

## Chapter-5

# Research Setting

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In a social science research of this kind, it is not possible to know and understand the data and draw the interpretations more accurately unless a fair understanding of the characteristic of the area and attitude of people is at command of the interpreter who intends to unveil an understanding of the implications and behavioural complexes of community. The socio-demographic background of the respondents is required to understand their behavioural complex.

### 1. AREA OF STUDY



The area of investigation of this study is situated in the state of Sikkim which is a landlocked Indian state located in the Himalayan mountains. The state of Sikkim in north-east India is a jewel-like mountain state of ethereal beauty and nestles in the heart of Himalayas. Cradled in the manifold splendours of nature deep within the snow clad Himalayas is Sikkim's capital *Gangtok*. Wrapped in mists and clouds, a garden state with an incredible variety of rhododendrons & a host of other flowers. The area of investigation belongs to the Mangan sub-division of the North district. The area of study is comprised of village Phodong.

## 2. DESCRIPTION OF THE STATE

Sikkim is situated in the north-eastern part of India and lies between  $27.33^{\circ}\text{N}$  and  $88.62^{\circ}\text{E}$ . Sikkim is a very small hilly state in the Eastern Himalayas, extending approximately 114 Kms from north to south and 64Kms from east to west, surrounded by vast stretches of Tibetan Plateau in the North, Chumbi Valley of Tibet and the kingdom of Bhutan in the east, Darjeeling district of West Bengal in the south and the kingdom in Nepal in the west. The state being a part of inner ranges of the mountains of Himalaya has no open valley and no plains but carried elevations ranging from 300 to 8583 metres above means sea level consisting of lower hill, middle and higher hills, alpine zones and snow bound land, the highest elevation 8583 metres. being the top of the Mt. Kangchendzonga itself.

The total geographical area of the state is 7096 sq. Kms. but according to 1958-60 survey operation and the gazetteer of Sikkim, the land area under different utilization categories is 7299 sq. Kms.

Sikkim has four districts, each overseen by a Central Government appointee, the district collector, who is in charge of the administration of the civilian areas of the districts. The Indian Army has control over a large part of the state, as Sikkim forms part of a sensitive border area with the People's Republic of China. Many areas are restricted to foreigners, and official permits are needed to visit them.

The four districts are East Sikkim, West Sikkim, North Sikkim and South Sikkim. The district capitals are Gangtok, Geyzing, Mangan and Namchi respectively. These four districts are further divided into subdivisions. Pakyong and Rongli are the subdivisions of the East district. Soreng is the subdivision of the West district. Chungthang is the subdivision of the North district. Ravongla is the subdivision of the South district.

## 3. CLIMATE OF THE STATE

Sikkim's climate ranges from sub-tropical in the south to tundra in the northern parts. The tundra-type region in the north is clad by snow for four months every year, and the temperature drops below  $0^{\circ}\text{C}$  ( $32^{\circ}\text{F}$ ) almost every night. The peaks of north-western Sikkim are perpetually frozen. Most of the inhabited regions of Sikkim, however, experience a temperate climate, with the temperatures seldom exceeding  $28^{\circ}\text{C}$  ( $82^{\circ}\text{F}$ ) in summer or dropping below  $0^{\circ}\text{C}$  ( $32^{\circ}\text{F}$ ) in winter; the mean monthly summer temperature is  $15^{\circ}\text{C}$ . The state has five seasons: winter, summer, spring, autumn, and a monsoon season between June and September. The average annual temperature for most of Sikkim is around  $18^{\circ}\text{C}$  ( $64^{\circ}\text{F}$ ).

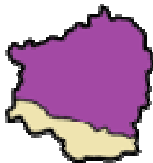

Sikkim is one of the few states in India to receive regular snowfall. The snow line ranges from 20,000 feet in the north of the state to 16,000 feet in the south. During the monsoon, heavy rains increase the risk of landslides. The record for the longest period of continuous rain in Sikkim is 11 days. In the northern region, because of the high altitude, temperatures can drop below  $-40^{\circ}\text{C}$  ( $-40^{\circ}\text{F}$ ) in winter. Fog affects many parts of the state during winter and the monsoons, making transportation perilous.

#### 4. THE GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF NORTH DISTRICT OF SIKKIM



The district is the largest of the four districts of Sikkim. North Sikkim is the northern district of Sikkim. Tourists need special permits to visit North Sikkim beyond Mangan. North Sikkim can be visited only as part of an organized tour.

#### 5. NORTH SIKKIM IS DIVIDED INTO TWO SUB-DIVISIONS

Name	Headquarters	Number of villages	Location
Chungthang	Chungthang	9	
Mangan	Mangan	46	



## 6. DEMOGRAPHICS

According to the 2011 census North Sikkim district has a population of 43,354, This gives it a ranking of 634th in India (out of a total of 640). The district has a population density of 10 inhabitants per square kilometre (26 /sq mi) . Its population growth rate over the decade 2001-2011 was 5.66 %.North Sikkim has a sex ratio of 769 females for every 1000 males, and a literacy rate of 77.39 %.

