

**Socio-Economic and Political Status of the Bhutias in Sikkim
Since 1975: Change and Continuity**

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DEDICATION

*This thesis is dedicated in memory of my beloved
father Late Passang Bhutia*

DECLARATION

I, **Karma Samten Bhutia**, hereby declare that the thesis entitled "**Socio-Economic and Political Status of the Bhutias in Sikkim Since 1975: Change and Continuity**" has been prepared by me under the supervision of **Dr. Karubaki Datta**, Professor, Centre for Himalayan Studies, University of North Bengal. The contents of this thesis did not form basis of the award of any previous degree and that the thesis has not been submitted by me for any research degree in any other University/Institute.

This is being submitted to University of North Bengal for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History.


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Socio-Economic and Political Status of the Bhutias in Sikkim Since 1975: Change and Continuity

ABSTRACT

A close look at the socio-economic and political status of the Bhutias of Sikkim during monarchic rule unravels that the Bhutias were the ruling community. Bhutias are descendants of Tibetans who migrated to Sikkim in different phases of time and finally established their rule in Sikkim. The first phase of history of Sikkim reflects the political hegemony of the minority Bhutia over the Lepchas and Nepalese. The Lepchas are among the earliest and the original inhabitants of Sikkim. When the Lepchas came to contact with the Bhutias, they got influenced by the Bhutia culture, tradition and religion and became 'inferior subject race'.

The Bhutias rose into the position of political and socio-economic prominence after consecrating Phuntsog Namgyal, as the first ruler or the Chogyal (Dharma raja) of Sikkim at Yoksum in 1642. The Chogyals ruled till Sikkim became a part of India in 1975. Sikkim, under the Chogyals, developed as a strong feudalistic state. The Bhutias occupied a high position in the society and were regarded as elites. The Landlords or Kazi and the Lamas were the class of people with high position and status in the society.

The next community living in Sikkim is Nepalese. They were the last one to enter Sikkim in the 19th century. Composed of different tribes and communities, they not only changed the demographic profile but also there was a gradual wave of change in the socio-economic structure in the country. The Nepalese managed to outnumber the early inhabitants, Bhutias and Lepchas in course of time and finally played a crucial role in changing the entire political history of Sikkim.

The entry of the British which led to the rise in the increase of Nepalese migration to Sikkim tremendously effecting the Bhutias status. Demand for land rights and proportionate representation of the Nepalese paved way for merger of Sikkim. The introduction of parity system in 1953 paved way for the entry of other communities into politics. Even though an elective system was introduced, it was found that still the Bhutias were represented well in politics through representation in the State Council till the first election under uniform electoral system in 1974.

The introduction of Sangha seat in 1958 further allowed the Bhutias to extend their influence in politics. The Lamas continued to enjoy the privileges as before. Lamas always represented in the

State Council as a nominated member. Later on, the monasteries had one elective seat in the State Council, a reserved seat as Sangha seat, which is still preserved in the State Assembly.

However, a review of the history of Sikkim shows that marginalisation of Bhutia-Lepcha communities had started during the pre-merger period. This process began when the British through the Political Officer took over the administration of Sikkim. Since then the political and economic powers of Kazis and Lamas was reduced. The Nepalese immigrants posed a great threat to the powers and positions of the Bhutias. New power equation rose when Nepalese were also made the landlords gaining equal economic power with the Lepcha-Bhutia Kazis and landlords. The political uprising in 1940's against the Bhutia rule and feudalism and the inclusion of Nepalese in the politics through representation in the State Council gradually accentuated the process of marginalisation of Bhutias in politics.

The mid 20th Century was the period of political turmoil which ultimately culminated into the merger of Sikkim with democratic and secular India in 1975. Political developments originated from the demand of the Nepalese for change in the administration and abolition of absolute and feudalistic rule of the Chogyals. Monarchy was replaced by a democratic set-up. The Bhutias were now in danger of being relegated to a subordinate position in the sphere of political, social and economic hierarchy. After merger Sikkim not only introduced all the democratic practices of India but Buddhism also ceased to be the state religion. There was a fundamental change in the political and social status of the Bhutias who lost their political authority.

In the post-merger period, the expansion of Scheduled Tribe list with the inclusion of other tribes of Bhutia origin in 1978 and inclusion of Limboos and Tamangs in 2002 made the position of Bhutias more insecure. The Bhutias have been representing themselves through various political and social organisations in the state as they have been relegated to as minority and Nepalese the majority community. The post-merger period also paved way for the development of ethnic identity discourse. New ethnic organisations competing for ethnic space and dominance emerged. The Bhutias also took recourse to this and strived to maintain their identity.

An analysis of the available data points out that, though small in number, Bhutias hold on state bureaucracy, government jobs and land holding is still proportionately very high. Their high bureaucratic positions in the state with sound socio-economic background particularly their hold on land have helped them to maintain their identity as an elite community in spite of the 'change' that had set in the polity and economy of the state.

It is seen that the Bhutias in spite of their smaller number enjoyed certain privileges. One of those is with regard to the number of seats in the Assembly, Bhutia and Lepcha (BL) are allotted 12 seats and one *Sangha* seat (monks representing monasteries) in the State Assembly. Out of the total 32 seats, the Bhutias and the Lepchas have share of 37.5 % of seats. The study reflects that though the Bhutias are numerically less, they still continue to be the most dominant group in Sikkim. In post-merger period, the Bhutias as a single community had a larger share with total of 67 Bhutias contesting and being elected in the assembly elections from 1974-2019. They have the highest number contesting the election in the state. Bhutias have majority share among the 12 BL seats in the state. Most of the reserved BL seats are contested by the Bhutias.

The findings substantiate that transformations and diversification in the occupational pattern among the Bhutia families in Sikkim is noticed. Agriculture as their traditional occupation has declined as they are pursuing other alternative occupations. The case study shows that the number of Bhutia agricultural households, both as agriculturist and agricultural labour has declined, but they continue as owners of large land plots. While members of Bhutia families have taken up new professions and switched over to different business enterprises, they continue to hold plots of lands and therefore have different sources of income. Pursue of education and literacy has increased among the Bhutias and majority of them have received education up to graduation and most of them have received their higher education outside Sikkim. Employment structure has changed from agriculture sector orienting towards non-agriculture sector with the changes in specialisation, technology, education and economy. Education is a major determining factor for a change in employment structure.

The Bhutias, established their own kingdom, but in course of time they had to surrender their political power to the demand for constituting a democratic state. In spite of this 'change', the Bhutias, today continue to occupy high position in the society. Occupying most of the high posts in the state administration, the Bhutias still maintain their position as elite in post-merger Sikkim. Though the influence of *lamas* and monasteries in administration has ceased, but the influence of the Bhutias in the society continues, and so does the role of *lamas* in the society through the reservation of one *Sangha* seat in the state Assembly allowing the *lamas* to get directly involved in state politics.

The state government has expressed the importance of the community (Bhutia) by retaining few of their practices even today. Bhutia has been recognized as state languages in addition to Lepcha and Limboo. The influence of Bhutia culture and traditions on Sikkimese society is also evident from the

fact that the state government annual calendar is still based on the Tibetan Lunar calendar. The Tibetan influenced Bhutia architecture with paintings of Buddhist motifs and ornamentations are evident in the structure of government buildings, including schools and colleges.

The study tries to understand the social, economic and political status of the Bhutias in the pre-merger and post-merger society of Sikkim with the immigration of Nepalese, political and administrative changes in Sikkim. The study is based on a diachronic approach, focusing on the study of Bhutias present condition in context to the past. The study includes field survey, secondary and primary sources for studying the present status of Bhutias. Case studies of certain Bhutia families in three districts: North, West and East were conducted as an oral source for understanding their present status. The case studies added more information on their socio-economic status in relation to the other communities.

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List of Abbreviations

- BL-Bhutia-Lepcha
BLPF- Bhutia-Lepcha Protection Force
BKRYT- Bhutia Kay-Rab-Yargay Tsogpo
DESME -Directorate of Economics, Statistics, Monitoring and Evaluation, Government of Sikkim.
DIET- District Institutes of Education and Training
DLYC- Denzong Lhaday Yangki Chakchen
DPC- Denzong People's Chogpa
DTYC- Denzong Tribal Yargay Chogpa
GOI- Government of India
INC- Indian National Congress
IAS- Indian Administrative services
IFS- Indian Forest Services
IPS- Indian Police Services
JAC-Joint Action Committee
MP- Moyal Pronzom
NER- Net Enrolment Ratio
RMRT- Rangiyong Mutanchi Rong Tarzum
SDF- Sikkim Democratic Front
ST- Schedule Tribes
SSA- Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan
SC- Scheduled Castes
SES- Socio-economic status
SNC- Sikkim National Congress
SSP- Sikkim Sangram Parishad
STWA- Sikkim Tribal Welfare Association
SLYC- Sikkim Lho-Men Youth Council
SIBLAC- Sikkim Bhutia-Lepcha Apex Committee
SPSC- State Public Service Commission
SCERT- State Council of Educational Research and Training

Chapter I

1. Introduction

1.1 Clarifying the term 'Bhutia'

Ethnicity has been mostly defined as the people having 'common ties of race, language, culture and origin. Ethnicity is understood as a social construct and is by nature changeable and influenced by factors like social and political environment and situations. Broadly, ethnicity is shaped by historical and political influences. One of the prominent feature of ethnicity is that, it is embedded in social, historical, and political contexts.

Ford M. E and Kelly PA. in their work '*Conceptualizing and categorizing race and ethnicity in health services research*' (2005), defines 'Ethnicity' as a complex social construct that influences personal identity and group social relations. Ethnicity, encompasses multi factorial aspects of social life like culture, traditions, and identity. It is a term bestowed on ethnic groups which is identified by their distinctive cultural attributes such as language and religion (G.D. Berreman, 2001).

Wsevolod W. Isajiw, University of Toronto, in '*Definition and Dimensions of Ethnicity: A Theoretical Framework*', (1993, pp. 407-27), explains two types of ethnicity or ethnic groups; primary and secondary. Primary ethnic groups are indigenous groups that exist and live in the original place where they are formed. In case of the secondary ethnic groups, their origin is different from the existing one. These type of ethnic group do not share any of their original cultural and historical background with the existing one.

According to the '*Ethnic and Racial Identity in the 21st Century Study Group*' by Umana-Taylor et al., 2014, ethnic and racial identity is multifaceted and its formation depends on socio-historical developments. Many scholars argue that the ethnic groups are influenced by ethnic identity. Tseng and Kiang, 2014, emphasizes that ethnicity and ethnic identity are influenced by both historical and contemporary factors. To Erikson (1968), identity is viewed as evolving situations across time and ethnic identity is constant. In sociological perspective 'identity' refers to a social category where a set of people are marked by certain characteristics. Thus, 'identity' may be referred to both social categories and individual self-respect or dignity.

Society is created and no doubt the phenomenon in it is ever-changing, accommodating to the change and modifications. People strive for stability but somehow are merged in direction of change, bringing change in their ethnic identity. Change is the law of nature and social structure is also subject to incessant change. The word “change” denotes some observable differences in the activities in the sphere of social, political and cultural phenomena experiences.

The focus of the present study is the change that has set in the socio-economic status of the Bhutias of Sikkim, who enjoy the status of one of the ethnic communities of Sikkim, who also enjoy the status of Scheduled Tribe of India.

Ethnic tribes are an inseparable part of the population, not only in India but through out the world as well. Study on tribes is carried by scholars and academicians belonging to various fields like anthropology, sociology, geography, history, and other related disciplines.

Tribes are regarded as subgroups within a larger cultural group in a society with same culture, traditions and language. The term ‘Tribe’ has received different meanings and nomenclatures from different scholars. It is sometimes described as ‘aboriginals’ or ‘depressed classes’, and to most of the people, it refers to a group of people or families professing the primitive religion known as ‘Animism’, living in some isolated area following primitive way of living and having some common name, dialect, culture and traditions (Desai, ed.1989, p.223). According to Oxford Dictionary, ‘Tribe’ is “a group of people who live in the same area and share same language, culture and history”. In the Indian context, ‘Ethnic Tribe’ means a primitive homogeneous group identified with rich culture and tradition (Majumdar & Madan, 1970).

According to Ministry of Tribal Affairs Statistics Division, Government of India (GOI), 2013, India is the country with largest tribal communities in the world. It accounts to around sixty eight million of tribal population. In total, the tribal population is divided into 227 different ethnic groups and 573 of tribal communities live in diverse geographical regions in the country. Many of the tribal groups have been recognised as Scheduled Tribes (ST) by Article 366 (25) of the Indian Constitution by the President of India through the amendment of the Act of Parliament. Total Scheduled Tribes notified in India is 705 (Ministry of Tribal Affairs Statistics Division GOI, 2013). Some special provisions have been provided for the socio-economic development of these groups. The tribal groups are safeguarded through various constitutional reservations in the

field of education, cultural, social, economic, political and service sectors.

Furthermore, some special articles like; Article 342 (provisions for statutory recognition), Articles 330 and 332 (proportionate representation in Parliament and state legislatures), Article 19(5) (restrictions on the right of the ordinary citizen in their free movement, settlement and acquire any property in any particular areas) and Article 29 (conservation of one's language, dialects and culture) have protected the tribal groups. The Indian constitution further entrusted the State governments to make provision of seat reservations in jobs for these groups (Article 16(4) (Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, January 2014, pp.4-5).

The Scheduled Tribe population in India since Census 1961 has increased from 30.1 million in 1961 to 104.3 million in 2011.

Table 1.1. Scheduled Tribe Population in India (1961-2011)

Census Year	Total population (in millions)	Scheduled Tribes population (in millions)
1961	439.2	30.1
1971	547.9	38.0
1981	665.3	51.6
1991	838.6	67.8
2001	1028.6	84.3
2011	1210.6	104.3

Source: Population Census, 2011, Government of India.

As per the population census 2011, the proportion of ST population in India is 8.6% where 11.3% are in rural areas and 2.8% in urban areas. According to Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Statistics Division, Government of India, Scheduled Tribes in India are located in two distinct geographical area: Central India and North- Eastern Area. Large number of Scheduled Tribes are concentrated in Central India, mainly in Madhya Pradesh (14.69%), Chhattisgarh (7.5%), Jharkhand (8.29%), Andhra Pradesh (5.7%), Maharashtra (10.08%), Orissa (9.2%), Gujarat (8.55%) and Rajasthan (8.86%). The states like Assam, Nagaland, Mizoram, Manipur, Meghalaya, Tripura, Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh forms the ST population of North East Area. State-wise distribution of tribal villages by different concentration of groups in the country is presented below.

Table 1.2 State-wise Distribution of Tribal Villages by Different Concentration of Groups – 2001 & 2011

State	100% Tribals		> 90% Tribals		> 75% Tribals		> 50% Tribals		>25% Tribals	
	2001	2011	2001	2011	2001	2011	2001	2011	2001	2011
Jammu & Kashmir ^[SEP]	157	89	358	369	460	488	711	766	1168	1295
Himachal Pradesh ^[SEP]	248	230	444	490	611	682	808	966	1011	1411
Punjab	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Chandigarh	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Uttarakhand	42	35	102	85	234	174	461	419	650	640
Haryana	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Delhi	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Rajasthan	1538	1152	3468	4456	4820	5701	6872	7763	9571	10654
Uttar Pradesh	20	23	49	124	63	197	74	340	93	623
Bihar	177	98	287	295	399	447	611	720	989	1155
Sikkim	4	2	12	17	36	51	77	138	178	285
Arunachal Pradesh	2165	2382	2894	3929	3144	4367	3378	4667	3555	4859
Nagaland	551	215	1105	1136	1201	1265	1247	1351	1271	1388
Manipur	1244	554	1586	1741	1663	1844	1694	1887	1722	1905
Mizoram	370	130	642	651	677	684	697	699	702	700
Tripura	123	22	302	301	377	385	451	466	549	564
Meghalaya	3944	1890	5257	5867	5460	6099	5575	6205	5621	6262
Assam	2772	1503	4309	4562	5107	5406	6311	6626	7689	8066
West Bengal	992	711	1601	1629	2302	2357	3900	3977	7256	7454
Jharkhand	3317	2451	6291	6370	8870	9008	12118	12239	15015	15171
Odisha	5085	3839	8688	8684	12249	12396	17531	17798	23000	23208
Chandigarh	1083	1076	3242	3200	5956	5926	9441	9418	12392	12298
Madhya Pradesh	2670	1619	7412	7338	10714	10687	14927	15022	20780	20927
Gujarat	1345	935	3446	3531	4007	4089	4934	4970	6089	6085
Daman& Diu	-	-	3	2	3	3	5	5	8	9
Dadra& Nagar Haveli	9	5	43	44	56	57	63	62	70	64
Maharashtra	1214	930	3614	3760	4785	4836	6640	6738	9944	10257
Andra Pradesh	2407	1466	3812	3928	4444	4515	5239	5335	6589	6748

Karnataka	78	61	224	224	438	447	1032	1083	2799	3000
Goa	-	2	-	11	-	19	-	38	-	78
Lakshadweep	-	1	7	4	8	5	8	5	8	6
Kerela	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	6	25	26
Tamil Nadu	75	46	210	231	267	282	323	320	391	391
Pondicherry	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
A&N Islands	112	41	141	77	157	84	163	89	167	93
All India	31742	21508	59549	63056	78508	82501	105296	110118	139302	145622

Source: Ministry of Tribal Affairs Statistics Division Government of India, 2013.

Scheduled Tribes in India have emanated from five language families: 1) Andamanese, 2) Austro-Asiatic, 3) Dravidian, 4) Indo-Aryan and 5) Tibeto-Burman (Linton, 1936, p. 231).

The Bhotias form the fifth group and are mostly found in the Indian Himalayan Region. The Indian Himalayan Region represents nearly 18.5% of the total tribal population of India. The distribution of Bhotia/Bhutia population shows that around 200,000 are in India.

Bhotias are generally known by different names. The nomenclature they carry are Bhotia, Bhutia, Bhote, Bhuti, Buddha etc. The Bhotia/Bhutia/Bhotey as they are called are either directly migrated from Tibet or are the descendants of the migrated Tibetans. The name Bhotia/Bhutia/Bhotey is derived from the Sanskrit word 'Bhotah' which means Tibet in Tibetan language. Bhutia is therefore, referred to as Tibetan. In India, Bhutia is an assortment of different tribes descended from migrated Tibetans like: Ladaki Bhutias, Arunachali Bhutias, Bhutanese Bhutias (Dukpa or Drukpas), the Sikkimese Bhutias (Denzongpa or Lho-po¹) and the Tibetan refugees who have migrated after 1959. Hence, Bhotia/ Bhutia/Bhotiya are Tibetans migrated from Tibet with mongoloid characteristics.

According to historians, altogether three important migrations took place from Tibet; migration during the 7th century; migration during the 10th-11th century; and migration between 14th -16th century. The migration that took place in the third stage are settled in the central and eastern regions of the country. The constitution of India refers Bhutias to the Tibetan speaking inhabitants in the country (Ghosh, 2007).

¹ The term 'Lhopo' refers to Bhutias who migrated from southern Tibet and has Tibetan ancestry.

Thus, the Bhutias are mostly based in the Himalayan region bordering Tibet and have close connection with the Tibetans. Tibetans are commonly called as 'Bhot' and apparently this may be the reason for calling these people with Tibetan connection as Bhutias.

The Bhutia community are mostly settled in the highland zone of the country. Occupationally, they have been involved in trade in the Himalayan borders in items like rock-salt, borax, raw wool, woollen cloth, sheep, horses etc. from Tibet and they also exported cereals, sugar, implements, utensils, mill made woollen and cotton cloths and articles of daily use from India to Tibet. Besides this, they also worked as guides and porters to the pilgrims visiting Kailash Mansarovar. Above this, they were also involved in agricultural activities, handicraft, pastoralism etc. Pastoralism is close to Bhutias economic activity. Sheep, goat, ponies, yak and jibus are the most used animals by them (Bhatt, Joshi & Tiwari, 2009).

The changed bilateral relations between India and China since 1960's however, restricted their trading activities in the cross border areas of Tibet and compelled them to be on the look out for other jobs and occupations. Bhutias received support from the Indian government which declared them as Scheduled Tribe in 1967. Job reservations in the administration, army, paramilitary and police forces were arranged for this group (Chatterjee, 1996, p.162).

As per the Linguistic Survey of India (LSI) conducted by Sir George Abraham Grierson, Bhutias belong to Tibeto – Burman family. According to the survey Bhutias includes Tibetans, Bhutias of Sikkim, Sherpa, a branch of Bhutia tribe, Drukpa (Bhotia of Bhutan), Ladakhi (Bhotia of Ladakh, Murmi or Tamang, Lahuli (Bhotia of Lahul), Balti (Bhotia of Baltistan), Bhotia of Spiti and Bhotia of Purik (Grierson 1909 : pp. 14 – 15 & 1927: pp. 54 – 55).

However, some study shows difference in their nomenclature and origin. According to studies, Bhutias in India do not have common origin. According to S.K Chaterjee, the origin of Bhotiyas of Uttarakhand of all the seven river valleys is very uncommon. According to RamRahul, "..... the Jods, the Bhotias of Uttarkashi affirm that they have migrated from Kinnaur in Himachal Pradesh. The Bhotias of the regions bordering Tibet, including the Jads of Uttarkashi, are commonly called Johari Shaukas. The Bhotias of Uttarakhand who have settled in the seven river valleys have derived their name as Darmisa, Chaundasis (in Kumaun), Marchhas, Joharis, Vyanshis, Tolchhas and Joda (in Garhwal) (Chatterjee, 1996, p.162). Similarly, the Bhutias of

Sikkim have different origin and are called Denzongpas, residents of Denzong, meaning, Valley of rice.

The study on Bhutias of the Indian Himalayas further presents some social, cultural and religious differences. Variation in the religion is seen among the Bhutia community as a whole. In the Central Himalayas, the Jad Bhutia practice Buddhism, while other Bhutia groups profess Hinduism or the religion is a mixture of Lamaistic Buddhism, Hinduism, and Animism. The study by S. K. Chatterjee, (1996) in his work '*Scheduled Castes in India*', (p.162) elicits that the Johari Bhutia are Hindus and use the services of Brahmans. The Bhutias of Sikkim, Bhutan, Arunachal Pradesh, Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri of West Bengal and many inhabitants of Eastern Himalayas mostly profess Mahayana Buddhism in the form of Tantrik Buddhism that exists in Tibet (Ghosh, 2007).

1.2 The Bhutias of Sikkim

As per the constitution (Sikkim) Scheduled Tribes Order, 1978, Bhutia groups of Sikkim includes Chumbipa, Dophthapa, Kagatey, Sherpa, Tibetan, Tromopa and Yolmo. All these groups are of Tibetan origin and use Tibetan script though they may differ in dialects. Once settled in Sikkim, slowly they got conglomerated within the Bhutia group. It appears that these groups have come from one or the other part of Tibet, mainly south-east Tibet.

Tibetans are the migrated Bhote people from U and Tsang districts of Tibet after the era of formation of Chogyal rule in Sikkim. The migration of Tibetans into Sikkim may be categorised into two stages: Tibetans migrated before 1959 and Tibetans migrated after 1959. The Tibetans are grouped into smaller clans like *Thomowa*, *Drobthaba*, *Khampa*, *Lhasawa*, *Tsongpa* and *Andowa*; named after the places in Tibet they have migrated from. They are generally identified as "*Bhote*" in Sikkim and are mostly concentrated in East district of Sikkim.

Thus, on the whole, Bhutias are descendants of Tibetans who migrated a few hundred years ago to Sikkim and finally established their rule in Sikkim. Bhutias are considered as different from that of Bhotia (Tibetan). After their migration and establishment of Namgyal dynasty in Sikkim, the migrated Tibetans, especially the descendants of Khey-Bumsa namely: Zhantarpa or Sandarpa, TshogyuTarpa, Nyungyepa and Guru Tashepa and the eight Tibetan families known as the *hBeps-m Tshan-bGyad* that migrated along with them call themselves as Bhutias, Sikkimese

or Denzongpas and they prefer to maintain their separate identity as different from Tibetans in Sikkim. They are also called the '*Lhorees*' (Risley, 1894). Tibetan customs and traditions are found in the Bhutias but with some modifications and alterations. Tibetans are basically the followers of 'Gelupa' sect of Mahayana Buddhism while the Sikkimese Bhutias mostly belong to 'Nyingmapa' sect of Mahayana Buddhism. The Tibetan script is followed by them, however, with some difference in their dialects. Bhutias form one of the prominent ethnic tribes of Sikkim, the other two being the Lepchas and the Nepalese.

Topas or Tromo-pas are group of Bhutia tribes that have come from Paro and Ha in Bhutan after the installation of Bhutia kingdom in Sikkim. This group of Bhutias are considered to be inferior to the 12 Bhutia tribes. Topas or Tromo are further subdivided into: *To- Lhagopa, To- Jamyangpa and To- Chu- Khapas*.

Chumbipas are Tibetans from Kham in Tibet, migrated to Hah in Bhutan and settled towards the lower region of the Mochu near Chumbi valley. Hence, they are called Chumbipas. The Chumbipas are found to be divided into six sub-groups: *Lhamodar, Genynputso, Agon, Athub-Putsos, Dozho-pa and Khyim-Pharpa* (Risley, 1894, p. 29). *Tromo-pas* and *Chumbipas* are the Bhutia groups that have migrated to Sikkim in after the foundation of Bhutia rule. Initially, they moved from Tibet to Bhutan and then to Sikkim.

Among the Bhutia group there also exist some lower or minor caste groups named after their place of origin (Namgyal and Dolma, 1908, p. 8) and *Dotrapas/ Dophthapas* are one of them. They are the inhabitants of Dhopta in south Tibet from where they have migrated to Sikkim. The Sherpas originally are said to have come from Kham in eastern Tibet. The Sherpas are found in northeast part of Nepal called Solukhumbu and in Sikkim. The migration of Sherpas took place from 1530 onwards which continued till 1850 (Subba, 2011, p 279). In Sikkim, Sherpas are mostly settled in Ribdi, Bharang, Okharey, Upper Thambong , Begha, Upper Bermiok, Siribadam, Singling and Buriakhop in west Sikkim. Since its recognition as, Scheduled Tribe in 1978 as one of the subgroups of Bhutia tribe, Sherpas share one seat from among the 12 Bhutia Lepcha (BL) seats in the state legislature.

Like Sherpas, Yolmos (also known as Kagetey) have migrated from eastern Tibet. The name Kagetey has been derived from Nepali word '*Kagaj*' which means paper which is allied with the

ancient practice of paper making (Gurung, 2011, p. 139), but this group prefers to be identified as Yolmos rather than as Kagateys. Though this group use Tibetan script and speak Kagatey language, they are more inclined towards Nepali culture and traditions. This is why they are more considered to be Nepalese sub-group by Bhutia organisations in Sikkim.²

On the whole, it appears that the Bhutias of different regions in India inspite of their claim to have different origins, share close similarities in their socio-cultural system. Their beliefs, religion, traditions, practices, customs, and costumes have common resemblance.

However, after migration, influence of Indian culture and religion has brought some changes and alteration in their actual practice and beliefs. This study closely explore the Bhutias of Sikkim as there has been no comprehensive study on them so far.

² *Survival Skkimese* and *Sikkim Bhutia-Lepcha Apex Committee* are the two organizations that does not accept Yolmos or Kagatey as Bhutia sub-groups.

Section I

Sikkim

Sikkim, a tiny Himalayan kingdom till its merger with India in 1975, is one of the smallest states of India nestled between China to the North, Bhutan to the east, Nepal to the west and West Bengal (India) in the south. Sikkim marks with the total area of 7,096 sq. km and density of population is 86 per sq. km (Census 2011). The state has four districts namely, East, West, South, and North with headquarters at Gangtok, Gyalshing, Namchi and Mangan respectively.³

Fig.1.1.1. Map of Sikkim



Source: <https://blogs.bl.uk/endangeredarchives/2016/10/sikkim-palace-archives.html>

³ Sikkim at present has six districts. Two more districts, Soreng (formerly part of West Sikkim) and Pakyong (formerly part of East Sikkim) have been created by the Government of Sikkim through a gazette notification that came into force in December, 2021. There has been change in the nomenclature of the four existing districts. North district will be now called Mangan, West Sikkim will be called Gyalshing, East district will be called Gangtok and South district will be now called Namchi. This is a very recent development. Our study is based on the four districts only.

Fig.1.1.2. Topographic Map of Sikkim



Source: <https://www.alamy.com/stock-photo/map-of-sikkim.html>

The state has sixteen (16) sub-divisions, thirty-two (32) sub-division blocks and 185 GPUs (Gram Prasashan Unit). The highest number of blocks is in West district followed by East district, South and North district. There exists seven (7) Municipal Corporations based on the population density and other relevant factors.

Table 1.3. The Administrative Set-up of Sikkim

District	District Headquarter	Area in Sq. Km	No. of Sub-Division	No. of GVKs	No. of GPUs	No. of Panchay at Wards	Municipal Corporation/ Nagar Panchayat/Nagar Pallika
West	Gyalshing	1,166	4	10	61	348	1
South	Namchi	750	4	8	48	283	2
East	Gangkok	954	4	10	51	283	3
North	Mangan	4,226	4	4	25	126	1
Total	04	7,096	16	32	185	1,040	7

Source: Census, 2011.

According to the population census of 2011, the total population in Sikkim has been recorded at 607,688, of which 321,661 are male and 286,027 are female respectively. The population has increased by one lakh people over a decade.

1.1.1. Socio-economic Status of Sikkim

The Sikkimese society is primarily composed of three main ethnic communities; Nepalese, Bhutias and Lepchas. Along with them there also exists small fraction of population as plainsmen. They comprise of the Marwaris and the Biharis who are basically involved in business and some other allied professions and some are employed in Central and State Government jobs or Private Companies.

The economy of the state was traditionally linked with agriculture but now tourism is emerging as a major source of sustenance. There is also gradual increase of the industrial sector in the state which contributes to the state economy.

Even though small in size in respect to population and area, in Sikkim, there is co-existence of many cultural ethnic groups viz. Nepalese, Bhutias, Lepchas and Limboos. Amongst these groups, the Nepalese constitute the majority. Difference in culture, tradition, language and religion persist among the communities. Almost entire Bhutia community and greater part of the Lepchas are Buddhists, most of the Nepalese are Hindu by religion with exception to the Tamang, Sherpa, Gurung and other communities who practice both Buddhism and Hinduism. Christianity had a little late entry to Sikkim which managed to convert some Lepchas and some groups of Nepalese.

Among the different communities of Sikkim, Lepchas are among the earliest and the original inhabitants with all the other communities been migrated over different phases of history of Sikkim. Lepchas are also called as '*Rongs*' or *Mon-pas* (Subba, 2011, p.249). The Lepchas belong to the Mongoloid group of people living in the foothills of Mount Kanchenzonga. Lepchas were only the inhabitants living in the large tract of mountainous region called Sikkim⁴. Today, Lepchas are found to be settled in all parts of Sikkim. However, the bulk of them are settled in the Dzongu area of North Sikkim. When the Lepchas came to contact with the Bhutias, they got influenced by their culture, tradition and religion and became 'inferior subject race' (Gorer, 1996, p.35-36).

⁴ The land got its name as 'Sikkim' only after 1642, after the establishment of Sikkimese (Bhutia) kingdom. Before that it was a barren land, called 'Mayel' by the Lepchas.

On the other hand Nakane Chie (1966) argues that Limboos, also called the '*Tsongs or Tsongreos*' were also among the original inhabitants of Sikkim before the migration of Bhutias. Originally, Limboos are known as '*Yakthumbas*'. The signing of the tripartite treaty '*Lho-Men-Tsong-Sum*' between the Bhutias, Lepchas and the Limboos during the first Chogyal of Sikkim (1642-70) is the evidence that Limboos lived in Sikkim prior to the coming of Bhutias.

The Bhutias, in different phases have migrated from Tibet. The Bhutias rose into the position of political and socio-economic prominence after the coming of the three Lamas from Tibet as per the prophesy of Guru Padma Sambhava made in 747 A.D. (Risley, 1894). These lamas played a key role in establishing monarchical set up by consecrating Phuntsog Namgyal, descendant of Khe-Bhumsa, as the first ruler or the Chogyal (*Dharma raja*) of Sikkim at Yoksum in 1642. The Chogyal ruled till Sikkim became a part of India in 1975. The political and social structure was totally under their influence. They developed a strong feudalistic structure based on Tibetan model which allowed them to be at the apex position in the country.

The next community living in Sikkim is Nepalese. They were the last one to enter Sikkim. Composed of different tribes and communities, they were encouraged by the British to enter and settle down in Sikkim. Nepalese are of two kinds: the Mangoloids such as Tamang, Gurung etc. and the Aryans such as, Bahun, Chhetri, Bhujel, Thami etc. The migration of Nepalese into Sikkim since the 19th century not only changed the demographic profile but also there was a gradual wave of change in the socio-economic structure in the country. Even though this community was the last to arrive, they managed to outnumber the early inhabitants, Bhutias and Lepchas in course of time and finally played a crucial role in changing the entire political history of Sikkim. Nepalese settlement was spread all over Sikkim, while the Bhutias became concentrated on North and West districts and the Lepchas were basically confined to Dzongu area in the North of Sikkim.

T.B Subba (1989) reflecting on the Nepalese settlement in Sikkim, relates the migration with the territorial conquest by Nepal in 1700 and 1740 AD. Historians argue that the British were responsible for Nepali settlement in Sikkim due to two main reasons; a) to accelerate the economic growth, and b) to counteract the supremacy of the Sikkimese Royal family and the Bhutia councillors. It is also argued that J.C White, who came to Sikkim in 1889 as the first political officer of Sikkim is responsible to a large extent for the large-scale migration of the Nepalese.

The history of Sikkim in the subsequent period speaks of the spread of some political developments originating from the demand of the Nepalis for a change in the administration and abolition of absolute and feudalistic rule of the Chogyals. The decades from the mid 20th Century onwards witnessed political turmoils which ultimately culminated into the merger of Sikkim with democratic and secular India in 1975. After merger, Sikkim not only introduced all the democratic practices of India but Buddhism also ceased to be the state religion. There was a vital change in the political and social status of the Bhutias who lost their political authority.

By virtue of being the ruling community, the Bhutias had enjoyed certain socio-economic privileges in the society and were the natural elites of the society. They managed to retain that position to a great extent even after the political change.

In this study we intend to examine, to what extent they have been able to retain their social, economic and political supremacy in the society, even after the fundamental change in the political status of the state.

Hence, the title of the study: “Change and Continuity”.

1.1.2. Statement of the Research Problems

The entry of the British which led to the rise in the increase of Nepalese migration to Sikkim tremendously effected the Bhutia status. They were now in danger of being relegated to a subordinate position in the sphere of political, social and economical hierarchy. The rising number of Nepalese tended to overshadow the Bhutias who, along with the Lepchas were given Scheduled Tribe status in 1978. Bhutias accepted this for the protection of their identity among the increasing growth of the Nepalese community.

The post-merger period is often marked by development and modernisation. It also paved the way for the development of ethnic identity discourse. New ethnic organisations competing for ethnic space and dominance emerged. The Bhutias also took recourse to this and strived to maintain their identity. Their high bureaucratic positions in the state with sound socio-economic background particularly their hold on land have helped them to maintain their identity as an elite community in spite of the ‘change’ that had set in the polity and economy of the state.

This is an attempt to a compare their socio economic and political position in the pre and post - merger period.

1.1.3. Literature Review

A literature review is very important and has become the mandatory criteria in conducting any kind of research studies. The literature review is the summary of the literature on the overall theme in general and specific area or topic of the research in particular. It allows a run-through of the subject, issue, or theory on a particular study. It is a summarisation and categorisation of the themes which explains how each work is similar and how it varies from the other studies. It contributes in considering the best argument, views and opinions that helps and develops understanding in the area of research.

Social science research basically depends on the consideration of the available literature. Literature survey allows us to have a complete understanding of the research problem and deliberate examination of the knowledge and perspectives of relevant changes in the past and present.

Literature review enables the researcher to gather a wide range of ideas of the proposed research topic. It leads to a deeper understanding of the available sources related to the study. A thorough literature review supports the ingenuity and pertinency of the research study. The identification of gaps in the sources through the literature review justifies the originality of the proposed research study or dissertation.

Based on the area of work, literature review may be classified as: methodological review, theoretical review, argumentative review, integrative review, historical review and systematic review. An argumentative literature review opposes the ideas and views in the source. This enables the researcher to disagree with the views present in the source and provide perspectives of their own. An integrative review scrutinises and presents a critical analysis on a given topic. It identifies the gap and creates path towards new research. A historical review furnishes the assessment of the historical records of the sources.

Therefore, literature review in any kind of research study is indispensable. The literature review of the present study is organised on thematic lines of reviews of literature. Thematic reviews are basically arranged around a topic or on particular issue. It does not give focus on the progression of time. In the thematic type of review progression of time may also be maintained while reviewing the issues.

For the present study the literature review and surveys of books, scholarly articles, and other sources relevant on the historical development of Sikkim and more particularly on the Bhutias and ethnic communities of Sikkim have been applied. Literature review of the studies conducted on Sikkim on the whole has provided an overview of sources that have been explored while conducting and writing the thesis.

While addressing the previous study on the communities of Sikkim, sources show that Lepchas, Limboos and the Nepalese have received much attention from the scholars. The Bhutia community is still to find attention of the researchers. Study on the political and socio-economic status of Bhutias cannot be completed without a reference to the status and influence of the Bhutias. It is true that so far not a single monograph has been written on Bhutia. On the contrary, the Lepchas have received much more attention from the scholars in recent times. A few monographs on Limboos have been written as well. We have excluded those books and articles on Lepchas and Limboos out of this literature review. Our focus is mainly on the books on Sikkim in general and Bhutias in particular. Thus, it is hoped that the proposed study will fill the gap in the literature on Bhutias of Sikkim and will provide more information on Bhutias.

Few books and articles which are available on Bhutias are:

Risley, 1894, '*The Gazetteer of Sikkim*', which is the oldest published book on Sikkim discusses not only the history but different aspects of Sikkim in detail. In the first part of the book, Risley discusses the physical features, British intervention and the treaties signed by Sikkim. The next part of the book focuses on the geographical position and description. The boundaries and the area of Sikkim are discussed at full length. The book also traces the rulers of Sikkim and the origins of the early Tibetan kings with short descriptions of their reign, population, tribes and chief families of Sikkim, nomenclature of places, old laws of Sikkim and marriage customs. It also gives full account of the geological and mineral resources such as copper, iron, lime and their locations in Sikkim. It gives a general account on *Lamaism* as the state religion, origin of Buddhism and its spread in India and outside, its extension to Tibet, the Lamaic sects and introduction of *Lamaism* in Sikkim. The next part of the book focus on a general description of Sikkim's monasteries, their kinds and location, monkhood, monastic routine as a village priest and some magic rites and charms. There is less focus on the elite structure and its development

of Sikkim during the Chogyal rule. The history section of the book consists of just the origins of the kings of Sikkim and the history of laws.

Namgyal and Dolma, 1908, '*History of Sikkim*' is the only book of its kind written by the king and the queen themselves. It sheds light on the historical background of the Namgyal Dynasty in Sikkim. The Tibetan sources have been consulted extensively to reconstruct the history of Sikkim and its relation with Tibet. In fact, it is the first work written by the Sikkimese themselves. It sheds light on the earlier historical developments of Sikkim. The work may be considered as important source of history of Sikkim.

White, 1909, the first political officer of the British in Sikkim, in his book '*Sikkim and Bhutan: Twenty-One Years on the North- East Frontier (1887-1908)*' describes in detail his personal experiences in the Eastern Himalayan states of Sikkim and Bhutan. The book deals with the description on geographical features along with the historical and cultural background of both Bhutanese and Sikkimese people. At the same time, he has not failed to carefully describe both the flora and fauna of Sikkim and Bhutan. However, the book does not shed light on the Bhutias of Sikkim in particular but it gives immense knowledge on the other aspects of Sikkim in the pre-merger period.

Sinha, 1975 in the book '*Politics of Sikkim: A Sociological Study*' throws a considerable light on the social structure in Sikkim. It tries to highlight how Lamaism and its tradition of Tibetan feudalism got accommodated in the kingship in Sikkim. This gave monarchy a unique character that established its rule for 333 long years. Monarchy in Sikkim was more based on Buddhism. In Part II, the author identifies different sections of society like the elite, the *Kazi's*, the ambitious pro-palace bureaucrats, the Nepali political leaders and the youth Congress Leaders. The youth Congress leaders were leading the various social forces in Sikkim. This part of the book elucidates more light on the social background, economic status, political affiliation and perception of various elite groups in Sikkim. Part III has four chapters dealing with the political process and development in the post- 1947 period, i.e. after Indian Independence. He mentions that Sikkim politics during that time was also influenced by Indian Independence movement. The interference by the elite class, pro-palace bureaucrats was more on the monarchical rule in Sikkim which was resented by the common people. The democrats and the common people did not favour this kind of political structure where democratic participation in decision making was

absent. Even though it discusses the trends of the history of Sikkim it basically focuses on the influence of the elites in politics.

Sinha has written a second book on Sikkim '*Sikkim: Feudal and Democratic*' in 2008. In it he discusses the social and political development in Sikkim in a much later periods. First part of the book provides the background and social history leading to development of ethnic groups and their political status. It reflects how the Bhutia rulers of Namgyal dynasty ruled Sikkim. From the book one gets to know about the immigration of Nepalese Sikkimese and the ethnic complexities in Sikkim, the interference of the British in the politics of Sikkim and on how Sikkim became the protectorate of India and then the 22nd Indian state. Part III describes the transformation of Sikkim from feudal set up to a democratic set up under Nepali leader. The book is informative and interesting for the readers.

Balikci, 2008, '*Lamas, Shamans and Ancestors. Village Religion in Sikkim*', is a monograph of a Himalayan Buddhist community. The study discusses a form of shamanic village religion that existed quite independently alongside the Buddhism in Sikkim. The author affirms that although Buddhism attempted to absorb the cult of ancestral gods and territorial deities, these rituals have nonetheless remained at the heart of ceremonies performed by both Buddhist village lamas and local religious specialists, or 'shamans', who are related to *Bon*, the native religion of Tibet.

The first part of the book introduces readers to the political and religious history of Sikkim and to 'village religion', a non-dogmatic form of Buddhism. The book focuses on the role played by conventional Buddhism in village relations with the state and the outside world. The particular value of this work lies in its presentation of an unusually well-documented case study of Tingchim village, which shows the social and religious transformation of a Sikkimese village in the twentieth century. The work also opens a space to make a comparative study with other Himalayan communities.

There are many books on Sikkim in general. Many books on history, ethnic compositions and political developments leading to merger. Some of these books are:-

Bhasin, 1989, in her study '*Ecology, Culture and Change: Tribals of Sikkim*' focuses on the two tribes-Lepchas and Bhutias of North Sikkim. The relationship between man and nature has been examined to show how and where eco-system and socio-cultural factors are interconnected. The

study points out cultural adaptation in a forest-hilly environment in north Sikkim. The study has thrown little light on the activities of Bhutias and Lepchas of North Sikkim. This is one of the few books written on the Bhutias of North Sikkim.

Singh, 1993, in the project undertaken by the Anthropological Survey of India entitled, '*People of India*', Singh has worked on various castes and communities of Sikkim. The study throws light on the biological, religio-linguistic and cultural profile of all the three ethnic communities of Sikkim; Nepalese, Bhutia and Lepcha. Sikkim Study Series, Volume III & V of the same project discusses on role and interest of government in the protection and promotion of the languages and cultures of these communities.

Bareh, 2007, *Encyclopaedia of North-East India: Volume VII, Sikkim*, elaborately deals with the development of North East Regions. The book includes the formation of states of North-Eastern India i.e. Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura having many links and common bonds. The first part of the book includes the physical features of the region covering snow-clad mountains, undulating hills, dense lush green forests, mighty rivers, sparkling streams, cascading waterfalls and awe-inspiring gorges, inlaid with fertile valleys and bouncing dales resulting in a landscape unique in scenic beauty. The entire work is divided into eight volumes. Each volume covers eight North Eastern States with the collection on all aspects including: culture, economy, politics, planning, history and geography. The book highlights on the strategic importance of the region along with its sensitive geopolitical location which has extremely diverse nature of its population with different cultural, linguistic, religious and historical background which makes the region characteristically different from the rest of the country.

Volume VII of the book confines to the study of ethnic groups in Sikkim and addresses the political development of Sikkim in pre-merger period. This part of the book has contributed in writing the present thesis.

Nakane, 1966, in her study '*A Plural Society in Sikkim: A study of the interrelations of Lepchas, Bhotias and Nepalis*', provides with the views on the belief, way of life and inter-community relationship among the three communities of Sikkim. It is a field-based study carried out in 1955 in the three Bhutia dominated areas of Sikkim namely Pabyuk in the East Sikkim and Phodong and Phensung in the North Sikkim. However, her observation on the Nepalis was not very

revealing. Furthermore, Nakane also seems to be unaware of the fact that other communities like Limboos or Tsongs, Mangers etc. were living in Sikkim

Subba, 2011, in his book *'History Culture and Customs of Sikkim'* provides the history of existence of the Himalayan Kingdom at length. The author elaborately presents the political history, social customs and culture of various groups and communities like the Lepchas, Bhutias, Limboos and the Nepalese. The author has done a good work in explaining and elaborating the various cultures and traditions of the sub-groups of Nepali community as well. The landscape, agriculture, food, dress culture, religion, social transformation, language and literature has been well presented. The book gives a detail account of the folk culture, festivals, art and culture of each existing communities of Sikkim. The different social forces of Sikkim are however not much covered in the book.

Dutta, 1997, in the article entitled *'Inter-Ethnic Relations in Sikkim in Historical Perspective'* is one of the important works on the demographic profiles of Sikkimese people; the Lepchas, Bhutias, Limboos and the Nepalese. The work gives a detailed account on the population census report from 1891 to 1991. The work highlights more on the development of non-tribals as a dominant group in Sikkim. Furthermore, it highlights on the inter-ethnic relations among the three communities during the Namgyal dynasty in Sikkim. This book has been a great help in understanding the demographic structure in Sikkim as a whole.

Subba, 1989, in the book *'Dynamics of Hill Society'*, which is a sociological study on the communities of Sikkim and Darjeeling Hills stresses on the study of Nepali community. The work attempts to understand caste-class relationships with the impact of occupational mobility and modernisation among the Nepalis. He suggests that the effect of modernisation has led to the growing interrelations among various caste and class in Sikkim and Darjeeling Hills.

Wangchuk and Zulca, 2007, in their study *'Kanchendzonga Sacred Summit'* describes the history, culture, tradition, faith and belief, language, literature and social way of life of the Lepchas, Limboos and Bhutias of Sikkim. The author attempts to demarcate the boundaries of Limbuwan (Land of Limboos) that existed before the birth of Sikkim in 1642 A.D. The book lays emphasis on the spread of Buddhism in Sikkim and the coming of the three great Tibetan Monks, Gyalwa Lachen Chempo, Katok Rigzing Chempo and Ngadak Sempo Chempo to

Sikkim in the 1640s. The discussion on the conversion of Lepcha's and Limboo's to Buddhism from their ancestral faith during the Bhutia rule is also included in the discussion.

Dwivedi, 2016, in *'Ethno-ecological Studies on Tribal Communities of Sikkim'* studies the relationship between the ethnic communities of Sikkim in a small Darap village which is rich in natural resources, bio-diversity and very rich in cultures and customs of Local Tribes (Limboo, Lepcha, and Bhutia Tribes). In the study she highlights the culture, customs and traditions of the three tribal communities i.e. Limboo, Lepcha and Bhutia. It also discusses their dependency on Traditional Medicine Systems for their health-care.

Singh, 1985, in his study *'People of India: Sikkim'* emphasises on bio-cultural and linguistic profile of all the 25 communities of Sikkim. A close attention has been given to study the history, culture, custom, religion, faith and belief, languages, art, crafts, food habits, agriculture, settlement pattern, festivals, socio-economic and political organisations of the communities. The study also covers Bhutia as a ruling community in Sikkim. The focal point is on the interrelationship between the indigenous culture and Buddhism and other ethnic cultures of Sikkim. In the political development of Sikkim, he criticises the role of Buddhist institutions in the foundation of Sikkim's political system since the establishment of monarchy in Sikkim in 1642. It sheds light on the influence of Buddhism in the governing system, administration and law-making process.

Rahman, 2006, *'The Beautiful India Sikkim'*, is a comprehensive and exhaustive encyclopaedic work. It covers description on land, people, heritage, history, geography, economy, polity and tourism of every state and union territory of India. Part one of the book gives a general introduction of the state, Sikkim, that includes; significance of the state, tradition and landscape, agriculture, irrigation and power, industry, transportation, festivals and tourism.

Part II of the book gives a glance at the historical journey which includes, the sources, ancient history, medieval history, modern history, the dawn of the new era -years after merger, the challenge and the disparity political developments and recent history of state. In Part III, the land and people, geography (that includes physiography drainage, climate, flora, wildlife, mineral wealth location, forestry and wildlife), Society, which includes demography, demographic attributes, population, literacy, language and literature, health and family welfare, art and culture where indigenous system, monasteries, festivals, role of mass media, sports and youth affairs are

discussed. Part IV gives an insight on the economy, business and industry, agriculture and economic development. Part V focuses on the polity, system of governance and political events. The last part, Part VI discusses tourism and tourist spots.

Though, the book does not cover the Bhutias and other communities of Sikkim, however, it sheds light on the detailed account of various aspects of Sikkim which in some way has helped us to gather information on the historical process and development in Sikkim. The book works as reference to the readers, scholars, researchers, teachers and students.

Arora, 2007, *‘Assertive Identities, Indigeneity, and the Politics of Recognition as a Tribe: The Bhutias, the Lepchas and the Limbus of Sikkim’*, studies the tribal identities and interests of the ethnic groups of the Himalayan region, Sikkim. Arora seeks to discuss the identity politics of contemporary Sikkim which is complicated by the cultural, religious, linguistic and racial diversity of the twenty-two groups residing, along with educational and occupational differentiation among them. Basically, the author talks about the three main ethnic communities: the Lepchas, the Bhutias, and the Nepalese. She affirms that there are cultural, religious and linguistic differences between these groups, however, they play a crucial role in inter-ethnic relations. The ethnic identity claims are intimately connected with their survival and struggles over land, forests, education, employment, justice and dignity in post-merger period. Hence, the study focuses on the politics of tribal identity in Sikkim.

Choedon, 1988, *‘Cultural Evolution of Sikkim: A Survey’* the article mainly focuses on the historical development of the Namgyal dynasty. More importantly, it focuses on the effects of modernisation on the socio-economic status of the people of Sikkim. However, specific mention of the social and economic status of Bhutias in particular is not included in the study. It fails to address the socio-economic status of communities of Sikkim in pre and post-merger period.

Mullard, 2011, *‘Opening the Hidden Land. State Formation and the Construction of Sikkimese History’*. The book contains a detailed documentation on the construction of Sikkimese history. The first chapter is dense with theory and methodology as the author discusses different interpretations of the term ‘state’, defining “the Sikkimese state as a community living under an organisational structure where power and authority is defined in the form of a structured hierarchy. He also argues that “the Tibetan concepts of state and social organisation were fundamental to the organisation of the Sikkimese state.” In addition to this, it also deals with the early inhabitation of Sikkim. The book overall sheds a fascinating light on the myths, the

narratives and the figures, both religious and secular, which contributed to the formation of the state. Saul Mullard places the 'historical events' in the particular context of Sikkim with its indigenous population and the overpowering influence from Tibetan culture in all its aspects. The work is an outstanding contribution on the history of Sikkim, using Tibetan and Sikkimese sources.

Books on political developments in Sikkim includes:-

Rao's, 1978, '*Sikkim: The story of its Integration with India*' begins with the influence of India's Independence on the democratic movement of Sikkim. He discusses about how the people of Sikkim struggled for a democratic set up. The book also deals with the political growth in the pre-merger period. It highlights the internal intrigues to embarrass India by siding with the feudal regime and awakening of the political consciousness among the people that culminated in creating Sikkim as the 22nd state of India Union. Chapter I of the book gives insight on the creation of Sikkim Council after the first democratic election in 1953 which was based on "Parity System" and formation of an Executive Council. The book also reveals the signing of Tripartite Agreement. The agreement was completed amongst the ruler of Sikkim, the Chogyal, existing political parties in Sikkim and Government of India on 8th May, 1973. It also gives a detailed account on Government of Sikkim Act, 1974 and its provisions for the formation of Assembly, Chief Executive, Council of Ministers and Judiciary. It further explains the status of Sikkim as an "Associate state" under the 35th Amendment Act of the constitution of India and the status of Chogyal as the constitutional head. The book however remains silent on the role and position of Bhutias in the post-merger period.

Das, 1983, in '*The Sikkim Saga*', makes a historical analysis on the reasons behind the transfer of power from Monarchy to Democracy and merger of Sikkim with India. The author tries to deal with questions like; was the merger of Sikkim with India necessary? Was there really a popular uprising against the Chogyal in 1973. In discussing the above questions, the writing is clear with author's personal experiences which make the book more relevant. The inclusion of the role played by 'three ladies', Hope Cooke, Elisa Maria Kazini and Indira Gandhi, in the events that led to the agitation of 1973 and the ultimate merger of Sikkim in 1975 has made the book more interesting. However, a very evident shortcoming of the book is its lack of a detailed role and influence of Bhutias in particular.

Sengupta, 1985, in *'State Government and Politics, Sikkim'* looks at the geo-political, economic and social foundations, political dynamics, electoral process, role of pressure groups and political parties that contributed in changing the trends in political dynamics contributed in Sikkim. He also traces the cross-current of ethnic, social and religious factors that correlates with the political dynamics in the state.

Bhattacharya, 1994, in his book entitled *'Sikkim-The Prayer Wheel and Scriptre'* is focused on the study of the socio-political system in Sikkim and at large stresses on the inter-relationship between the indigenous Bhutia and Lepcha communities. The second part of the book is on the critical role played by the Buddhist institutions in the foundation of Sikkim's political system in the mid 17th century. Bhattacharya has made an important understanding towards the impact of Buddhism on the political process in Sikkim. The author is however analysing the impact of Buddhism in the politics of Sikkim and not the other factors. In the book, the author has tried to be less critical towards the Buddhist institutions of Sikkim that played a pertinent role in the foundation of Buddhist state of Sikkim. Nonetheless, the books is very much relevant to present study.

Basnet's, 1974, *'Geography and Demography of Sikkim'* is divided into two parts. Part I discusses the geography and demography of Sikkim and anointing of the first Bhutia King of Sikkim in 1642. It discusses the Bhutanese and Gorkha invasion in 1700 and 1740 respectively. The book presents a detailed account of the Treaty of Sougali (1816) between British and Nepal and the Treaty of Titaliya (1817) between British and Sikkim. Part II reflects on the development of political parties, agitation launched by different political parties and sections of society and the intervention of the Indian government in the political affairs of Sikkim. This part of the book presents the first Panchayat election of 1950, the first Sikkim Council election of 1953, distribution of seats among Bhutia- Lepcha, Tsongs (Limboo), Scheduled Caste and Nepalese in 1966. The author talks about the revolt against monarchy and zamindari system under the monarchy which resulted in the implementation of democracy in Sikkim in 1975. This is basically a political history with focus on the political movements prior to the merger with India.

Sharma, 1996, *'Sikkim: Past and Present'* (*Sikkim Hijo Dekhi Aaja Samma*) is another book that focuses on political developments, provides a detailed account of the historical developments in Sikkim. In his work, Sharma illustrates on the monarchical set up in Sikkim and it's working. He

discusses how the people were dissatisfied with the rule of Chogyal and the exploitation and suppression by the *Kazis*, who were *Zamindars* during the kingship. In the second part of his work, he mainly focuses on the growth of political organisations and parties in Sikkim. He highlights on the Assembly and Lok Sabha elections in the state and the changing governments. He tries to look at Sikkimese people's faith and trust on the Sikkim Democratic Front party.

Joshi, 2004, in '*Sikkim: Past and Present*', a work on different aspects of Sikkim; history, politics, society and economy comprises of seven chapters. The first chapter covers an overview of Sikkim's history and geography, agriculture system, industries, irrigation and power, transport, festivals and tourist centres of Sikkim. The second chapter presents the abode of snow, interesting places in and around Gangtok as tourist spots, natural wealth, and mountainous adventure, Lamaism, Buddhism and Monasteries of Sikkim. The third chapter discusses the historic evolution of Sikkim, cultural and economic aspects, population and settlement pattern of Sikkim. It also discusses the economy of the former Kingdom, forest resources, minerals, industries, power and transport. Political aspects like internal and external political problems with the neighbouring countries like Bhutan, Nepal and India are also discussed. Talking about the modern state, the book sheds light on national identity, nation-building efforts, accession of Sikkim to the Indian Union and the rise of democracy in Sikkim. A large number of issues and problems have been discussed in this book.

Yasin and Chhetri, 2012, '*Politics, Society and Development*', discusses the impact of the end of Chogyal administration in the political system of the newly formed state of Sikkim and its impact on the society, economy and polity of the region. The book proceeds with the discussion on Sikkim's progress towards democracy, the introduction of electoral system based on adult suffrage and the abolition of the institution of monarchy in 1970s. The book deals with the constitutional changes that took place following the 1973 uprising and Government of Sikkim Act 1974 that led to a dramatic change in political and economic institutions. It further gives an insight on the change in the political institutions that led to the formation of representative government ensuring greater participation of people in the decision-making processes. The authors mention how the Government of Sikkim Act 1974 removed many of the worst inequities under the old political system where only few aristocrats and nobles were the part of the Government system. The book attempts to portray the different socio-political and economic

aspects of Sikkim in the post-merger period. It gives an account on various developments in Sikkim.

Kazi, 2009, in his book *'Sikkim for Sikkimese: Distinct Identity within the Union'* makes a study on the Sikkimese people- Lepchas, Bhutias and Nepalese who have been living in Sikkim for generations. The author focuses that Sikkim now being a part India has the right to preserve its unique and distinct identity.

Gaunley and Chettri, 2003, in their book *'History of Democratic Movement'* provides a historical background of Namgyal dynasty and the influence of Bhutias as a ruling class. The later part of the book covers the life history of the political leaders of Sikkim and their contributions in the process of democratisation of Sikkim. The book to some extent is helpful in understanding the nature of Bhutias as a ruling class.

Raizada, 2012, in his work entitled *'Merger of Sikkim: A New Perspective'* highlights the historical background of the advent of British and its interference in the Sikkim politics. Focus is on the political developments and the settlement agreements of 1973. The book unfolds various issues related to the merger of Sikkim- domestic and international as well as China's objections over it. It allows an understanding on the political unrest and demand for ending Bhutia rule.

Bhadra's, 1992, work *'Sikkim-Democracy and Social Change'* explains the factors and forces that led to the transformation of Sikkim from a monarchy to democracy. Commenting on the political developments in a traditional society it stresses that the objective of the study is not theory building but to explore the factors of socio-political change in Sikkim. The book presents the socio-economic conditions and the rise of different political organisations and parties in Sikkim. To her, it is important to analyse the political process in terms of nation-building, popular participation, modernity, social mobility, identity etc. It also tries to find out the agents of social change and what role do different social and economic classes in Sikkim play in political development. According to her, the Sikkimese feel threatened with more outsiders pouring into the state. To her, abolition of the safeguards by means of reservation has led to slow erosion of Sikkim's distinct identity.

Bhutia and Kharga, 2015, made a study on *'Democratic Associations and Political Representation of Tribal Population in Sikkim: a study on the Associational Activity of Bhutias'*

and Lepchas’ finds that the tribal associations of Bhutia-Lepchas in Sikkim have failed to ensure “genuine tribal representation” of the Bhutia-Lepchas along the lines of Sikkim’s tradition. The study also highlights that the parity formula system that existed during monarchical rule fairly represented the Bhutia-Lepchas of Sikkim and the number of seats reserved for the Bhutias and Lepchas in the State Legislative Assembly is also not likely to be increased under the present framework of one-man-one-vote system of political representation.

Karki, 2018, in a study entitled *‘A Historical Study of Tribal Status Development in Sikkim- Post Merger 1975’* explains the different topics related to development of different tribes in Sikkim. The study throws light on the tribal seat reservation issues and their dissatisfaction during L. D Kazi led Government where the Bhutias and Lepchas demanded for 15 seats reservation policy.

Chakrabarti, 2012, *‘Migration and Marginalisation in the ‘Himalayan Kingdom’ of Sikkim’*, gives a close look at the political history of Sikkim during monarchic rule. It stresses on the marginalisation of the Lepchas and the Limboos by the Bhutias in the pre-merger period and reflects on the political hegemony of the minority Bhutia over the majority Nepalese who were mostly landless.

The study traces the process of migration and the political, economic and cultural changes in the ‘Himalayan kingdom’, Sikkim from the seventeenth century till the merger in 1975. The study explicitly looks into the process of possible political, cultural and economic marginalisation of the ethnic groups during the Bhutia rule in Sikkim. In doing so, the author discusses the existence of major ethnic groups like the Bhutias, Lepchas and Limboos. Chakrabarti proceeds on with the discussion on the British intrusion in Sikkim, Nepalese immigration and changing demographic pattern in Sikkim. The change in the demography brought major socio-economic and politico-cultural change in Sikkim. The study has provided a major insight on the ethnic communities of Sikkim and changes in their socio-economic status. More particularly, the study has been helpful in understanding the process of marginalisation of ethnic communities in the pre-merger period.

Dewan, 2012, *Education in Sikkim: An Historical Retrospect Pre-Merger and Post- Merger Period*, traces the development of education sector in Sikkim. Dewan underlines his focus on historical survey of the development of education in Sikkim. He discusses on the factors leading

to break through the age-old conservativeness and to move towards progressive activities. The stress is on how the formal system of institutional instruction had been initiated in Sikkim paving way for development in the school education. The chapters are designed according to periodical events and phenomenal changes in educational sphere of Sikkim. The discussion on the inclusion of different ethnic groups in the educational sector in the pre and the post-merger period is very limited. However, the book covers other aspects of educational progress both in pre and post-merger period that fulfils the understanding of overall educational development in Sikkim.

While there are many books on Sikkim, there are very few written on Bhutias. Of course, they have received attention in the historical and political developments but not as a single community whose status have changed over the years. Some of the books and articles on Bhutias are:-

Prasad, 1989, in his work entitled '*Bhutia Tribals of India-Dynamics of Economic Transformation*' seeks to understand the dynamics of economic transformation and cultural adaptation among the Bhutia tribals. The study has been spread over large and wide compass, beginning from the emergence of trading activities of the Bhotias and its impact on their socio-cultural life. The study covers a vast period of growth and development of Bhotia society. Though it is a general study on Bhotia, it highlights the Bhotias residing in India. This is one of the few books on the Bhutias.

Ghosh, 2007, '*Culture Patterns of the Bhotias: The Bhotias of Indian Himalayas: A Socio-Linguistic Approach*', the author sheds a fascinating light on the settling of the Tibetan speaking people in the Himalayas, with their socio-linguistic peculiarities. She talks about how the settlers in the Himalayas have made themselves a unique case of cultural integration in spite of diverse ethnicity and distinguishable cultural identity. Specifically, the book sheds light on culture and how it manifests manifold aspects of human life including their behavior patterns. More particularly, the author identifies the culture scenario of the Bhotias residing in different parts of Himalayas with similarities and differences. Linguistic divergence in the dialects from a Monpa to that of Ladakhi and Baltis (now in PoK occupied Kashmir) has been discussed. Reference on the reminiscence of high civilization of the Tibetans residing in the Trans-Himalayan region has been given in the book.

Sector-wise distribution of Himalayan groups is presented in Western Sector, Central Sector, Eastern Sector. The author further discusses that in the culture-growth of the Bhotias in Indian Himalayas, various common trends may be noticed, despite their separate language identities. Bhutia language though based on Tibetan stems but is transformed in speech from its origin. The scripture, literary language is almost the same while the spoken language prevalent among the Bhotias in three sectors differ. The book also gives a detailed picture on multidimensional cultural traits of the Bhotias like: food habits, housing, dress and garments, ornaments, household goods, weapons, travel and transport, occupation, shop-keeping, trade, family property and inheritance, family structure and social institutions, spirituality and religious identity, welfare service to the sick and destitute, socio-economic speech and communication, arts and crafts education-non-formal and formal of the Bhotias of Indian Himalayas.

Mukherjee, 1980, in the article '*Some Aspect of Bhutia Culture in Sikkim*' focuses on the Bhutia culture in Sikkim. She presents on the physical features, settlement, language, house pattern, clothing, household goods, jewellery and food. She has also not failed to highlight the social traits of the Bhutias like birth ceremony, marriage, death ceremony and spiritual traits like religious institutions, temples and arts and crafts. The only missed out point in her work is the study of political role and the socio-economic background of the Bhutias which would have been a good source for the present study.

Gyamtso, 2009, in '*The History, Religion, Culture and Traditions of Bhutia Communities*' extends study on Bhutia as an ethnic community in Sikkim. The book is a reprinted work entitled "*An Introduction to Sikkimese Songs*" (1969). History, religion, culture, customs, traditional Sikkimese dishes, costumes, Bhutia ceremonies, songs etc. are the main course of the work. Description on the Bhutia establishment in Sikkim with its influence of religion, culture and traditions are the focus of the study. The book covers almost everything of the Bhutias but the author is not aware of the economic status of the Bhutias in traditional Sikkim and nor does it throw light on the evolution of their position in society. The book is basically descriptive in nature.

Verma, 2002, in her book '*A Guide and a hand book of Sikkim*' has tried to explore the historical aspects of Bhutia of Sikkim and has focused on the political role of the Bhutias. She has tried to study the changes in the Bhutia culture over the decade and the main aim as per the book is to

make the Bhutias understand their culture and help them preserve and practice so as to keep this tribe alive.

Bhutia, 2014, in his article *'Bhutia Tribe in Sikkim: A Sociological Study'* studies the history, origin, present social status along with cultural practices of Bhutia community in Sikkim. Bhutia tribe has its own language and scripts. In the study it is found that in the house, the Bhutia people speak and communicate with each other by their own language but outside the house they generally speak Nepali as a means of communication. The younger generation, due to establishment of English medium Convent schools throughout the state, does not know complete Bhutia scripts. According to the author, transmission, cultural assimilation, development of transportation and communication facilities, establishment of industries particularly Pharmaceutical industries, development of tourism, establishment of English Medium schools, Colleges, Technical and Professional institutions; the people of Sikkim in general, Bhutia in particular have gone a radical change in every spheres of their life. Though the book has elicited much information on Bhutia language and scripts and its use by the Bhutias in present days, the work could have included more information on the present position of Bhutias in Sikkim which would have given the book a better weightage.

Bhutia and Mishra, 2014, in a study entitled *'Socio-Economic Status of Bhutia Tribe in Sikkim'*, elicits on the areas like: present status of Bhutia tribe in Sikkim; the origin and history of the Bhutias, the art of writing, the alphabets and the scripts of the Bhutias, the family life, way of living, kinship, status of women, education, social organisation and also analyses various cultural aspects of Bhutias. The study briefs that the establishment of English Medium schools, Colleges, Technical and Professional institutions along with industries particularly Pharmaceutical companies, development of road transport facilities. The book highlights on how Bhutia in particular have gone a radical change in every spheres of their life. As seen in the works of other scholars, in this study, there is a gap in mentioning about the present socio-economic status of Bhutias.

Iqbal, 2012, in his work entitled *'The Socio-Economic Status of Various communities: An Empirical study on Sikkim Himalaya'* highlights on the historical background and different communities of Sikkim. The importance of his work is that he has tried to analyse the status of

Bhutia as a Scheduled Tribe as recognized by the constitution of India. In his study it is found out that the Bhutias are the most influential community in all fields of life which is rare among the other Scheduled Tribes in India.

From the comprehensive study on related literatures, it is clear that there is not a single monograph specially dedicated to Bhutias of Sikkim. Hence, the present study addresses the position and status of Bhutias in Sikkim.

1.1.4. Objectives of the Study

The basic objectives of the study are:

1. To understand the social, economic and political status of the Bhutias in the pre-merger society of Sikkim.
2. To understand how the Bhutias were affected by the immigration of the Nepalese into Sikkim.
3. To trace the political and administrative changes brought about by the Nepali demand for equality and abolition of monarchy.
4. To understand the shift in the role of Bhutias as majority ruling community to a minority Scheduled Tribe in the state.
5. To examine to what extent the Bhutias have been able to maintain their traditional status in Sikkim.

1.1.5. Research Questions

The study will pose to answer those questions that we have derived from the objectives of the study.

1. What was the actual position of the Bhutias in the traditional government of Sikkim? What kind of political status they are still enjoying in the state?
2. To what extent has the social status of this elite community been affected by the termination of monarchy and introduction to democracy in Sikkim?

3. What kind of economic privileges did they enjoy in the pre-merger period? Have they been able to maintain that status in the post-merger period? Has there been any substantive change in their occupational pattern particularly in relation to land in the post-merger period?
4. Where do they stand now in relation to other communities particularly in areas of education, landholding, jobs- both government and otherwise.
5. To what extent did their influence shape the state's cultural and religious policy in the pre-merger period? Does their cultural and religious influence still continue to be felt in the overall cultural atmosphere of the state as it used to be in the earlier period?

1.1.6. Methodology

The proposed research work is on the history of evolution of the socio-economic status of the Bhutia community of Sikkim. The study is basically a diachronic one. Diachronic means *across-time*. Diachronic approach, as we know, is one that analyses the evolution of something over time, allowing one to assess that something changes throughout history. Diachronic research can offer us the appropriate examples in relation to a phenomenon from many historical periods and make possible the connection between a specific phenomenon and others that remain the same or change in different historical periods. It attempts to make deductions about the progression of events that contributed to the current state.

Sociologists and anthropologists consider this approach as one of the best ways of studying change in a society and it is also widely used by the historians for studying change in the course of history. Number of studies on social and economic change of different villages and places has been carried so far. Tom G. Kessinger's *'Vilayatpur' 1848-1968: Social and Economic Change in a North Indian Village (1974)*, *The Toda of South India: A New Look (1986)* by Anthony R. Walker and G.S Ghurye's *'After a Century and a Quarter (1960)* are some of the important diachronic studies.

Since the focus of the study is their present condition in the context of the past, the use of traditional historical methods involving archival and literary sources is not sufficient. The study includes methods of other social sciences or studies particularly field survey for

studying the present status. Data were collected from both secondary and primary sources, from libraries as well as from the field.

As a work of history, it is based on data collected from both documental as well as oral sources from the study area. Study of the history of Sikkim, particularly that of Bhutia migration, emergence of the monarchy and evolution of the social and administrative characteristics of Sikkim under the Chogyals involve an extensive and critical desk review of the various books, documents, and articles etc. in the libraries of both Sikkim and outside Sikkim.

Initially, the evolving demographic profile of the state is presented from the Census reports that highlights the Bhutia dominated areas and pockets of Sikkim. Reports and records in the various administrative departments of state government are consulted for an idea about the percentage of Bhutia employees over time while land revenue records have provided similar information regarding the percentage of land under the Bhutia landowners. Similar data is collected from educational institutes and some other departments. Some schools, colleges and university rolls are collected for getting an idea about the share of the Bhutia students in such institutes.

Case studies of certain Bhutia families were conducted as an oral source for understanding their present status, changing lifestyle and their self perception about the present status. Bhutia families each group from three Bhutia dominated villages, one each from three districts: Lachung in North, Tashiding in West and Tathangchen in East districts were interviewed. This has shed light on the evolution of the fortunes and socio-economic status of those families over the years and generations. Structured schedules for interview as well as methods of personal discussion and observation were used for the purpose. The identification of such families was done specially taking care that the respondents cover both older and young generations. Such case studies have added more information on their socio-economic status in connection to other communities. This has given an idea about the self-perception of the community in the context of changing social, political and economic condition of the state. During the case studies care was taken to highlight the condition, educational level and occupational patterns of the girls/women in the Bhutia society as well.

Based on the objectives and the research questions the dissertation is chapterised in the following manner:

Chapter I: *Introduction*

Chapter II: *Population of Sikkim: An Overview*

Chapter III: *A Short history of Sikkim and Status of Bhutias in Pre-merger period*

Chapter IV: *Role of Bhutias in Sikkim's Journey Towards Democracy and their Gradual Marginalisation in Politics*

Chapter V: *The Occupational Pattern and Economic Status of Bhutias in Sikkim*

Chapter VI: *Bhutias in Bureaucracy of Sikkim*

Chapter VII: *Bhutias in Educational Sector of Sikkim*

Chapter VIII: *Case Studies:*

Summary and Conclusion

Chapter II

Population of Sikkim: An Overview

Before entering into a discussion on demographic pattern of Sikkim, particularly of the Bhutias, we may begin with the purpose of conducting demographic research.

The word ‘demography’ is derived from the Greek words ‘*Demos*’ and ‘*Graphy*’. *Demo* means people and *Graphy* is a suffix word which means represented. Thus, the term ‘demography’ refers to the study of people in particular. Demography is the collection of data regarding a specific population, inclusive of various age groups, races and sex. It is the analytical inquiry of population, especially the study of different dimensions of human beings like size, composition and distribution (Kenton, 2019, p.1). It also includes the spatial changes in birth rate, death rate, infant mortality rate, fertility rate and life expectancy. Overall it is specified to study the information of the people.

For demographic studies, details are secured mostly from the statistical census reports, which include records of data on births, deaths, gender, migrations and employment. Study of these relevant factors gives the overall picture of the population of a particular society and the changes that have occurred in different periods. This further leads us into a conceptual understanding of the population change. Population change may be understood as an analysis of population statistics measuring the change in growth and decrease in the numbers of people from one another. Since in every society, the population continues to rise or decrease, population change is an essential component of demographic study. Demographic study is conducted by considering population of a particular census and comparing it with the earlier censuses. The present study depends on a similar method of demographic study in Sikkim.

Various governments, corporations and organisations use demographics for different kinds of societal studies. It is used for different purposes and objectives by different research groups and organisations. For example, demography is used by governments for political purposes and observations, while scientists utilise it for research purposes and business groups use it for marketing and advertising. Demographic research or studies are usually conducted to determine the current status and position (economic, cultural, social and political) of the existing groups or communities in society. This information helps us to make a comparative study across different types of communities and groups living together.

For this study, demographic data is collected through census reports and documented records of the groups and communities existing in the state. The variables included in this demographic study are race, sex, age, income, employment, households and level of education. Inclusion of all these variables allows us to derive certain generalisations about the Bhutia group.

The chapter strives to provide the necessary analytical demographic study of Sikkim, with particular focus on the Bhutias, since the first population census conducted in 1861. Data is obtained from the Population Census, socio-economic surveys, and also from various available administrative records on the population of communities in Sikkim. The demographic study of the Bhutia community in particular as described above, can be of great importance to the study on socio-economic status of communities in the state. Demographic analysis of Bhutias is extended to a variety of areas or parameters where study on Bhutia populations has changed across time and through level of migration. The chapter has two sections: section I deals with the ‘Demographic Profile of Sikkim’ and Section II discusses the ‘The Bhutia Population of Sikkim’.

Section I

Demographic Profile of Sikkim

The Sikkimese societal structure is quite different as compared to other multi-caste based hierarchical society found in most parts of India. It may be said that Sikkimese society is a multi-ethnic society, which is attributed to tribal social formation.

Sikkim’s demographic statistics hold limited information on the ethnic demography of the communities in the state before 1891. This is partly because the government of the Sikkimese kingdom did not begin collecting such data until 1891 and partly because the Bhutia monarchy’s rule did not document the statistical data on the population, as Sikkim was very sparsely populated till the early 18th century.

The lack of early records of Sikkim’s population limits the study on the evolution of the state’s demographic profile. It was only after 1861, following British entry into Sikkim, that a record of the Sikkim population was undertaken. The first population census of Sikkim was conducted in 1891 by the British Political Officer in Sikkim. As per the census, Sikkim had a total number of

30458 people, out of which 11589 were males, 10563 were females and 8306 were children (Risley, 1894, p.27). A detailed study of the population distribution is given in table 2.1.1.

For the study on the demographic history of Sikkim before 1975, the population figures of the ethnic communities in Sikkim have also been drawn from Limboo chronicles and Lepcha folklores and legends. For the collection of information and statistical data on the population of Sikkim, sources like the Tibetans texts have been referred to.

The first population census of Sikkim in 1891, recorded the existence of fourteen communities in Sikkim. About 30,458 population were estimated in the census record. Regarding the details of population ratio, the Lepchas were the greatest in number, followed by Bhutias, Limboos, Gurung, Tamangs and others. The information on community-wise population census of Sikkim in 1891 is presented in the following table.

Table 2.1.1 Population Census of Sikkim, 1891

Sl. No	Race of caste	Males	Females	Children	Total
1	Lepcha	2362	2399	1001	5762
2	Bhutia	1966	1960	968	4804
3	Limbu	1255	1159	943	3356
4	Gurung	1108	1047	766	2921
5	Murmi (Tamang)	801	778	1288	2867
6	Rai, Jimdar	742	691	587	2026
7	Khambu	726	648	589	1963
8	Kami	626	464	580	1670
9	Brahman	521	372	521	1414
10	Mangar	363	346	192	901
11	Chhetri	303	253	273	829
12	Newar	240	183	304	727
13	Slaves ⁵	124	99	103	326
14	Derzi	102	92	93	287
15	Miscellaneous including troops	350	72	99	521
	Total	11589	10563	8306	30458

Source: Risley, 1894.

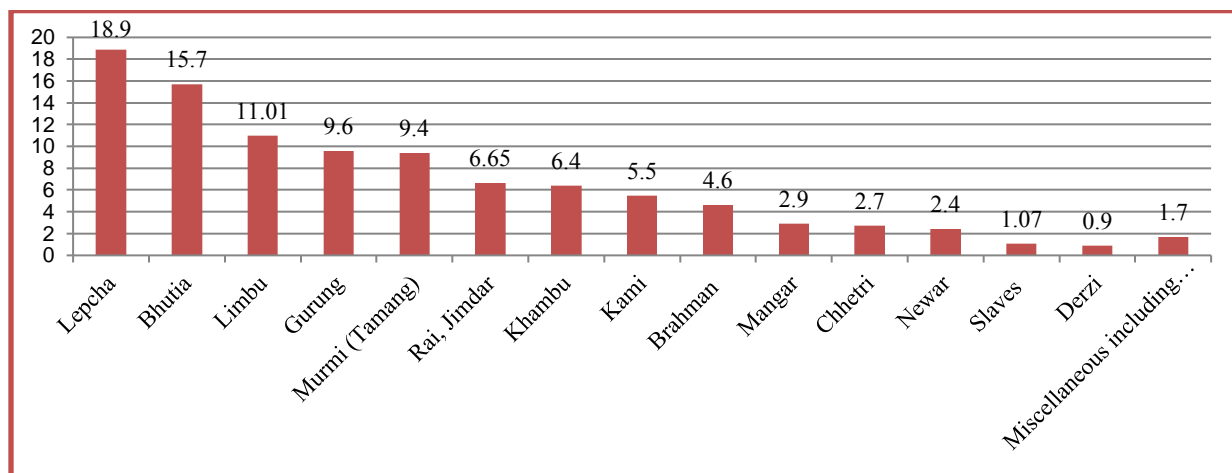
⁵ Slaves include the *chakhureys* and *pakhureys* who cultivated the land for the landlords.

