

## Some General–Social, Economic, History, Geo–Political and Cultural Aspects of Sikkim (India): A Review

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**ABSTRACT:** The present review covers the published work on different field viz., history, politics, geography, society, economy and cultural aspects of Sikkim from the year 2000 to till dates. Information was taken from various research papers, books, articles, thesis, magazine, project reports, newspaper etc. During this period a large number of publications have been made on different aspects of glance of Sikkim. The papers have been published in more than 250 national and international journals. Present survey reveals that this scientific field has great potential for future progress. A total of 370 references including research paper, Ph.D. thesis, books, magazine and newspapers published during this period are given in the present paper.

**KEYWORDS:** Culture, Review, Sikkim and Society.

### I. INTRODUCTION

Sikkim is known for its richness in ethnic diversity as well as tribal communities. A good amount of literature work under different field work carried out in this state is lying scattered in various journals, books, thesis, magazines etc. Therefore, the present attempt has been made to compile and classify these studies and aims to outline an overview of geography, economy, history, sociology, politics and cultural and traditional aspects of Sikkim. According, the aim of the present study was to compose a general profile of the research related of literature of Sikkim (review) and to identify gaps and future perspectives in this field of research.

The state Sikkim, the smallest of the north-eastern states of India, lies between 27°43'40"-28°04'53" N latitude and 88°02'61"-88°97'39" E longitudes, covering a total area of 7,096 sq. km. politically, the State comprises four district viz. North, East, South and West. The topography of the state is highly variable with mountains, ridges and valleys with the altitude ranging between 250-8598 m above mean sea level.

### II. METHODOLOGY

Literature was collected from various sources like the libraries of several Universities and colleges within and outside the state, public libraries, personal collections and through internet. All the Journals, published articles, magazine, bulletins and newspaper were consulted (till dates 2020). Books and M. Phil /PhD thesis of history, politics, geography, society, economy and cultural and traditional aspects were also consulted. The data was analyses and calculated through the helps of ms-excel and interpretation of different years and its categories.

### III. RESULTS

#### Year-wise data analysis

The analysis of publications on different aspects of review work of Sikkim are shown in Table-1 & Fig.-1, that the earliest recorded review work (references) has been categorizes in different field with different time interval (years) i.e. history, politics, geography, society, economy and cultural aspects if Sikkim. Maximum number of publications (85) was made in economical aspects followed by history (66), culture and tradition (64). The maximum number of publication in different aspects i.e. 132 were between 2010-2015 followed by 2000-2005 (93), 2005-2010 (84) and 2015-2020 (52).

**Table:1. Year-wise publications**

Categories/Years	2000-2005	2005-2010	2010-2015	2015- 2020 (till date)
<b>History</b>	20	16	24	6
<b>Politics</b>	17	10	14	10
<b>Geography</b>	16	6	19	6
<b>Society</b>	7	6	17	18
<b>Economy</b>	20	25	32	8
<b>Cultures</b>	13	21	26	4

#### **Publication on different aspects in Sikkim**

The numbers of publications on different aspects of Sikkim are shown in Fig. 1. The major review work can be divided in various aspects i.e. History, Politics, Geography, Society, Economy and Traditional Culture.

#### **IV. HISTORY**

Lepchas was the early inhabitants of the state of Sikkim. Inflow of Bhutia began towards the region from Tibet in the 14th century, when the kingdom of Sikkim was established in 1642, Phuntsog Namgyal, the first 'King' came from the Bhutia community. The Namgyal dynasty ruled Sikkim until 1975. The word 'Sikkim' is *su him*, in Limbu language which means "new house."

After the independence of India in 1947, political parties began to be formed in Sikkim for the first time. The Indo-Sikkimese Treaty made Sikkim, an Indian protectorate in 1950, with India assuming responsibility for the external relations, defense, and strategic communications of Sikkim. India prepared a constitution for Sikkim that was approved by its national assembly in 1974. In a special referendum held in 1975, Sikkim became the 22nd state of India on May 16, 1975.

