muga* and *eri* cultivation. At present silk cocoons are produced on experimental basis in a few govt. sericulture farms and select villages in the East, South and West districts.

**Animal Husbandry:** Next to agriculture, animal husbandry is the most important economic activity of the people of Sikkim. Animal grazing is an age-old practice of the mountain people, especially in areas above 3000m. This is the mainstay of a large number of semi-nomadic tribes and supplementary source of income for most of the settled agriculturists. Given the fact that a large area of Sikkim is grassland lying beyond the regime of crop culture, the resident people of those areas have no alternative but to rear livestock for their living. The major concentrations of pastorals can be found on the grassy slopes of the mountains in the North, East and West districts. The livestock reared by the settled agriculturists are usually stall-fed. The animals reared in Sikkim include, cattle, buffalo, yak, sheep, goat, pig, horse, pony, mule, dog, rabbit and poultry.

Figure No. 8



Source: Sikkim: A Statistical Profile 2002, DESME, Govt. of Sikkim.

Of all the animals reared in Sikkim (excluding poultry which is almost ubiquitous in Sikkim), cattle rank first with a total of 1,43,024 followed by goat (82,938) and pig (26,975). Cattle are reared in Sikkim as much for its meat as for the milk. Barring the Hindu Nepalese, almost all Sikkimese people consume beef, and there is always good demand for it. Goat and pig too are reared for their meat. Buffaloes are comparatively rare in Sikkim and their total number is only 1,970.

Sheep and yak are usually reared in high altitude areas in the North and East districts. The yak and sheep population in the state increased ever since the Sino-Indian border was closed. The total number of sheep in the state is 3,023, while the number of yaks is only 3,140. Sheep are



reared chiefly in the North and West districts, while yaks are most numerous in the North district (1,549 nos.). There is no yak in the South district.

The number of the beasts of burden like horse, pony, donkey and mule is also dwindling due to improved communication system. At present, there are only 5,436 horse and ponies, and 121 donkey and mules in the state. A very small number of rabbits (357) are also reared in the state.

II) Industries: Compared to the agricultural sector, the industrial sector of the state is still weak and under-developed. The industries of Sikkim can be classified as cottage, small and medium scale industries. There is no large-scale industry in the state. The locational factors are not yet conducive for the establishment of large-scale industries in Sikkim. The mountainous terrain and geographical isolation, small and scattered domestic market, and limited mineral resources render large-scale industry non-viable. Therefore, industrial development in Sikkim is restricted to small-scale, cottage and a few medium-scale industrial units. Altogether there are 367 small-scale units, 36 cottage industries, 3 medium scale industries and 3 Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) in the state. The total number of non-functioning units is 87. The table below gives the district-wise break up of different categories of industries in Sikkim.

Table No. 7. District-wise Distribution of Industries, Sikkim, 2000.

Particulars	North	East	South	West	State
Provisionally registered	25	244	51	66	386
Small scale units	6	276	54	31	367
Cottage Industries	1	19	6	10	36
Medium scale industries	NA	3	NA	NA	3
PSUs	NA	3	NA	NA	3
Non-functioning units	3	65	10	9	87

Source: Sikkim: A Statistical Profile 2002, DESME, Govt. of Sikkim.

The industries in Sikkim are primarily mineral and agro-based. Among others, precision industries are gaining ground, thanks to a comparatively pollution-free environment and cool climate. Industries like copper smelting, steel forging, watch making, distilleries and breweries, fruit preservation, and tea have already made their presence felt in the industrial scenario of Sikkim. Most of these industries are concentrated at and around Rangpo, Singtam and Gangtok in the East district. The copper mining town of Rangpo can be called the only industrial town in Sikkim. It can be mentioned here that the known copper reserves of Sikkim are almost exhausted and the copper industry of Sikkim is on the verge of extinction. The border town of Rangpo is now known more for its distilleries than copper. The Rangpo Distillery, a joint undertaking of a private company and the state government, and Mount Distillery, a private enterprise, are producing a wide range of liquors. Of late, a steel-forging unit has come up in the outskirts of Rangpo. Sikkim Time Corporation (SITCO), a premier precision tool industry and a prized state government undertaking, is located in the outskirts of Gangtok. The town of Singtam is the hub of many small-scale units. At one point of time, the town was well known for its fruit preservation factory. A few industries have come up at Melli, Jorethang and Temi in the South district. Worth mentioning are the Yuksam Brewery at Melli and the lone tea producing factory of Sikkim at Temi.

The tea industry of Sikkim, though presently based on only one garden, deserves special mention. The Temi tea garden is a state government undertaking. The quality of tea produced at Temi tea estate is comparable to that of standard Darjeeling tea. The tea grown at Temi is processed in the garden itself. Several varieties of tea are produced at Temi, of which the orange pekoe and orthodox varieties are in high demand. Tea could be one of the most promising industries in an industrially starved state like Sikkim.

