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**Gender and Exclusion: A Retrospective Analysis  
of the School Education Scenario in Sikkim**

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**ABSTRACT** Despite many inclusionary measures, exclusion of girls in education continues to be an enduring challenge in India primarily due to structural constraints. Sikkim, the new entrant in Indian union as the 22<sup>nd</sup> state in 1975 was traditionally rooted in ethos of patriarchal society. With its history of traditional religious based monastic education, exclusion of girls in education was a common phenomenon and bridging the gender gap had remained a challenging task for many years. Based on the educational indicators, official statistics and secondary data as well as the narratives, the paper aims to look retrospectively at the practices of gender exclusion in school education in the past, and at the same time the paper highlights how the development initiatives of the state has positively impacted the sphere of girls' education in recent time.