#### **Substantial amount of work on different aspects of History in Sikkim**

Chris (2000); Das (2001, 2002); Datta (2001); Risley (2001); Paudyal (2001); Denjongpa (2002); Bulletin of Tibetology (2003); Jackson, (2003); Bhowmik (2003); Joshi (2004); Verma (2004); Moktan (2004); Ronaldshay Lord, (2005); Gorer, Geoffrey (2005); Deepak (2005); Shrivastava (2006); Raatan (2006); Bhatt and Bhargava (2006); Sing and Sharma (2006); Sinha (2006); Pema and Zulca (2007); Subba (2007); White (2008); Starkel *et al.*, (2008); Eicher (2008); Vibha (2009); Braham (2010); Banerjee (2010 a &b); Mullard (2009, 2011); Mullard and Leiden (2011); Dorjee (2011); The Hindu (2011); Bhanja (2011); Eden Tshering (2011); Tran Hong, (2012); Bhattarai and Upadhyay (2012); Verma (2012); Raizada (2012); IPR (2002, 2007, 2012); Bhaumik (2013); David Lang (2013); Chettri and Mullard (2013); Doma Yishey (2013); Chattri (2011, 2013); Basnet and Guha (2014); Singh *et al.*,(2015); Duff (2015); Mishra (2008);); Eram Fatma (2017); Upadhyay (2014 a,b & 2017); Awasty (2017); Bhutia (2017); Rai (2004, 2015, 2019) and Vandenhelsken and Khamdhak (2020).

#### **V. POLITICS**

After the merger in India in 1975, the Congress Party of India began pressing on the Kazi to merge the Sikkim National Congress with the Congress. Now, the direct involvement of Congress leaders from Delhi was started in Sikkim Pradesh Congress affairs. The various organization of the Sikkim Pradesh Congress could not develop any integrity within the party. The internal contradiction within the Sikkim Pradesh Congress already started surfacing. During this time a sense of public demonstrations all over Sikkim took place in order to protest against the working of the Government which culminated in the formation of Sikkim Janata Party. The political leaders of Sikkim was ruled as a Chief Minister in different chronological period viz., Kazi Lhendup Dorji (1975-1979), followed by Nar Bahadur Bhandari (1979-1984), B. B. Gooroong (1984) again Nar Bahadur Bhandari (1985-1994) Sanchaman Subba (1994), Pawan Kumar Chamling (1994-2019) and Prem Sing Tamang (2019-till date).

### **Substantial amount of work on different aspects of Politics in Sikkim**

Lahiri *et al.*, (2001); Lama (2002); Bali (2003); Chamling (2001, 2004); Gooroong and Chakarvarthi (2004); Shreshtha (2005); Arora (2006); Arora (2007a, b); Chaudhuri (2001a, b, c); Government of Sikkim Sikkim (2001, 2007); IPR (2001, 2002a,b,2003, 2004, 2007); Chhetri (2008); Sinha (2003, 2008, 2009); Telegraph (2010); Sikkim NOW (2011); Tashi Tenzin, (2011); Kumar (2011); Syangbo (2012); Chakrabarti (2012); Hong Tran, (2012); Kharel and Bhutia (2013); Sikkim Reporter (2013); Rai (2013); Moktan (2014); Chhetry and Adhikari (2014); Das (2014); Kharga and Bhutia (2015); Syangbo and Bhutia (2016); Bhutia (2017); Buchanan (2018); Sonia Mehta, (2018); Sidhu (2018); Pradhan (2008, 2019); Kharga (2007a,b, 2019) and Om Marathe, (2019).

## **VI. GEOGRAPHY**

Sikkim Himalaya, corresponding to the state of Sikkim is located in the western end of eastern Himalaya. It lies between latitudes 27° 5' north to 28° 9' north and longitudes 87° 59' east to 88° 56' east. It is wedged between Nepal in the West and Bhutan in the East and China in the North and North-East. In the South it shares its Indian border with the state of West Bengal. It has a total area of 7,096 sq km.