In 1891, a total of 30,458 people were recorded, with 11,589 males, 10,563 females and 8,306 children. The Lepchas were the biggest ethnic group with 5,762 people. The male population included 2,362 people, the females included 2,399 people and 1,001 were children. The Bhutias were the second largest group with a total of 4,804 people, out of which 1,966 were male and 1,960 female and 968 were children. The next highest population after the Bhutias were that of the Limboos, constituting a total of 3,356 people, with 1,255 males, 1,159 females and 943 children.

The available data reveals that in Sikkim, there existed a multi-cultural society. According to the census report, communities like Limboo, Tamang, Rai, Gurung, Khambu, Brahman (Sharma), Chettri, Kami, Mangar and Newar existed along with the Lepcha and Bhutia groups. The table also enumerates that in the earlier history of Sikkim, i.e before 1975, there existed a section of people who were categorised as slaves. As per the census of 1891, all together there were 326 slaves, wherein males constituted 124 persons, females were 99 and remaining 103 were children. A section of the population categorised in the Miscellaneous Group included the troops. The total population of this group was 521, with 350 males, 72 females and 99 children. However, if all the Nepali communities are taken together (excluding Bhutia, Lepcha and Limbo) they make the biggest population group, with a total of 16,452 people in Sikkim. As a result, we can see that Nepalese settlement in Sikkim outnumbered the previous settlers such as Lepchas, Bhutias and Limboos.

The 1891 Census Operations in Sikkim were carried out with British assistance (Risley, 1894). The first census of Sikkim, conducted for the first time under Government of India, was in 1971. Since then, the census report published revealed a steady growth in its population.

Fig 2.1.1. Population of Sikkim, Census 1891



Source: Risley, 1894.

The graph on census 1891 elicits the percentage of population (ethnic community-wise) in Sikkim. The data depicted in the figure explains that the highest percentage of the population as shown is the Lepchas, followed by Bhutias and Limboos. The Nepalese population shows a very meagre percentage of representation.

A comprehensive study of the decadal demographic profile from 1891-2011 is presented below.

Table 2.1.2. Population and Sex Ratio of Sikkim (1891-2011)

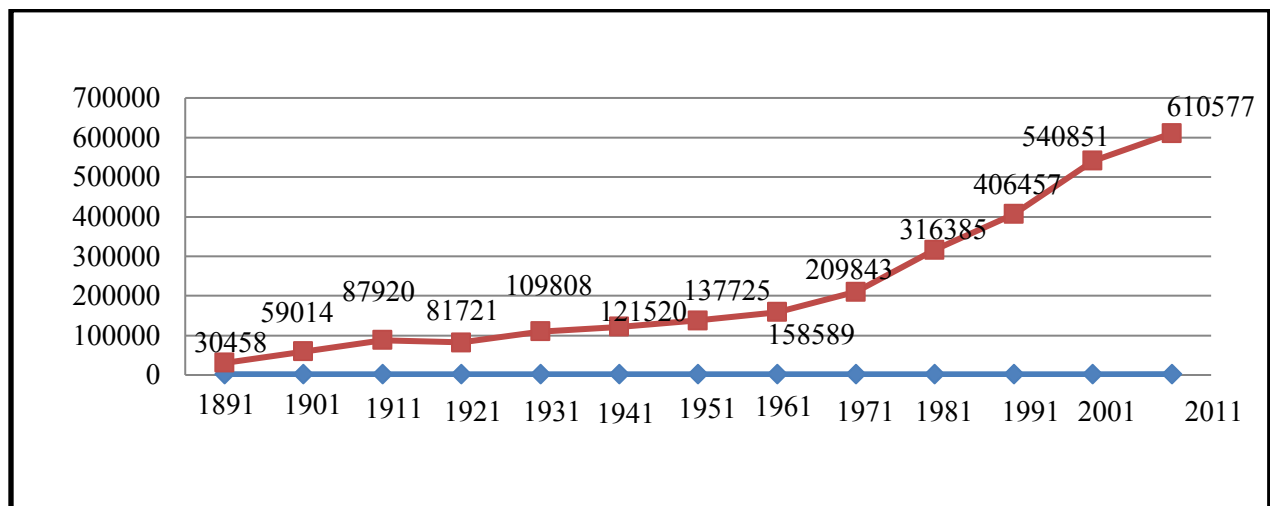
Year	Population					Sex ratio
	Total	Male	%	Female	%	
1891	30458	15742	51.7	14716	48.3	935
1901	59014	30795	52.2	28219	47.8	916
1911	87920	45059	51.3	42861	48.7	951
1921	81721	41492	50.8	40229	49.2	970
1931	109808	55825	50.8	53983	49.2	967
1941	121520	63289	52.1	58231	47.9	920
1951	137725	72210	52.4	65515	47.6	907
1961	158589	81593	51.4	76996	48.6	904
1971	209843	112662	53.7	97181	46.3	863
1981	316385	172440	54.5	143945	45.5	835
1991	406457	216427	53.2	190030	46.8	878
2001	540851	288484	53.3	252367	46.7	875
2011	610577	323070	52.9	287507	47.1	890

Source: State Socio Economic Census, DESME, Govt. of Sikkim, 2013

According to the 2011 State Socio Economic Census (SSEC), the state's population is 610577, with 323,070 males and 287,507 females, compared to a total population of 540851 in 2001. The state has registered 7.52% growth from 2001 to 2006 (SSEC, 2013). The male population has increased by 4.94% and the female population by 10.38% from 2001 to 2006. The sex ratio in the 2011 census stands at 890 per 1000 males.

As per the census of 2011, the distribution of rural and urban settlements reveals that 91.55% of the population is based in rural areas. All four districts in the state have a higher percentage of the population in rural areas.

Fig. 2.1.2. Demography of Sikkim (1891-2011)



Source: State Socio Economic Census, DESME, Govt. of Sikkim, 2013

As mentioned earlier, the demographic pattern in Sikkim has taken a new turn with the migration of the Nepalese. The graph on decadal growth of demography of Sikkim illustrates that the population rise was speedy during the decade of 1961-1971. Thereafter, consistency in the growth is seen. An increase of 51,254 people was noticed in this decade, i.e 1961-1971. The decade from 1971-1981 records an increase of about 106,542 people, which is remarkably high in comparison to previous decades. The decade from 1981-1991 shows a 90,072 increase in the population. The highest ever increase was recorded in 1991-2001 with 134, 394 people. The lowest increase was seen in 2001- 2011 i.e., 69726 people (SSEC, 2013).

The settlement of the Nepalese into Sikkim not only brought difference in the demographic profile but also influenced the socio-cultural and religious life as the majority of the migrated Nepalese professed Hinduism.

Within a short span of time, the Nepalese as a whole became the community with largest number of population in Sikkim, outnumbering both the Bhutias and the Lepchas. However, in the

political and administrative management of the country, the migrated group of people remained minor players.

Various factors stand responsible for the increase of Nepalese in Sikkim. The Nepalese were considered to be industrious because they were engaged in extending the settlements by clearing the forests and increasing agricultural cultivation during the Chogyal rule in Sikkim. They introduced new methods of agriculture, including terraced farming. Cultivation of cardamom was started by the Nepalese which is an important cash crop in Sikkim.

The Nepalese, especially the Newars, were able to occupy important positions in business and administration in Sikkim. The migration of the Nepalese helped Sikkim in the attainment of development and prosperity in the agricultural and economic fields. The migrated Nepali community who settled in Sikkim included sub-cultural groups like the Kiratis, the Newars and the Gurkhas (Bahun and Chhetri). The Kiratis include Limbus, Rais, Mangars, Gurungs and Tamangs. The Newars (also called Pradhans) came from Nepal in the 19th century and emerged as the Nepali counterpart of the *Kazis* in Sikkim. The Gurkhas, namely, Basnett and Chhetri, moved from Nepal towards Sikkim along with the expansion of Gurkha invasions into Sikkim in the 18th century (Mukherjee, 2011, p. 11).

By far, the most serious threat the Bhutias faced was that from the immigration of Nepalese. According to the Census reports, the population has increased around four times in the last four decades since 1975. Along with the Bhutias, Lepchas and Nepalese, a small and distinct group known as the Tsongs- settlers from the Tsang-po valley in Tibet, now the Limbuwana district of Nepal, were among the early settlers of Sikkim. A group of Indians known as plainsmen lived in Sikkim. These people were traders and businessmen. They exercised economic influence to a large extent. The Indians basically came from Rajasthan, Punjab, UP, Bihar and Bengal and are still an important community in Sikkim (Raizada, 2012, p. 9).

Table 2.1.3. Population Decadal Growth Rate (%) in Sikkim (1901-2011)

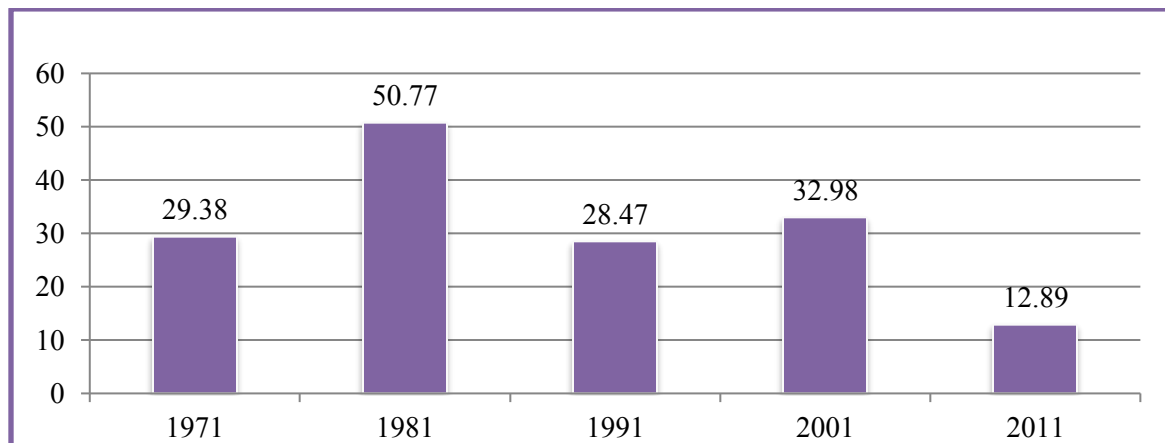
Year	Population growth rate in %
1901-1911	51.61
1911-1921	7.05
1921-1931	13.34
1931-1941	10.67
1941-1951	13.34
1951-1961	17.7 6

1961-1971	29.38
1971-1981	50.77
1981-1991	28.47
1991-2001	32.98
2001-2011	12.89

Source: Population Census, 1901-2011

The population census of 1901 enumerates the highest growth of 51.61%, which is about 59,014 people. The major contributing factor for this growth is the migration of the population into Sikkim, especially the Nepalese. Secondly, the Chogyal of Sikkim also encouraged Nepali settlement in Sikkim for the purpose of expanding agricultural land in Sikkim. Referring to the traditional occupation of Bhutias and Lepchas in this context, the Bhutias were basically traders and some were into pastoralism. Very few were engaged in agricultural activities. The Lepchas, as described by historians, lived a nomadic life. Hence, the Chogyal, being interested in developing agriculture in Sikkim and the Nepalese being better agriculturists, were allowed to settle in Sikkim. These events led to increase in the population of almost 50% during this period. However, there seemed to be a decrease in population growth from 1911 to 1921, which was 7.05%. Two factors may be considered responsible. One being the imposition of ban in 1917 against the transfer of land of the Bhutia and the Lepchas to other communities in Sikkim and the other, the spread of epidemic in 1919 that led to negative growth of population during this period (Raizada, 2012, p.17). The consequence of the epidemic not only hampered the population in Sikkim but also India as a whole was affected.

Fig. 2.1.3. Population Decadal Growth Rate (%) in Sikkim (1901-2011)



Source: Compiled from Census, 1971-2011, GOI.

So far, the highest growth was in 1981-91, i.e., 50.77%, and the second highest growth was recorded in 1991-2001, i.e., 32.98%. The reason may be the merger with India. Sikkim as a new state required administrators and educationists for the newly established state structure. Hence, migration was allowed to meet the changing needs of the state. The rapid growth of the population not only changed the demographic pattern but also impacted the socio-economic structure in the state.

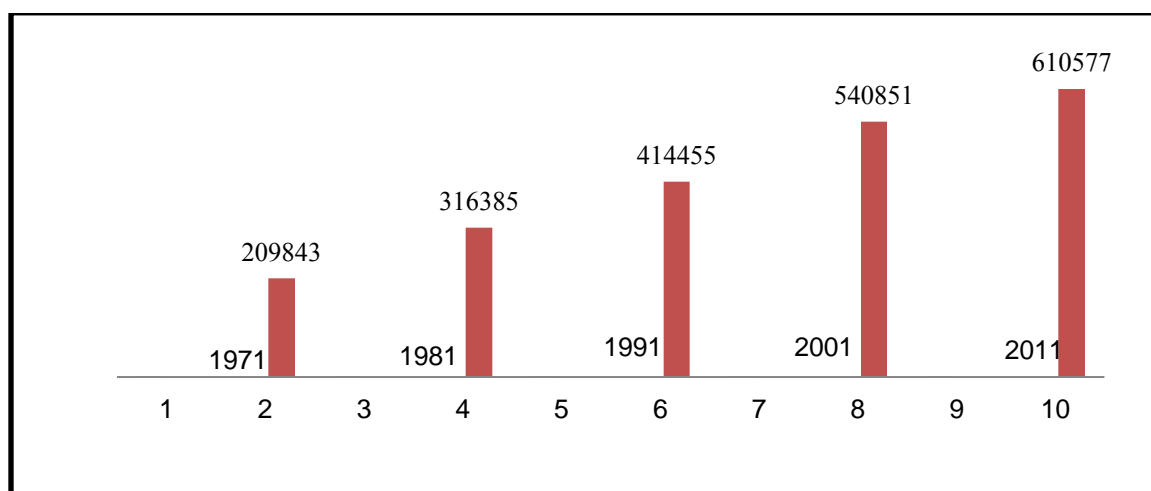
Table 2.1.4. District-wise Distribution of Population of Sikkim, 1961 to 2011

SL. No	Year	Sikkim	North	West	South	East
1	1961	162189	-	-	-	-
2	1971	209843	13014	58023	53185	85621
3	1981	316385	26455	75192	75976	138762
4	1991	406457	31240	98161	98604	178452
5	2001	540851	41030	123256	131525	245040
6	2011	610577	43709	136435	146850	283583

Source: Census of India, GOI, 2011

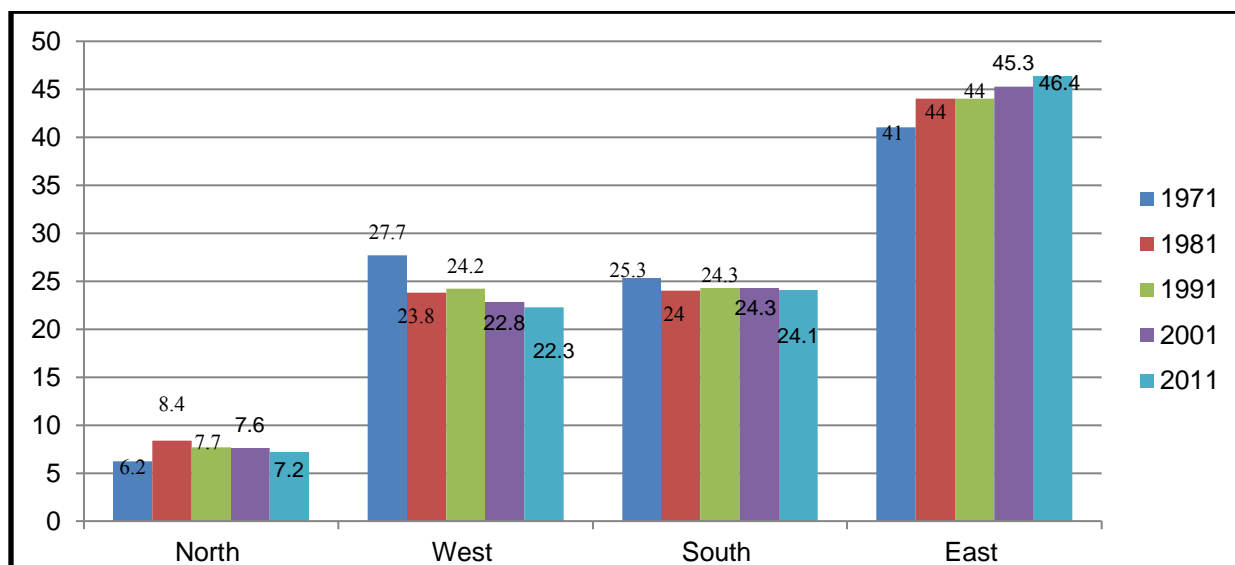
As per the figures presented in table 2.1.4, the total population in 1961 was 162189. The record on the district-wise distribution of population is not available for this census. As per the subsequent census reports (1971 to 2011), the East district has the highest population in the state, followed by South and West districts, while the North district is the most sparsely populated district.

Fig 2.1.4. Population of Sikkim (1971 - 2011)



Source: Population Census, India 2011.

Fig.2.1.5. District-wise Population (in %) of Sikkim, 1971 to 2011



Source: Census of India, GOI, 2011

The statistics from the population censuses enumerate that there has been increase in growth rate in Sikkim in every census, except for censuses 1911 and 1921.

The graphical presentation of district wise distribution of the population presented in Figure 2.1.5 shows the consistency in the increase in population census from 1971-2011. The East district is presented with the highest percent of population in all census reports. Near about 50 percent of the population are based in East district. West district accounts for the second highest percentage of the population, followed by the South and North districts respectively.

Table 2.1.5. Rural and Urban Population of Sikkim-2001 and 2011

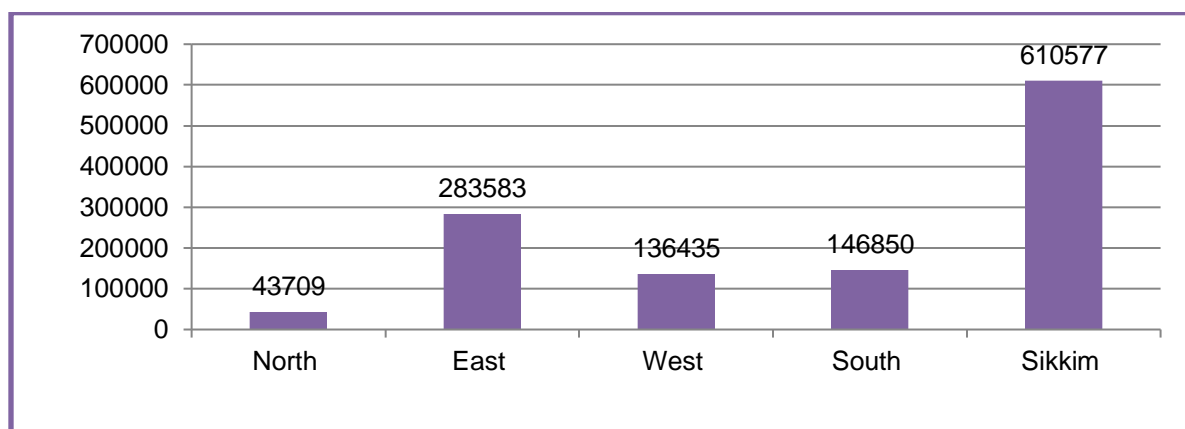
Sl. No.	State/ District	Sector	2001			2011		
			Total Population			Total Population		
			Persons	Male	Female	Persons	Male	Female
1	North	Total	41,030	23,414	17,616	43709	24730	18979
		Rural	39782	22643	17139	39065	22274	16791
		Urban	1248	771	477	4644	2456	2188
2	East	Total	245040	132917	112123	283583	151432	132151
		Rural	192188	104150	88038	161096	87147	73949
		Urban	52852	28767	24085	122487	64285	58202
3	West	Total	123,256	63,912	59,344	136435	70238	66197
		Rural	121432	62885	58547	131187	67528	63659
		Urban	1824	1027	797	5248	2710	2538

4	South	Total	131525	68241	63284	146850	76670	70180
		Rural	127579	66096	61483	125651	65848	59803
		Urban	3946	2145	1801	21199	10822	10377
5	Sikkim	Total	540,851	288,484	252,367	610577	323070	287507
		Rural	480,981	255774	225,207	456999	242797	214202
		Urban	59,870	32,710	27,160	153578	80273	73305

Source: Population Census 2001 and 2011

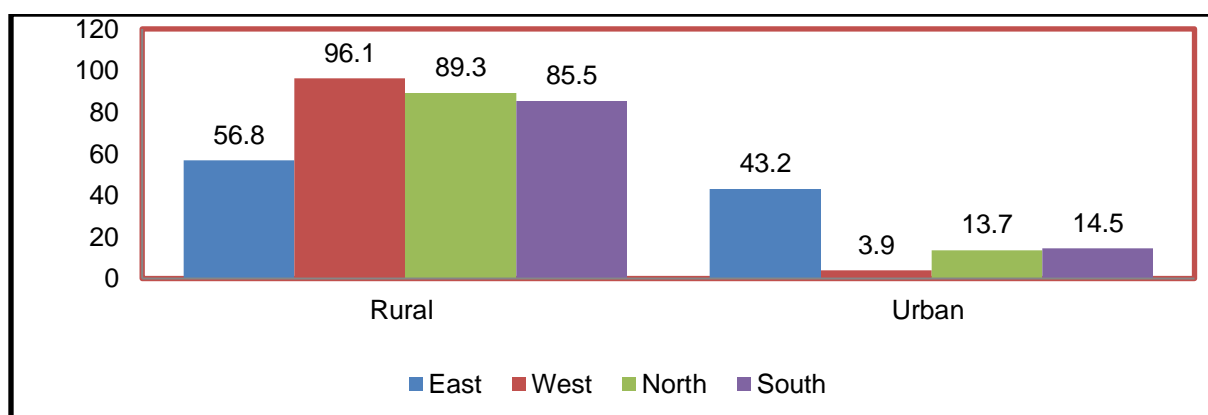
Demographic statistics for both the decades i.e. 2001 and 2011, indicate that the East district made up the larger portion of the population with 45.31% in 2001 and 46.44% in 2011. South district reports 24.31% in 2001 and 24% in 2011, West district accounts for 22.79% in 2001 and 22.3% in 2011 and North district recorded 7.59% in 2001 and 7.1 % in 2001. Area-wise North district is the largest, but it is the least populated.

Fig 2.1.6. District-wise Population of Sikkim, 2011 (In Lakhs).



Source: Census of Sikkim, 2011.

Fig. 2.1.7. District-wise Rural and Urban Distribution of Population, 2011



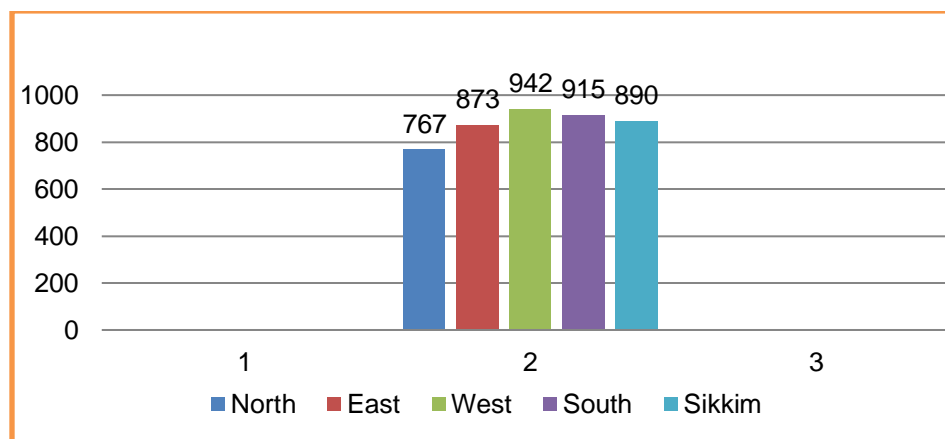
Source: Census of Sikkim, 2011.

While speaking elaborately about the districts' urban-rural population, in North district, 89.38% of the people live in the rural areas while only 13.7 % are in urban areas , i.e at Mangan, the only town in North district. In West district, rural areas account for 96.15 % of the population while urban areas such as Gyalshing and Nayabazaar account for only 3.85%. It is perhaps the town with the least population.

In the South district, 85.56 % live in rural areas while the remaining 14.5 % live in the urban areas: Namchi and Jorethang, the main towns in South district. East district has the highest population living in the urban areas, as there are more towns in East district; Gangtok, Singtam, Rangpo and Rhenock. We find 56.81% population living in rural areas and 43.2 % living in urban areas.

Apparently, all the four towns sharing 122,487 (79.76 per cent) are located in the East district. South district has an urban population of about 21,199 which constitutes 13.80 % of the total urban population. Similarly, West district has 5,248 (3.42 per cent) and the North district has 4,644 (3.02%) of the total urban population (Census of India, 2011).

Fig.2.1.8. District-wise Sex Ratio (2011)



Source: Census of Sikkim, 2011.

The sex ratio by district reveals that the West and South districts have higher sex ratios, with 925 and 915 females per 1000 males, respectively. North district has the lowest sex ratio with 767 females per 1000 males and East district has 873 females per 1000 males.

Apart from the population statistics, studies on the linguistic population also throw light on the demography of the state. The statistics of the linguistic population of Sikkim as published in the Census of 2001 (population by linguistic group is not reported in previous census reports) show that Nepali language is spoken by the largest number of people in the state.

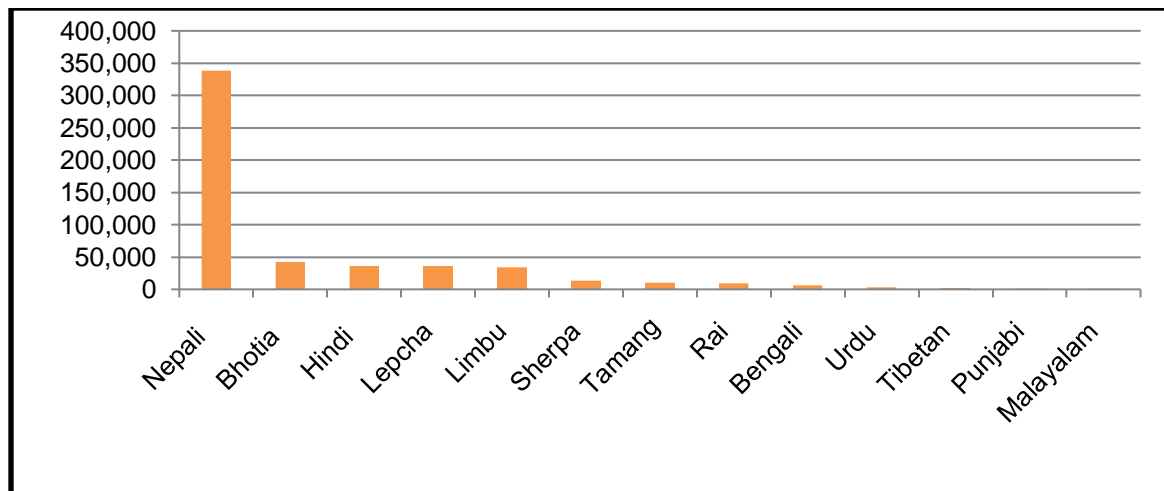
Table 2.1.6. Linguistic Groups of Sikkim in 2001

Sl. No.	Language	Total number of speakers
1	Nepali	338,606
2	Bhutia	41,825
3	Hindi	36,072
4	Lepcha	35,728
5	Limbu	34,292
6	Sherpa	13,922
7	Tamang	10,089
8	Rai	8,856
9	Bengali	6,320
10	Urdu	2,930
11	Tibetan	1,977
12	Punjabi	1,364
13	Malayalam	1,021

Source: Census of Sikkim, 2001.

Though Sikkim is country's one of the smallest state, it is marked by existence of numerous linguistic groups with co-existence of number of languages like Nepali, Bhutia, Lepcha, Limboo, Tamang, Rai, Mangar, Sherpa, Newari, Tibetan and other languages (Census, 2001). The table reflects that the most spoken language is the Nepali language. Hence, today Nepali has become the lingua-franca of Sikkim.

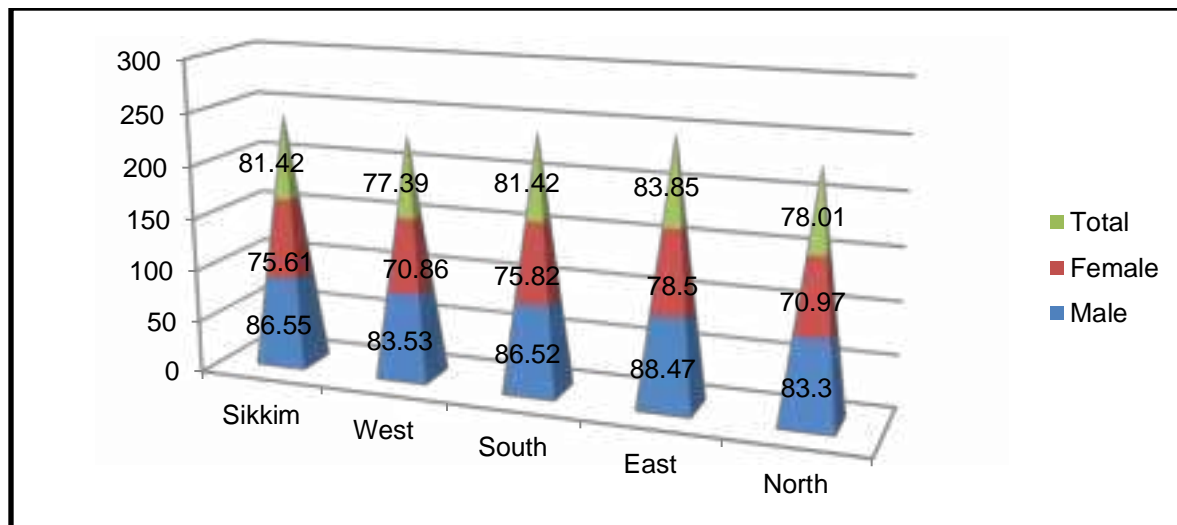
Fig.2.1.9. Linguistic Groups of Sikkim- 2001 Census



Source: Census of Sikkim, 2001.

Educational development in Sikkim started quite late, more after the merger in 1975. In 1971, the literacy rate in Sikkim was only 17.74% when Sikkim had just started as a newly created state. Within four decades there on, the literacy rate increased to 82.20% in 2011. Male literacy stands at 87.29%, while female literacy rate is 76.43%. The literacy rate in 2011 has increased by 20%. In 2001, it was recorded at 68.81%, of which male literacy rate was 77.38% and female rate was 59.63%

Fig. 2.1.10. District-wise and Gender-wise Literacy Rate -2011.



Source: Population Census, India 2011.

Section II

The Bhutia Population of Sikkim

It is understood from history that the actual settlement of Bhutias in Sikkim began from 15th century. According to Maharaja Thutop Namgyal and Maharani Yeshey Dolma Namgyal (1908), the migration of Bhutias took place in various forms and ways. Since the establishment of Bhutia rule in 1642, the Bhutia population has gradually expanded in Sikkim. The migration was also seen during the Chinese influence of Tibet and the escape of the Tibetan religious head, His Holiness Dalai Lama, into India.

Table 2.2.1 Bhutia Population in Sikkim from 1891-2011

Year	Total Population Sikkim	Total Bhutia Population
1891	30,458	4,894
1901	59,014	-
1911	87,920	-
1921	81,721	-
1931	109,808	11,955
1941	121,520	-
1951	137,725	15,626
1961	162,189	49,874 (including Lepchas and Bhutias)
1971	209,843	23,572
1981	316,385	36,308
1991	406,457	50,410
2001	540,851	63,723
2011	610,577	69,598

Source: District Census Handbook, Directorate of Census Operations, Sikkim, 2011 & A.C Sinha, 2008, p 37.

The first ever population census of Sikkim was conducted in 1891. The 1891 census recorded 4894 Bhutia population which increased to 69,598 in 2011. The table shows that there has been substantial growth in the Bhutia population. However, the 1901, 1911, 1921 and 1941 censuses include records of only the general population.

The researcher was unable to explain the reason leading to this non-record of the Bhutia population in the above mentioned census due to the unavailability of recorded facts. It is also worth mentioning here that the growth in the population is not only for Bhutias, but there has been a growth among the other communities as well. The census reports present that overall

population figure underwent a major change eventually. The increase in the state population over the years shows a large margin of difference in the population of Nepalese and the other two communities (Bhutia and Lepcha).

Table 2.2.2. Population of Scheduled Tribes -2001

Name of the Scheduled Tribe	Total population	Proportion to the total ST population %
Bhutia	70,308	63.1
Lepcha	40,568	36.4
All Scheduled Tribes	111,405	100

Source: Census of India, 2001

According to the Census of India, 2001, the total population was 540,851, of which 111,405 (20.6 %) of the population were Scheduled Tribes (STs). Among the ST group, the Bhutia and Lepcha are the two prominent STs in the state.

In 2001, the Bhutia share was 63.1% of the total ST population of the state and the highest numbers of Bhutias are from the East district. The Lepchas, mostly confined to the North district, represent 33.4% of ST population. As per the record, 10.9% of the Bhutias and 4.5% of the Lepchas are in urban areas. Hence, it can be said that a large chunk of Bhutia and Lepcha people are concentrated in the rural areas.

Table 2.2.3. Distribution of Population by Social Group - 2006

Social Group	Person	Percentage to the total population
ST	111618	37.39
SC	19683	6.66
MBC	69867	23.46
OBC	69013	23.20
OTHERS	32671	9.29
STATE	302852	100

Source: State Socio Economic Census, DESME, 2006.

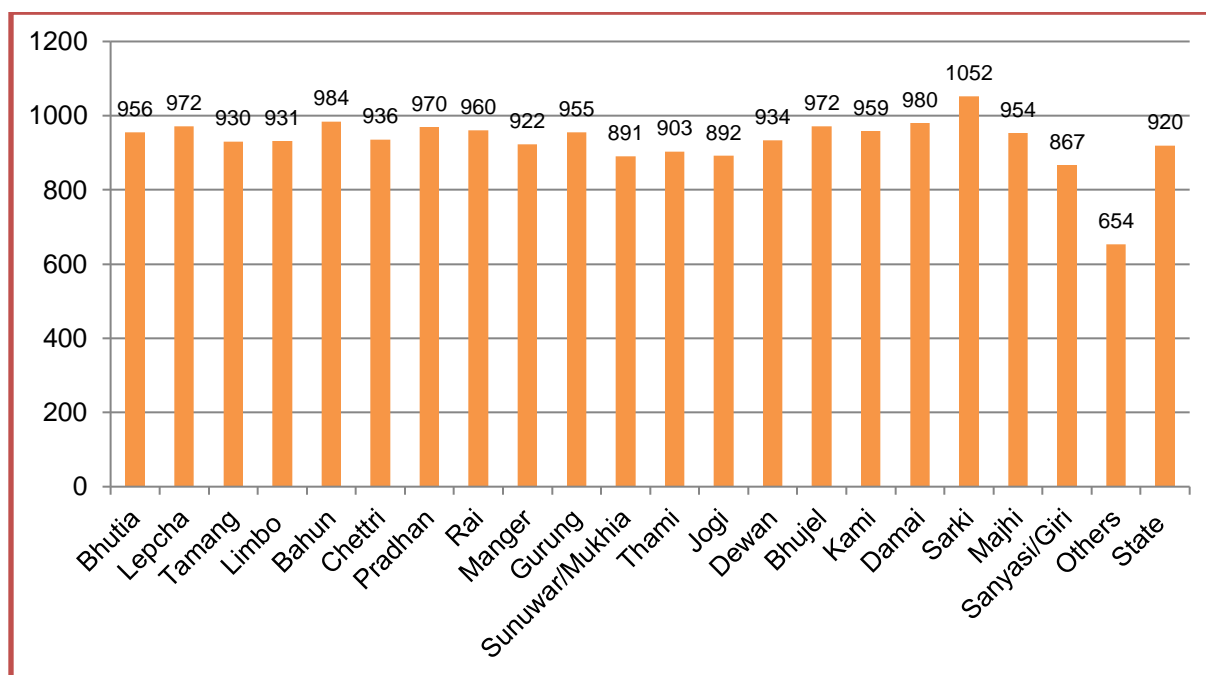
A community-wise population study has only been found for the year 2006. The survey conducted by the Directorate of Economics, Statistics, Monitoring and Evaluation, Government of Sikkim (DESME). There is no such data available before and after 2006. According to the survey, the most populous social group in the state are Scheduled Tribes, with 37.39% of the total population and the lowest is the Scheduled Caste. The Bhutias are included in this group (ST group) along with the Lepchas.

2.2.1. Community-wise Sex Ratio

The distribution of the population by sex ratio is considered as one of the prime factors in demographic groupings. The study on sex ratio finds an important place in demographic study. In the light of this, the present study also takes into account the statistics on sex ratio of the Scheduled Tribe in Sikkim.

The 2001 Census shows that the sex ratio of the ST population was 957. The sex ratio of STs in Sikkim is comparatively lower than the national average for STs, which is 978. In 2001, the sex ratio of the Bhutia population was 966 females per thousand males. The sex ratio of the Lepcha group was 945. The child sex ratio among Bhutia and Lepcha reveals that the Bhutia is slightly lower with 954 than that of Lepcha, which has 979.

Fig.2.2.1. Community-wise Sex Ratio (2006)



Source: State Socio Economic Census, DESME, Govt. of Sikkim, 2006

Population records show that the Bhutia population has increased consistently since their settlement in the 15th century and has become the most dominant group in Sikkim. The Nepalese settlement, since the 19th century has increased and the Bhutias have been outnumbered by them. The Bhutias have been pushed towards the minority group.

In 2006, the State Socio Economic Census under the Directorate of Economic, Statistics, Monitoring and Evaluation (DESME), Government of Sikkim came up with the community wise distribution of the population by house hold size and sex ratio. As per the available data, the entire population is distributed amongst twenty communities.

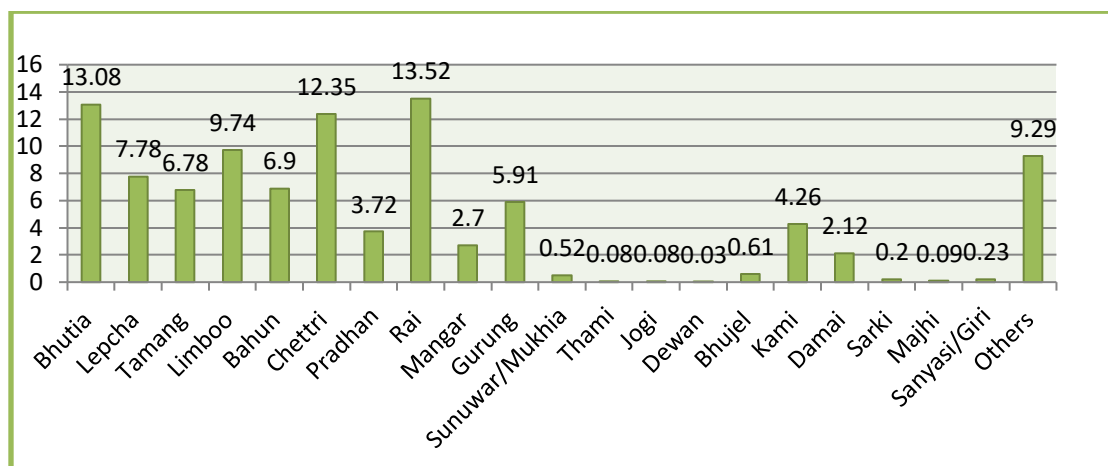
Table 2.2.4.**Community-wise Distribution of Population, Household Size and Sex Ratio, 2006**

Community	Households	Population			HH Size	Sex ratio
		Total	Male	Female		
Bhutia	14769	76070	38891	37179	5.15	956
Lepcha	8041	45239	22945	22294	5.63	972
Tamang	7718	39457	20439	19018	5.11	930
Limbo	10672	56650	29343	27307	5.31	931
Bahun	7680	40110	20213	19897	5.22	984
Chettri	13509	71836	37103	34733	5.32	936
Pradhan	4441	21636	10981	10655	4.87	970
Rai	15430	78651	40122	38529	5.1	960
Manger	3015	15702	8171	7531	5.21	922
Gurung	6489	34344	17570	16774	5.29	955
Sunuwar/Mukhia	595	3042	1609	1433	5.11	891
Thami	92	453	238	215	4.92	903
Jogi	94	490	259	231	5.21	892
Dewan	44	176	91	85	4	934
Bhujel	701	3563	1807	1756	5.08	972
Kami	4715	24767	12640	12127	5.25	959
Damai	2345	12322	6223	6099	5.25	980
Sarki	216	1151	561	590	5.33	1052
Majhi	100	506	259	247	5.06	954
Sanyasi/Giri	263	1337	716	621	5.08	867
Others	10901	54044	32671	21373	4.96	654
State	111830	581546	302852	278694	5.2	920

Source: State Socio Economic Census, DESME, Govt. of Sikkim, 2006

Of the total of 111,830 households in 2006, the Rai community has the highest number of households (15430). The total households of Bhutia group is 14769. The third group is Chhetri with 13509. Bhutias alone make 13.21 % of households in the state. The State Socio Economic Census, 2006 records for 13.08% of the Bhutia population, with male accounting for 12.84% and females accounting for 13.34% of the total population.

Fig.2.2.2. Community-wise Percentage of Distribution of Population in Sikkim, 2006



Source: State Socio Economic Census, DESME, Govt. of Sikkim, 2006

The graph outlines the percentage of population of each community in Sikkim. Rai from the Nepalese group has the highest share with 13.52%, Bhutias are after Rai with 13.08% population. Lepchas who are the original inhabitants comprise of only 7.78% of the total population. This community has always been in minority since the arrival of Bhutias in Sikkim. Limboo and Tamang are the two other ethnic communities which has much higher number than other Nepali communities of Sikkim. The Limboos and Tamangs comprises of 9.74% and 6.78% of total population respectively. Excluding Bhutia, Lepcha, Limboo and Tamang groups, the Nepalese make 62.12% of population in the state.

The Socio- economic survey, DESME, 2006⁶ projects district wise distribution of Bhutia community in the state. It is noted that the East district comprises of the highest number, followed by South district, North district and then West district.

Table.2.2.5. District-wise Distribution of Bhutia Community, 2006

District	Bhutia population	Male	Female	Percentage %	Sex ratio
North	9221	4717	4504	13.42	955
East	37818	19404	18414	55.03	949
South	14177	7255	6922	20.61	954
West	7500	3787	3713	10.9	980
Total	68716	35163	33553	100	

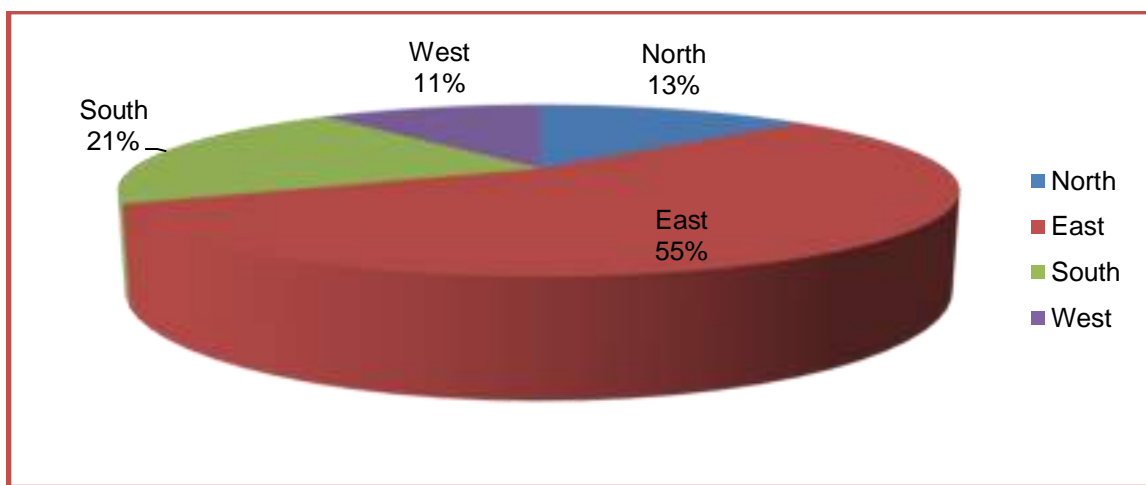
Source: DESME: State Socio Economic Census, Govt. of Sikkim, 2006

⁶ State Socio Economic Census of 2006 under Directorate of Economic, Statistics Monitoring and Evaluation, Government of Sikkim (DESME) is the only document available with community-wise recorded data of Sikkim.

The total Bhutia population in Sikkim as of 2006 is 68716, where the total male population consists of 35163 (51%) and 33553 (49%) of the female population. In all the districts, male population is higher than the females. The same picture exists in the state as a whole, where the male population surpasses the female population in terms of demographic profile.

The majority of the Bhutia population (55.3%) is settled in the East district. Since Gangtok, is the state capital, in the East district, more people are concentrated in this part of Sikkim. The Bhutias of the East, South and West districts have settlements along with the other communities, but North district has the habitations of mostly Bhutias and Lepchas.

Fig.2.2.3. District-wise Distribution of Bhutia Community, 2006



Source: DESME: State Socio Economic Census, Govt. of Sikkim, 2006

2.2.2. Age-wise Distribution of Bhutia Population in Sikkim

The demographic shift can be best revealed by the study of the age group of the population. The age distribution of the Bhutia population shows that most of the Bhutia population is over the age of 60 which is not good for the community. It shows that the overall birth rate among the community is pretty low. The percentage of the Bhutia population within the age of one to twenty, as per the 2006 socio-economic census, shows that it is the lowest with less than 15 percent. The illustration given in table 2.2.6 depicts the community with the least number.

Table 2.2.6. Percentage Distribution of Bhutia Population by Age Group in Sikkim, 2006

Total Population	0-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	60-64	65-69	70-74	75 Above	Not reported
13.08	10.92	11.59	12.63	12.94	12.88	13.60	14.04	14.27	13.51	13.72	13.94	13.81	15.14	15.45	15.77	16.96	15.15

Source: DESME, State socio-economic status census, 2006

It is evident that the population is higher in the age group of 60 and above. The highest percentage of the population is seen within the age group of 75 and above. The census of 2011 also gives the impression that the Bhutia population has decreased over the decade. It enumerates that total Bhutia population is 69598, as against 70308 in 2001.

According to the Census 2011, the highest number of Bhutias are concentrated in the East district, with 34043 people, followed by South district with 15482 people, West with 13779 people and North district is the least Bhutia populated district with only 9184 people. Detailed data regarding the community as per the Census of 2011 is given below in Table 2.2.7.

Table.2.2.7 District-wise Distribution of Bhutia Population in Sikkim, 2011

District	Sikkim					Bhutia				
	Rural		Urban		Total	Rural		Urban		Total
	Male	Female	Male	Female		Male	Female	Male	Female	
Total	242797 (39.76)	214202 (35.08)	80273 (13.14)	73305 (12.01)	610577 (100)	26127 (4.28)	24729 (4.05)	9097 (1.49)	9645 (1.58)	69598 (11.38)
North	22274 (50.96)	16791 (39.41)	2456 (5.62)	2188 (5.01)	43709 (100)	4082 (9.33)	3889 (8.89)	815 (1.86)	398 (0.9)	9184 (21.01)
South	65848 (44.84)	59803 (40.72)	10822 (7.36)	10377 (7.06)	146850 (100)	7330 (4.99)	6475 (4.4)	813 (0.5)	864 (0.58)	15482 (10.54)
West	67528 (49.49)	63659 (46.66)	2710 (1.98)	2538 (1.86)	136435 (100)	6433 (4.71)	6526 (4.78)	407 (0.29)	413 (0.3)	13779 (10.1)
East	87147 (30.73)	73949 (26.08)	64285 (22.67)	58202 (20.52)	283583 (100)	9493 (3.34)	9120 (3.22)	7479 (2.63)	7951 (2.8)	34043 (12.0)

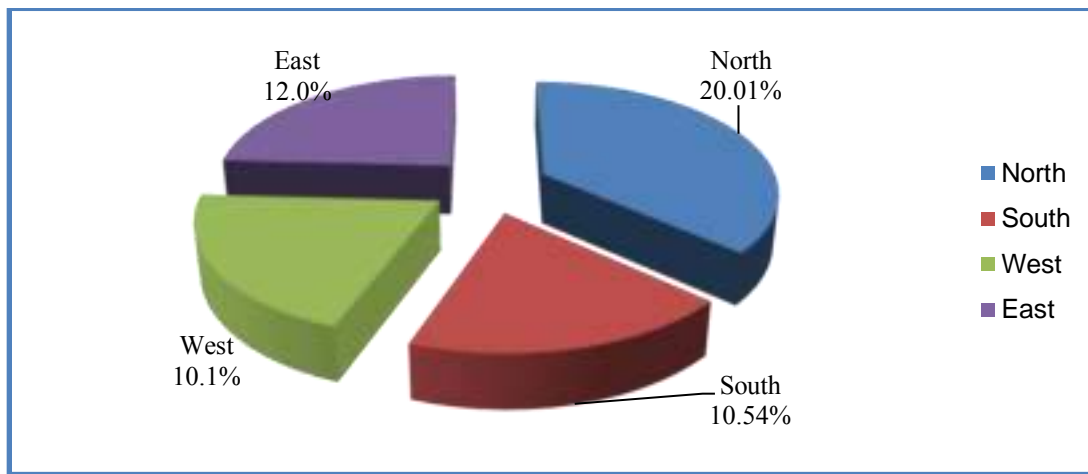
Source: Census of India, 2011 *Figure in the bracket is in percentage.

Table 2.2.7 supports the contention that all the districts have a higher number of population living in rural areas. In rural areas, the number of males is higher than the number of females. The urban statistics show that among the four districts, the female population has outnumbered

the male population in three districts, and only in North district, the male population was found to be higher than the females. The female Bhutia population living in the urban areas is 9645 and that of male is 9097.

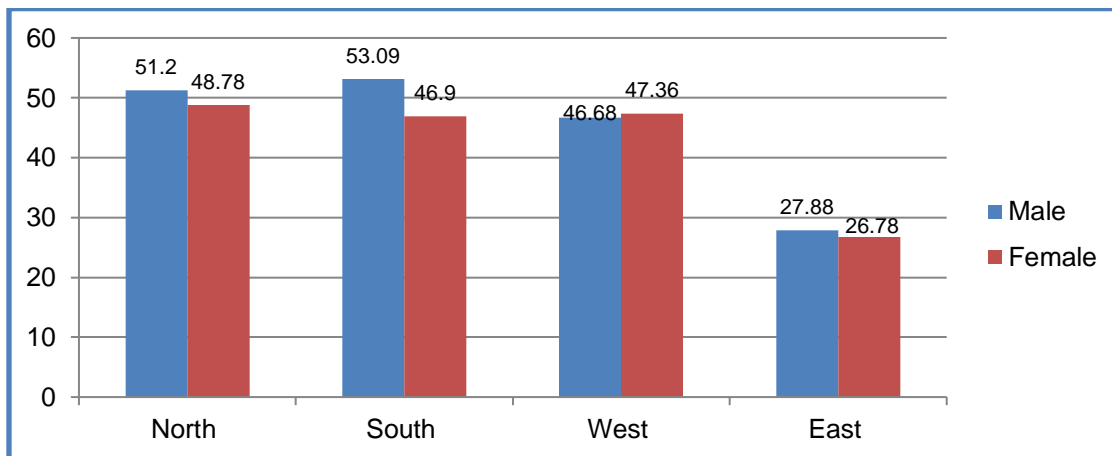
According to 2011 Census, Bhutias represent 11.38% in Sikkim, which is a decrease from 13.08% in 2001. The North district holds the highest population of 21.01%, followed by East, West and South districts with 12.0%, 10.1% and 10.54%, respectively.

Fig. 2.2.4. District-wise Bhutia Population, 2011



Source: Census of India, 2011

Fig. 2.2.5. Rural Population (Bhutia), 2011



Source: Census of India, 2011

The concluding thought on the demographic status of Sikkim may be outlined by the fact that Sikkim is a small state with minimal number of populace in India. Sikkim witnesses an increase of 1.23% in its population on yearly basis. Population of Sikkim has grown by 12.31% in the last 10 years. In the last 60 years, there has been steady growth in the population of Sikkim. Among the population, the Bhutias were the dominant group in Sikkim. A cursory look at the Bhutia

population gives us the picture that Bhutia settlement in Sikkim flourished and maintained their dominance amongst the other communities till 1975.

The Bhutias were approximately 4894 in 1891, which has increased to 69598 in 2011. It is obvious that the numbers of Bhutias have increased in every census. This chapter therefore, gives an idea about their numerical position vis-à-vis the other communities of Sikkim.

The share of the Bhutia community has come down to 11.38% of the total population of Sikkim. They occupy the second position among all the communities of Sikkim taken separately. The North district is basically inhabited by them and the Lepchas, while they are found in all the three districts of Sikkim living along with the people of other communities. The majority of the Bhutias live in rural areas, but a considerable number of them live in Gangtok also.

CHAPTER III

A Short History of Sikkim and Status of Bhutias in Pre-merger Period

Section I

A Short History of Sikkim

Before the process of state formation, most parts of Sikkim were barren land. Politically speaking, Sikkim had no identification as a country or a state until 1642. Sikkim was more known as a hidden land where there was no settled government or political unit to rule the people. A number of petty kings and chiefs ruled over Sikkim, mainly belonging to the Lepchas and Tsongs (Limboos). The name Sikkim was given after the establishment of the Bhutia kingdom. Initially, the Lepchas called it *Mayel* and later called it as *Ronjong*, while the Limboos called it *Yoksom*, which means a fort or a fortified place and it was called *Denzong* by the Bhutias. *Suk khim* (now Sikkim) was the name given by the Limbooni queen Thunwamukma, wife of Chogyal Tensung Namgyal, the second Maharaja of Namgyal Dynasty. Sikkim means ‘a new home or place’ and later it was called Sikkim (Namgyal & Dolma, 1908, p. 27).

Historians like J.R Subba (2011), S. A Rahman (2006) stress that ethnic groups like Lepchas, Limboos and Mangars were present in Sikkim before the migrant Bhutias. The Lepchas are the earliest aboriginal inhabitants who called themselves *Mutanchi Rong Kup Rum Kup* or *Rong* in short, which means the ‘Son of the Snowy’ peak or the son of the God (D.C Roy, 2012, p. 1). The name Lepcha is derived from the Nepali word *Lapche* which means ‘vile speaker’. They are called *Mon* by the Tibetans and *Meri* by the Bhutanese. The Limboos are called by various names like Limbus, *Yakthumbas* or *Tsongs*, who are also identified as the descendants of ancient Kiratas from Limbuwan, the land of the Limboos in Nepal (Subba, 2011, p. 297). Though the word ‘Limbu’ was used by the Gorkha rulers of Nepal only in 1774, Limbus were living in Sikkim even before Sikkim was created in 1642.

Along with the Lepchas and the Limboos, the Magars, were the earlier settlers of pre-established Sikkim. History says that the Magar Kiing Santanu Sen, also called Santu Pati Sen, resented the Bhutia establishment and supremacy in Sikkim (Subba, 2011, p.5).

From the historical perspective, the formation of Sikkim as a kingdom began with the consecration of Phuntsog Namgyal as the first king or Chogyal, meaning Dharma Raja and the establishment of the Bhutia rule in the name of Namgyal dynasty in 1642. Bhutia here means the migrated Tibetan people who settled in Sikkim. Once they started settling in Sikkim and established their rule, they considered themselves to be Bhutias and not Tibetans.

As the mythology goes, Sikkim is a hidden land as prophesied by Guru Padmasambhava,⁷ the three lamas travelling from three different directions would meet at the place called Yoksum, which is situated in west Sikkim, for the purpose of consecrating the first Dharma Raja of Sikkim. Yoksum in Lepcha means “Three *Lamas*”, *Yok-* meaning *Lama* and *Sum* meaning three. With the coronation of Phuntsog Namgyal by the three *lamas*; *Gyalwa Lhatsun Namkha Namgyal Jigmed Chempo*,⁸ *Kathog Kuntu Zangpo* and *Nga- Dag Sempa Phunsog Ringzing* in 1642 began the long established Bhutia rule in Sikkim, which lasted for 333 years.

According to historians, the Bhutias migrated from Tibet to Sikkim much before the 16th century. The study on the migration of Tibetans and their settlement reveals that Tibetans migrated to Sikkim and other parts of India, as a result of the defeat of the Red Hat Sect (followers of *Nyingma-pa*) at the hands of the Yellow Hat Sect (followers of *Geluk-pa*) in Tibet in a religious strife (Gurung, 2011, p. 32).⁹ *Tsonkapa's Gelukpa* sect, founded in the fifteenth century, had become predominantly both religious and political spheres. The *Gelukpa* sect were the followers of the Grand Lama, the fifth Dalai Lama (Kotturan, 1983, p. 29). When the Dalai *Lama* became

⁷ Guru Padmasambhava, popularly known as Guru Rinpoche is considered as the founder of Lamaism. Prior to the advent of Buddhism in Tibet in 7th century A.D, the religion that Tibet followed was Bon religion, a kind of shamanism. The dawn of Buddhism began during the reign of king Srong-tsan-gampo who ruled Tibet in and around 7th century. However, Buddhism could not flourish much after the death of Sron-tsang-gampo and when Buddhism was soon wiped-out by local Bonpa priests. Again Buddhism got revived during the reign of king Thi-sron-detsan who reigned from 740-786 A.D could firmly establish its foothold in Tibet. He built the first Buddhist monastery in Tibet namely Samye monastery and also many Sanskrit scriptures were translated into Tibetan. It was in the connection to the building of the Samye monastery that Guru Rinpoche or Guru Padmasambhava, a great wizard priest visited Tibet. The king Thi-Sron-Detsan invited Guru Padmasambhava to control the distractions put by the demons in building of the Samye monastery in 747 A.D (Waddell, 2004). A reputed sorcerer, Guru Padmasambhava, with his Vajra or thunderbolt subdued the demons and the construction of Samye monastery was completed in 749 A.D. Thereafter Lamaism became firmly rooted in Tibet under the patronage of king Thi-Sron-Detsan and his successors. It is believed that after establishing the first order of monk in Tibet Guru Rinpoche travelled to different parts of Eastern Himalayas like Bhutan, Sikkim, Ladakh for the purpose of spreading Lamaism.

⁸ Gyalwa Lhatsun Namkha Namgyal JigmedChempo (1595-1650) was the founder of the Zog-chen sect of Mahayan Buddhism in Sikkim. He is credited with the formation of Sikkimese State in traditional histories. Kathog Kuntu Zangpo was the second pioneer lama and the high priest of the Nyingma Monastery of Kathog Dorjenden. Nga- Dag Sempa Phunsog Ringzing (1592-1656) was the third lama who consecrated the first Chogyal of Sikkim.

⁹ It was reformed into various sects like Nyingmapa (older or unreformed sect), Kadampa (reformed sect) ‘Kargyudpa (semi-reformed sect), Sakyapa (semi-reformed sect) and the Gelukpa (reformed sect).

both spiritual and temporal head of Tibet, great discontent arose among the older Red Hat sect, which was inclined towards a simpler way of life. Persecution of the *lamas* of the Red Hat Sect came under the newer sects. At this point of religious rebellion, the *lamas* belonging to the Red Hat Sect fled from Tibet towards the southern direction. Most of them fled towards Sikkim and Bhutan and sought refuge. This is how the actual migration of Bhutias started in Sikkim and the subsequent era of Bhutias in Sikkim.

The history of Sikkim spells out that since its very inception, the social structure of Sikkim was invariably based on the Buddhist structure of Tibetan society. The Bhutias being originally Tibetans and inclined towards Tibetan culture and traditions, the political and administration set up in Sikkim under the Namgyal dynasty was based on the system of *Lugs gnyis* of Tibet. This state theory of *Lugs gnyis* explains the religion-political theory of state and society, in which both religion and politics are complementary to each other and dependent on state policies (Subba, 2011, p. 59). Basing on this structure, Chogyal Phunsog Namgyal selected twenty-four heads: twelve heads representing Bhutias as *Kahlons* (ministers) and twelve heads representing Lepchas as *Jongs* or castles.

Many factors stand responsible for the adaptation of the Tibetan structure in the formation of Sikkim's state structure. First, the founder of Namgyal dynasty in Sikkim has his originality in Tibet as one who was also consecrated by the Tibetan monks prophesied by Guru Padma Sambhava. Second, the geographical location of Sikkim also put it under the influence of its immediate neighbouring countries. Nestling between Bhutan, Tibet and Nepal, Sikkim was influenced by these nations. During the course of its historical and political development, the closest relation that Sikkim had was with Tibet. Almost all the legacies that the Bhutias carried were those of Tibet. Tibetan culture, tradition, societal setup, religion, politics and language were brought to Sikkim by them. However, these underwent some changes with time and one finds some difference in the aspects of culture, tradition, religion and language of the Tibetans and the Sikkimese Bhutias as these stand today. Third, the Chogyals of Sikkim always sought help and shelter from Tibet during times of external threats. Time and again Chogyal Chakdor Namgyal, (1708) fled and took refuge in Tibet. In 1788-89, Chogyal Tenzing Namgyal also fled to Lhasa with his queen when Gorkha attacked Sikkim at Rabdentse palace. Whenever the kingdom was endangered by military threats, Sikkim was supported by Tibet by providing shelter to the Chogyal and assisting with military support. Sikkim has always pledged to look upon Tibet for

its immediate support and help.

As for the historical background of state formation of Sikkim, history says that Tibetan Prince, *Guru Tashe*, was foretold to proceed to *Denzong*, meaning Sikkim, which means “Valley of rice” in Bhutia and *Demozong* in Bhutnese. *Guru Tashe* had three sons: the eldest son *Jo-Khye-Bumsa*, was known as superior, with the power of ten thousand horses. He was married to *Gurumo*, the daughter of Sakya ruler and settled in Chumbi Valley, then a part of Sikkim. *Khye-Bumsa* is recognised as an important figure in the history of Bhutia kingdom in Sikkim. The rulers of Namgyal dynasty are the lineage of *Khye-Bumsa*. The majority of historical discussion on *Khe-Bumsa* assumes that they were childless. They were advised to visit the Lepcha spiritual head, *Thekong Tek* and his wife, *Neylong Nyel*, in Sikkim to seek their blessings. Coming to Sikkim and meeting the Lepcha spiritual head, he got solicited with the blessing for sons and returned back to Chumbi valley. There in Chumbi, three sons were born to *Khe-Bumsa* and his wife; *Kay-boRab*, *Mi-tponRab* and *Lhag-moRab* (Namgyal and Doma, 1908, p. 14-16).

Khey Bumsa paid a second visit to Sikkim to express his gratitude for being blessed with three sons. He met *Thekong Tek*, with whom he concluded the blood- brotherhood treaty with the Lepchas at *Kabi*.¹⁰ The blood-brotherhood treaty was concluded with a ceremony where several animals were sacrificed to the local deities as a witness of the Lepcha-Bhutia bond of friendship (Subba, 2011, p.12-13). However, Saul Mullard (2005, p.72) states that coming of *Khey Bumsa* to Sikkim and the story of the existence of *Thekong Tek* is a folk history and there is uncertainty in the story which requires more clarification.

Of the four sons born from the second son of *Khye Bumsa*, *Mi-tponRab*'s youngest son *Guru Tashe* became more influential among the four brothers who received the dignity that of a ruler. *Zhal-nga A-Phag* was the son of *Guru Tashe*. From *Zhal-nga A-Phag*, *Guru Tenzing* was born. Phuntsog Namgyal, the first Chogyal of Sikkim was the son of *Guru Tenzing*. Phuntsog Namgyal was born in Gangtok in 1604. *Guru Tashe*'s family became more dominant and flourishing among their people. This is why the *Rongs* or Lepchas came under their supremacy (Namgyal and Doma, 1908, p.22-23). As a result, referring to the source, we can conclude that

¹⁰ The Blood Brotherhood treaty was signed in the 13th Century and the place has been identified and protected as the sacred place at *Kabi Lungchok*, North Sikkim.

the Lepchas were appointed in the services of the Bhutias¹¹ since then.

As per the prophesy of Guru Rimpoche, the three Tibetan lamas of the Red Hat Sect, namely *Lha-tsum Nam-kha Jig-med*, *Nga-dag Sempa Phunsog Ringzing* and *Kathog Rigdzin Kuntu Zangpo*¹², consecrated Phuntsog Namgyal as the king of Sikkim in 1642 at Yoksum. Many historians see that the consecration of Phuntsog Namgyal's consecration as the extension of the Tibetan dominance in Sikkim.

Though the coming of *Khye Bumsa* to Sikkim to pay a visit to *Thekong Tek*, the Lepcha head is believed to be folk history, the detailed account of the visit spells out that the Lepchas were the existing group in Sikkim prior to the arrival of Bhutias and their settlement. The works of Dharnidhar Dahal (1984, p .24) and Subba, (2011, p 11) clearly stated that the Lepchas, Limboos and Magars living in Sikkim opposed the establishment of Namgyal (Bhutia) dynasty in Sikkim. The ethnic groups resented against the Bhutia supremacy but were defeated and ultimately came under their influence. The mention and reference of treaty of brotherhood '*Lho- Men- Tsong*', between the three ethnic groups; Lepcha, Bhutia and Limboo by the historians is also an evidence to the existence of other groups in Sikkim prior to Bhutia rule. The mention of the first Chogyal's encounters with the Lepcha Chieftans, Magar kings and Limboo kings by historians like Jas Raj Subba in his studies, provides information on the prevalence of other tribes before the migrant Bhutias. Subba states that Limboos confronted acceptance of Namgyal dynasty as the rulers of Sikkim. They fought against the Bhutias, who were well equipped with swords and guns, but lost the war. Similarly, the Magar king, Santusati Sen of Mangarjong of Mangsari, West Sikkim fought against the establishment of the Bhutia rule. The Magar king, not being able to defeat the Bhutias, sought help from the Limboo king of Lunchok in West Sikkim. Eventually, the Bhutias were successful in establishing their hold and influence (Namgyal and Doma, 1908,

¹¹ The Lepchas who proved to be trustworthy were appointed in the household establishments and in other responsible works in the state. Those Lepchas who served the Bhutia Chief were called the ministerial Lepchas or 'Monpos'. The Lepchas who could not win the trust of the Bhutia chief were employed as traders (to carry goods and grains to any market for trade and barter). These lot of Lepchas were called Tsong-sKyelMonpas.

¹² Lha-tsum Nam-kha Jig-med (1595-1650) was the founder of Zog-chen sect of Mahayana Buddhism in Sikkim. He was basically from sByaryul province of southern Tibet. On the request of one of his Principal teacher's, Jatshonsnying po came to Sikkim with fifteen of his followers. Nga-dag Sempa Phunsog Ringzing (1592-1656) belonged to a place called Sag Khrimkhar in western Tibet. As per the prophetic tradition of the Nyingmapa school, he came to Sikkim with his son. Both Lha-tsum Nam-kha Jig-med and Kathog Rigdzin Kuntu Zangpo belonged to a family of nobility in Tibet. Kathog Rigdzin Kuntu Zangpo was the high priest of Nyingma Monastery of Kathog Dorjeden belonging to a Vajrayana sect.

p.23 and Subba, 2011, p 17). The most interesting event that took place after the coronation of Phuntsok Namgyal was the recognition as the ruler of southern slopes through letter and silk scarf received as a token of felicitations from the His Holiness the Dalai Lama of Tibet. The Bhutias originally belonged to Tibet and had a great bond towards Tibet. However, this occasion made the Bhutias more support-seeking from Tibet in times of trouble too (Namgyal and Dolma, 1908, p. 23). After the consecration as Chogyal (Dharma Raja) in 1642, Phuntsok Namgyal's first and foremost task was the consolidation of the land resources of all the communities of Sikkim into one and the making of 'Greater Sikkim'. Through the tripartite agreement mentioned above, the three communities agreed to integrate under one government and abide by one order. Thus, the agreement was signed by a total of 24 leaders belonging to three communities, where four were Lepchas, eight were Bhutias and the Limboos had the largest number, with 12 leaders signing the treaty in 1642.

Yuksom in West Sikkim, as the first capital created by the tripartite treaty, extended from the Bhutia dominated areas of Chumbi valley, the Lepcha dominated areas of most of the present Sikkim with the Hah Chu Valley and Amdo Valley, which are now part of Bhutan and also Ilam, now part of Nepal and the third area was the Limboo dominated areas of present West Sikkim and Limbuwan (Subba, 1999, p. 13-20, 126-128). The country ruled by the first Chogyal extended to Thang-la, beyond Phari (Tibet) in the north, Tagong-la, near Paro in Bhutan in the east, Titalia, in the south (near the borders of Bihar and Bengal in India) and towards Timar Chorten, on the banks of the River Timar in Nepal in the west.

The second foremost task undertaken by the Chogyal Phungsok Namgyal was the establishment of the administrative structure of the new kingdom. For the purpose of administration, the country was divided into 12 *dzongs* (districts) each being headed by a *Dzongpon* (governor). All *Dzongpon's* were Lepchas, belonging to high positioned Lepcha families. There existed a council of administration, comprising of 12 ministers altogether (Joshi, 2004, p. 79). From this it becomes clear that the Limboos did not occupy any administrative posts in the country, though they were the third group to sign and complete the tripartite agreement for formation of 'Greater Sikkim'. Apart from the formation of 'Greater Sikkim' and the establishment of an administrative system, a new palace for the Chogyal was built at *Tashi Temka* at Yuksom and *Nga-dag Sempa* built the *Lhahang* which is also called Red Temple and *Kathog* monastery by *Kathog Rigdzin Kuntu Zangpo* in 1643 (Subba, 2011,p. 27).

The first Chogyal's reign ended in the year 1670. He was succeeded by his only son, Tensung Namgyal, as the second Chogyal of Sikkim. Born in the year 1644, Chogyal Tensung Namgyal began his rule from 1670. The first achievement of the Chogyal was the building of a new palace at Rabdentse in West Sikkim and shifting the capital from Yuksom to Rabdentse. He did this on the suggestion received from *Lha-tsum Chempo*, who was still living then. Tensung Namgyal was married to three wives. Numbe Ongmu, a Bhutanese woman, was his first wife who bore a daughter named Pende Ongmu, who later claimed to be heir to the throne. Debasam-serpa, a Tibetan was Tensung Namgyal's second wife who bore him a son named Chakdor and the third wife was a Limboo, the daughter of a Limbu Chief of Arun Valley in West Sikkim of Greater Sikkim (now Nepal). From her, Chogyal Tensung Namgyal had two children, a son named Shalngo-Guru and a daughter, Pende Tshering Gyemu. Nothing of much significance had happened during his reign (Namgyal & Dolma, 1908, p. 24).

He was succeeded by Chakdor Namgyal, who was born in 1686 and ascended the throne 1700 at the age of 14. Pende Ongmu, his eldest sister, challenged the accession claiming that being the first child of Tensung Namgyal she had the first right to the throne. Pende Ongmu having failed to take the throne, conspired against the Chogyal and concluded an alliance with the Bhutanese force to invade Sikkim and help her assassinate her brother. However, Chogyal Chakdor Namgyal was rescued and fled to Lhasa, Tibet by the way of Illam and Limboo Country Wallung with the help of his loyal councillor, Yugthing Teshe. After reaching Lhasa, he took refuge under the sixth Dalai Lama, Gyalwa Tsang-yang Gyamtso and the Regent, Gyalpo-Lha-bZang. He studied Buddhist texts and Tibetan writings in Lhasa. Eventually, he became the official astrologer for the sixth Dalai Lama in Tibet. He received many recognitions from both Tibetan and Chinese governments. He was accorded with dignity of the *Thajjee*¹³ and rewards of landed estates (Padi-jong, Nagartsejong, Tinkejong and Gyalkharmangpa) in Central Tibet for his services to the Dalai Lama (Namgyal & Dolma, 1908, p. 24-25).

Back in Sikkim, the Bhutanese forces under Deb Raja entered Sikkim and captured the Rabdentse palace. Perhaps this was the first invasion Sikkim received after the creation of Greater Sikkim. After Chakdor Namgyal's flight, the palace was taken care of by Yugthing

¹³ Thajjee-His property was later inherited by his successors. The landed estate of Chakdor Namgyal in Tibet was reacquired by the Tibetans during the time of Tsugphud Namgyal, the seventh Chogyal of Sikkim.

Aroop, son of the counsilar, Yugthing Teshe, the Lepcha man who helped Chogyal in his escape to Tibet. He was arrested and sent to Bhutan to Deb Raja called Sayshing, for punishment. Rabdentse Palace came under the control of Tabar Nga-wang Thinley and Don Phenlay and was kept under their control for eight long years. When the sixth Dalai Lama died in 1707, Chakdor Namgyal made his way towards Sikkim after many long years. He returned with wife, from U, princess of the Lowo Raja. To make Chakdor Namgyal's return safe in Sikkim, the Tibetan government requested through a letter to the Bhutanese government to withdraw its forces and evacuate the Capital of Sikkim. The Bhutanese did as requested, but the forces that had camped at east Teesta maintained their position at Fort Dumsong (Sikkim Gazette, 1894, pp. 12-13). However, Chakdor Namgyal reoccupied the Rabdentse palace. During Chakdor Namgyal's reign Pemayangtse monastery was constructed, which is one of the premier monasteries in Sikkim. The reign of Chakdor Namgyal did not last long as he was murdered by his own *amji* (traditional Tibetan medicinal healer) at Ralong hot spring. It is said that Pende Ongmu had a hand in it to settle her old grievance but she also had to face the penalty of death for killing her brother, on the same day Chakdor Namgyal was killed.

Chakdor Namgyal was succeeded by his son Gyurmed Namgyal, as the fourth raja in 1717. His reign did not last long. In 1734, Chogyal Gyurmed Namgyal became seriously ill. Since he did not have good relation with his wife from Tibet, he was left with no child to continue his lineage. On his death bed, he admitted that a nun of Sanga-Cholling, daughter of Nyer Gaden of Tagchung- Dar caste, was conceived with his child. The name of this son, the heir to the throne was Namgyal Phuntshog.

Born in 1733, Namgyal Phuntshog became the fifth Chogyal of Sikkim. There arose some discontent regarding the legitimacy of Namgyal Phuntsog as the real heir of the throne and *Dzongpons* (governors), particularly Chandzod Tamding refused to accept him as the Chogyal. Assuming all powers, he appointed himself as the *Gyalpo* and ruled Sikkim for three years, from 1738 to 1741. Another group led by Chandzod Karwang, the Lepchas, a loyal supporter of Gymurmed Namgyal, acknowledged Namgyal Phuntshog as the heir of Gymurmed Namgyal. Hence, the self-appointed *Gyalpo* Tamding was forced to leave the throne and Sikkim. He fled to Lhasa and sought help from the Tibetans to reinstate him as the ruler of Sikkim. The Tibetan government agreed to assist and deputed Rabden Sherpa Gyalpo as the Regent to Sikkim. Immediately, Rabden Sherpa Gyalpo restored security in Sikkim and made a few major changes

during his stay in Sikkim. The system of annual taxation and a fixed system of revenue such as *Bahpa*, *Zolung*, a tax on forest produce and *Tshong-skyed*, a system of income tax was introduced for the first time in Sikkim (Subba, 2011 p. 31).

Namgyal Phuntshog faced a number of invasions by Bhutan, Nepal and Limboos (Tsongs). Deb Raja of Bhutan conspired a plan with the Mangars but was suppressed. Again in 1752, the Tsongs posed an uprising against the Chogyal which was also suppressed by Chandzod Karwang. Consequently, the Gurkhas under Raja Prithivi Narayan Shah of Nepal posed a rebel against Sikkim the following year. This was settled by concluding a treaty with Nepal in 1755 which established a new Nepal-Sikkim boundary line at Sango chu, Sangdidzong, Mallayang and Lhachu. The Gurkhas, notwithstanding the treaty, occupied Elam and Topzong in western Sikkim and proceeded further into Sikkim. Bhutan made its second invasion in 1772. This time the issue was settled by negotiation at Rhenock in east Sikkim, which urged the Bhutanese to withdraw from Sikkim.

Namgyal Phuntshog had three marriages, of which the third wife, daughter of Deba Shamshed Khiti Phukpa, bore him a son as the next heir of Sikkim. The sixth Chogyal was Tenzing Namgyal (1769-1793), who ascended the throne in 1780. He married Anyo Gyelum, a daughter of Changzod Karwang.

Continuous confrontations with Nepal took place after Tenzing Namgyal started ruling. Nepal's attack was thwarted by Chandzod Chothup, brother of Maharani Anyo Gyelum and son of Chandzod Karwang, along with his colleague DebaTakarpo and drove the Gurkhas from Elam. History says that the Sikkimese forces actually entered as far as Chainpore in Nepal. Eventually, Sikkim was defeated in the battle near Bilungjong in 1787 due to the death of DebaTakarpo and hence, Chandzod Chothup withdrew his force from the battle. The war did not end here. The Gurkhas again attacked Sikkim in 1788-89 under the Gurkha General Jahar Singh. This time the Gurkhas captured Rabdentse palace, causing Chogyal Tenzing Namgyal to flee with his wife and son to Lhasa in Tibet for shelter. Meanwhile, in Sikkim, the Gurkha invaders were pursued by Chandzod Chothup and his troops.

The reign of Tenzing Namgyal ended in 1793. He died in Lhasa and his son, Tsughnud Namgyal, came back to Sikkim and ascended the throne in Rabdentse palace as the seventh

Chogyal. Born in 1785, he ruled from 1790 to 1864.

During his reign, Sikkim's political scenario underwent a wave of change. First and foremost, was the advent of Britishers. In those years, the Britishers had established their paramountcy over India and were in the verge of extending their influence towards the Himalayas. Their journey to the Himalayas was not political in nature but was interested in the establishment of trade route to Lhasa in Tibet and then towards Peking in China through Sikkim. In 1814-15, the Anglo-Nepali war broke out in which Sikkim took the side of Britishers. Together, Sikkim and British fought against the Gurkhas at Nagri Jong fort. The Gurkhas were defeated and treaties of Sugouli (1815) and Titalia (1817) restored the boundary between Sikkim and Nepal. The treaty established the eastern and western boundaries of Sikkim (Risley, 1894, p.18-19).

Chogyal Tsughnud Namgyal engaged in building a palace at Tumlong, North Sikkim in 1814, as frequent wars with Nepal posed danger to Rabdentse palace, as it was situated in the western part of Sikkim and in close proximity to Nepal and too far from Tibet. Eventually, the capital of Sikkim was shifted from Rabdentse to Tumlong as the third capital of Sikkim. A disagreement arose between the Chogyal and his Chief Minister Chandzod Bolot, with regard to the shifting of capital from Rabdentse to Tumlong. The problem, however, got dissolved for the moment as Chief Minister and his family were assassinated in 1826. Sensing a threat to their lives, Bolot's loyal supporters, the Kotapas, fled to Unthoo in Nepal with 800 Lepcha tribesmen. However, this did not end the problem here. A dispute erupted along the borders of Sikkim and Nepal. In this context, in 1828, Captain Lloyd, a British officer was sent to Sikkim by the British East India Company to study the situation and report on the events. On their expedition to Sikkim, Captain Lloyd was accompanied by Mr. J.W. Grant.