The people are mainly of Nepali descent. Other ethnic groups include the Lepcha and Bhutia communities. Nepali is the most widely spoken language in the district. It also has one of the lowest populated regions of the state.

## 7. GEOGRAPHICAL AND PHYSICAL FEATURES

The landscape is mountainous with dense vegetation all the way up to the alpine altitude before thinning out to desert scrub towards the Northern Tundra. Numerous waterfalls astride the main road make the trip to this district extremely picturesque.

The most prominent effect of the steepness of the valleys is the prevalence of landslides that at times drop to anything between 3000 to 5,000 ft (1,500 m) carrying devastation along their course. Most of them are caused either by the melting snow beds on top of the mountains or by erosive action of the rains.

Most of the people of the state reside near Mangan, the district headquarters which is about 2,000 feet (610 m) above sea level. Further north the elevation increases with the vegetation turning from temperate to alpine to tundra. Temperatures range from about 25° to below -40° in the extreme high reaches where the altitude is in excess of 6,000 metres. Kanchenjunga is the highest peak at over 8,000 m, straddling its eastern border with Nepal and can be seen clearly from the town of Singhik.

## 8. ECONOMY

Mangan is known as the Cardamom Capital of the world. The climate and terrain best suit the cultivation of the larger variety of Cardamom here. The region has many power projects and enjoys almost uninterrupted electricity. The steep gradient and the innumerable lakes on the higher reaches facilitate ideal conditions for generation of hydro electric power.

In 2006 the Ministry of Panchayati Raj named North Sikkim one of the country's 250 most backward districts (out of a total of 640).It is the only district in Sikkim currently receiving funds from the Backward Regions Grant Fund Programme (BRGF).

## 9. FLORA AND FAUNA

North Sikkim is home to the Red Panda (*Ailurus Fulgens*), a vulnerable species. This animal is the pride of Sikkim and is also the State Animal. It is generally found between heights of 2000 m to 4000 m. It is as big as a domestic Siamese cat (approximately 2 ft long), has a triangular shaped face with a stripe on its cheek, with

red fur and black eyes. It has a sprinkling of white on its back and chest. The tail is bushy, black or brown in color and long like that of a skunk. They generally live on treetops.

In 1977 North Sikkim district became home to Khangchendzonga National Park, which has an area of 1,784 km<sup>2</sup> (688.8 sq mi). It shares the park with West Sikkim district. It is also home to the Shingba (Rhododendron) Wildlife Sanctuary, which was established in 1984 and has an area of 43 km<sup>2</sup> (16.6 sq mi).

## 10. VITAL INFORMATION'S OF NORTH SIKKIM

1.	Geographical Area	:	4226 sq. KM
2.	Population(2011 census)	:	43,354
3.	Male to Female Ratio	:	1000:769
4.	Literacy rate	:	77.39%
5.	Number of Subdivisions	:	2
6.	Number of Revenue block	:	45
7.	Number of Gram Panchayats	:	18
8.	Number of Dumza	:	2
9.	Number of Panchayat Wards	:	98
10.	Number of Assembly Seats	:	3
11.	Number of Schools	:	76
12.	Estimated Households	:	6489
13.	Number of Health Centres	:	23
14.	Number of Town (Notified)	:	1
15.	Number of Consumer Cooperatives	:	10
16.	Number of Multipurpose Cooperative Societies	:	5
17.	Major Cash Crop	:	Cardamom
18.	Major Rivers	:	Tista, Lachung Chhu, Chakung Chhu, Umram Chhu, Yumthang Chhu etc.
19.	Other Agricultural Products	:	Paddy, Apple, Potato, Cabbage, Corn
20.	Major Tourist Spots	:	Mangan, Chungthang, Lachen, Lachung, Yumthang

## 11. LOCATION OF AREA: MANGAN

**Mangan** is a town in North Sikkim in the Indian state of Sikkim. The town is connected to the capital Gangtok by a metalled road. North Sikkim is the largest district of Sikkim in terms of area. The town lies in the geographic south of the district. After the opening up of the district, Mangan has witnessed a spurt in its economy, mostly due to tourism. The town opens up the Tibetan Plateau. Mangan also serves the towns of Lachung, Chungthang and Lachen in the far north. Owing to its elevation, the town enjoys a temperate climate.

Mangan is located at 27.52°N 88.53°E. It has an average elevation of 956 metres (3136 feet).

## 12. DEMOGRAPHICS

As of 2001 India census, Mangan had a population of 1248. Males constitute 62% of the population and females 38%. Mangan has an average literacy rate of 69%, higher than the national average of 59.5%: male literacy is 72%, and female literacy is 63%. In Mangan, 14% of the population is under 6 years of age.