The geology of Sikkim comprises the Lesser Himalaya, the central Himalayan and the Tethys Himalaya. Precambrian rocks cover the major parts of the State. Sedimentary and meta-sedimentary rocks are present in the southern region while north eastern and western regions consist of hard massive gneiss rocks. The south and central regions are composed of soft thin slates and half schistern rocks. The soil is mainly brown clay, shallow and generally poor in organic and mineral nutrients, however, it is rich in iron oxides. The soil is coarse and ranges from neutral to acidic. The texture of soil is loamy sand to silty clay loam.

The climate is highly variable in different regions of the state depending on the topography. Subtropical climate prevails in the lower hills and valleys with warm winters and hot, humid summers. Temperate climate with cool winters, hot summers and often heavy rainfall prevails in the interior regions.

Literacy is an important demographic elements and it is good quantify of human development. It is essential for social modernization, improvement in quality of life and preparation of manpower for rapid development. Education inculcates new ideas for betterment of the society in particular and nation in general. The high literacy rate is one of the most important indices of highly developed economy. According to the census of India 2011, there has been an increase in literacy of Sikkim from 68.69 per cent in 2001 to 82.20 in 2011; i.e. an average growth rate of 1.35 per cent per annum. During 1951 the literacy of Sikkim was 6.59 per cent as compare to the national average of 18.3 per cent. The figure rose to the tune of 82.20 per cent in 2011, it rose faster than the national average 74.04 per cent. Out of 607688 people in the state only 108168 people are illiterate persons. This means that less than 18 per cent of the total population is illiterate.

### **Substantial amount of work on different aspects of Geography in Sikkim**

Sanjukta (2000); Lahiri *et al.*, (2000); Sharmila (1999-2000); Registrar General of India (2001a, 2001b); SAC (2001); Registrar General & Census Commissioner, India (2001); Zaruba and Lama (2001); DESME (2002); Pradhan *et al.*, (2004); DESME (2004-05); Papola (2005); Asian Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Network (2006); State Socio Economic Census (2006); Chowdhury (2006); Lakshmana, (2008); Sharma and Joshi (2009); Bhasin (2011); Census of India (2001 to 2011); Director of Census Operation (2011a, 2011b); Government of India (2008); Government of Sikkim (2011); Census of India (2011); Zaruba and Yishey (2011); Population Census of Sikkim. (2001, 2011); Shankar (2011); Zaruba, and Karmakar (2011); Das and Roy (2012); Sahu & Jana (2013); Khawas (2014); Kumar (2014); Lama (2014); Dahal (2015); Sharma and Sharma (2015); Puja and Kumar (2016); Rai (2016); Tourism (2016); Bhutia (2018); Giri (2019) and Sharma and Goyal (2020).

## VII. SOCIETY

The Lepchas, Bhutias and the Nepalese are the three ethnic groups of population of the state of Sikkim. They are simple and hardworking people. Among the Sikkim here ethnic communities it is universally accepted now that Lepchas were the original inhabitants of Sikkim.

Nepali is the lingua franca of the State because the majority of the population belongs to Nepali community. Besides there are several dialects prevalent among the different Nepali castes like Gurung, Rai, Tamang, Mukhia, Newer, Manger, Sherpa etc., however within these communities also these dialects are rarely spoken. They usually speak Nepali language. English is the official language of the State; along with it Nepali is also used as official language in Sikkim.

Majority of the population belong to Hindu religion. Other important religions professed by the people of Sikkim are Buddhism and Christianity. Bhutias are Buddhist and majority of the Lepchas, and some Nepalese also practice Buddhism. But majorities of the Nepalese practice Hinduism. Some people from all three ethnic communities are now converted to Christianity. Besides this, there are a very few Muslims, Sikhs and Jains who basically belong to non-ethnic community.