In course of their visit to Sikkim, their interest fell on the Darjeeling hills and they started negotiations for its transfer in 1834-35. The deal supported Sikkim with military assistance to curb the Kotapas incursion supported by Nepal in the Terai region. Sikkim needed to end this at the earliest and the British took this opportunity. A deed of grant for cession of Darjeeling was signed between Tsughpud Namgyal and the British in February 1835. The British agreed to pay Rs. 3000 on a yearly basis as compensation for the cession of Darjeeling from the year 1841. Later, the grant was increased to Rs. 6000. The grant came to a stop in 1849 when Dr. Hooker and Dr. Campbell, while travelling to Sikkim with prior permission of the Chogyal were taken as

prisoners because they had crossed the boundary which they were not supposed to do (Risley, 1894, p. 20, Namgyal & Dolma, 1908, p.66 and Kotturan, 1983, p.61). In course of time, Darjeeling developed into an attractive hill city of international reputation with plantations all around it. The Chogyal had not been able to foresee this.

Tsugphud Namgyal died in 1863 and was succeeded by his eldest son Sidkeong Namgyal. (The eldest son from the second wife of Tsugphud Namgyal). Sidkeong Namgyal was the eighth Chogyal of Sikkim. The first thing that happened in his time was that the grant from British as a rent for Darjeeling was restored in 1862. As Chogyal Sidkeong Namgyal died in April 1874, not much events could take place under his rule.

Sidkeong Namgyal's half-brother, Thutob Namgyal (son from the fifth wife of their father Tsugphud Namgyal) ascended the throne after him as the ninth Chogyal of Sikkim. Thotub Namgyal, born in 1860, became the next Chogyal in 1874, whose reign lasted for forty years. The period of Thotub Namgyal can be seen as the most startling and unsettling one. The most pertinent issue was the issue of Nepali settlement in Sikkim. Some administrative changes also took place. The British Officer, John Claude White, the first Political Officer of Sikkim arrived in 1889. Secondly, the Nepali migration into was at large during this time. Many lessee landlords were created and many Nepalese settlements were allowed to develop in different parts of Sikkim in 1890. Chogyal was charged with using forced labour in the country by John Claude White and addressed the issue to the Prince of Wales at Calcutta. Knowing this, Thotub Namgyal tried to flee towards Doptah, an enclave of Sikkim near Khampazong in Tibet. However, the Nepalese seized him at Wallung valley and he was handed over to the British. Thotub Namgyal was confined at Kurseong for two years and in 1895, was shifted to Darjeeling for another six months and then released from confinement and returned to Sikkim (Risley, 1894, p.24-25; Subba, 2011, p.44). Since then, the British established authority in Sikkim. The change here can be expressed as Sikkim losing its sovereignty as a kingdom. J.C White had established his power in Sikkim. What made it easy for him to do so was that the country lacked an organised army, systematic law courts, proper education and health systems. A major step taken by White was the introduction of diarchy system of taxation in 1889 and encouragement to expand agriculture and production in order to increase revenue. The diarchy taxation system embarked the ethnic community resentment in Sikkim. Thotub Namgyal's rule ended in 1914. He was succeeded by his son Sidkeong Tulku. His reign was the shortest of all the Chogyals of Sikkim, who ruled for

only 10 months and was left without an heir.

Tashi Namgyal (1893-1963) succeeded Sidkeong Tulku as the eleventh Chogyal of Sikkim in 1914. He was the half-brother and the first son of the second wife of their father, Thutob Namgyal. He initiated many developmental works and reforms. For the first time, there was a total reform in the judicial structure in Sikkim. The Chief Court was established in 1916 and the High Court in 1955, which detached judiciary from the executive. The landlords no longer enjoyed their judicial functions as they were abolished in 1948. The practices of forced labour like *Jharlangi* and *kuruwa*¹⁴ were abolished in 1946 and 1947. It was during his rule that Sikkim Nationalised Transport was started. It was in 1945 that the developmental plans were designed and the Five-Year Plan was introduced since 1954-60 and 1961-1965. The Namgyal Institute of Tibetology (the only institution on Buddhist studies) was established in 1957. The institution still serves as one of the prime institutions for Buddhist studies in Sikkim. According to Government of Sikkim, Notification No. S/277/61 dated 3rd July 1961, the concept Sikkim Subject was introduced for the persons of Sikkim origins- Bhutias, Lepchas, Limboos and Nepalese in 1962. Despite many developments in the country, the period of Tashi Namgyal also saw the rise of political parties that demanded the formation of a constitutional government. The first movement against the Chogyal and monarchical form of government was the meeting held at Temi Tarku under the leadership of Dhan Bahadur Tewari and Gobardhan Pradhan and opening of a first political party 'Praja Sammelan' in 1947. His rule came to an end in 1962 (Subba, 2011, p. 48).

Palden Thondup Namgyal, the last and twelfth Chogyal of Sikkim, was the second son of Tashi Namgyal. Born in 1923, he became the Chogyal at the age of forty, i.e., in the year 1963. He married two wives, Sangey Deki from Tibet and gave birth to two sons and one daughter. His second wife was Miss Hope Cooke of United States of America. Palden Thondup Namgyal had one son and one daughter from Hope Cooke. With the initiative taken by Hope Cooke, education and the handicraft industry in the country received much importance. Traditional arts and crafts like carpet weaving and Thangka painting were given priority. Accordingly, trainings were provided to Sikkimese boys and girls. The period was politically important. Political movements

¹⁴ *Jharlangi* is a form of forced labour on peasants without any payment for the labour provided to the zamindars and thekedars under the zamindari system in Sikkim. There was no fixed time and place for such labours. Similarly, *Kuruwa* is also a forced and obligatory labour, which means long wait. In this, the peasants had to wait for their turn in every two weeks to provide labour services.

started in the 1950's. Political parties were formed and the decade 1970's was very crucial for the Chogyal. A political dispute arose between the people and the Chogyal administration over the Council's election of 1973, leading to the revolution in 1973. Several demands were raised for the formation of a written constitutional system, the prevalence of direct representation and many other reforms related to electoral processes. The administration of Sikkim was taken over by B.S Das as Chief Administrator on April 9, 1973. The 1973 agitation came to an end with the signing of a tripartite agreement by Chogyal, Palden Thondup Namgyal, the leaders of political parties of Sikkim and Government of India at Gangtok on May 8, 1973. The agreement made Chogyal the constitutional head of the country. Accordingly, the first historic election took place in April, 1974. The election dealt a great blow to the long established Bhutia rule of 333 years under the Namgyal dynasty. The Sikkim National Congress won the election with a total of 31 seats from the total of 32 Assembly seats. The party of the Chogyal, the Sikkim National Party, could secure only one seat. Eventually, Sikkim was merged with the Indian Union as the 22nd state on May 16, 1975 (Gurung, 2011, p. 203-205).

Section II

Status of Bhutias in Pre-merger Period

The previous section discussed the historical development of Sikkim under the Chogyals. This part of the chapter looks into the role of the Bhutias in Sikkim's administration during this period. Before the establishment of Namgyal dynasty in 1642, the Bhutias came to Sikkim mostly as traders and herdsman. They came as herders with their folks to the lowlands in search of green pasture for their herds, and travelled to Sikkim as traders. They brought salt and sold it to Lepchas for rice (Kotturan, 1983, p.24). They preferred to live in high altitude and hilly regions. Only after 1642, with the consolidation of political power, changes in the social structure took place in Sikkim.

Based on Risley (1894), the Bhutias of Sikkim can be categorised into three groups. Firstly, the four tribes descended from *Khye Bumsa* were *Zhan-tar-pa* or *Zhan-po-tar*, *Tshe-gyu-Tarpa* or *Tshes bChu-tar*, *Nyim-Gye-pa* and *Guru- Tashe-pa*.¹⁵ They are regarded as the first four Bhutia

¹⁵ They are also called *Tungdu-Rusior*, the four families' of 1000 collections. The giYul-Thenpa and Lingzerpa are the descendants of the Pyak-Tsen-Tar (Pu-pun-Sum), three brothers of KhyeBumsa who migrated and settled in Hah in Bhutan.

families among the Bhutia clan in Sikkim. The second category of Bhutia are the descendants of *Beb- Tsan- Gyat*. This group constitutes the eight tribes: *Pon-pa*, *rGan-sTag-Pu Tshogs* or *tGon-gSang-Pa*, *Nam-g Tsang-sKho-pa* or *sKor-pa*, *sTag-Chhung- Tar-pa*, *tKar-Tshogs-pa*, *Grong-sTod-pa*, *bTshun-rGyal-pa* or *rGyas-pa* and *mDo-Khang-pa* or *Khamp-pa*. These 12 tribes are considered pure Bhutias or 'Lhorees' and are eligible for direct entrance into the Pemayangtse monastery as monks. Among the eight tribes, the *Pon-pa* were further sub-divided into five classes; *Nag-IDig*, *Lha-bSungs*, *Yos-IChags*, *Na-pons* and *Pon-Chhung-pa*. A group of Bhutia tribes who are considered to be inferior to the former ones comes after the twelve Bhutia groups. These groups are *Pu-Tsho- po-pa*, , *Lag-IDinpa*, *rGod-Rong-pa*, *Gyeng-pa*, *sTod-pa*, *Shar-pa*, *hBar-phong- Pu-Tsha-pa* (*Barphungpuso*), and *A IDan-Pu-Tsha-po* (*Adinpuso*). *sTod-pa* are subdivided into the following castes: *Toi- Lha-goi-pa*, *Toi- Jam-Yang-Pa*, *Toi- Chhu-Khapa* or *sTod-Chhu-Kha-Pa*. *Chombi-pa* comes after the above Bhutia groups. The *Chombi-pas* have migrated from Kham in Tibet and settled at Hah in Bhutan, later migrated to Sikkim. *Chombi-pas* are further subdivided into; *Lham-tar* or *Lha-ma-tar*, *Gue-ne-pu-Tshogs* or *TGe-bsNyen-pu-Tsha-pa*, *Agon* or *Ang-tGon*, *Athub-pu-Tshogs*, *Do-Shoi-pa* or *rDog-Zhod-pa* and *Khim-barpa*, *Khyim-hPar-pa*.

Apart from these Bhutia groups, there are also groups of Bhutias settled at Lachen and Lachung in North Sikkim. They originally came from Paro and they are called *LaponLhundrub* caste. However, in the Bhutia community, there exist some lower or minor castes named after their place of origin, like *Assom-pa*, *Mang-sPod-pa*, *Na-Mangs*, *Shag-Tshang-pa*, *rDo-hRob-pa*, *sGang- rGyab-pa*, *La-hog-pa*, *Mang-Tshang-pa*, *sPa-Thing-pa*, *Peng-ri-pa*, *Ka-gye-pa* and *Dobta-po* (Risley, 1894, pp. 28-30).

With the inception of Namgyal dynasty in Sikkim, the Bhutias became the rulers over rest of the settlers and have always occupied high positions and have enjoyed the ranks of *Jongpons*, *Magpons*, *Dingpons*, *Chupons*, *Kyomee* and *Pipons*. The inflow of Nepalese was postulated to be a threat to the rule and position of the Bhutias in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The administrative set up of the new Himalayan kingdom from its very foundation at Yuksam shows that though the Bhutias were the rulers, the Lepchas were also a part of the new administrative set up of the kingdom. In the central administrative system of the country, the Lepchas were the *dzongpon* of twelve *dzongs* or districts and the Bhutias formed the council of twelve ministers.

The Lepchas were appointed as chiefs to the Chogyal (Namgyal and Dolma, 1908, p 20). Their hold was further strengthened when Bhutias entered into matrimonial relationships with the Lepchas. Chogyal Tenzing Namgyal, for example, married daughter of Lepcha Leader Chandzod Karwang, and she was half-sister to Chandzod Chothup. This relationship enabled him to involve more participation of the Lepchas in the administration.

3.2.1. Socio-economic Status of Bhutias in Sikkim

The Bhutias occupied a high status in society and came to be regarded as elite. Their position was derived from their economic strength, which came mainly from land. Hence, it is important to discuss the land holding system in Sikkim, which gives a clear picture of the status of the Bhutias. As discussed earlier, Sikkim's state structure was influenced by Tibetan tradition. The Chogyal was the only owner of private estates and lands in the country. After the migration of Bhutias, the ownership of land shifted to the Bhutias and later to landlords and aristocratic class. The Lepchas were seen mainly as the cultivators. Some lands were gifted to the *Kazis* for rendering their services. Most of the land was rented out to farmers and cultivators. Village headmen were appointed to look after the rented lands. There existed the system of forced labour without any wages (Sinha, 2008, pp. 135-136). This was narrated in one of the case studies conducted at Tashiding in January 2019, when an 87-year-old Bhutia recollected how they were forced to work for mandal without any payments and had a difficult life during the monarchy.

The Land lords known as *Kazis*, were the next class of people to control the land holdings after the Chogyal. They discharged the task of collecting revenues from the farmers. The village headmen, called the *Mandals*, were given the charge of collecting revenues from the common people. The collected tax was paid to the landlords, who in turn paid the share to the Chogyal. The *Lamas*, who were mostly from the Bhutia community, were exempted from paying taxes. So, with respect to paying of taxes, the Bhutias enjoyed more relaxation than the other communities. For example, the Lepchas and the Bhutias had to pay 8 annas (half a rupee) per pathi of seed sown and the Nepalese were charged with 14 annas. The Council meeting of September 5, 1898, imposed unequal rate of taxation on those lands where the Lepchas, Bhutias and Nepalese were settled together. Secondly, according to the Council meeting, discrimination occurred among the Lepchas and the Bhutias where they were allowed to graze three cattle free of charge, while the Nepalese and the Limboos were taxed eight annas per cattle. Besides this,

the farmers were required to provide free human services to the landlords, *Thekedars* and *mandals*. Hence, the people were exploited by the *Kazis* and *Thekedars*.

There were seventy-one (71) landlords in total, divided into three categories: 13 *Lamas*, 27 *Kazis* and 37 *Thikadars* (Debnath, 2009.p 47). The land revenue system of Sikkim took a major turn in 1925 when the '*elaka*' lease system was introduced by the Sikkim Durbar for a period of 15 years. An *elaka* was revenue-collecting unit under the a tax collector assigned by the Darbar. In case of death of a lessee during the term of his lease, the Government undertook to renew the lease in favour of his heir only in the male line of descent. According to Administration Report of the Sikkim State for the year 1929-30, there were 104 *elakas* in Sikkim (Debnath, 2009, p. 68). Out of a total 104 *elakas*, 15 *elakas* were directly under the control of the Chogyal as Private Estate. These estates were divided into 62 revenue blocks. Five *elakas* were under the monasteries, which consisted of 38 revenue blocks. Durbar appointed managers managed thirteen (13) *elakas*, while *Kazis* and *Thikadars* managed the remaining 71 *elakas*. The land at the block level was further distributed among the villagers called *bustiwalas*. The *mandals* acted as direct intermediaries between the villagers and the *Kazis*. The *kazis* acted as the intermediaries between the *mandals*, *bustiwalas* and the Chogyal.

Again, a difference was created in the distribution of land between the *mandals* and the *bustiwalas*. A *Bustiwala* could hold only 20 acres of land, whereas the *mandals* were allowed to hold 30 acres of land. Further, the lands were given on lease to *Adhiadars*, *Kootidars*, *Chakhureys* and *Pakhureys* for the purpose of cultivating the land. The *bustiwalas* owed the right to cultivate the land as hereditary and transferable. All the tasks related to fixation and assessment of the revenue to be paid by the tenants, *bustiwalas* and *mandals* were decided by *Kazis* and *Thekidars* on behalf of the Chogyal (Gurung, 2012 p 61). However, the revenue of the private Estates of the royal family was managed by Chogyal's own agency. The agency collected revenue from only 18 revenue blocks and the revenue of the remaining 44 blocks was collected by the government through respective district officers. The revenue was distributed in percentages, like 7 percent was saved as *mandals* commission, 10 percent as supervision charges and remaining amount was deposited in the Private Estate account.

Various kinds of taxes were collected by the ruler. The tax for the use of forest was called *Zo lung*¹⁶. Another kind of tax was the trade tax, or *Bah pa* which means an income tax to be paid by the trader. During those days, salt was brought from Tibet, so most of the trade was in buying and bringing salt from Tibet to Sikkim. This had become a regular source of income for Sikkim, especially the Chogyal. A tax was collected on the import and export items called *tshong- khyed*. This tax also included a tax for carrying business or trade within the country.

In the Bhutia kingdom, there existed different levels and modes of payment of revenues. The Nepalese were the most affected by the prevailing revenue system. They had to pay more revenues as compared to Bhutias and Lepchas.

The introduction of a new lessee system by J.C White, the first political officer of Sikkim and the introduction of Revenue Order No. 1 (Annexure 3) by the Chogyal Tashi Namgyal restricted the transfer of Bhutia- Lepcha land to others. This embarked to a social confrontation, particularly among the Nepalese. The best description of the role and position of Bhutias under the feudalistic regime gives the idea that the landlords who are Bhutias also possessed magisterial powers in both civil and criminal matters.

3.2.2. Bhutias' Role in Administration

Like in Tibet, Sikkim's administrative system was religion-oriented. Bhutias continued to live in the Tibetan way, as they used to do before coming to Sikkim. Hence, it is obvious they would adopt the same pattern in socio-economic and political arrangements in which they were familiar with. All the powers, executive, legislature, judicial and religious were vested with the Chogyal. He was the source of all authorities. Nonetheless, *Lamas* (monks) were also entrusted with administrative powers. Later it was extended to the *Kazis*. *Lamas* played a dual role during the Bhutia rule. They performed spiritual affairs as well as acted as political advisers to the Chogyal. The Bhutia ruler was also recognised as an incarnate *Lama*, he is called the Dharma raja.

In this kind of practice, Sikkim, thus, was a theocratic state where religion was totally integrated with politics. The *Lamas*, mostly the high *Lamas*, those representing the important monasteries, played a determining and decisive role in the policy making of the country. This pattern

¹⁶ *Zo lung* was as a tax paid for using the forest produce such as timber, bamboos and other products from forests. This tax was paid in the form of food grains, wine, milk and butter, as per the production from the people.

continued till the early 1950's. After 1950, certain changes were made in the administrative field when new political institutions like the Executive Council, State Council, Village Councils and Baazar Committees were formed in 1953 (Sinha, 2008, p.155). Even though an elective system was introduced, the *Lamas* continued to enjoy the privileges as before. *Lamas* always represented in the State Council as a nominated member. Later on, the monasteries had one elective seat in the State Council, a reserved seat as *Sangha* seat, which is still preserved in the State Assembly. Consequently, the monasteries (*lamas*) directly participated in the body politic for which its political role has been recognised and legitimised.

In the pre-merger period, at the apex of the administration was the Chogyal with absolute power and authority in the country. The ruler was assisted by the Royal Adviser, who provided advice to the Chogyal on various political matters. It was more than a statutory post, it was created as a reward from the ruler. Next, there was the Sidlon or Dewan¹⁷ which was the highest bureaucratic post in the country. Sidlon headed the administration and was the president of the State Council, appointed by the Chogyal. The Executive Council, which is also called the State Cabinet, was formed in 1953, initially with three members. Later in 1958, the number of members was increased to five (Gurung, 2011, p. 168). The state administration was carried out through the establishment of a number of departmental secretaries, namely, the General Secretary, Financial Secretary, Judicial Secretary, who looked after Education and Ecclesiastical Affairs, and the State Engineer, who acted as Secretary for the public Works Department. The secretaries and other higher-ranking officials in the department mostly comprised of Bhutias. In almost all cases, the *Lamas* with modern education and knowledge were appointed and assigned the administrative functions.

Right from the very inception of Bhutia rule, Bhutias have been represented in the highest bureaucratic posts. When the country was divided into 12 districts, Chogyal Phuntsog Namgyal appointed twelve *Kalons* or ministers from Bhutia community. Essentially, Sikkim's bureaucracy was a feudal bureaucracy in which the *Kazis* dominated. The occupational affiliation of the dominant ethnic communities in 1975 (Table 3.2.1) indicates that the bureaucratic positions in Sikkim were dominated by 36.30% of the Bhutias and 34.68% belonged to the aristocratic

¹⁷ John C. Lall, I.C.S. was appointed as the first Dewan of Sikkim in 1949. During the last Chogyal, the post was termed as Principal Administrative Officer. He functioned on behalf of the Chogyal in his absence.

class. The figures show that there were 27.42% of *Kazis* and 7.26% of Newar who held posts as bureaucrats. The recruitment procedure for the bureaucrats was purely feudal in nature. In the cross examination of the bureaucrats, around 63.11% had close affiliations to the ruler and the royal family. Out of 63.11%, 8.33% were relatives of the Chogyal (Sinha, 1975, p.76) Interestingly, the bureaucrats formed a forum called the ‘Sikkim Study Forum’.

Table 3.2.1. Occupational Affiliation of the Dominant Ethnic Communities, 1975.

Sl. No	Occupation	Bhutia	Lepcha	Kazi	Newar	Nepalese	Indian	Unclassified	Total
1	Higher bureaucracy	45	2	34	9	2	1	31	124
2	Trade and business	3	-	-	1	3		11	55
3	Contractor-cum soldiers in voluntary politics	12	1	2	1	2	37	33	51
4	Agriculture	2	-	4	-	8	-	33	47
5	Professions	1	-	1	-	2	-	9	17
6	Priesthood and monkhood	8	3	-	-	-	4	4	15
7	Ownership of estate	-	-	5	-	-	--	-	5
8	Others*	1	-	-	-	-	4	12	17

Source: A.C Sinha, 1975

3.2.3. Bhutia Influence and the Government

No doubt, the Bhutias were the rulers in Sikkim. The top most offices in the country during the Chogyal’s (himself a Bhutia) rule were assigned to the Bhutias. Before the 1953 Proclamation on the formation of the new representative system, the Bhutias enjoyed all privileges in the Bhutia government. The need for the inclusion of people belonging to other communities or parties was never felt. As discussed in the earlier section, all the power holders in the country were Bhutias and some Lepchas who became part of the system from the very inception of Bhutia rule. Nevertheless, Sikkim’s political picture of the 1940’s seemed to be different from the previous one. The demand for equal representatives from all sections of society that urged the Chogyal to change the governing pattern to a representative one. The factor that led to this was that the demography of Sikkim had undergone a total shift. The original inhabitant tribes, the Lepchas and Bhutias, were outnumbered by the migrated Nepalese. Possibly, the formation of State Council and the Executive Council was the way out to hold the representation of all the groups

on equal footing.

The State Council comprised of the president appointed by the Chogyal, 12 elected members, six each from Bhutia and Lepcha communities and the remaining six from Sikkim Nepalese and five members nominated by the Chogyal, as a discretionary power. The Proclamation of 1953 still preserved the rights of the Bhutias as rulers. The elite Bhutia-Lepcha and lamaist group were projected as the pressure groups in the administration as well as in policy-making decisions. Even today, Bhutia-Lepcha have their special 12 seats and one *Sangha* (monks representing monasteries) reserved in the state Assembly. Indeed, this is a special status for them as Bhutia and Lepcha take a share of 37.5 % and they are also given equal share in the cabinet. This ensures that, though a minority, its power and position are still secured in Sikkim politics.

The study of A. C. Sinha (1970), which covers a field-based survey project (Table 3.2.2 and Figure 3.2.1), shows that 18.75% of the surveyed Bhutia respondents opined that the Bhutias dominated the government. While 7.80% of respondents said that the Bhutia bureaucrats were dominating the administration. It was found out that 28.90% of respondents (Bhutias), which is the highest number, felt that *Kazis* dominated the government.

Since the Chogyal was the only source of all legislative authority in the state, the governance was based on the 16 pure basic human laws of Tibet. These laws are also called the ‘Old Laws’ of Sikkim. The Bhutias always desired to bring other communities into their fold. The main point for having these laws in the political system was to integrate all the people into Buddhism. The 16 laws encompass:

1. General rules to be followed in times of war
2. Rules for those who are defeated and cannot fight
3. Rules for officers and Government servants
4. Law of evidence
5. Law for grave offences
6. Fines levied for offences
7. Law of imprisonment
8. Law for offenders and defaulters who refuse to come to court
9. Law for murder
10. Law for bloodshed
11. Law for those who are false and avaricious
12. Law for theft cases

13. Law for disputes between near relatives, between man and wife, between neighbours who have things in common
14. Law for adultery
15. Law of contract
16. Law for uncivilised people.

Source: *The Gazetteer of Sikkim*, 1984, pp. 46-47

Regarding the practice of the laws, the Bhutias, mainly the *Lamas* were not liable from following of such laws. They were exempted from such laws. Bhutias in almost all cases, relished more liberty than the other communities.

Besides all these, the Bhutias left a great mark on the spread of art, crafts and culture in Sikkim. Lepchas, culturally and socially, were hunters and nature worshippers. Very little of art and craft practices was known in Sikkim before the coming of the Bhutias. Influenced by the Tibetan culture and traditions of art and crafts, the Bhutias carried it with them while they migrated to Sikkim. In the course of time, the Bhutias were successful in spreading art and craft industries in Sikkim.

Finally, we can sum up that even though the Bhutias became numerically less over the years, they continued to be the most dominant group in Sikkim. They started their journey as traders in Sikkim. Gradually, they were able to overshadow the Lepchas and were successful in establishing their position and status as the ruling elite in Sikkim for 333 long years. The following tables from A. C Sinha's book will illustrate their position.

Table 3.2.2. Categories of People Dominating the Sikkimese Government, 1970

Sl. No.	Categories of the people	Number	Percentage
1	Kazis	37	28.90
2	Bhutias	24	18.75
3	National	08	06.24
4	Big bureaucrats	10	07.80
5	Newars	08	6.24
6	Members of the study forum	03	02.34
7	Not applicable	33	25.74
8	No information	05	03.90
	Total	128	99.91

Source: A.C Sinha, 1975, p.83.

Fig. 3.2.1. Categories of People Dominating the Sikkimese Government,1970



Source: Based on table 3.2.2.

Chapter IV

Role of Bhutias in Sikkim's Journey towards Democracy and their Gradual Marginalisation in Politics

Ethnic communities have always played a dominant role in the socio-economic and political development of a state, country, or a region. Today, no state is homogeneous in terms of race, religion, language, script, customs, traditions ideas and ways of life. The development of a state demands for a shift in emphasis from the individual's growth to the growth of a larger section of society. In this regard, the role of ethnic group in socio- economic and political development has always gained momentum.

Cohen, in his published work in 1974, stated that ethnic group "is a collection of people who share some patterns of normative behaviour and form a part of a larger population, interacting with people from other collectivities within the framework of a social system" (Timothy Baumann, 2004).

Different ethnic groups at different times have played an important role in shaping the state structure. The politics of north-eastern states of India is always understood to be affiliated with ethnic politics. Ethnic-based politics has been the intrinsic feature of politics. The politics of Sikkim no doubt developed from this very nature of ethnic politics. The continuity of such a political system is persistent even today (Chettri, 2013, p.96). The study of politics and the formation of political structures in Sikkim is relatively different from that of other parts of the country. The chapter tries to understand the role played by the ethnic groups in moulding and shaping the political structures, especially in the formation of a democratic state of Sikkim.

The democracy that has prevailed through a long history of the world is the essence of different forms and concepts about freedom and rights. Though democracy is not free from continuing challenges, it continues to evolve as the most widely accepted form of government in the world. In Greek, the word 'Democracy' means '*demos*' meaning 'people'. It means that the people have power, who are the guardians of their own freedom and rights. The core characteristics of a democracy are that it is ruled by the majority and individual rights.

Democracies may be categorised into two types: direct democracy and representative democracy. Direct democracy encompasses the people's rule in the decision-making policies. This type of democracy is not feasible to a large group of people. It may be successful only in a small

community organisation, or tribal groups, or the local units living within the larger group. On the other hand, representative democracy views the system where the people elect their representatives to take decisions and rule on their behalf (Douglas, 2013, p. 83). The history of the past shows that a representative form of democracy is the most common form of democracy that has ruled nations. The form of democracy that Sikkim has chosen is the representative democracy.

In the process of formation of political structure in Sikkim, the Bhutias have played a vital role. Their representation was seen as the ruling elite in the pre-merger period. Although the merger brought some changes in the power equation, the Bhutias have been well represented in Sikkim politics in the post-merger period as well even though they are the minority group and are gradually marginalised in politics.

Many definitions and meanings of marginalisation have been provided by various authors and scholars. In general, 'marginalisation' is described as the actions or temperament of a society where human beings exclude some individuals and groups as undesirable. The people or groups who are excluded are known as marginalised groups. In his book '*Personality and Ideology*', Peter Leonard (1984, p.180) defines marginality as ". . . *being outside the mainstream of productive activity and/or social reproductive activity*".

The debate on marginalisation has received much attention in terms of political, sociological and economic discussions in the world. Marginalisation may vary with different levels of development in society, different types of culture and most importantly, the level of economic status. For Devesh Saksena, 2019, marginalisation takes place when a minority group becomes the victim of discrimination and subjugation; when the marginalised groups fight for common identity and common social rules; and when the groups prefer marrying within their own groups. Marginality, an experience faced by many minority groups in every society, is excluded from the mainstream of political and socio-economic systems. To Burton, M and Kagan, C. (2005, p. 5), marginalisation is a multi-layered concept in which exclusion takes place to the entire society at the global level, ethnic groups and communities within society and families or individuals within localities. Further, marginalisation is a shifting phenomenon that is linked to political and social status. The marginalisation of Bhutias as an ethnic group may be discussed on the same grounds as discussed by Burton, M and Kagan. Bhutias once enjoyed individual and group status, but with the shift in the political power, they claim to be the marginalised group.

The marginalised group or community is one that is pushed to the lower position in society. Such groups have the least role to play in the political, social, economic, and cultural activities of society. Social marginalisation of a group takes place when the group is deprived of all levels of education, employment and gender-related opportunities and to a large extent, the group or community does not get much entry into the power structure and decision-making processes in the state. In marginalisation, exclusion of groups in the pattern of income distributions, occupational status, social relationships, religion and gender takes place (Burton, M and Kagan, C. 2005). Social marginalisation itself is political marginalisation. As always seen in different types of political settings in the world, different groups at different times have secured political, social and economic authority, marginalising the rest of the groups. The case of the marginalisation of Bhutias in Sikkim may be addressed in a similar manner. For a very long time, they were the rulers, a dominant group occupying a high position in the country and leaving the rest of the communities at the edge of the power politics and the state structure. Marginalisation is the core of the exclusion of individuals, groups and communities from the main stream, who have relatively less influence on the available resources in the state. The impact of marginalisation may be viewed in terms of developing low self-confidence and self-esteem, isolating them from the larger group in society. This may have an immense impact on the development of individuals as human beings and on society at large (Devesh Saksena, 2019).

In the Indian context, Saksena (2019) states that the Scheduled Tribes and the Scheduled Castes (SC) are mostly considered to be marginalised groups. The Scheduled Tribes are mostly marginalised based on ethnicity. Around 84.3 million of Scheduled Tribes population in India are viewed as socially and economically deprived groups. The percentages of Scheduled Tribes population are represented differently in different states. This group primarily consists of the landless labourers particularly agricultural and industrial labourers who have little control over resources such as land and forest. They constitute the lowest stratum of society. However, the case of Scheduled Tribes in Sikkim is different from that of the other Scheduled Tribes in India. In that case, Bhutias as Scheduled Tribe do not represent the lowest strata of society, but they are the elites in Sikkim.

This chapter proceeds in four sections. Section I discusses Sikkim's Journey towards democracy and examines the democratic principles underpinning the challenges posed to Bhutia rule by the formation of various groups in the form of political parties in Sikkim. The section further

discusses the establishment of constitutional democracy with one vote one man as the inherent right of the citizens, which forms the basics of democracy. The second section deals with the role of the Bhutias in Sikkim politics in the pre-merger period and how they retained their hold in politics till 1974-75. Section III covers the role of Bhutias in politics in the post-merger period. The section tries to analyse how Bhutia has been able to play vital role in politics through the reservation of twelve BL seats in State Legislative Assembly. Section IV discusses the marginalisation of Bhutia in politics in Sikkim.

Section I

Sikkim's Journey towards Democracy

Sikkim's journey towards democracy can be traced to the 1940s with the formation of political parties and organisations to uproot the monarchic and feudalistic rule in Sikkim. The kingdom was marked with internal resistance from various political parties and organisations demanding constitutional representation, abolition of feudalism and ultimately the accession of Sikkim with Indian Union, setting the stage for establishment for democratic state.

A brief discussion of the administrative structure, feudalistic elements and social relations among the people may lead to better understanding of the factors underlying such demand and uprising. Analysing the demand for having a democratic instead of a monarchy state originated from the fact that the people (all communities) of Sikkim during Bhutia's rule were under the subjugation of the ruler and did not enjoy equal rights. The resentment against monarchical rule is rooted in feudalism and feudalism is based on the exploitation of the common people.

Feudalism¹⁸ was the basis of the rule during the Namgyal dynasty, which defined the social structure of the country. Sikkim followed the Tibetan pattern of social structure and a feudalistic society as existed in the medieval ages. Historians argue that feudalistic social structures entrust responsibility, powers and authority to high official and the elite class. These high-class people became the lords of these lands. This brought differences and divisions in the social relationships

¹⁸ Medieval Europe during the period of 9th to 15th century was characterized by Feudalism. The social structure mainly revolved around three strata of people: the lords, the vassals, and the fiefs or the peasants. The lords were the land owners, and they were rich with much authority and power from the King. They ruled their territories as the highest-class people in the society. The Vassals, were mostly poor people who served and worked in the lands of lords. These people received a small share from the cultivations. Their lives were controlled by the landlords.

among the different groups of people. Similarly, in Sikkim, the feudalistic structure divided the land into *Dzongs* or *Elakhas*, leased out to *Dzong-pons* or Governors. Later, they were given the title of *Kazis* who actually ruled rural Sikkim. This distribution of land divided the people on social and economic grounds. The feudal character that existed in Sikkim exploited the common people to a large extent, making the *Kazis*, *Thekedars* and *Mandals* superior over the people and vesting them with administrative powers. The *Kazis*, *Thekedars* and *Mandals* extracted labour from the people and exploited them under the system of *Adhiadars* and *Kutiyadars*. A detailed discussion on the administrative structure in pre-merger Sikkim is already presented in the preceding chapter III.

For administrative purposes, Chogyal had established a Secretariat. The administration of the kingdom was carried through various departments which formed the Secretariat and the Chogyal was called the '*Durbar*', where all orders and proclamations in the name of *Durbar* were signed by the Chogyal. The departments were headed by officers appointed by the Chogyal himself. There existed four departmental secretaries: the General Secretary, Financial Secretary, Judicial Secretary (also under the charge of Education and Ecclesiastical Affairs) and the State Engineer, who also acted as Secretary in the Department of Public Works. The secretaries and the higher departmental officers were mainly appointed from the Buddhist and educated individuals. In most cases, the *lamas* (monks) with modern education were appointed to look after the administration (Bhattacharya, 1994, p.109-110). The administrative powers were controlled by the Bhutias.

In the process of Sikkim's political development, several socio-political phenomena occurred, which led to the marginalisation of minority communities. The Bhutia elite dominated the country's culture, leaving the other communities in an inferior position. Critical examination of the Bhutia rule indicates the implementation of discriminatory policies that created persistent dissatisfaction among the different communities. The success of the Bhutias in politics as an ethnic community, which had historic growth from early 15th century onwards till the merger period in 1975, has been well researched in recent years. From the period of British entry into Sikkim, the demography of Sikkim changed. Waves of migrations from outside, particularly the Nepalese ultimately leading for the demands by the ethnic communities to protect their own identity and privileges. The dominant Bhutia group tried to dominate the immigrant Nepalese, leading to outbreaks of democratic demands and resistance.

Initially, the democratic establishment in Sikkim paved its way through the abolition of feudalism and its ill practices of exploitation of the people. The resistance to the Chogyal was not a demand for the direct formation of a democratic government. The domination by the *Kazis* and of different and unequal treatments of civil laws, revenue laws and unequal representation of various communities led to dissatisfaction and uprising among the people, especially the Nepalese. By this time, people from Nepal and India had migrated to a large extent. Larger the group, bigger the demand became the order of the day. The representation issue in the administrative processes contributed to the emergence of dissatisfaction amongst the people.

For the ruler in Sikkim in the 1940's, the spread of World war II and the engagement of British in the war was a great opportunity to rebuild the state power and restructure the administrative system again. After long years of agitation against the British, India became an Independent country in August, 1947. This effectively ended British paramountcy in India and Sikkim, restoring Chogyal's autonomy over internal matters in the country. Nevertheless, the years after this event, Sikkim witnessed a new phase of democratic demands and the abolition of long-established Bhutia dominance. This, in fact, was a crucial moment in Sikkim's political structure. This took Sikkim in a new direction of political momentum that brought political and economic reforms to Sikkim.

The democratic movement in Sikkim can be traced to the first underground movement at Namthang and a secret meeting at Tendong hill in South Sikkim. The movement was led by the Nepalese under the leadership of Dhan Bahadur Tewari and Gobardhan Pradhan of Temi Tarku (Basnet, 1974, p. 79). This democratic drive was initiated by formation of political parties like Praja Sudharak Samaj, Praja Sammelan and Praja Mandal at Gangtok in 1947 by Tashi Tshering, Dhan Bahadur Tewari and Kazi Lhendup Dorji, respectively. Kazi Lhendup Dorji himself belonging to the kazi family was taking the lead against the feudalism and monarchy. The three newly born parties merged into one as Sikkim State Congress on December 7, 1947 with three-fold demands: i) abolition of Landlordism; ii) formation of interim government as a necessary precursor of a democratic and responsible government; iii) accession of Sikkim to Indian Union (Dhamala, 1986, p. 5-6).

The birth of new political parties brought a new equation to the political power. A new class of people, especially young, educated Sikkimese people of all communities, came up with ideas of democracy and liberation from the prevailing feudal society. This gave a major setback to the power and position of the Bhutias in Sikkim (Bhattacharya, 1994, p. 77). Chogyal, with the dream of re-establishing the Sikkimese political and social structure after being set free from the British interference, received a great setback when the political parties started demanding the end of long established Bhutia rule. The demand of representation was made by the new group, basically the Nepalese, because the demographic picture of Sikkim had taken a different shape. The inflow of Nepalese during the British period had enabled this group to prepare themselves in a representative body.

Ethnically and culturally completely different from the Bhutias, the Nepalese realised that acceptance of theocratic state under the control of Bhutias, *Lamas* and *Kazis* would amount to religious, cultural and economic submission to the Bhutias. Alarmed, he formed a political party in 1948, named Sikkim National Party, representing the aristocrats and the elite, mostly from the Bhutia and Lepcha communities. The party of the Chogyal was supported by the lamas, who had always been his support in ruling the country. The Chogyal's main intention in formation of the National Party was to counter the demands made by the Sikkim State Congress and safeguard the Status quo of Bhutias (Dhamala, 1986, p.6). On the other side, the acceptance and adoption of the democratic model by the Bhutia rulers would create a loss to the Bhutias as a ruling community and their hold over Sikkim politics. In response to these demands, the Sikkim National Party of the Chogyal passed a resolution on April 30, 1948, which declared that *Sikkim has its close relationship historically, culturally, socially and linguistically with Bhutan and Tibet; geographically Sikkim is not a part of India, it was only politically interfered; ethnically and religiously it has no affinity with India; and the policy of Parity system is to be maintained to preserve its integrity* (Bhattacharya, 1994, p.78).

Chogyal, in 1953, trying to protect his hold as a ruler, brought in some administrative reforms through a proclamation called the '*Constitutional Proclamation*'. The proclamation created the representative bodies; State Council and the Executive Council that introduced a diarchal system.¹⁹ A critical look at the proclamation of 1953 shows how it paved the way towards the

¹⁹ Through the Diarchy system, powers were distributed into reserved and transferred subjects. The Chogyal reserved some important powers and transferred some powers to the Executive Councillors, nominated from the members of State Council. The Chogyal controlled the Reserved Subjects like Ecclesiastical, External Affairs, State

division of ethnic communities along the lines of Buddhism and Hinduism in the coming election of the State Council (A. Bhattacharya, 1994, p.79). The formation of the State Council and the Executive Council in 1953 marked the beginning of a representative state, with the members of Executive Council being appointed by the Chogyal. The Proclamation of 1953 introduced a system called ‘Parity Formula’, wherein the three communities would have equal representation in the State Council (Bhadra, 1992, p. 85). The 1950s, in fact was the period of political turmoil that ultimately culminated in the development of early 1970s and the ultimate change in the political status of Sikkim and the termination of the political authority of the Bhutias.

The proclamation initiated the process of elections and the gradual marginalisation of the Chogyal. An account of these political developments are given below.

The Himalayan Kingdom went for first time election in 1953. The election was to be conducted in two phases: Primary level and General level. The election process was arranged in such a complicated manner that the Bhutia-Lepchas were supposed to contest the election twice both at primary and general levels. Only if they won in both the levels, they would be declared elected candidates. The election was conducted through the division of the country into four constituencies: Pemayangtse constituency in the West, Namchi constituency in the South, North Central constituency covering North and Gangtok constituency in the East. Each constituency had seats reserved for all three communities: Bhutia, Lepcha and Nepali (Table 4.1.1). The 1953 proclamation also gave the Chogyal the power to nominate five members to the State Council, taking the total strength to 17. Herein we see the process of purposive political participation of all communities taking place in Sikkim.

Table 4.1.1. Distribution of Constituency and Seats – 1953

Sl. No.	Constituency	Seats
1	Pemayangtse Constituency	Bhutia-Lepcha:1 Nepali: 2
2	Namchi Constituency	Bhutia-Lepcha:1 Nepali:2

Enterprises, Home and Police, Finance, Land Revenue, Rationing and Establishment. The Dewan, appointed by the Government of India was the administrator of the Reserved Subjects. The Transferred Subjects like Education, Public Health, Excise, Press and Publicity, Transport, Bazars, Forests and Public Works were under the Executive Council (Dhamala, 1986, p. 4 and Bhattacharya, 1994, p. 78). This pattern of administration operated till the revolution of 1973.

3	North Central Constituency	Bhutia-Lepcha:2 Nepali: 1
4	Gangtok Constituency	Bhutia-Lepcha:2 Nepali: 1
5	Total seats	12 (Bhutia Lepcha-6 Nepali: 6)

Source: Encyclopaedia of North East India, Volume III-Sikkim, 2007.

The State Council, established in 1953, comprised of a total 17 seats. 12 members were elected and the Chogyal appointed 5 members (including that of the President). Of the total of 12 elected members, 6 seats was reserved for Nepalese and 6 seats for the Lepchas and the Bhutias.

In the history of Bhutia rule in Sikkim, representatives were elected to govern the country. In fact, the Nepalese were to be represented in the government for the first time. Furthermore, the Chogyal nominated five members to the Council.

This new representation system was an attempt to maintain balance amongst the existing Bhutia, Lepcha and Nepalese communities. This new seat sharing in the government initiated the sharing of power of the ruling Bhutias with the Nepalese. A closer observation of the distribution of seats reveals that while Bhutia-Lepcha seats were 6, the actual share of the Bhutias was much less as they shared their seats with the Lepchas. On the whole this equation would lead to equal representation of Nepalese and Lepcha- Bhutias in all the state bodies too, in the administration as well in the state economy.

In the election, equal number of seats were won by both the Sikkim National Party and the Sikkim State Congress, with 6 each. All the seats won by the Sikkim National Party were Bhutia-Lepcha seats and all the seats won by the Sikkim State Congress were Nepali seats.

Table 4.1.2. State Council Election Results, 1953

Party	Nepali seats	Bhutia- Lepcha Seats	Total seats
Sikkim National Party	0	6	6
Sikkim State Congress	6	0	6
Appointed	-	-	5
Total	6	6	17

Source: Encyclopaedia of North East India, Volume III-Sikkim, 2007.

This period witnessed a constant struggle for the Bhutia ruler to maintain its status quo in relation to other minority groups with distinctly different histories and cultures. For the protection of rights of the ethnic inhabitants (Lepcha-Bhutia), a proclamation was issued on August 30, 1956 (Bhattacharya, 1994, p. 77). Whereby, the Chogyal announced the elimination

of different types of rate for payment of land revenue by the Nepalese, Bhutias and Lepchas. He also proclaimed the reinforcement of the 1917, Revenue Order No. 1²⁰. Thirdly, the Chogyal declared a constraint on non-indigenous (outsiders) who have settled in North Sikkim without prior permission from the Sikkim Darbar. This was to safeguard the interests of the indigenous people of Sikkim. The *Sangha* seat, which was introduced in 1958 to retain the influence of the Bhutia monks (Lamas) in politics, was also towards the safeguard of the Bhutias in particular (Bhattacharya, 1994, p. 77). More changes were brought in the representation of members in the State Council in 1958. In the second election to the State Council in, three more seats were added. One to represent monasteries and *lamas*, one for the Sikkimese general population, and one for Limboos (Tsongas). The total number of seats was increased to 20.

Table 4.1.3. State Council Election Results, 1958

Party	Nepali seats	Bhutia- Lepcha Seats	Total seats
Sikkim National Party	6	1	7
Sikkim State Congress	0	5	6
Appointed	-	-	7
Total	6	6	20

Source: *Encyclopedia of North East India*, Volume III-Sikkim, 2007.

In this election, the Sikkim State Congress could secure all six seats, one Bhutia-Lepcha seat and the General seat. The Sikkim National Party, the party of the Chogyal won five Bhutia-Lepcha Seats and one *Sangha* seat.

The next significant political development was the advent of a new political party, the Sikkim National Congress (SNC), in May, 1960. The party was the result of merger of Swatantra Dal, Rajya Praja Sammelan and dissidents of the then dominant parties, Sikkim State Congress and Sikkim National Party under the leadership of Kazi Lhendup Dorjee (Basnett, 1974, pp. 116-117). The party represented all ethnic groups in Sikkim that opposed the monarchy and worked for democratic reforms. As the opposition to Chogyal's party, this party, in the election to the State Council, it secured a total of 8 seats out of 24.

The position of the Chogyal became more critical when the Indo-Chinese clash took place in

²⁰ It was the first 'modern' law regarding land transfers, passed by the British Political Officer John Claude White in 1917. The order mentioned that Bhutias and Lepchas should not 'sell, mortgage or sublet any of their lands to any person other than a Bhutia or Lepcha without the express sanction of the Durbar' and cancelled land transfers passed without approval from the government during the previous twenty-five years.

October, 1962. National emergency was declared in India. Similarly, Sikkim being the protectorate of India and also for its close proximity to Tibet, a state of emergency was declared in Sikkim too. All the trade routes of Sikkim were closed and Indian army was deputed to the borders of Sikkim and Tibet and sealed till January, 1963. The 1962, election of the State Council was not held and the State Council got dissolved. However, the functioning of the Executive Council continued.

In 1966, four more seats were added, one each for the Nepali and Lepcha/Bhutia communities, one for the Tsongs (Limboos) and one for the Scheduled Caste group. Thus, the structure of the State Council was increased to 24.

Table 4.1.4. State Council Seat Reservation, 1966

Sl. No.	Seats	Total
1	Bhutia-Lepcha	7
2	Nepalese	7
3	General	1
4	Sangha	1
5	Schedule Caste	1
6	Tsongs	1
7	Nominated seats	6
8	Total	24

Source: L.B Basnett, 1974. p.128.

Earlier, there were no separate seats reserved for the *Tsongs* (Limboos) in the State Council. They were included in the Nepali community. The 1967, State Council saw them as a separate community. One seat for the Scheduled Castes was reserved in the State Council in 1967.

In the election of the State Council in 1967, the Sikkim National Congress Party under Kazi Lhendup Dorji emerged as the most popular party, securing the highest number of seats. The party of the Chogyal, the Sikkim National Party won five seats. The following table illustrates the results of the 1967 election to the State Council.

Table 4.1.5 State Council Election- 1967

Party	Seats won
Sikkim National Congress	8
Sikkim National Party	5
Sikkim State Congress	2
Limboos	1
Schedule Caste	1
Sangha	1
Appointed	6
Total.	24

Source: AC Sinha, 1975, p. 31.

Right before the fourth election to the State Council, the National Party suffered a split. However, it could not become the party of all the communities. A new party was born out of it, the Sikkim Janata Party, on December 18, 1969, under the leadership of Lal Bahadur Basnett. The party contested the election in April, 1970. The election results are shown in the table below.

Table 4.1.6. State Council Election Results, 1970

Party	Seats won
Sikkim National Party (both factions)	8
Sikkim National Congress (Kazi faction)	5
Sikkim State Congress	4
Schedule Caste (Independent)	1
Appointed	6
Total	24

Source: L.B Basnett, 1974.p.128.

The election result shows light that the Sikkim National Congress, which had become the most popular party in the 1967 election, could secure only five seats out of 18 elected seats. The Sikkim National Party appeared to be the largest party, securing eight seats out of twenty four. In October 1972, a new political party, Sikkim Janata Congress was formed through the merger of the Sikkim State Congress and the Sikkim Janata Party, both of which contested the election of 1973.

On September 23, 1972, the date for the fifth State Council election was announced. It was scheduled for January 1 to 23, 1973. On February 15, 1973, the election results were announced according to which the Sikkim National Party became the largest winning party, securing 11 out of a total of 18 elected seats. The newly formed party, the Sikkim Janata Congress, secured 2 seats and the State National Congress won 5 seats.

Table 4.1.7. State Council Election Results, 1973.

Party	Bhutia-Lepcha	Nepali	Tsong	Scheduled Caste	Sangha	General	Total
Sikkim National Party	7	2	-	1	1	-	11
Sikkim National Congress	-	3	1	-	-	1	5
Sikkim Janata Congress	-	2	-	-	-	-	2
Total	7	7	1	1	1	1	18

Source: L.B Basnett, 1974.p.128.

The Sikkim National Party won the election by absolute majority. Unhappy with the election results, the Sikkim National Congress and Sikkim Janata Congress boycotted the inauguration of

the new Council by Chogyal on March 28, 1973. The Nepalese, under the banner of Sikkim National Congress and Sikkim Janata Congress held a rally in Gangtok with slogans and flags. There seemed to be political unrest in Gangtok that led the Chogyal to deploy police to control the situation. More than a hundred demonstrators were injured in the lathi charge by the police. The situation got worse when the agitation spread to other parts of Sikkim too. The Sikkim Janata Congress and Sikkim National Congress formed a Joint Action Committee (JAC). Kazi Lhendup Khangsarpa became the chairman of the JAC. The JAC laid an ultimatum to the Chogyal to fulfill their demands of responsible government. The Chogyal paid no heed to the demands submitted by the JAC. In April 4, 1973, around 5000 people held black flags and anti-Chogyal slogans in Gangtok and in the district headquarters of South, West and East. There was a civil unrest in the country. Arrest warrants were issued against the political leaders leading the agitation.

At this juncture, the Chogyal had no other option but to request the Indian Government to take over the law and order in their hands. The Indian army, which was based at the border areas since the Chinese incursion took over the situation. A new Chief Administrator, B.S Das was appointed by the Indian Government on April 9, 1973.

The Tripartite Agreement was concluded on May 8, 1973, between the Foreign Secretary of Government of India, the Chogyal and the leaders of political parties of Sikkim. The agreement spells out that a fully responsible government would be established in Sikkim. The agreement made many new arrangements in the country which accorded Chogyal as the constitutional head and not the real ruler of the state (Basnett, 1974, p. 185-188). The agreement also altered the State Council into Sikkim Legislative Assembly. The agreement retained the parity formula as the norm for distribution of seats amongst the Bhutia-Lepcha and Nepalese. Two reserved seats were abolished by the agreement, one Tsong (Limboo) seat and the other was the nominated seats by the Chogyal. The first election (1974) was held on the arrangement of seats reserved as per the agreement of 1973. The election was conducted under the purview of the Election Commission of India.

Election of April 13, 1974, was the first democratic election based on universal suffrage and also the last of the independent country. The result of the election shows that the Sikkim National Congress swept the poll by winning 31 of the 32 seats. Kazi Lhendup Dorjee became the first Chief Minister of Sikkim.

Table 4.1.8. Sikkim Legislative Assembly Election Results, 1974.

Sl. No	Name of the Party	Total seats won
1	Sikkim Congress	31
2	Sikkim National Party	1
3	Total	32

Source: Sikkim Assembly Election, 1974, Election Commission of India.

The rising consciousness of the people into politics may be noted from the number of voters turnout in this election. Total voters turnout was recorded at 34,996, of which 26,767 voted for Sikkim Congress, 1040 voted for Sikkim National Party and 7189 voters voted for independent candidates.

Table 4.1.9. Total Number of Voters (Sikkim Legislative Assembly Election), 1974.

Sl. No	Name of the Party	No. of Votes polled
1	Sikkim Congress	26,767
2	Sikkim National Party	1040
3	Independent candidates	7189
	Total	34,996

Source: Information and Public Relations, Govt. of Sikkim 1974.

Accordingly, on May 10, 1974, a new Sikkim Assembly was constituted by the Chogyal with Lhendup Dorji Khangsarpa as the first Chief minister of democratic Sikkim. In fact, this was a historical day for Sikkim, ending 333 years long monarchy in Sikkim and its journey towards democratic state.

Soon, differences between the Chogyal and the Chief Minister emerged over the Government of Sikkim Bill of April 1974, the Bill proposed for the restructuring of the entire administration of Sikkim. The provision of the Bill included a three-tier system of administration where the ruler (Chogyal) would be the constitutional head; the state administration would be led by the Chief Executive and the Chief Minister and his cabinet would be incharge of the non-reserved subjects (Sinha, 1975, p. 35). The Chogyal, initially reluctant to accept the Bill, finally signed the Bill on July 4, 1974, almost after three months of the introduction of the Bill in the Assembly (Bhattacharya, 1994, p. 83). His very ascent to the bill made him the constitutional head and he lost all his position and power as the real ruler. The Chief Minister, L.D Kazi, immediately approached the Indian Government for the arrangement of the provisions in Sikkim as per the Government of Sikkim Bill, 1974. Acting upon the request of the Chief Minister of Sikkim, the

Indian Parliament enacted the 36th Constitution (Amendment Bill) 1974, which made Sikkim an 'Associate State' of India. The Bill also made the provision of the inclusion of two members from Sikkim in both the Houses of the Parliament.

Back in Sikkim, the Government of Sikkim Act 1974, faced a challenge by the Chogyal in the Central Court in Gangtok. Knowing that the court has no jurisdiction, the Assembly in its emergent meeting passed a resolution which declared the institution of Chogyal to be altogether abolished and Sikkim, from then onwards would be the democratic state and part of India. The statement made it clear that Sikkim would be merged with the Indian Union and would not remain an independent country anymore. Sikkim went through an opinion poll whether to be part of India. The poll went in favour of the merger, thus, enabling the Indian Parliament to pass the 36th Constitutional Amendment Act on May 16, 1975. The Act recognized Sikkim as the 22nd state of India. This was the end of Sikkim's existence as an independent state as well as the supremacy of the Bhutias. This was the change in the overall status of the Bhutias in Sikkim society.

Section II

Role of Bhutias in Politics in the Pre-merger Period

The evolution and growth of political Institutions and their inter-tribal relationship in Sikkim can be traced back to the Lepcha system. Before the Bhutias established their political hold in Sikkim, the Lepchas, the primitive group of Sikkim, had their own way of governing their clans and people. The Lepchas adopted a patriarchal system where people were divided into various patrilineal clans (*Ptso*). Each clan was under the chieftain (*Athang*). Along with this, there was a system of having a local lord called *Tur* who had number of clans under him. However, the king, *Punu* was the apex authority. This pattern of political system under Lepchas continued till the beginning of the 17th century, when the Bhutia rule started in 1642. As discussed in the earlier chapter, the coming of the Bhutias in Sikkim was the result of the Tibetan persecution of the Red- Hat Sect Buddhists by the Yellow- Hat Sect in Tibet, which led a large number of Tibetans to take refuge in Sikkim.

The initial journey of the Bhutias in Sikkim was faced with encounters with the then existing ethnic groups of Sikkim, particularly, the Lepchas, Magars and the Limboos (Roy, 2012, p 74).

The Bhutias required fertile lands and areas for their fodder, so they began to influence the Lepchas and tried to bring them into their fold. First thing the Bhutias did was converting the Lepchas into Buddhism. Lepchas, being the nature worshipper, was easily adapted to the new religion. Gradually, this conversion led to building of the Bhutia authority over the Lepchas, hence beginning the new era in political history of Sikkim.

The new political system established by the Tibetan settlers, so-called the Bhutias, was based on the agreement with the Lepchas. The Lepchas were treated as equals with the Bhutias as the rulers. In spite of some initial opposition from the Lepchas, the Bhutias were gradually successful in extending both spiritual and temporal influence in Sikkim.

The political roots under Bhutia monarchy in Sikkim were established under the three influential lamas: *Lapchh-yun Nakgha Jigme, Nagada Sempa Chhimpo and Katu Rinji Chhimpo*. With the coronation of Phuntsog Namgyal as the Dharma Raja (Chogyal) in the year 1642, the Buddhist embedded Bhutia rule began in Sikkim. The journey of Bhutias in politics in Sikkim can be divided in two periods: a) before the merger and b) after 1975 (after the merger).

The participation and role of Bhutias in politics in the pre-merger period was not seen as a issue as the Bhutia themselves were the ruling class in erstwhile Sikkim. The rule of the Namgyal dynasty portrayed the representation of only the high class Bhutia people in politics. The Bhutia commoners never entered into politics. There were no prescribed set of laws for the conduct of elections before the merger period. The elections were conducted based on various proclamations declared by the Maharaja with certain rules and selection formats. It was only in 1953 that the introduction of parity system paved way for the entry of other communities into politics. Before this, politics was reserved for Chogyal and his nominated people, especially the aristocratic family members. Till the first election under uniform electoral system in 1974, elections were conducted on the lines of Maharaja's declarations. However, the elections held in 1953, 1958 and 1967 gave lead into seat allotments to all communities in the State Council. So far, Bhutias were the sole community representing politics but the merger of Sikkim broke this hegemony and their representation and participation in politics saw some changes.

The introduction of electoral politics also saw the beginning of the gradual marginalisation of Bhutias in politics. The Chogyal tried to retain its hold on Sikkim in the later phases of its rule

when it was encountered with resistance by many groups. Attempts were made to protect the interest of the Bhutia and Buddhist Lepchas through the Proclamation of the Maharaja. The political development of this period have been discussed in the previous section.

Through the proclamation of Maharaja in 1953, the provision for the inclusion of other communities in the State Council was made. A total of 17 seats were arranged, where 12 seats were elected and 5 seats were appointed by the Chogyal. Though this representation brought new balance to politics and marked the beginning of power sharing among the Bhutias, Lepchas and Nepalese, politics remained centred on Bhutia domination. Even after implication of parity formula, not much difference was seen in the role played by Bhutias in politics. The position was easily maintained in the elections to the State Council, through election and nomination.

Table 4.2.1. Community-wise Representation in the State Council, 1953

Community	Seats won
Nepali	6
Bhutia- Lepcha	6
Nominated by Chogyal	5
Total	17

Source: *Encyclopaedia of North East India, Volume III-Sikkim, 2007.*

The introduction of *Sangha* seat in 1958 further allowed the Bhutias to extend their influence in politics. The changes in the representation of seats were in 1958 by adding two more seats in the State Council: one for *Sangha* (representing monasteries and *lamas*) and the other for Sikkimese general population, the total number being 20. In the election to the State Council in 1958, Nepali and Bhutia secured equal seats of 6 each. The added advantage to the Bhutias was that their number increased as the *Sangha* seat and the remaining nominated seats by the Chogyal went in their favour.

Table 4.2.2 Community-wise Representation in the State Council, 1958

Community	Seats won
Nepali	6
Bhutia- Lepcha	6
Tsong (Limboos)	1
General	1
Nominated by Chogyal	6
Total	20

Source: *Encyclopaedia of North East India, Volume III-Sikkim, 2007.*

The *Sangha* seat introduced in 1958, represents the role and domination of the Bhutias in Sikkim politics. The political leaders contesting the elections in 1953 and 1958 mostly belonged to the Bhutia community. It is obvious that the political party of Maharaja represented all Bhutia Lepcha candidates, but also the other political parties contesting the elections had most of their candidates from Bhutia community.

In the 1958 election, out of total 10 candidates from different political parties contesting the election from Gangtok constituency, 6 were Bhutia, 3 Nepali and 1 Lepcha.

Table 4.2.3. Community-wise Candidates Contesting the Election from Gangtok Constituency-1958

Nepali	Bhutia	Lepcha
Narendra Narshing	Sonam Tshering	Tendup Lepcha
Haridas Pradhan	Kazang Wangdi	
Reshmi Prasad Alley	Chemgba Bhutia	
	Kazi Narbu Dadul	
	Karma Lama	
	Dubo Bhutia	

Source: Madhumita Bhadra, 1992, p. 130.

Similarly, candidates from the North-Central Constituency, out of a total of 8 candidates contesting the election, four were Bhutias, three Nepalese and one Lepcha.

Table 4.2.4
Community-wise Candidates Contesting the Election from North-Central Constituency-1958

Nepali	Bhutia	Lepcha
Nakul Pradhan	Thendu Bhutia	Athang Lepcha
Harta B. Chhetri	Martam Topdan	
Ratna B. Khatri	Tashi Rinzim Kazi	
	Phurba Bhutia	

Source: Madhumita Bhadra, 1992, p. 130.

Namchi constituency had nine candidates contesting in the election, six of whom were Nepalese, two Bhutias and one Lepcha.

Table 4.2.5. Community wise Candidates Contesting the Election from Namchi Constituency-1958

Nepali	Bhutia	Lepcha
Kashiraj Pradhan	Kazi Norbu Wangdi	Nayen Tshering Lepcha
Shankhaman Rai	Dubo Bhutia	
Ratna Kamal Dewan		
Kulbahadur Thapa		
Kali Prasad Rai		
Kaiser Bahadur Thapa		

Source: Madhumita Bhadra, 1992, p. 131.

It is clear from the tables above that the highest number of candidates were Bhutias. The Lepchas are the least to contest the election. Nepalese had a close fight with the Bhutias.

Even the Sikkim National Congress (SNC 1960), which was in opposition to the Chogyals party, happened to be a Bhutia (Basnett, 1974, pp. 116-117). The year 1966 saw further inclusion of seats in the State Council. Four more seats were added, one each for the Nepali and Lepcha/Bhutia, Tsongs (Limboos) and Scheduled Caste. The distribution of number of seats of the State Council was increased to 24. This increase in seats for all communities may be seen as confirmation and more participation of people in politics. This, however, may not be considered danger posed to the ruling Bhutias but it enabled the community to be more participatory in the elected form. Along with other communities, more Bhutia people got the opportunity to be included into politics.

It is correct to mention here that the Proclamation of 1966 created special constituency known as the “*Sangha* Constituency”. The constituency was reserved for the representation of one *lama* (monk) as a member to the State Council. The elected *lama* would represent the electoral college of Buddhist monasteries. It is through this constituency the Bhutia monks of Sikkim are still directly involved in the political affairs of the state. The “*Sangha* seat” has been retained even today.

The representation of Bhutias (other than the royal family and nobility) started with the formation of political parties and rise of democratic movements against monarchy and feudalism. India’s independence in 1947 inspired the people and many political parties like Praja Sudharak Samaj, Praja Sammelan and Praja Mandal were formed. The point to be noted here is that leaders of the two political parties were Bhutias. Praja Sammelan was led by Lhendup Dorjee, Praja Mandal was led by Sonam Tshering, Kejang Tshering and Tashi Tshering and Praja Sudharak Samaj was led by Nepali leaders Shri Gobardhan Pradhan and Shri Dhan Bahadur Tewari (Subba, 2011, p. 60). The people, including Bhutias, who believed the monarchy system was discriminative in nature, found their ways of participating in politics through various political activities against the Chogyal.

The Community wise representation in the State Council, 1973, elicits that more seats were included in the State Council. Bhutia-Lepcha and Nepali secured 7 seats each and Tsong, General Sikkimese, Scheduled Caste and *Sangha* secured one seat each. Nepali communities together gave a tough fight to the ruling Bhutia, yet Bhutia managed to retain its hold until 1973.

Table 4.2.6. Community-wise Representation in the State Council, 1973

Community	Seats won
Bhutia-Lepcha	7
Nepali	7
Tsong	1
Schedule Caste	1
Sangha	1
General	1
Total	18

Source: L.B Basnett, 1974, p.128.

The seats reservation policy of Chogyal underwent a change with the signing of the agreement in May 8 , 1973, between the government of India, the Chogyal and the existing political parties of

Sikkim. The agreement replaced the State Council with the Legislative Assembly with total 32 seats. The agreement followed the same parity formula of sharing the seats amongst Bhutia, Lepcha and the Nepalese. The Tsong (Limboo) nominated seat by the Chogyal stood abolished. Bhutia and Lepcha enjoyed 15 seats in the previous elections to State Council but the redistribution of seats as per the Presidential Ordinance of 1979, the Bhutia- Lepcha seats were reduced to 12 from 15 seats. Since then, Bhutias and Lepchas have been contesting elections for the twelve seats as BL (Bhuita –Lepcha) in the State legislative Assembly (Basnett, 1974.p.128).

The election of April, 1974, the first democratic election, left the Chogyal with no more power to be the ruler. However, Kazi Lhendup Dorjee who was the principal anti -Chogyal political leader, was a Bhutia himself.

As rulers, the Bhutias never felt that their rights needed to be protected and they never had political organisation of their own till 1940's. Various proclamations issued by the Chogyal from time to time protected their interest. However, we cannot deny the fact that some kind of pressure groups of the landlords, *Kazi* and *Lamas* of monasteries existed since the very early days in Sikkim. Being loyal to the Chogyal, these groups were part of the decision makings of the royal government. Though these groups were non-associational group, yet they enjoyed both administrative and judicial authorities within their territorial jurisdictions. Similarly, the Bhutia *Lamas* also placed their position in politics in Sikkim. They were instrumental in maintaining the socio-cultural and political identity of Sikkim even after the merger (Sengupta, 1985, P. 128).

So, till the merger, Bhutia as a community is seen to be the most profoundly dominating people in all aspects of Sikkimese society. After the abolition of monarchy under the Namgyal dynasty, Kazi Lhendup Dorji was elected as the first chief minister of the state. However, the government under Kazi Lhendup Dorji could not last long. Since 1979, Sikkim has been ruled by five Chief Ministers mainly belonging to Nepali community. This increasing Nepali movement in Sikkim politics has brought major changes in the political structure of Sikkim. This act of Nepali taking over the politics of Sikkim into their hands has left some impact on the Bhutia and Lepcha. Accepting the political loss Bhutias also fear the cultural extinction as well (Raizada 2012, p.12).

The next section of the chapter tries to see whether the change in power equation has been able to change the Bhutia dominating feature in Sikkim politics.

Section III

Bhutias in Politics in Post-merger Period

The merger of Sikkim with India brought about a fundamental change in the administrative as well as the social structure of Sikkim. Not only did the Bhutias lose their position as the ruling class of an independent kingdom, but Buddhism too ceased to be the state religion. It naturally curtailed the role of the *Lamas* in administration. Yet, in recognition of the erstwhile status of Sikkim, certain special characteristics were retained through the constitutional amendment.²¹ Among these were the *Sangha* seat, the Ecclesiastical Department and of course, the parity system. The existence of the *Sangha* seat and the Ecclesiastical Department was the acceptance of the significance of religion. Yet, with the passage of time, one can observe a gradual secularisation and of course the gradual marginalisation of the Bhutias in politics. I have tried to trace that trend in the next section.

After the merger, the issue of Scheduled Tribe order by the Indian Government in 1978 further dismantled the position of the Bhutias in the state. Bhutias and Lepchas were included in the Scheduled Tribe list with eight other sub-tribes of Bhutias such as Drukpa, Sherpa, Chumbipa, Yalmo, Tibetan, Kagatay, Tromopa and Dophapa. Though unhappy with the inclusion of some more communities at par with them under the name 'Bhutia', the Bhutias strove to retain their domination in terms of politics.

The share of 12 BL (Bhutia-Lepcha) seats enabled the community to have their share in politics. Among the 12 BL seats, Bhutias always had a majority. Most of the reserved BL seats were contested by the Bhutias.

The first Assembly Election in the state (1974) saw an increase of Bhutia representation in politics. The election was held following the 32 seat reservation policy of the Proclamation of Representation of Sikkim Subjects Act of 1974. The proclamation further enhanced the numerical strength of the Legislative Assembly from 24 to 32, where Bhutia-Lepcha reserved seats were increased to 15, while 15 seats were for Nepalese, 1 for Scheduled Caste and 1 for *Sangha*. So, including *Sangha* seat Bhutias-Lepchas had 16 seats reserved in the State Assembly.

²¹ 36th Amendment Act of the Indian Constitution came into force on 26th April, 1975. Sikkim became full fledged State of the Indian Union.

Table 4.3.1. Distribution of Seats in 1974

Sl.No	Community	Seats
1	Bhutia-Lepcha	15
2	Scheduled Castes	1
3	Sangha	1
4	Nepali	15
5	Total	32

Source: Statistical Report, Assembly Election, 1974, Election Commission, Govt. of India.

The Sikkim's politics, even after its merger was characterised by rifts in representation among communities. The community wise representation and distribution of seats in the Assembly election occupied a prominent place for discussion and criticism amongst political parties and political organisations. It has become the major issue in Sikkimese politics since the merger. The political parties were not happy with the increase of the Bhutia-Lepcha seats to 15. The political parties like Sikkim Janata Congress and Sikkim Prajatantra Party submitted the proposal for amendment of the Representation of the People Act, 1951 for the abolition of 15 reserved seats for Nepalese and the reduction of reserved seats for Bhutia- Lepchas from 15 to 12. The Representation of the People (Amendment) Bill, 1979 (Bill No.79) was proposed by the Sikkim Janata Government in May, 1979. There was some political blockade in the passing of the bill due to the dissolution of Lok Sabha. Nevertheless, the Representation of the People (Amendment) Ordinance, 1979, was issued by the President of India and sought to amend Section 5 A of the Representation of the People (Act), 1951. The ordinance added new features:, reservation of 12 seats for Bhutia-Lepcha, out of 15 seats, reservation of 2 seats for Scheduled Castes, 1 seat was to be retained for *Sangha* and 17 seats declared as general. The Ordinance abolished the provision of seats for Nepalese and included the right of the plainmen to contest the election from the General seats. However, the ordinance benefited the Bhutia and Lepcha as they were allowed to contest elections for the general seats as well in addition to their 12 reserved seats (Basnett, 1974.p.128).

This new seat reservation set up in Sikkim created apprehensions among the Nepalese to a greater extent as they had to share their seats with others, especially the plainmen, Bhutias and Lepchas in the Assembly. If we look the community-wise representation ratio in state politics, we can see that Bhutias and Lepchas benefited the most and could have stronger hold in state decision making.

By virtue of being the original inhabitants and the ruler, these communities still enjoyed certain privileges in state politics. In spite of a feeling of deprivation of political power and fear of losing their identity in the new democratic set up, the Bhutias have been able to represent themselves as the most influential group (politically, socially and economically) in Sikkimese society.

The hope of retaining their original status was given by the new political party, the Sikkim Janta Party, under the leadership of Nar Bahadur Bhandari in the election campaign of 1979. Sikkim Janta Party raised the issue of anti-merger and the reduction of BL seats during the previous government led by L.D Kazi. The Sikkim Janta Party received widespread support from all sections of society by winning 16 seats out of 32 in 1979. He was also able to win the lone *Sangha* seat.

The Bhutias, as a single community, had a larger share in the government. Out of 32 seats, 12 were reserved for Scheduled Tribes, out of which 9 were won by Bhutias, 6 from Sikkim Janta Party, the ruling party and 2 Bhutias from Sikkim Congress (Revolutionary), 1 seat from SPC and 3 seats were won by Lepchas, 2 from Sikkim Congress (R) and the other from Sikkim Janata Parishad.

Table 4.3.2. Election Results of BL Seats in State Legislative Assembly -1979

Sl. No.	Constituency	Name of the Winner	Political Party
1	Tashiding	Dawgyal Pentso Bhutia	Sikkim Janata Parishad (SJP)
2	Rinchenpong	Katuk Bhutia	Sikkim Janata Parishad (SJP)
3	Ralong	Chamla Tshering	Sikkim Congress (Revolutionary)
4	Pathing	Ram Lepcha	Sikkim Congress (Revolutionary)
5	Djongu	Athup Lepcha	Sikkim Janata Parishad (SJP)
6	Lachen Mangshila	Tenzing Dadul Bhutia	Sikkim Janata Parishad (SJP)
7	Kabi Tingda	Sonam Tshering	Sikkim Congress (Revolutionary)
8	Rakdong Tintek	Dugo Bhutia	Sikkim Prajatantra Congress
9	Martam	Samten Tshering Bhutia	Sikkim Janata Parishad (SJP)
10	Rumtek	Dadul Bhutia	Sikkim Janata Parishad (SJP)
11	Assam Lingjey	Sherab Palden Lepcha	Sikkim Congress (Revolutionary)
12	Ranka	Dorji Tshering Bhutia	Sikkim Janata Parishad (SJP)
13	Total	12 (Bhutia=9, Lepcha =3)	

Source: Election Commission of India-State Elections, 1979.

In the general assembly election of 1979, 9 Bhutia candidates and 3 Lepcha candidates were elected amongst the 12 BL seats. Though from different political parties, Bhutia candidates secured the highest number of votes. So, out of a total of 32 seats, the Bhutia representation was 31.25 percent in the new government under Nar Bahadur Bhandari in 1979. The Lepchas and Bhutias benefited the most from the Bhandari government. During the government, a new language policy was introduced in 1981, where Bhutia and Lepcha languages were to be introduced and taught up to class ten in government schools in Sikkim. The Bhutia and Lepcha languages got acceptance and recognition as optional subjects up to class XII by the CBSE board in 1984-85. The new government also tried to restore B L seats to 16, but the process was incomplete.

In the next general election in 1985, Nar Bahadur Bhandari contested the election under the banner of a new political party, Sikkim Sangram Parishad (SSP) and became the Chief Minister again. In this election, the Bhutias retained 9 seats in the Assembly, leaving 3 with the Lepchas. This time, all the Bhutia candidates won from the ruling party (SSP), except one from the Indian National Congress (INC) party. The Bhutia representation was 28%.

Table 4.3.3. Election Results of BL Seats in State Legislative Assembly, 1985

Constituency	Name of the Winner	Political Party
Tashiding	Ugen Pintso Bhutia	Sikkim Sangram Parishad
Rinchenpong	Ongdi Bhutia	Sikkim Sangram Parishad
Ralong	Sonam Gyatso Bhutia	Sikkim Sangram Parishad
Pathing	Ram Lepcha	Sikkim Sangram Parishad
Djongu	Sonam Choda Lepcha	Sikkim Sangram Parishad
Lachen-Mangshila	Thokchok Bhutia	Sikkim Sangram Parishad
Kabi Tingda	Kalzang Gyatso Bhutia	Indian National Congress (INC)
Rakdong Tintek	Phuchung Bhutia	Sikkim Sangram Parishad
Martam	Chamla Tsering Bhutia	Sikkim Sangram Parishad
Rumtek	Ongay Tob Bhutia	Sikkim Sangram Parishad
Assam Lingjey	Sonam Dapden Lepcha	Sikkim Sangram Parishad
Ranka	Dorjee Tshering Bhutia	Sikkim Sangram Parishad
Total	12 (Bhutia- 9, Lepcha -3)	

Source: Election Commission of India-State Elections, 1985.

The fourth general Sikkim Assembly election of 1989 brought a different picture of politics. The election of 1989 witnessed 118 candidates in total contesting the election: the Indian National Congress, regional parties, namely the Sangram Parishad and the Rising Sun Party and independent candidates. This time also, the election verdict went in favour of Sikkim Sangram Parishad, securing all 32 seats in the State.

Table 4.3.4. Election Results of BL Seats in State Legislative Assembly, 1989

Constituencies	1989	Political Party
Tashiding (ST)	Ugen pintso Bhutia	Sikkim Sangram Parishad
Rinchenpong (ST)	Chong lamu Bhutia	Sikkim Sangram Parishad
Ralong (ST)	Sonam Gyatso Kaleon	Sikkim Sangram Parishad
Pathing (ST)	Ram Lepcha	Sikkim Sangram Parishad
Djongu (ST)	Sonam Choda Lepcha	Sikkim Sangram Parishad
Lachen Mangshila (ST)	Tasa Tengey Lepcha	Sikkim Sangram Parishad
Kabi Tingda (ST)	Hangu Tshering Bhutia	Sikkim Sangram Parishad
Rakdong Tintek (ST)	Phuchung Bhutia	Sikkim Sangram Parishad
Martam (ST)	Chamla Tshering Bhutia	Sikkim Sangram Parishad
Rumtek (ST)	O.T Bhutia	Sikkim Sangram Parishad
Assam Lingje (ST)	Sonam Dupden Lepcha	Sikkim Sangram Parishad
Ranka (ST)	Dorjee Tshering Bhutia	Sikkim Sangram Parishad
Total	12 (Bhutia- 8, Lepcha -4)	

Source: Election Commission of India-State Elections, 1989.

In this election, out of 12 BL seats, the Bhutias secured 8 seats, leaving 4 with the Lepchas. Bhutias emerged as a single community, taking the lead with 25% seats in the state. In the government formed by Sikkim Sangram Parishad in 1989, out of 13 cabinet ministers, (6) 44.4% was given to Bhutia-Lepchas. Though a small proportion of population in the state, the Bhutia-Lepchas were well represented in the government. The winning of the election in 1989 and formation of the government was the third time victory of Nar Bahadur Bhandari.

Table 4.3.5. Election Results of BL Seats in State Legislative Assembly, 1994

Constituencies	1994	Political Party
Tashiding (ST)	Thutop Bhutia	Sikkim Sangram Parishad
Rinchenpong (ST)	Phur Tshering Lepcha	Sikkim Democratic Front
Ralong (ST)	Dorjee Dazom Bhutia	Sikkim Democratic Front
Pathing (ST)	Ram Lepcha	Sikkim Sangram Parishad
Djongu (ST)	Sonam Ghyoda Lepcha	Indian National Congress
Lachen Mangshila (ST)	Hissey Lachungpa	Sikkim Democratic Front
Kabi Tingda (ST)	Thinley Tshering Bhutia	Sikkim Democratic Front
Rakdong Tintek (ST)	Mingma Tshering Sherpa	Sikkim Sangram Parishad
Martam (ST)	Dorjee Tshering Lepcha	Sikkim Sangram Parishad
Rumtek (ST)	Menlom Lepcha	Sikkim Sangram Parishad
Assam Lingjei (ST)	Tsheten Tashi Bhutia	Sikkim Sangram Parishad
Ranka (ST)	Rinzing Ongmu Bhutia	Sikkim Sangram Parishad
Total	12 (Bhutia- 6, Lepcha -5 Sherpa-1)	

Source: Election Commission of India-State Elections, 1994.

The 1994 election saw the decline of the Bhutias in securing the BL seats. 6 out of 12 was won by Bhutias, 5 seats were taken by the Lepchas and Sherpas could win 1 seat. This is an interesting twist that the Sherpas, for the first time received a chance to represent in the Legislative Assembly by winning one seat. It must be noted that Sherpas received the status as one of the sub-tribes of Bhutia group in 1978 when Bhutias were declared as Scheduled Tribe. Before this, the Sherpas were not recognised as Bhutias, though they are of Tibetan origin. The Representation of People Act (Amendment Act) of 1980 clearly stated that the 12 BL seats are also meant for the sub-groups of Bhutia that were included in 1978.