The household industries of Sikkim include biscuit factory, flour mill, spices factory, noodle factory, pickle factory, ice cream factory, garment factory, knitting factory, wrought iron furniture and grill factory, soap factory, etc. The cottage industries of Sikkim specialize in handloom, carpet weaving, woodcarving, scroll painting, mask and artifact making. The handicrafts of Sikkim have a prospective market both within and outside the country.

**III) Services:** The geographical isolation and difficult terrain of Sikkim have restricted the scope of agricultural and industrial expansion. It is believed that the 'engine of economic growth' (Sikkim Today, p. 94) in Sikkim has to be the service sector. However, service sector in the state still maintains a low profile. Absence of large towns and limited development of modern infrastructure kept the tertiary sector small and stunted for a pretty long time. However, the scope of tertiary activities expanded to a great extent ever since Sikkim became a constituent state of India. Demand from various government as well as private establishments created job opportunities in the state and the number of tertiary workers increased manifold during the last three decades. Requirement of workers by various state and central government departments has provided a boost in the service sector. The major job-providing departments of the state are Public Works, Power, Education, Police, Health, Rural Development, Transport, Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Tourism. The departments of Public Works and Power are the two major employers of both trained professionals as well as un-skilled labourers. They engage huge labour force to construct and maintain roads, bridges, government buildings and power plants. The departments of Education and Health, the two most important departments so far as human resource development is concerned, provide job to thousands (7,771 and 2,402 persons respectively, as of 2002. Source: Sikkim: A Statistical Profile 2002, DESME, Govt. of Sikkim).

Among the central government departments, defence, banking and insurance sectors are the major job providers. Sikkim has a long international border on three sides and the strategic location of Sikkim necessitated deployment of a huge force consisting of all ranks of defence personnel. The recruitment of local youth in several defence contingents is considerable.

The banking sector has made its presence felt in Sikkim with a total strength of 69 public sector banks. Along with the banks, numerous insurance companies and non-banking financial investment companies have spread their network and provided job opportunities to many as field staff and agents.

Other than government services, trade and commerce, transport, construction and tourism related activities engage a large section of tertiary workers. It is estimated that non-government workers are more than twice the number of government employees. Of late the state has experienced a spate in trade and commerce. Sikkim's inclusion in the North Eastern Council (NEC) and opening of the traditional trade route via Nathula to China might be crucial for the future development in trade and tourism related activities.



Till very recently the transport sector of Sikkim used to be controlled entirely by the state owned Sikkim Nationalized transport. But with the rise in number of local commuters as well as tourists, private bus and taxi owners have become the dominant players in this sector.

In recent years Sikkim has witnessed a boost in construction of buildings. Hotels, lodges, resorts and shopping complexes have increased the demand for civil engineers, contractors, masons, carpenters, electricians, plumbers and un-skilled labourers. Most of the construction workers in Sikkim are migrants from outside the state.

Over the years, the demand for trained professionals like doctors, lawyers, tutors, beauticians, barbers, tailors, etc. has increased manifold. However, the total number of these professionals is still small.

As far as the private services are concerned, the most remarkable development has taken place in the tourism sector. Even two decades back, very few people visited Sikkim and even fewer people took interest in tourism related activities. With the lifting of restrictions on entry to certain areas in Sikkim, tourism started in the state in a big way. The sharp rise in the number of tourists, and volume of demand for hotels, lodges and guest houses, tourist taxis and drivers, travel agencies and tour operators, guides, porters, interpreters, etc. suggest that tourism can become the leading economy of the state in the near future. The job opportunities in the field of tourism proliferated due to demand for specialized services required by domestic and foreign tourists. Diverse forms of tourism, namely eco-tourism, adventure tourism, village tourism and cultural tourism, etc. have intensified the demand for skilled professionals in tourism sector.

**1.3. Employment Profile/Occupational Structure:** According to major occupation, the people of Sikkim may be grouped as under:

1. Main workers
  - a) Cultivators
  - b) Agricultural labourers
  - c) Workers in household industry
  - d) Other workers
2. Marginal Workers
3. Non-workers.

The total number of workers in Sikkim according to 2001 census is 2,22,500. The total number of main workers in the state is 1,86,222, of which 86,314 are cultivators, 10,837 are agricultural labourers, 2,791 are workers in household industries and 86,280 are other workers. There are 36,278 marginal workers, while 1,90,343 persons in the state are non-workers. The numbers of male and female workers in different sectors are given in table no. 8.