Plainsmen apart from the ethnic groups, there is a sprinkling of plains people who migrated here generations ago. Plainsmen mainly the Marwaris entered Sikkim for trading purposes. People from other parts of India like Bihar, Bengal, Assam, Orissa, Kerala, Punjab etc. also resides in the state of Sikkim. Besides trading, some emigrants' plainsmen were engaged in other types of occupation such as teaching, administration etc.

### **Substantial amount of work on different aspects of Society in Sikkim**

Planning Commission (2001); Linguistic Survey of India Sikkim, Part I. (2001); Gupta (2004); Sinha (2007); IPR (2003a, 2007a, b); Government of India (2008); Mishra and Mukhopadhyay (2011); Tambe & Arrawatia (2011); Chettri (2012); Dewan (2012); Sachdeva (2013); Kharel and Bhutia (2013); Hannan (2014); Subba (2014); Government of Sikkim (2001, 2009, 2015); Syangbo and Bhutia (2015); Chettri & Yasin (2015); Dey (2015); Toney (2015); Rai and Chinara (2015); Mishra (2004, 2016); Puja and Kumar (2016); Sharma (2016); Chakraborty and Chakma (2015, 2016); Chettri *et al.*, (2016); Bhaisn (2002, 2017); Rai and Khanal (2017); Khanal and Misra (2017); Thakur *et al.*, (2013, 2017); Chettri and Kundu (2018); Manger (2018); Rai (2015,2016, 2017, 2019); Fabian (2019) and Singh (2020).

## VIII. ECONOMY

Primarily the Sikkim's economy is based on agriculture, engaging more than half of the working population with it. Maize, paddy, buckwheat, wheat, and barley are grown in terraced fields along the valley flanks. Beans, ginger, potatoes, vegetables, fruits, and tea also are produced. Cardamom is one of the cash crops of the state and Sikkim is one of the principal producers of it. Farmers of Sikkim are also raise livestock, including sheep, goats, cattle, pigs and poultry. Buffalo and cattle are limited mainly to the subtropical humid belt, while yaks and sheep are herded in the higher elevations in the north.

Sikkim has copper, lead, and zinc mines. The state also has deposits of other minerals, like coal, graphite, and limestone. Like some industries such as hand-woven textiles, carpets, and blankets as well as traditional handicrafts, scroll paintings, and wood carving. Since, several small-scale industries have also been developed. These produce, most notably, processed foods, beverages, watches and small electronics parts. These are the only resources of the state.

The hydroelectric potential of Sikkim is Tista and Rangit river system is considerable. There are a few large hydroelectric stations and many smaller plants that provide energy to different urban cities and rural electrification has remained a government priority. Pharmaceutical companies are also inputs the revenue generate body of state. Similarly the tourism is also the main source of state revenue collection. Besides that, state has its own natural beauty as well as biodiversity hotspots it attract people inflows.

**Substantial amount of work on different aspects of Economy in Sikkim**

Maharana *et al.*, (2000); Travel Agent Association of Sikkim (2000); GBPIHID (2001); Lama (2000,2001); Registrar General of India (2001a,b); Department of Tourism, Government of Sikkim (2002); Sharma *et al.*, (2002a,b); DESME (2002); Horizon Industrial Consultancy Services (2002); Naoroji (2003); Sikkim Tourism Development Corporation (2003); Sarkar and Rai (2004); Indo-Swiss Project Sikkim (2005); DESME (2004-05); DESME (2005-06); DESME (2006); DESME (2006-07); FEWMD (2007); GIAHS (2007); State of Environment (2007); Bora (2009); Sharma *et al.*, (2009); Department of Forest Environment and Wildlife Management (2009); Tambe (2009); Oommen (2009); Debnath (2009); DESME (2009-10); Banerjee (2010); Sikkim State Socio Economic Census (2010); FSADD (2010); Doma and Singh (2011); FSADD and HCCDD (2012); HCCDD (2009, 2010, 2011, 2012); Ingty and Bawa (2012); Iqbal (2012); Sachdeva *et al.*, (2012); Sharma and Rai (2012); IPR (2007, 2013); Paul (2013); Rizal and Asokan (2013a,b); Sharma and Acharya (2013); Chakrabarti (2008, 2009 a,b, 2010, 2014); Sharma and Sezhiyan (2013 a,b, 2014); Government of Sikkim (2001a,b, 2007,2012, 2014); Chhetry (2014a,b); Partap *et al.*, (2014); Das (2014); Kundu (2014); Pandey and Choubey (2015); Sharma (2012, 2016); Subba (2014, 2015, 2016); Sharma *et al.*, (2016); ECOSS & WWF (2016); Chettri and Bhutia (2018); Chhetri (2013, 2014, 2015, 2019); Mishra (2014, 2019) and Mahis (2019).