Table 4.3.6. Election Results of BL Seats in State Legislative Assembly, 1999

Constituencies	1999	Political Party
Tashiding (ST)	Thutop Bhutia	Sikkim Democratic Front
Rinchenpong (ST)	Ongden Tshering Lepcha	Sikkim Democratic Front
Ralong (ST)	Dorjee Dazom Bhutia	Sikkim Democratic Front
Pathing (ST)	Sonam Dorjee	Sikkim Sangram Parishad
Djongu (ST)	Sonam Gyatso Lepcha	Sikkim Sangram Parishad
Lachen Mangshila (ST)	Hissey Lachungpa	Sikkim Democratic Front

Kabi Tingda (ST)	Thinley Tshering Bhutia	Sikkim Democratic Front
Rakdong Tintek (ST)	Mingma Tshering Sherpa	Sikkim Sangram Parishad
Martam (ST)	Dorjee Tshering Lepcha	Sikkim Democratic Front
Rumtek (ST)	K.T Gyaltzen	Sikkim Democratic Front
Assam Lingjey (ST)	Tsheten Tashi Bhutia	Sikkim Democratic Front
Ranka (ST)	Tsheten Dorjee Lpcha	Sikkim Democratic Front
Total	12 (Bhutia-7, Lepcha -4 Sherpa-1)	

Source: Election Commission of India-State Elections, 1999.

The election of 1999 again saw the distribution of 12 BL seats among the Bhutias, Lepchas and Sherpas. Bhutias won 8 seats, Lepchas 4 and Sherpas won 1 seat. Since the very beginning, there has always been a tug of war between the two, where Bhutia always emerged as the winner. However, the 2004 general election saw a change in the Bhutia-Lepcha representatives. The Lepchas won the majority seats from the 12 BL reserved seats. Lepchas were ahead of Bhutias with 6 seats, Bhutias with 5 and Sherpas with 1 seat.

Table 4.3.7. Election Results of BL Seats in State Legislative Assembly, 2004

Constituencies	2004	Political Party
Tashiding (ST)	D. N Thakarpa (Bhutia)	Sikkim Democratic Front
Rinchenpong (ST)	Dawcho Lepcha	Sikkim Democratic Front
Ralong (ST)	Dorjee Dazom Bhutia	Sikkim Democratic Front
Pathing (ST)	Mingma Tshering Sherpa	Sikkim Democratic Front
Djongu (ST)	Sonam Gyatso Lepcha	Sikkim Democratic Front
Lachen Mangshila (ST)	Hissey Lachungpa	Sikkim Democratic Front
Kabi Tingda (ST)	Thinley Tshering Bhutia	Sikkim Democratic Front
Rakdong Tintek (ST)	Norzang Lepcha	Sikkim Democratic Front
Martam (ST)	Dorjee Tshering Lepcha	Sikkim Democratic Front
Rumtek (ST)	Menlom Lepcha	Sikkim Democratic Front
Assam Lingjey (ST)	Kunga Zangpo Bhutia	Sikkim Democratic Front
Ranka (ST)	Nimkit Lepcha	Sikkim Democratic Front
Total	12 (Bhutia- 5, Lepcha -6, Sherpa-1)	

Source: Election Commission of India-State Elections, 2004.

A decline in the Bhutia representation has been noticed since 2004, after the new party, Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF), formed the government. This reduction of seat occupation by the Bhutias in state politics has somehow impacted their influence and their importance as the ruling elite in the state. A consistent decrease in the representation of Bhutias is seen in the remaining elections in the state. The number of Bhutia representation in the 2004 election came down to 5, whereas the Lepcha representation was increased to 6. In the earlier elections where the parity formula was applied, the Bhutias were the dominant group. It is seen that since merger, only 20 percent of Lepchas are represented in the Assembly, as compared to 80 percent of Bhutias.

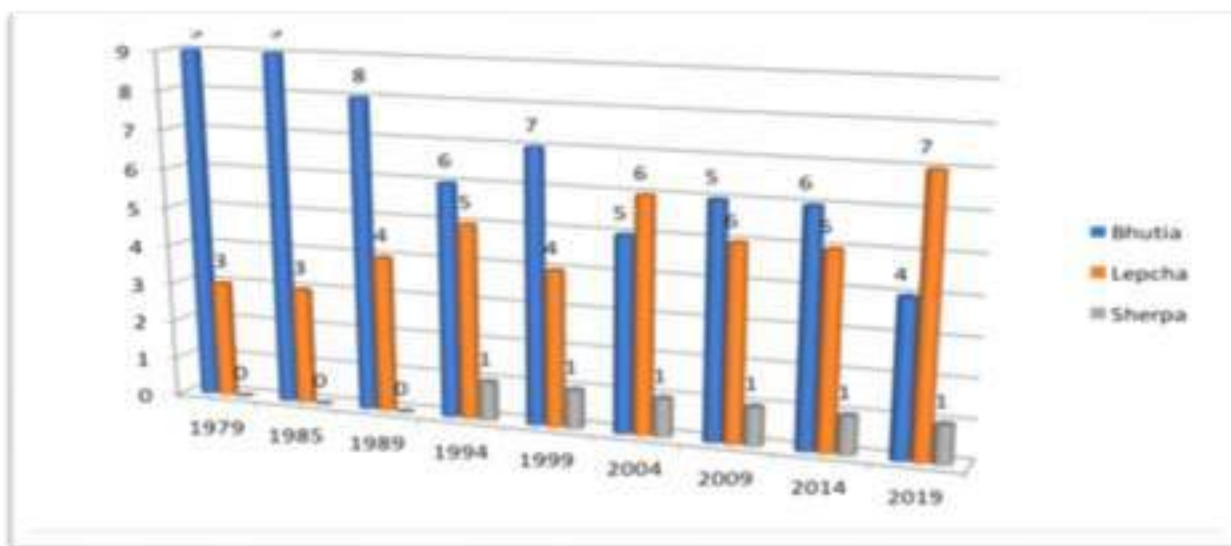
The elections of 2009, 2014 and 2019 were based on the delimitation of the parliamentary and Assembly orders, Election Commission of India, 2008. There was a change in the constituency arrangement for the purposes of both the election and the administration of the state. The delimitation process changed the electoral map of Sikkim. The earlier reserved constituencies for Bhutias/Lepchas were rearranged with the allocation of new territorial coverage. Except for the five constituencies of Rhenock, Rinchenpong, Melli, Shyari and Dzongu, the rest of the constituencies were created through total territorial redistribution. The demand put forth by the political parties and especially by the Bhutia-Lepcha communities that the earlier constituency wise reservation of seats had a lower number of voters belonging to the two communities was somehow meted out by the new delimitation process. The delimitation, however, did not increase the assembly seats, but the population arrangement was made as per the community voters.

Table 4.3.8. B-L Seats in State Assembly Elections (1979-2019)

Community	1979	1985	1989	1994	1999	2004	2009	2014	2019	Total
Bhutia	9	9	8	6	7	5	5	6	4	60
Lepcha	3	3	4	5	4	6	6	5	7	42
Sherpa	-	-	-	1	1	1	1	1	1	6

Source: Election Commission of India-State Elections, (1979–2004).

Fig. 4.3.1.
Graphical Presentation of Community-wise Representation of B-L Seats in State Assembly Elections (1979-2019)



Source: Prepared on the basis of Table No. 4.3.8.

The state Assembly election results (1979 -2019) in the state after the merger brought the significant fact that initially Bhutia representation had been greater than Lepchas in the 12 B-L reserved seats, but the trend changed from 2004 onwards. In the 2004, 2009 and 2019 elections, Lepchas won the majority seats, as many as 7 seats in 2019. It is seen that from 1994 election onwards, Sherpa has been representing at least one seat in the BL category.

The following tables (Tables 4.3.9, 4.3.10 & 4.3.11) presents the distribution of BL seats in the Assembly elections of 2009, 2014 and 2019.

Table 4.3.9. Election Results of BL Seats in State Legislative Assembly, 2009

Constituencies	2009	Political Party
Yoksam-Tashiding (BL)	Dawcho Lepcha	Sikkim Democratic Front
Rinchenpong (BL)	D.N Thakarpa (Bhutia)	Sikkim Democratic Front
Daramdin (BL)	Tenzing Sherpa	Sikkim Democratic Front
Barfung (BL)	Sonam Gyatso Bhutia	Sikkim Democratic Front
Tumen-Lingi (BL)	Ugen Gyatso Bhutia	Sikkim Democratic Front
Gnathang-Machong (BL)	L.M Lepcha	Sikkim Democratic Front

Kabi Lungchuk (BL)	Thiney Tshering Bhutia	Sikkim Democratic Front
Djongu (BL)	Sonam Gyatso Lepcha	Sikkim Democratic Front
Lachen Mangan (BL)	Tshering Wangdi Lepcha	Sikkim Democratic Front
Gangtok (BL)	Dorjee Namgyal Bhutia	Sikkim Democratic Front
Martam-Rumtek (BL)	Menlom Lepcha	Sikkim Democratic Front
Shyari (BL)	K.T Gyaltzen	Sikkim Democratic Front
Total	12 (Bhutia-5, Lepcha -6, Sherpa-1)	

Source: Election Commission of India-State Elections, 2009.

Table 4.3.10. Election Results of BL Seats in State Legislative Assembly, 2014

Constituencies	2014	Political Party
Yoksam-Tashiding (BL)	Sonam Dadul Bhutia	Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF)
Rinchenpong (BL)	Karma Sonam Lepcha	Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF)
Daramdin (BL)	Da Norbu Sherpa	Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF)
Barfung (BL)	Dorjee Dazom Bhutia	Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF)
Tumen-Lingi (BL)	Ugen T. Gyatso Bhutia	Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF)
Gnathang-Machong (BL)	Dorjee Tshering Lepcha	Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF)
Kabi Lungchuk (BL)	Ugen Nedup Bhutia	Sikkim Kranti kari Morcha (SKM)
Djongu (BL)	Sonam Gyatso Lepcha	Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF)
Lachen Mangan (BL)	Tshering Wangdi Lepcha	Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF)
Gangtok (BL)	Pintso Chopel (Lepcha)	Sikkim Kranti kari Morcha (SKM)
Martam-Rumtek (BL)	Mechung Bhutia	Sikkim Kranti kari Morcha (SKM)
Shyari (BL)	Kunga Nima Lepcha	Sikkim Kranti kari Morcha (SKM)
Total	12 (Bhutia- 5, Lepcha -6 Sherpa-1)	

Source: Election Commission of India-State Elections, 2014.

Table 4.3.11. Election Results of BL Seats in State Legislative Assembly, 2019

Constituencies	2019	Political Party
Yoksam-Tashiding (BL)	Sangay Lepcha	Sikkim Krantikari Morcha(SKM)
Rinchenpong (BL)	Karma Sonam Lepcha	Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF)
Daramdin (BL)	Mingma Norbu Sherpa	Sikkim Krantikari Morcha(SKM)
Barfung (BL)	Tashi Thendup Bhutia	Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF)
Tumen-Lingi (BL)	Ugen T. Gyatso Bhutia	Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF)
Gnathang-Machong (BL)	Dorjee Tshering Lepcha	Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF)

Kabi Lungchuk (BL)	Karma Loday Bhutia	Sikkim Krantikari Morcha(SKM)
Djongu (BL)	Pinto Namgyal Lepcha	Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF)
Lachen Mangan (BL)	Samdup Lepcha	Sikkim Krantikari Morcha(SKM)
Gangtok (BL)	Yon Tshering Lepcha	Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)
Martam-Rumtek (BL)	Sonam Venchungpa (Bhutia)	Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)
Shyari (BL)	Kunga Nima Lepcha	Sikkim Krantikari Morcha(SKM)
Total	12 (Bhutia- 4, Lepcha -7, Sherpa-1)	

Source: Election Commission of India-State Elections, 2019.

A comparative study of community wise representation in Sikkim Legislative Assembly (1974-2019) is presented in the table below.

Table 4.3.12.

Election wise / Community wise Representation in Sikkim Legislative Assembly: 1974-2019

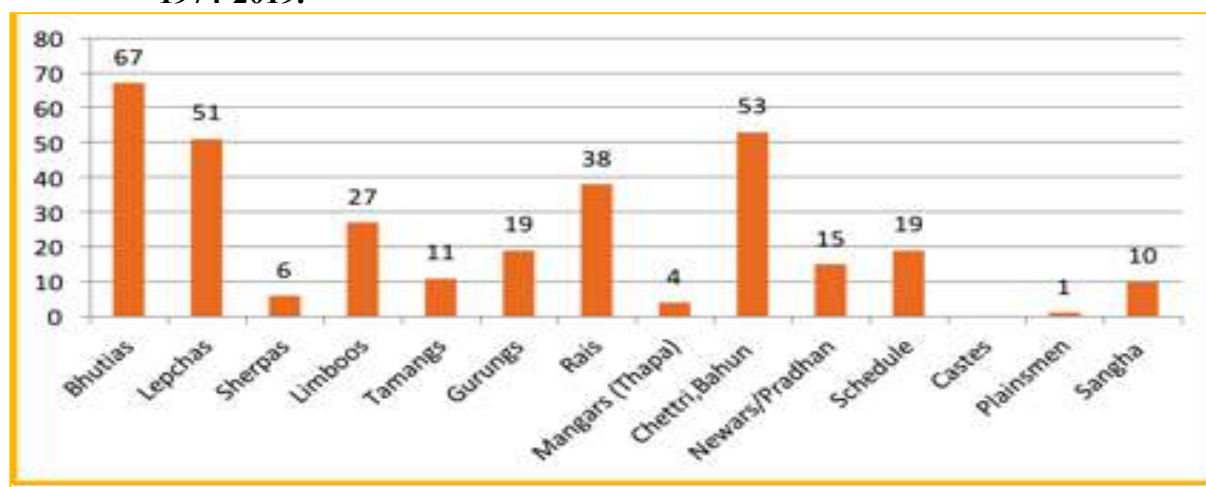
Communities	1974/ 1979	1979/ 1985	1985/ 1989	1989/ 1994	1994/ 1999	1999/ 2004	2004/ 2009	2009/ 2014	2014/ 2019	2019	Total
Bhutias	8	9	9	8	6	7	5	5	6	4	67
Lepchas	8	3	3	4	5	4	6	6	5	7	51
Sherpas	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	6
Limboos	1	3	2	2	3	4	4	3	3	2	27
Tamangs	0	1	0	0	1	2	1	2	1	3	11
Gurungs	2	4	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	0	19
Rais	3	1	4	5	5	5	4	5	5	2	38
Mangars (Thapa)	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	2	4
Chettri,Bahun	7	7	7	6	3	3	4	4	4	8	53
Newars/ Pradhan	2	1	1	2	2	2	1	2	2	0	15
Schedule Castes	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	19
Plainsmen	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Sangha	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	10

Source: Statistical Report on General election, 1974 to 2019, Legislative Assembly Election of Sikkim, Election Commission of India.

A notable feature of the State Assembly elections in Sikkim since the merger is that the Bhutias have been elected in the state, with a total of 67 elected leaders since the 1974 elections. No doubt, the community has been contesting the election on the 12 seats reserved for BL. Next to

Bhutia, the communities represented most are Chettri and Bahun, with a total of 53 elected leaders. So far, Lepcha has represented Sikkim politics with a total of 51 elected leaders. The next community represented highly in state politics is Rai, with altogether 38 elected leaders. The sequence is followed by Limboo with 27, Gurung with 19, Scheduled Caste with 19, Newars with 15, Tamang with 11, Sherpa with 6 and Mangar with 4. The Plainsmen, so far have been able to represent in Sikkim politics only once.

Fig. 4.3.2. Total Representation of Communities in the State Legislative Assembly – 1974-2019.



Source: Prepared on the basis of Table No. 4.3.12.

A brief study on community wise women's participation in politics shows that Bhutia women too have been elected to the Legislative Assembly since 1989. A community wise comparative study on the depiction of women in Sikkim politics highlights that Nepalese women have the highest number of representation with 11 in total. Two Bhutia and two Scheduled Caste women had their representation in politics. Women have been represented once from Lepcha community. Though women got their entry into politics quite late, the number has been increasing in recent years. Yet, women's representation in Sikkim politics is comparatively low.

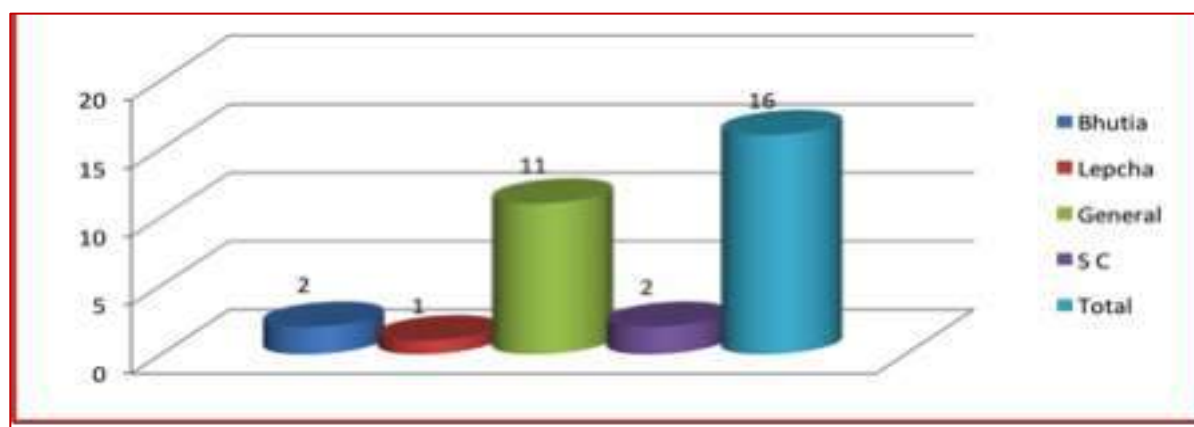
Table. 4.3.13. Women Participation in Sikkim Legislative Assembly (1979-2019)

Sl. No	Year	Bhutia	Lepcha	General	S C	Total
1	1979	0	0	0	0	0
2	1985	0	0	0	0	0
3	1989	1	0	1	0	2
4	1994	1	0	0	0	1

5	1999	0	0	1(Subba)	0	1
6	2004	0	1	1(Subba) 1(Thapa)	0	3
7	2009	0	0	1(Subba) 1 (Gurung)	1	3
8	2014	0	0	1(Subba) 1 (Rai) 1(Gurung)		3
9	2019	0	0	1(Thapa) 1(Tamang)	1	3
10	Total	2	1	11	2	16

Source: Statistical Report on General election, 1979 to 2019, Legislative Assembly Election of Sikkim, Election Commission of India.

Fig. 4.3.3. Community-wise Women Representation in State Legislative Assembly (1989-2019)



Source: Prepared on the basis of Table No. 4.3.13.

The Bhutias have been active in the post-merger period through various political and social organisations like the *Denzong People's Chogpa* (DPC), a registered political party, the *Denzong Tribal Yargay Chogpa* (DTYC), the Sikkim Tribal Welfare Association (STWA), the *Denzong Lhaday Yangki Chakchen* (Association of Buddhist Monks of Sikkim) and the *Bhutia Kay-Rab-Yargay Tsogpo* (BKRYT), (1983).

It is evident from the discussion in the above data that political power before the merger was controlled by the minority Bhutias. In post-merger Sikkim politics, Bhutias, though not rulers anymore, continue to have a good share in state politics. The Bhutia MLAs came down, but considering their proportion in the population, their representation is considerable. This has been possible due to the parity formula. The representation of Bhutia monks (*Lamas*) introduced by the Proclamation of 1966 has continued as a special constituency known as the “*Sangha*

Constituency”. Monks of the Sikkim monasteries are allowed to elect one member to the state Legislative Assembly. Thus, the Buddhist monks of Sikkim are still directly involved in the political affairs of the state.

Section IV

Marginalisation of Bhutias in Politics

In the previous section, it is discussed how the monarchy in Sikkim was replaced by democratic practices and the formation of the representative body, the State Council and the Executive Council were the political institutions were based on the parity formula. This parity formula enabled the Bhutias to retain their considerable presence in state electoral politics, which is more than in proportion to the Nepalese and other communities. However, the changing demographic profile of the state has contributed to the marginalisation of the Bhutias in the long run.

The study on the marginalisation of Bhutias is important because it allows us to discuss their representation in the political, social, economic and civil administrations in the new democratic set up. This has happened when the other groups, especially the Nepalese have been able to overcome their isolation and be in the mainstream of politics. The marginalisation of the Bhutias in Sikkim politics was noticed much earlier when the British began to exercise control on the Chogyal.

B.S.K Grover (1974), for example, observes that the articles related to the treaty of Titalia of 1817 clearly reveals that the power of the Bhutias in Sikkim has been decreased. As per the articles of the treaty, the ruler of Sikkim would refer any issue and dispute arising between the ruler and the subjects and also any issues with the neighbouring countries to the British government and the decision of the latter would be implemented. Hence, the treaty relegated the position of Sikkim from independent Kingdom to a buffer state. The writings of Arpana Bhattacharya (1992) also points out that in the Peking Conventions in April 27, 1906, China confirmed that Sikkim was the protectorate of the government of India. The appointment of J.C White as the political officer of Sikkim in 1889 further dismantled the administrative set up of Sikkim by reducing the Bhutia power (Bhattacharya, 1992, p.74).

In his book '*Sikkim- Feudal and Democratic*, 2008,' A.C Sinha explains the administrative situation in Sikkim when J.C White took up as Political Officer. To quote J.C White, 'Sikkim

was full of chaos. There was no revenue system, no court of justice, no police, no public works, no education...”. The first thing J.C White did to organise the administrative set up was the appointment of an Advisory Council to run the administration. A representative body consisting of Khangsa Dewan, Phodang Lama, Sheo Dewan, Lari Lama (Pemayangtse monastery), all *Kazis* of Gangtok, Rhenock, Enchey and Tashiding and lamas from Bhutia and Lepcha communities was formed. Even the Chogyal, Thutop Namgyal and the queen were removed from the throne for three years (1892-1895) and exiled to Kurseong on the ground that Chogyal refused to appear in Darjeeling in May 1887 when summoned by the British to explain the issue at ‘Longtu’.²² He was restored back to the throne in 1895 on a 10 point understanding worked out by J.C White (Sinha, 2008, p. 91-93).

Sinha writes that since 1861, the involvement of the British in Sikkim’s political affairs saw a reduction in the influence and powers of the *Kazis* and *Lamas*. The encouragement of the Nepalese migration to Sikkim by the British also posed a great threat to the powers and positions of the Bhutia rulers. Many confrontations with regard to the influx of the Nepalese population were noticed. According to Risley, “*the influx of Nepalese would revive and change the political and social structure in Sikkim*” (Bhattacharya, 1994, p. 94). Nepali people were known spread as businessmen, industrialists and agriculturists. Among the Nepalese groups, Newars emerged to be the counterparts of the Lepcha-Bhutia *Kazis*. They even got the title of ‘*Thikadars*’ during the Chogyal period. The Nepalese migration to Sikkim, encouraged by the British administration, was a great worry to the existing Bhutia Lepchas in Sikkim. The British created a landlord class among the Nepalese too, posing equal economic power with the Lepcha-Bhutia *Kazis* and landlords. This power balance between the new power holders, Nepalese and the existing power group, Bhutia Lepcha had to protect themselves from newly created power group of Nepalese. The Chogyal tried to subjugate the Nepalese through various policies in administration at different times. In this regard, the Lepchas and Bhutias attempted to prevent land alienation. The Revenue Order No. 1 of 1917 prohibited land alienation by the Bhutias and the Lepchas in favour of a person of another community without express permission of the Durbar. Civil Courts were also debarred from sanctioning sales of land of Bhutia-Lepcha communities in favour of persons of other communities without the prior sanction of the Durbar. In fact, the immigration

²² Longtu is a border area near Jalep-la that separates Tibet and Sikkim. Tibet occupied Longtu and established checkpoints with armed forces. The matter was brought to the Tibetan Khashag (cabinet) which replied that ‘it was no harm in protecting its own territory and were prepared to resist the British attack’. Chogyal Thutop Namgyal commented by saying that Longtu was in Tibet.

of the Nepalese had coupled with British intervention in administration began to pose a threat to the power and political authority of the Chogyal and the Bhutia community. The merger was the elimination of the trend and the trend was further taken in the post merger period.

The challenge to the Bhutia rule began to take shape in the 1940s. Sikkim State Congress under Tashi Tshering led 'No Rent' and 'No Tax' protest rally demanding the end of the *zamindari* system and the formation of an interim government in Sikkim. The protest rallies ('No Rent' and 'No Tax') organised by the party at Rangpo in February, 1949 and later at Gangtok in May, 1949 led to the formation of 'Popular Ministry' in Sikkim on May 9, 1949. The ministry was a five member Council under the Chief Ministership of Tashi Tshering. This ended the chapter on feudalism and Bhutia power, opening a new chapter on democracy in Sikkim. The interim government was dismissed on June 6, 1949 by the then political officer, Harishwar Dayal, as differences were elevated between the Chogyal and the Ministry regarding the reforms brought by the ministry (Basnet, 1974, p.88-90).

The Indian intervention in Sikkim's politics after India's Independence and withdrawal of the the British accentuated the marginalisation of Bhutias. During this time, Sikkim was going through political turmoil. Hence, in 1949, the government of India advised Chogyal to appoint a Dewan (Indian) to head the administration in Sikkim. Chogyal, always wanting to bring political stability agreed upon the appointment of the Dewan. In the name of Dewan, the administration of Sikkim went into the hands of the Indian Government.

During the tenure of J.S. Lall, the Indian Civil Servant, on August 11, 1949, a significant development in political history was the signing of Indo-Sikkim treaty on December 5, 1950, between the Indian Political Officer and the Chogyal, Sir Tashi Namgyal. As per the Article II of the agreement, Sikkim's status as Protectorate was confirmed (Basnet, 1974, p.95). Till 1974, the Indian Government had been regulating the external relations, political, economic and financial aspects of Sikkim, thereby curtailing the power of Chogyal.

Thus, in the pre-merger period, while it was the Bhutia rule that exerted the marginalisation of the other communities like the Limboos, the Lepchas and of course the Nepalese, the Bhutia ruler himself was losing his sovereign power to the British rulers and to the Government of Independent India.

In the post-merger period, the Bhutias were accorded Scheduled Tribe status. But they were quite apprehensive when they were added in the Scheduled Tribe list of India in 1978 along with other tribes of Bhutia origin like the Chumbipas, Dothopas, Kagatey, Sherpas, Yolmos, Drukpas, Tromopas and Tibetans (Gurung, 2011, pp.142-144). Initially, Bhutias were only those people of Tibetan origins who had settled in Sikkim since the establishment of Namgyal dynasty till 1961, the year Sikkim Durbar recognised them as early settlers as legal settlers. They were issued Sikkim Subject Certificates under the Sikkim Subject Regulations, 1961. But this equal identity and the inclusion of eight other communities as Bhutias has put the identity of Bhutias at stake. This fear got further aggravated when in 2002, the Limboos and Tamangs were also listed as Scheduled Tribes. This led to another tension over the sharing of 12 Bhutia-Lepcha (BL) seats in the state Assembly, which is mostly monopolised by the Bhutias. Since their incorporation in the Scheduled Tribe list, the Tamangs and Limboos are demanding their share in the state Assembly and the Bhutias and Lepchas are not ready to share their seats with them, as these 12 seats, as per the Representation of Peoples Act, 1950/51 (as amended in 1976 and 1980) is specifically meant for BL.

Many organisations were formed to represent the issues of Bhutia- Lepchas in the state. Four social tribal organisations; *Sikkim Tribal Welfare Association* (STWA), *Sikkim Lho-Men Youth Council* (SLYC), *Rangjyong Mutanchi Rong Tarzum* (RMRT) and, *Muyal Pronzom* (MP), were set up to voice the demands for the reorganisation and delimitation of the constituencies according to the population of tribal voters (Kazi, 2003).

Further, to accelerate the demands of the Bhutia - Lepchas, a Joint Action Committee (JAC) was formed under the banner of *Sikkim Tribal Welfare Association* (STWA) on October 9, 1985. The committee raised the demand for the restoration of 16 seats in the Assembly for the Bhutia-Lepchas (Kazi, 2003). *Denzong Lho Mon Chodrul*, formed in August 1992, represented the interest of the Bhutia- Lepchas and demanded restoration of 15 reserved BL seats instead of 12. The demand was put forward for the original distribution of 50-50 seats with the Nepalese as the 1979 Presidential Ordinance had reduced the number into 12.

Many members of the tribal associations of the Bhutia-Lepchas have joined the state parties and contested in the State Assembly elections. So far, not a single political party is being formed under Bhutia- Lepcha leadership in the state. An apex body of the Bhutias and Lepchas, the *Sikkim Bhutia-Lepcha Apex Committee* (SIBLAC) ensures fair political representation of the BL in the state. The demand for equitable BL seats from the existing 12 to 17 is been put forward by

SIBLAC, when the proposal for the increase of number of Assembly seats from 32 to 40 will be approved by the Central government.

The state government under Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF) tried to field tribal candidates belonging to groups other than the Bhutias and Lepchas from the BL reserved seats for the Assembly and Lok Sabha polls in 1999. These associations of Bhutia- Lepcha protested the move of the government with a protest rally and one-day hunger strike in the state. The following year, in 2000, SIBLAC submitted a memorandum to the State government demanding that the 12 BL seats be reserved solely for Sikkimese Bhutia-Lepchas. It requested the exclusion of other tribal communities listed as Bhutias from the group of 'Bhutias' included in the ST list. The *Bhutia Lepcha Protection Force* (BLPF) is also constantly striving towards the protection of Bhutia-Lepcha against the growing Nepali majority in the state.

It can be argued that democracy in Sikkim resulted in the consolidation of political power by the Nepalese, eventually leading to the ethnic Bhutia and Lepcha community as minorities.

After the merger in 1975, when Sikkim was transformed from a monarchy to a democracy and the Bhutias were no longer rulers, the end of Bhutia dominated politics was witnessed. As we have seen, it is they who have been marginalised in politics over the years. The formation of so many organisations over the issue of reserved seats indicates their apprehension of vulnerability. At the same time, the impact of the Bhutias on the overall social and administrative ambience of Sikkim is still continuing. Buddhist culture, as it was always in the erstwhile Sikkim, has been the most vital determining force in the state. The government calendar in the state is being followed based on the Buddhist calendar. The Bhutia elite continues to exist as a pressure group in the state politics, as they have the highest secured position in the state with 13 seats, including one *Sangha* seat, reserved out of 32. The Representation of the People (Amendment) Ordinance of 1979, which was passed to elect the new Sikkim Legislative Assembly, and the Representation of the people (Amendment) Act of 1980, under which the next Legislative Assembly was elected, retained the *Sangha* seat (Gurung, 2011, p. 277). Eventually, under the Election laws of the country and the allotment of 13 seats (including *Sangha*) to the Bhutia-Lepcha community in the state, it clearly signifies the influence of the Bhutias even in the political process in Sikkim. The continuation of old laws in Sikkim, even after its merger, has provided weightage to this community. Article 371F (Appendix 4) of the Constitution of India, further secures their position in Sikkim. The constitution was amended and taking into consideration the history and the status of Sikkim some special concessions are provided.

CHAPTER V

The Occupational Pattern and Economic Status of Bhutias in Sikkim

Occupation and the economy together are strongly correlated with development. The economic progress of a society is directly associated with the changes in the occupational structure and hence, any change in the occupational structure essentially influences economic growth. In other words, the socio-economic status of a region or a state purely depends upon the occupational pattern and the size of the population working in different areas (Clark, C., 1940, p.182). Broadly looking at the social impact of the occupational pattern, the individual status in a society is directly attached to their occupation (Maurya, 1989, p. 110). Furthermore, the occupational structure of a society intimately depends on related factors, such as agricultural activities and their development, industrialisation and civilisation (Chandna, 1986, Pp. 245-46).

In most cases, a group's occupation is embedded in culture and tradition which has a specific value in society. An occupation may be defined as an event in which a series of actions occur that form an activity and a number of activities form an occupation (Bendixen, Kroksmark, and others, 2006, p. 2). The level of participation of an individual or groups contributing to the economy of a state or nation is known as an occupational pattern.

To quote Townsend *et. al.*, "*Occupation is everything people do to occupy themselves, including looking after themselves (self-care), enjoying life (leisure), and contributing to the social and economic fabric of their communities (productivity)*" (Bendixen, Kroksmark, and others, 2006, p.3). In describing occupation as a pattern of actions and activities, it may be studied in reference to temporal and environmental context. These two temporal and environmental contexts influence the occupational patterns the most. In other words, occupation also refers to the activities of communities and groups within a specific environment or influenced by the culture and tradition of the existing society. Hence, the socio-cultural environment forms a basic component in which occupational patterns occur.

In a simple sense, occupation implies a trade or profession adopted by people for their earnings in daily life. It may be related to agriculture, industry and other services available, and also the activities carried forward from older generations. The occupational pattern of the people determines the distribution of the population and its composition. Occupational structure is a key component and manifestation of population composition of a given society. The study on

occupational pattern gives a proper illustration of the ratio of the people engaged in different occupations and jobs in the state.

The socio-economic status (hereafter SES) is one's access to collectively desired resources, be they material goods, money, power, friendship networks, healthcare, leisure time, or educational opportunities. And it is access to such resources that enables individuals and groups to prosper in the social world. To some scholars, the main perimeter to measure the SES was basically the annual income of the individual. However, now, the measurement of SES includes ethnicity, health status, education, etc. SES meant individuals or groups accessing the available resources that will enable them to prosper (Kaufman, Cooper and McGee 1997; Oakes and Rossi 2003, p 7). Measurement of SES enables us to understand the intergenerational change in the social status of people and society over subsequent periods. Studies based on socio-economic status allow a better understanding of the individual or group's position and their influence in society.

This chapter provides a comparative insight into the occupational pattern and economic status of the Bhutias in both pre-merger and post-merger Sikkim. First, a historical background of Sikkim's economy is presented, followed by a general survey of the occupation of the Bhutias that built their socio-economic status in the pre-merger period. This is followed by a comparative assessment of their status during the post-merger period. A comparison is also made with the other communities.

The spatial distribution of Bhutia people engaged in different occupations and jobs in the pre-merger and post-merger periods has been considered through the data provided by the Census of India and other sources. The proportion of Bhutia people engaged in various occupations highlights socio-economic status of the community. It also reveals the state's position in the social and economic stratum in general and Bhutias in particular.

Section I

An Overview of Sikkim's Economy

The economy of Sikkim has passed through various phases. The demographic and political changes brought about by the migration of various communities, starting with the Bhutias and ending with the opening up of the state post merger with India, have left their impact on the economy of the state. The economy has diversified and now opportunities have opened up for those inhabitants. In order to understand how the Bhutias have fared in this changing economic environment, we begin with an account of the phases of the economic transformation of Sikkim.

The Lepchas are said to be the original inhabitants of the region when the Bhutias set up their kingdom in 1642. Though very little is documented about the economic pattern or system of the Lepchas, history says that they lived a nomadic life. The Lepchas were purely dependent on flora, fauna, forest and to some extent, agriculture as an essence of life (Roy, 2012, p. 74). The main characteristic of the kind of societal structure of the Lepchas was that all production and means of production were equally distributed amidst communities. After the founding of the Bhutia Kingdom in 1642, major changes were seen in the socio-economic pattern of pre-settled groups in Sikkim. The Bhutias brought with them their own pattern of living, mostly influenced by Tibetan culture. The Lepchas were forced to move towards and adopt the Bhutia pattern.

Under the Bhutias the traditional economy of Sikkim was characterised by agriculture, which for many centuries remained under feudalism. Just like in any feudal society, land was the basis of the socio-economic structure. The Maharaja or Chogyal, was the sole proprietor of land in the country. The next in the social strata were the *kazis*, the feudal lords who enjoyed considerable authority in the realms of administrative and economic arenas. The *Kazis* were the most influential and powerful people after the ruler. They administered and collected revenues from the land on behalf of the Chogyal. The village headmen, called *mandals*, extended their support to the *Kazis* in performing their functions as land lords. Hence, land and feudal system became the prime factors in the socio-economic settings of Sikkim. In this type, the system of private ownership of land did not exist and the farmers were forced to work free on the lands of the landlords and also pay certain taxes. Agricultural activities were carried out mainly by the *mandals* (village headmen) and *bustiwalas*. The *mandals* were appointed by the *Kazis* to collect rents and revenues from the cultivators. The actual cultivators were the *bustiwalas*. The exchange of good was based on barter system, which prevented the development of a currency

system. Lives stocks were used for exchange of goods. For the first time, Indian currency was used after the British Political Officer, J. C White took administrative charge of the country (Debnath, 2009, p 67). The main agricultural products were rice, maize, millets and vegetables.

Though agriculture was the main occupation of the people during the monarchy, this sector was characterised by low productivity and poor economy. Many factors were responsible for this agricultural backwardness. Sikkim's location and physical features, practice of terrace farming, feudal land-holding pattern, practice of mono-cropping, use of traditional technologies of production, lack of appropriate agricultural investment and planning, inadequate support in infrastructural set up, mode of transportation and communication, irrigation facilities, and above all marketing facilities were some of the major factors for the low economy of the country (Human Resource Development Report, 2001).

The factor that led to this underdevelopment of agriculture was that there existed a system of forced labour and rural indebtedness. The British, under the administration of J.C White, brought about some administrative changes. One of these was the Sikkim Debt Law of 1910, which was introduced to limit the rate of interest to be charged on the peasants and prohibit lending of money by the money lenders.²³ Sikkim Debt Law was violated by most of the money lenders as the government (Darbar) did not have direct control over them.

As for public revenues and expenditures, prior to the British entry and takeover of the administration in 1889, the country was functioning without any organised and systematic revenue system. The land revenue, house tax and income tax were the only sources of revenue. There was no government agency to collect the revenues. The collection of the taxes was done on a contract or farming basis. Even though the term for the payment of taxes were not fixed, it was collected from one to fifteen years.

²³ At that time in Sikkim, money lenders were mostly Marwaris. Money lending system first came in Mangan in 1908. Even though the system enabled the people to meet their requirements. It ultimately led almost all people to debt.

The *Elakhadars*, or the lessees were supposed to pay the royal government the amount fixed at the rate of per acre of land²⁴ (Bhattacharya, 1994, p.110-111). In this type of system, the commoners were the most exploited group. In Sikkim in 1929-30, there were all together 71 landlords.

Table 5.1.1. Total Landlords in Sikkim -1929-30

Sl. No	Categories of Landlords	Total numbers
1	Lamas	13
2	Kazis	21
3	Thikadars	37
4	Total	71

Source: J.C. Debnath, 2009, p. 67.

Out of these, the *Lamas* and the *Kazis* belonged to the Bhutia- Lepcha community and *Thikedars* included Nepalese also. Bhutia-Lepchas had more representatives as landlords.

To some extent, the land revenue system that existed prior to British intervention was responsible for the low economic growth of the country. The existing land revenue system was introduced through ‘*elaka*’ leases in 1925 by the Durbar. An *elaka* was a revenue collection unit under each revenue collector, basically under the *Kazis*. J C Debnath, gives an account of the number of *elakas* in Sikkim according to the Administrative Report of the Sikkim state for the year 1929-30. Altogether there were 104 *elakas*.

Table 5.1.2. Categories of Revenue Collectors and Number of Elakas -1929-30

SI No.	Categories of Revenue collector	Number of elakas
1	Private estates of the king	29
2	Kazis	21
3	Five big Monasteries	15

²⁴ The entire country was divided into 12 Dzongs or Elakhas, each headed by 12 Dzonpons. The Dzonpons were later called kazis. Accordingly, land was divided into three types: 1). Class I Elakha: lands leased out to big landlords or kazis on fixed revenue as per the acreage of land leessed. There were 91 such Class I Elakhas. 2). Class II Elakha: there were 11 Elakhas in Class II type, where the land was managed by appointed managers of the country. The revenues received from these types of lands were put in the state Bank of Sikkim. 3). Class III Elakhas: land owned by big monasteries in the country. In total there were seven (7) of its kind. The monasteries collect the revenues and utilized for maintaining the monasteries and are also used for religious purposes. Apart from these lands, the royal family owned 15 private estates. These estates were taken care by Nang-zans, appointed by the Chogyal.

4	Nepalis	13
5	Managers appointed on commission	11
6	Lepchas	8
7	Bhutias	6
8	Domiciled Plainsman	1
9	Total	104

Source: J.C Debnath, 2009, p.68.

The land under the Chogyal, *Kazis* and monasteries were big estates. The first British Political Officer, J. C White, introduced a new lease system for land tenure in 1888 that led to the introduction of a new land settlement pattern. The new settlement pattern brought changes in the ownership of the land system (Debnath, 2009, p. 68). He did this with the help of some influential Sikkimese people, while the Chogyal Thutop Namgyal and his Maharani were at Kalimpong in exile when this event took place. The launching of the new economy dismantled the existing feudal-based economy in Sikkim. In addition, a number of the new lessee landlords, mostly Newars from the Nepali community were created. More migration of Nepalese was allowed. Not only this, the Political Officer initiated a course of new revenue generating avenues in the country. For the first time, land revenue settlement was introduced, forest excise measures were adopted and the traditional taxation system was also revised in 1898. Trade and commerce developed to such a great extent that the revenue of the country which was Rs. 30,458 in 1891 was raised to Rs. 22,00,000 in 1889 (Subba, 2011, pp. 44-46).

The first scientific survey of land in Sikkim was carried out in 1950–58. The survey was conducted using the British measurement system of acres and miles. The second survey of land was conducted in 1976–83 survey, which delimited the age-old *elakas* into revenue blocks.

The details extracted from Sikkim Human Development Report, 2001, present people's engagement in various occupations and the revenue collected accordingly. The major revenue sources recorded from 1910 to the pre-merger years, i.e 1970-71, were land, excise, forest, agriculture, house hold tax and Sikkim Nationalised Transport (introduced in 1960's).

Table 5.1.3. Major Revenue Sources (In Per Cent) 1910–11 to 1970–71

Items	1910–11	1920–21	1930–31	1960–61	1970–71
Land	34.4	22.0	27.5	16.2	2.6
Excise	22.7	18.4	17.6	9.9	7.51
Forest	2.4	5.5	5.6	7.9	2.8
Agriculture	9.15	1.6	0.32	2.9	0.3
Household Tax		4.7	8.87	-	-
Sikkim Nationalised Transport	-	-	-	25.0	29.3
Total (Rs million)	0.19	0.52	0.63	4.13	26.61

Source: Sikkim Human Development Report 2001, p 85.

Even though land had been the major source of revenue for the government, a decrease was noticed in the subsequent years. The revenue from agriculture in 1910-11 was 9.15 % and was reduced to 0.3% in 1970-71. The decrease in the revenue from land and agriculture consequently motivated people to look for other non-traditional sources of income like transport, excise, etc. The table indicates a change in Sikkim's economy.

Table 5.1.4. Growth of Public Revenues and Expenditures in Sikkim

Year	Total Receipts (Rs)	% Increase	Total Expenditure	(Rs) % Increase
1890	24,686		16,652	5
1900–01	61,899	151	1,07,049	543
1910–11	1,91,497	209	1,96,445	84
1920–21	5,15,980	169	4,84,528	147
1930–31	6,26,067	21	6,30,481	30
1940–41	6,34,800	1	6,53,800	4
1950–51	23,41,100	269	20,78,000	218
1960–61	41,30,000	76	41,10,000	98
1970–71	2,66,10,800	544	2,66,63,000	549

Source: Sikkim Human Development Report 2001, p. 84.

Till the end of the 19th century, the revenue system of the country did not include land as a source of revenue because there existed no system of private land-owning. The entire land belonged to the ruler. The period which is assessed for the increase in public revenues and expenditures in Sikkim is the period when the British introduced new revenue system and brought some changes to reinstate modern budgetary system in the country. The revenue system started with the advent of the British. Since then, land has become the essential source of revenue in Sikkim. One of the important changes brought in was the monetisation of the budgetary

system. As discussed, we can see that each decade shows an increase in the total receipts of revenue and also the expenditure incurred for the developmental works in Sikkim.

Transportation was another area that received the interest of the British, which led to the easy movement of goods and items from one part of Sikkim to another. This facilitated the development of trade and commerce. Before the development of transport and communication services, people used to ride on mules to reach their destination which was more time consuming. The development of trade and commerce contributed in the increase of the state's economy. Also, as J.C Debnath writes in his book, '*Economic History and Development of Sikkim*' the development of trade and commerce led to the introduction of capitalist economy in Sikkim, which means there was a growth in ownership of private property. The introduction of the currency system led to the birth of a new economic class that paved way for modern economic system in Sikkim (Debnath, 2009, pp 47-48). The age old traditional market economy has been replaced by a modern market economy.

Industrially, Sikkim did not flourish during the Chogyal period. During that time in Sikkim, there was no entrepreneurial class. There was craftsmanship based on traditional Sikkimeese cottage industries. The practice of carpet and rug weaving by the Bhutias and bamboo-craft, woodwork, spinning of loom and weaving traditional textures by the Lepchas were some of the traces of the existence of small scale industries. The Nepalese contributed with the workmanship in metalwork, silverware and woodwork.

Carpet weaving was done in the factory owned by the Chogyal. To support the sustainability of the culture of traditional weaving, two weaving schools were opened at Lachung and Lachen in North Sikkim. The cottage industry gave training to young Sikkimese in local handicrafts, carpentry, handmade paper, carpets, doll making, handloom and weaving. This process was emphasised in various plan periods even after the merger. However, these industries could not grow well in the pre merger period due to the limited availability of market facilities (Debnath, 2009, p 48).

Among the modern industries, the distillery of wines and liquors was the first industry established at Singtam in 1955. The second factory was for fruit preservation, established at Singtam in 1956. For the enhancement of the industrial sector, freedom to conduct business

activities is required. In Sikkim, the businessmen, mainly Indian businessmen, were barred from carrying on their business freely. They were not allowed to own landed property, which obstructed the growth of free industrial activities. To carry on their business, they had to pay very high rent to the *Kazis*. This hindered the development of entrepreneurial activities in Sikkim. Besides this, Sikkim lagged in transport and technical know-how as the important impetuses for the growth of the economy.

Border Trade was one of the thriving sources of the economy in the country in the pre-merger period. Trade with Tibet was carried through the Nathu-la Pass. Trade markets were extended to Gangtok, Kalimpong, Darjeeling and Calcutta. Human porters and animals like ponies and yaks were used to carry items in this border trade. Indian goods and commodities were supplied from Calcutta to Tibet and likewise Tibetan wool, gold, precious gems, borax, dogs, yak tails and other light and luxury items were brought to Indian markets. This border trade flourished till 1962. After that, it was closed due to the Sino-Indian war of 1962. The reopening of the border trade again in July, 2006, took the economy to a new heights in Sikkim. However, the local traders, mainly the Bhutias had more competitors in the border trade as the market was open to new traders coming from all over the region. The re-opening of the Nathula border trade boosted the economy of Sikkim.

When Sikkim joined the Indian Union in 1975, some far reaching economic changes were brought in after Sikkim was declared a backward state, both in the agricultural and industrial sectors. Hence, the post-merger developmental strategy was to enhance state's economy. In this aspect, various services aimed at consolidating the agricultural economy. The new schemes covered renew of land reforms, provisions for agricultural marketing, seeds, fertilizers and pesticides and irrigation. The services provided encouraged horticulture, for which new crops like wheat, rajmah, rape and mustard were introduced. The services also included the extension of more agricultural land, high-yielding varieties of seeds and also introduction of multiple cropping. Thus, agricultural development made considerable progress in Sikkim. Sikkim underwent many changes in its economy and demography after it joined the national mainstream in 1975. Development activities were increased considerably, which led to rapid urbanization, especially in towns likes Gangtok, Jorethang, Geyzing and Namchi. The migration of rural people in search of job opportunities enabled growth of these towns which were driven by

administrative and commercial growth. This urbanization accelerated the economic growth in Sikkim.

Tourism has emerged as one of the world's biggest industries. Tourism enables the viable and sustainable development of a region or a state. Through travel and tourism, new jobs and employment capacity are built up that strongly contribute to the socio-economic progress of the state. In recent years, Sikkim has developed as one of the most prosperous tourism destinations in the country. Sikkim's economy has become the mainstay of Sikkim's tourism. Most areas in North district are tourist destinations. From Kabi (where the brotherhood agreement 'Lho-Men-Tsong' between the Bhutias, Lepchas and Limboos was made) to Chungthang, Lachung, Lachen and Tsho Lamo lake and Guru dongmar lake are the sites of tourist attractions in the North district. In West Sikkim, most tourist visit Pelling and Yuksom (the first capital of Sikkim). This has provided economic and livelihood opportunities as hotels, resorts and home stays are increasing. Transport has also received support from tourism, providing jobs and income to many. Shops, restaurants and the sale of souvenirs are another source of income patronised by tourism.

Hence, the primitive agriculture based occupational pattern has undergone total transformation in Sikkim. Apart from agriculture, pasturage and trade, people in Sikkim have entered into a new occupation, jobs and employment through industrialisation and tourism in modern Sikkim. It is evident from the case studies conducted that change in the occupational pattern has been understood largely as a change in their economic activities to earn their livelihood. Change has been noticed in the occupational pattern. The economic and technological developments of the modern world have contributed to form this change. The economic transformation is accompanied by a rising number of educational institutes that also provide job opportunities for many. We have a detailed discussion about that in chapter VII on Education.

To understand the economic status and position of Sikkim, indicators like the size of work force and the distribution of people in different economic activities are taken into account in the post merger period as well.

This study rests on the census classifications that have changed time and again. The Census authority of 1971 enumerates the working population into nine categories considering the Indian economy. However, this classification of workers was changed by the Census authorities in 1981

and reduced into four broad categories: 1). Cultivators, 2). Agricultural labourers, 3). Household Industry and 4). Other workers. The Census authorities in 1991, again revived the 1971 census classification of workers into nine categories. The 2001 census curtailed the earlier classification into three categories of working population as main, marginal and non-workers. The main workers are comprised of the cultivators, agricultural labourers, workers in household Industry and other workers (Socio-Economic Caste Census, 2011). On this ground, a comparative analysis of occupational characteristics has been made. The specific data about Sikkim has been collected from Government Reports.

Table 5.1.5. People in Different Categories of Occupational Pattern in Sikkim, 2011

Item	1981	1991	2001	2011
Population	316385	406457	540851	610577
Main Workers	147436	164392	212904	230397
(a) Cultivators	88610	97834	101200	117401
(b) Agricultural Labourers	4887	13793	9081	25986
(c) Worker in Household Industry	1586	1309	3168	5143
(d) Other Workers	52353	52353	99455	159608
Marginal Workers	5378	4329	50139	77741
Non-Workers	163571	237736	277808	-

Source: Department of Economics, Statistics, Monitoring and Evaluation, Government of Sikkim, 2011.

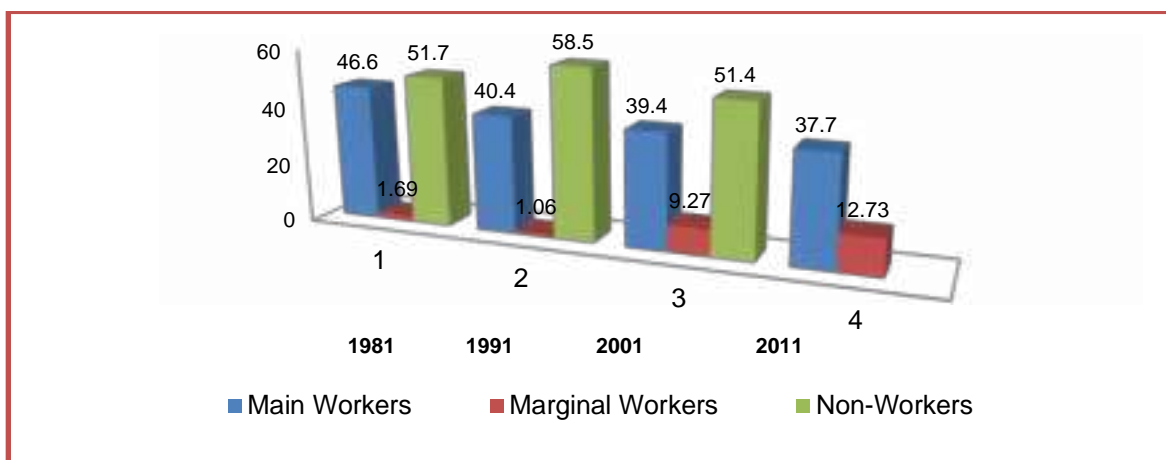
Table 5.1.6. Percentage of Population in Different Categories of Occupation Pattern in Sikkim, 1981-2011

Item	1981	1991	2001	2011
Population	316385	406457	540851	610577
Main Workers	46.6	40.4	39.4	37.7
Marginal Workers	1.69	1.06	9.27	12.73
Non-Workers	51.7	58.5	51.4	-

Source: Socio-Economic Caste Census 2011, Rural Development Statistics, GOI

The study reveals a decrease in engagement of people as main workers. Not much of an increase has been noticed in the category of non-workers. However, there has been a slight increase in the number of marginal workers. Bulk of the people are non-workers, that is more than 50%. The next category are those who are classified as main workers. The lowest number of people are marginal workers.

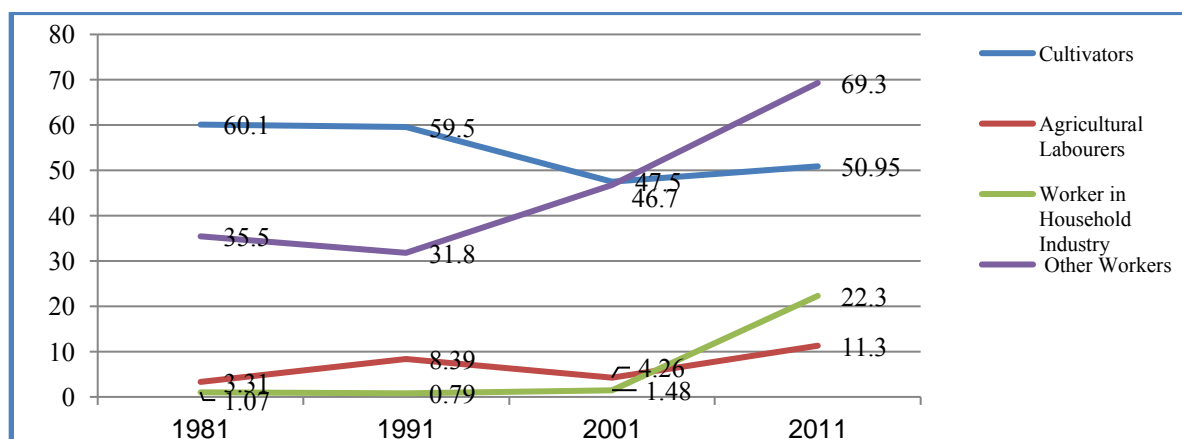
Fig 5.1.1: Graphical Presentation of Percentage of Population in Different Occupations, 1981- 2011



Source: Department of Economics, Statistics, Monitoring and Evaluation, Government of Sikkim, 2011.

From 1981 to 2011, the overall working population increased as a marginal worker, while the percentage of main workers decreased to 37.7 % in 2011 from 46.6 % in 1981. But there seemed to be an upward movement among the marginal workers. No major change in the number of non-workers is observed, though the population has increased in each subsequent years. The increase is recorded as 12.73 % in 2011 which was just 1.69 % in 1981. Non-workers have always remained above the 50 % mark.

Fig 5.1.2. Percentage of Marginal Workers in Sikkim, 2011.



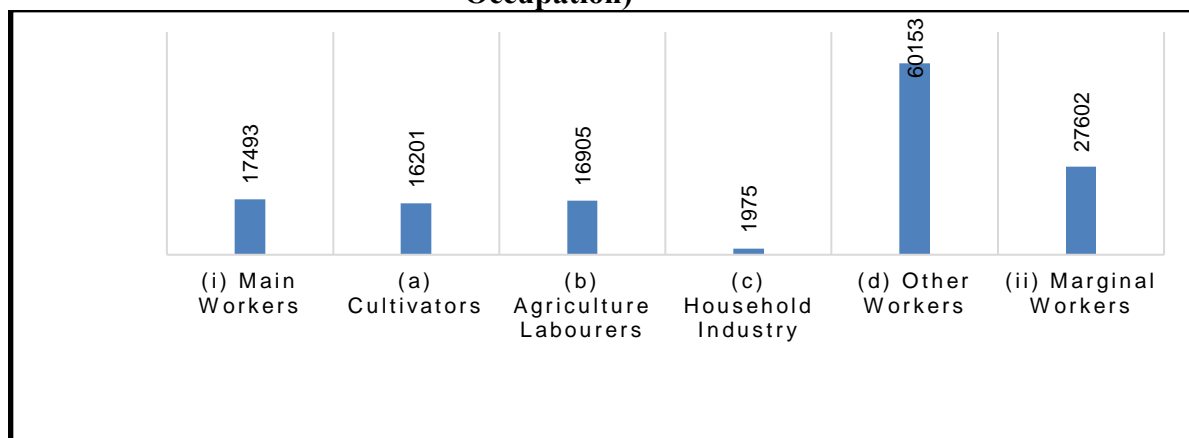
Source: Department of Economics, Statistics, Monitoring and Evaluation, Government of Sikkim, 2011.

The graph of the marginal workers across the decades reveals a gradual decline in the population as cultivators. The decline is more prominent in the year 2001. The increase in the population as other workers and workers in the household industry has been noticed. A shift in the occupation

pattern among the people is seen in 2001-2011. Similarly, a decline has been noticed in the population as agriculture labourers.

Growth has been noticed in the number of people as main workers and marginal workers in 2011 over 2001.

Fig 5.1.3. Increase in 2011 over 2001 (Number of people in different categories of Occupation)



Source: Department of Economics, Statistics, Monitoring and Evaluation, Government of Sikkim, 2011.

In total, 17493 people have increased as main workers in the state in 2011 over 2001. The highest increase is seen as other workers, with 60,153 person increase, 27,602 marginal workers was increased in 2011. About 16905 main workers increased in agriculture in 2011 over 2001.

So far, we have seen the overall population in different categories of occupational pattern. Sikkim's population as main workers is decreasing as compared to other categories of occupation. The section focuses on the community wise distribution of population into different categories of occupation in the post-merger period. The discussion that follows is based on the community wise study of occupation.

Employment as one of the indicators that allow us to measure the economic condition of the country. Before discussing the community wise employment and income status of Sikkim, an understanding on the state (Sikkim) comparison with nation (India) on employment and income status becomes necessary.

The Socio-Economic Caste Census, 2011 provides the details of employment and income characteristics in India and Sikkim.

Table 5.1.7. Employment and Income Characteristics (Rural India) (Number in Lakhs), 2011

	Households (in Lakhs)	No. of Households with Salaried job		No. of Households with Salaried Job						No. of Households Pay Income Tax or Professional Tax	No. of Households Own/Operate an Enterprise registered with the Govt.
				Government		Public Sector		Private			
				No	%	No	%	No	%		
India	1794.45	173.3	9.66	89.90	5.01	20.14	1.12	64.10	3.57	82.17	48.93
Sikkim	0.89	0.24	26.86	0.18	20.58	0.01	1.19	0.05	5.09	0.14	0.05

Source: Socio-Economic Caste Census 2011, Rural Development Statistics, GOI

The statistics reveal that the state shares 0.24% of households out of the total households in India. The number of households with salaried jobs makes 20.58 % in the government sector, 1.19% in the public sector and 5.09% in the private sector. Out of a total 48.93 % of households owning and operating an enterprise registered with the government, Sikkim shares 0.05% of the total population.

Table 5.1.8. Employment and Income Characteristics (Rural) (Number in Lakhs), 2011

	Number of Households (in Lakhs) having Monthly income of highest earning household member					
	Less than Rs. 5,000		Rs. 5,000 and Rs. 10,000		Rs. 10,000 or more	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
India	1336.96	74.51	308.42	17.19	148.28	8.26
Sikkim	0.65	72.99	0.11	12.89	0.12	13.98

Source: Socio-Economic Caste Census 2011, Rural Development Statistics, GOI

The statistics on the employment and income characteristics in India and Sikkim shows that 72.99% of Sikkimese households have a monthly income of less than Rs. 5000, 12.89 % of households have a monthly income of Rs. 5,000 to Rs. 10,000 and 13.98 % of households are in the category of monthly income of Rs. 10,000 and above.

Section II

Occupational Pattern and Economic Status of Bhutias in the Pre- merger Period

The social stratification amongst the Bhutia community during the Namgyal dynasty gives a picture of the status of the Bhutias in social and economic aspects. The community was divided into royal families, *lamas*, *Kazis* and commoners. The *lamas*, who mostly belonged to the noble families of Tibet, became the guardians of the important monasteries in Sikkim. The monasteries during that time possessed huge land property over which the *lamas* enjoyed administrative control and managed the revenue of the monasteries. The *lamas* were also the principal advisers to the Chogyal in the affairs of the country. The third group, the *Kazis*, mostly belonging to the Bhutia-Lepcha group were the landlords or *zamindars*. As Sikkim was a feudalistic state, the *Kazis* wielded enormous economic and political power. Hence, in Sikkim, all land belonged to the ruler who used it at his own will and power. The Chogyal possessed absolute power and reigned over the land. He was the secular as well as the sacred head of the state. He was also the richest man, the largest single industrialist, and the biggest landlord of Sikkim (Sinha, 1975, p. 22).

In Sikkim, there existed a system of free employment of the peasants towards the land lords. The first factor was that the country did not follow any organised system of agriculture until the migrated Nepalese started the practice in the 19th century. There prevailed a system of shifting cultivation which prevented the peasants from occupying any land. The second factor being Bhutias' engagement mostly in trading and pasturage, they had very little knowledge of farming and agriculture. Apparently, the agricultural growth was unsubstantial. Initially, the revenue generated from the agricultural production was very meagre and hence the system of owning private land was not felt necessary. Third and most importantly, the land-holding system was such that the Chogyal was the absolute owner of the land in the country. It was impossible for the farmers to tie themselves to the land unless gifted by the ruler.

There existed two different types of taxation system: one for the Bhutias and Lepchas and the second type for the Nepalese. Limboos were included in the Nepalese group. An unequal tax system existed for these two groups. The Lepchas and Bhutias were charged 8 annas (half of a rupee), while the Nepalese were supposed to pay 14 annas as land revenue. The Bhutias and

Lepchas were exempted from paying any tax for grazing of animals (cows), but the Nepalese were imposed with tax of 8 annas for grazing of each herd. Hence, the Lepchas and Bhutias enjoyed some relaxation in the taxation system while the other group, the Nepalese were levied with heavy taxes. This, perhaps was the root cause of ethnic disparity and ethnic discontentment. It was only in 1747 that system of annual taxation was introduced by Rabden Sherpa Gyalpo, a Tibetan Regent deputed by Government of Tibet to look after the administration of Sikkim. A fixed system of revenue like *h bah-pa, b Zolung*, which means tax on forest produce and Tshong-skyed, an income tax were introduced (Subba, 2011, p 62).

Apart from agriculture, the Bhutias of Sikkim worked in different occupations to supplement their income. Among such occupations was pasturage carried by the Bhutias of the northern part of Sikkim, mainly by the Lachungpas and the Lachenpas. The rearing of yak, sheep and goat and its preservation was feasible only through a migratory movement. Along with this, they also practiced marginal agriculture and carried some trading activities within the borders. The trading was based on barter system. Timber, wood, dyestuffs and dairy products were the main items exchanged for Tibetan salt and wool. Hence, the occupation of Bhutias of Lachen and Lachung was intimately interwoven with pastoral activities, limited agricultural activities and trading (Bhasin, 2012, p 1.).

Some groups of Bhutias were into the trans-border trade, especially with Tibet, Bhutan and Nepal. Trade with Nepal gradually slowed down because the traders had to cross very difficult terrain to trade with Nepal. The trade with Tibet continued till 1962, the year of Chinese invasion. This greatly affected the social and economic life of the people of Lachung and Lachen.

The Bhutia Kings of Sikkim were mostly influenced by Tibetan culture and tradition and also kept a close proximity with them right from the beginning and encouraged the practice of Tibetan culture and civilisation. The Tibetans influenced by Chinese arts and crafts, were engaged in carpet weaving and handlooms.²⁵ Carpets and woollen clothes were manufactured and this has been carried forward under Sikkim Handloom and Technical Institutions in the state. The Lepchas, however, not very much interested in the occupations followed by the Bhutias, and

²⁵During the tenureship of J.C White as Political Officer of Sikkim, a few weaving schools in Lachung were established. Later, a carpet factory was also established at Gangtok under the control and supervision of the Maharani of Sikkim.

more inclined towards bamboo works, were engaged in weaving and making of bamboo mats, vessels, ropes, baskets, etc.

The British presence and taking up of the administration of Sikkim not only introduced new revenue system but also many new occupational avenues were unfolded for the Sikkimese people. Many got into government services, mainly as contractors in the building of roads and highways, the task undertaken by the British to establish their trade relations with Tibet. The construction works also included building of government offices, residential quarters and dak bungalows. Through the opening of new government services and offices, a number of people got chances in government jobs, which resulted in the increase in the state economy as well. So apart from these occupations, the Bhutias also got entry into new occupations created in Sikkim. The spread of education further created opportunities for them to take up other occupations as a source of earning.

Throughout the rule of Chogyal Tashi Namgyal (1893-1963) many developmental changes were initiated. The first thing that happened was the abolition of feudalism in 1948 which was a menace to the country's development. The abolition of feudalism and landlordism made the *Kazis* and land holders lose their hold over the land and ultimately power over the peasants. By then, in Sikkim, different commercial networks like household industries, banking, transport services, communication and construction work were established. Many of the *Kazis* and landlords went for these services. Majority of the Bhutia aristocrats and *Kazis* became government contractors and entered the state's best service sectors. However, trade and business were captured mostly by the plainsmen, especially the Marwaris and Biharis (Sinha, 1975, p.68). The study undertaken by A.C Sinha in 1970 on the occupational background of the Bhutia families affirms that in Sikkim around 90% of the people were involved in agricultural activities.

Table 5.2.1. Occupational Background of Elites in Sikkim- 1970

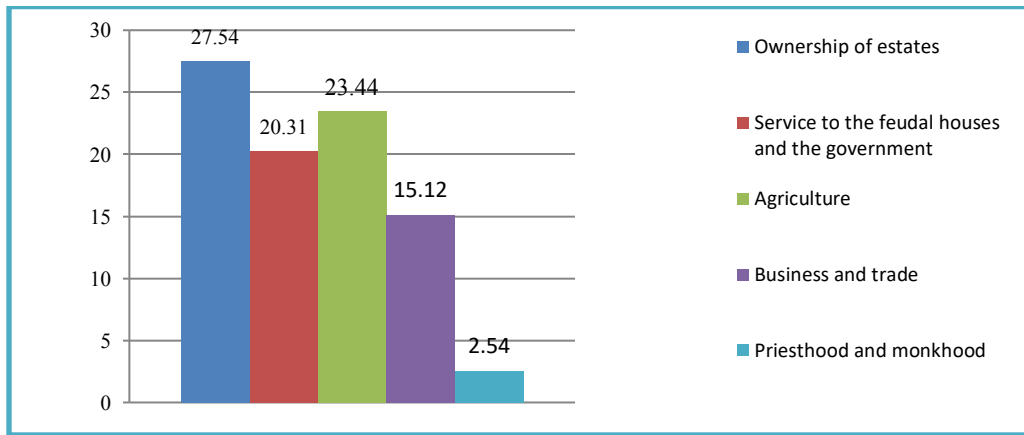
Sl. No.	Occupational Background	Number	Percentage
1	Ownership of estates	35	27.54
2	Service to the feudal houses and the government	26	20.31
3	Agriculture	30	23.44
4	Business and trade	20	15.12
5	Priesthood and monkhood	03	02.54
6	Unskilled labour	04	03.12
7	Others	04	03.12

8	No information	06	04.68
9	Total	128	99.87

Source: A.C Sinha, 1975, p. 68.

From the field study conducted by A.C Sinha in 1970, it is clear that the major occupation of the elites in Sikkim was agriculture. The highest number of elites in Sikkim were the owners of estates. Then, followed by agricultural land holders and government employees.

Fig. 5.2.1 Occupational Background of Elites in Sikkim- 1970



Source: Based on the table No. 5.2.1.

A graphical illustration on the occupational background of elites in Sikkim in 1970 shows that among the surveyed elite, about 27.54 % were owners of estates, while 23.44 % were engaged in agriculture. It shows that, 20.31% gave their service to the nobility and the aristocracy, and 15.12% were into trade and business. Only 2.54% of elites choose to concede their life into priesthood and monk-hood.

Table 5.2.2. Ethnic Affiliation of Elites in Sikkim

Sl. No	Ethnic Groups	Number	Percentage
1	Lepchas	18	14.10
2	Bhutias	25	19.10
3	Nepalese	54	42.20
4	Indians	23	17.94
5	Tsongs	3	2.34
6	Others	4	3.12
7	No Information	1	0.78

Source : A.C, Sinha, 1975.

As per the sample respondents of the study in 1970 by A.C Sinha on the ethnic affiliation of elites in Sikkim, it indicates that 14.10% were Lepchas, 19.10% were Bhutias and the Nepalese were the highest amongst the respondents as elite with 42.20%. By this time, i.e. 1970's, a bulk of the Indians (Plainsmen) (17.94%) and 2.34% were Tsongs (Limboos) were added as elites in Sikkim .

Table 5.2.3. Major Occupation of Elites in Sikkim in 1970 and Occupation of their Fathers

Sl. No	Details	Fathers Occupation		Incumbents Occupation	
		Numbers	Percentage	Numbers	Percentage
1	Agriculture	32	25.00	3	2.34
2	Ownership of the Estates	25	19.52	8	6.24
3	Business and Trade	22	17.16	15	11.72
4	Priesthood and Monkhood	4	3.12	5	3.90
5	Professions	32	25.00	44	34.36
6	Ex-Soldiers-cum-Contractors	-	-	12	9.37
7	Ex-Soldiers-cum-Voluntary Politics	-	-	12	9.37
8	Contractors-cum- Voluntary Politics	-	-	16	12.50
9	Others	10	7.80	10	7.80
10	No information	3	2.34	2	1.56

Source : A.C, Sinha, 1975.

As explained earlier, there is either no or very little information available regarding the community wise occupational data in traditional Sikkim. However, the work of A.C Sinha, 1975, has been a great source of information with regard to the ethnic affiliation of occupation. The findings of his work reveal that among the surveyed elites, around 25% of their fathers were agriculturists, 19.25% were owners of estates, 17. 16% were traders and businessmen, 3.12% were monks and 25% were into different professions (government and private sectors). A comparative study with their children's occupation revealed that they opted other sources of occupation which their fathers never thought of. The respondents who had taken their job as Ex-Soldiers-cum-Contractors were 9.37%, Ex-Soldiers-cum-Voluntary Politics were 9.37% and 12.50% were Contractors-cum- Voluntary Politics. There was a rise in number of people who opted for new avenues of income. Decrease in agriculture as occupation was noticed from 25% (fathers engagement) as only 2.34 % of their children. Secondly, respondents as owner of estates

were 19.52 % during the respondent's father's time which reduced to 6.24 % in 1970. Similarly, the number of people engaged in business and trade fell from 17.16 % to 11.72 %.

Hence, it is clear that in the later phases, occupation had begun to change which is visible in the socio-economy of the country in general and Bhutias in particular. This trend is further supported by the case studies also. In three Bhutia dominated villages; Tathangchen in East district, Lachung in North district and Tashiding in West district also saw that agriculture was the occupation and a main source of income of the Bhutia people in the pre merger period. Gradually, transformations in the occupation pattern and socio-economic status were noticed. A shift in the occupation has been recorded during the merger period. Bhutias joined other services in bureaucracy, education, government development works, construction works.

Section III

The Occupational Pattern and Economic Status of Bhutias in the Post-merger Period

It has been discussed in the previous section how opportunities for new occupations and jobs have opened up in both the government and private sectors. The new democratic state initiated the migration of people, especially from different parts of the country and neighbouring countries like Nepal in search of new jobs. Not only was the demographic profile changed, but there were many new jobs and occupations. There was a demand for more skilled and educated manpower for the speedy developmental processes. In such situations, the Bhutias continued to play and occupy better places in the service sectors as compared to other communities in the state.

This section is an attempt to examine the occupational and economic status of Bhutias in the post-merger period. The distribution of the population on various occupational categories is considered to find out occupational pattern and economic position of the Bhutias in this context.

For specific communities in Sikkim, we have data from 1998 onwards. The Nepali group (Bahun or Sharma, Chhetri, Pradhan/ Newar, Gurung, Manger or Thapa, Tamang, Limbo, Rai, Sunwar and Dewan) occupied the highest number of gazetted posts in the state in 1998. Scheduled Tribe (Bhutia, Lepcha, Sherpa) stand second in the distribution of employees in all cadres of job in 38 departments.

Table 5.3.1. Community-wise Employment Status in 38 Departments, 1998

Sl. No.	Communities	Selection IAS/IPS/IFS	Gazetted Grade I	Gazetted Grade II	Non Gazetted III	Class IV
1	Scheduled Tribe	23	95	120	888	1115
2	Scheduled caste	2	7	15	143	450
3	Nepali (Total)	20	86	220	1634	4618
i	Bahun/Sharma	2	25	42	372	739
ii	Chhetri	6	11	35	318	752
iii	Pradhan/Newar	7	17	44	245	301
iv	Gurung	-	8	17	180	524
v	Manger/Thapa	1	1	16	74	208
vi	Tamang	1	5	12	158	555
vii	Limbo	2	3	14	151	586
viii	Rai	1	12	28	81	789
ix	Sunuwar	-	2	9	50	23
x	Dewan	-	2	3	5	2
xi	Giri/Sanyasi	-	1	1	16	44
xii	Jogi	-	-	-	2	13
xiii	Thakuri	-	-	1	4	3
xiv	Bhujel	-	-	1	10	29
xv	Thami	-	-	-	-	2
xvi	Others*	4	8	34	74	48

Source: Report of the OBC Commission, 1998. * Others include plainsmen (Bengali, Marwari, Bihari, Sweeper, Keralian, Rajasthani, Kashmiri, Mohamedian, Garali, Anglo Indian, Karmakar and Oria).

According to a comparative study of the employment status of the communities, Nepalese have the highest number of employees. Scheduled Tribe (Bhutia, Lepcha and Sherpa) have the second highest number of employees distributed across all levels of employment. The Nepalese share

the highest (74.3%) number of employees, while Bhutia represents 17.2% of employees and the Lepchas have 8.5% of employees in the state.

The Report on Statistical Profile published by Government of Sikkim (2004-05) highlights the Bhutias alone as having the highest number of employees in the state in 2002 (Table 5.3.2). The entire working population has been categorised as regular, worked charged, ad-hoc, muster roll and people working in other sectors.

Table 5.3.2. Community-wise Total Numbers of Employees – 2002

Sl. No.	Community/Caste	Regular	Work-charged	Ad-hoc	Muster Roll	Others/ PSU	Total
1	Lepcha	1902 (8.9%)	72 (4.8%)	19 (10.3%)	789 (8.1%)	171 (8.2%)	2953 (8.5)
2	Bhutia	4275 (20.2%)	229 (15.2%)	40 (21.9%)	1070 (10.9%)	361 (17.2%)	5975 (17.2%)
3	Nepali (Total)	15026 (71%)	1205 (80%)	124 (67.8%)	7890 (81%)	1565 (74.6%)	25810 (74.3%)
i	Bahun	2578	166	20	771	155	3650
ii	Bhujel	63	8	1	50	7	129
iii	Chettri	2674	286	18	1484	218	4680
iv	Damai	242	28	3	180	11	464
v	Gurung	1385	107	18	895	190	2595
vi	Jogi	5	2	-	7	-	14
vii	Kami	761	95	3	497	66	1404
viii	Majhi	7	-	-	9	3	19
ix	Manger	436	22	3	274	41	776
x	Pradhan	1394	127	8	428	54	2011
xi	Rai	2629	172	20	1229	346	4396
xii	Sarki	17	2	-	27	3	49
xiii	Sherpa	610	33	4	435	76	1158
xiv	Subba (limbo)	1328	63	12	827	230	2460
xv	Sunuwar	82	16	-	88	100	286
xvi	Tamang	1350	78	14	705	105	2252
xvii	Thami	5	-	-	2	-	7

xviii	Others*	1936	72	15	240	-	1723
	Total	21203	1506	183	9749	2097	34,738

Source: Sikkim – A Statistical Profile, Government of Sikkim 2004-05.

* Others include plainsmen (Bengali, Marwari, Bihari, Sweeper, Keralian, Rajasthani, Kashmiri, Mohamedian, Garali, Anglo Indian, Karmakar and Oria).

A comparative survey of the community wise employees (in both government and private) in the state in 2002 shows the consistency in the increase of employees amongst the Bhutia community. Though less in terms of number, (17.3%, Census, 2001), Bhutias have the highest number of employees in the state. Bhutias alone counts a total of 5975 employees. Chettri is the next group with 4680 employees and Rai in the third position with 4396 employees. Out of a total of 5975 Bhutia employees, 4275 are regular workers, 166 are on work charged, 20 are on ad-hoc basis, 771 are working on muster roll and 155 are employed in other private sectors in the state.

In the comparative study among communities, the Nepalese represent 71% as regular employees, 80% as worked charged, 67.8% as adhoc, 81% working on a muster-roll basis and 74.6% working in other sectors. About 20.2% of Bhutia's are regular employees, 15.2% are working as worked charged, 21.9% are working on ad-hoc basis, 10.9 % are working on a muster roll basis and 17.2% are working in other sectors. About 8.9% of Lepchas are regular employees, 4.8% are working as work charged, 10.3% working on ad-hoc basis, 8.1% are working as muster roll and 8.2% employees are working in other sectors in the state.

Consistency in the rise of employees among all three communities is noticed in the year 2006.

Table 5.3.3. Caste-wise Total Numbers of Employees – 2006.

Community	Government		PSU	TOTAL
	Regular	Non-Regular	Regular + Non-Regular	
Bhutia	5367	3481	530	9378
Lepcha	2325	2646	183	5154
Tamang	1702	1567	243	3512
Limboo	1980	2349	148	4477
Bahun	3711	2860	269	6840
Chettri	3092	3309	345	6746
Pradhan	1715	1149	194	3058

Rai	3279	3592	389	7260
Manger	659	731	96	1486
Gurung	1890	2125	298	4313
Sunwar/Mukhia	148	112	37	297
Bhujel	129	112	18	259
Kami	1089	954	164	2207
Damai	330	385	55	770
Majhi	21	43	3	67
Sanyasi/Giri	125	108	11	244
Sherpa	812	1004	101	1917
Dewan	23	27	0	40
Jogi/ Thai	13	7	5	35
Others	761	444	208	1413
Total	29171	27005	3297	59473

Source: Department of Economics, Statistics, Monitoring and Evaluation, Govt. of Sikkim, 2006.

In the study undertaken for the analysis of caste wise employees in 2006, shows that 9378 (15.76%) of the Bhutia population were employed. Next, 7260 (12.2%) employees belong to the Rai group. Bhutias continued to be the community with the highest number of employees in the state. The State Socio-Economic Census, 2006 highlights in the comparative analysis of community wise distribution of employees that Bhutias are still the leading community. The number of employees from the community has increased from 5975 in 2002 to 9378 in 2006.

The argument put forward by A.C Sihha (2009) that one of the reasons for Bhutias' being observed in the higher bureaucratic posts in the state is their affiliation to the royal family as well as their high socio-economic status. Secondly, the educational background of the Bhutias has helped them to take a lead among all the other communities.