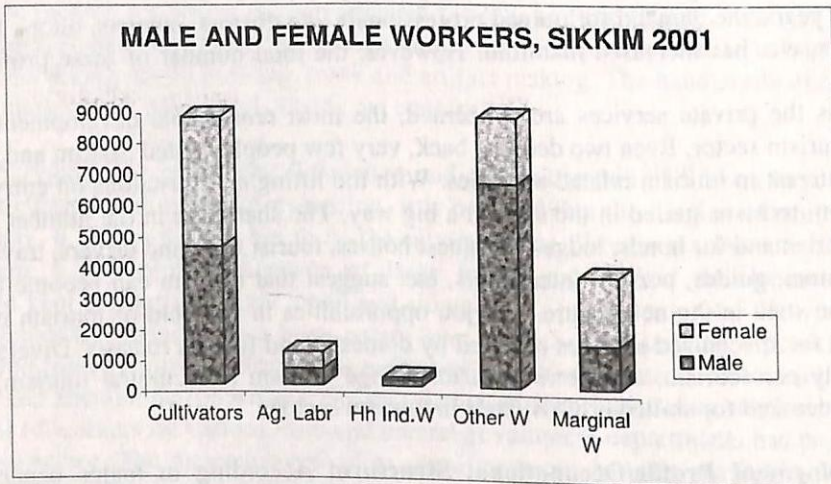
Table No. 8. Male and Female Workers, Sikkim, 2001

Workers	Male	Female	Total
Cultivators	44,642	41,672	86,314
Agricultural labourers	5,328	5,509	10,837
Workers in household industries	1,777	1,014	2,791
Other Workers	65,513	20,767	86,280
Marginal Workers	14,132	22,145	36,278

Source: Primary Census Abstract, Sikkim, Census of India, 2001.

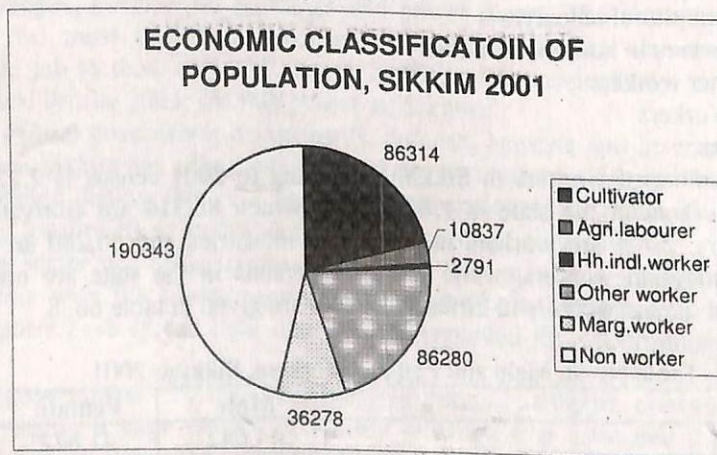
The female workers are more in number than the male workers in the sector of marginal workers. The number of female agricultural labourers is also marginally higher than their male counterpart. However, the male workers still dominate in the categories of cultivators, household industries and other workers. The proportion of male and female workers in the categories mentioned above is shown in figure no. 9.

Figure No. 9



Source: Primary Census Abstract, Sikkim, Census of India, 2001.

Figure No. 10



Source: Primary Census Abstract, Sikkim, Census of India, 2001.

The economic classification of workers in Sikkim shows that about a quarter of the total work force in Sikkim constitutes of primary workers and less than a quarter is made of tertiary



workers. The number of secondary workers is negligible. Almost half (46%) of the total population of Sikkim is non-worker (fig. no. 10).

The Demographic, Economic and Employment Profiles of Sikkim indicate that the state, though disadvantaged due to geographical isolation, has many positive aspects in regard to human and economic resources. It cannot be denied that the state has many limitations as far as utilization of resources is concerned. Yet, the profiles make it clear that the state's socio-economic environment is conducive to growth and development of both human as well as economic resources.

The Demographic Profile of Sikkim shows that the density of population in Sikkim is still very low and the size of population is small. Though migration factor plays a big role as far as growth of population is concerned, there is hardly any mechanism either to check or even record the entry of immigrants. Another demographic problem of the state is its low sex ratio. The low male-female ratio in the state hints at gender bias. Yet another intriguing feature is the small size of towns. The miniscule size of towns indicates very slow urbanization process. The literacy figures, though improving, are not very impressive as far as rural and female education is concerned.

The Economic Profile of the state shows growth in the sector of agriculture and allied activities. In spite of limited cultivable land, the state recorded growth in this sector. There was progress both in terms of quality and quantity. Sikkim has scopes to expand horticulture, animal husbandry and to some extent, sericulture sectors. However, as far as industries are concerned, the state has very little space, except in tourism industry.

The occupational structure of the state is more or less balanced. Though the number of non-workers in the state is pretty large, high work participation of both the sexes in primary, secondary and tertiary activities indicates healthy work environment. Unemployment is still not acute in Sikkim. There are scopes to expand self-employment opportunities and trade with the diversification of tourism sector and opening of Nathu-la pass in near future.