**IX. CULTURE AND TRADITION**

The people of Sikkim have a deep spiritual and super natural connection to their land. This influences the way communities related to their surroundings and how they use and guard their natural resources (Doma & Singh 2018).

The land of Sikkim is like a beautiful bouquet which adorned with the amazing colors and essence of different of attractive folk dances, customs and traditions of different tribes and castes. The festival of every ethnic communities such as Pang Lhabsol is one of the festivals celebrated by Bhutia communities, when they offer gratitude to the Mount Kanchendzonga which is considered as a powerful guard of the state; Tendong Lho-Rum-Faat, this is the festival of Lepcha communities consider as mountains, rivers, forests etc as God by them; Teyongshi Sirijunga Sawan Tongnam of the Limbu; Sonam Lochar for Tamang; Sakewa for Rai; Tamu Lochar of the Gurung; Dasai, Tihar and Mange Sankranti of Nepali sub-communities; etc. Desian festival is celebrated in the month of sept-oct, which symbolizes the victory of good over evil, just like the hindu festival 'Dussehra', and Diwali is celebrated on the second week after Dasian (Doma & Singh 2018 and Gurung & Lama 2004).

**Substantial amount of work on different aspects of Traditional Culture in Sikkim**

Bhasin and Bhasin (2000); Bhasin (2002); Thapa (2002); Alley (2003); Rai and Chamling (2003); IPR (2004); Subash Deepak (2004); Namgyal *et al.*, (2004); Arora (2006); Shneiderman and Turin (2006); Sinha (2006); Bentley (2007); Rai and Chamling (2003, 2007); Ramakrishnan (2008a,b); Roy Burman (2001, 2008); Sikkim Express (2008a,b); Kazi (2009); NOW (2006, 2008, 2011); Gurung & Lama (2004, 2011); Karkidoli (2011); Khamdhak (2009a, 2009b, 2009c, 2012); Irengban (2012); Bhutani (2012); Chaudhuri (2012); Gowloog (2013); Subba (2008, 2011, 2012, 2013); Tiwari (2013, 2014); Pandey (2014); Pandey *et al.*, (2014); Panda and Mishra (2012, 2015); Chettri (2013, 2015); Singh and Singha (2015); Manger (2015); Sharma (2015); Shrestha (2005, 2014, 2015, 2016); Acharya and Ormsby (2017); Doma & Singh (2018) and Norma Levine (2018).