On the basis of the above descriptions, the Bhutias are identified as the elite group in the present day as well. According to Sinha (2009), the status-quo as elite is being maintained by the Bhutia group.

5.3.1. Income Status

Income as a determinant factor of socio-economic status is considered in many ways. In this family income and assessments of wealth are considered as important parameters. The collection of income also includes the measurement of total income, earned or unearned.

Table 5.3.4.
Community-wise Percentage Distribution of Household by Income Category- 2006*

Community	Household	0 - 2500	2501-5000	5001-10000	10001-25000	25001-Above
Bhutia	14769 (13.2)	11.48	11.46	13.69	16.73	21.52
Lepcha	8041 (7.19)	7.70	7.59	6.88	6.44	5.59
Tamang	7718 (6.9)	6.51	7.44	7.39	5.92	4.73
Limboo	10672 (9.54)	14.40	10.26	7.82	5.83	4.17
Bahun	7680 (6.87)	5.37	6.17	6.91	9.41	10.41
Chettri	13509 (12.08)	11.83	12.68	12.30	11.38	9.09
Pradhan	4441 (3.97)	2.94	3.52	4.14	4.98	7.91
Rai	15430 (13.8)	16.43	15.15	12.78	9.82	9.18
Manger	3015 (2.7)	3.10	3.06	2.53	1.77	1.68
Gurung	6489 (5.8)	6.29	5.82	5.79	5.76	3.96
Sunwar/Mukhia	595 (0.53)	0.59	0.58	0.55	0.34	0.43
Thami	92 (0.08)	0.08	0.11	0.07	0.05	0.02
Jogi	94 (0.08)	0.11	0.11	0.06	0.03	0.02
Dewan	44 (0.04)	0.01	0.02	0.03	0.11	0.11
Bhujel	701 (0.63)	1.01	0.67	0.53	0.32	0.17
Kami	4715 (4.22)	4.44	4.71	4.05	3.37	2.49
Damai	2345 (2.1)	2.31	2.37	2.08	1.50	0.88
Sarki	216 (0.19)	0.33	0.21	0.14	0.10	0.04
Majhi	100 (0.09)	0.11	0.10	0.09	0.05	0.02
Sanyasi/Giri	263. (0.24)	0.26	0.24	0.19	0.25	0.22
Others	10901(9.75)	4.68	7.72	12.00	15.85	17.37
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Source: Department of Economics, Statistics, Monitoring and Evaluation, Govt. of Sikkim-2006

*The income parameters starting from Rs.25.00 seems quite unreal during the period under review. The general impression one gets about the Bhutia community also is different and this is the data provided by the Government and this gives an idea of the economic status of the community in relation to others.

With regard to the distribution of households by income category in the state, the Rai community has 13.8 %, which is the highest number of households (15430) and the highest income bearer in the category of 0-10000. Bhutia is the second highest, with 14769 households, sharing 13.2% percent of the total households in the state. The Bhutias are the highest income earners in the income category of Rs.10,000 and above.

After the state picture, the study on district wise distribution of community wise households and their income is highlighted. This enables us to draw an assessment in the socio-economic status of Bhutia visa-vis other communities in the state.

5.3.2. District-wise Distribution of Household by Income Category

5.3.2.1. East District

The East district has a total of 53194 households, of which 7470 households (14%) belong to the Bhutias, which is the highest in the district. Chettri has 6342 households, followed by Bahun which has 5106. Among these, the Bhutia households are the highest income bearers in the category of Rs. 5000 and above income category, while Chettri (households) have the highest income in the category of Rs. 0-5000. In the category of households with an income higher than Rs. 25001, 892 households are Bhutias, the highest in the district.

**Table 5.3.5. Community-wise Distribution of Household by Income Category
East District, 2006**

Community	Household	0- 2500	2501-5000	5001-10000	10001-25000	25001 Above
Bhutia	7470	837	2326	1715	1703	892
Lepcha	2388	325	901	530	433	199
Tamang	4099	540	1770	1002	609	178
Limboo	2585	587	1222	557	317	102
Bahun	5106	579	1883	1143	1092	409
Chettri	6342	850	2668	1492	1016	316
Pradhan	2554	281	874	582	512	305
Rai	5743	932	2564	1252	743	252
Manger	1341	202	623	291	166	59
Gurung	2674	391	1075	636	459	113

Sunwar/Mukhia	315	51	136	79	32	17
Thami	77	14	42	12	8	1
Jogi	23	5	11	7	0	0
Dewan	31	1	4	6	14	6
Bhujel	307	67	131	72	29	8
Kami	2644	359	1178	588	409	110
Damai	1358	214	634	314	161	35
Sarki	85	18	37	18	11	1
Majhi	61	15	32	10	3	1
Sanyasi/Giri	158	27	58	33	31	9
Others	7833	660	2462	2010	1942	759
Total	53194	6755	20631	12346	9690	3772

Source: Department of Economics, Statistics, Monitoring and Evaluation, Govt. of Sikkim-2006.

5.3.2.2. North District

In total, there are 7184 households in the North district. The Lepchas are the most populous, with the greatest number of households, accounting for 2507 people (35%). They are mostly concentrated in the Dzongu block of North Sikkim. The Bhutias are the next group with 1776 households (25%) and 852 households are Limboo. In the income category among the three ethnic communities, the Lepchas are the highest income bearers in all the categories. Except in the category of Rs. 25000 and above, the Bhutias are the highest.

**Table 5.3.6. Community-wise Distribution of Household by Income Category
North District, 2006**

Community	Household	0 - 2500	2501-5000	5001-10000	10001-25000	25001-Above
Bhutia	1776 (25%)	192 (25%)	679 (19%)	513 (27%)	334 (33%)	58 (41%)
Lepcha	2507 (35%)	276 (36%)	1230 (35%)	596 (32%)	362 (36%)	43 (30%)
Tamang	365	35	202	99	27	2
Limboo	852	86	523	185	53	5
Bahun	40	2	8	17	11	2
Chettri	384	36	198	107	39	4
Pradhan	75	8	33	14	17	3

Rai	354	45	209	76	24	0
Manger	55	10	27	13	5	0
Gurung	83	11	41	19	11	1
Sunwar/Mukhia	27	2	14	10	1	0
Thami	1	0	1	0	0	0
Jogi	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dewan	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bhujel	8	0	5	1	2	0
Kami	156	18	83	33	20	2
Damai	85	13	39	26	6	1
Sarki	4	0	3	1	0	0
Majhi	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sanyasi/Giri	7	1	5	0	1	0
Others	405	27	136	141	83	18
Total	7184	762	3436	1851	996	139

Source: Socio-Economic Census, DESME, 2006.

5.3.2.3. South District

The South district comprises a total of 26691 households. The district is mostly inhabited by the Nepalese, though the Bhutias and Lepchas are sparsely populated. The Rai community has the highest number of households with a total of 5789, followed by Chettri with 3738. Bhutia accounts for a total of 2710 households. In the income distribution, Rai leads in almost all the income categories. Bhutia households have the highest income in the category of Rs. 25000 and above.

Table 5.3.7. Community-wise Distribution of Household by Income Category- South District- 2006

Community	Household	0 - 2500	2501-5000	5001-10000	10001-25000	25001-Above
Bhutia	2710	312	1182	662	442	112
Lepcha	1330	216	629	282	163	40
Tamang	2069	292	1001	495	233	48
Limboo	1928	266	997	457	174	34
Bahun	1442	161	589	333	280	79

Chettri	3738	463	1818	865	496	96
Pradhan	1178	132	492	286	203	65
Rai	5789	948	2754	1302	616	169
Manger	927	127	477	210	92	21
Gurung	1627	178	747	421	240	41
Sunwar/Mukhia	145	20	79	31	12	3
Thami	3	1	2	0	0	0
Jogi	40	8	24	6	2	0
Dewan	11	2	4	1	4	0
Bhujel	184	36	108	27	12	1
Kami	1014	171	503	234	93	13
Damai	512	97	253	104	51	7
Sarki	55	11	33	7	4	0
Majhi	36	7	12	11	6	0
Sanyasi/Giri	37	2	20	6	7	2
Others	1916	173	669	508	450	116
Total	26691	3623	12393	6248	3580	847

Source: Department of Economics, Statistics, Monitoring and Evaluation, DESME, 2006.

5.3.2.4. West District

Limboos are the dominant group, with a total of 5307 households in the West district. Next is the Rai group with 3544 households, Chettri with 3045 households and Bhutias with 2813 households. As compared to East and North districts, Bhutias have a lower number of households in West district. The distribution of income by category shows that Limboos have the highest income in all the income categories, but only in the category of Rs. 25000 and above the Bhutia households take the lead.

**Table 5.3.8. Community-wise Distribution of Household by Income Category
West District-2006**

Community	Household	0 - 2500	2501-5000	5001-10000	10001-25000	25001-Above
Bhutia	2813	997	1058	354	315	89
Lepcha	1816	750	711	221	117	17
Tamang	1185	459	430	152	119	25

Limboo	5307	2194	1951	651	429	82
Bahun	1092	352	341	143	189	67
Chettri	3045	1060	1119	447	349	70
Pradhan	634	178	210	97	99	50
Rai	3544	1420	1403	394	257	70
Manger	692	292	273	84	33	10
Gurung	2105	701	802	294	251	57
Sunwar/Mukhia	108	47	38	9	11	3
Thami	11	2	5	4	0	0
Jogi	31	10	16	1	3	1
Dewan	2	0	1	0	1	0
Bhujel	202	103	64	25	10	0
Kami	901	357	392	104	40	8
Damai	390	147	158	49	32	4
Sarki	72	39	22	8	2	1
Majhi	3	1	2	0	0	0
Sanyasi/Giri	61	22	29	6	3	1
Others	747	92	267	180	172	36
Total	24761	9223	9292	3223	2432	591

Source: Department of Economics, Statistics, Monitoring and Evaluation, DESME, 2006

Form the analysis in the four districts, it is seen that though Bhutias are in the minority with regard to population and households, they are still the highest income bearers. The Bhutia households in all four districts are the highest income bearer in the income category of Rs. 25000 and above. The potential confounding factor may be that they are largely represented in the job sectors as well as they are the biggest land owners in the state.

5.3.3. Landholding Status

The pattern of land distribution is also one of the determining factors in studying the socio-economic status of the communities. Communities have been categorised along the lines of land distribution by land size. However, not much data is available in this area.

Table 5.3.9.
Community-wise Distribution of Land in Sikkim (1976–83) (Area in Hectares, Rent in Rs)

Caste	Total Paddy Fields		Total Dry Land		Wasteland		Cardamom	Total Cultivated Land	
	Area %	Rent in ₹	Area %	Rent in ₹	Area %	Rent in ₹	Area %	Area %	Rent in ₹
Bhutia	27.12	25.13	16.13	15.37	24.18	24.28	27.05	20.32	19.11
Lepcha	14.97	14.07		18.48	17.53	13.42	32.72	20.38	16.15
Nepali	57.19	64.74	60.80	64.95	67.10	62.00	62.25	22.37	58.66
Total Public	99.28	100.00	99.56	100.00	99.60	100.00	82.15	99.36	100.00
Grand Total	11,727.1	93,647.9	64,739.8	172,986.1	11,734.4	16,362.5	21761.7	109,963.02	82,996.4

Source: Sikkim Human Development Report 2001, p 42.

The table on ‘Community wise distribution of land in Sikkim’ highlights the distribution of different categories of land owned by different ethnic communities immediately after the merger and formation of the new government in the new democratic state (1976–83). The study of the land distribution is studied in the form of total paddy fields, total dry land, wasteland, cardamom area and total cultivated land.

Nepalis owned nearly 59 percent of total cultivated land in 1983, as well as the largest share of total paddy fields, dry land and waste land area. The community contributed the most (64 percent) to state’s total land revenue. The Bhutias and Lepchas own 20% of the land and 19% and 16% of the revenue generated by land, respectively. The two communities, Lepcha and Bhutia, have the largest share under cardamom cultivation.

The socio-economic census of 2006 presents the distribution of land by land size amongst different communities in the state. The statistics provided in the table illustrates the distribution of land among three ethnic communities: Lepcha, Bhutia and Nepalese in 1976-83.

Table 5.3.10. Community-wise Distribution of Land in Sikkim 1976-83 (Area in Hectares)

Communities	Total Paddy fields (Area %)	Total Dry Land (Area %)	Wasteland (Area %)	Cardamom (Area %)	Total Cultivable land (Area %)
Bhutia	21.12	16.13	24.18	27.05	20.32
Lepcha	14.97	---	17.53	32.72	20.38
Nepali	57.19	64.95	62.00	22.37	58.66

Source: Land Record Section, Department of Land Revenue, Govt. of Sikkim, Gangtok.

The distribution of land amongst Bhutia, Lepcha and Nepalese in Sikkim from 1976-83 reveals that the Nepali group has the largest cultivated land, i.e 58.66%. Bhutias and Lepchas share equal percentages of 20% each. In terms of cardamom land owned, the Lepchas have 32.72% of total land, which is highest among the three communities. However, it has to be mentioned here that Lepchas and Bhutias' percentage of land owned is as a single group, whereas the land owned by the Nepalese is the consolidation of total land of all the Nepali communities.

Table 5.3.11. Community-wise Distribution of Land by Land Size

Community	Less Than 1 Acre in %	More than 1 Acre less than 2.5 Acre	More than 2.5 Acre less than 5 Acre	More than 5 Acre less than 10 Acre	More than 10 Acre less than 25 Acre	More than 25 Acre	Grand Total
Bhutia	83.17	10.58	2.40	2.40	0.96	0.48	100.00
Lepcha	78.81	13.91	3.97	0.00	3.31	0.00	100.00
Tamang	86.84	7.89	0.00	2.63	2.63	0.00	100.00
Limbo	91.45	4.61	1.97	1.97	0.00	0.00	100.00
Bahun	88.15	11.11	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.74	100.00
Chettri	84.83	12.36	2.25	0.00	0.56	0.00	100.00
Pradhan	87.50	7.50	2.50	2.50	0.00	0.00	100.00
Rai	89.21	8.27	2.16	0.36	0.00	0.00	100.00
Manger	85.48	14.52	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	100.00
Gurung	95.31	1.56	1.56	1.56	0.00	0.00	100.00
Suwar/ mulkhia	100.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	100.00
Thami	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Jogi	100.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	100.00

Dewan	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Bhujel	83.33	16.67	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	100.00
Kami	87.50	12.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	100.00
Damai	100.00	0.00	00.0	0.00	0.00	0.00	100.00
Sarki	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Maji	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Sanyasi/giri	100.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	100.00
Others	100.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	100.00
Grand total	86.80	9.60	1.91	0.88	0.66	0.15	100.00

Source: Department of Economics, Statistics, Monitoring and Evaluation, DESME, 2006.

Among the various social groups in Sikkim, 83.17% of Bhutia households possess less than 1 acre of land. In the category of more than 1 acre and less than 2.5 acres of land, Bhutia households have a share of 10.58%. Around 2.40% of households possess more than 2.5 acres less than 5 acres of land, 0.96% possess more than 10 acres and 0.48% Bhutia households possess more than 25 acres of land.

We see Bhutia as the community with the possession of large land areas in the state. The various reforms and notification of the government has led to the protection of lands owned by the Bhutias and Lepchas. For example: Revenue Order 1 has been an advantage to Bhutias for possession of large lands amongst the communities in the state as it forbids the selling of land without prior permission of the Darbar.

Sikkim gets its name “*Denzong*”, which means “Valley of Rice”. Hence, paddy cultivation is an important crop for all the communities of Sikkim

Table 5.3.12. Community-wise Distribution of Households Possessing Paddy Land, 2006

Community	Less Than 1 Acre	More than 1 Acre less than 2.5 Acre	More than 2.5 Acre less than 5 Acre	More than 5 Acre less than 10 Acre	More than 10 Acre less than 25 Acre	More than 25 Acre	Grand Total
Bhutia	1897	805	176	81	38	20	3017
Lepcha	2043	562	102	26	14	10	2757
Tamang	612	206	27	9	3	0	857
Limbo	2124	573	81	16	13	3	2810

Bahun	2225	815	173	44	15	3	3275
Chettri	2365	881	166	43	22	4	3481
Pradhan	687	251	49	20	11	4	1022
Rai	1486	492	104	21	10	1	2114
Manger	242	63	10	1	0	1	317
Gurung	535	141	20	2	7	0	705
Sunwar/mulkhia	50	20	3	0	1	0	74
Thami	3	2	0	0	0	0	5
Jogi	12	2	0	0	0	0	14
Dewan	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
Bhujel	169	46	3	1	0	0	219
Kami	444	151	20	1	1	0	617
Damai	159	37	6	5	2	0	209
Sarki	17	9	0	0	0	0	26
Maji	2	3	2	0	0	0	7
Sanyasi/giri	52	21	7	1	0	1	82
Others	44	20	4	0	0	3	71
Grand total	15170	5100	953	271	137	50	21681

Source: Department of Economics, Statistics, Monitoring and Evaluation, DESME, 2006

The table above gives us an understanding from the statistical figures that out of a total of 21681 households in the state, 3017 Bhutia households possess paddy land. Around 13.9% of the land is shared by the Bhutias. In the category of less than 1 acre, 1897 (12.5%) paddy lands are under Bhutia households. About 805 (15.7%) of Bhutia households possess more than 1 acre and less than 2.5 acres of paddy land. In the category of more than 2.5 acres and less than 5 acres, 176 (18.4%) households possess land and 81 (29.8%) of households possess more than 5 acres and less than 10 acres of paddy land. In the category of more than 10 acres and less than 25 acres, 38 (27.7%) households possess land and 20 (40%) of Bhutia households possess paddy land which is above 25 acres.

Table 5.3.13. Community-wise Distribution of Land under Cardamom by Land Size

Community	Less Than 1 Acre	More than 1 Acre less than 2.5 Acre	More than 2.5 Acre less than 5 Acre	More than 5 Acre less than 10 Acre	More than 10 Acre less than 25 Acre	More than 25 Acre	Grand Total
Bhutia	2135	870	296	104	53	22	3480
Lepcha	1969	900	299	90	29	7	3294
Tamang	313	69	14	9	4	0	409
Limbo	1670	378	86	23	9	2	2168
Bahun	756	181	52	11	6	0	1006
Chettri	1111	295	76	25	11	1	1519
Pradhan	180	38	12	6	7	1	244
Rai	1418	410	115	29	13	2	1987
Manger	171	68	15	2	2	0	258
Gurung	986	256	81	21	8	2	1354
Sunwar/ mulkhia	18	4	2	0	0	0	24
Thami	6	2	0	0	0	0	8
Jogi	2	0	1	0	0	0	3
Dewan	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
Bhujel	24	3	1	0	0	0	28
Kami	143	15	6	1	0	0	165
Damai	33	0	1	0	1	0	35
Sarki	9	5	0	0	0	0	14
Maji	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Sanyasi/Giri	19	6	3	0	0	0	28
Others	9	1	0	0	0	0	10
Grand total	10975	3501	1060	321	143	37	16037

Source: Department of Economics, Statistics, Monitoring and Evaluation, DESME, 2006

Cardamom has always been the major cash crop in Sikkim. The Lepchas and Bhutias have been cultivating cardamom. With regard to the community wise distribution of land under cardamom by land size, the highest number of Bhutia households in Sikkim possess land under cardamom. In 2006, the total number of households in the state with cardamom land was 16037, with 3480 (21.6%) being Bhutia households.

In the category of less than 1 acre, 2135 (19.4%) Bhutia households possess land under cardamom. About 870 (24.8%) of Bhutia households possess more than 1 acre and less than 2.5 acres of land under cardamom. In the category of more than 2.5 acres and less than 5 acres, 296 (27.9%) households possess land and 104 (32.3%) of Bhutia households possess more than 5 acres and less than 10 acres of land under cardamom. In the category of more than 10 acres and less than 25 acres, 53 (37%) households possess land under cardamom and 22 (54%) of Bhutia households possess land under cardamom which is above 25 acres. According to the state socio economic census data of 2006, Bhutias outnumbered the other communities in occupation and land under cardamom.

As discussed in the previous sections, Sikkim's economy has changed over the years, particularly after the merger with India. New avenues for economic development have opened up and job opportunities have diversified while land remains a staple source of income for the Bhutias with the new economic opportunities and they have emerged as economic elites.

The Bhutias have contributed to expansion of Gangtok as the capital of Sikkim. A small hamlet until the construction of the Enchey Monastery in 1840, Gangtok was a Buddhist pilgrimage centre. Today, with a population of a total 219450 (102846 rural and 116604 urban), it has become a major trading, business and administrative centre in the state. The literacy rate of Gangtok is 80.1%, where rural literacy rate is 73.9% and the urban literacy rate is 85.1% (Census 2011). The work participation rate of Gangtok is 49% (107521 persons). 81.4% are main workers and 18.6% are marginal workers. According to the 2011 population Census, Gangtok Sub-Division records 18.7% as cultivators (34.5% in rural and 0.7% in urban areas) and 6.1% as agricultural labourers (10.3% in rural and 1.4 % in urban areas).

New buildings, big hotels and restaurants have replaced the old houses and shops in Gangtok. The owners of most of the buildings and hotels are Bhutias. In most of the Bhutia owned buildings, hotels, private offices, private banks and shops are opened. Some of them are on rent and some are leased to Indian businessmen. For example, one of the oldest Yama building, located at M.G Marg, has been rented to HDFC Bank and businessmen. The famous Denzong Regency, which has one of Sikkim's Casinos, situated near Zero point, Technical, Gangtok is owned by Bhutia. Similarly, some big and renowned hotels like Hotel Keepsa, Hotel Yangthang Heritage, Hotel Summit Denzong etc. are owned by Bhutias. Bhutia buildings are leased out to open Shopping complexes like Pantaloons, banks and car showrooms. The buildings along the

stretch of Mahatma Gandhi Marg (M.G Marg) where we find big and small shops and hotels are mostly owned by Bhutias.

Agriculture has become the secondary source of income for the present generation of Bhutia people. They are more engaged in business and trade, tourism and salaried jobs. As per the data obtained from various census and case studies, the Bhutias as agriculturist and agricultural labour has declined, but they still own large landed properties in Sikkim.

The Bhutias and Lepchas, inspite of being original groups in Sikkim, have been outnumbered by the Nepalese. However, the indicators of the socio-economic status of different communities residing in Sikkim show that the Bhutias have still managed to retain their socio-economic status high in the state as compared to other communities. The reason why the Bhutias still enjoy a high share in bureaucratic posts in the state is their affiliation to the royal family as well as their high socio-economic status. Their educational background also helped them to take a lead among all the other communities.

Chapter VI

Bhutias in Bureaucracy of Sikkim

In this chapter, we look into Bhutias' representation in the Sikkimese bureaucracy. The chapter examines their representation and performance as bureaucrats in various administrative structures in the pre and post-merger era.

We first look into the existing theories on bureaucracy and organisational design and structure to understand the role of bureaucracy in the contemporary world. The chapter has two sections, section I begins with the general meaning and introduction of bureaucracy in the modern world. The section deals with the Bhutias in bureaucracy in the pre-merger period. Section II deals with the Bhutias in bureaucracy in the post-merger period in Sikkim.

Section I

Pre-merger Period

The word Bureaucracy comes from the Latin word '*burr*' which means '*a dark and somber colour*' and the Greek word '*cracy*'. The word *burr* is related to the French word '*la bure*', signifying a piece of cloth laid on the desks used by government officials. Later, it was understood as the room from which the public or government officials functioned. The French Minister of Commerce, Vincent de Gournay, referred bureaucratic to public officers (Verma, 1915-16, pp.716-718). Bureaucracy has a prominent role to play in any form of government. Bureaucrats are the ones who are actual actors within the state, monitoring and imposing material and symbolic effects on the functioning of the state.

Historians maintain that 'bureaucracy' is one of the ancient systems of administration in history. As such, bureaucracy is believed to be as old as human civilization. The origin or emergence of bureaucracy goes back to the ancient period of 10,000 years. Bureaucracy played a formidable role in power stabilizing, public works implementation and developmental planning. Since ancient times, bureaucracy has played a dominant role in the execution of administrative functions. For example, in great empires and civilisations like Persian, Chinese, and Roman, bureaucracy played a key role in the administration. Bureaucracy received much attention in the twentieth century with the creation of new nation states in the world. The beginning of the

conceptualisation of a welfare state further expanded their realms of role and functions (Marx, 1957, pp.17-18).

The development of bureaucracy as an instrument of a state structure has a long historical background. The term 'bureaucracy' was used first in France in 1764. Since then, it has formed an important part in the analysis of the administration of modern states (Heywood, 2013, p 356). The administration of the state functions on the ideal of separation of works at all levels, depending upon the role of bureaucracy. Max Weber, who is regarded as one of the pioneer founders of modern discipline of sociology, states that it is the bureaucracy that enacts the actual power of the state. The bureaucracy always tries to secure the status and position of the bureaucrats at present and also in future advancements. This view tries to explain why the public in general is under those who always demand minimized powers of the officials or bureaucrats who always try to promote their status in the state (Weber, 1922 (1968), pp. 956–958, 999–101).

In the structure of state government as propounded by Max Weber, bureaucracy is organised on the basis of eight principles: the official tasks are organised on a continuous and regulated basis; the tasks are divided into different functional departments; hierarchy in the offices is maintained; functions of the departments are carried according to technical and legal rules; the resources of the organisations are distinctively separated from the members of private individuals; administration is conducted through proper written documents and files; and legal authority prevails in all the functioning of the bureaucracy. The new state of Sikkim strived to organise the state administrative structure following the principles of bureaucracy that most modern states have applied since the merger and attainment of statehood ushered major administrative changes.

Bureaucracy, since its inception, has always acted as an effective bridge between the government and the people and is engaged in the implementation and execution of policies. The bureaucrats exert considerable influence on the policy process (Heywood, 2013, p. 361). Public services in the state are always executed through bureaucracy. Without bureaucracy, the state administration cannot function (Bhattacharya, 2016, pp. 57-59).

In a bureaucratic structure, the officials are designated at different levels of administration with the principle of hierarchy which is a prime characteristic of bureaucracy. The day to day administration and the socio-economic development of the state directly depends on the effectiveness of bureaucracy.

B. K. Verma, in his book, '*Modern Indian political system: problems and prospects*' refers to Fainsod's five different forms of Bureaucracies; Representative Bureaucracies, Party State Bureaucracies, Military dominated Bureaucracies, Ruler Dominated Bureaucracies and Ruling Bureaucracies. The Sikkimese bureaucracy represented the Ruling Bureaucracies (Verma, 2006, p.117). Referring to Max Weber's definition of bureaucracy, the representatives in a bureaucracy are always appointed. He talks about the 'theory of domination'. The theory expands on the existence of power in the ruler in any established authority. The administrative apparatus comprises the people who are followers, relatives and servants of the ruler. Under the feudal system, it is mostly dominated by the feudal lords who actually act as intermediators between the ruler and the ruled (Bhattacharya, 2016, pp. 54-55).

Few studies have been undertaken so far on the bureaucracy of Sikkim in the pre-merger period. Analysis of the bureaucracy of Sikkim and the role of Bhutias in particular have been drawn from the limited sources and the discussions made by various historians on the administrative structure during the monarchy period. The bureaucratic set up in Sikkim has been talked about in the light of monks (high Lamas) holding important posts along with the *Dzongpons* (governor), *Kazis* and *Thekadars*. The holding of high posts and the distribution of power by the *lamas* (mostly Bhutias) permits us to understand that the Bhutias controlled all the bureaucratic posts under Chogyal. However, as mentioned in the earlier chapter, the acculturation of Lepchas to Buddhist customs and culture as well as inter-marriage between them, also favoured some Lepchas to occupy high posts in the administrative set up.

Providing advice to the political executive is an important function of bureaucracy. The same function was extended by the bureaucrats in Sikkim during the Chogyal period. The monks who also functioned as bureaucrats, acted as strong political advisers to the ruler. The *Kazis* and monks performed the duties of bureaucrats. It is known that one of the main roles of bureaucrats is to carry out the administrative justice. The *Kazis* and monks who formed the bureaucracy in Sikkim handled several types of cases and disputes for the common people. They controlled the financial administration as well. They were assigned with the function of collection of taxes, which is a crucial function of bureaucracy. They controlled the tax-structure, tax-administration and collection revenues in their respective *elakas*.

Since the beginning of the Bhutia rule in Sikkim, the structure and functioning of the newly established country followed the Tibetan structure, having strong administrative base on

feudalistic norms and religious sanctions. The bureaucracy in Sikkim was founded on a feudal basis with feudal lords, *Kazis*, *Thekadars* and *Lamas* (monks) acting as bureaucrats appointed by the ruler, concentrating most of the power in their hands.

Administration in Sikkim was established through the centralized bureaucratic model until the abolition of zamindari system in the 1940's and eventually the Sikkim's merger with Indian federation in 1975. The historical traces of Sikkim administration performances in several evaluations suggest a study on its successes and failures, mainly, the resistance posed by other existing ethnic groups such as Lepchas and Limboos, commoners and political organisations.

Bureaucracy in pre-merger Sikkim was mostly rule bound, exploitative, elitist, and repressive under absolutist monarchy. The Chogyal, *Kazis* and the land lords took charge of the administration where public representation was not considered. The rule of the *Kazis* and landlords, who were mostly Lepchas and Bhutias, was not much liked by the Nepalese. The resistance against the repressive bureaucracy took a major escalation from the 1940's when the first political movement broke out. The advent of the British also brought necessary changes in the bureaucratic system. Again, the abolition of the judicial and magisterial functions of the landlords brought changes in the bureaucratic system of Sikkim. Furthermore, the tripartite agreement among the government of India, leaders of political parties in Sikkim and the then Chogyal, Palden Thendup Namgyal, in 1973, which made the Chogyal the constitutional head of the country brought gradual changes in the bureaucratic system in Sikkim.

Earlier, during the monarchy system, the administration of the country was managed through twelve *Dzongs* or districts, namely, Lassu, Dallon, Yangthang, Song, Libing, Maling, Simik, and Pandom etc. These were placed under the district chief or *Dzongpen*, all belonging to the leading Bhutia and Lepcha families in the country. They were also called *Kazis*. After the initial start of Bhutia rule in Sikkim, the Lepchas came under the subjugation of the Bhutias through different ends and treaties and were included in the administration of the country.²⁶

²⁶Matrimonial alliances took place between the Lepchas and the Bhutias. So acculturation of Buddhist customs and culture of took place among the Lepchas. This enabled the group of Lepchas who had close affiliation to the ruler secure a higher status in the social hierarchy as compared to other existing communities. The marital relationship of the Lepchas with Bhutias led to birth of a new class, recognized to be as *Kazis*. The *kazis* became the elite class after the Chogyal. They were the landlords and enjoyed powers over the lands, however Chogyal remained the final authority over the landed property.

The central administration was vested in the Chogyal. Under him was the Council of twelve ministers, mostly belonging to Bhutia families (Sinha, 1995). In the history of Sikkim, *Kazis* as bureaucrats were instrumental in assisting the political rule in the country. *Kazis* developed to be in the highest strata and level of administration. The lamas received high position among the other groups of people. The *Lamas* (mostly heads of six prominent monasteries) were always consulted on various issues and decisions by the Chogyal. So, within the Bhutia community, there was a presence of stratified society, with the lamas as the clergy, the *Kazis* as the aristocracy and the commoners enjoying the lowest position in the social status. The strategy for including the monks in the administration was due to the influence of huge monasteries which were under them. The monasteries functioned as both administrative and revenue collection centres. The six prominent monasteries were Pema Yangtsee, Tashiding, Phensang, Ralong, Rumtek and Phodong. The first three monasteries belonged to the Nyingmapa sect of Buddhism and remaining belonged to Kyagupa sect.²⁷ Hence, the monks and the monasteries performed important role in social, economic and political development of the country (Sinha 1975, p.39).

There were no specific recruitment and training processes for bureaucrats during the Chogyal period. People with close attachments and affinities were appointed in the high posts. The bureaucrats occupied the position next to the ruler in the administrative hierarchy, as the *Sidlon* and the secretaries. From field survey conducted in 1970-72, A.C Sinha projected that bureaucrats comprised of 36.30% of Bhutias, of which 34.68 % belonged to aristocrat families that included relatives of royal family and *Kazis* which also represented Bhutua families, 27.42% were *Kazis* and 7.26 % were represented by Newars. The entire recruitment process of the bureaucracy depended upon feudal elements. The administration of the country was conducted through various offices of the government. The identified public offices in 1970 were those of the *Sidlon* or Dewan, Chief Secretary, Departmental Secretaries, Departmental Directors and Executive Councillors (Sinha, 2008, pp. 76-77 &174).

As per documents procured in the Sikkim State Archives²⁸, prior to 1975, there existed 'the Secretariat established for carrying out the administration. An organised secretariat was

²⁷ There are two Rumtek monasteries, the monastery that is referred in the chapter is the old Rumtek monastery and the Ralong monastery also refers to the old Ralang Monastery.

²⁸ The Sikkim State Archives was established as an Archives Section under the Art and Culture Department in 1976. It was renamed as the Sikkim State Archives in 1990, presently located at Zero point, Gangtok, National Highway

established to assist the Chogyal in administration. As discussed earlier, the Dewan headed the Secretariat and was supported by various Secretariat Departments. The conduct of administration was carried through three Secretariats:

- 1) The General Secretary was in charge of police, arms and ammunition, land administration, registration, cooperative credit societies, forest, political, post, telegraphs and stationery administration.
- 2) The Judicial Secretary was in charge of education, medical health administration (including sanitation), ecclesiastical, jails, income tax, excise, bazar, veterinary, stamps, census and transport.
- 3) The Finance Secretary was in charge of the state budget processes, accounting and auditing government employee salaries. In addition to these three secretariats, a State Council of nine members existed, which provided support in secretariat administration.

The traditional administrative structure was based on the model of a five-member secretariat. Sikkim being a feudal state and the secretariat was mostly comprised of members belonging to the feudal class. The revenue collection and management of the state was vested in the members of secretariat. The local administration of the country was entrusted to the *Kazis* and the *Thekadars*, who made their own arrangements in performing their functions under their jurisdiction.

The administrative structure of Sikkim underwent severe changes due to British intervention. The change and implementation of the new bureaucratic system were initiated by John Claude White in 1888. The task assigned to him was to understand the administrative situation in Sikkim because Sikkim during those times was undergoing administrative problems. Then Chogyal, Thutob Namgyal, was living in Tibet. A new administrative structure was designed by the Political Officer, J.C White. The Chogyal was requested to come back to Sikkim and take his seat but the request was not obliged by the Chogyal. The inclusion of the ruler in the designing of the new administrative structure was much needed and felt by the Political Officer, but this could not happen since the Chogyal refused to be part of it (Sinha, 1975, pp. 19-20).

10 Earlier known as 31-A. The State Archives preserved the record holdings of 15 Secretariat Department of the Darbar period prior to merger.

Nevertheless, the existing administrative system was replaced by the new system introduced by the Political Officer, which made him the predominant authority in the country. After his return to Sikkim in 1905, Chogyal Thutob Namgyal had great difficulty restoring administrative power. It was only in 1918 that the administrative powers were transferred back to the Chogyal, then Tashi Namgyal. Till then, the administration was controlled by the Political Officer (Sinha, 1975, p.20).

The major change was seen in the land administration of the country with the initiation of the existing bureaucratic system. The functioning of the new system brought some visible exhaustion in the bureaucratic powers of *Kazis*. Chogyal Tashi Namgyal's period also saw tremendous socio-economic transition in Sikkim. The abolition of landlord's judicial and magisterial powers in 1948 led to the abolition of the practices of forced labour like *Jharlangi* and *Kuruwa*.

The Sidlon was the highest bureaucrat and ex-officio member of the State Council. After the dismissal of the first popular government in 1949, John C. Lall, ICS, was appointed as the first Dewan of Sikkim on August 11, 1949. Dewan was then the highest bureaucrat. According to A.C Sinha, the appointment of J. C Lall initiated a difference in the bureaucratic pattern in Sikkim. For administrative purposes and developmental plans, Sikkim was divided into four districts; East, West, North and South with headquarters Gangtok, Geyzing, Mangan and Namchi, respectively. The administration was in control of the Secretariat headed by Chief Secretary, with all the pertinent departments like finance, trade and industry, revenue and panchayats under its control.

6.1.1. Land Administration

Since Sikkim was a feudal state, a major transition point in the policies was in land administration. For the purpose of land administration, there were two *tehsils* as revenue districts, one each in East district and West district. The entire land in the country was adjusted and arranged as per the State Revenue Roll. The new revenue collection system based on the trigonometric survey of all lands was introduced in Sikkim. To initiate revenue collection, the revenue division was introduced under lessee system. Three classes of *Illakas* were created. These were classified as follows: Class 1 *Illakas* that was leased out, Class 2 *Illakas* that were managed directly and Class 3 *Illakas* that were managed by Monasteries. Three different systems

of collection of revenue were arranged for three different classes of *Illakas*. The detailed revenue collection system under each *Illakas* was rearranged as:

1. **Class 1-** the *Illakas* which are leased out to various *Illakadars* on fixed annual revenue, known as *Khazana*. In this system of revenue collection, fixed amount as land rent had to be paid by the lease holders annually. 91 of *Illakas* were placed under this system.
2. **Class 2-** in this type the *Illaksas* were place under direct management of the state. There were total 11 *Illakas*. The administration of the *Illakas* was entrusted to different managers of the state Bank who also maintained the records.
3. **Class 3** type dealt with the monastery estates. Seven *Illakas* were placed under this class. The monasteries were exempted from paying land rent collected from the ryots. The revenue was utilized for religious activities in the monasteries (Bhattacharya, 1994, p.110).

The re-bureaucratization of the administration system made certain land arrangements that, in the later phases became the basis for the development of the democratic apparatus.

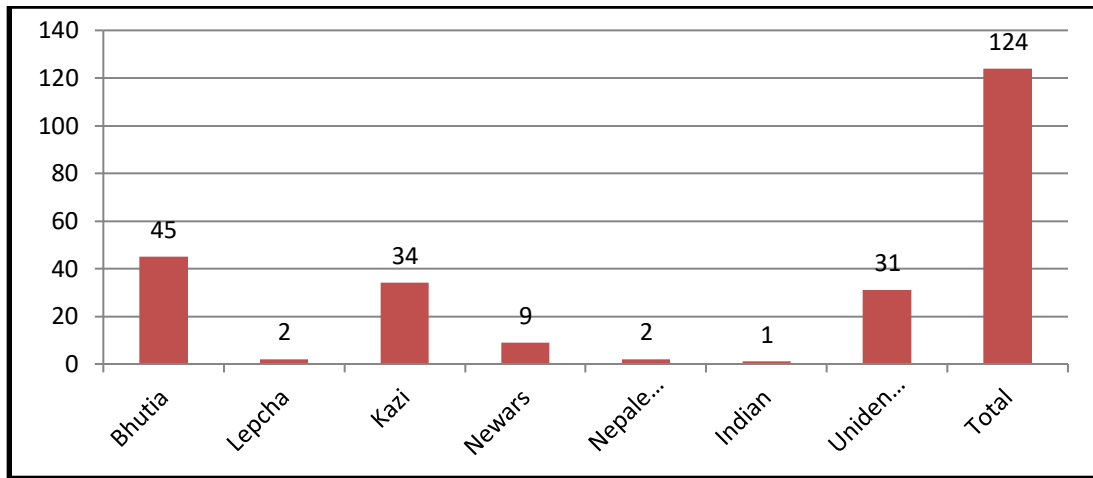
The country witnessed a new type of recruitment process which was based on the development plans initiated in the Indian First Seven Year Plan (1954-1961). Though the new set brought new changes in the entire functioning of the state, the traditional influence of the bureaucracy did not cease in Sikkim. Personal considerations at the highest level continued to dominate the selection of bureaucrats and civil servants. The predominance of Bhutias and Lepchas as power holders did not end here. As pointed out by A.C Sinha through a field study in 1970, it is clear that out of a total of 124 officials in the higher bureaucracy in the country, 45 bureaucrats, highest in number, represented the Bhutia community. The number was followed by *Kazis* with 34 and the Newars, 9 bureaucrats representing the Nepali community. Sinha further pointed out that in the analysis of the bureaucrats in Sikkim, about 63.11% of the civil servants were relatives of the ruler, 18.75% were drawn from families with feudal adherence to the ruler and mostly comprised of Bhutias (Sinha, 2008, p.174).

Table 6.1.1. Ethnic Representation in the Higher Bureaucracy -1975

Sl. No	Community	Number of Bureaucrats
1	Bhutia	45
2	Lepcha	2
3	Kazi	34
4	Newars	9
5	Nepalese	2
6	Indian	1
7	Unspecified	31
8	Total	124

Source: A.C Sinha, 2008, p 173.

Fig. 6.1.1. Distribution of Number of Bureaucrats -1975



Source: Based on the table No. 6.1.1.

From this it may be interpreted that the Bhutias were highly represented in the highest positions in the administration of the country till 1970s.

Despite many challenges and decline of political power, the Bhutias have been seen as powerful and influential figures who constituted the highest bureaucrats in the country.

Section II

Post-merger Period

Concern about the role of bureaucracy in Sikkim has been a serious issue in Sikkim in the post-merger period, as the period posed many developmental challenges. The abolition of feudalism and the appointment of a Dewan as an administrative head paved the way for many new administrative mechanisms in the functioning of the bureaucracy. Furthermore, the merger of Sikkim in 1975 led to a drastic transition in the political and economic structures, which consequently led to the restructuring of the state administration into a purely bureaucratic structure.

For about a year after the merger, the political climate remained quite stormy, which delayed the reestablishment of the administrative functioning as per the requirements. It was only after the first democratic election in 1974 that a new bureaucratic structure made its way into Sikkim and started functioning accordingly. The initial tasks in bureaucracy organization included professionalization and adjustments in civil servants in the new structure. The process received many challenges from various perspectives. Sikkim, as a new democratic state, essentially favoured professional bureaucrats to lead the state towards the process of development.

After 1975, twenty-four departments were created for administrative purposes. The departments were as follows:

1. Agriculture Department
2. Animal Husbandry Department
3. Bazar Department
4. Co-operative Department
5. Education Department
6. Ecclesiastical Department
7. Electricity Department
8. Establishment Department
9. Excise Department
10. Finance Department
11. Food Supplies and Fair Price Shops Department
12. Forest Department
13. General Excise and Motor Vehicles Department
14. Home Department
15. land Revenue Department
16. law Department
17. Legislative Department
18. Medical and Public Health Department
19. Panchayat and Rural Works Department

20. Planning and Development Department
21. Press publicity and Cultural Affairs Department
22. Public Works Department
23. Tourism Department
24. Trade Industry and Commerce Department.

(Source: Secretariat Record (Durbar Period), Sikkim State Archives ²⁹).

Sikkim was in great need of experienced people to take up the new administrative responsibilities. The local people and also the officials and bureaucrats of erstwhile Sikkim could not meet the requirement of running the administration. This led to the bringing in of more bureaucrats from the central government. The inclusion of people from outside the state in the administrative posts was not welcomed by the local bureaucrats. Nevertheless, the Sikkimese people had to adjust to the new bureaucratic services in the state, and it brought competitiveness among them for positions in the administration (Gurung, 2011, p.225).

The post-merger period was a challenge for the government of Sikkim as several attempts were made to establish bureaucracy on the lines of the ethnic distribution component. Various forms of recruitment procedures were tried to reconcile the demands of state modernisation (with a professional bureaucracy) with the specific needs of various ethnic groups. Under the new situation, the Bhutias found it easier to get entry as bureaucrats. Their status and position allowed them to occupy high posts in the state administration as compared to other communities. A.C Sinha recognised that there were two reasons for Bhutias to get into these bureaucratic posts. First, it was their affiliation to the royal family, as well as their socio-economic status and second, their educational background that gave them an edge above the other communities. Sinha further added that the highest bureaucratic posts in the state in 1975 were possessed by the Bhutias which made 36% of the total bureaucrats (Sinha, 2008, p.174).

After merger in 1975, the record of the community wise distribution of bureaucrats in the civil service cadre in 1997 enumerates that out of a total of 240 bureaucrats in Group A and Group B

²⁹ The records collected include: Census Department: 1902-1960, p. 20; Dubar Department: 1898-1939, p.172; Development Department: 1954, p.5; Education Department: 1905-1956, p.40; Excise Department:1909-1958, p. 18; Finance Department: 1909-1974, p.259; General Department: 1909-1961, p. 843; Health Department: 1955-1961, p. 3; Industries Department: 1953-1962, p. 5; Information Public Relations Department: 1955-1962, p.2; Judicial Department:1907-1943, p. 2; Land Revenue Department: 1903-1963, p. 120; Police Department: 1909-1954,p.63; Veterinary Department 1923, p. 1.

in the State Civil Service Cadre, Nepalese were represented the most, followed by Bhutias and Lepchas.

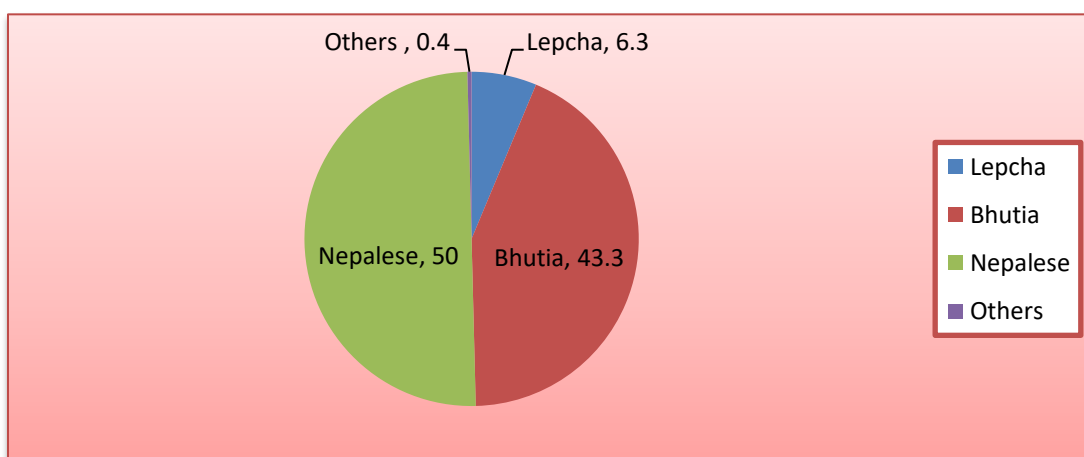
Table 6.2.1.
Community-wise Distribution of Bureaucrats in the State Civil Service Cadre – 1997

Community	Group A	Percentage (%)	Group B	Percentage (%)	Total	Percentage (%)
Lepcha	12	6.7	03	4.9	15	6.3
Bhutia	88	49.4	16	25.9	104	43.3
Nepalese	77	43.2	43	69.3	120	50.00
Others	01	0.6	-	-	01	0.4
Total	178	100.00	62	100.00	240	100.00

Source: Department of personnel and Administrative Reforms and Training- Gangtok, 1997.

Based on the representation of the communities in the State Civil Service, 1997, the Bhutias as a single community had the highest share in the Group ‘A’ category in the state bureaucracy. It is noteworthy that 49.4% of bureaucrats in Grade ‘A’ were Bhutias, making them the most dominant community in the state bureaucracy. The Nepalese, who are numerically larger, had the highest share in Group ‘B’ with 69.3%. Nepalese constitute 50% of the total share and Bhutias followed the Nepalese with a 25.9% share in the State Civil Service Cadre in Group ‘B’ category.

Fig 6.2.1. Ethnic Distribution of Bureaucrats in the State Civil Service Cadre -1997



Source: Department of Personnel and Administrative Reforms and Training- Gangtok, 1997.

Considering bureaucrats from both the groups (Group ‘A’ and Group ‘B’), Nepalese made up 50% of the total bureaucrats in the state civil service cadre. The Bhutias had 43.3% as bureaucrats in the state civil service cadre. Lepchas on the contrary, are poorly represented in the state bureaucracy. They have the least percentage with only 6.3% represented in the state civil services.

Similarly, the data on the highest bureaucrats in the state in 1999 elicits the community wise distribution of officials as IAS, IPS, and IFS. As per the numerical strength, the Bhutias have the highest with a total of 35 officers (including all three categories). Second in the line is the Nepalese group with 17 officers, and 35 officers belong to the other categories³⁰.

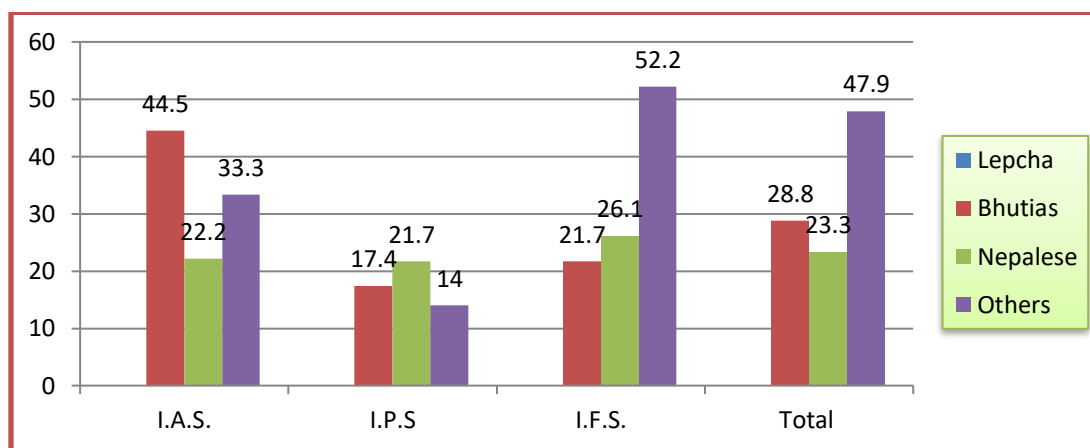
Table 6.2.2. Community Background of Officers in National Bureaucratic Cadre, 1999.

Communities	I.A.S.	I.P.S.	I.F.S.	Total
Lepcha	-	-	-	-
Bhutia	12 (44.5%)	04 (17.4%)	05 (21.7%)	21 (28.8%)
Nepalese	06 (22.2%)	05 (21.7%)	06(26.1%)	17 (23.3%)
Others	09 (33.3%)	14 (60.9%)	12 (52.2%)	35 (47.9%)
T otal	27 (100.00%)	23 (100.00%)	23 (100.00%)	73 (100.00%)

Source: Department of Personnel and Administrative Reforms and Training, Gangtok, December, 1999.

It is observed that not a single person from Lepcha community is represented in any of the national bureaucratic cadre in the state.

Fig. 6.2.2 Community-wise Percentage of Bureaucrats (National cadre), 1999.



Source: Based on Table No.6.2.2.

³⁰ Others refer to the non-Sikkimese officers posted in Sikkim.

The ethnic community background of officers in the national bureaucratic cadre in 1999 highlights that 47.9% of officers are from outside Sikkim. The Bhutias had the highest representation amongst the people of Sikkim, with 28.7% and the Nepalese had a share of 23.3%. Among the Bhutias, the highest representation is seen in the Indian Administrative services (IAS) with 44.5%, followed by the Indian Forest Services (IFS) with 21.7 % and 17.4% in the Indian Police Services (IPS).

According to the available statistics provided by the Department of Personnel and Administrative Reform & Training, Government of Sikkim, in 1999 and 2005, it appears that the Bhutias continued to hold the highest number of administrative posts in the state. In total, 28.7% of administrators were Bhutias in 1999. The percentage of Bhutia bureaucrats in 2005 shows a slight decline, which is marked at 21% as compared to 1999. Nevertheless, its representation is still the highest in the state. Not only did the participation of Bhutias in state administration grow, the number of civil servants in higher bureaucratic posts also increased.

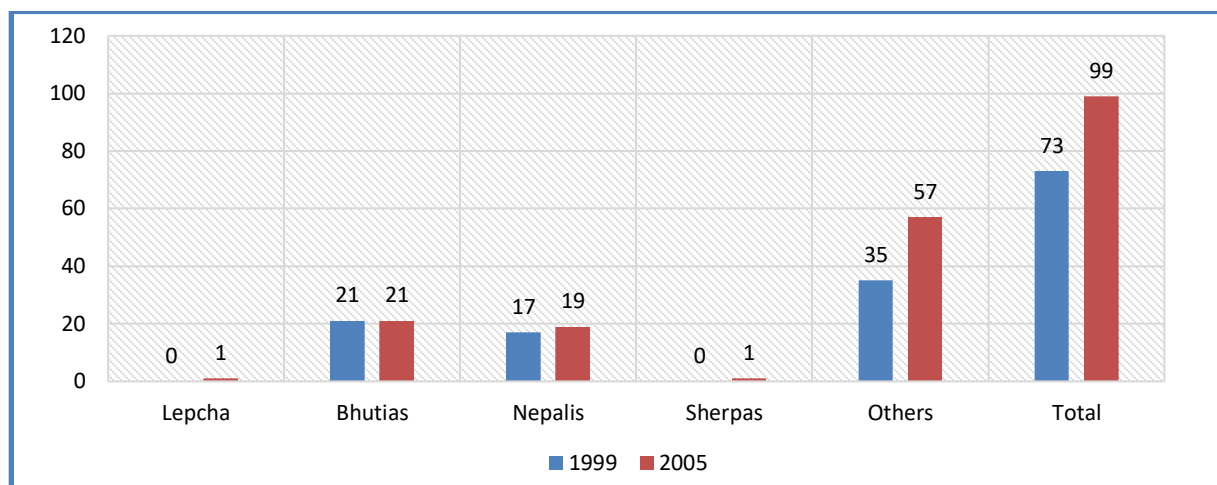
Table 6.2.3. Ethnic Background of the Bureaucrats in Sikkim – 1999 & 2005

Number of cadres and percentage								
Ethnic Communities	1999				2005			
	IAS	IPS	IFS	Total	IAS	IPS	IFS	Total
Lepcha	-	-	-	-	01(2.1)	-	-	01
Bhutia	12 (44.5)	04 (17.4)	05(21.7)	21	13(28.3)	03(12.0)	05(17.8)	21
Nepalese	06(22.2)	05(21.7)	06(26.1)	17	9(19.6)	4(16.0)	6(21.4)	19
Sherpas	-	-	-	-	01(2.1)	-	-	01
Others	09(33.3)	14(60.9)	12(52.2)	35	22(47.8)	18(72.0)	17(60.7)	57
Total	27	23	23	73	46	25	28	99

Source: Department of Personnel & Administrative Reform & Training, Government of Sikkim, 1999 and 2005

Fig. 6.2.3.

Community-wise Comparative Status of Highest Bureaucrats in Sikkim – 1999 & 2005



Source: Department of Personnel & Administrative Reform & Training, Government of Sikkim, 1999 and 2005

Sikkimese officers as IPS shows that the Bhutia community has the highest representation in 1999 and three in 2005. Two each from the ST category (Tamang, Limboo and Sherpa) and the Nepalese group are represented in this cadre.

Table 6.2.4. List of IPS Officers, 2004-2005

Designations /Post held	Bhutia	Lepcha	ST-Tamang, Limboo, Sherpa	Nepali	Others
DGP/IGP/DIGP	4	0	2	2	7
SP/SDPO	0	0	0	0	9

Source: DESME, Govt. of Sikkim, 2006.

As per the records on the bureaucratic statistics provided in the Statistical Report, Directorate of Economic and Statistical Monitoring and Evaluation (DESME), 2006, the Sikkimese representation as IAS officers in the state has declined as a whole. But even then, of the total 14 IAS officers from the state, Bhutias have the highest number, followed by Nepalese and others.

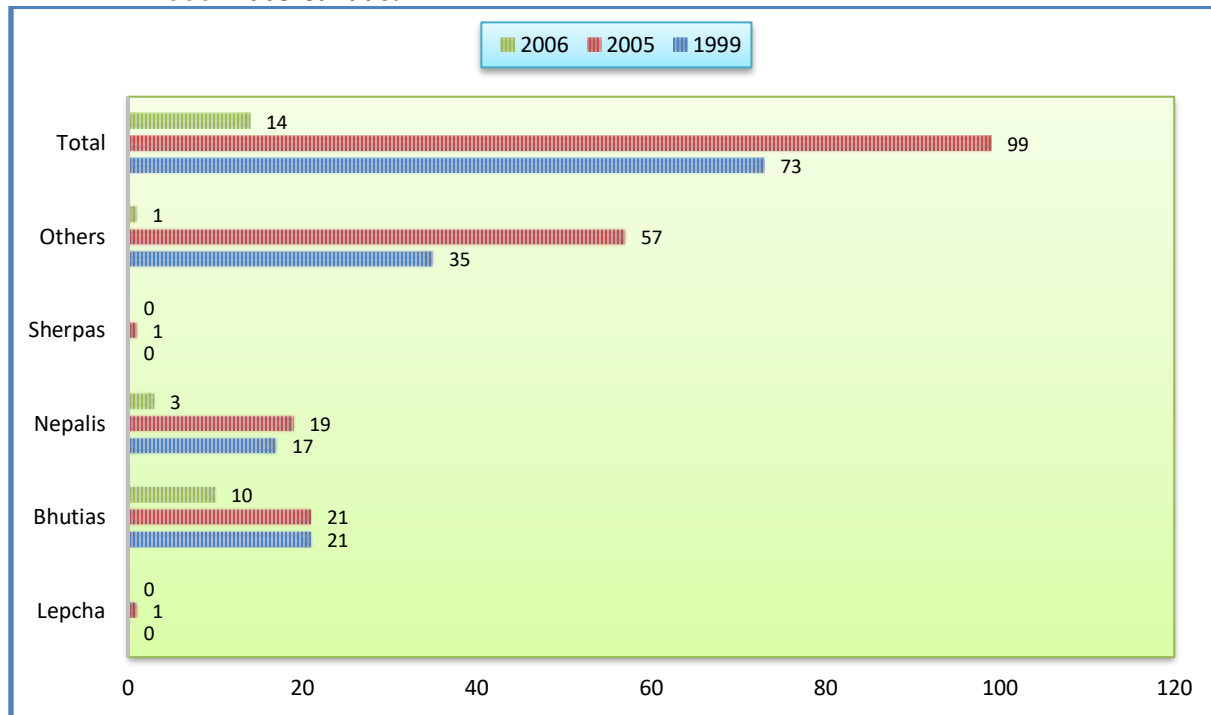
Table 6.2.5. List of Highest Cadre (IAS) in Sikkim, 2006

Community	Numbers
Bhutia	10
Lepcha	0
Nepalese	3
Others	1
Total	14

Source: Statistical Report, DESME, 2006.

The comparative study of the distribution of ethnic stock as higher bureaucrats leads to an understanding of the representation of different communities over the years. For this purpose, a comparative analysis has been made for the years 1999, 2005 and 2006.

Fig. 6.2.4. Comparative Study of the Distribution of Ethnic Stock in Higher Bureaucracy, 1999-2005 & 2006.



Source : Socio-economic Census, Directorate of Economic and Statistical Monitoring and Evaluation, Govt of Sikkim, 2006.

The figure represents a fall in the number of officials in the highest bureaucratic posts among all the three communities. A drastic fall was seen in the year 2006. From a total of 99 officials in 2005, it has come down to only 14.

In 2015, about 35.5% of Bhutia officers were represented in the department of Irrigation and FC Department in the East district alone. The Lepchas represented 12.9% and the Nepalese were 45.2%.

Table 6.2.6.
Officers & Staff Working under Irrigation & FC Department as on 30th April, 2015

Bhutia	Lepcha	ST-Tamang, Limboo, Sherpa	Nepali	Total
11	4	2	14	31

Source: Department of Personnel, Administrative Reforms and Training, Govt. of Sikkim, 2015.

After Sikkim's merger with Indian Union in May, 1975, the process of recruitment of officers for the administration of the state was initiated. It began with the establishment of State Public Service Commission (SPSC) in the year 1978, as per the Constitutional Provision under Article 315. The provision envisages having a Public Service Commission for the States. In Sikkim, the actual functioning of the State Public Service Commission began in 1982, which enabled the appointment of the Chairman and staffs from the State Government.

The organisational operations of any state depend upon the recruitment and selection of its officials, known as bureaucrats, who are entrusted with the administrative responsibilities. Systematic procedures are involved in the recruitment processes, which involve both resources and time. In this context, the SPSC accordingly fulfills the task of recruitment of such officials from the bureaucracy. The purpose of assigning such a responsible task to SPSC is that recruitment and selection itself is an important process that needs to select the right people to ensure sustained organisational performance within the state. The initiation of recruitment processes through SPSC in the state has enabled an adjustment in the inclusion of all communities. Thus, we see through various data of various departments, that all sections of society have been represented in the state bureaucracy.

Similarly, the basic purpose of selecting the bureaucrats through recruitment procedures is to produce a pool of able candidates required for the best performance of the organisation. The SPSC follows the recruitment process with immediate selection of the candidates through a final interview process. The data available provides a picture of the ethnic groups represented in the state bureaucracy.

The representation of Bhutias visa-vis other communities in the bureaucracy of the state as of 2017 is presented in the following tables. Each table gives an illustration of the department wise distribution of ethnic communities in the state.

6.2.1. Representation of Bhutias in the Department of Finance and Accounts Service, 2017

Table 6.2.7. Finance and Accounts Service as on 01.05 2017

Sl. No	Designation	Bhutias	Lepcha	Nepali (Including SC)	ST (Limboo/Tamang & Subba)	Total
1	Principal Director	0	0	2	1	3
2	Director	2	0	7	0	9
4	Addl. Director (Accounts)	4	0	8	2	14
5	Chief Accounts Officer	7	1	15	6	29
6	Sr. Accounts Officer	6	1	30	3	40
7	Accounts Officer	9	0	34	5	49
8	Total	28	2	96	17	144

Source: Department of Personnel, Administrative Reforms and Training, Govt. of Sikkim, 2017.

Bhutias hold 19.4% of the "A" grade cadre positions in the Finance and Accounts Service. The number is quite impressive as compared to other communities. Nepalese groups, including Schedule Caste (SC) have the highest number, 96 out of a total of 144 of officials in the department.

6.2.2. Representation of Bhutias in the Department of Transparency Officer/ Appellate Authority/ SPIO/ASPIO

The number of officials in the department of Transparency Officer/Appellate Authority/ SPIO/ASPIO³¹ highlights that the department comprises a total of 469 officials in total. The highest number of officials are SPIO's, Additional Directors and Joint Directors.

³¹ The officers include Appellate: Director, Additional Director, Additional Chief Executive, Chief Executive Officer, Pr. Registrar, Additional Registrar, Joint Registrar, Special Secretary, Additional Secretary, CEO, PCE,

Table 6.2.8. List of Transparency Officer/ Appellate Authority/ SPIO/ASPIO – 2017

Sl. No	Designation	Bhutia	Lepcha	Nepali (Including SC)	ST(Limboo/ Tamang& Subba)	Others	Total
1	Transparency Officer	6	3	16	2	2	29
2	Appellate Authority	20	4	44	5	6	79
3	SPIO Additional Director, Joint Director	56	7	95	18	5	181
4	ASPIO	66	10	80	21	3	180
5	Total	148	24	235	46	16	469

Source: Department of Personnel and Administration, Govt. of Sikkim, 2017.

Categorically looking at the distribution of officers, the Bhutias have a total of 148 officers, while the Nepalese have the highest number of 235 officers, followed by Scheduled Tribe (ST) with a total of 46 officers and Lepchas with 24 officers and others. Though it is clear that the percentage of Bhutias, Scheduled Tribe, Lepchas and others category officers is less in number in comparison to the Nepali community, it is relatively high when it is compared with their respective population.

6.2.3. Representation of Bhutias Officers in Important Departments in the State-2018

An insight on the representation of people (ethnic community wise) in important departments in the state in 2018 shows that the Nepalese as a whole have 140 officials, the Bhutias with 85 officials, the ST with 38 officials, the Lepchas with 17 officials and others have 4 officials representation.

Table 6.2.9. Community-wise List of Officers in Important Departments-2018

Posts held/ designation	Bhutia	Lepcha	Nepali	ST (Sherpa, Tamang & Limboo)	Others	Total
Non-MLA - Chairmen/Chairperson /Advisor with the rank of Dy. Minister of State	4	0	6	0	0	10
SFS Officers- Forests, Environment and Wildlife Management Department	48	9	52	13	2	122
Officers, Human Resource Development Department.	13	4	50	11	2	78

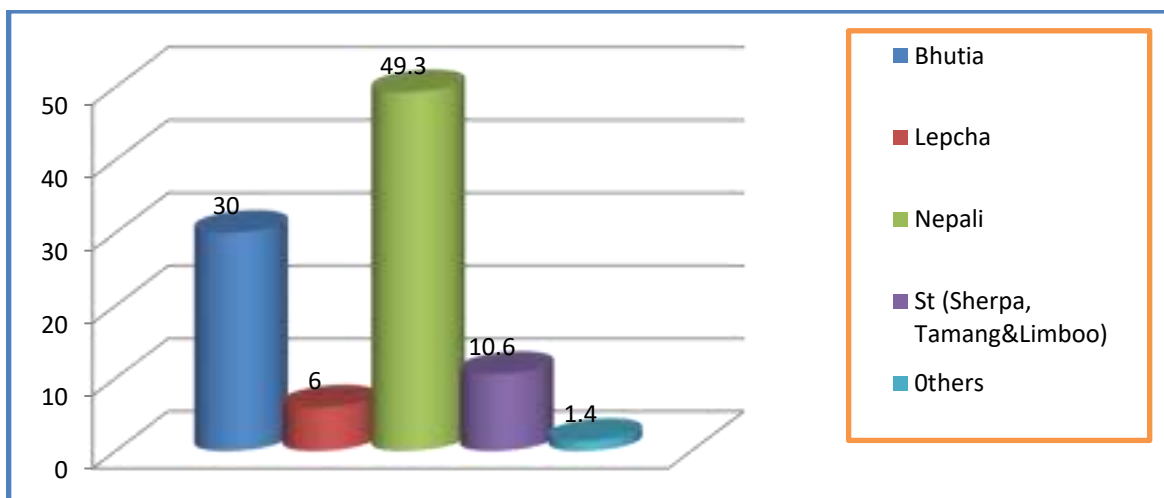
Secretary-Cum-Commissioner, Director of Accounts, CCF-cum-PD, Principal Director, Secretary, Additional Chief Engineer, D.C, ADGP/CID, C.E, Municipal Commissioner, GM, Managing Director and DGM.

List of officers of Buildings and Housing Department	17	2	27	4	0	50
Total	85	17	140	38	4	284

Source: Department of Information Technology, Govt. of Sikkim, 2018.

Relying on existing numerical data of ethnic communities in the important departments in the state, it can be said that all communities have representations in the state bureaucracy. The only difference seen is that there is a difference in the numbers. The Nepalese group as a whole has the highest number of officials. Bhutias, as a single community have the highest number. Lepchas are the least represented ethnic group in the state. A graphical illustration is also presented (Figure 6.2.5) to understand the representation of the ethnic groups.

Fig.6.2.5.
Percentage Representation of Ethnic Communities in Important Departments in the State-2018



Source: Department of Information Technology, Govt. of Sikkim, 2018.

Nepalese make half of the bureaucrats in the state’s important departments, while Bhutias make 30%, STs make 10.6% and Lepchas make only 6%. Hence, the administrative environment in Sikkim sees the inclusion of all categories and communities in the state.

Throughout the post-merger period, the state government is seeking new growth opportunities by recruiting new staff to achieve growth in the state. In the midst of these significant developmental processes, ethnic representation in different organizational sections has also taken place.

6.2.4. Bhutia Bureaucrats in Sikkim-2019

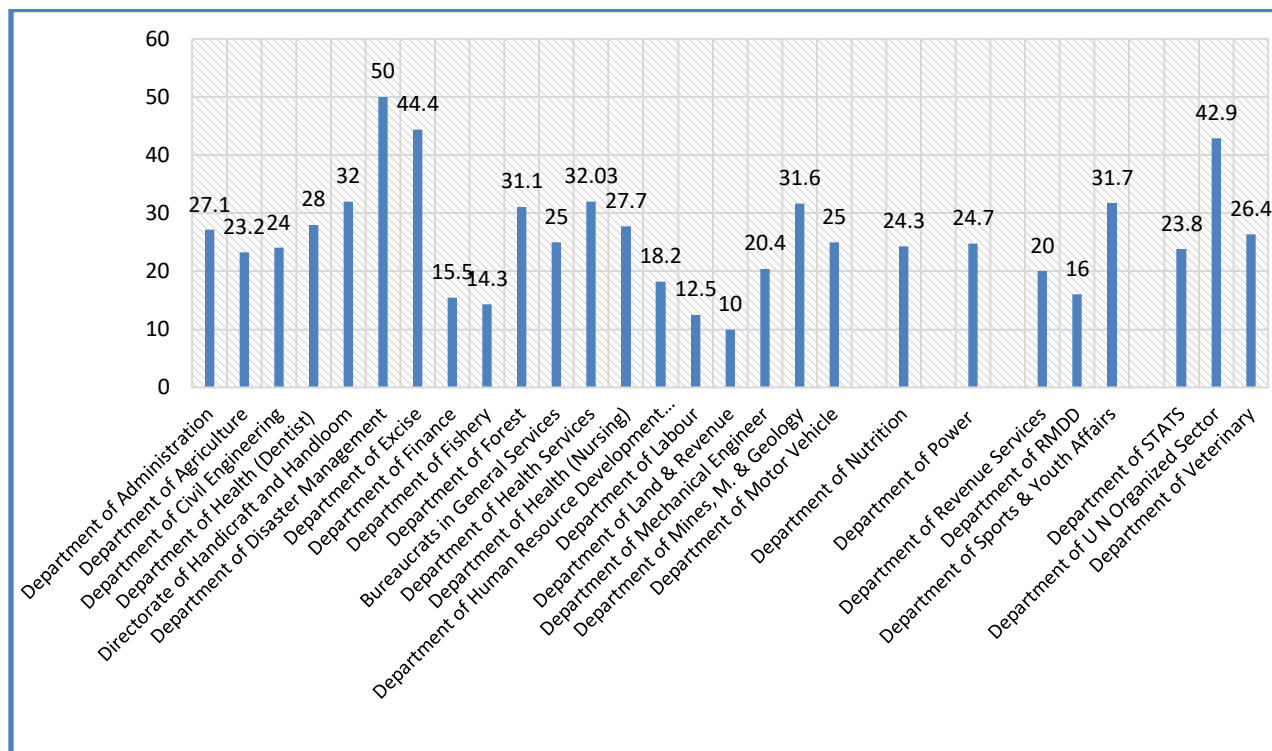
To further the analytical study on the Bhutias in bureaucracy in the post-merger period, bureaucratic statistics of 2019 have been referred to in the study.

Table 6.2.10. Bhutia Bureaucrats in Sikkim-2019

Sl. No	Department	Total bureaucrats	Bhutia bureaucrats	Bhutia Percentage %
1	Department of Administration	59	16	27.1
2	Department of Agriculture	125	29	23.2
3	Department of Civil Engineering	297	71	24
4	Department of Health (Dentist)	29	8	28
5	Directorate of Handicraft and Handloom	22	7	32
6	Department of Disaster Management	4	2	50
7	Department of Excise	9	4	44.4
8	Department of Finance	155	24	15.5
9	Department of Fishery	7	1	14.3
10	Department of Forest	119	37	31.1
11	Bureaucrats in General Services	132	33	25
12	Department of Health Services	206	66	32.03
13	Department of Health (Nursing)	47	13	27.7
14	Department of Human Resource Development Department (HRDD)	99	18	18.2
15	Department of Labour	8	1	12.5
16	Department of Land & Revenue	10	1	10
17	Department of Mechanical Engineer	54	11	20.4
18	Department of Mines, M. & Geology	19	6	31.6
19	Department of Motor Vehicle	8	2	25
20	Department of Nutrition	99	24	24.3
21	Department of Power	150	37	24.7
22	Department of Revenue Services	15	3	20
23	Department of RMDD	25	4	16
24	Department of Sports & Youth Affairs	41	13	31.7
25	Department of STATS	42	10	23.8
26	Department of U N Organized Sector	7	3	42.9
27	Department of Veterinary	91	24	26.4
	Total	8872	468	5.27

Source: Department of Personnel and Administration, Govt. of Sikkim, 2019.

Fig. 6.2.6. Bhutia Bureaucrats (in %) in Various Departments in the State, 2019.



Source: Department of Personnel and Administration, Govt. of Sikkim, 2019.

In 2019, Bhutias representation in the department of Disaster and Management was found to be the highest, i.e 50% of the total. 44.4% are in the Department of Excise and 42.9 % are in the unorganised sector. The Bhutia community accounts for 40 to 50 percent of the bureaucrats in these three departments.

Departments such as the Department of Land Revenue (20.4%), Revenue Services (20%), Mechanical Engineering (20.4%), Department of Administration (27.1%), Agriculture (23.3%), Civil Engineering(24%), Handloom and Handicraft (32%), Forest (31%), Bureaucrats in General Services (25%), Health Services (32.03%), Health (Nursing) 27.7%), Mines and Geology (31.6%), Motor Vehicle (25%), Nutrition (24.3%), Power (24.7%), Sports and Youth Affairs (31.7%), Department of STATS (23.8%) and Veterinary (26.4%) have 20 to 30 percent of Bhutias as bureaucrats.

The departmental representation of Bhutias visa-vis other communities as bureaucates in various departments in the state in 2019 is presented from tables 6.2.11 to 6.2.38.

Table: 6.2.11. Department of Administration-2019

Name of The Post	Community											Total	
	Bhutia	Thapa	Chettri/ Sharma	Gurung	Pradhan	Tamang	Subba	Rawat	Lepcha	SC	Khatiwara		Rai
Additional Registrar	2	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
Joint registrar	1	-	1	-	-	1	-	1	1	-	1	-	2
D.C.S.O.	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Deputy registrar	3	-	5	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	10
Administrative officer	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Senior audit officer	4	-	3	-	1	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	10
GVA	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
State project manager	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Manager	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
DRCS	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	3
Block development officer	-	-	1	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	3
Audit officer	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	4
ARCS	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	3
Municipal executive officer	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
District office	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Assistant registrar	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	3
Bazar office	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Administrator	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Total	16	1	14	1	4	2	2	1	3	1	8	53	

Source: Department of Personnel and Administration, Govt. of Sikkim, 2019.

Table: 6.2.12. Department of Agriculture-2019

Name of the Post	Community												Total
	Bhutia	Thapa	Chettri/ Sharma	Gurung	Pradhan	Tamang	Subba	Others	Lepcha	SC	Sherpa	Rai	
Principal director cum-secretary	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Chief executive officer	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Additional director	5	-	3	1	1	1	-	1	-	1	-	1	14
Additional executive director	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Joint director	4	2	8	1	1	1	3	-	2	-	-	2	24
Programme coordinator	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	3
Deputy director	9	-	10	3	1	5	1	-	2	2	1	1	33
Deputy project director	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
HDO	5	-	15	3	-	-	2	-	2	1	2	7	37
Agriculture development	1	-	2	1	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	1	7

officer													
Organic regulator inspector	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Total	29	2	40	10	4	7	6	1	5	6	3	12	125

Source: Department of Personnel and Administration, Govt. of Sikkim, 2019.

Table 6.2.13. Department of Civil Engineering-2019

Name of the post	Bhutia	Thapa	Chettri/ Sharma	Gurung	Pradhan	Tamang	Subba	Others	Lepcha	SC	Sherpa	Rai	Total
Pce-cum-secretary	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	4
Principal chief engineer	2	-	-	-	1	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	5
Chief engineer	3	-	4	-	-	-	1	1	-	2	-	-	11
Assistant chief engineer	3	-	6	3	2		1	2	1	1	1	1	21
Senior engineer	6	-	10	2	3	2	4	2	1	1	-	4	35
Deputy engineer	23	-	16	3	4		4	1	7	3	-	9	70
Assistant engineer	33	1	48	6	13	13	2	4	8	12	2	9	151
Total	71	2	85	14	23	15	12	12	17	19	3	24	297

Source: Department of Personnel and Administration, Govt. of Sikkim, 2019.

Table 6.2.14. Department of Health (Dentist) -2019

Name of the post	Bhutia	Chettri/ Sharma	Gurung	Pradhan	Tamang	Subba	Koirala	Others	Lepcha	SC	Rai	Total
Supertime grade-I	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2
Selection grade I	1	-	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	1		5
Selection grade-II	3	-	-	-	1		1	-	1	2	1	9
Senior dental surgeon	3	1	1		1	1		1	1	-	-	9
Dental surgeon	1	-		2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
Total	8	2	2	2	3	1	1	1	2	3	2	29

Source: Department of Personnel and Administration, Govt. of Sikkim, 2019.

Table 6.2.15. Directorate of Handicraft and Handloom -2019

Name of the post	Bhutia	Chettri/ Sharma	Gurung	Tamang	Sangmo	Lepcha	SC	Khatiwara	Rai	Total
Joint director	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	2
Joint director joint welfare officer	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Deputy director	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	2	4
Assistant director	5	4	1	2	1	-	-	1	1	15
Total	7	4	1	2	1	2	1	1	3	22

Source: Department of Personnel and Administration, Govt. of Sikkim, 2019.

Table 6.2.16. Department of Disaster Management-2019

Name of the post	Bhutia	Lepcha	Sherpa	Total
District project officer	2	1	1	4

Source: Department of Personnel and Administration, Govt. of Sikkim, 2019.

Table 6.2.17. Department of Excise

Name of the post	Bhutia	Chettri/ Sharma	Dulal	Bhandari	Basnett	Total
Special secretary	-	1	-	-	-	1
Deputy commissioner	1	1	-	-	-	2
Assistant commissioner	3	-	1	1	1	6
Total	4	2	1	1	1	9

Source: Department of Personnel and Administration, Govt. of Sikkim, 2019.

Table 6.2.18. Department of Finance -2019

Name of the post	Bhutia	Thapa	Chettri/ Sharma	Gurung	Pradhan	Tamang	Subba	Magrati	Others	Lepcha	SC	Sapkota	Sherpa	Rai	Total
Principal director	-	-	1	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Director	2	-	4	-	2	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	10
Joint director	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	3
Additional director	2	-	3	-	1	2	2	1	-	-	1	1	-	1	14

Chief account officer	4	-	3	1	3	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	16
Chief pay & account officer	2	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
Senior accounts officer	4	-	14	5	4	1	2	-	1	1	1	-	-	8	41
Deputy director	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2
Chief finance officer	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Deputy chief pay & account officer	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Account officer	9	1	24	3	2	6	2	-	1	1	1	-	-	9	59
Total	24	2	50	9	14	11	13	1	3	2	3	2	1	20	155

Source: Department of Personnel and Administration, Govt. of Sikkim, 2019.

Table 6.2.19. Department of Fishery -2019

Name of the post	Bhutia	Pradhan	Tamang	Subba	Kharel	Rai	Total
Director	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Joint director	-	-	-	-	-	2	2
Assistant director	1	-	1	1	1	-	4
Total	1	1	1	1	1	2	7

Source: Department of Personnel and Administration, Govt. of Sikkim, 2019.

Table 6.2.20. Department of Forest -2019

Name of the post	Bhutia	Thapa	Chettri/ Sharma	Gurung	Pradhan	Tamang	Subba	Others	Lepcha	SC	Rai	Total
Pr. Secretary & project director	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Y	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	2
PCCF & chief warden	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Secretary	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Inspector general of	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
PCCF & chief forest cum-officer (FCA)/chief warden	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Director general	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Forest	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
OR	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1

Commissioner	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Conservator of forest	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	2
Conservator of forest, FCA officer	-	-	-	1		-	-		-	-	-	1
Resident commissioner	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Director	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Conservator of forest	-	-	1	-	-	1	1		-	-	-	3
Conservator of	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	2
RY	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Project director, -I	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Project director, -II	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Secretary	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	2
NAL director	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1		3
Director	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1		2
Forest officer	18		12	2	1		3	1	3	3	4	47
Conservator of	15	1	6	3	1	2	2	1	6	2	2	41
Total	37	1	19	8	3	3	6	20	9	8	6	119

Source: Department of Personnel and Administration, Govt. of Sikkim, 2019.