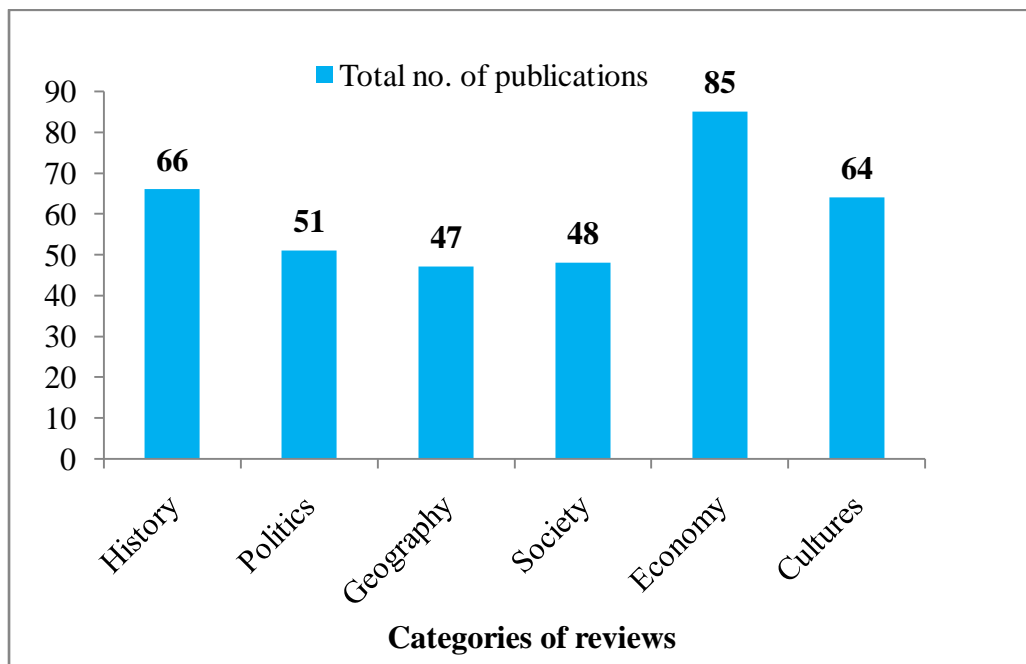


Fig. -1: Number of publication of different categories of Sikkim

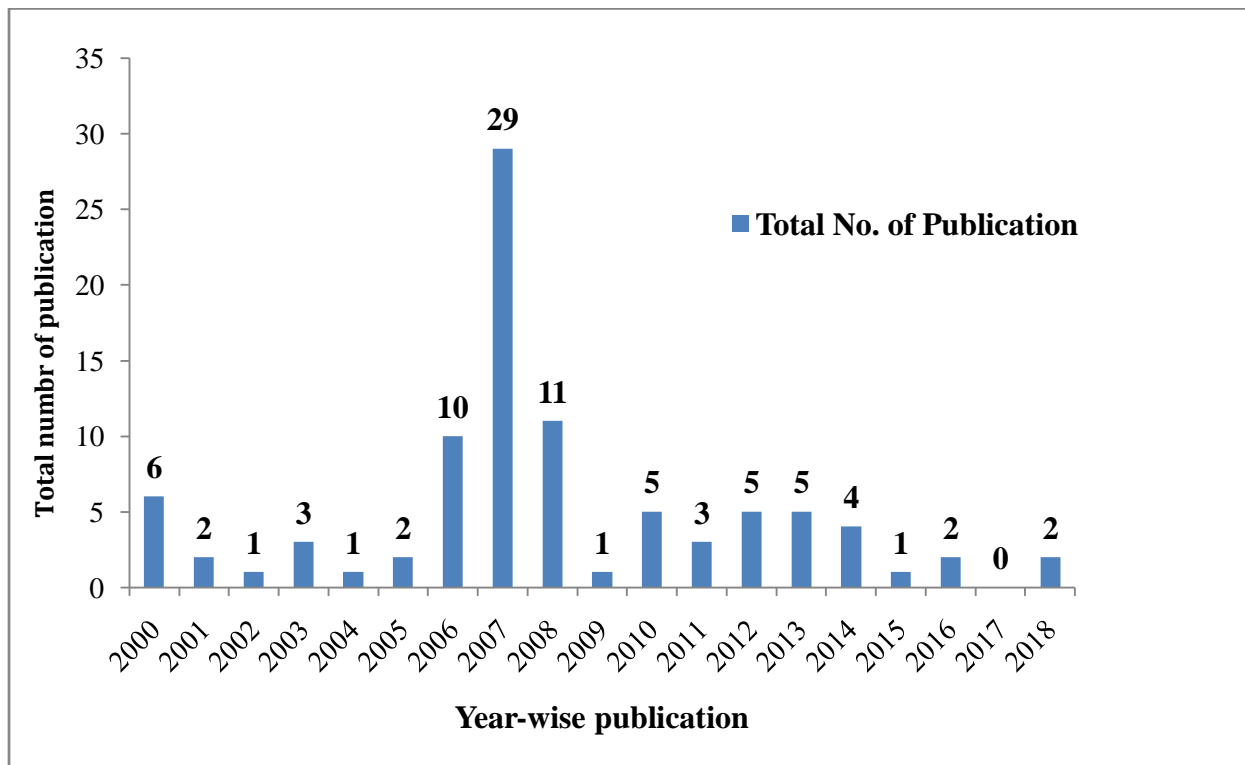
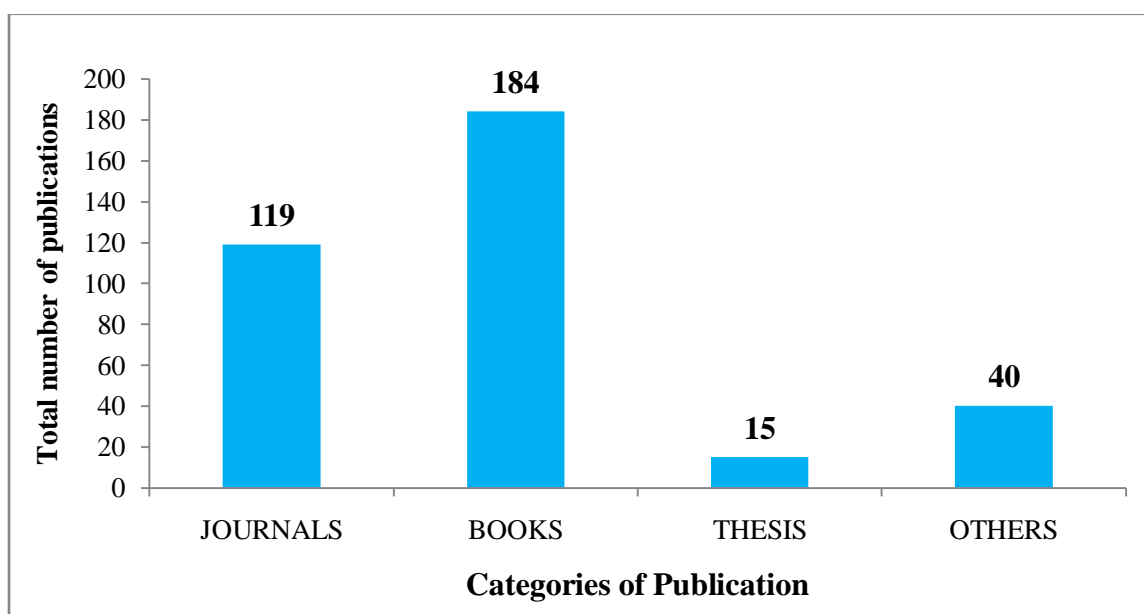


Fig. 2: Year-wise establishment of magazine and newspaper in Sikkim (2000-2020)

**Table: 2. Publication of different aspects in Sikkim from (2000-2020)**

Categories	History	Politics	Geography	Economy	Society	Culture
Journals	19	15	12	28	22	23
Books	32	26	28	48	21	29
Thesis	3	1	5	4	1	1
Others	11	8	2	4	4	11



**Fig. 3. Categories wise publications in Sikkim from 2000-2020.**

#### **Research Paper/ Thesis/ Articles/ Newspaper/Books published**

Review work of Sikkim can be categorized into doctoral thesis, books and research publications. As per survey more than 300 research papers on different aspects of Sikkim (history, politics, geography, society, economy and culture) has been published in more than 150 national and international journals. Thus the bibliography of this paper comprises a total numbers of 366 references including research papers, books, PhD thesis, magazine etc.

### **X. ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

Authors are grateful to the Sikkim University and local libraries for providing the literature survey and we also thank Namchi Government College, South Sikkim (Sikkim) India, for permitting to confirm the study of different scientific journals.

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