Table 6.2.21. Bureaucrats in General Services-2019

Name of the post	Bhutia	Thapa	Chettri/ Sharma	Gurung	Pradhan	Tamang	Subba	Others	Lepcha	SC	Sherpa	Rai	Total
Director	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Additional director	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Joint director	7	-	3	3	2	1	1		3	4	3	5	32
Deputy director	16	-	12	3	9		3	6	7		2	7	65
Deputy general manager	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
AST	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	3
AD/APO	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Assistant director	4	1	4	-	2	1	1	1	-	1	1	4	20
Seal cover	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Social welfare officer	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
RTO	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Superintendent cum-probation officer	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Total	33	2	21	8	14	2	6	9	10	5	6	16	132

Source: Department of Personnel and Administration, Govt. of Sikkim, 2019.

Table 6.2.22. Department of Health Services-2019

Name of the post	Bhutia	Thapa	Chettri/ Sharma	Gurung	Pradhan	Tamang	Subba	Mukhia	Others	Lepcha	SC	Manger	Sherpa	Rai	Total
Supertime group-1	9	-	5	-	-	1	1	-	3	2	-	-	-	2	23
Supertime group-II	5	-	3	1	3	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	15
Sel. Grade-II	23	2	13	2	6	4	2	-	3	4	7	-	3	5	74
Senior grade	17	1	10	3	3	3	2	1	1	3	1	-	-	4	49
Junior grade	12	1	2	4	8	1	3	-	1	2	2	1	1	7	45
Total	66	4	33	10	20	10	8	1	9	11	10	1	4	19	206

Source: Department of Personnel and Administration, Govt. of Sikkim, 2019.

Table 6.2.23. Department of Health (Nursing) -2019

Name of the post	Bhutia	Thapa	Chettri/ Sharma	Gurung	Pradhan	Tamang	Others	Lepcha	SC	Sherpa	Rai	Total
Community Nursing Officer	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	3
Joint Director	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Nusing Superintendent	1	-	2	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	5
Senior Sister Tutor	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Deputy Nursing Superintendent	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	1	-	-	1	4
Senior. C.H.O.	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Assistant Nursing Superintendent	8	1	6	2	-	2	1	1	1	1	3	26
CHO	3	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	6
Total	13	1	10	4	1	4	2	4	1	1	6	47

Source: Department of Personnel and Administration, Govt. of Sikkim, 2019.

Table 6.2.24. Department of Human Resource Development Department (HRDD) -2019

Name of the post	Community														Total
	Bhutia	Thapa	Chettri/ Sharma	Gurung	Pradhan	Tamang	Subba	Mangar	Others	Lepcha	SC	Dhakal	Sherpa	Rai	
Director	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	2
Additional director	4	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	8
Joint director	3	-	1	-	2	-	2	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	10

Deputy director	6	-	8	-	1	3	3	1	3	2	1	-	-	3	35
Assistant director	5	-	12	1	2	1	6	-	-	5	1		3	8	44
Total	18	1	22	1	5	4	12	1	4	9	3	1	3	11	99

Source: Department of Personnel and Administration, Govt. of Sikkim, 2019.

Table 6.2.25. Department of Labour -2019

Name of the post	Bhutia	Chettri/ Sharma	Subba	Kunwar	Sherpa	Rai	Total
Joint labour commissioner	-	-	1	1	-	-	2
Deputy labour commissioner	-	1	-	-	1	-	2
Assistant labour commissioner	1	2	-	-	-	1	4
Total	1	3	1	1	1	1	8

Source: Department of Personnel and Administration, Govt. of Sikkim, 2019.

Table 6.2.26. Department of Land & Revenue-2019

Name of the post	Bhutia	Chettri/ Sharma	Gurung	Others	Lepcha	Sherpa	Rai	Total
Revenue officer cum additional director	3	2	1	1	1	1	1	10

Source: Department of Personnel and Administration, Govt. of Sikkim, 2019.

Table 6.2.27. Department of Mechanical Engineer-2019

Name of the post	Community													
	Bhutia	Thapa	Chettri/ Sharma	Gurung	Pradhan	Tamang	Subba	Basnett	Others	Lepcha	SC	Sherpa	Rai	Total
Principal Chief Engineer	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Chief Engineer	2	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	4
Assistant Chief Engineer	1	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	5
Senior Engineer	2	1	1		1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	8
Deputy Engineer	1		2	2	1	-	-	-	1	2	3	-	-	12
Assistant Engineer	5	3	6	2	2	1	1	-	1	2	1	-	-	24
Total	11	4	10	4	6	1	1	1	2	5	4	3	2	54

Source: Department of Personnel and Administration, Govt. of Sikkim, 2019

Table 6.2.28. Department of Mines, M. & Geology-2019

Name of The Post	Bhutia	Chettri/ Sharma	Gurung	Pradhan	Adhikari	Lepcha	SC	Khanal	Sherpa	Total
Principal Director	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Director	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Additional Director	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	2
Joint Director	2	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	4
Senior Chemist	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Senior Survey Officer	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Assistant Survey Officer	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Assistant Chemist	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	2
Assistant Engineer	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Assistant Geologist	1	2	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	5
Total	6	4	1	1	1	1	3	1	1	19

Source: Department of Personnel and Administration, Govt. of Sikkim, 2019.

Table 6.2.29. Department of Motor Vehicle-2019

Name of The Post	Bhutia	Chettri/ Sharma	Gurung	Pradhan	Subba	SC	Total
Jt. General Manager	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Deputy Director	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Assistant Director	1	-	-	-	1	-	2
Deputy RTO	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
ARTO	1	1	-	-	-	1	3
Total	2	1	2	1	1	1	8

Source: Department of Personnel and Administration, Govt. of Sikkim, 2019.

Table 6.2.30. Department of Nutrition-2019

Name of The Post	Bhutia	Thapa	Chettri/ Sharma	Gurung	Subba	Others	SC	Basnett	Sherpa	Rai	Total
Joint Director	-	1	-	1	1	-	-	1	-	-	4
Deputy Director	2	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	4
Senior Physiotherapist	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Assistant Director	3	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	2	6
Physiotherapist	1	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	4
Medical Stores Officer	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Technical Officer	11	-	14	3	10	4	3	-	-	8	63
NMLO	4	1	-	-	-	-	2	1	-	3	13
HEO	2	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	6
Total	24	3	17	5	12	5	6	3	2	13	99

Source: Department of Personnel and Administration, Govt. of Sikkim, 2019.

Table 6.2.31. Department of Power -2019

Name of the Post	Bhutia	Thapa	Chettri/ Sharma	Gurung	Pradhan	Tamang	Subba	Others	Lepcha	SC	Sherpa	Rai	Total
Pce-Cum-Secretary	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Pce, Distribution, Incharge Of Hq, West, Trans/Sreda/East/O & M	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Pce, Gen& Trans, Incharge of N/S & Llhp/Rongli	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Chief Engineer	2	1	2	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7
Assistant Chief Enginner	1	-	5	1	1	-	1	-	1	1	-	-	11
Senior Engineer	8	2	3	1	3	-	-	1	1	1	-	4	24
Deputy Engineer	12	3	10	-	7	-	2	2	2	-	1	4	43
Assistant Engineer	13	1	22	2	5	3	4	-	4	3	1	4	62
Total	37	7	43	4	18	3	7	3	8	5	2	13	150

Source: Department of Personnel and Administration, Govt. of Sikkim, 2019.

Table 6.2.32. Department of Revenue Services-2019

Name of the Post	Bhutia	Gurung	Pradhan	Tamang	Subba	Lepcha	SC	Rai	Total
Joint Commissioner	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	2
Deputy Secretary	1	1	-	1	-	-	1	-	4
Deputy Commissioner	1	-	-	-	1	1	-	2	5
Assistant Commissioner	1	-	1	-	-	1	-	1	4
Total	3	1	1	1	2	2	1	4	15

Source: Department of Personnel and Administration, Govt. of Sikkim, 2019.

Table 6.2.33. Department of RMDD-2019

Name of the post	Bhutia	Chettri/ Sharma	Gurung	Pradhan	Tamang	Subba	Lepcha	SC	Rai	Total
Assistant director	4	10	3	1	2	1	1	1	2	25

Source: Department of Personnel and Administration, Govt. of Sikkim, 2019.

Table 6.2.34. Department of Sports & Youth Affairs-2019

Name of the post	Bhutia	Chettri/ Sharma	Gurung	Pradhan	Tamang	Subba	Shanker	Lepcha	SC	Sapkota	Rai	Total
Additional Director		1		1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Joint Director	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2
Deputy Director	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1			3
Assistant Director	10	2	1	4	1	3	1	5		1	3	31
Block Development Officer	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Principal		1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Bazar Officer	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Total	13	4	1	4	1	4	1	6	1	1	4	41

Source: Department of Personnel and Administration, Govt. of Sikkim, 2019.

Table 6.2.35. Department of Statistics-2019

Name of the post	Bhutia	Thapa	Chettri/ Sharma	Pradhan	Tamang	Subba	Others	Lepcha	SC	Dhakal	Rai	Total
Director	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Additional Director	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Joint Director	1	1	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	1	-	5
Deputy Director	5		4		2	1		1	1	-	1	15
Assistant Director	3	1	4	1	4	3		2	1	-		19
Assistant Commissioner	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Block Development Officer	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Total	10	2	8	2	6	5	1	3	3	1	2	43

Source: Department of Personnel and Administration, Govt. of Sikkim, 2019.

Table 6.2.36. Un Organized Sector-2019

Name of the post	Bhutia	Chettri/ Sharma	Lepcha	SC	Total
Joint Director	-	-	-	1	1
Deputy Director	1	1	-		2
Social Welfare Officer	-	-	-	1	1
Superintendent Cum-Probation Officer	1	-	-		1
Gendrung	1	-	-		1
Officer on Special Duty	-	-	1		1
Total	3	1	1	2	7

Source: Department of Personnel and Administration, Govt. of Sikkim, 2019.

Table 6.2.37. Department of Veterinary-2019

Name of the post	Bhutia	Thapa	Chettri/ Sharma	Gurung	Pradhan	Tamang	Subba	Others	Lepcha	SC	Sherpa	Rai	Total
Principal Director	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Director	4		1		2		1	-	-	-	-	1	9
Additional Director	1		2		1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	6
Joint Director	4	2	2	2	2			2		3		2	18
Deputy Director	7	2	2		2		4	1	1		2	3	25
Chief Veterinary Officer	1												1
Veterinary Officer	7		4	2	3	2			2	1		2	23
Farm Manager/ MPO			2			1			2			3	8
Total	24	4	13	4	8	5	6	3	5	4	2	11	91

Source: Department of Personnel and Administration, Govt. of Sikkim, 2019.

Table 6.2.38. Ethnic Representation in IPS -2019

Bhutia	Lepcha	Thapa	Giri	Chhetri	Rai	Gurung	Tamang	Others	Total
2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	20	30

Source: Department of Personnel and Administration, Govt. of Sikkim, 2019.

The tables and figures above give the total number of officials in different departments and also highlight the representation of each ethnic group in these departments. The recent data (2019) shows the Bhutias in the leading positions in almost all important departments in the state.

The objective of this chapter was to provide the share of Bhutias in the new bureaucratic system in the state. In particular, we were looking into the role of Bhutias as bureaucrats as they used to enjoy during the monarchical rule in the pre-merger period. In Sikkim, even after the end of their kingdom and the emergence of a democratic set up, the Bhutias are seen as the top administrators in the state. Though a minority group in terms of demography, their positions as top bureaucrats is retained. In almost all departments of the state government, they are well represented as the single highest community. The data reviewed indicate consistency in Bhutia's role as a top bureaucrat in different departments in the state. The dominant feature of Bhutias occupying the highest posts in the state can be explained from two perspectives. First, from a developmental angle, the Bhutias have been imbibed with the experience of administration in the pre-merger period. Secondly, in spite of Sikkim being a multi-ethnic society, the Bhutias have maintained share as administrators in modern Sikkim. The available data shows that Bhutias' share in the state administration continues even when the present bureaucratic system is quite distinct from previous one.

Thus, even though the representation of Bhutias in bureaucracy during the Chogyal period was relatively higher compared to the present period, Bhutias continue to maintain their place in the high bureaucratic posts in modern Sikkim. Despite the simultaneous coexistence of different ethnic communities and the prevalence of State Civil Service examinations and recruitment process, they have been able to build bureaucratic capacity to implement the priorities of different political regimes and in facing the task of democratisation and modernisation

Chapter VII

Bhutias in Educational Sector of Sikkim

Section I

Development of Education in Pre-merger Sikkim

History shows that education in Sikkim took a gradual shape in the course of history. With the co-existence of multi-ethnic groups (Lepcha, Bhutia and Nepali) with un-common religion and language of their own, education as common endeavor could not reach to all sections of society for quite some time. In this context, Datta (1991), in his book '*Sikkim since Independence*', argues that education in earlier Sikkim was confined to teachings of Buddhist Philosophy that benefitted only the upper-class people. The history of Sikkim reveals that education as an independent structure did not exist before the 17th century. Sikkim's religion (Buddhism) influenced societal development in Sikkim, including education. The ethnic society in Sikkim is also a representation of society influenced by religion and hence development of education happened through the means of religious influence.

Initially education was incorporated with religion and religious teachings. Education was in the form of Monastic education. The system of education was brought by the Tibetan people who migrated to Sikkim during the early 17th century which also happens to be responsible for the introduction of formal system of education in the form of monastic education in Sikkim. Tibetan influenced monastic education was accessible to the Bhutia *Lamas* only. The common people were excluded from the Buddhist system of Education at the early phase of its development.

From the inception of Bhutia rule in 1642 till the introduction of the modern system of education in the late 19th century, education in Sikkim was confined to the study of scriptures in various monasteries of the country. The spread of Buddhistic philosophy was no doubt the main objective of the establishment of monasteries in Sikkim. The monastic education system was also focused on the objective of patronising the Tibetan language since all the Buddhist texts were available in Tibetan language only. So, learning of Tibetan Language through monastic schools seemed very important at this juncture. Moreover, the objective of the monastic education system was also to teach Buddhism in the form of Buddhist arts, literature and culture. The curriculum of Buddhist monastic education included vast areas of study like painting, sculpture,

astrology, including mathematics, medicines, philosophy, literature and tantric learning. Apart from these, the monks (*lamas*) who were the actual beneficiaries of the education system were supposed to learn religious music, use of ritual objects and learning and recitation of puja mantras.

For further studies, the monastic education system as it existed in Sikkim provided only the basic studies, and for further upgradation of the education, the monks had to go to Tibet. At times, some learned *lamas* from Tibet were invited to Sikkim to impart education in Buddhist Teaching (Gurung, 2020, p.15).

Entry to the monastic education system was quite unique as compared to other educational systems. Only the male children who were aged eight to ten years old were eligible for admission. Another criterion for the enrolment was that the child should be free from any physical defects or deformities. The child was examined and approved by the monk who basically was the guru or tutor. The tutor approved the candidature of the child and reported to the senior monks to consider the boy as a pupil. Then he becomes a novice and resides in the monastery for his education. As per tradition, every Bhutia family in Sikkim devoted one son to the monastery to become a *lama* (Dewan, 2012, p.147). However, this tradition of sending one son to monastery is gradually vanishing in the modern era. Once admitted, the novice had to undergo professional examination in the first year. He gets promoted as a junior lama after clearing a second examination in the next following year or two. The novice performed minor routine job of serving the elderly monks till he qualified these two examinations. Qualification of the preliminary examinations allowed them to take seat in the Assembly Hall along with other *lamas*. However, junior *lamas* were expected to show respect to other senior *lamas* (Risley, 1894, pp.297-300). From then onwards the task of serving the elderly monks ceases.

Though only for a handful of *lamas* and not for all, monastic education did make a significant contribution to the spread of education in Sikkim. The role played by monastic education is not limited to the earlier educational development of Sikkim alone, but it has been able to retain its importance and popularity in the post merger educational development of Sikkim. Thus, it was the Buddhist monastic education that gave birth to formal educational system in Sikkim prior to the introduction of modern education.

7.1.1. Development of Education in Sikkim in the Pre-merger Period

The commencement of the modern formal education system can be dated back to the 1880s with the advent of the Christian missionaries in Sikkim. The work of various Christian Missionaries in Sikkim is well documented. Among the first Missionary groups to arrive were Finnish and Scottish mission missionaries (Gurung, 2020, p.25).

The first formal education for all the common people was started by the Finnish missionaries in 1880s. The missionaries started education with the opening of primary schools. Initially, they opened three primary schools at Khamdong, Sang and Mangan. The spread of education was further accentuated with the coming of the Scottish missionaries in 1884. Among ten primary schools established by the Scottish Missionaries seven schools were operational in Sikkim in 1890's. The schools were spread over South, West and East districts. Out of the seven schools, three schools were located in West district at Chakhung, Soreng and Magbo, three in South district at Kitam, Chidam (Sadam) and Namthang and one school at Singtam in East district. The appointed teachers of these schools received teacher training from Missionaries at Kalimpong and Darjeeling. Towards the close of the 19th century, the Scottish Mission opened fourteen schools in Sikkim (Dewan, 2012,pp.175-176).

Table 7.1. 1. Scottish Mission Schools in Sikkim (1889-90)

SL. No	School
1	Temi School, South Sikkim
2	Pakyong School, East Sikkim
3	Rhenock School, East Sikkim
4	Kamlet School, South Sikkim
5	Chidam (Sadam) School, South Sikkim
6	Wok School, South Sikkim
7	Soreng School, West Sikkim
8	Phambong School, West Sikkim
9	Dentam School, West Sikkim
10	Vok Lace School, South Sikkim
11	PNG School , East Sikkim
12	Namthang School , East Sikkim
13	Singtam School, East Sikkim

Source: Gurung, 2020, p.23-24

The Missionary schools were doing good for quite some time. However, they gradually started closing down due to various reason. Inconveniences in running the schools by the founders were faced. The number of teachers was seen as one of the main factors for the closing of these schools. Getting a qualified teacher was difficult during those days (Debnath, 2009,p. 250).

People in Sikkim acquired only basic primary education because the Christian missionaries focused more on elementary education. People were still not open to secondary and higher education. The foundation of secondary education in Sikkim started during the tenth Chogyal of Sikkim, Maharaja Sidkeong Tulku (1897-1914). He was the only ruler of Sikkim who had been educated abroad at Pembroke College, Oxford, and gave education a new dimension in Sikkim. It was during his rule that government schools were established in Sikkim. In 1906, the first government school, Bhutia Boarding School was established. The second school, Nepali Boarding School was established in 1907. Later, in 1924, these two schools were combined into one and was named Tashi Namgyal Higher Secondary School. In 1909, the Enchey School was established in the Enchey monastery by the Maharaja. The main purpose behind the foundation of Enchey School was to provide liberal education to the monks other than monastic education which was based on religion. These government schools imparted education on the subjects like English, History, Geography, Mathematics, Drawing, Tibetan and Hindi. Drawing was a common subject while Tibetan and Hindi were taught as special subjects (Sikkim Development Report, 2008).

Table 7.1.2. Educational Institutes in Sikkim (1910-11)

Sl. No.	Description of School	No. of Schools	No. Of Pupil	State Expenditure/ Contribution In Rs.
1.	State Schools:			
	Bhutia Boarding School	1	42	4,055
	Nepali Boarding School	1	55	2,121
2	Schools maintained by the Church of Scotland Mission:			
	1.Lace School	3	415	1000
	2.Day School	12		
3.Night School	12			

Source: J.C. Debnath, 2009, p. 250.

A steady growth in education in Sikkim took place from the 1890s onwards. The majority of schools were under Christian missionaries. The schools were increased to a total of 27 in 1913-14, out of which two were secondary and twenty five were primary schools. Of the primary schools, 3 were maintained by the state, 14 by the Church of Scotland Mission, 2 by the Scandinavian Alliance Mission and 6 by the landlords in their own estates (Gurung, 2020, p 25). Thus, the educational development was a result of the combined efforts of both the Darbar and the foreign Christian missionaries.

With the increase in the number of schools, there was also a rise in the enrolment of students. In 1921, the total enrolment recorded was 514. However, the number of schools turned down as compared to 1913-14. Many factors were responsible for its decline. Education received a setback in 1920-21 when many schools were closed down for lack of funds. The schools lacked support from the landlords that they were receiving earlier. Another factor that may also be reiterated is that Sikkim was not ready for such a common approach in building society through education. So education received a setback as schools were opened and closed without proper undertaking (Debnath, 2009, pp. 250-251).

An important reform in education was introduced in November, 1920, when the Maharaja of Sikkim reorganised the Education Department. It was placed under the "Director of Education, Sikkim State and assisted by the "Board of Education, Sikkim State". Again in 1922, the education department was brought under the Judicial Secretary, which was directly under the control of Darbar. The Education Department was headed by a Councillor appointed by the Darbar. However, it was observed that the administration of education lacked well-structured formation and required streamlining in the system (Debnath, 2009, pp. 250).

It appears that the development of education was more rapid during the reign of Sir Tashi Namgyal (1893-1963). It underwent major changes in the administration when the Education Inspector of Schools was appointed in 1945. The appointment of the Education Inspector of Schools was the first ever effort to support a planned and systematic educational administration. The education department became even more systematic and structured with the appointment of first Executive Councillor of the Education Department in 1953. The Executive Councillor was assisted by three school Inspectors, one in headquarters and others in the districts.

By then, demand for more schools was made by different communities in the country. To meet the educational needs of all sections of society, a plan of investment scheme was developed by the Darbar with the help of Indian Government in 1954 (Gurung, 2020,p.240). Accordingly, 7.4% of the total outlay of plan investment policy in 1954-61 was granted for Educational development and was implemented from 1954.

Prior to the 1940s, the school education functioned without a school board. Systematic monitoring and administration of school education was totally absent. It was only during the period of Sir Tashi Namgyal that the high schools in Gangtok were recognised under the West Bengal Board of Secondary Education.

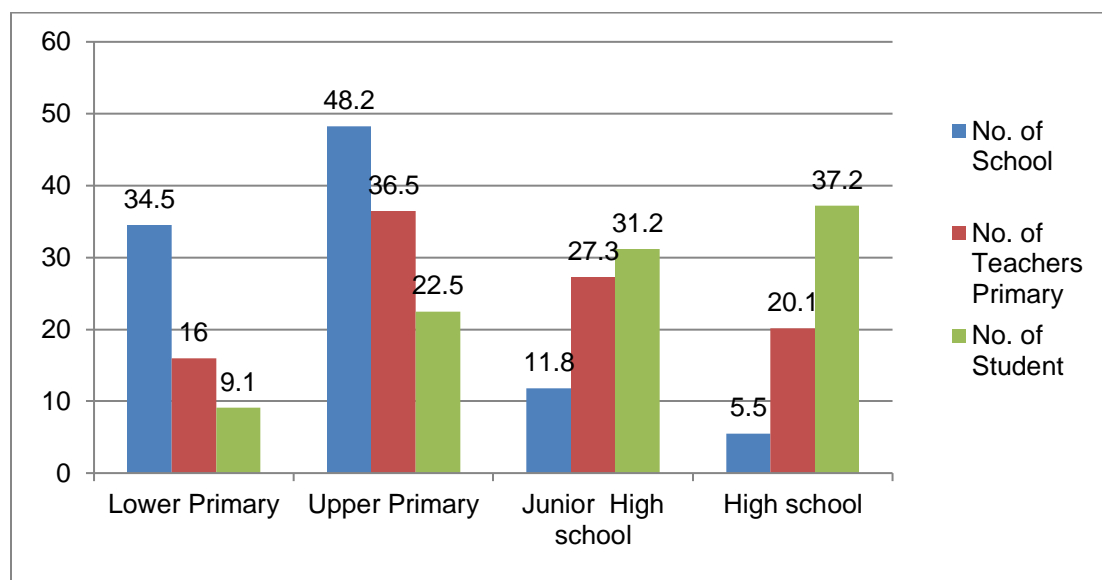
Table 7.1.3. Number of Schools, Teachers and Students in Sikkim, 1960

School (Category)	No. of School	No. of Teachers (Primary)	No. of Student
Lower Primary	38	91	1141
Upper Primary	53	207	2815
Junior High school	13	155	3903
High school	6	114	4662
Total	110	567	12521

Source: Dewan, 2012, p.242.

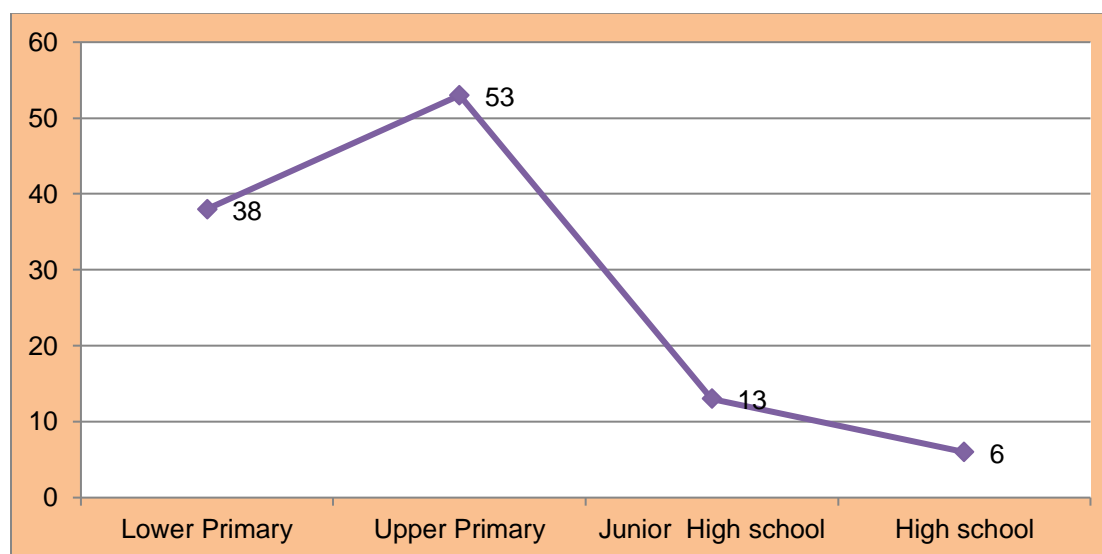
As mentioned earlier, the expansion of schools in Sikkim began in the 1940s. As highlighted in 1960, there were a total of 110 schools, 567 teachers and 12521 students. The highest number of schools was upper primary with a total of 53 schools. The expansion of schools was up to high school, i.e. class X. For further higher education, people had to go outside Sikkim, mainly to Kalimpong or Darjeeling. However, not all people could to this kind of studies.

Fig 7.1.1. Number of Schools, Teachers and Students in Sikkim, 1960 (in percentage)



Source: Based on Table No. 7.1.3.

Fig. 7.1.2. Category of Schools, 1960



Source: Based on Table No. 7.1.3.

The education sector saw a speedy increase both in terms of the numbers of schools as well as students. It was seen that by 1970, the total number of schools had increased to 263; of which 226 were primary schools, 31 junior high schools and 6 higher secondary schools (excluding public schools and evening college) (Gurung, 2020, p.236-237). Enrolment increased from 12521 in 1960 to 21,631 in 1970. According to the school wise distribution of students, 17,657

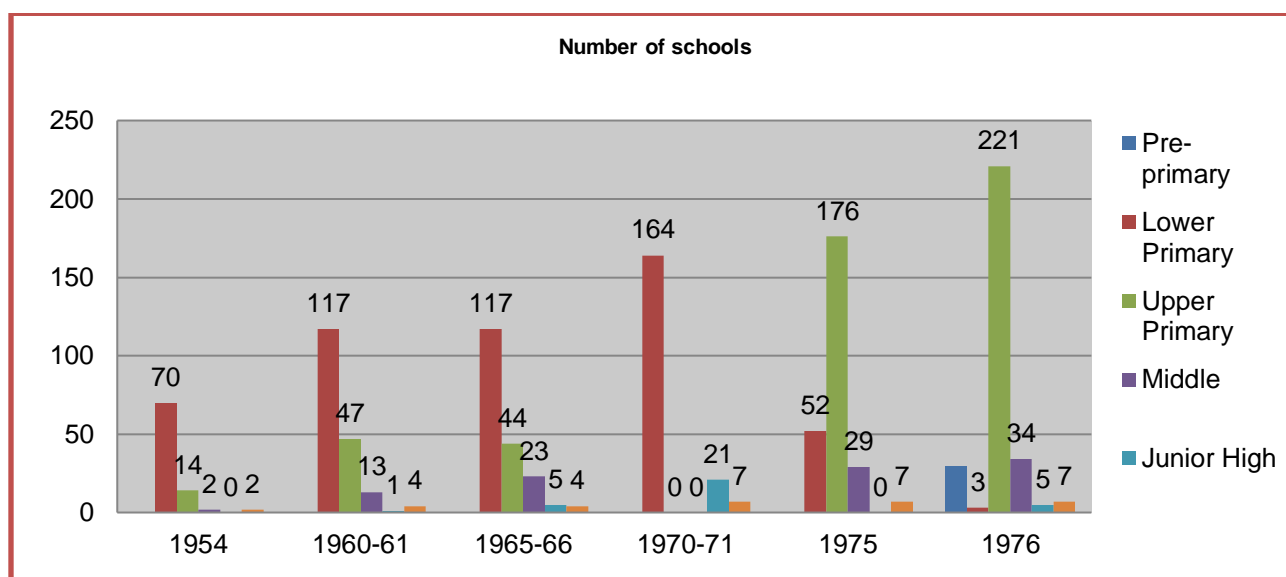
students were enrolled in primary schools, 3,291 students in junior high schools, and 683 in higher secondary schools (Dewan, 2012, p.242).

Table 7.1.4. Status of Schools in Sikkim (1954-1976)

Sl No.	Type of School	1954	1960-61	1965-66	1970-71	1975	1976
1	Pre- primary	-	-	-	-	-	30
2	Lower Primary	70	117	117	164	52	3
3	Upper Primary	14	47	44	-	176	221
4	Middle	2	13	13	-	29	34
5	Junior High	-	1	5	21	-	5
6	High/Higher Secondary	2	4	4	7	7	7
7	Total	88	182	183	192	264	300

Source: Debnath, 2009 and Statistical Supplement to Seventh Five Year Plan, 1985-1990.

Fig. 7.1.3. Number of Schools- 1954-1976



Source: Based on Table No. 7.1.4.

As far as the number of schools is concerned, the number was increased to 300 in 1976. A remarkable increase in the number of schools, from 264 in 1975 to 300 in 1976 was recorded. The educational growth in pre-merger Sikkim, in fact, shows the importance and the increasing demand for education.

Table 7.1.5. Number of Literate Population in Sikkim - 1901-1971

Year	Persons
1901	578
1911	479 (-99)
1921	451 (-28)
1931	354 (-97)
1941	524 (170)
1951	756 (232)
1961	1,415 (659)
1971	37,230 (35, 815)

Source: Census Report, 1971 and Gurung, 2017.

* Value in the bracket represents the rate increase/change in number.

As per the demographic distribution, the literacy rate in pre-merger Sikkim was quite impressive. The number of literates has been increasing with each subsequent census records. Only the censuses from 1911 to 1931 shows a low number of literates when compared to other years. The fact that its rate of literacy growth was faster in 1961 and 1971 adds to its significance.

Besides constructing a complete profile of educational history, it is also essential to study the extent to which education has been able to integrate different ethnic groups into the education system. The purpose is to see the impact that education has been able to have on the socio-economic and cultural advance of the people.

Section II

Post- merger Educational Development in Sikkim

Education in the post-merger also saw a more organised and systematic administrative structure. The Department of Education has its own position in the ministry. The department, headed by the Education Minister and the Secretary to monitor the functioning of the entire administrative works and formulation of policy, planning, implementation of project and other matters related to education in the state.

When compared to the decadal literacy rates of the North-Eastern States since 1961,³² the growth in literacy rates in these states has been quite impressive. These states have higher literacy rates in comparison to the country's literacy rate. Only states like Arunachal Pradesh and Assam are represented with minimal growth of literacy rates. The states like Mizoram, Tripura, Sikkim, Nagaland and Manipur are among the top ten states in the country in terms of literacy.

Table 7.2.1. Literacy Rates in North Eastern States -1961 to 2011 (Census)

States	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011
Arunachal Pradesh	7.13	11.29	25.55	41.59	54.34	66.95
Assam	32.97	33.94	-	52.89	63.25	73.18
Manipur	36.04	38.47	49.66	59.89	70.53	79.85
Meghalaya	26.92	29.49	42.05	49.1	62.56	75.48
Mizoram	44.01	53.8	59.88	82.26	88.80	91.58
Nagaland	21.95	33.78	50.28	61.65	66.59	80.11
Sikkim	-	17.74	34.05	56.94	68.81	82.20
Tripura	20.24	30.98	50.1	60.44	73.19	87.75
India	28.3	34.45	43.57	52.21	64.84	74.04

Source: Census of India (1951-2011)

Sikkim, the youngest of the North-Eastern states, has shown the highest leap in literacy rate from 68.81% in 2001 to 82.20% in 2011. The state of Sikkim had the third highest literacy rate in the North-Eastern states at 82.2% (Census, 2011). Literacy growth was 17.74 % in 1971 and increased to 82.2% in 2011.

Table 7.2.2. Number of Schools in Post- merger Period (1975 to 2019)

Schools	1975	1980	1986	1995	2002	2004	2013	2019
Primary Schools	228	320	482	536	492	462	419	399
Junior high Schools	29	44	122	119	127	147	188	171

³²Sikkim became the eighth member of North East States only in 2002.

High Secondary schools	-	29	54	67	80	92	105	113
Senior Secondary schools	07	08	13	24	26	41	58	83
Total	264	401	671	746	725	742	770	766

Source: Human Resource Development Department- 2019

A tremendous leap in the number of schools was recorded from 1975 to 2018. The schools which were 264 in 1975 have increased to 766 in 2019 (Education Department, Govt. of Sikkim, 2019).

Table 7.2.3. District-wise Number of Schools, 2019

Sl. No	District	Total No of schools
1	East	233
2	West	226
3	North	78
4	South	229
5	Total	766

Source: Human Resource Development Department- 2019

According to the information obtained from the Education Department, Government of Sikkim, 2019, the number of government schools in the state is recorded as 766. Maximum schools are in the East district followed by South district, West district and North district has the least number of schools.

This section also sheds light on the enrolment of students in government schools in the state. Enrolment and the literacy rate increased consistently with the spread and establishment of more schools in both government and private sectors.

7.2.1. Student Enrolment

This part of the chapter deals with student enrolment and its distribution across the levels of schools in all four districts.

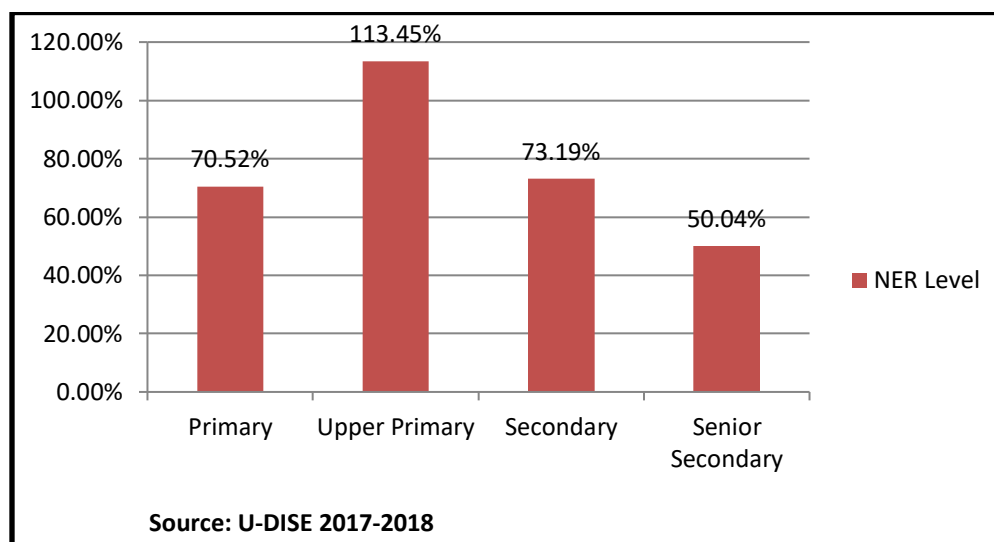
In comparison to the other three levels, the Upper Primary level has higher Net Enrolment Ratio (NER) of 113.45%. Primary, Secondary and Senior Secondary level accounts for 70.52%, 73.19% and 50.04% percent, respectively.

Table 7.2.4. Net Enrolment Ratio (All Management Schools).

Sl. No.	Stages	NER level
1	Primary	70.52%
2	Upper Primary	113.45%
3	Secondary	73.19%
4	Senior Secondary	50.04%

Source: U-DISE 2017-18.

Fig. 7.2.1. Net Enrolment Ratio (All Management Schools)



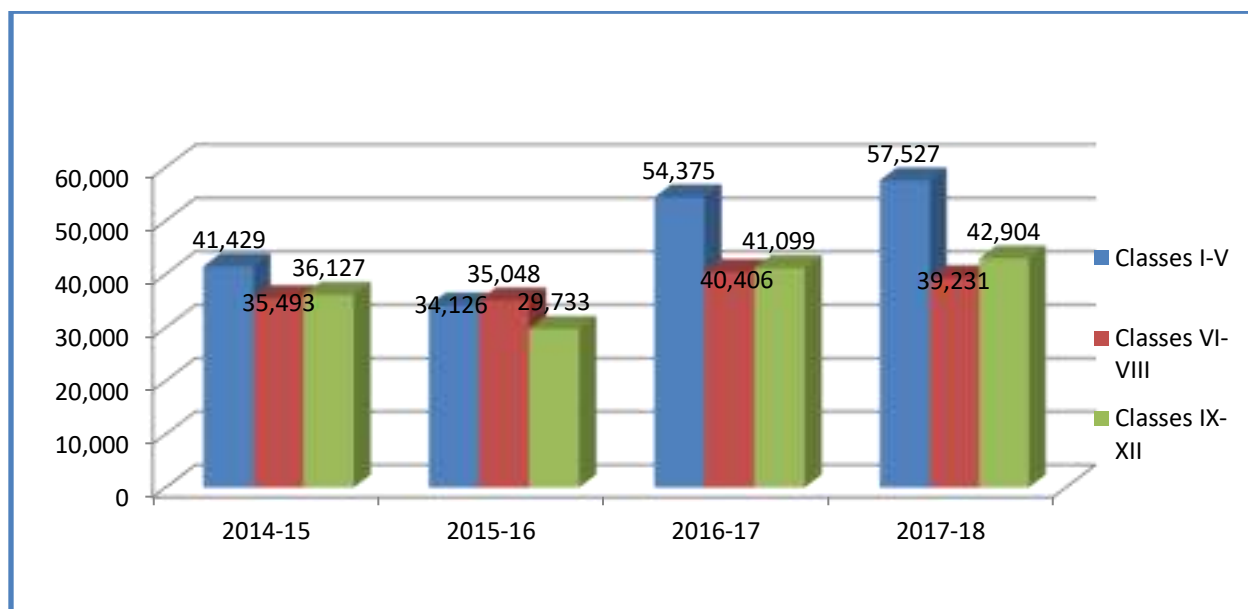
The school enrolment has shown an increasing trend. Enrolment at the earlier stages (Primary and Upper Primary) has receded, while there is a marginal increase at the Secondary and Senior Secondary stages. Enrolment among girls has remained impressively higher than among boys in many levels of education across the years 2015-16 to 2017-18.

Table 7.2.5. Enrolment of Students by Stages (2014-15 to 2017-18)

Stage	Enrolment							
	2014-15		2015-16		2016-17		2017-18	
	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls
Classes I-V	41,429	20,605	34,126	17,020	54,375	25,500	57,527	25,375
Classes VI-VIII	35,493	18,499	35,048	18,072	40,406	20,448	39,231	19,852
Classes IX-XII	36,127	19,484	29,733	15,735	41,099	21,800	42,904	22,820

Source: U-DISE 2014-15 to 2017-18

Fig. 7.2.2. Enrolment of Students by Stages (2014-15 to 2017-18)



Source: U-DISE 2014-2015 to 2017-2018

As observed at the stage of Classes I-V, there is a slight decrease in the enrolment in 2015-16 as compared to enrolment in 2014-15. However, an enlargement in the enrolment from 2016-17 onwards is observed. In stage - Classes VI-VIII, a small margin of decline in the enrolment was noticed in 2017-18. The enrolment at stage – Class IX-XII shows that there has been a constant increase in the enrolment from 2014-15 onwards, with slight drop in 2015-16.

Table 7.2.6. District-wise Enrolment (2014-15 to 2017-18)

District	Govt. School level	Enrolment							
		2014-15		2015-16		2016-17		2017-18	
		Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls
East	Primary	16,752	8,451	14,040	7,182	25,776	12,142	24,544	11,644
	Upper Primary	14,427	7,457	14,251	7,325	18,051	9,104	17,195	8,817
	Secondary	9,386	5,071	9,850	5,213	5,337	2,750	11,212	5,836
	Senior Secondary	6,671	3,636	3,000	1,661	5,895	3,148	7,857	4,204
West	Primary	10,613	5,237	8,514	4,170	12,983	6,052	12,653	5,989
	Upper Primary	9,043	4,612	9,231	4,736	10,586	5,362	9,918	4,950
	Secondary	5,562	2,916	5,551	2,852	2,684	1,403	6,472	3,487
	Senior	3,546	1,922	1,603	905	3,575	1,903	4,170	2,160

	Secondary								
North	Primary	2,943	1,423	2,348	1,138	3,563	1,626	3,239	1,510
	Upper Primary	2,173	1,160	2,186	1,167	2,521	1,270	2,406	1,190
	Secondary	1,323	738	1,384	740	573	315	1,477	799
	Senior Secondary	900	490	426	240	944	523	1,088	610
South	Primary	11,121	5,494	9,224	4,530	12,053	5,680	13,356	6,232
	Upper Primary	9,850	5,270	9,380	4,844	9,248	4,712	9,712	4,895
	Secondary	5,577	3,035	6,315	3,245	3,163	1,705	6,367	3,305
	Senior Secondary	3,162	1,676	1,604	879	3,246	1,824	4,261	2,419

Source: U-DISE 2014-15 to 2017-18.

In the comparative study of district wise enrolment of students, it is seen that in East district the enrolment of students had a decline at the secondary stage (class IX-X) in 2016-17 and at the senior secondary level (XI-XII) in 2015-16. But the study shows that in 2017-18 the enrolment has multiplied.

The data on West district reveals that there was a decline in enrolment at upper primary level in 2017-18 as compared to earlier years. Slight decrease was seen in 2016-17 at secondary level. Enrolment at the primary level has increased in 2017-18.

In North district, there is a constant increase in the enrolment of students at all levels, except for the secondary level, where decrease was noticed in 2016-17. Enrolment in South district increased at all levels in 2017-18. In 2016-17, there was a decrease at the senior secondary levels and in 2015-16, there was a decrease at secondary level.

The study indicates an increase in the number of schools along with the teachers and students to a greater extent since its statehood in 1975. Growth in schools has increased across all four districts in the state.

7.2.2. Teachers

With the expansion of educational institutions, the number of teachers also expanded. Prior to the merger many teachers from outside the state were appointed to government schools. In those days Sikkim lacked local qualified teachers.

There is an unavailability of documents and records regarding the teacher's data in Sikkim prior to the merger. Information related to teachers is sourced from the Education Department, Govt. of Sikkim. Records of teachers are presented from the year 1960 and onwards.

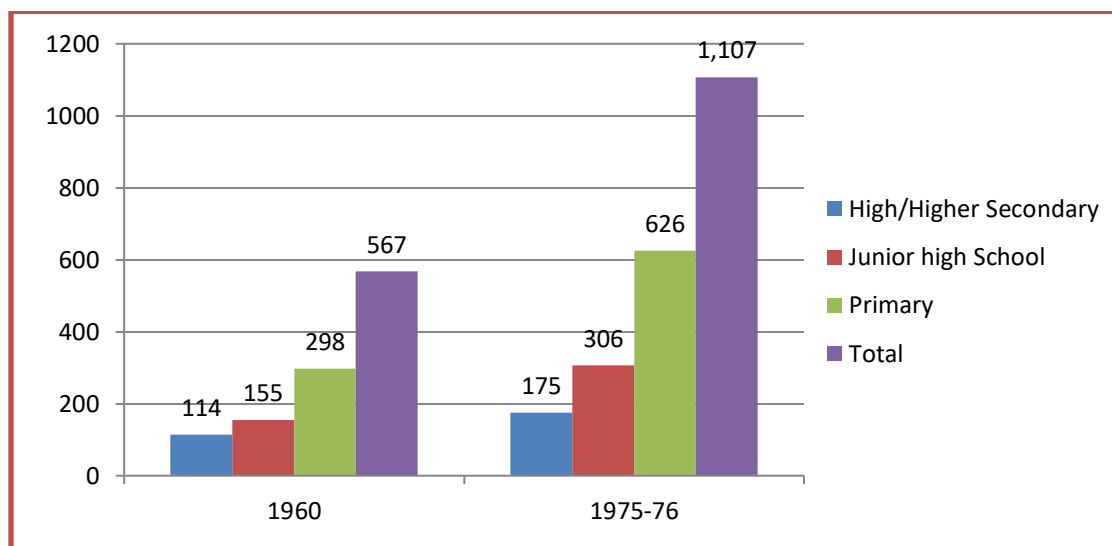
Table 7.2.7. Number of Teachers and Number of Pupils (1960 and 1975-76)

Sl. No.	Category of schools	Number of teachers		Number of pupils	
		1960	1975-76	1960	1975-76
1	High/Higher Secondary	114	175	4,662	4,642
2	Junior high School	155	306	3,903	6,280
3	Primary	298	626	3,956	10,300 (6344)
4	Total	567	1,107 (540)	12,521	21,222 (8701)

Source: Education Department, Govt. Of Sikkim and Gurung 2020.

It can be inferred from the above table that growth in the number of teachers and pupils have been noticed from 1960 to 1975-76. In 1960 there existed a total of 567 teachers and 12,521 pupils which increased to 1,107 and 21,222 teachers and pupils respectively in 1975-76 (Gurung, 2020, pp 37-38).

Fig.7.2.3. Number of Teachers (1960 and 1975-76)



Source: Based on Table No. 7.2.7.

In Sikkim there existed no structured rules for the appointment of teachers, it was only during the Plan period (1954 onwards) that such rules were framed under the Department of Education.

The appointment of teachers was conducted by constituting a board consisting of five members. As mentioned earlier, people from outside Sikkim were also appointed as teachers, but in 1960-62, the Durbar brought forth a plan that only the Sikkim Subject holder candidates could be considered eligible for service in Sikkim including teaching jobs from 1962-63. Even though the rule was implemented, it failed to continue as Sikkim still lacked qualified Sikkim subject holder people to be recruited as teachers and hence candidates from outside Sikkim had to be appointed as teachers (Dewan, 2012,p.245).

Table 7.2.8. School-wise Number of Teachers (1975 to 2005-06)

Year	Primary	J.H.S.	Secondary	Sr. Secondary	Total
1975-76	626	306	N.A.	175	1107
1994-95	2559	608	1325	889	6381
1999-2000	2721	701	1531	1057	7010
2004-05	2842	776	1599	1104	7321
2005-06	4690	1356	1072	514	7632

Source: Official Record, Department of HRD, Govt. Of Sikkim and Gurung, 2020.

The number of teachers in the state has tremendously increased from 1107 in 1975-76 to 7632 in 2005-06. The primary schools have appointed the highest number of teachers, followed by Junior High School, Secondary and Senior Secondary Schools.

Table 7.2.9. Total Teachers in Government Schools, 2016-17

Districts	Primary Schools			Junior High Schools			Secondary Schools			Senior Secondary Schools		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
East	876	1100	1976	474	558	1032	233	297	530	198	236	434
North	279	293	572	113	94	207	56	56	112	35	51	86
South	745	794	1539	364	335	699	143	143	286	131	158	289
West	897	737	1634	351	251	602	239	189	428	157	124	281
Total	2797	2924	5721	1302	1238	2540	671	659	1356	521	569	1090

Source: Department of Education, SSA - 2016-17.

The number of teachers of Government schools in 2016 - 2017 presents that female teachers are highest among the primary teachers and teachers teaching at senior secondary schools in Sikkim. The male teachers have overshadowed the female teachers in Junior High Schools and Secondary Schools.

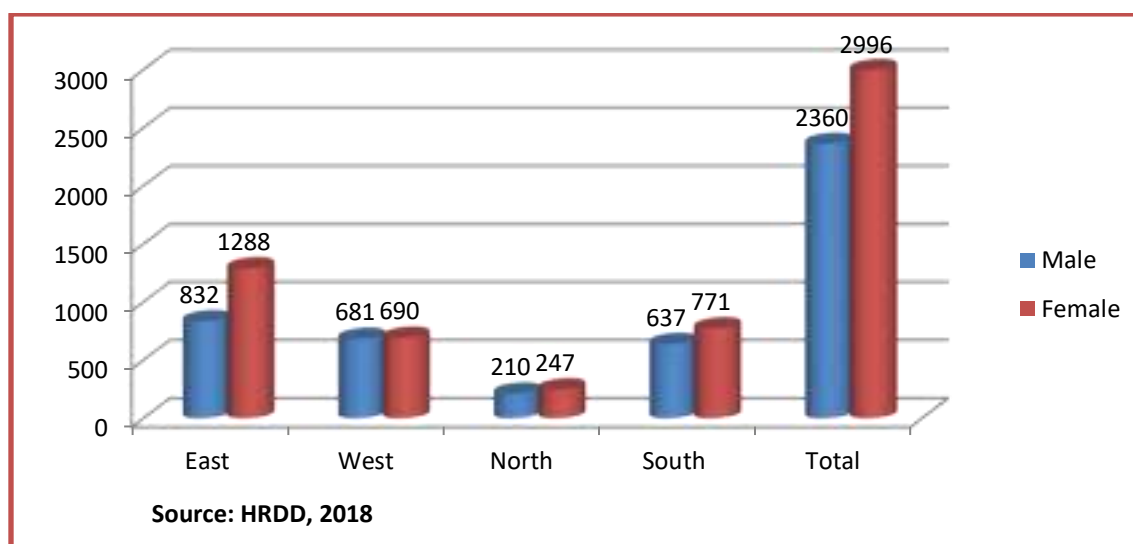
The distribution of teachers in all districts may not look equal as all the districts do not have equal number of schools. East district has the maximum schools and thus the number of teachers in this district is also recorded to be the highest. Similarly, the North district has less number of schools and the numbers of teachers is also low.

Table 7.2.10.
District and Gender-wise Distribution of Elementary Teachers Teaching in Class I-VIII in JHS/SS/SSS - 2017-18

District	Male	Female	Total
East	832	1288	2120
West	681	690	1371
North	210	247	457
South	637	771	1408
Total	2360	2996	5356

Source: Human Resource Development Department 2018.

Fig. 7.2.4. District and Gender-wise Distribution of Elementary Teachers Teaching in Class I- VIII in JHS/SS/SSS - 2017-2018



The percentage of female teachers is highest in almost all the four districts. The percentage of female is 55.9% whereas male teachers are 44%.

Table 7.2.11. District-wise Number of Elementary Teachers Teaching in Class I- VIII in JHS/SS/SSS - 2017-18

District	Total Teachers	PRT	GTA	GTS	PPT	OTHERS
East	2120	979	658	407	36	40
West	1371	602	442	273	34	20
North	457	235	130	76	14	3
South	1408	632	417	303	27	29
Total	5356	2448	1647	1059	111	92

Source: Human Resource Development Department 2018.

Fig. 7.2.5. District and Gender-wise Distribution of Elementary Teachers Teaching in Class I-VIII in JHS/SS/SSS - 2017-2018

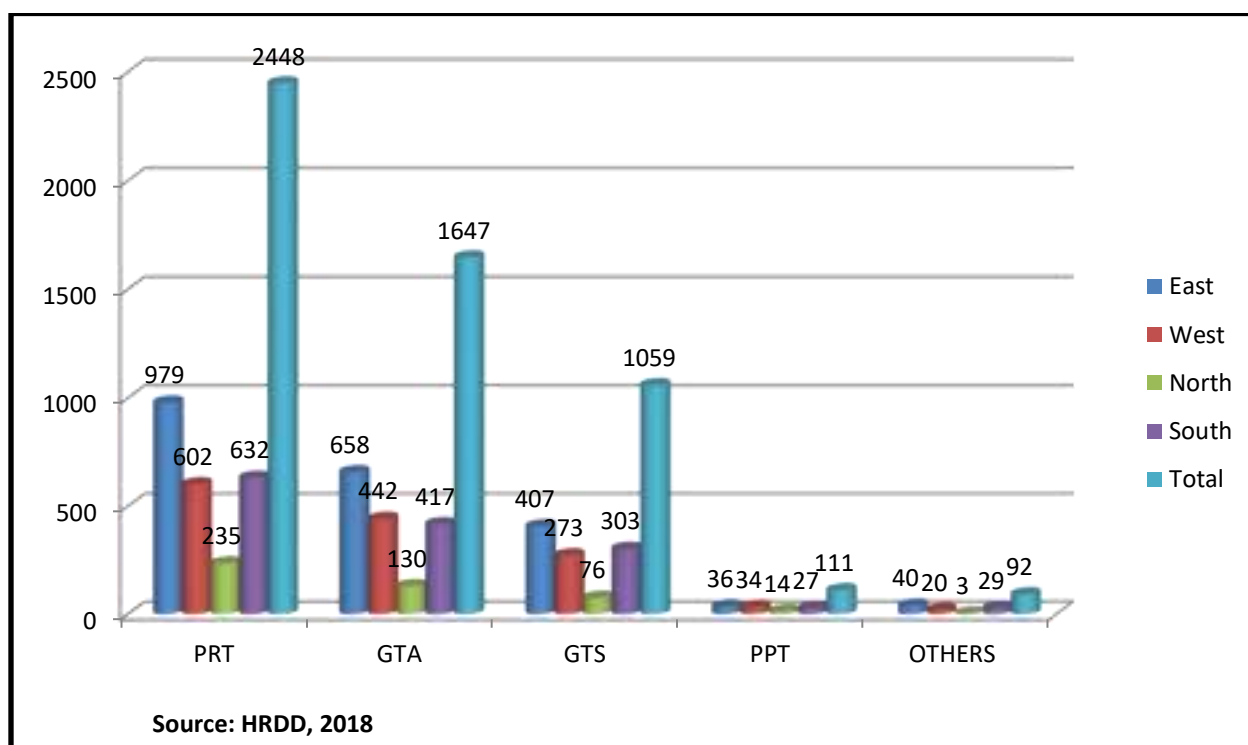


Table 7.2.12. Number of Teachers, Teachers Profile by Qualification (Including Para Teachers), 2017-18

District/ Professional Qualification	Rural Area		Urban Area		All Areas		Total teachers
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
East Sikkim							
Diploma/Certificate in BTT of >=2 years	278	302	18	106	296	408	704
Bachelor of Elementary Education (B.El.Ed.)	103	195	19	71	122	266	389
B.Ed. or Equivalent	486	575	93	263	579	838	1417
M.Ed. or equivalent	26	24	12	12	38	36	74
Others	197	269	30	106	227	375	602
None	884	1,389	193	520	1,077	1,909	2,986
Diploma/Degree in special education	13	17	1	11	14	28	42
Pursuing any relevant professional course	8	16	2	3	10	19	29
Only upto State Level	0	2	0	0	0	2	2
District Total	1,995	2,789	368	1,092	2,363	3,881	6,245
North Sikkim							
Diploma/Certificate in BTT of >=2 years	87	131	3	1	90	132	222
Bachelor of Elementary Education (B.El.Ed.)	3	1	4	0	3	5	8
B.Ed. or Equivalent	95	130	2	1	97	131	228
M.Ed. or equivalent	3	3	0	0	3	3	6
Others	90	57	3	3	93	60	153
None	186	209	11	37	197	246	443
Pursuing any relevant professional course	15	30	0	0	15	30	45
District Total	479	561	19	46	498	607	1,105
South Sikkim							
Diploma/Certificate in BTT of >=2 years	181	225	13	35	194	260	454
Bachelor of Elementary Education (B.El.Ed.)	172	154	6	12	178	166	344
B.Ed. or Equivalent	337	329	37	88	374	417	791
M.Ed. or equivalent	14	14	6	6	20	20	40
Others	150	185	22	52	172	237	409
None	623	859	75	170	698	1,029	1,727
Diploma/Degree in special education	18	37	1	5	19	42	61
Pursuing any relevant professional course	13	14	0	0	13	14	27
Only upto State Level	3	3	0	0	3	3	6
District Total	1,511	1,820	160	368	1,671	2,188	3,859
West Sikkim							
Diploma/Certificate in BTT of >=2 years	230	200	0	0	230	200	430
Bachelor of Elementary Education (B.El.Ed.)	93	118	0	0	93	118	211
B.Ed. or Equivalent	367	310	0	0	367	310	677

M.Ed. or equivalent	23	20	0	0	23	20	43
Others	173	171	0	0	173	171	344
None	980	1,183	1	11	981	1,194	2,175
Diploma/Degree in special education	15	14	0	0	15	14	29
Pursuing any relevant professional course	3	4	0	0	3	4	7
Only upto State Level	0	1	0	0	1	0	1
District Total	1,884	2,021	1	11	1,885	2,032	3,917

Source: U-DISE 2014-15 to 2017-18.

7.2.3. Teacher Pupil Ratio by Schools (2017-18)

Total number of teachers is the highest in East district with a total of 6,245, followed by West district with total of 3917, South district with 3859 teachers and North district has 1105 teachers in total.

Regarding the total number of teachers with professional qualification, it is seen that in East district 1417 teachers have B.Ed. or Equivalent degree followed by 704 with Diploma/Certificate in BTT of ≥ 2 years, while highest number of (2986) teachers are recorded to have none of the mentioned professional qualifications.

In North district, around 228 teachers have B.Ed. or Equivalent degree, 222 teachers have Diploma/Certificate in BTT of ≥ 2 years and the highest number (443) of teachers do not have any professional qualification.

South district has total of 3859 teachers, out of which 791 have B.Ed. or Equivalent degree, 454 number of teachers have Diploma/Certificate in BTT of ≥ 2 years and 1727 number of teachers do not possess any required professional qualification.

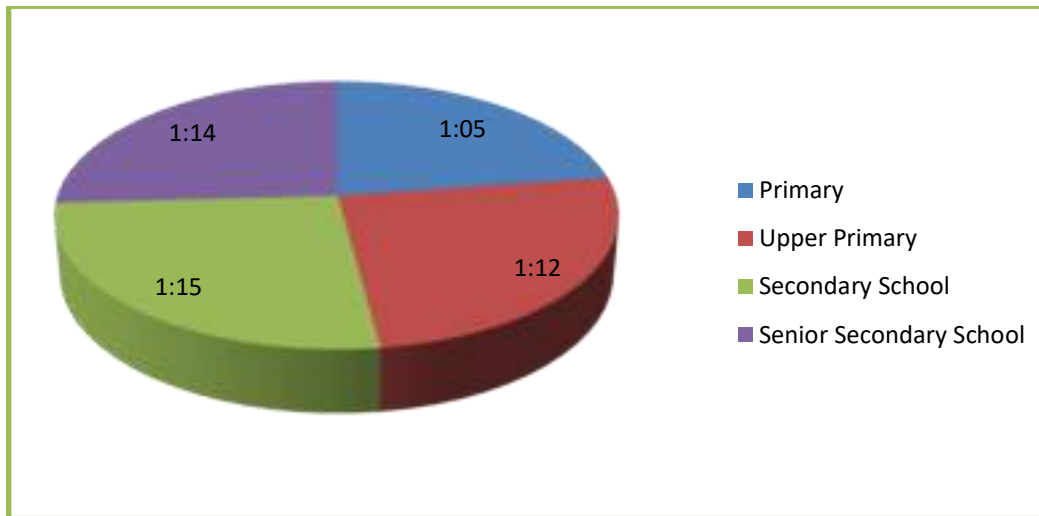
Like in East and North districts, in West district, the highest number of teachers (2117) do not possess any required qualification. It shows that 677 teachers have B.Ed. or Equivalent degree and 430 have Diploma/Certificate in BTT of ≥ 2 years. Overall, the data shows that highest number of teachers do not possess any professional qualification in any of the four districts.

Table 7.2.13. Teacher Pupil Ratio by Schools (2017-18).

State Govt. School	Teacher-Pupil Ratio
Primary	1:5
Upper Primary	1:12
Secondary School	1:15
Senior Secondary School	1:14

Source: U-DISE, 2017-18.

Fig.7.2.6. Teacher-Pupil Ratio



Source: U-DISE, 2017-18.

The total teacher pupil-ratio of the State is very low against the National guidelines of 1:30. This is attributed to several factors like, low birth rate in the recent few decades, increasing Private Schools, Central and State Sponsored Schools, migration of parents of the children from the State to other States, etc.

7.2.4. Higher and Technical Education

The development of higher education in Sikkim was the main concern for the new government in 1975. Few higher education institutes like Namgyal Institute of Tibetology (1957), Sikkim Institute of Higher Nyingma Studies (1963), and Sir Thudob Namgyal College (1972) prevailed in 1975 (Dewan, 2012,p.366). More higher educational institutions were established in later years. The growth of higher educational institutes became more visible after 1990s. It shows that the development of higher education in Sikkim laid its foundation quite late as compared to other Indian States (Syangbo & Bhutia, 2018, p.83).

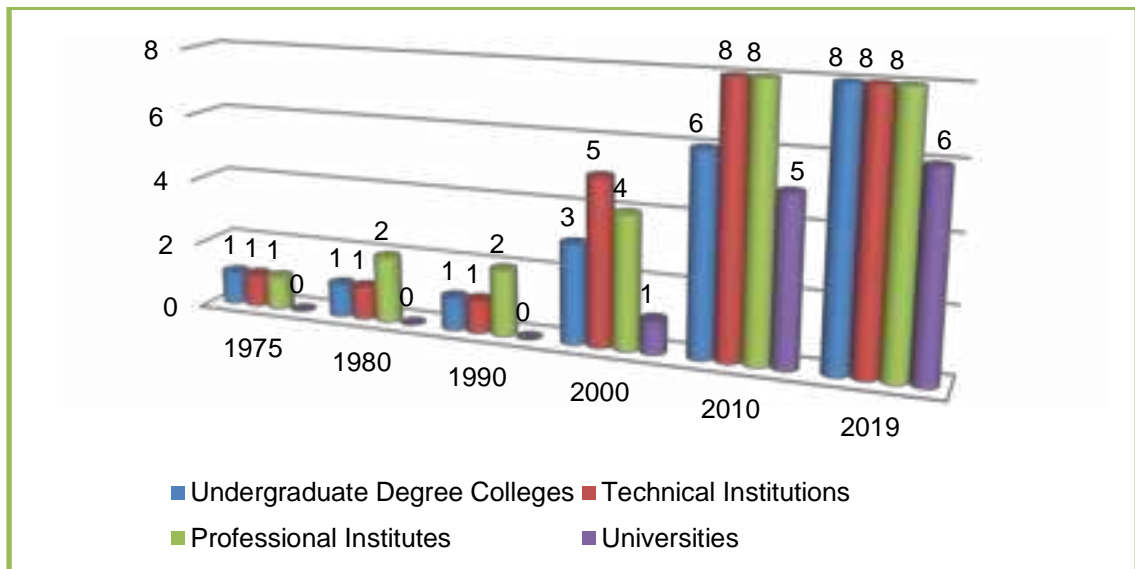
In the last decade (2000-2010) Sikkim witnessed a remarkable development in the field of higher education. Few colleges and only 1 university i.e. Sikkim Manipal University existed prior to year 2000. The last fifteen years show the growth of more higher educational institutions in the state.

Table 7.2.14. Year-wise Number of Higher Educational Institutions under Government of Sikkim (1975-2019)

Sl. No .	Types of Higher Educational Institution	1975	198 0	1990	2000	2010	2019
1	Undergraduate Degree Colleges	1	1	1	3	6	8
2	Technical Institutions	1	1	1	5	8	8
3	Professional Institutes	1	2	2	4	8	8
4	Universities	N.A	N.A	N.A	1	5	6

Source: Education Department, Govt of, 2020.

Fig.7.2.7. Number of Higher Educational Institutions in Sikkim (1975-2019)



Source: Based on Table No.7.2.14.

List of Higher Educational Institutions with its Year of Establishment:

1. Undergraduate Degree Colleges

- i. Sikkim Government College, Tadong, Gangtok, East Sikkim (Govt.) -1972
- ii. Damder Singh College, Deorali, East Sikkim (Pvt.) -1994
- iii. Namchi Government College, South Sikkim (Govt.) -1996
- iv. Palatine College, Pakyong, East Sikkim (Pvt.)- 2004
- v. Rhenock Government College, East Sikkim (Govt.)- 2005
- vi. Gyalshing Government College, West Sikkim (Govt.) - 2010
- vii. Vocational Degree College, West Sikkim (Govt)- 2017
- viii. Arts Degree College, North Sikkim (Govt)- 2017

2. Technical Institutions

- i. I.T.I., Rangpo (Under Labour Dept. State Govt.)- 1975
- ii. Himalayan Pharmacy Institute (D. Pharma, B. Pharma), Majitar, East Sikkim (Pvt.)- 1990
- iii. Sikkim Manipal Institute of Technology (B.E), Majitar, East Sikkim (Pvt.)- 1997
- iv. Advanced Technical Training Centre (Deploma), Polytechnic College, Bardang, East Sikkim (Govt)- 1999
- v. Centre for Computers and Communication Technology (Deploma), Polytechnic College, Chisopani, South Sikkim (Govt.)- 1999
- vi. Agriculture College, Ranipool, East Sikkim (Govt.)- 2006
- vii. Vinayaka Mission Pharmacy College, East Sikkim (Pvt) -2008
- viii. NIT, Rabong, South Sikkim (Govt.)- 2010

3. Professional Institutions

- i. Sikkim Manipal Institute of Medical Sciences (SMIMS), SMU, M.B.B.S., Tadong, East Sikkim (Pvt.) - 2001
- ii. (TTI) and 2003 (DIET)- TTI/DIET, Gangtok, East Sikkim (Govt.)- 1979
- iii. Loyola College of Education, Namchi, South Sikkim, (Pvt.)- 1993
- iv. Carmel Teacher Training Institute, Pakyong, East Sikkim (Pvt.)- 1995
- v. Harkamaya College of Education, Tadong, East Sikkim, (Pvt.) (v) 2009- DIET, Gyalshing, West Sikkim (Govt.) -2003
- vi. DIET, Soreng, West Sikkim (Govt.) -2009
- vii. B.Ed College, Soreng, West Sikkim (Govt.)- 2009
- viii. Sikkim Government Law College (LLB, LLM), Gangtok, East Sikkim- 1980.

4. Universities

- i. Sikkim Manipal University (Pvt.)- 1996
- ii. ICFAI University (Pvt.) -2004
- iii. EIILM University (Pvt.) - 2006
- iv. Sikkim University (Central Govt.) -2006

- v. Vinayaka Missions Sikkim University (Pvt.) - 2008
- vi. Sikkim State University (State Govt.) – 2018

Source: Human Resource Development Department, 2019.

Fulfilling the requisites of modern education and to promote quality education, teacher training institutes were established in the state. State Institute of Education as an academic wing of Education Department was established in 1978-79. At present the institute has been transformed into State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT). District Institutes of Education and Training (DIET) was established in the state. The state has three DIETs at Gangtok, Geyzing and Namchi to cater and meet the demands and needs of professional development of teachers. Gangtok DIET was started in 1998, DIET Namchi was established in 2004 and DIET in west Sikkim was started in 2005.

7.2.5. Monastic Schools in Sikkim

In continuation of the tradition of pre merger period monastic schools are also continuing in Sikkim. Monastic schools were started by Chogyal Sidekong Tulku in 1909 at Enchey (Ecclesiastical Department, Government of Sikkim, 2019). In the past Monasteries were the main learning centres in Sikkim which offered basic five (5) year course “*Goncho Labra*” to become a monk. The main idea for the existence of monastic education was to impart religious teaching for the preparation of monks. But these days formal education upto primary level has been introduced in the monastic schools. Through this the students not only receive religious education but also the basics of formal education. Teaching of subjects like Mathematics, EVS and English is added to its curriculum. The fundamental Buddhist included in religious books which contained prayer chantings, along with study of diversified subjects such as painting, sculpture, astrology, mathematics, medicine, philosophy, literature and tantra etc. The next higher level of monastic education is the *Shedas* (Monastic Colleges for Higher Studies in Buddhist Literature). Two such institutes are situated at Deorali and Rumtek in East Sikkim (Education: A historical overview, Human Resource Development Report-2001, p. 28-29).

The monastic schools are managed by the Ecclesiastical Department and Education Department (for appointment of teachers), Govt. of Sikkim.

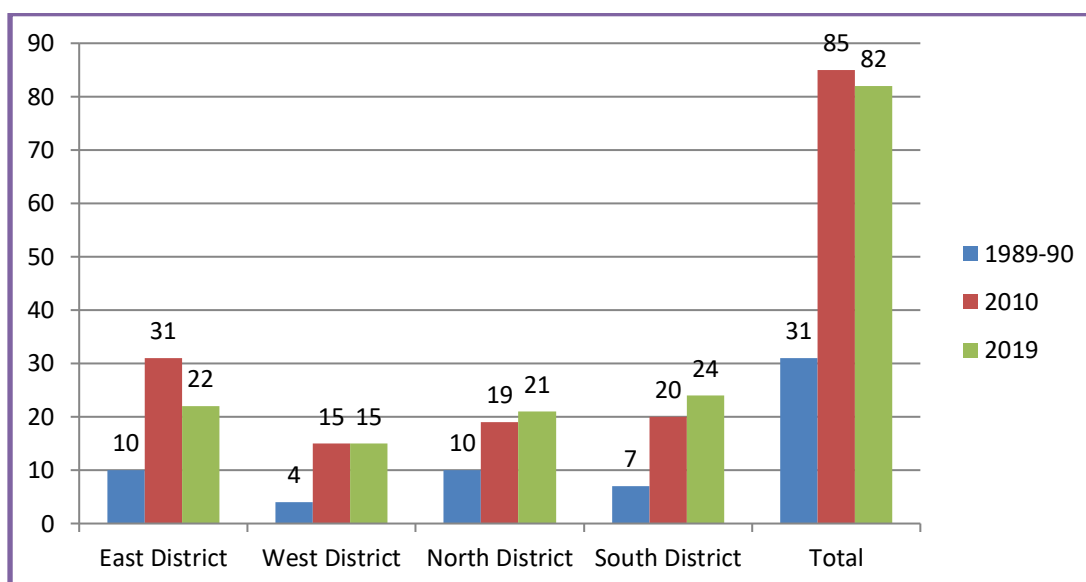
The erstwhile Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) and now Samagra Siksha has been appointing two teachers in subjects like English, Mathematics and Environmental Science since 2005. The schools also receive financial aid from the department (Education Department, Govt. of Sikkim, 2019). The monastic schools also receive free textbooks like any other government school. All together there are total 82 Monastic schools in Sikkim at present.

Table. 7.2.15. Monastic Schools in Sikkim (1989-90, 2010 & 2019)

Sl. No	District	1989-90	2010	2019
1	East District	10	31	22
2	West District	4	15	15
3	North District	10	19	21
4	South District	7	20	24
5	Total	31	85	82

Source: Statistics of Education in Sikkim, 1989-90, Chhetri, 2010 and Ecclesiastical Affairs Department, Govt. of Sikkim, 2019.

Fig. 7.2.8. Monastic Schools in Sikkim (1989-90, 2010 & 2019)



Source: Statistics of Education in Sikkim, 1989-90, Chhetri, 2010 and Ecclesiastical Affairs Department, Govt. of Sikkim, 2019.

Various modes of education have prevailed at different periods in the history of Sikkim. First, traditional education of Sikkim was centred around Buddhist religious teachings imparted at monastic schools. The objective was to prepare the monks to

priesthood.³³ Second, arrival of Christian Missionary education in the late 19th century was promoted by the landlords/*Kazis*.³⁴ In fact, the schools opened by the missionaries was the only means of offering basic education in Sikkim in the dawn of 20th century. The first ever established government school was in 1906 (Bhutia Boarding School). The second being in 1907 (Nepali Boarding School). Finally, the universal formal education system emerged into Sikkim educational system. The best part in the development of education system in Sikkim is that, various strategies were focused on advocacy of educational policies to raise its achievement at various stages.

Section III

The Participation of Bhutias in the Education Sector

During the monarchical set up in Sikkim it was obvious that the Bhutias were the only beneficiaries of education than the other existing communities. Though the education imparted was more of religious inclination, it was the sole means of formal education that existed in Sikkim. Till the early nineteenth century, this was the pattern of education in Sikkim where the other communities got their entry in education only after education was expanded with the entry of British Political Officer and foreign Christian missionaries.

It is seen that participation of all communities in formal education has taken place without shifting the existing monastic education in the new democratic set up. The state government rendered various interventions for educational development of all communities. Accordingly, literacy rates among communities indicate that education has reached to every section of the society in Sikkim. Literacy rate by communities and by Sex was conducted by DESEME which is available only for 2006.

³³Schools in Tashiding, Tulung, Pemayongtse and Sangnachaling monasteries were famous as centres of monastic education in those days (Jangira, 1977).

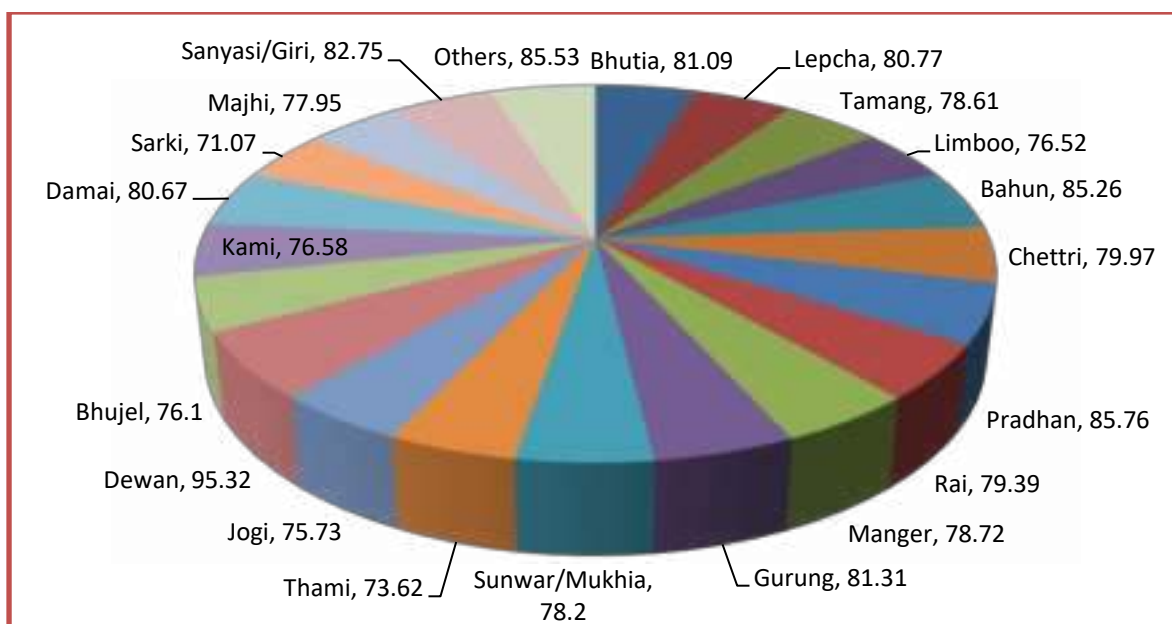
³⁴The missionaries were not allowed to live in Gangtok. In 1924, Mary Scott was allowed to open a school for girls in Gangtok. The first matriculation class passed the examination (four candidates) in 1945 and the school continued to grow, becoming a recognized higher secondary school in 1961 (Ritchie, 1977). A striking feature of the Christian Missionary schools for girls was 'industrial' teaching mainly sewing and knitting. 'Vocational training' was also a part of the curriculum.

Table 7.3.1. Literacy Rate by Community and by Sex, 2006

Community	Male	Female	Total
Bhutia	86.88	75.03	81.09
Lepcha	85.76	75.59	80.77
Tamang	83.84	72.93	78.61
Limboo	83.19	69.32	76.52
Bahun	91.45	78.96	85.26
Chettri	84.76	73.79	79.97
Pradhan	90.38	81.01	85.76
Rai	84.76	73.70	79.39
Manger	83.32	73.62	78.72
Gurung	86.73	75.57	81.31
Sunwar/Mukhia	83.08	72.86	78.20
Thami	76.69	70.00	73.62
Jogi	79.22	71.96	75.73
Dewan	95.40	95.24	95.32
Bhujel	81.21	70.73	76.10
Kami	82.14	70.83	76.58
Damai	85.69	75.61	80.67
Sarki	78.79	63.45	71.07
Majhi	84.32	69.84	77.95
Sanyasi/Giri	88.03	76.22	82.75
Others	88.47	80.80	85.53
Total	86.04	74.76	80.66

Source: Socio- Economic Survey, DESME, 2006

Fig. 7.3.1. Literacy Rate by Community, 2006



Source: Socio- Economic Survey, DESME, 2006

As per Socio- Economic Survey, 2006, the community and sex-wise literacy rate reveals that Dewan, Pradhan, Bahun, and Sansyasi from the Nepali group have the highest literacy rates with 95.32 %, 85.76 %, 85. 26 % and 82.75 % respectively. Among the remaining, Bhutias are at the lead with 81.09% of literacy rate as compared to other tribal groups in the state. In comparison, male literacy rate is higher with 86.88% than female population which is 75.03 %. Lepchas come next to Bhutias with 80.77%, where male population is 85.76% and female with 75.59%.

Looking at the individual caste groups among the Nepali community, Dewan is with the highest per cent (95.32) where both male and female has equal per cent (male-95.40 and female 95.24) of literate population. The next groups with higher percentage of literacy rates (85 percent each) are Bahun and Pradhan. The groups which have higher literacy rate than the average state literacy rate are Gurung, Damai and Sanyasi/ Giri. In all cases, the male population has the higher literacy rate than the female. According to recent education indicators, 67.1% of the ST population are literate with male literacy rate of 73.8% and female of 60.2%. The literacy rate of Bhutias is 67.9% and the literacy rate of Lepchas is 65.7% (Census, India, 2011).

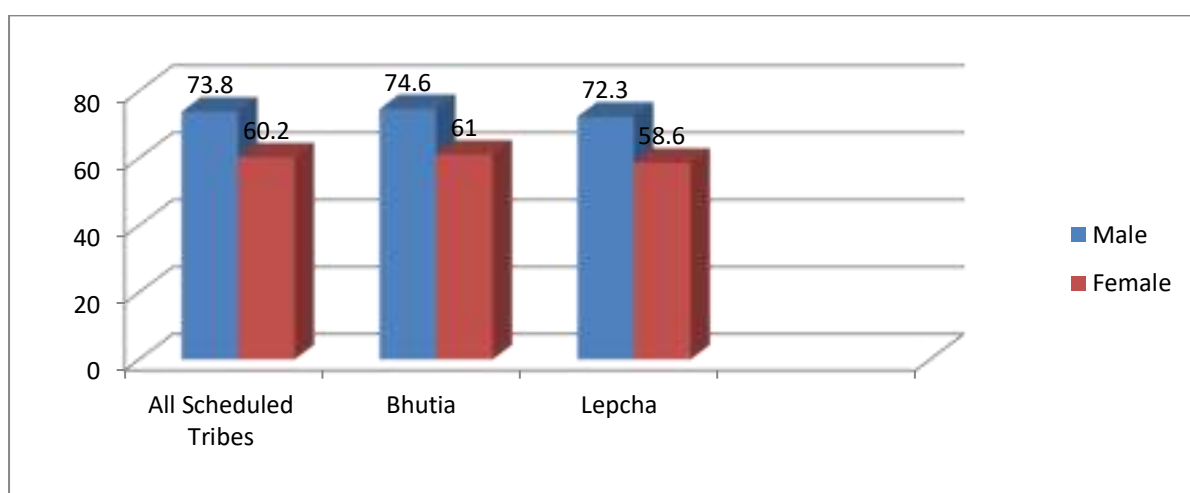
Table 7.3.2. Percentage of Literacy among STs, 2011

Name of the Scheduled Tribe	% of Literate		
	Total	Male	Female
All Scheduled Tribes	67.1	73.8	60.2
Bhutia	67.9	74.6	61.0
Lepcha	65.5	72.3	58.6

Source: Census, India, 2011.

Census report of 2011 presents that three-fourth of the ST population (76%) in the age group 5-14 years are pursuing education. The Bhutias are marginally ahead in this regard with 78.2% and Lepchas with 72.8 %.

Fig 7.3.2. Percentage of Literacy among STs



Source: Census, India, 2011.

Table 7.3.4. Community-wise Percentage Distribution of Population by Level of Education, 2006.

Community	Illiterate	Primary	Jr. High School	Secondary school	Sr. Sec. School	Graduate	Post Graduate	PhD	Religious Literate
Bhutia	16.72	28.61	16.28	10.43	6.27	4.55	0.59	0.01	2.65
Lepcha	16.72	36.55	15.32	7.87	4.09	2.33	0.33	0.00	1.86
Tamang	18.54	35.14	16.18	7.87	3.87	2.50	0.27	0.01	0.59
Limboo	20.00	36.19	14.83	6.40	3.05	1.52	0.18	0.00	0.12
Bahun	13.16	27.36	17.14	12.79	8.98	5.45	1.21	0.03	0.69
Chettri	17.11	33.75	16.31	8.67	4.57	2.64	0.37	0.01	0.10

Pradhan	12.64	28.53	19.08	12.23	7.16	5.63	0.92	0.03	0.10
Rai	17.60	35.74	15.89	7.59	3.76	2.07	0.25	0.00	0.13
Manger	18.11	37.78	15.38	6.74	2.73	2.03	0.28	0.01	0.08
Gurung	16.17	34.49	17.69	9.11	4.29	2.29	0.22	0.00	0.39
Sunwar/Mukhia	23.87	47.01	18.97	8.61	5.03	2.86	0.56	0.00	0.20
Thami	25.87	41.28	18.10	5.74	3.09	1.55	0.22	0.00	0.00
Jogi	22.04	44.08	14.08	5.92	1.84	1.22	0.00	0.00	0.00
Dewan	4.55	21.02	21.02	19.32	11.93	10.80	2.27	0.00	0.00
Bhujel	20.40	37.30	14.96	5.84	2.92	1.82	0.25	0.00	0.14
Kami	19.95	37.33	14.44	6.50	2.85	2.08	0.22	0.01	0.15
Damai	15.23	35.33	15.12	6.57	2.86	1.91	0.19	0.00	0.10
Sarki	24.33	42.22	9.90	4.17	1.04	0.43	0.00	0.00	0.00
Majhi	30.24	55.93	23.32	14.82	5.34	3.95	0.99	0.00	0.00
Sanyasi/Giri	24.76	51.38	25.36	20.04	8.75	6.96	1.80	0.00	0.22
Others	12.55	25.69	17.30	11.79	6.97	5.18	1.27	0.11	0.75
Total	16.77	33.10	16.24	8.96	4.89	3.14	0.49	0.02	0.73

Source: Socio- economic survey, DESME, 2006.

The table elicits the illiteracy rates of different communities in Sikkim. Illiteracy among the Bhutias is 16.72%, which is very less as compared to Nepalese community as a whole. It has the least percentage of illiterate people with 4.55%.

Of the total communities; Sanyasi/ Giri, Dewan, Pradhan, Bhahun and Bhutia has been recorded as the first five communities having educational level of graduate and above. It is recorded that 1.80% of Sanyasi/Giri, 2.27% of Dewan, 0.92%, 1.21 % of Bahun and 0.59 % of Bhutias are posts graduates. The Bhutia is the better off among the tribal groups: Lepcha, Limboo and Tamang.

7.3.1. Community-wise Enrolment of Students in Higher Education

This section explicitly examines the community-wise enrolment of students in Higher education institutes under Directorate of Higher Education, Govt. of Sikkim.

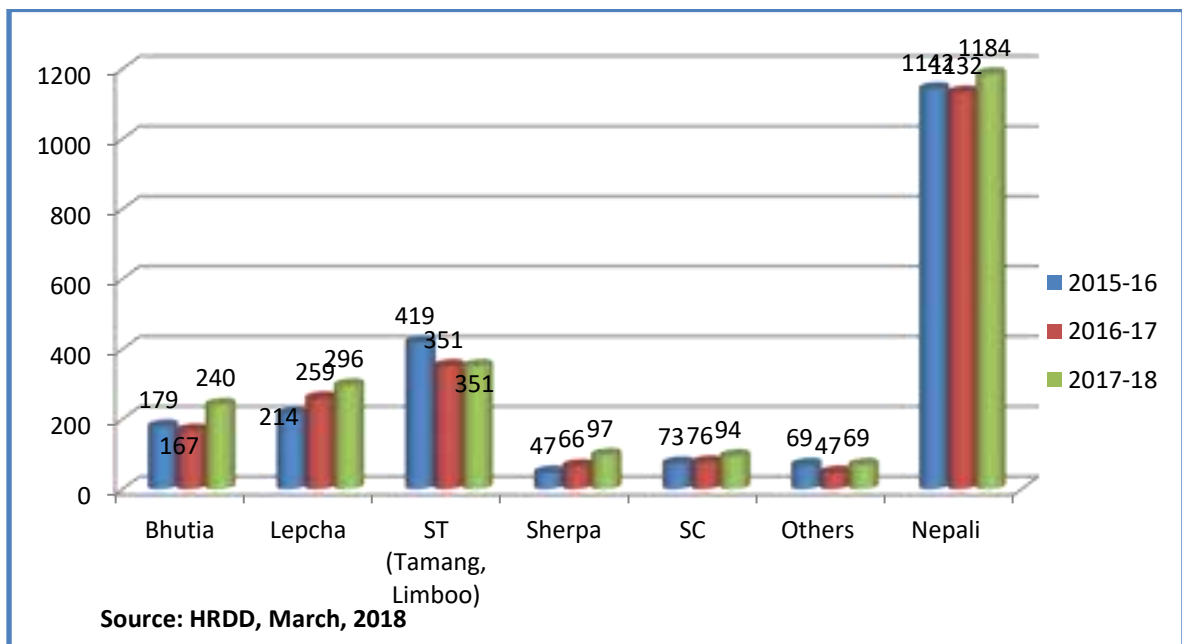
Table 7.3.5. Enrolment of Students in Government Colleges, (2015-2018)

Year	Bhutia	Lepcha	ST (Tamang, Limboo)	Sherpa	SC	Others	Nepali
2015-16	179	214	419	47	73	69	1142
2016-17	167	259	351	66	76	47	1132
2017-18	240	296	351	97	94	69	1184

Source: Human Resource Development Department, March, 2018.

The study on the enrolment of students in government colleges in Sikkim in 2015-18 shows less enrolment of Bhutia students. It is assumed and also evident from the case studies conducted in three Bhutia dominated villages; Tathangchen, Tashiding and Lachung that most of the Bhutia families send their children outside the state for pursuing higher education.

Fig.7.3.3. Enrolment of students in the last 3 years in Government colleges, (2015-2018)



The enrolment of students in 2015-18 in Bachelor Degree Courses has been reflected amongst all caste groups. The increase in the enrolment among the Bhutia is noticed to be the highest with 179 in 2015-16 to 240 in 2017-18. The enrolment of students

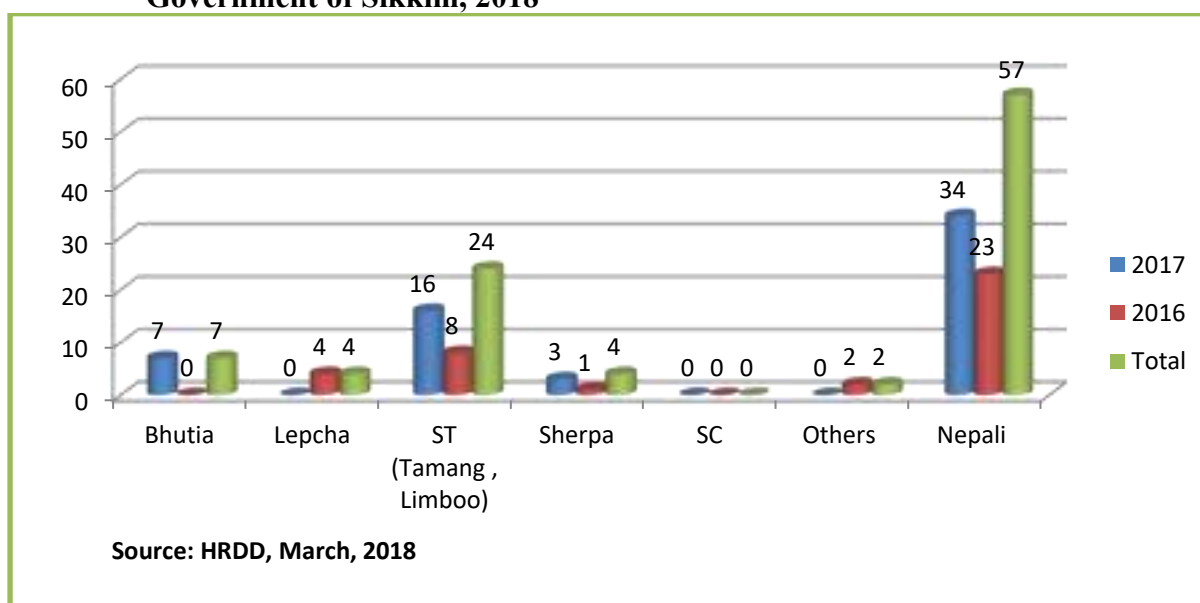
among Lepcha community has increased from 214 to 296, Sherpas increased from 47 to 97, Scheduled Castes from 73 to 94 and Nepalese increased from 1142 to 1184. Drop in the numerical figure among ST (Tamang, Limboo) has been noticed from 419 in 2015-16 to 351 in 2017-18.

Table 7.3.6. Enrolment in PG Courses in Higher Education Institutions under Government of Sikkim, 2018

Year	Bhutia	Lepcha	ST (Tamang, Limboo)	Sherpa	SC	Others	Nepali
2017	7	0	16	3	0	0	34
2016	0	4	8	1	0	2	23
Total	7	4	24	4	0	2	57

Source: Human Resource Development Department, March, 2018.

Fig. 7.3.4. Enrolment in PG Courses in Higher Education Institutions under Government of Sikkim, 2018



Unlike the B. A Courses, entry to Post graduate courses is minimal. The study relies only on the statistics of P.G Courses under Directorate of Higher Education, HRDD, Government of Sikkim. The students enrolled in other private institutes and universities of the state is not considered in the study.

There is a small share of students enrolled at PG courses under Directorate of Higher Education, HRDD, Government of Sikkim. Nepali students are the highest in both the years opting for post graduate courses. Second is the ST group with total of 16 students and Bhutia students' amounts to around 7 only.

Table. 7.3.7.

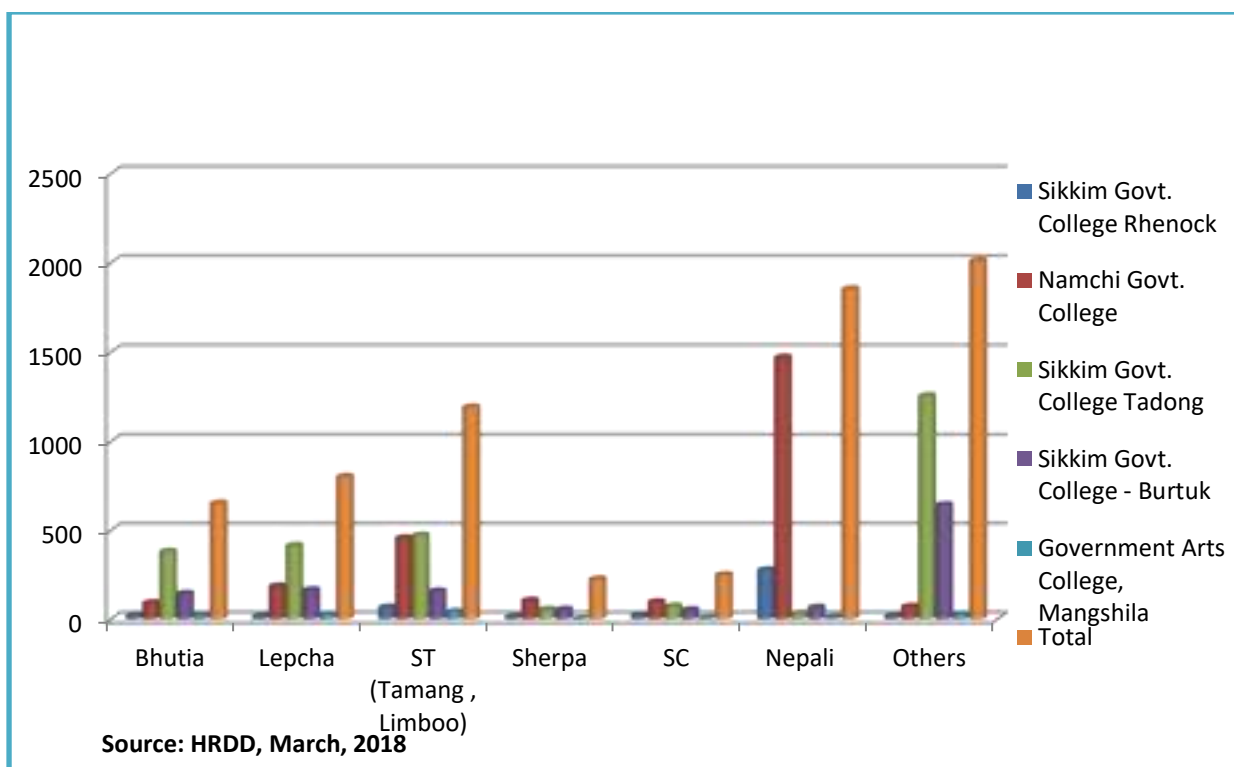
Community wise Enrolment of Students in Higher Education, 2017-18

Name of the institute	Bhutia	Lepcha	ST(Tamang, Limboo)	Sherpa	SC	Nepali	Others
Sikkim Govt. College Rhenock	16	14	66	11	22	276	15
Namchi Govt. College	91	185	456	105	97	1470	71
Sikkim Govt. College Tadong	380	413	471	53	72	31	1254
Sikkim Govt. College - Burtuk	144	164	157	54	52	65	643
Government Arts College, Mangshila	21	26	41	2	6	10	27
Total	652	802	1191	225	249	1852	2010

Source: Human Resource Development Department, March, 2018

Fig. 7.3.5.

Community wise Enrolment of Students in Higher Education, 2017-2018



Looking at the community wise enrolment of students in the government colleges in Sikkim in 2017-18, the highest number of students (2010) are represented from the 'Others' category. 1852 students belonged to Nepali community, 1191 are ST students. The Lepchas were 802 while the Bhutias had 652 students enrolled.

7.3.2. Community-wise Language Teachers

Along with the study on community wise distribution of population by level of education and literacy, the study particularly highlights the community wise distribution of teachers under Education department, Government of Sikkim. The study focuses on the representation of Bhutias in the education service as language teachers in the category of Primary, Graduate and Post Graduate teachers. Before we enter into the discussion on language teachers, it is pertinent to have brief discussion on the language policy in education in Sikkim.

India, as a diverse country with multiculturalism at its core has a linguistic diversity that is both varied and unique. With 22 official languages along with English, there is a challenge in protecting and preserving the language of the ethnic people.

The National Education policies of 1968 and 1986 emphasizes the development of regional languages while also using them as a medium of instruction in education. Language education in Sikkim is presently guided by the 3-language policy. Preservation of local languages was done with the first Sikkim Official Languages Bill of 1977 for Lepcha, Bhutia and Nepali. The same Act was amended in 1981 which included Limboo in the state language category. The year 1995 saw the amendment of Sikkim Official Language Act, 1977 for the recognition and inclusion of seven other languages as state languages: Rai, Newari, Gurung, Manger, Sherpa, Sunuwar and Tamang. In total eleven languages were included in the state language list.

English being the first language, the state recognised 11 local languages as second language in all Government schools. All the vernacular languages are introduced as second language in Class I along with English. A third language, Hindi, is also introduced in Class I. However, there is no provision for continuation of the study of all local languages up to university. Of the 11 local languages only 4 languages (Nepali, Bhutia, Lepcha and Limboo) are taught at the university level.

Presented below is the list of second languages introduced in the school education system under various language bills by the state.

Table 7.3.8. List of State Recognised Regional Languages

Sl.No	2 nd language in schools	Year of language bill passed	Level up to which it is taught
1	Lepcha	1977	University
2	Bhutia	1977	University
3	Nepali	1977	University
4	Limbu	1981	University
5	Newar	1995	School
6	Gurung	1995	School
7	Rai	1995	School
8	Mangar	1995	School
9	Tamang	1995	School
10	Sherpa	1995	School
11	Sunuwar	1996	School

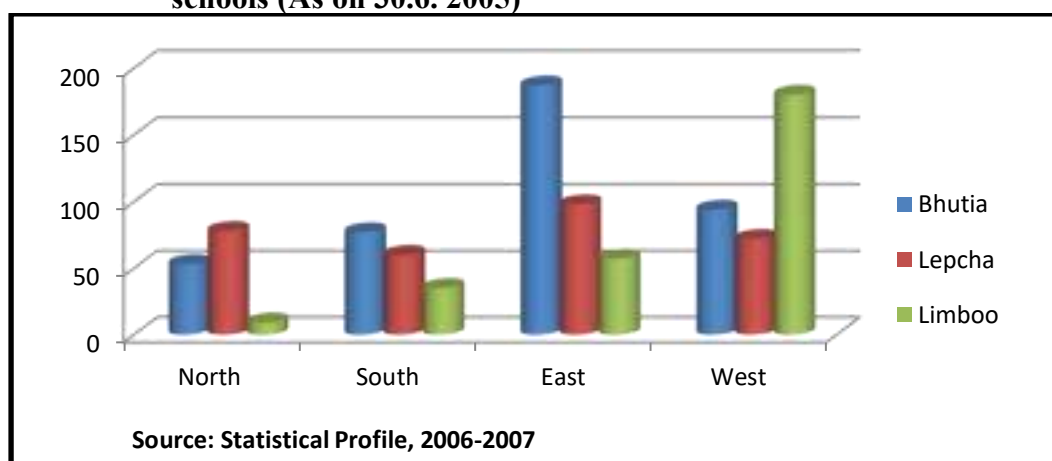
With the introduction of vernacular languages in school education, it can be assumed that Sikkim has been successful in its implementation of the 3-language policy. Accordingly provision for the appointment of language teachers are made for the eleven languages introduced as vernacular in schools.

Table 7.3.9. District wise Number of Language Teacher in Government Schools (As on 30.6. 2005)

Language teacher	North	South	East	West	State
Bhutia	53	77	187	94	411
Lepcha	78	60	98	72	308
Limboo	09	35	57	180	274

Source: Statistical Profile: 2006-07

Fig. 7.3.6. District wise Number of Language Teacher in Government schools (As on 30.6. 2005)



The study on the language teachers, especially the three distinct ethnic groups- Bhutia, Lepcha and Limboo shows that in 2005 the Bhutias outnumbered the other two communities. Language teachers here means those teachers teaching respective languages as primary teachers, graduate teachers and as post graduate teachers in government schools and colleges. The number of Bhutia language teachers was 411, where Lepchas were 308 and Limboo language teachers were 274 in 2005-2006. As language teachers, Bhutias is in the lead. District wise distribution of language teachers reveals that Bhutia language teachers are concentrated more in East district.

Table 7.3.10. Category wise Language Teachers –2017

Year	Category of teachers	Bhutia	Lepcha	Limboo	Rai	Manger	Tamang	Gurung	Sherpa	Mukhia	Newar	Total
2017	Post Graduate Teacher	23	08	10	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	41
	Graduate Teacher	70	45	48	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	163
	Primary Teacher	329	275	221	14	06	08	10	10	04	08	885
	Total	422	328	279	14	06	08	10	10	04	08	1089

Source: Language Section, Human Resource Development Department-2017.

The study reveals that in total there exists 1089 language teachers in 2017, out of which 422 are Bhutia teachers, 328 are Lepchas, 279 are Limboos and followed by other communities. Bhutia represents 38.7%, while Lepchas are 30% and Limboos 25.6% as language teachers. Considerable increase in the number of language teachers is seen amongst all groups.

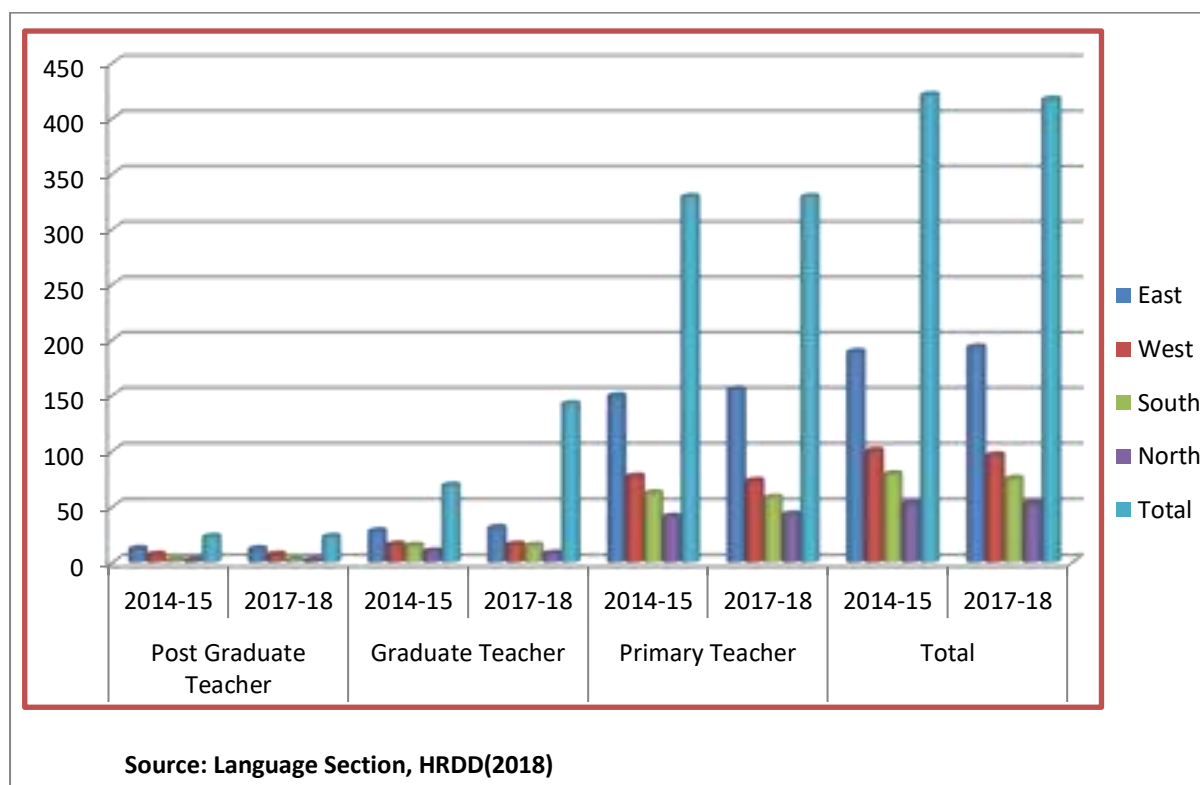
Table 7.3.11. District and Level-wise Bhutia Language Teachers (2014-2015 & 2017-18)

District	Post Graduate Teacher		Graduate Teacher		Primary Teacher		Total	
	2014-15	2017-18	2014-15	2017-18	2014-15	2017-18	2014-15	2017-18
East	12	12	28	31	149	155	189	193
West	07	7	16	16	77	73	100	96
South	02	2	15	15	62	58	79	75

North	02	2	10	8	41	43	53	53
Total	23	23	69	142	329	329	421	417

Source: Language Section, Human Resource Development Department-2018.

Fig.7.3.7. District-wise Bhutia Language Teachers (2014-2015 & 2017-2018)



Among the Bhutia language teachers of total 417 in 2017-18, the highest number (193) are serving in schools of East district, 96 teachers are in West district, 75 in South district and 53 in North district.

Table 7.3.12. Community-wise Number of Language Teachers, 2019

District	Bhutia	Lepcha	Limbu	Gurung	Tamang	Rai	Sherpa	Sunuwar/Mukhia	Mangar	Nepali	Newar	Total
East	180	120	56	10	7	21	6	1	5	80	8	494
West	92	92	179	15	12	24	15	0	13	58	3	503
South	62	80	58	16	14	35	14	4	12	45	0	340
North	50	84	14	0	0	0	3	0	0	22	0	173
Total	384	376	307	41	33	80	38	5	30	205	11	1510

Source: Education Department, Govt. of Sikkim, 2019

The recent data on the language teachers in government schools in Sikkim indicates that from the total 1510 language teachers, Bhutias represent the highest number with 384, out of which 180 are in East district, 92 in West, 62 in South and 50 teachers in North district. Lepchas have total of 376 language teachers, 120 in East, 92 in West, 80 in South and 84 in North districts respectively. Limboo comes next to Bhutia and Lepcha with a total of 307 language teachers distributed in all four districts. East district has 56 Limboo language teachers, West district has the highest with 159 teachers, South district has 58 in number and 14 are in North district. Nepali language teachers are 205 in total, 80 in East, 58 in West, 45 in South and 22 in North districts. The reason for language teachers of other communities like Gurung, Tamang, Rai, Sunuwar, Sherpa, Manger and Newar are less in numbers is due to the reason that these languages were added in school much later than the other three ethnic groups (Bhutia, Lepcha, Limboo and Nepali).

7.3.3. Community-wise Teachers in Higher Education Sector

All the communities in the state have their share and have been contributing to the higher education sector as well. Almost all communities have their representation as teachers in various colleges in Sikkim. The information obtained from the Directorate of Higher Education as on February, 2018, records total of 312 teachers, including both appointed on regular and ad-hoc basis. The highest percentage is amongst the Nepali community with 55 per cent and teachers belonging to others categories. Out of total 312 teachers, Bhutias alone make 23.3 percent of teachers in higher educational institutes in the state.

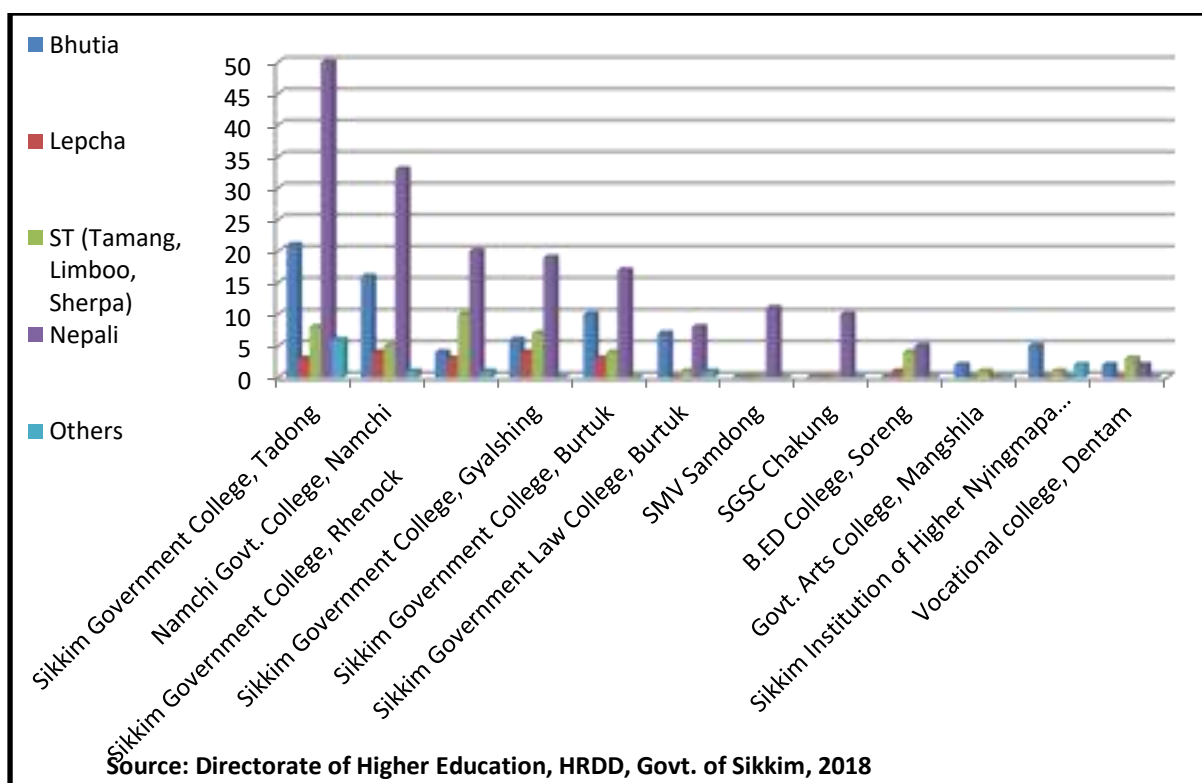
Table 7.3.13. Community-wise Teachers Teaching at Higher education Institutions, as on February, 2018.

Name of the institution	Bhutia	Lepcha	ST-(Tamang, Limboo, Sherpa)	Nepali	Others	Total
Sikkim Government College, Tadong	21	3	8	50	6	88
Namchi Govt. College, Namchi	16	4	5	33	1	59
Sikkim Government College, Rhenock	4	3	10	20	1	38
Sikkim Government College, Gyalsing	6	4	7	19	0	36

Sikkim Government College, Burtuk	10	3	4	17	0	34
Sikkim Government Law College, Burtuk	7	0	1	8	1	17
SMV Samdong	0	0	0	11	0	11
SGSC Chakung	0	0	0	7-3 Guest Faculty	0	10
B.ED College, Soreng	0	1	4	5	0	10
Govt. Arts College, Mangshila	2	0	1	0	0	3
Sikkim Institution of Higher Nyingmapa Studies, Pangthang	5	0	1	0	2	8
Vocational college, Dentam	2	0	3	2	0	7
Total	73 (23%)	18 (6%)	34 (10.6%)	175 (54.5%)	11 (3.4%)	321

Source: Directorate of Higher Education, HRDD, Govt. of Sikkim, 2018

Fig.7.3.8. Community-wise Teacher Teaching at Higher Educational Institutions, as on Feb, 2018



Nepalese are ahead of all other communities with 54.5 % as teachers in the higher education institutes. Bhutia represents 23% of the total teachers, followed by other STs

(Limboo, Tamang and Sherpa) with 10.6%, Lepchas with 6% and 'Others' representing 3.4 % of teachers.

Sikkim Government College, renamed as Nar Bahadur Bhandari Degree College in 2018, Tadong, is the oldest and the biggest college covering all three streams of humanities, science and commerce in the state. Hence, it becomes obvious that the number of teachers is also in higher side. The college alone represents 27.4% of teachers in higher education institutes, out of which 23.9% are Bhutias, 3.4% are Lepchas, 9.09% are STs, 56.8% are Nepalis and 6.8% belongs to 'others' category.

After Nar Bahadur Bhandari Degree College, Namchi Government College has the next highest number of teachers with 55.9% Nepalese, 21.1% of Bhutias, 8.5% of STs, 6.8% of Lepchas and 1.7% from 'Others' category.

Sikkim Government College, Rhenock has the next higher number of teachers. Nepalese represent the highest with 52.6%, 26.3% are STs, 10.5% are Bhutias, 7.9 % are Lepchas and 2.6% belongs to 'Others' category. In other colleges like Sikkim Government College, Gyalsing, Sikkim Government College, Burtuk have the next higher number of teachers with Nepalese as the highest followed by Bhutias and others. Sikkim Institution of Higher Nyingmapa Studies, Pangthang is the college which has the highest number of Bhutia teachers with total five out of eight teachers.

There has been increase in number of schools, teachers and students to a great extent in Sikkim. Various figures presented in the chapter reveals this growth in the education sector. The analysis of the study presents that there is an increasing trend in enrolment among all communities in the higher educational institutes in the state.

Sikkim's post-merger period picture of education system and participation of Bhutias shows that even after 30 years of statehood, Bhutias have quite an impressive representation in education sector. The numerical growth of Bhutias, as students and teachers in schools and higher educational sector reflects their greater representation and contribution in this sector. However, along with Bhutias, Lepchas also have more representation in schools and colleges as language teachers. The chapter has tried to study not only the improvement in number of schools, students and teachers, it has also tried to study comparison of the existing communities and their growth in education.

CHAPTER VIII

Case Studies

The case study on occupation and socio economic status of Bhutias is carried out in three districts – North, East and West. It intends to understand the occupational pattern and socio-economic status between the generation of the Bhutias respondent families of three Bhutia dominant villages of Sikkim i.e. 1) Lachung in North Sikkim 2) Tashiding in west Sikkim and 3) Tathangchen in East Sikkim. Further classification of the sample is presented as follows.

Table 8.1.1 Distribution of Households in the Study Villages

Sl. No	Name of Village	No. of households surveyed
1	Lachung (North Sikkim)	5
2	Tashiding (West Sikkim)	5
3	Tathangchen (East Sikkim)	5

For the present case study five influential families each from 3 selected villages from three different districts (East, North and West) have been taken. A brief description on these three villages namely; Lachung (North), Tathangchen (East Sikkim) and Tashiding (West Sikkim) is presented for reference.

Occupational mobility is generally the look into an inter- generational occupational change, the occupational changes from older generation to newer generation. This section examines the occupational changes over a period of time which may be inferred as inter-generational occupational changes.

8. 1. Lachung in North Sikkim

Lachung village is a valley located in the North-eastern part of Sikkim. Total geographical area of Lachung is 750 sq. km. It is located at the altitude of 8,858'. The valley is approximately 125 kilometres from the capital city, Gangtok. Total area of the village is 2805.82 hectares, with total 401 households. Total population of Lachung is 2495 persons, of which 1796 are males and 699 are females (Census of India, 2011).

Lachung valley has 115.2260 hectares of land as Apple orchard/field, 2074 hectares of land belongs to Sikkim Sarkar, 11.7400 hectares of land is possessed by *Gumpa*

(monastery) and 68.7910 hectares of land is *banjo* (wasteland) land. About only 40 percent of the valley area is utilised for cultivation (Land Revenue and Disaster Management, Chungthang, Government of Sikkim, August, 2019).

Lachung which form part of this study is inhabited by the Bhutias who are known as Lachungpas. The Bhutias of Lachung are the descendants of Tibetan immigrants from Hah and Paro in Bhutan. They call themselves of the *Lopon Lhumdrub* caste.

The actual date and the period of their coming to Sikkim is not clear but it is assumed that they have migrated to Sikkim during the phases of Bhutanese invasions of Sikkim. As history spells that the Bhutanese invaded Sikkim in 1676 (Bhasin, 2012). The language of Bhutias of Lachung is called *den-jong-ke*, a Tibetan dialect which is spoken in Ha valley of Bhutan. The dialect is quite different from the dialect spoken by the Bhutias of other parts of Sikkim.

There exist few differences in the culture and tradition of Bhutias of Lachung and the Bhutias of other parts of Sikkim. The first difference found is that the Bhutias from Lachung celebrate '*Losaar*', instead of '*Losoong*', which is celebrated by Bhutias of other parts of Sikkim. '*Losaar*' and '*Losoong*' are significant festivals of Bhutias in Sikkim for welcoming new year. '*Losaar*' is celebrated in the month of February and '*Losoong*' is celebrated in December.

The Bhutias of Lachung followed a mixed agro-pastoral and trade economy. It means that marginal agriculture was practiced due to the mountainous location and cold climatic environment. So to sustain and supplement their economy they indulged in pastoralism and marginal trading activities across the borders. Historically, Lachung was a trading post between Sikkim and Tibet. However, indulgence in cross border trading has ended with the closing of the Tibetan border in 1962. Now the Lachungpas have diverted their engagement towards tourism as Lachung now has become the most prominent tourist destination in Sikkim. Today tourism is the main sources of economy of the valley.

So we can say, agriculture, pasturage and tourism are the main occupations of the Bhutia people of Lachung.

The entire Lachung valley is divided into three blocks; *Shertchu*, *Singring* and *Beechchu*. These three villages have their cultivable lands at *Khedum*, *Leema* and *Lothen*.

Khedum, *Leema* are agricultural land and *Lothen* is a pasture land. With this the Bhutias of Lachung have been able to carry agriculture and pasturage simultaneously. The total cultivable land of these three places is about 13-16 hectares. These lands are located at lower altitude (i.e. five kilometres away) from Lachung bazar. The households of *Shertchu* and *Singring* have agricultural land at *Khedum* and *Lothen*, while the households of *Beechchu* have cultivable land in *Leema and Khedum*. Maize, wheat, barley, potatoes, radishes, peas, cabbages and other vegetables are grown. Potato and cabbage is grown in ample where surplus is sold out in the market.

As mentioned above, pasturage is also one of the primary activities that the Bhutias of Lachung are involved. Lachung has common forest and pasture land to carry pastoralism. Common grazing and forest land enable them to further their activities without any hindrances. Yak, sheep and goat rearing are part of pastoralism. The yaks are used for producing milk products, goats and sheeps are kept mainly for wool and meat.

Today tourism has flourished in Lachung and has become a prominent lucrative sector for the Bhutias of Lachung. As the Lachung valley which was a traditional village, has now opened to tourism, the traditional houses are being replaced by new houses and concrete hotels.

One of the significant features of Lachung is the *Dzumsa*; a traditional administrative system. According to history of Sikkim, the institution of *Dzumsa* was established during the reign of Thutop Namgyal, the ninth Chogyal of Sikkim. In general, *Dzumsa* means a 'gathering place'. The institution was vested with administrative powers and acted as general council of villagers. *Dzumsa* is headed by '*Pipon*' or Village chief. During the Bhutia kingdom, *pipons* were vested with the function of delegating the powers of the king (Chhetri & Lal, 2018).

The *Dzumsa* is composed of *pipon*, *gen-me*, *chepas* and *gyapon*. It comprises of two *pipon* (headmen), two *gyapans* and two *cheap* (store- keeper assistants). The election of *cheпа* was included later in the composition of *Dzumsa*.

The functions of *Dzumsa* includes land holding, resource management and community organisation. The *Dzumsa* also has judicial role to play. The responsibility of implementation and enforcement of rules is with the *Dzumsa*. All people abides by the

rules set by *Dzumsa*. Two *pipons* are elected, one as *Khedum Pipon* and the other as *Lhema Pipon*.

The institution of *Dzumsa* remained intact during the transition of political set up in 1970's. Administrative reorganization of Sikkim introduced the panchayat system of local government which was not imposed in Lachen and Lachung. The institution of *Dzumsa* was officially recognised in 1985 and continues to function even today.

The elections of *Pipon* of *Dzumsa* takes place every year. It happens in the lunar New Year i.e December just after the monastic mask dances. Earlier the *Pipons* were nominated by the heads of the households. Now the *Pipon* is elected by the Bhutias of Lachung. So far there is no women chosen to become a *Pipon*. A reasonable answer was provided by the ex-pipon on the question of 'why women do not have the provision of becoming a pipon?'. According to him, "women are not considered to be fit because Lachung being a hilly terrain and cold place, sometimes they have to travel at night in difficult situations like funeral, sickness, and have to walk through jungles and too far off places for administrative purposes. In such cases women may not be able to travel alone and perform duties accordingly".

Lachung, Namgay Ongdi Bhutia, an *ex-pipon* (ex-village head) says that any benefits received from the state government is distributed equally among all the households. The *Pipon* supervises the distribution of the benefits. Anything that is excess or left out is deposited for public use, like construction of foot paths, maintenance of roads, etc.

8.2.Tashiding in West Sikkim

The word 'Tashiding' is a Tibetan word, 'tashi' means blessing and 'ding' refers to land or place. So Tashiding means a 'blessed land'. Tashiding village is located in West district in Sikkim, situated 27 km away from the West district headquarter, Gyalzing. It is located at the elevation of 4090 feet and lies at 27⁰ 17' 00'' north latitude and 88⁰ 20' 00'' east longitude. Tashiding covers the geographical area of about 663.11 hectares. It has 281 households and 1478 population (762 male and 716 female).

The total revenue block of Tashiding is 663.1140 hectares. Tashiding has total 403.5460 hectares of agricultural land, 167.7420 hectares of forest (*khasmal*) land, 87.0120 hectares of waste land (*banjo jamin*) and 111.1280 hectares of land belonging

to Tashiding Monastery (Land Revenue and Disaster management, Government of Sikkim, Geyzing, West Sikkim, January, 2019).

This village falls under Gyalshing sub-division and well connected by roads from Gyalshing and Yuksom. According to Buddhist scriptures, it was in Tashiding that Guru Padmasambhava blessed Sikkim as sacred land in the 8th century. Tashiding is known for one of the oldest monasteries, built in 1651 by Ngadak Sempa Chembo. The monastery is an important monastery belonging to the Nyingmapa Buddhist Sect. It is also famous for *Thong-wa-Rang-dol* (holy Chorten), meaning ‘savior by mere sight’. Another important feature of this monastery is *Bumchu*, the annual sacred water festival. The place of tourist interest are the Silnon Monastery, *Tso-Nim-Dawa* (Pokhari Dara), the ruins of Pao-Hongri Monastery and Phamrong waterfall. Also, it is famous for sacred caves; Kasturi Orar (Cave) and Lhari Nyingphuk (Gazetter of Sikkim, 2013).

8.3.Tathangchen in East Sikkim

Tathangchen village is located in Gangtok Tehsil of East district in Sikkim. Tathangchen is derived from the word ‘Ta’ which means horse and ‘thang’ means grazing place for horses. Since Tathangchen was just below the royal palace, it was a grazing land/ place for the horses belonging to royal palace and its subordinates.

It is situated at 2 km away from the capital town, Gangtok, which is both district and sub-district headquarter of Tathangchen village. The total geographical area is 521.5 hectares with latitude of 27.3287 and longitude 88.61823. the elevation (in meters) is 1654. Total population of the village is about 936 persons of which 480 male and 456 females with total 209 households (Census of India, 2011).

Total land area of Tathangchen is 191.0350 hectares, where 11.0460 hectares of land is paddy field, 85.6120 hectares of land is forest land, 15.5900 hectares is cultivated land, 3.7240 hectares of land is banjo (waste) land and 75.0630 hectares of land is Sarkari land which includes footpaths, kholsa, khasmal etc. Situated so near to Gangtok, it enjoys almost all the main facilities and people living there are also attached to Gangtok professionally.

Tathangchen village is sparsely populated as compared to other two Bhutia dominated villages considered for the study. The Bhutias of Tathangchen holds both cultivable and non-cultivable land.

Table 8.1.2. Village-wise Distribution of Area, Households and Population of the three Villages under Case Study

Village	Area of village in hectares	Number of Households	Population		
			Persons	Male	Female
Lachung (North)	2805.82	401	2495	1796	699
Tashiding (West)	663.11	281	1478	762	716
Tathangchen (East)	521.50	209	936	480	456

Source: Census of India, 2011, Sikkim, Series 12, Part XII-B.

The distribution of areas of villages, number of households and population illustrates that Lachung has the largest geographical area with 2805.82 hectares of land. Further, it has the highest number of households (401) and population (2495 persons) in comparison to the other two villages. Tashiding on the other hand has the second largest area of land with 663.11 hectares, 281 households and 1478 population, of which 762 are male and 716 are female. Lastly, Tathangchen has the lowest area of land with 521.50 hectares, comprising of 209 number of households and population of total 936 persons; 480 male and 456 females. Further, it reflects that the percentage of female population is lower than the male population in all three villages.

Table 8.1.3. Village-wise Distribution of Literates of the Three Villages under Case Study

Village	Illiterate			Literate		
	Persons	Male	Female	Persons	Male	Female
Lachung (North)	696 (27.9)	312 (44.8)	384 (55.1)	1799 (72.1)	1484 (82.5)	315 (17.5)
Tashiding (West)	480 (32.5)	202 (42.1)	278 (57.9)	998 (67.5)	560 (56.1)	438 (43.9)
Tathangchen (East)	227 (24.3)	91 (40.1)	136 (59.9)	709 (75.7)	389 (54.9)	320 (45.1)

Source: Census of India, 2011, Sikkim, Series 12, Part XII-B.

Tathangchen has the highest literacy rate with 75.7 per cent. Lachung accounts to 72.1 percent of literates and Tashiding has 67.5 per cent of literates. Highest literacy rate is among the male population. The female literacy rates of the villages are less but Lachung has the comparatively the least with only 17.5 female literates.

The figures also reveal that Tashiding has the highest percent of illiterates with 32.5 per cent. Lachung has 27.9 per cent of population as illiterates and Tathangchen has the lowest percentage of 24.3 percent. All the three villages have female population with the highest number of illiterates.

Table 8.1.4. Village-wise Distribution of Workers, Cultivators and Agricultural Labourers.

Village	Total workers			Main Workers			Marginal workers			Cultivators			Agricultural Labourers		
	Persons	Male	Female	Persons	Male	Female	Persons	Male	Female	Persons	Male	Female	Persons	Male	Female
Lachung (North)	1952	1525	427	1707	1445	262	245	80	165	68	14	54	7	2	5
	78.2	78.1	21.9	68.4	84.7	15.3	9.8	32.7	67.3	2.7	20.6	79.4	0.2	28.8	71.4
Tashiding (West)	650	412	238	623	402	221	27	10	17	4	2	2	16	8	8
	44	63.4	36.6	42.6	64.5	35.5	1.8	37.3	63	0.3	50	50	1.1	50	50
Tathangchen (East)	340	253	87	314	243	71	26	10	16	3	1	2	-	-	-
	37	74.4	25.6	36.4	77.4	22.6	2.8	38.5	62	0.3	33	67	-	-	-

Source: Census of India, 2011, Sikkim, Series 12, Part XII-B.

Lachung has highest workers as main workers, marginal workers, cultivators and agricultural labourers. Total workers in Lachung is 78.2%, Tashiding has 44% and 37 % in Tathangchen. Female population are less represented as compared to male counterpart in all categories of workers, except as cultivators and agricultural labourers. All three villages have the least percent of people engaged as cultivators and agricultural labourers. The major factor for such decline is the engagement of people in other service sectors, mostly in government service in case of Tathangchen and Tashiding and spread of tourism industry in Lachung.

8.4. Findings of the Case Study (Village-wise)

The finding of the study has been divided under three sub-head as per the respective district of the respondent; North, East and West respectively. As it is mentioned earlier these case studies intends to study the inter-generational occupational and socio-economic pattern of the respective Bhutia families. The study evolved over the family background, their occupation, educational status and land holdings of three generations of a Bhutia family. The respondents for the case study were the middle generation, and throws light their socio-economic backgrounds and their parents families. The findings of the same are presented below.

8.4.1. Tashiding -West Sikkim

Case Study 1

Name: Sonam Wangchuck Bhutia

Sex: Male

Age: 54 years

Marital status: Married

Education: Monastic education

Occupation: Monk

Sonam Wangchuck is a Buddhist Monk by occupation and is also a nominated Chairman of the Ecclesiastical Department, Government of Sikkim. He is the first son of their parents and has four siblings.

Sonam Wangchuk's Father was a monk of Pemayangtse Monastery, and is 93 years old. His mother is 88 years old. His father owned around 6 acres of land at Tashiding. Cardamom was the major crop that was cultivated during his time. The family depended upon the income generated through cardamom cultivation and some income through monk's services by his father. His mother was a homemaker and had no specific income to contribute to the family income.

Both Sonam Wangchuk's father and grandfather received monastic education. The income of his grandfather depended upon the monastic services and from the landed property where cardamom cultivation was prevalent.

Sonam Wangchuck being the eldest son did not undergo any formal education except for the monastic education he received as a monk.

His second brother studied engineering and at present is serving the Government of Sikkim as Superintendent Engineer. His third brother is a farmer and lives in the ancestral village at Tashiding. Fourth brother is no more alive and fifth brother is married and settled in America.

Sonam Wangchuk has four children; 2 sons and 2 daughters. All the children are qualified upto master level but not employed. They have received their higher studies from outside Sikkim.

The family has more than 5 acres of landholdings in the village. Basically, cultivation of cardamom has been the major output from the land.

Over the conversation it was found that he and his family is having a good living condition and good income as compared to the living condition during his grandfather and father's time. All his children received good education. When asked about the economic status of Bhutias in west Sikkim, Sonam Wangchuk responded that 'there are still few Bhutia families whose living condition is not very good in terms of occupation and income. But, compared to pre-merger socio-economic status of Bhutias, the life style and condition has changed and improved in the post-merger period'.

Case study 2

Name: Zamyang Bhutia

Sex: Male

Age: 67 years

Marital status: Married

Education: Class X pass from Darjeeling High School

Occupation: Business

Zamyang Bhutia originally from Gyangyap is the third son of Thinley Bhutia, married to Nima Lhamu from Gyangyap. He left Gangyap and started business at Tashiding. He bought land and started hotel business and petrol pump. His wife was one time elected Zilla panchayat (2013-17) from Sikkim Democratic Front party.

Zamyang's grandfather was known as Chathak Rimpoche who came from Tibet, Kham-Goluk in 1917. He fled from Tibet as there were clashes and roamed through Sikkim and Kalimpong and finally settled at Gyangyap. Married to a Lepcha woman from Gyangyap, he had five sons and three daughters;

Sons;

- i. Hisshey Nima (Rimpoche) was unmarried who settled at Ma Tshagi and finally settled at upper Risum, Gyangyap spending his life mediating.
- ii. Thinley Bhutia
- iii. Yinden Bhutia
- iv. Palden Bhutia
- v. Necho Bhutia who is now settled at two places, Gangyap and Tashiding.

Daughters

- i. Ani Jet,
- ii. Dup Doma and
- iii. Ani Kanchi

Zamyang's grandfather bought land from people of Gyangyap which at present is used for construction of the Monastery. The land type was both cultivating and Forest lands. Mainly cardamom was cultivated in the land.

Zamgyang's father was Thinley Bhutia, the second son of Chathak Rimpoche. Thinley, Zamyang's father was a farmer by occupation. He had seven sons 7 sons:
Pema Tenzing: The first son lived till 57 years of age. He was a farmer. He had cardamom field gifted by the Chogyal. He has son Palden Bhutia, who is at present Divisional Engineer at Power Department, Govt. of Sikkim. Palden Bhutia has a son Rigsel Bhutia who is studying at Tashi Nmgyal Academy, Gangtok at present. He is also the father of two daughters.

Dup Tsh. Bhutia: The second son of Thinley Bhutia, brother of Zamyang Bhutia is not educated. He succumbed to death at the age of 49 and survived by a son Sonam Ongdi, working as RDA at Daramdin. Dup Tshering like his father is settled at Gangyap. He owns land of about 28 hectares which is a cardamom field. Addition to this he has agricultural land where cultivation of maize, paddy, wheat are grown. He said that income from this used to be more during his father's time but now cultivation has come down as no one works in the field. Dup Tshering has 2 daughters:

- i. Chonum Bhutia who lives in the village and does not work,
- ii. Tshering Doma is a teacher.

Zamyang Bhutia is the third son of Thinley Bhutia, (to whom case study is conducted). He worked as Class 1 A contractor but now is looking after the business - hotel and petrol pump at Tashiding. Zamyang Bhutia has two daughters;

i) Hissey Doma, who did her schooling from TNA and higher studies from Tamil Nadu. She is now working as Junior Engineer and is married,

ii) Tseten Choki is the second daughter who also did her schooling from TNA and higher studies from Simla. At present, she is a Dentist at Tashiding Primary Health Centre as a voluntary job.

Say Say Bhutia: The fourth son was a farmer and lived till the age of 49. He has a son Sonam Wangchuk working as Additional Director in Welfare Department, Govt. of Sikkim. Sonam Wangchuk has 2 daughters.

Lendup Bhutia: The fifth son is 55 years old. He is basically a farmer but also is engaged in business. He has one son, Soyang Bhutia who is studying Computer Diploma at ACTC, Burdang, Singtam, Sikkim.

Lhendup Bhutia has three daughters:

1. Renchen Ongmu is a graduate from Sikkim Government College, Gangtok and is working as a teacher.

2. The second daughter has completed engineering and the third daughter has studied Architecture from Punjab.

Norgil Tsong Bhutia; the sixth son of Thinley Bhutia is 53 years old. He pursued his education from Darjeeling. Now is working as a graduate teacher and settled at Gangyap. He has one son studying at Manjushri Public School, Sikkim in class XI.

Namgyal Bhutia; the seventh son of Thinley Bhutia is 50 years of age and is unmarried. He is working as a graduate teacher at Tashiding. Tsheten Bhutia is the only daughter of Thinley Bhutia who is unmarried and settled at Gangyap.

Case study 3

Name: Dawa Gyatso Bhutia

Sex: Male

Age: 62 years

Marital status: Married

Education: Graduate, studied at Tinkitam upto class 2, remaining schooling at St. Roberts High School and graduate from

Occupation: Civil servant

Dawa Gyatso Bhutia's fore fathers came from Tibet and settled at Tinkitam, south Sikkim but Dawa Gyatso Bhutia came and settled at Tashiding from 1980.

His grandfather came from Tibet and initially settled at Mo-Chu valley in Bhutan for some time but had to leave Bhutan for some reasons. He settled in Maling for some time and finally came to Temi, in South Sikkim. His Great grandfather was into government job as Chowkidar in Chogyals rest house at Martam Bunglow, South Sikkim. His grandfather was known as Machen Mabepa who shifted from Temi and settled at Tinkitam. He had 2 sons;

i. Nima Tshering, the father of Dawa Gyamtso was married to Pema Phuti Khampa. He was 52 years old when he died. He was a farmer who cultivated products like paddy , maize. He inherited cultivated agricultural land from his father. He had three sons; 1) first son named Palden Bhutia, who at present is working in Assam. 2) Passang Tshering, the second son who studied at Tinkitam Government School till class IV and then went to St. Roberts school at Darjeeling for further studies. Now he works in the department of education as UDC. He has two sons- Sangay Pintso, who works as Hawaldar in Fire department, and has one son and one daughter studying. The second son, Topdent Pintso is married and is recruited in the Indian Reserve Battalion force. Has one son and one daughter studying at Kyedikhang school, Sikkim. 3) Third son of Nima Thering was Dawa Gyamtso the respondent of the case study.

Dawa Gyatso Bhutia's, He got into govt. job in 1996 as Panchayat Inspector in the department of RDD.

In 1992 he was selected into Sikkim Civil Service and appointed as Revenue Officer in land Revenue Department and promoted as Deputy Director in RDD. He was again posted to Land revenue as ADC for three and half years, promoted as Deputy Commission in Income Tax Department, Joint Secretary in Sports and Youth Affairs, Additional Secretary in UDHD. He has three sons:

- i. Ugen Tseten- working at District Collectors office, west Sikkim, he studied Computer engineering from Bardang ATCC.
- ii. Chogyal Dorji- working in Forest dept. He is a graduate from Sikkim Govt. College, Tadong.
- iii. Thupden Rinzing- who is unemployed and graduated from Sikkim Govt. College, Tadong.

Dawa Gyatso Bhutia's source of income is his pension and rent collected from one of the houses in Tashiding. He possesses inherited land and land bought on his own which together makes 4 acres of barren land at Tashiding.

Nima Tshering also has two daughters; Ugen Tsetso- married at Canada and the second one is married at Gangtok.

Machen Mabepa the grandfather of the respondent Dawa Gyatso Bhutia's second son was Thambu Bhutia who was a farmer at Tinkitam. He owned 9 acres of land in total with the production of cardamom, ginger, maize. Thambu has 3 sons;

i. Athop Madepa who does not have any educational background and is a farmer and unmarried.

ii. Lak ching, second son has 2 sons; first son Tashi Naku, is a farmer and not yet married, second son Pintso Bhutia, works at PHE Department, Govt. of Sikkim. He has studied upto class upto 5 and is settled at Tinkitam.

iii. Phuchung Bhutia, the third son of Thambu Bhutia, works at Power Department at Gangtok and has 1 son who is studying and 1 daughter who is a graduate and married.

Thambu Bhutia owned 30 acres of land, out of which 5 acres were all forest land retained for his sons and other lands were gifted to Dathup Bhutia- the Mandal of Tinkitam.

Case study 4

Name: Tshering Bhutia

Sex: Male

Age: 45 years

Marital status: Married

Education: Graduate

Occupation: Teacher

Tshering Bhutia's grandfather belonged to Dokhampa caste. One of his forefathers Changzey Jhamig was personal assistant of Nagdak Chempo in 1642. They came from Tibet to Kewzing for meditation and to build gumpa (monastery) at Tashiding. During meditation it was revealed to him that Tashiding was filled with holy items so no resources or the building materials should be used from Tashiding to build the Gumpa.

Resources were brought from Kewzing and the responsibility was given to one of the Dokhampa who happened to be Tshering Bhutia's forefather. Changzey Jhamig did not have any child and he was foretold by Nagdak Chempo that he would have children, and later child was born to him named Brah Samdup who also had two siblings. Difference arose between the two sons and they tried to kill each other, Brah Samdup fled and came and stayed with Nagdak Chempo at Tashiding. Nagdak Chempo had two *Gumpas* (monastery) under him, Tashiding and Silnon *Gumpa*.

Hence, with Brah Samdup, the settlement of Dokhampas began at Tashiding.

Tshering Bhutia (respondent of the case study) is the 13th generation of Dokhampa and his sons are the 14th generation of Dokhampa lineage.

Great grandfather, Chogey Tenzing was *Chikap* lama of Tashiding Monastery. His great grandfather had 26 acres of land where cardamom cultivation was carried on upto 30 - 40 '*maan*' (it refers to a measuring vessel) of rice in a year.

He had two sons:

i. Nim Tshering who settled at Namchi

ii. the second son, Passang Bhutia, is a farmer and settled at Namchi.

Passang Bhutia-had 2 sons;

i. Tshering Palzor who is a lama of Tashiding Gumpa has a son; Ugen Tshering Bhutia who is a medical doctor. The second son is Tsewang Dorzi Bhutia, working as language post graduate teacher. He has his educational background from monastery and *Seda*.

ii. Second son of Passang Bhutia is Tshering Bhutia (the respondent of the case study).

Tshering Bhutia is working as a Bhutia Language Teacher at Tashiding Senior Secondary School. He did his schooling till class X from Tashiding school and joined *Seda* at class X where he completed Industry training- arts traditional for 5 years.

He has 2 sons- i. Odzer Zangpo Bhutia who is studying in class XII at Eklavya Residential school, Gangyap. ii. Tashi Bhutia is studying in class VII.

The source of income is his salary as a Bhutia teacher and the traditional item shop he owns at Tashiding Bazar. Adding to it, house rents also raises his income.

The land that he possesses is both inherited and acquired. In total Tshering Bhutia has around 3 acres of land, of which 1acre is forest land and 2 acres are under cultivation land. However, at present not much cultivation takes place.

Case study 5

Name: Pema Wangdi Bhutia

Sex: Male

Age: 45

Marital status: married

Education: BA (Sheda)

Occupation: Teacher (Bhutia Language)

Pema Wangdi Bhutia, his great grandfather was called Choni Lama. He spent 30 years as Dorzee Lobe (Head Lama) at Llanchi Monastery, West Sikkim. He has one son and one daughter. He was 95 years of age when he died.

Pema Wangdi Bhutia's grandfather was the only son of Choni lama. His grandfather was a monk. He inherited piece of land at Llachin, where vegetables were cultivated.

He had two sons; Lakpa Thendup and Zigmee Dorjee and one daughter.

1. Lakpa Thendup has one son, Tsheten Thinley and two daughters. The educational qualification of Lakpa Thendup is class X pass. He is engaged in business and owns a hotel at Tashiding.

2. Zigmee Dorjee was a monk at Tashiding Gumpa. His source of income was the share received as monk by offering prayers at gumpa and also he was more inclined towards farming and business. He owned hotel and service car at Tashiding.

He inherited the small land, he also added more land through purchase at Tashiding. He owned a total of 4-5 acres land. It was mostly used for cultivation of vegetables.

Pema Wangdi Bhutia, 45 years of age, is son of Zigmee Dorjee. He completed his BA from Sheda in 1992. He has one son named Tshering Topden, and one daughter. His son is studying at Tashi Namgyal Academy, Gangtok. He is a head lama and also works as Bhutia Language teacher at Tashiding Senior Secondary School. His source of income depends upon the government salary as Bhutia Teacher and receives some amount as *Yen* (money) from the people offering prayers from the monastery.

He inherits ancestral property, land, hotel, vehicle from his father and owns a hotel and a shop of his own at Tashiding.

The occupational structure of the respondents in the case study in Tashiding village shows that at present they have engaged in diverse occupations ranging from agriculture, business to salaried job. Interestingly, the Bhutia families have multiple

sources of livelihood and their economic activities have been diversified into different occupations. Moreover, education has driven them, particularly the younger generation, for wage employment specifically for organised employment which indicates an upward occupational mobility in terms of stable salaried income and some social gains in terms of prestige and status of being a salaried person (Marchang, 2016). Their agriculture based occupational structure has undergone change to non-agricultural occupational practices specially with the technological, educational and economic changes. Education can be assumed to be one of the major determining factor for a change in employment and occupational structure of the Bhutias.

The size of land holdings of the Bhutia families are big in size. The land holdings of the Bhutia families in Tashiding varies from above 2 acres to 30 acres of land.

8.4.2. Tathangchen- East Sikkim

Case study 1

Name: **Passang Bhutia**

Sex: Male

Age: 65

Marital status: married

Education: Class IV pass

Occupation: Government Contractor

Passang Bhutia, a resident of Tathangchen- Gangtok, East Sikkim is one of the oldest residents of Tathangchen. He studied upto class V and worked as a government peon in the year 1968 when he was 19 years old. His initial salary at appointment time was rupees 250 per month. Later he chose to resign from the job and started working as contractor from which his income raised to 1000 per month.

He is the first son of his parents and has three siblings.

Passang Bhutia's Father, Tshering Nedup Bhutia was a farmer who survived till 55 years of age. His mother, Dorjee Uden Bhutia lived till 82 years of age. His father owned 25 acres of land, both cultivated and forest land. The earnings of the family depended on the pastures and paddy cultivation. Since Passang's father was not literate, he was engaged and depended on agriculture for his livelihood and income.

Tshering Nedup Bhutia had three sons: Passang Bhutia, Sonam Ongdi Bhutia and Phigu Tshering Bhutia and one daughter Ongmu Bhutia.

Talking about the ancestral where about, it is found out that they have been settled in Tathangchen since their migration from Ha valley in Bhutan. They have migrated from Tibet and settled at Ha Valley in Bhutan for some time.

Passang Bhutia's grandfather and Tshering Nedup's father, Golay Tshering Bhutia was a carpenter, depended on daily wage earning for his livelihood during the Chogyal rule in Sikkim. It has been understood that during Chogyals time they were the common people working for the *Kazis* and *Zamindars* for all kinds of work. Passang Bhutia reiterated that living conditions during the Chogyal period was not good for the common people like his father and grandfather. He stated that "the merger of Sikkim into Indian Federation was also a kind of independence for the common people from the bondage of subjugation under the *zamindari* system."

Passang's brother, Sonam Ongdi Bhutia expired at 27 years. He was serving as police constable. He is survived by wife, Tshering Doma Bhutia and three sons; Karma Loday Bhutia, Wongyal Bhutia and Dorjee Bhutia, who are all married and settled at Tathangchen, Gangtok. Karma Loday Bhutia is a government contractor, Wongyal Bhutia is a government servant, working in Police Department and Dorjee Bhutia is working in private sector.

Phigu Tshering Bhutia, youngest son of Tshering Nedup Bhutia is a retired government employee who was working as a Senior Accountant under Govt. of Sikkim. He has one son; Rinzing Bhutia who is working as a primary teacher at Modern Senior Secondary School, Gangtok. The two daughters are Pema Lhamu Bhutia and Kesang Bhutia. All three children of Phigu Tshering has educational qualification as graduates.

Tshering Nedup Bhutia's only daughter, Ongmu Bhutia is a homemaker married to a Police Officer, who is also settled at Tathangchen.

Passang Bhutia has four children, three sons; Karma Samten Bhutia, Karma Sonam Bhutia and Kulzang Gyatso Bhutia and one daughter, Tashi Lhamu Bhutia. All the children have good educational background. They have acquired their school education from the schools in the state and pursued higher education from the institutions outside the state. All the sons are post graduates and placed in good

position in the Education Department, Govt. of Sikkim. Daughter, Tashi Lhamu is class X pass and is a house wife.

The family has more than 5 acres of landholdings. The family had two storied house, built out of wood, stone, mud and bamboo sticks. Passang Bhutia with his income from the contractual service could build a new two storied house made out of cement, wood and tin sheet roof. Some part of the house has been rented to raise his income to support the education of his children.

The source of income of Passang Bhutia is the house rents which ranges from 40-50 thousand per month. Besides this, income from agricultural and forest products adds on to his source of income.

Case study 2

Name: Giden Bhutia

Sex: Male

Age: 51

Marital status: Married

Education: XII pass

Occupation: Government Contractor cum Business

Giden Bhutia is the grandson of Tathangchen Mondal, Dawa Gyamtsen Bhutia and grandmother, Phumkam Bhutia. Grandfather Dawa Gyamtsen Bhutia was a Mondal during the Chogyal period who collected the revenues from the villagers. Dawa Gyamtsen Bhutia's wife Phumkam Bhutia had given birth to four children, of which only one survived, Sherab Lhamu, mother of Giden Bhutia.

Sherab Lhamu is married to Phituk Bhutia, who worked as government servant in Sikkim Court. After his retirement he was elected as Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA) from *Sangha* seat in 2009- 2013. Sherab Lhamu has three children; son Giden Bhutia and two daughters, Doma Chopel and Kunchok Bhutia. All three children are married and has the educational qualification of class XII Pass. The children of Doma Chopel and Kunchok Bhutia are placed in government services and are procuring higher studies outside Sikkim.

Giden Bhutia acquired his school education from Tashi Namgyal Senior Secondary School, Gangtok. He works as government contractor. He owns a shop at Tathangchen and is also engaged in other business activities. His income also comes from the two

luxurious tourist taxis he owns, house rent and agricultural products like cardamom. His source of income ranges from 1.5 to 2 lakh per month. He has inherited land of around 12 acres, out of which 8 acres is a forest land.

Case study 3

Name: Norbu Tshering Bhutia

Sex: Male

Age: 57

Marital status: Married

Education: XII Pass

Occupation: Civil Servant

Tracing the family background of Norbu Tshering Bhutia, his grandfather, Passang Bhutia and Grandmother Seden Bhutia are earlier settlers of Tathangchen. His grandfather had two sons; Thinley Bhutia and Thendup Bhutia and two daughters; Tshering Ongmu and Kadey Bhutia.

They owned a landed property of 20 acres. Basically, they were engaged in farming and their source of income depended purely on agricultural activities. The main cultivation was cardamom, paddy and millet.

Norbu Tshering Bhutia's father, Thinley Bhutia and mother Dorjee Uden Bhutia had nine children; five sons and four daughters.

1. The first son, Rinzing Bhutia was in police service who died at the age of 47. He was survived by his wife, two sons and three daughters. Both the sons are working in private sectors and the daughters are married and settled at Gangtok.

2. The second son, Pema Wongyal Bhutia, is retired Assistant Jailor. He has two sons and three daughters. All five children of Pema Wangchuk are government employees in different departments.

3. The third son, **Norbu Tshering Bhutia** (the respondent of the case study) is presently posted as Sub- Divisional Magistrate (SDM), Govt. Of Sikkim. Norbu Tshering Bhutia, is married to wife Roshni Rai, Senior Stenographer at Government of Sikkim. They have two sons:

i. Norden Tshering Bhutia: is working as senior officer at Sikkim State Bank, Gangtok. He pursued his school education from Tashi Namgyal Academy, Gangtok and higher education from Delhi University. Norden Tshering has one daughter studying in school.

ii. Rosden Tshering Bhutia: is working as Assistant Professor at Namchi Government College, South Sikkim. He received his school education from Tashi Namgyal Academy, Gangtok and higher education from Delhi University.

Norbu Tshering Bhutia owns 5 acres of land, inherited and purchased cultivated land. He possesses a paddy field of about 1 acre in the outskirts of Gangtok (Ranka). He also inherited 4 acres of cardamom field (land) at Pangthang, Gangtok.

Owns two houses (concrete buildings) at Tathangchen. Besides their salary, the income is also received from house rent and agricultural products like rice and cardamom.

4. The fourth son Nim Tshering Bhutia, works as Jailor in Sikkim Jail, Gangtok. He has three daughters, working in both private and government sectors.

5. The fifth son, Bhaichung Bhutia works as an account clerk under government of Sikkim. He has two daughters, both settled at Gangtok.

Amongst the four daughters; eldest daughter, Pema Choden is married and is a house-maker, second daughter Norkit Lhamu Bhutia was married but passed away at the early age of 27, third daughter is Ninden Bhutia who works as Office Assistant in the Agriculture Department, Government of Sikkim and the fourth daughter is Tashi Ongmu Bhutia who is also a house-maker.

Case study 4

Name: Jigme Dorjee Bhutia

Sex: Male

Age: 57

Marital status: Married

Education: XII Pass

Occupation: Government Servant

The ancestors of Jigme Dorjee Bhutia are from North Sikkim, later they sifted to Tathangchen and settled here. They acquired landed property at Tathangchen. Grandfather of Jigme Dorjee Bhutia was Lakpa Bhutia and grandmother Lhamu Bhutia. They had one son Kagay Bhutia who is married to Doma Bhutia. Kagay Bhutia and Doma Bhutia have three children; two sons and one daughter. Both the sons Sonam Tshering Bhutia and Denzong Bhutia are farmers.

Sonam Tshering Bhutia is married to Daden Bhutia and Denzong Bhutia is married to Shophak Bhutia. Denzong Bhutia and Shophak Bhutia have seven children, five sons and two daughters.

The family has ancestral landed property at North Sikkim and also in Tathangchen. The family's main source of income was from agriculture products like cardamom and ginger.

Jigme Dorjee Bhutia (the respondent of the study) son of Sonam Tshering Bhutia and Daden Bhutia, is a government employee in the Vigilance Department, Government of Sikkim. He is married to Tshering Doma Bhutia who is also a government employee. They have a son studying at Tashi Namgyal Academy and daughter is a government employee.

Jigme Dorjee acquired his education from Tashi Namgyal Academy and pursued higher education from Delhi.

Jigme Dorjee Bhutia possesses a land holding of about 2 acres in Tathangchen and about 3 acres land at North Sikkim. The main earning comes from his salary, Jigme Dorjee also generates income from house rent and from cultivation of cardamon.

Case study 5

Name: Sonam Bhutia

Sex: Male

Age: 50

Marital status: Married

Education: Graduate

Occupation: Government Servant (Teacher)

Sonam Bhutias family is one of the oldest residents of Tathangchen. His grandfather, Wangchuk Bhutia and grandmother Kunzang Choden Bhutia had two sons; Kami Lama and Norden Tshering Bhutia and two daughters; Tem Bhutia and Lhaday Bhutia. Kami Lama married to Pem Dem Bhutia, was Dorze Lobay a head *lama* (monk) of Enchey monastery. The second son of Wangchuk Bhutia and Kunzang Choden Bhutia is Norden Tshering Bhutia who is a retired Director of Education Department in Government of Sikkim. Both the daughters are married with the Bhutias.

The family owned a big land holding of about one hectare at Tathangchen. Most of the land was used for cultivation of paddy, maize, millet and cardamom. Vegetables were also grown to some extent. Earlier the family lived in a wooden cottage which is now upgraded to RCC building. Wangchuk Bhutia being a farmer, his source of income depended on agricultural activities, which was sufficient for his family.

Kami lama had altogether 10 children; five sons and five daughters. The first son was Tashi Bhutia, who is retired as Assistant Director. Second son, Nima Bhutia is Instructor of Thanka Painting, the third son Sonam Bhutia, the respondent of the study is a graduate teacher at West Point Senior Secondary School, Gangtok, the fourth son works as a Court Peshkar and the youngest son, Samten Bhutia is not working in any sector but looks after the family activities.

The five daughters of Wangchuk Bhutia are; 1. Tshering Choden, working as Office Superintendent in the Education Department, Government of Sikkim. 2. The second daughter, Diki Bhutia is unmarried and stays at home. 3. Choden Bhutia, the third daughter works as Upper Divisional Clerk, Kalzang Diki works as a nurse and is settled at Australia and the youngest daughter, Phigu Bhutia is Head Mistress in Government School in Sikkim.

Sonam Bhutia, the respondent of the study is married to Sonam Doma Bhutia and has one son, studying in class 5 at Gangtok. Apart from teaching job, Sonam Bhutia engages himself into agricultural activities which also adds on to his income. He possesses about 3 acres of land at Tathangchen. The house rents collected from the building at Tathangchen is another source of income for Sonam Bhutia's family.

Primary field data result validates that means of livelihood of Bhutia families of Tathangchen has undergone a change. Salaried employment has replaced the self-employment, particularly in agriculture activities, as the main source of livelihood for majority of the Bhutia families. The engagement in new jobs and other allied occupations has enhanced the income of the family. Agriculture has become secondary activity for most of them. Case study shows that employment in agriculture sector is lower among Bhutia families of Tathangchen than the Bhutia families of Lachung and Tashiding. The extent of salaried employment is higher bringing a occupational shift among the Bhutia community.

Most of the Bhutia houses in Tathangchen are multi-storied buildings which are given on rents to the tenants. House rents supplement their incomes.

8.4.3. Lachung -North District

Case study 1

Name: Nangey Ghalley

Sex: Male

Age: 84 years

Marital status: Married

Education: Illiterate

Occupation: Farmer

Nangey Ghalley's great grandfather was the person who laboured during the building of Lachung Gumpa. He carried wood logs for the monastery. His name was Palgey Bhutia and had eight children.

Nangey Ghalley's father, Gyamtso Bhutia had five children, three sons and two daughters, of which only two survived and rest three died.

Nangey Ghalley the respondent of the study has three children, one son and two daughters. His son Yangdol Bhutia works as chowkidar for Lachung Rimpoche, and one daughter works in the field. None of his children are educated. His son Yangdol has three sons- the first one, Topden Bhutia who runs travel agency at Gangtok. Second son, Dorji Gyatso is class 10 pass who studied at Lachung school, now drives his own tourist vehicle, and the third son, Karma Zigmee is a monk.

Nangey Ghalley is a farmer by occupation. Cultivation of apple, cauliflower, cabbages, wheat are the main products. However, these items are grown for family consumption only. He used to grow three pate (bora) of wheat alone and sell at Mangan. He said working keeps one healthy and away from sickness. While interacting he used the proverb- "*look at the bird and drink water and look at people's hard work and follow their work*".

Nangey Ghalley's source of income is not much, but whatever is grown and sold was sufficient for their living. He was also engaged in Pasturage. Yak and cow milk products were used for home consumption. He reiterated that both the animals and cultivation has decreased now days due to modernization.

For him, Chogyas period was good, because modernization has spoilt the tradition. To put his words down in writing, he said "*lee pant (meaning jeans pants) has come*

into fashion but he still has been able to maintain the tradition of his own. The people of modern world fail to preserve their tradition. To him wearing traditional dresses (addressing to bakhu) should be compulsory while going to gumpa (monastery) and attending meetings etc., if not fine should be issued". He feels disheartened when people today do not follow the traditional rules. Earlier rules were good as people followed religiously without questioning but these days it is not so. He fears that the old tradition might vanish due to modernisation and development.

Looking at him, one can say that he is still a rigid follower of old tradition of his community. He still has kept his hair long, plated and circled round his head. This tradition was followed earlier for both male and female.

He says, *"Earlier people had to work very hard but also people were healthy because of healthy food they ate. These days good healthy food is not available so people are victim of many diseases."* He further adds that people today have better and easy lifestyle. Working has become easier and they need not work hard like in earlier days.

When asked about his education, he said, earlier education was not important because they had to work in the field. He being the eldest son did not have to study.

Case study 2

Name: **Chokey Lachungpa**

Sex: Female

Age: 85 years

Marital status: Married

Education: Illiterate

Occupation: Farmer

Chokey Lachungpa, the respondent of the study is a 85 years old lady. She does not remember in detail about her ancestors but has heard that her grandfather's name was Zombe Lachungpa. Her father had 11 children; 4 sons and 8 daughters. Her father was a farmer and did not go to school.

Chokey Lachungpa has six children: 3 sons and daughters each. Amongst the sons;

- i. Pema Lhendup is a monastic Teacher at Lachung school. He is the only son with sound educational background.

- ii. The second son- Thapchey- owns lodge at Lachung and carries business work.
- iii. Dadul Tshering is a farmer.
- iv. Among daughters- one is married at Lachung, one at Namok and one at Gangtok.

During her father's time they used to eat Champa (wheat powder) and maize as it was difficult to get rice at that time. They cultivated cabbage, maize, potato and even today the same is carried out. She still works in the field, and smilingly says she has not visited hospital even once, which shows that they used to have a healthy life.

When asked about the development in the present days, she feels Raja or the Chogyal rule was good and had good relations among all.

3.3 Case study 3

Name: Namgay Ongdi Bhutia

Sex: Male

Age: 67 years

Marital status: Married

Education: Class XII

Occupation: Ex- Pipon - Lachung

Namgay Ongdi Bhutia's grandfather was Tenzing Durge who had 11 children; 7 sons and 4 daughters. Not much details could be acquired about his ancestors.

His father's name was Norden Bhutia. He was basically a farmer and also owned yaks, through which pasturage was carried. More than being engaged in agricultural activities, pasturage was his priority and the main source of income to the family. He had 9 children- 7 sons and 2 daughters.

Namgay Ongdi Bhutia was one of the son of Norden Bhutia. He is 67 years of age now. He is the ex-*Pipon* (village head) of Lachung. He became *Pipon* in 12 Dec, 2015.

Namgay Ongdi Bhutia's wife was Drenchy who is 46 years of age. They have two sons and 2 daughters. The eldest son is settled at Lachung and is a businessman. He owns a tourist lodge at Lachung. The second son is a monk.

The first daughter is a teacher in government school and the second is studying at PNG, Gangtok.

Namgay Ongdi Bhutia possesses cultivated land of about 0.57 acre at Lachung. In addition to this, he is engaged in pastoral activities at larger extent, of which he owns about 50 yaks. His income is supplemented by the dairy products of yaks, in addition to the rents generated from the homestay and a shop at Lachung bazar. The earnings of the family are mostly generated during the peak tourist seasons (February to May) which is sufficient to sustain the needs of the family for a year.

Case Study 4

Name: **Pintso Dorjee Bhutia**

Sex: Male

Age: 41

Marital status: married

Education: MA

Occupation: Government Employee

Pintso Dorjee Bhutia, is a government employee at Lachung. His grandfather's name is Thendup Bhutia who is 86 years of age and he is among the early settlers of Lachung.

Thendup Bhutia was a farmer by occupation and his source of income was depended upon farming. Cabbage, potato and wheat were the most cultivated items in his one-hectare land. The cultivated items were used for family consumption only.

Thendup Bhutia has two sons; Tsewang Topgay and Topchung Bhutia, and two daughters; Uden Bhutia and Passankit Bhutia. Topchung Bhutia died at early age.

Tsewang Topgay is 66 years old. He has his education qualification upto class III and has worked as Chowkidar and Sikkim Guard during the Chogyals time.

He has two sons, and three daughters.

1. First son, Pintso Dorjee Bhutia is a Master degree holder. Pintso Dorjee despite being government employee owns a tourist lodge at Lachung with an income of about 3 lacs per annum. In addition to this he has inherited landed property of 1 acre at Lachung and 2 acres at Gangtok. Pintso Dorjee Bhutia has RCC building at Gangtok where half of the building is rented for business purposes.

2. Second son, is Wangchuk Bhutia is class V pass who is engaged in business and is running tourist lodge at Lachung.

Tsewang Topgay's three daughters: Chanzom Bhutia, Yangchen Bhutia and Pema Bhutia. Two of the daughters are settled at Gangtok and owns a shop at Gangtok Bazaar. All daughters have their educational qualifications upto class X.

Case Study 5

Name: **Sonam Bhutia**

Sex: Male

Age: 45

Marital status: married

Education: class XII

Occupation: Government Servant

Sonam Bhutia, son of Pema Chewang Lachungpa is a permanent settler of Lachung. He is a government servant and works as a Ranger Officer in Forest Department, Government of Sikkim. Sonam Bhutia's grandfather Topgay Bhutia was 95 years old when he died. He was a farmer with cultivated land of 1.4 acres.

Topgay Bhutia had three sons; Nima Chewang Lachungpa, Kunga Chewang Nima and Pema Chewang Lachungpa. Chewang Lachungpa and Kunga Chewang Lachungpa, both of them served as monk in the monastery. Apart from two sons, Topgay Bhutia also had two daughters. Topgay Bhutias income basically depended upon the agricultural activities.

Sonam Bhutia the respondent for the study is a government employee. He has education qualification as graduate from Sikkim.

Besides being a government employee, he is involved in other business activities like running a shop and tourist lodge at Lachung. Agricultural activities is his area of interest, although agriculture being less preferred due to time factor. Moreover, he owns a house and landed property of around 0.45 acre at Gangtok.

It appears that Bhutia families of Lachung have a multiple occupations with mixed source of income. Income is presently earned through different occupation beside the traditional one by the Bhutia people in Lachung. For many households traditional occupation alone could not meet the modern requirements and hence, they are engaged into a subsidiary occupation. The subsidiary occupation is one which is adopted to earn additional income which constitutes a part of his income. Income from construction of modern houses and buildings that has been used as hotels, home stay

and shops is the major source of income for the people. Buildings are given in lease for opening of hotels, home-stays and shops. More importantly, income from the tourism sector has contributed to the income of Bhutia families.

Also, the younger generation are into salaried jobs mostly in government sector. A transition of their livelihood system from agricultural to non-agricultural pursuits is evident. Shift from agriculture to non-agriculture urban pursuits, informal to formal sector and traditional to modern occupations and services is noticed. A similar pattern and trend prevails in other two areas; Tashiding and Tathagchen.

8.5. Major Findings of Case Studies

The overall trend obtained through the case studies indicates many transformations being taken place in the occupational pattern and socio-economic status between the generation of Bhutia families in Sikkim.

There is noticeable diversification in their occupation pattern which is usually considered to be a positive development as it constitutes an essential part of growth. Agriculture was their traditional occupation. It is seen that amongst first generation (respondents' parents) people were more dependent on agriculture as the main source of income. What derives from the case studies is that the involvement in parental occupation has declined. The second generation people were not only dependent on agriculture as a main source of income but they were also engaged in other activities like tourism, government services and renting house etc. for their source of income. They have got other job avenues with the changing economic pattern of the state which was not available in the time of the first generation people. Bhutias are pursuing other alternative occupations as salaried jobs in both private and government sectors, businessmen and entrepreneurs.

Expectedly, the size of Bhutia agricultural households, both as agriculturist and agricultural labour has declined in all the three villages: Tashiding, Tathangchen and Lachung. However, analyses of the case studies show that Bhutia people owned largely an inherited land and have added more lands by themselves.

When we see the size of the family in the first generation, the size of the family is relatively bigger than the second generation. The decrease in the family size may be

education and awareness of family planning and also the change in the belief system of the people in general. Among the surveyed Bhutia families, the structure of the family shows the existence of mostly nuclear type.

A growing trend of learning and receiving education is observed among the Bhutia group. The first generation Bhutia people were rarely educated and many have not received any formal education but in the following generation (second generation, respondent) it is seen that almost all have received either formal or monastic education. This may be because in the time of the first-generation school facilities were not available as education system started very late in Sikkim. Moreover, in the third generation (respondent's children) it is found that majority of them have received education up to graduation and most of them have received their higher education outside Sikkim.

Joining the Indian mainstream and the foundation of democratic state has contributed to the exposure of the Bhutia and the diversification from their traditional occupation into modern job avenues. They have opened small shops to supplement their incomes. La- chung has emerged as a tourist destination

Pursuit of education and literacy has increased from earlier generation to the present. However, notable disparity in the levels of education between male and female and between rural and urban is observed.

Adopting a new occupation has contributed in increase in their other livelihood assets. The changing occupational patterns is also examined with reference to educational impact. It is observed that education has a direct impact on upward occupational mobility. Thus, the findings of the case studies gives a clear understanding of how generational changes have taken place among the Bhutias of Sikkim.

Summary and Conclusion

Sikkim, a Himalayan kingdom became part of India in 1975 ending long 333 years of Bhutia rule. Till the advent of the British, the Bhutias were free from outside interference. The entry of the British which led to the rise in the increase of Nepalese migration in Sikkim brought changes in political and socio-economic status and position of the Bhutias. The post-merger period is also marked by development of ethnic identity discourse. The Bhutias strived to maintain their identity in the state. The thesis intended to make a comparative study on the 'change' in the status and position of Bhutias in the pre-merger and post-merger periods.

Keeping in mind the study on the socio-economic and political status of Bhutias and its continuity, the entire thesis is summarized into seven chapters.

Chapter I incorporates the theoretical aspect of the research covering brief background of the Bhutias of India and profile of Sikkim like physical features, administrative setup, socio-economic background and ethnic composition. The Bhutias form the Tibeto-Burman group are mostly found in the Himalayan Region, stretching from Ladakh, Nepal, Bhutan, Sikkim, Darjeeling and Arunachal Pradesh. They are called by different names like Ladaki Bhutias, Arunachali Bhutias, Bhutanese Bhutias (*Dukpa* or *Drukpas*), the Sikkimese Bhutias (*Denzongpa* or *Lho-po*) and the Tibetan refugees who have migrated after 1959.

The second chapter covers the demographic profile of Sikkim and Bhutias in particular. Section I studies the demographic status of Sikkim and section II discusses the distribution of Bhutia people in Sikkim.

It is found that Sikkim officially consists of twenty different communities (Census 2011). The first population census of Sikkim conducted in 1891 recorded total population of 30,455 of which Nepalese constituted half of the total population but it is not a homogenous community. It consists of several ethnic groups and all of them are called Nepalese. They are followed by Lepchas, Bhutias and Limboos. The initial demographic profile of Sikkim shows the Bhutias as a single community having absolute majority in Sikkim. Each population census since 1901 records increase in the Bhutia population in Sikkim. However, a decline in the Bhutia population has been recorded in the census of 2011. East district has been identified with highest Bhutia

population in the state, followed by South, West and North districts. At present, the Bhutias constitute 11.38%, whereas 7.78% are Lepchas and 69.9% are Nepalese. Rai from the Nepali community records the highest population with 13.52%. The Bhutias share 63.1% of the total ST population in the state. The Lepchas mostly confined to North district represent 33.4% of total ST population. It is found that 10.9% of Bhutias and 4.5% of Lepchas are recorded in urban areas. With the change in the demography, change in socio-economic and political setup has been noticed in Sikkim. Nepalese, consisting of many caste groups have outnumbered all other communities in the state.

Chapter III is on 'Short history of Sikkim and status of Bhutias in pre-merger period'. It has two sections, section I deals with short history of Sikkim and section II deals with the study on the Bhutias of Sikkim and their role in pre-merger period. The Bhutias were the ruling community in Sikkim for 333 long years. The Bhutias occupied a high status in the society and were regarded as elites. The Landlords or *Kazis*, who are Bhutias, controlled the land holdings after the Chogyal. They also possessed magisterial powers in both civil and criminal matters.

In the post-merger period, the Bhutias inspite of their smaller number enjoyed certain privileges. One of those is with regard to the number of seats in the Assembly. They were allotted 12 seats and one *Sangha* seat (monks representing monasteries) in the State Assembly. Out of the total 32 seats, the Bhutias and the Lepchas have share of 37.5 % of seats. The study reflects that though the Bhutias are numerically less, they still continue to be the most dominant group in Sikkim.

Chapter IV gives an account on Sikkim's journey towards democracy and gradual marginalisation of the Bhutias in politics. The discussion is distributed into four sections. Section I, covers Sikkim's journey towards democracy, the second section looks into the role of the Bhutias in politics in the pre-merger period, while section III discusses the role of Bhutias in politics in the post-merger period and section IV sheds light on the marginalisation of Bhutias in politics.

The Bhutias have played an important role in politics in Sikkim since the foundation of the Namgyal dynasty. The introduction of parity system in 1953 paved way for the entry of other communities into politics. It was found that still the Bhutias were represented well in politics through representation in the State Council till the first election under uniform electoral system in 1974. The introduction of *Sangha* seat in

1958 further allowed the Bhutias to extend their influence in politics. In post-merger period, the Bhutias as a single community had a larger share with total of 67 Bhutias in the assembly elections from 1974-2019. They have the highest number contesting the election in the state. Bhutias have majority share among the 12 B-L seats in the state. Most of the reserved B-L seats are contested by the Bhutias.

A review of the history of Sikkim shows that marginalisation of Bhutia-Lepcha communities had started during the pre-merger period. This process began when the British through the Political Officer took over the administration of Sikkim. Since then the political and economic powers of *Kazis* and *Lamas* was reduced. The Nepalese immigrants posed a great threat to the powers and positions of the Bhutias. New power equation rose when Nepalese were also made the landlords gaining equal economic power with the Lepcha-Bhutia *Kazis* and landlords. The political uprising in 1940's against the Bhutia rule and feudalism and the inclusion of Nepalese in the politics through representation in the State Council gradually accentuated the process of marginalisation of Bhutias in politics.

The trend continued after transfer of administrative powers to Dewan (Indian) and it was almost total after the formation of new democratic state in Sikkim. The study reveals that the expansion of Scheduled Tribe list with the inclusion of other tribes of Bhutia origin in 1978 and inclusion of Limboos and Tamangs in 2002 made the position of Bhutias more insecure. The Bhutias have been representing themselves through various political and social organisations in the state as they have been relegated to as minority and Nepalese the majority community.

Chapter V is the study on the occupational pattern and economic positions of the Bhutias in the pre and post-merger Sikkim. It is divided into three sections; section I deals with the historical background of Sikkim's economy, section II deals with the occupational pattern and economic status of Bhutias in the pre- merger period and section III deals with the occupational pattern and economic status of Bhutias in the post-merger period.

The findings show that Sikkim is intimately connected with the agrarian sector of economy and the Bhutias have played great role in the evolution of the Sikkimese economy. Sikkim society being feudal, the Chogyal was the sole proprietor of land in the country with feudal lords assisting him. The monasteries also possessed huge

landed property over which the *Lamas* enjoyed both revenue and administrative control. Agriculture and pasturage was the main occupation in the country. Handicraft was also one occupation among the Bhutias.

The occupational pattern underwent major changes during the British presence where many developmental works were initiated. In 1970 about 27.54 percent of the Bhutia elites were the owners of estates, while 23.44 percent engaged in agriculture, 20.31 percent gave their service to the nobility and the aristocracy, 15.12 percent were into trade and business while only 2.54 percent of elite Bhutia families were lamas. The study conducted in 1970 on Bhutia elites by A.C Sinha showed that 25% of respondent's fathers were agriculturists, 19.25% were the owners of estates, 17.16% were traders and businessmen, 3.12% were monks and 25% took up different professions in government and private sectors. The study by A.C Sinha further shows that Bhutias engagement in agriculture decreased from 25% (father's engagement) to 2.34% of their children. Secondly, the Bhutia ownership of estates was reduced from 19.52% to 6.24%. Engagement in Business and Trade was reduced to 11.72 percent from 17.16 percent.

As for the post-merger era, socio-economic census, 2006, records the Nepalese as the leading group in terms of employment, which is followed by Bhutias and Lepchas. It is also found that the Rai community accounts for 13.8% of total households which is the highest income bearer. Bhutias with the share of 13.2% of households are the second highest income bearer in the next income category. Bhutia households are the highest income bearer in all four districts.

Among the various social groups in Sikkim, the Bhutias hold the highest possession of lands in the state. The paddy fields and land under cardamom cultivations are mostly owned by the Bhutias.

The study also reflects that agriculture has become the secondary source of income for the current generation of Bhutia people. As they have shifted over to business and trade, tourism, and salaried jobs. Even though the Bhutia share as agriculturists and as agricultural labour has declined, they still own large landed properties in Sikkim and income from land, coupled with income from other sources help them to survive a very high income group in society. It is evident from the study that the Bhutias, the dominant community in the pre-merger period still maintains their position in the new socio-economic structure of Sikkim.

Chapter VI is about Bhutias in Bureaucracy. There are two sections; section I deals with representation of the Bhutias in bureaucracy in the pre-merger period and section II talks about representation of the Bhutias in bureaucracy in the post-merger period in Sikkim.

The study shows that the foundation of bureaucracy in Sikkim had a feudal base, rule bound, exploitative, elitist, and repressive in service of the absolutist monarchy. Landlords (*Kazis*) and monks (high *Lamas*) occupied high posts. Overall, the Bhutias controlled all the bureaucratic posts under Chogyal. They played a vital role as advisers to the Chogyal, as administrator, as judiciary as well as financial administrators.

In 1970-72, 36.30% of Bhutias comprised as bureaucrats; 34.68% belonged to aristocrat family representing Bhutia families, 27.42% were kazis and 7.26% was represented by Newars. The high officials appointed in the administration were appointed from high class educated Bhutias.

In the post-merger period, the Nepalese replaced the Bhutias as the group holding highest number of bureaucratic posts in 2018. The Nepalese accounted for 50% of the total bureaucrats, while the Bhutias accounted for 30%, and other STs (Limboo, Tamang and Sherpa) for 10.6% and the Lepchas 6%. But given their number of population, the share of the Bhutias in bureaucratic posts is proportionately very high.

Thus, even after the shift of political power, the Bhutias continue as the top administrators in the state. Despite simultaneous coexistence of different ethnic communities and the prevalence of state civil service examinations and recruitment process, the Bhutias have always been able to build bureaucratic capacity in the state.

Chapter VII studies the representation of the Bhutias in Education. The chapter is divided into three sections. Section I discusses the development of education in pre-merger Sikkim, section II focuses on the post-merger educational development in Sikkim and section III tries to study the participation of Bhutias in the education sector.

Education was imparted through religious teachings in the form of Monastic education influenced by Tibetan system during the monarchy period. Monastic education was

accessible to the Bhutia *Lamas* only. The commoners did not get access to the Buddhist system of Education. Later, development of formal education in Sikkim began with the advent of the Christian missionaries in 1880's. Schools established were mostly primary schools. The first government school was Bhutia Boarding School, opened in 1906. Nepali Boarding School was the second government school established in 1907 and Enchey School was established in the Enchey monastery in 1909. More schools were established in 1913-14.

The study reflects that Education Department under the "Director of Education, Sikkim State" assisted by the "Board of Education, Sikkim State" was established in 1920 which accelerated the development of education in the state. The appointment of Education Inspector of Schools in 1945 and the appointment of first Executive Councillor of Education department in 1953 made education system more systematic and structured. In 1960, number of schools increased to 110 with 567 teachers and 12521 students. In 1970, total number of schools were increased to 263. Around 300 schools were established in Sikkim by 1976.

Post-merger period saw an increase in schools in 2019. East district has the largest number of schools and teachers, while, the North district has the least number of schools and teachers. The study reflects that the percentage of female teachers is higher than males in almost all the four districts. The literacy rate in 1971 was 7.74% and at present Sikkim is represented as the third highest in literacy rate with 82.2% in the country. The development of higher education in Sikkim laid its foundation quite late as compared to other Indian States. It saw a remarkable increase in number of Colleges and universities since 2000.

In the pre-merger period the Bhutias got the best opportunity in education through monastic education. The trend continues as Bhutia representation in education sector in the state is quite impressive. As per Census 2006, the literacy rate of Bhutias is at 81.09%. Male literacy rate is higher with 86.88% than female literacy rate, which is 75.03%. It is found that Bhutias have outnumbered the other two communities Lepcha and Limboo as language teachers in government schools. In 2017, Bhutias accounted for 38.7%, Lepchas were 30% and Limboos were 25.6 % as language teacher.

In higher education sector, the study reflects that in 2018, 55% of teachers teaching in colleges in Sikkim belonged to Nepali community (taking all the Nepalese communities together) as a whole, while, 23.3% represented the Bhutia group, 10.6% are from ST category, 6% are Lepchas and 3.4% belonged to 'Others' category. The enrolment of students in last three years in Bachelor Degree Courses (2016-18) shows the enrolment of Nepali students as the highest, followed by Lepchas and Bhutias. Similar pattern is followed in case of enrolment in the post graduate courses under Directorate of Higher Education, HRDD, Govt. of Sikkim. The enrolment of the Bhutias are shown less as most of the Bhutia families send their children outside the state for higher education.

The last chapter consists of Case Studies conducted in the three districts, North, East and West districts of Sikkim. The objective was to substantiate the study on socio-economic and political status of Bhutias in Sikkim. Three Bhutia dominant villages; Tashiding in West Sikkim, Lachung in North Sikkim and Tathangchen in East Sikkim were selected for the purpose.

The findings substantiate the data provided by the government reports regarding the transformations and diversification in the occupational pattern among the Bhutia families in Sikkim. Agriculture as their traditional occupation has declined as they are pursuing other alternative occupations. The case study shows that the number of Bhutia agricultural households, both as agriculturist and agricultural labour has declined, but they continue as owners of large land plots. While members of Bhutia families have taken up new professions and switched over to different business enterprises, they continue to hold plots of lands and therefore have different sources of income. In the North district almost all of them have shifted to tourism business.

Among the surveyed Bhutia families, the family sizes have become smaller and are mostly nuclear type. The findings show that pursue of education and literacy has increased among the Bhutias and majority of them have received education up to graduation and most of them have received their higher education outside Sikkim.

The largest ruling tribe in Sikkim, at one time, the Bhutias, established their own kingdom, but in course of time they had to surrender their political power to the demand for constituting a democratic state. In spite of this 'change', the Bhutias, today continue to occupy high position in the society. They played a prominent role in the

pre-merger period, they also have maintained their influence and role in the post-merger period. Occupying most of the high posts in the state administration, the Bhutias still maintain their position as elite in post-merger Sikkim.

The economy and culture was shaped by the Tibetan Buddhist elements brought in by the Bhutias and implemented through the monarchy. The political status of Sikkim has changed over the years, politics has been more secularized, influence of *lamas* and monasteries in administration has ceased, but the influence of the Bhutias in the society continues, and so does the role of *lamas* in the society. Reservation of one *Sangha* seat in the Assembly election has also given a scope to the *lamas* to get directly involved in state politics.

The state government has expressed the importance of the community (Bhutia) by retaining few of their practices even today. Bhutia has been recognized as state languages in addition to Lepcha and Limboo. These three regional languages are now recognized at Master degree level in the state's only Central University. The influence of Bhutia culture and traditions on Sikkimese society is also evident. The state government's annual calendar is still based on the Tibetan Lunar calendar:- the calendar that Sikkimese Bhutias follow. All the Buddhist festivals and occasions are declared as state holidays in Sikkim. For example, Saga Dawa is a Buddhist religious festival that falls in the fourth month of the Tibetan lunar calendar. It is a state holiday. All educational institutes, banks, government offices are closed on this day. The day is marked by a religious procession every year, where all communities participate in the procession carrying the holy Buddhist texts, Kangyur. To observe this holy month, all butcher shops are closed for 15 days, killing of animals and selling of meat in the state are prohibited during the period. Similarly, the first month of the Tibetan lunar calendar is declared a holy month, where selling of meat is banned for seven days. Selling of meat during these holy month is a punishable offence in Sikkim. The Tibetan influenced Bhutia architecture with paintings of Buddhist motifs and ornamentations are evident in the structure of government buildings, including schools and colleges. These typical architecture, the monasteries, the institute of Tibetology in Gangtok, various monastic festivals, the *Sangha* seat in Assembly and the role of the monks in state politics, often remind one of its Buddhist heritage. The participation of all communities in the Bhutia customs, rites and rituals points to the 'Buddhist essence' in all aspects of social life.

Yet, at the same time, it is also a fact that despite their overall comfortable position in the state, the Bhutias (along with the Lepchas) do suffer from a feeling of loss and resent the gradual marginalisation in politics of the state. Their aspirations and demands have become an issue in the politics. One instance is the inclusion of Tamang and Limboo in the Scheduled Tribe list in 2002. The sharing of the 12 B-L seats in the state Legislative Assembly has also been a debated issue. But that is a different issue of the state politics. Fearing a gradual dilution of their identity and marginalisation they have formed various associations like *Denzongki Lho Khay*, *Bhutia Literary Development Association* with an objective of preserving their language and identity. *Bhutia Kayrab Yargay Tshopo Lhoriy Lushey Sangkyob* are such groups that supports the community by taking language classes for younger people to learn Bhutia language, culture, traditions and history.

On the whole, an analysis of the available data do point to the fact that despite their small number, their hold on state bureaucracy, government jobs and land holding is still proportionately very high. With sound socio-economic background particularly their hold on land have helped them to maintain their identity as an elite community in spite of the ‘change’ that had set in the polity and economy of the state. And the impact of Bhutia practices and rituals continue to be prominent in Sikkim.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Sikkim Scheduled Tribe Order 1978

Appendix II: Enrolment of Students' in Government Colleges in Sikkim: 2018

Appendix III: Revenue Order No. 1

Appendix IV: Article 371 (f)

APPENDIX I

[THE CONSTITUTION (SIKKIM) SCHEDULED TRIBES ORDER, 1978

(C.O. 111)

In exercise of the powers conferred by clause (1) of article 342 of the Constitution of India, the President, after consultation with the Governor of the State of Sikkim, is pleased to make the following Order, namely :-

1. This Order may be called the Constitution (Sikkim) Scheduled Tribes Order, 1978.
2. The tribes or tribal communities, or parts of, or groups within, tribes or tribal communities, specified in the Schedule to this Order, shall, for the purposes of the Constitution, be deemed to be Scheduled Tribes in relation to the State of Sikkim so far as regards members thereof resident in that State.

THE SCHEDULE

1. Bhutia (including Chumbupa, Deptsupa, Dukpa, Kagrey, Shupa, Tabstan, Trompa, Yolmo)
2. Lepcha
3. Limbu
4. Tamang

¹ Referential with the Ministry of Law, Justice and Company Affairs, South, No. C.L.E. 20223, dated the 22nd June, 1978, Gazette of India, Extraordinary, 1978, Part II, Section 311, page 346.

² In the App. (Vol. 28), c. 8 and the Schedule 3rd.

APPENDIX II

Enrolment of Students in Government colleges, 2017-18

Table 1. Sikkim Govt. College Rhenock - 2017-18

Semester	Bhutia	Lepcha	ST (Tamang, Limboo)	Sherpa	SC	Nepali	Others
BA.VI	6	5	15	2	2	59	2
B.A II	4	8	34	5	15	154	8
BA. IV	6	3	17	4	5	63	5
Total	16	14	66	11	22	276	15

Source: Human Resource Development Department, March, 2018.

Table 2. Namchi Govt. College 2017-18

Semester	Bhutia	Lepcha	ST (Tamang, Limboo)	Sherpa	SC	Others	Nepali
B. Sc VI	4	17	36	7	5	3	122
B. Sc IV	11	15	28	9	3	6	134
B. Sc II	8	13	27	8	8	9	114
B.A VI	15	27	105	15	14	11	257
B.A IV	18	30	91	18	29	9	253
B.A II	20	46	98	26	22	10	322
B. Com VI	3	13	26	5	6	11	88
B. Com IV	6	12	30	9	5	6	99
B. Com II	6	12	15	8	5	6	81
Total	91	185	456	105	97	71	1470

Source: Human Resource Development Department, March, 2018.

Table 3. Sikkim Govt. College Tadong, 2017-18

Semester	Bhutia	Lepcha	ST (Tamang, Limboo)	Sherpa	SC	Others	Nepali
B.Sc/ B.Com/B.A VI	122	118	170	11	24	13	468
B.Sc IV	14	11	25	10	2	3	81
B.Sc II	21	13	27	8	5	0	85
B.A IV	83	110	100	16	13	5	198
B.A II	107	121	87	18	19	2	238
B.Com IV	14	12	16	2	2	1	54
B.Com II	9	19	17	1	5	0	35
B.VOC	3	5	5	1	2	5	38
Total	380	413	471	53	72	31	1254

Source: Human Resource Development Department, March, 2018.

Table 4. Sikkim Govt. College – Burtuk, 2017-18

Semester	Bhutia	Lepcha	ST (Tamang, Limboo)	Sherpa	SC	Others	Nepali
B.A VI	28	28	56	5	16	20	108
B.A IV	46	46	31	19	17	12	250
B.A II	51	55	36	16	13	22	181
B. Com VI	1	6	11	2	4	4	40
B. Com IV	4	20	13	6	0	0	0
B. Com II	14	9	10	6	2	7	64
Total	144	164	157	54	52	65	643

Source: Human Resource Development Department, March, 2018.

Table 5. Government Arts College, Mangshila, 2017-18

Semester	Bhutia	Lepcha	ST(Tamang, Limboo)	Sherpa	SC	Others	Nepali
B.A I	10	12	15	1	3	7	14
B.A III	11	14	26	1	3	3	14
Total	21	26	41	2	6	10	27

Source: Human Resource Development Department, March, 2018.

REVENUE ORDER NO. 1.

With reference to Order dated the 2nd January 1917, it is hereby again notified to all Ryots, and standards holders that no Bhutias and Lepchas are to be allowed to sell, mortgage or sub-let any of their land to any person other than a Bhutia or Lepcha without the express sanction of the Darbar or officers empowered by the Darbar in their behalf, whose order will be obtained by the Ryots concerned. Any non-compliance therewith will be severely punished.

In this order the term 'mortgage' means mortgaging the whole or part of holding on the Biver or muskata system and the term 'sub-let' means sub-letting the whole or part of holding on the Palkuria system.

DEFINITION

- (1) 'Biver' means mortgaging land to another person who enjoys the produce of the land as interest, so long as the principal loan remains unpaid.
- (2) 'Muskata' means mortgaging of fields to a creditor who enjoys the produce of the field as an annual instalment towards the loan.
- (3) 'Palkuria' means sub-letting, where a ryot allows another person to cultivate upon a portion of his own holding, generally receiving from his tenant in cash and some assistance in cultivating his own fields.

Gangtok,
The 17th May, 1917.

C. A. Bell,
Superintendent, Sikkim State.

PART XXI
TEMPORARY, TRANSITIONAL AND
SPECIAL PROVISIONS

371F. Special provisions with respect to the State of Sikkim.—Notwithstanding anything in this Constitution,—

- (a) the Legislative Assembly of the State of Sikkim shall consist of not less than thirty members;
- (b) as from the date of commencement of the Constitution (Thirty-sixth Amendment) Act, 1975 (hereafter in this article referred to as the appointed day)—
- (i) the Assembly for Sikkim formed as a result of the elections held in Sikkim in April, 1974 with thirty-two members elected in the said elections (hereinafter referred to as the sitting members) shall be deemed to be the Legislative Assembly of the State of Sikkim duly constituted under this Constitution;
- (ii) the sitting members shall be deemed to be the members of the Legislative Assembly of the State of Sikkim duly elected under this Constitution; and
- (iii) the said Legislative Assembly of the State of Sikkim shall exercise the powers and perform the functions of the Legislative Assembly of a State under this Constitution;
- (c) in the case of the Assembly deemed to be the Legislative Assembly of the State of Sikkim under clause (b), the references to the period of five years, in clause (1) of article 172 shall be construed as references to a period of four years and the said period of four years shall be deemed to commence from the appointed day;
- (d) until other provisions are made by Parliament by law, there shall be allotted to the State of Sikkim one seat in the House of the People and the State of Sikkim shall form one parliamentary constituency to be called the parliamentary constituency for Sikkim;
- (e) the representative of the State of Sikkim in the House of the People in existence on the appointed day shall be elected by the members of the Legislative Assembly of the State of Sikkim;
- (f) Parliament may, for the purpose of protecting the rights and interests of the different sections of the population of Sikkim make provision for the number of seats in the Legislative Assembly of the State of Sikkim which may be filled by candidates belonging to such sections and for the delimitation of the assembly constituencies from which candidates belonging to such sections alone may stand for election to the Legislative Assembly of the State of Sikkim;
- (g) the Governor of Sikkim shall have special responsibility for peace and for an equitable arrangement for ensuring the social and economic advancement of different sections of the population of Sikkim and in the discharge of his special responsibility under this clause, the Governor of Sikkim shall, subject to such directions as the President may, from time to time, deem fit to issue, act in his discretion;
- (h) all property and assets (whether within or outside the territories comprised in the State of Sikkim) which immediately before the appointed day were vested in the Government of Sikkim or in any other authority or in any person for the purposes of the Government of Sikkim shall, as from the appointed day, vest in the Government of the State of Sikkim;
- (i) the High Court functioning as such immediately before the appointed day in the territories comprised in the State of Sikkim shall, on and from the appointed day, be deemed to be the High Court for the State of Sikkim;
- (j) all courts of civil, criminal and revenue jurisdiction, all authorities and all officers, judicial, executive and ministerial, throughout the territory of the State of Sikkim shall continue on and from the appointed day to exercise their respective functions subject to the provisions of this Constitution;
- (k) all laws in force immediately before the appointed day in the territories comprised in the State of Sikkim or any part thereof shall continue to be in force therein until amended or repealed by a competent Legislature or other competent authority;
- (l) for the purpose of facilitating the application of any such law as is referred to in clause (k) in relation to the administration of the State of Sikkim and for the purpose of bringing the provisions of any such law into accord with the provisions of this Constitution, the President may, within two years from the appointed day, by order, make such adaptations and modifications of the law, whether by way of repeal or amendment, as may be necessary or expedient, and thereupon, every such law shall have effect subject to the adaptations and modifications so made, and any such adaptation or modification shall not be questioned in any court of law;
- (m) neither the Supreme Court nor any other court shall have jurisdiction in respect of any dispute or other matter arising out of any treaty, agreement, engagement or other similar instrument relating to Sikkim which was entered into or executed before the appointed day and to which the Government of India or any of its predecessor Governments was a party, but nothing in this clause shall be construed to derogate from the provisions of article 143;
- (n) the President may, by public notification, extend with such restrictions or modifications as he thinks fit to the State of Sikkim any enactment which is in force in a State in India at the date of the notification;

(o) if any difficulty arises in giving effect to any of the foregoing provisions of this article, the President may, by order, do anything (including any adaptation or modification of any other article) which appears to him to be necessary for the purpose of removing that difficulty:

Provided that no such order shall be made after the expiry of two years from the appointed day;

(p) all things done and all actions taken in or in relation to the State of Sikkim or the territories comprised therein during the period commencing on the appointed day and ending immediately before the date on which the Constitution (Thirty-sixth Amendment) Act, 1975, receives the assent of the President shall, in so far as they are in conformity with the provisions of this Constitution as amended by the Constitution (Thirty-sixth Amendment) Act, 1975, be deemed for all purposes to have been validly done or taken under this Constitution as so amended.

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DEMOGRAPHIC STATUS AND POSITION OF BHUTIA'S IN SIKKIM

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ABSTRACT

The study of demographic pattern of any society is important as it allows us to understand the nature in which our population changes over time and leaves its impact in the changing socio-economic and political scenario. Sikkimese society can be described as multi-ethnic segmented society which is an attribute of tribal social formation and not a multi-caste hierarchical society found in other parts of India. Historically, Sikkim was predominantly ruled by the Bhutia's, migrated from Tibet since 13th century. With time, the status and position of Bhutia's in Sikkim underwent great changes. The paper is an attempt to study the demographic status of Bhutia's in Sikkim. As per the census record Bhutia's were the largest community in Sikkim in early years. However, consequent changes occurred with the increase of migrated population in Sikkim, which became threat to the long existing position of Bhutia's as the dominant community. The paper relies on the available population census records for studying the demographic profile of communities in Sikkim. It is seen that the population of Sikkim has consistently increased. It is found out that there has been not much progress in Bhutia population as compared to population of the state.

KEYWORDS: Sikkim, Bhutia, Population, Status, Position, Change.

Sikkim, a multiethnic state is officially composed of twenty different communities as per the 2011 census. Basically Sikkim has three ethnic communities, Bhutia, Lepcha and Nepali. There is a consensus that Lepchas are the original population of Sikkim. The Limboo, the Mangar and the Bhutia are the other communities who have come to Sikkim quite early in the Middle Ages (Namgyal and Dolma, 1908). Initially Bhutia's had the absolute majority of population in Sikkim. Like any other society Sikkim also has witnessed changes in the population structure. Gradually Sikkim witnessed change in the demographic profile with the influx of the Nepali community. The bulk of the population belonging to the Nepali community from other parts of India especially from west Bengal, Assam (India) and Nepal migrated and settled in Sikkim during the late and early 20th centuries. The process of migration further got accelerated after Sikkim became the protectorate of the British in 1861. This migration of population, particularly Nepalese led Sikkim into the road of population diversity.

It is understood from the historical prospective that the settlement of Bhutia's in Sikkim basically began in the 15th and the 16th century. According to Maharaja Thutup Namgyal and Maharani Yeshey Dolma Namgyal (1908), the migration of Bhutia's took place in various forms and ways. Since the establishment of Chogyal rule (Nangyal dynasty) in 1642, the population of Bhutia's gradually expanded in Sikkim. The migration was also seen during the Chinese influence of Tibet and the escape of Tibet King cum religious head, His Holiness Dalai Lama into India.

Availability of limited source on the early demographic record of ethnic communities of Sikkim limits the study on the demographic profile of Sikkim. Only after 1888 when Sikkim came under British Superintendency, the population census was conducted by the British political officer in Sikkim. Before 1975, the population figures of the ethnic communities in Sikkim have also been drawn from Limboo chronicles and Lepcha folklores and legends. The Tibetan texts and traditions have also been the source for the record of ethnic population distribution in the early history of Sikkim.

According to Rishley, the first population census of Sikkim was held in 1891. It was the first ethnic wise population census of Sikkim. It shows that there existed about fourteen communities. The 1891 census gave rough population estimate of 30,458. With regard to population ratio the Lepchas stands at the top followed by Bhutia's, Limboo's, Gursung, Tamang's and others.

The first population census conducted in 1891 also reveals that Lepchas constituted the highest numbers of population with total 5762 persons. The male population included 2362 persons, females included 2399 persons and 1001 were children. Bhutia's were the second highest with total of 4804 persons, where the male population was 1966, 1960 were female population and 968 were children. The next highest population after Bhutia's were the Limboos constituting of total population of 3356, where male population comprised of total 1255 persons, female population included 1159 persons and 943 children.

The available data presents that even prior to the census of 1891, in Sikkim there existed a multi-cultural society. Apart from the Lepchas and the Bhutia's the other communities like Limboo, Tamang, Rai, Gurung, Khambu, Brahman

(Sharma), Chetri, Kami, Mangar, Newar and others lived in Sikkim. This indicates that the existence of other communities side by side has always been a threat to Bhutia paramountcy in Sikkim.

The demographic pattern underwent a great change with the Nepalese migration into Sikkim. The settlement of the Nepalese into Sikkim not only brought difference in the demographic profile but also created a new socio cultural life as the majority of the migrated Nepalese professed Hinduism.

Within a short span of time the Nepalese as a whole became the largest community in Sikkim, outnumbering both the Lepchas and the Bhutia's. However, in political and administrative management of the country, the migrated group of people remained minor players till the merger of Sikkim took place in 1975.

Considering Nepalese as an industrious people they were welcomed by the Chogyal of Sikkim. Nepalese were engaged in extending the settlements by clearing the forests and increasing agricultural cultivation. They introduced new methods of agriculture including the terraced farming. The migration of Nepalese helped Sikkim in the attainment of development and prosperity in the agricultural and economic fields.

Along with the Bhutia's, Lepchas and Nepalese, small and distinct group known as the Tsongs originally settlers from the Tsang-po valley in Tibet, now the Limbuwara district of Nepal, which was at one time a part of Sikkim, dispersed and settled down in various parts of Sikkim. Among early settlers of Sikkim, an important minority was that of Sikkim Indians. As this group were traders and businessmen, they exercised economic influence to a large extent. The Indians basically were from Rajasthan, Punjab, UP, Bihar and Bengal and are still the important community in Sikkim (Ratnada, 2012, page 9).

In Sikkim, the Lepchas and Bhutia's were the most dominant group in Sikkim till the late 18th and the beginning of the 19th century.

The first ever captured record of the Bhutia Population in Sikkim was in 1840. The Bhutia's were approximately 1995 in 1840 which has increased to 69598 in 2011. It is evident from the table below that the numbers of Bhutia's increased in every census. However, decline in the growth of Bhutia population has been noticed in 2011 census.

Table 1. Bhutia Population in Sikkim from 1840-1991

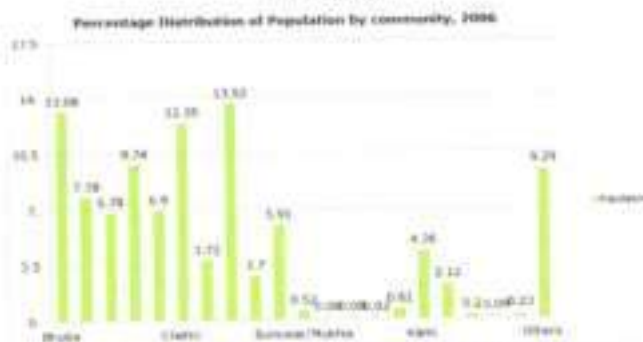
Year	Bhutias in Sikkim
1840	1995
1891	4894
1909	6600
1931	10411
1921	9639
1931	11070
1951	15626

1961	36577
1971	36760
1981	21548
1991	65033
2001	70308
2011	69598

Source: SK Gurusang, 2012

As per the findings of Directorate of Economic, Social and monitoring and Evaluation (DESME) 2006, the entire population is distributed amongst 20 communities in the state. Rai from the Nepali community has the highest number of household which stands at 15430 households, followed by Bhutia's with 14769 households, Chetri (from Nepali Community with 13509 households and then by Limbo's with 10672 households.

Fig.1 Community wise Percentage of distribution of Population in Sikkim, 2006



Source: DESME, State Socio Economic Census, Govt. of Sikkim, 2006

Table 3. Percentage distribution of Bhutia population by age group in Sikkim, 2006

Population	0-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-14	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	60-64	65-69	70-74	75 Above	Not reported	
	13.08	10.92	11.59	12.63	12.94	12.88	13.60	14.04	14.27	13.51	13.72	13.94	13.81	15.14	15.45	15.77	16.96	15.15

Source: DESME, State socio-economic status census, 2006

Bhutia's comprise of total 13.08% out of the total population in the state. It is evident that within the age group 60 and above have higher population than the lower ages. The highest percentage of population is seen within the age group of 75 and above. It shows that the birth rate within this community is low as compared to death rate.

The census, 2011 gives the impression that the Bhutia population has decreased over the decade. It enumerates that total Bhutia population is 69598 as against 70308 in 2001. According to the population census of 2011, the highest number of Bhutia's are concentrated in the east district with 34043 persons, followed by south district with 13802 persons, west with 13779 persons and north district is the least Bhutia populated district with only 7971 persons.

Table.4 District wise distribution of Bhutia Population in Sikkim, 2011

District	Total population	Rural		Urban	
		Male	Female	Male	Female
Sikkim	69598	26127	24729	9097	9645
North	7971	4082	3889	815	398
South	13805	7330	6475	813	864
West	13779	6433	6526	407	413
East	34043	9493	9120	7479	7951

Source: Census of India, 2011

The population figure shows that in all the districts higher number of Bhutia population lives in rural areas. While making a comparative study between male and female population, the number of male population is higher than the female in rural areas. Only in west district female is slightly higher than the male population. The urban statistics show that in east, south and west district the female population has outnumbered the male population. The district where male population is higher in urban areas is the north district. In total, the female Bhutia population living in the urban areas is 9645 and that of male is 9097. At present the Bhutia population stands at 11.39% of the total population in Sikkim. In the wake of time, the population of Sikkim has consistently increased. Sikkim witnesses an increase of 1.23% in its population on yearly basis. The population

Though the rule of Bhutia's in Sikkim came to an end 42 years back, still they have been able to maintain their position to second largest community after Rai.

The paper has also extended to study district wise distribution of Bhutia Community in the state. It is noted that the East district comprises of the highest number, followed by south district, north district and then west district. Table below gives the picture of district wise distribution of Bhutia's in the state in 2006.

Table. 2 District wise distribution of Bhutia community, 2006

District	Bhutia population	Male	Female	Percentage %	Sex ratio
North	9221	4717	4504	13.42	955
East	37818	19404	18414	55.03	949
South	14177	7255	6922	20.61	954
West	7500	3787	3713	10.9	980

Source: State Socio Economic Census, Govt. of Sikkim, 2006

Total Bhutia population in Sikkim as on 2006 is 68716, where total male population consists of 35163 (51%) and 33553 (49%) of female population. All the districts comprises of male population to be at the higher side than the females. The same picture exists in the state as a whole where male population surpasses the female population in terms of demographic profile. Bhutia's in Sikkim have the maximum settlement (55.3% Bhutia populations) in the east district. Since east district, especially Gangtok was the last capital of Sikkim during the Chogyal so the Bhutia population also was concentrated more in this part of Sikkim. The Bhutia's of east, south and west districts have settlements along with the other communities also, but the north district has the habitations of mostly Bhutia's.

census shows that there has been not much progress in Bhutia population as compared to population of the state.

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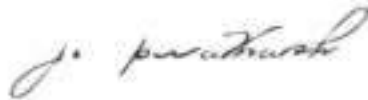
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Occupational and Socio-economic status of Bhutias in Sikkim

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Abstract- Sikkim, a tiny Himalayan kingdom till its merger with India in 1975, is one of the smallest states of North East India sharing multiple boundaries with China to the North, Bhutan to the east, Nepal to the west and West Bengal (India) in the south. Though demographically small in size with total 6, 07,688 number of people (2011 census), it is the homeland of multiple cultural-racial ethnic groups. Bhutias, Lepchas, Limboos and Nepalese are the different communities that live in Sikkim, of which the Nepalese constitute the majority of the population.

According to historians, the Lepchas are the original inhabitants of Sikkim. The others have migrated over different phases in the history of Sikkim. The Bhutias were the earliest migrants. However, historians like Chie Nakane, 1966 argue that Limboos and Magars too existed in Sikkim before the Bhutia migration. The Bhutias are basically Tibetan settlers from Kham province in eastern Tibet. According to Namgyal and Dolma (1908), they started migrating to Sikkim from the western and northern passes of Sikkim from 13th century onwards.

Bhutia after settling in Sikkim established its rule in 1642. Till the merger of Sikkim with India in 1975, Bhutias ruled Sikkim and accorded the highest position in political and socio-economic status. In the light of this discussion, the paper intends to discuss the occupational and socio-economic status of Bhutias in Sikkim.

Index Terms- Bhutias, Occupation, Socio-Economic, Status, Sikkim.

I. INTRODUCTION

Sikkim is a state of multi-ethnic cultural group and communities. Initially it was a barren land before people started migrating. Lepchas were the only original inhabitant of Sikkim. Bhutias migrated from Tibet to Sikkim and became the ruling authority of Sikkim in 1642. The Bhutia monarchy ruled Sikkim for 333years (1642-1975).

Bhutias who were identified as traders and Lepchas as agriculturists were the two dominant communities that existed in Sikkim initially. However, the arrival of the Nepalese from the 18th century onwards brought some changes in the socio-economic structure of Sikkim (T.B Subba, 1992). The Nepali settlement in Sikkim relates partly to the migration with the territorial conquest by Nepal in 1700 and 1740 and the arrival of British in 1887 to a great extent. The first political officer of Sikkim, J.C White, to a large extent was responsible for migration of the Nepalese (Basnet, 1974). Since then the Nepalese started outnumbering the other ethnic groups in terms of population and occupation.

The first population survey of Sikkim in 1891 recorded total population of 30,455, out of which Nepalese had the highest number with 15,458, followed by Lepchas with total 5,762 persons, Bhutias with 4,894 numbers and Limboos with 3,356 total population. Nepalese recorded 50% of the total population in the country. Subsequently, the Nepalese were the leading group in terms of numbers in all the census reports.

According to State Socio Economic Census, Govt. of Sikkim, 2006, Sikkim records 76,070 (13.08%) of Bhutias, 45239 (8.57%) of Lepchas, 56650 (10.7%) of Limboos and 349543 (60%) with Nepalese. There appeared a tremendous change in demographic structure which also led to change in the political and socio-economic structure in Sikkim.

1. Occupational and economic status of Bhutias in pre-merger Sikkim

For the assessment of the occupational and economic status of Bhutias in Sikkim, the study on the lines of pre and post-merger periods may be considered. The discussion on the traditional and the present occupational engagement of Bhutias allows us to draw a comparative understanding on the occupational and economic status of Bhutias in pre and post-merger period. As presented by various studies on Sikkim, the Bhutias accorded the position as the ruling community and enjoyed highest socio-economic status in the society in the pre-merger period.

The social stratification amongst the Bhutia community that existed during the pre-merger period gives a picture of the socio-economic status of Bhutias vis-a-vis other existing communities. During the monarchical set up in Sikkim (i.e. before 1975) the Bhutia society was structured into four social strata; Royal family, lamas (monks), kazis and the commoners. After the royal family, the lamas during those time occupied most respected position in the society. The lamas were entrusted as the custodian of the important monasteries in Sikkim. Monasteries possessed huge lands under them which made the lamas enjoy both revenue and administrative control in Sikkim. The Lamas also acted as the chief advisers to the Chogyal (maharaja) in both political and administrative affairs of the state. After lamas, the kazis, mostly belonging to Bhutia-Lepcha were the next high positioned group. Kazis were mostly the landlords and zamindars. The feudalistic state structure of Sikkim created a separate entity for the kazis. Lowest stratum was a mix of Lepchas, Bhutias and Nepalese who worked for the Chogyal and the Kazis as agriculturalist and unpaid laborers (Sinha, 2009).

Bhutia rulers began to establish their dominance because the central administration was maintained according to the Tibetan

style of state craft. The creation of new class of Kazis further accelerated the powers of Bhutias in Sikkim. After the royal family it was this class of people who commanded power over their regional territories. They also acquired traditional education basically entrusted towards religious learning. The kazis wielded considerable authority in the realm of economic and administrative arenas. In the later phases of the Chogyal rule, the kazis established themselves to be more influential and more powerful than the rulers. They were responsible for insulating feudalism and zamindari system to its peak in Sikkim. They were indeed responsible for promoting the main policies of aggravating administrative powers into their hands, specifically when Sikkim was encroached by foreign invaders, especially Nepal and Bhutan in the 18th century.

However, this administration of Sikkim underwent severe changes during the period of Colonial intervention. The change in the administrative structure was seen since the appointment of first British political officer in 1887. A new pattern of administration was introduced and new bureaucratic system was proposed by John Claude White in 1888, the first Political Officer of Sikkim. Hence, it is seen that the change in the wave in socio-economic and occupation pattern of people in Sikkim was brought by the British entry into Sikkim.

This new administrative structure opened new occupational avenues for the people of Sikkim. The agriculture based society slowly turned towards modern society which created avenues for many government services and new occupations. Bhutias being the most educated lot got the possible entry into these new occupations.

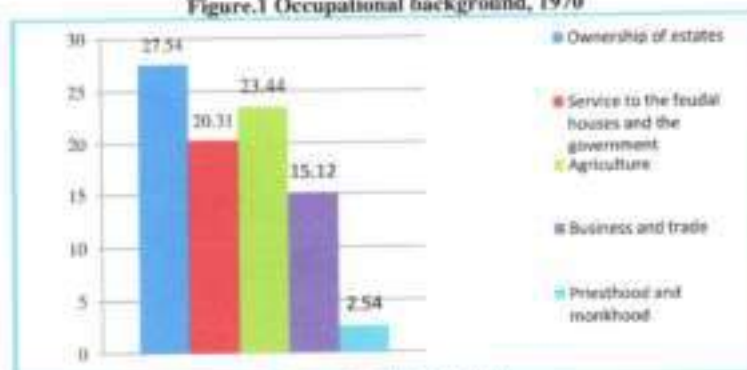
Secondly, the abolition of landlordism during the reign of Tashi Namgyal (1893-1963) further changed the occupational

pattern. The system of government during this period was based on absolute monarchy with deeply rooted feudalism. Many agitations took place in Sikkim for the abolition of landlordism. The abolition of landlordism made the kazis and land holders to opt for other means of occupation. By then many commercial networks were established in Sikkim. They moved towards different commercial occupations like household industries, banking, transport services, communication and construction works. Majority of the traders and contractors belonged to the Bhutia aristocrats and kazis. After they lost their privileges as landlords they got into state's best service sectors. However, the trade and market was captured by Marwaris and other traders from the plains.

Today, Bhutias are found working in different sectors in the state. Substantial amount of Bhutias still practice agriculture as the source of income along with pasturage. Apart from this they also practiced other existing occupations for their livelihood. Influenced by Chinese arts and crafts, carving and weaving (yarning) are some of the occupations followed by them. The main products being carpets and woolen clothes and this practice is been carried forward under Sikkim Handloom and technical institutions in modern Sikkim.

The study conducted on the occupational background of the Bhutia families by A.C Sinha in 1970 revealed that in Sikkim more than 90% of the people were engaged in agriculture. The figure below reveals the percentage of people engaged in different occupational patterns. It shows that 27.54% were the ownership of estate, 23.44% were agriculturists, 20.31% gave their service to the nobility and the aristocracy, and 15.12% were into trade and business.

Figure.1 Occupational background, 1970



Source: A.C Sinha, 1975.

It is evident from the field study conducted by A.C Sinha in 1970 that the major occupation of the Sikkimese people was agriculture. The highest percentage of the Bhutias were the owners of estates and second highest were in agriculture and then into government services.

Right after the merger, people got entry into the service sector of newly created state of Sikkim. According to A.C Sinha

(1975), Bhutias were the highest in number to get into the higher bureaucracy, followed by Kazis, who are also of Bhutia and Lepcha origin. Secondly, Bhutias got entry as Contractor-cum soldiers in voluntary politics. Table below presents the occupational affiliation of the dominant ethnic groups- 1975.

Table 1. Occupational affiliation of the dominant ethnic groups- 1975

[1] Sl. No	[3] Occupation	[4] Bhutias	[5] Lepcha	[6] Khas	[7] Newars	[8] Nepalese	[9] Indians	[10] Unidentified	[11] Total
[12] 1	[13] Higher bureaucracy	[14] 45	[15] 2	[16] 34	[17] 9	[18] 2	[19] 1	[20] 31	[21] 124
[22] 2	[23] Trade and business	[24] 3	[25] -	[26] -	[27] 1	[28] 3	[29] -	[30] 11	[31] 55
[32] 3	[33] Contractor-cum soldiers in voluntary politics	[34] 12	[35] 1	[36] 2	[37] 1	[38] 2	[39] 37	[40] 33	[41] 51
[42] 4	[43] Agriculture	[44] 2	[45] -	[46] 4	[47] -	[48] 8	[49] -	[50] 33	[51] 47
[52] 5	[53] Professions	[54] 1	[55] -	[56] 1	[57] -	[58] 2	[59] -	[60] 9	[61] 17
[62] 6	[63] Priesthood and monkhood	[64] 8	[65] 3	[66] -	[67] -	[68] -	[69] 4	[70] 4	[71] 15
[72] 7	[73] Ownership of estate	[74] -	[75] -	[76] 5	[77] -	[78] -	[79] -	[80] -	[81] 5
[82] 8	[83] Others*	[84] 1	[85] -	[86] -	[87] -	[88] -	[89] 4	[90] 12	[91] 17

Source: A C Sinha, 1975.

So far we have seen the status and position of Bhutias in the pre-merger period. The assessment of community wise occupation and socio-economic status in Sikkim in pre-merger period sheds light that Bhutias dominated Sikkim politics after the establishment of their kingdom in 1642. And no doubt, they started enjoying the highest degree of social and economic status in the society. The Nepalese migration and settlement, however, brought some changes in the socio-economic structure, yet Bhutias retained their position as the highest among the social strata.

2. Occupation and socio-economic status of Bhutias in Post-merger period

This part of the paper tries to discuss the occupation and socio-economic status of Bhutias in the post-merger period. The assessment of occupational pattern and socio-economic status of Bhutias (visa-vis other communities) is discussed under the headings: occupational pattern, income status, landholding status in the state.

3.1 Occupational pattern

Since merger in 1975, various avenues for jobs and new occupational patterns emerged in Sikkim. This led to migration of people especially from India and neighbouring countries like Nepal in the search of new jobs which changed the demographic profile of the state. Sikkim in its initial period of statehood faced the challenge of meeting the demands of the new service sectors. There was great demand of skilled and educated manpower which Sikkim lacked during the time. In such situations the migrated Nepalese and Bhutias who were more educated among the communities in Sikkim were able to occupy better places in the service sectors in the state.

The occupational status of the existing communities captured in 1998 reflects that the Nepali group consisting of Bahun/Sharma, Chhetri, Pradhan/ Newar, Garung, Manger/Thapa, Tamang, Limbo, Rai, Sunwar and Dewan are the group with highest number occupying gazette posts in the state. Schedule tribes including Bhutia and Lepcha have the second highest number of employees in all cadre of job in 38 departments. Table 2. provides the information on the employment status of different communities in 38 departments in the state in 1998.

Table 2. Community-wise Employment Status in 38 Departments, 1998

Sl. No.	Communities	Selection IAS/IPS/IFS	Gazetted Grade I	Gazetted Grade II	Non Gazetted III	Class IV
1	Scheduled Tribe	23	95	120	888	1115

2	Scheduled caste	2	7	15	143	450
3	Nepali	20	86	220	1634	4618

Source: Report of the OBC Commission, 1998.

The Comparative study of the communities reflects that Nepalese being the greater in number in the state, employment number is also large. Schedule tribe which also includes Bhutia and Lepcha has the second highest number of employees distributed across all categories of employments in the state. The data of community wise employees in the state elicits that Nepalese group has the highest percent (74.3%) of total employees whereas Bhutia records 17.2% of employees and Lepchas are 8.5%.

To find out the working status of the people (community wise) living in the State, five types of nature of employment has been discussed, which covers the entire nature of employment pattern the State of Sikkim has been adopting; Regular, Work-charged, Ad-hoc, Muster Roll and employees working in private and other sectors. Table 3 presents the distribution of employees in the state in 2002.

Table 3. Community wise total numbers of employees - 2002.

Community/Caste	Regular	Work-charged	Ad-hoc	Muster Roll	Others/ PSU	Total
Nepali (Bahun, Bhujel, Chettri, Damai, Gurung, Jogi, Kami, Majhi, Manger, Pradhan, Rai, Sarki, Sherpa, Subba (limbo), Sunuwar, Tamang, Thami).	15026 (71%)	1205 (80%)	124 (67.8%)	7890 (81%)	1565 (74.6%)	25810 (74.3%)
Lepcha	1902 (8.9%)	72(4.8%)	19 (10.3%)	789 (8.1%)	171 (8.2%)	2953(8.5)
Bhutia	4275 (20.2%)	229(15.2%)	40 (21.9%)	1070 (10.9%)	361 (17.2%)	5975 (17.2%)
Total	21203	1506	183	9749	2097	34,738

Source: Sikkim - A Statistical Profile- 2004-05, Government of Sikkim.

The table sheds light that Nepalese has 71% of the regular employees, 80% as worked charged, 67.8% as adhoc, 81% employees working on muster-roll basis and 74.6% working in other sectors. Among the Bhutias 20.2% are regular employees, 15.2% are working as worked charged, 21.9 as adhoc employees, 10.9 % on muster roll and 17.2% working in other sectors. 8.9% of Lepchas are regular employees, 4.8% working on work charged, 10.3% on adhoc basis, 8.1% as muster roll and 8.2% working in other sectors in the state.

Similarly, we can see consistency in the increase in the number of employees amongst all three groups in 2006. Nepalese is the leading group followed by Bhutia and Lepcha communities. The available data on community wise number of employees in 2006 highlights on the total number of employees; regular and non-regular employees in the state. It also presents total number of employees working in the Private sector Units, including regular and non-regular. The following table presents the Community wise number of employees in the state in 2006.

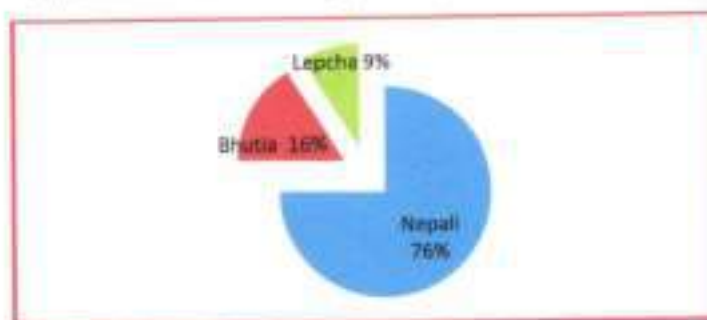
Table 4. Community wise total numbers of employees - 2006

Community	Government		PSU	Total
	Regular	Non Regular	Regular + Non Regular	
Nepali	21479 (73%)	20,878 (77.3%)	2584 (78.3%)	44941 (76%)
Bhutia	5367 (18.4%)	3481 (13%)	530 (16.1%)	9378 (16%)
Lepcha	2325 (10%)	2646 (10%)	183 (5.6%)	5154 (9%)
Total	29171	27005	3297	59473

Source: Department of Economics, Statistics, Monitoring and Evaluation, Govt. of Sikkim, 2006.

It is presented that in both government and non-government sector, Nepali community has the highest number (76%) of employees in the state. After Nepalese, Bhutias has the second highest number of employees (16%) and Lepchas has total of 9% employees share in the state.

Figure.2.Total numbers of employees (Regular + Non Regular) 2006



Source: Department of Economics, Statistics, Monitoring and Evaluation, Govt. of Sikkim, 2006.

Sinha (2009) argues that there are many reasons for Bhutias to get into the higher bureaucratic posts in the state, one being their affiliation to the royal family as well as their socio-economic status. Secondly, as mentioned earlier the educational background of the Bhutias keeps them edge above the other communities.

According to the available statistics provided by the Department of Personnel & Administrative Reform & Training, Government of Sikkim, 1999 and 2005, the ethnic background of the bureaucrats in Sikkim – 1999 & 2005 is provided in the following table.

Table 5. Ethnic Background of the Bureaucrats in Sikkim – 1999 & 2005

Number of cadres and percentage								
Ethnic Communities	1999				2005			
	IAS	IPS	IFS	Total	IAS	IPS	IFS	Total
Lepcha	-	-	-	-	01(2.1)	-	-	01
Bhutias	12 (44.5)	04 (17.4)	05(21.7)	21	13(28.3)	03(12.0)	05(17.8)	21
Nepalis	06(22.2)	05(21.7)	06(26.1)	17	9(19.6)	4(16.0)	6(21.4)	19
Sherpas	-	-	-	-	01(2.1)	-	-	01
Others	09(33.3)	14(60.9)	12(52.2)	35	22(47.8)	18(72.0)	17(60.7)	57
Total	27	23	23	73	46	25	28	99

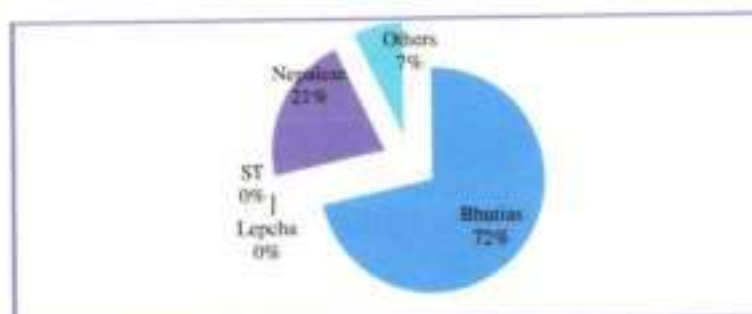
Source: Department of Personnel & Administrative Reform & Training, Government of Sikkim, 1999 and 2005.

It shows that the Bhutias are in the highest administrative posts in the state. In the highest category of administrative posts like IAS, Bhutias are represented 44.5%, 17.4 % in IPS and 21.7% in IFS. In total, Bhutia makes 28.7% of administrators in 1999. However, the percentage of the Bhutia bureaucrats in 2005 has

slightly decreased to 21% as compared to 1999. But as a community as a whole it has the highest percentage in the state.

There was not only high participation of Bhutias in the state administration; the number of civil servants in higher bureaucratic posts is also highest in the state.

Figure 3: List of highest cadre (IAS) in Sikkim, 2006



Source: Statistical Report, DESME, 2006.

The above figure is an indicative of the fact that the Bhutias are highest in the cadre of IAS in the state government.

3.2 Income status

Income as a determinant factor of socio-economic status can be measured in a variety of ways, including family income and

assessments of wealth. The collection of income includes the measurement of total income, earned or unearned.

The socio-economic survey conducted by the Department of Economics, Statistics, Monitoring and Evaluation, Govt. of Sikkim in 2006 presents the distribution of income of different communities in 2006.

Table 6. Community wise percentage distribution of household by income category, 2006

Community	Household	0 - 2500	2501-5000	5001-10000	10001-25000	25001-Above
Bhutia	14769 (7.81)	11.48	11.46	13.69	16.73	21.52
Lepcha	8041 (4.3)	7.70	7.59	6.88	6.44	5.59
Nepali	188915 (88.1)	80.82	80.95	79.43	76.83	72.89
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Source: Department of Economics, Statistics, Monitoring and Evaluation, Govt. of Sikkim-2006.

Considering the distribution of population in the state, the Nepalese are more employed and as expected they are the highest income bearers.

It is seen that the Nepalese have the highest percentage of income. Bhutias as always comes after Nepalese, followed by Lepchas.

3.3 Landholding status

The pattern of land distribution is one of the major determining factors of studying economic status of the people. In this study we have also been able to categorize communities on the lines of distribution of land by land size.

Table 7. Community wise Distribution of Land in Sikkim (Area in Hectares), 2006

Communities	Total Paddy fields (Area %)	Total Dry Land (Area %)	Waste land (Area %)	Cardamom (Area %)	Total Cultivable land (Area %)
Bhutia	21.12	16.13	24.18	27.05	20.32
Lepcha	14.97	—	17.53	32.72	20.38
Nepali	57.19	64.95	62.00	22.37	58.66

Source: Land Record Section, Department of Land Revenue, Govt. of Sikkim, Gangtok, 2006.

The distribution of land by size, 2006 gives us an understanding that Bhutia as a community possesses 20.32 % of cultivated land area and Lepcha possesses 20.38% of cultivated land. Nepalese (total of land owned by Bahun, Bhujel, Chettri, Damai, Gurung, Jogi, Kami, Majhi, Manger, Pradhan, Rai, Sarki, Sherpa, Subba (limbo), Sunuwar, Tamang, Thami) is the group possessing 58.66% of the total land in the state.

Table 8. Community wise distribution of land by land size, 2006

Community	Less Than 1 Acre	More than 1 Acre less than 2.5 Acre	More than 2.5 Acre less than 5 Acre	More than 5 Acre less than 10 Acre	More than 10 Acre less than 25 Acre	More than 25 Acre	Grand Total
Bhutias	83.17	10.58	2.40	2.40	0.96	0.48	100.00
Lepcha	78.81	13.91	3.97	0.00	3.31	0.00	100.00
Tamang	86.84	7.89	0.00	2.63	2.63	0.00	100.00
Limbo	91.45	4.61	1.97	1.97	0.00	0.00	100.00
Bahun	88.15	11.11	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.74	100.00
Chettri	84.83	12.36	2.25	0.00	0.56	0.00	100.00
Pradhan	87.50	7.50	2.50	2.50	0.00	0.00	100.00
Rai	89.21	8.27	2.16	0.36	0.00	0.00	100.00
Manger	85.48	14.52	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	100.00
Gurung	95.31	1.56	1.56	1.56	0.00	0.00	100.00
Suwar/Mukhia	100.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	100.00
Thami	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Jogi	100.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	100.00
Dewan	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Bhujel	83.33	16.67	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	100.00
Kami	87.50	12.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	100.00
Damai	100.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	100.00
Sarki	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Maji	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Sanyasi/giri	100.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	100.00
Others	100.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	100.00
Grand total	86.80	9.60	1.91	0.88	0.66	0.15	100.00

Source: Department of Economics, Statistics, Monitoring and Evaluation, DESME, 2006.

Detailed status of land holding by land size presents that 83.17% of Bhutia households possess less than 1 Acre of land, 10.58% of households possess more than 1 acre and less than 2.5 acres of land, 2.40% Bhutia households possess more than 2.5 Acre less than 5 Acre of land, 0.96% possess more than 10 Acre and less than 25 Acre and 0.48% households possess more than 25 Acre of land.

Referring to the earlier works on Sikkim, Bhutias were identified as elites in the pre-merger period. According to AC Sinha (1975), Bhutia community possessed high political, social and economic status in Sikkim. Today, Bhutias accounts to 13.08% of the total population yet, they have good share in the state's employment, landholding and household income in the

state. It may be said that with the increasing population, Bhutias have been able to represent in almost all sections of the state.

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Photographs



1. Traditional Bhutia House



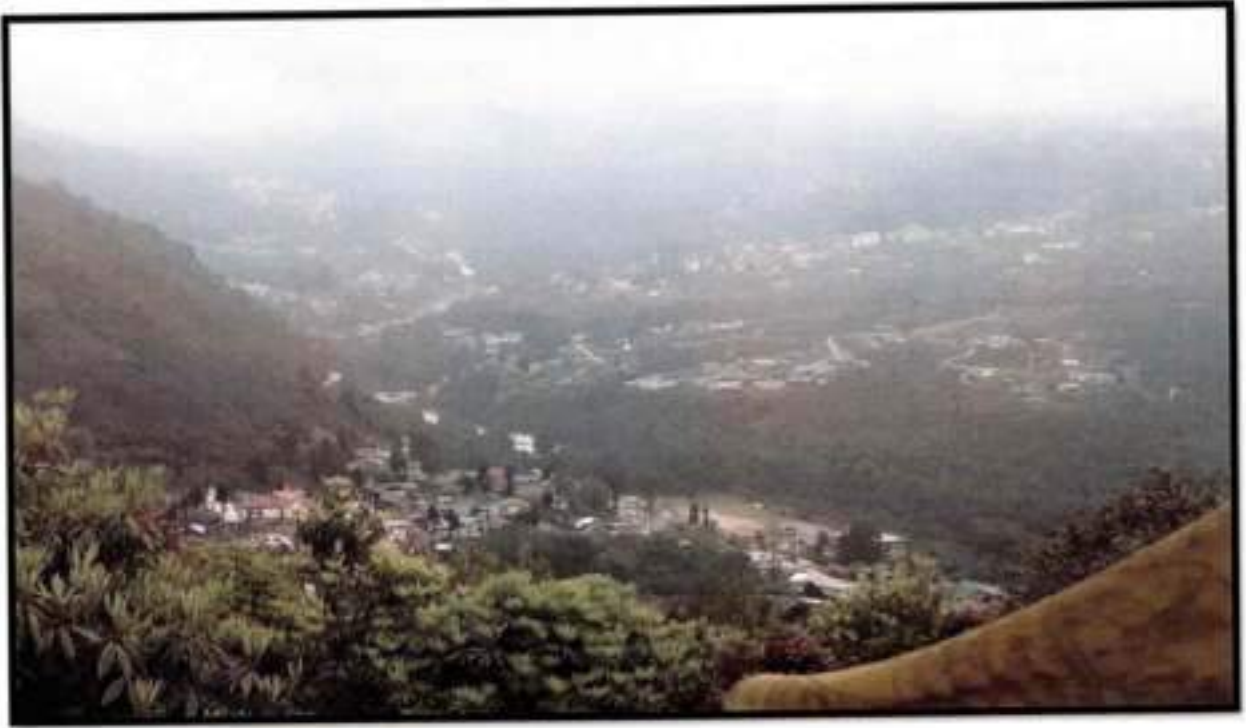
2. Bhutia Elderly Couple



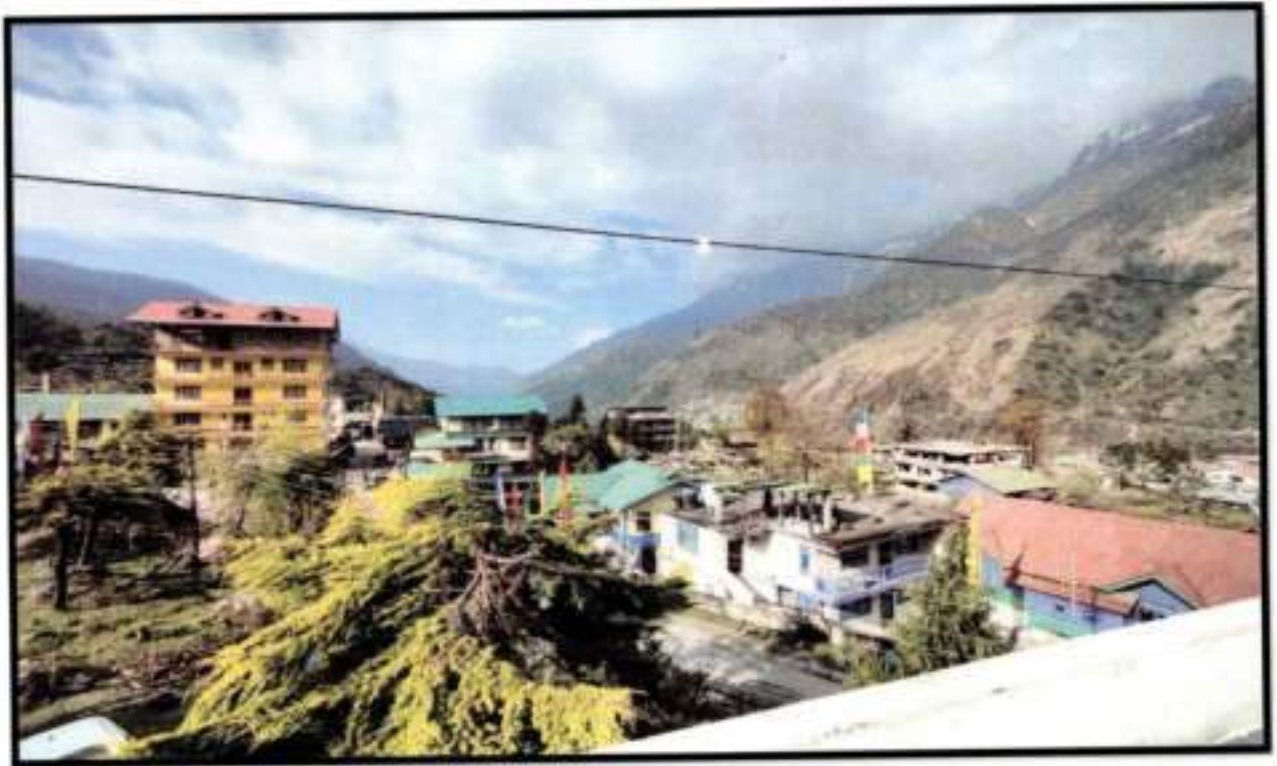
3.Gangtok town (Before Pre-merger period)



Gangtok town (Now)



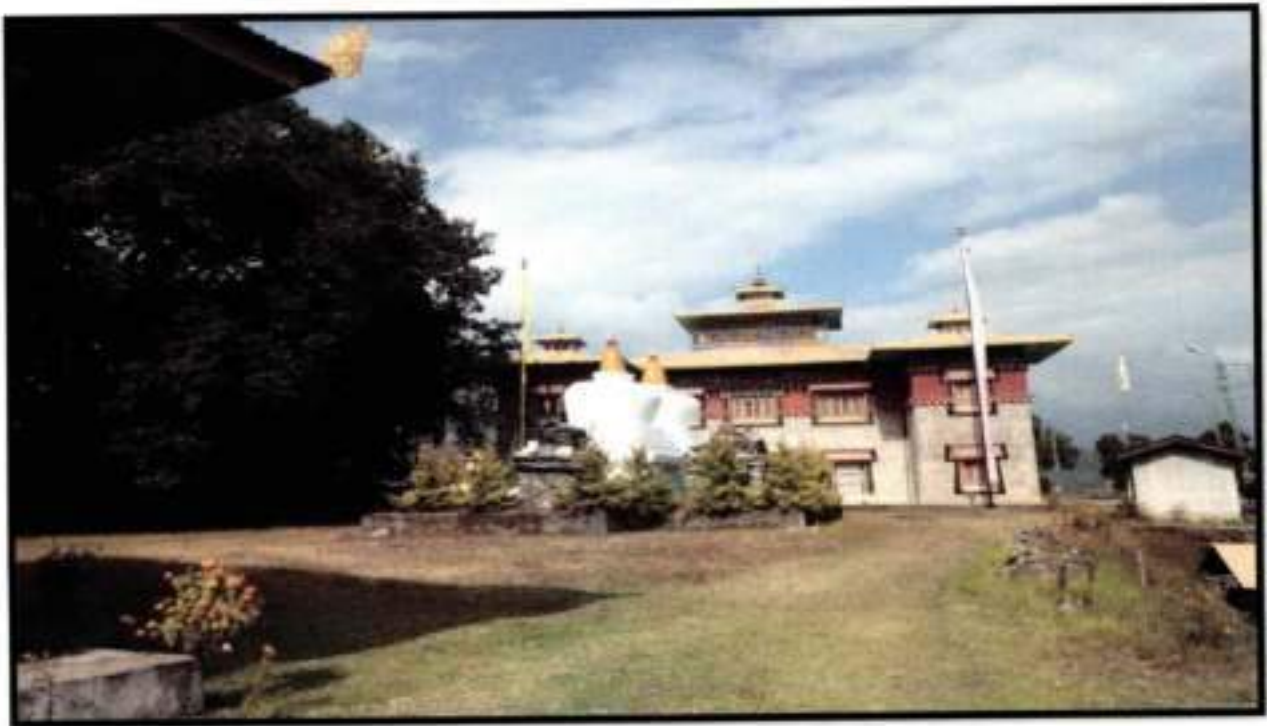
4. Lachung Valley, North Sikkim



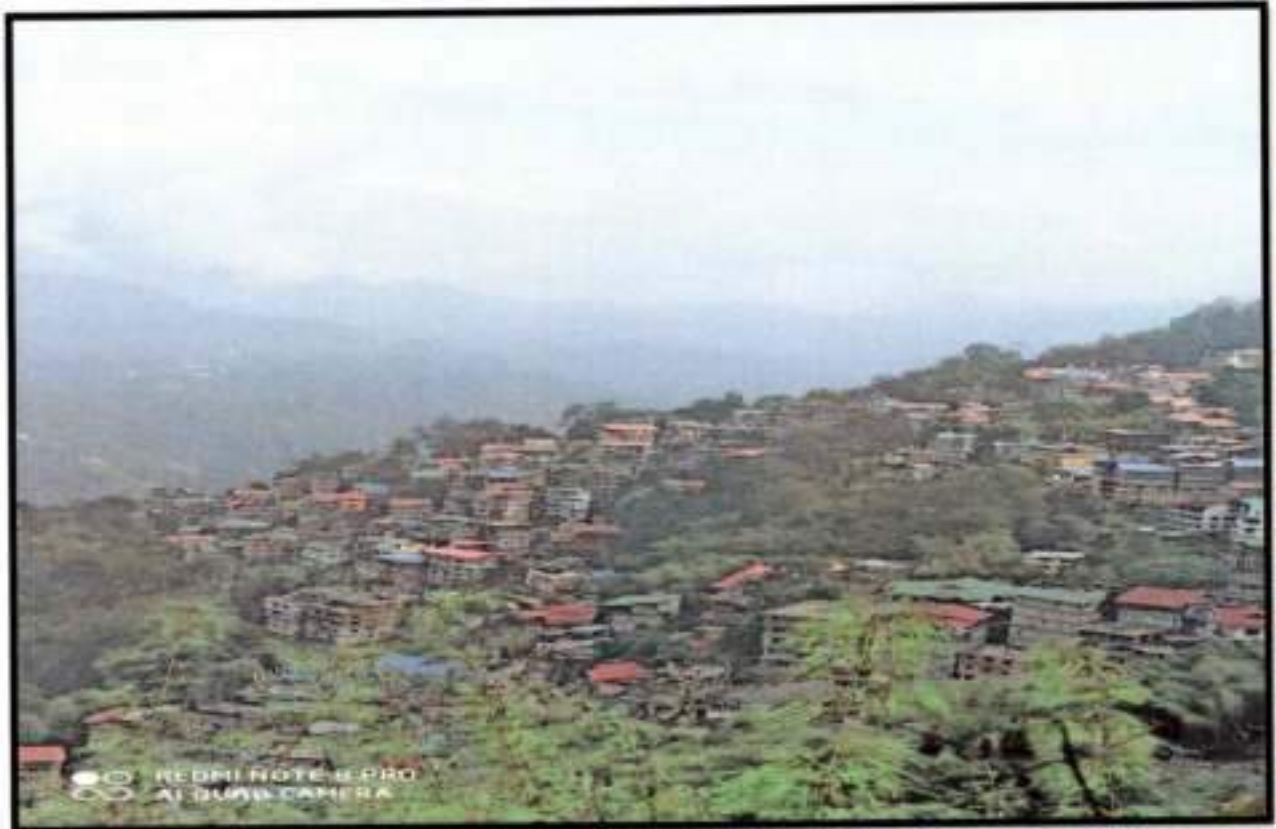
5. Lachung Baazar, North Sikkim



6. Tashiding-West Sikkim



7. Tashiding Monastery-West Sikkim



8. Tathangchen- East Sikkim

Glimpses of Case Studies



