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Tourism Innovations is a Journal of Indian Tourism and Hospitality Congress (ITHC). It is a bi-annual international referred research Journal focusing on academic perspectives in Tourism and Hospitality. Being an journal of inter-disciplinary field, the journal focuses on various aspects of tourism and hospitality like, Tourism Issues, Tourism Impacts, Eco-tourism, Sustainable Tourism, Tourism Marketing, Medical Tourism, Health Tourism, Culture Tourism, Culinary Arts, Service Operations and other tourism, trave and hospitality areas. The objective of the journal is to have a comprehensive collection of research articles and dispersal of updated knowledge and information about tourism sector.

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Community-Based Ecotourism For Socio-Economic Development in Periyar Tiger Reserve in Thekkady

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Abstract

Wildlife Sanctuaries and National Parks are the protected areas identified for ecotourism activities since the declaration of the International Year of Ecotourism in 2002. Implementation of the principles of sustainable tourism through introduction of ecotourism in protected areas is an attempt to ameliorate socio-economic development of local community. Community-based tourism is an innovative approach to link tourism with the benefits of local people. This construct has gained acceptance in the third-world countries in the recent decades. The term "community-based tourism" outlines social dimension in tourism development. This is a form of ecotourism that empowers local people to stake control over ecotourism resources and manage benefits. This paradigm of institutionalizing community-driven form of tourism in protected areas is primarily meant for socio-economic empowerment, thereby opening windows of income and employment opportunities for unskilled and semi-skilled people. Most of the Eastern and Western African countries have experienced community-oriented tourism and managed tourism for alleviating poverty, hunger, malnourishment and different social hazards. There are pioneering ecotourism activities for improvement in the quality of life of local community members. The present study is focused upon the community-based tourism in and around Periyar Tiger Reserve (PTR) with an aim to promote sustainable ecotourism.

Keywords:

Community-Based Tourism, Innovations, Ecotourism, Protected Areas, Community Benefit

Introduction

Ecotourism is a well-defined approach explaining management of tourism impacts and conservation of nature in a way to maintain a fine balance between socio-economic development and conservation of natural resources in protected areas. The global importance of ecotourism was largely realized in 2002 when the International Year of Ecotourism (IYE) was celebrated on the theme "Ecotourism-A Key to Sustainable Development". Since the new global environment movement in the year 1970 and the general dissatisfaction towards mass tourism as a development tool, a new form of tourism took a formal shape i.e. ECOTOURISM. Especially in 1990s, ecotourism was identified as the fastest-growing sector with 20 per cent to 34 per cent growth in a year. Ziffer (1989) pointed out that the overall number of nature-based tourists grew at about 20 per cent annually that resulted in the increase of operators offering Nature Tours. The (WTO) in the early 1990s predicted an annual growth rate of 10-15 per cent in the demand for ecotourism. The IYE has brought about several fundamental changes in perceptions and approaches of ecotourism. As a result, ecotourism and nature-based tourism are growing three-times faster than mass tourism. Regardless of the natural scenic places, developed, developing and underdeveloped countries have embraced the promotion of ecotourism for achieving the objectives of conservation and economic well-being. Leading countries with huge ecotourism potentials like Costa Rica, Galapagos Island, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Nepal, Australia, and United States of America (USA) have established a dynamic system for managing non-consumptive aspects of ecotourism. These countries are immensely benefited from their ecotourism projects.

The term "Ecotourism" was figured in the English Dictionary in the mid 1980s and it was also found mentioned with a hyphenated term (eco-tourism) in the article by Romeril in the year 1985. Hector Ceballos Lascurain, the Mexican Ecologist and Social Activist, used the Spanish word "Ecotourism" in the later part of 1990s. Ziffer (1989) pointed out that ecotourism is a form of tourism inspired primarily by the natural history of an area, including its indigenous cultures. An eco-tourist visits relatively undeveloped areas with the spirit of appreciation, participation and sensitivity. Ecotourism is a practice of a non-consumptive use of wildlife and natural resources and contributes to the visited area through labour or financial means. It aims at directly benefiting the conservation of the site and the economic well-being of the local people. Some of the earliest studies on ecotourism attempted to classify eco-tourists on the basis of settings, experiences and group dynamics. Lascurine (1991) defines ecotourism as "travelling to relatively undisturbed or uncontaminated natural areas with a specific objective of studying, admiring, and enjoying the scenery and wild plants and animals, as well as any cultural manifestations (both past and present) found in these areas".

Starmer and Smith (1991) found that the number of tourists taking ecotourism holidays grew three-time faster than those who chose mainstream holidays. Ecotourism is expected to represent 5 per cent of global holiday market by 2024. The global estimate revealed that 32 per cent of visitors search for the scenery, wild plants and wildlife as a part of their trip in Australia and New Zealand. In Africa, 80 per cent of tourists visited several countries in this continent for wildlife as a primary motivational attribute. In North America, 69-88 per cent of European and Japanese travelers considered wildlife and bird watching to be the most important motivations. In Latin America, 50-79 per cent of visitors advocated for nature-based tourism. It represented an important factor in selecting such destinations. In America, over 100 million people participated in wildlife activities, of which 76.5 million visited for viewing wildlife and 24.7 were interested in bird watching.

Filion et al. (1993) uncovered that ecotourism generated more than US$ 20 billion economic activities with an estimated growth of 30 per cent per year. Cater (1993) found that annual tourist arrivals during 1980s in certain ecotourism destinations were reported to be more than double while tourist receipts were reported to witness ten-fold increase in the case of Belize. It was estimated that tourism in natural and wildlife settings accounted for a total of 20-40 per cent of international tourism receipts, while it is expected to increase by 20-50 per cent per year (Filion et al. 1994). Rodgers et al. (2000) suggested that the Protected Area Network (PAN) of India can be enhanced to 160 National Parks and 698 Wildlife Sanctuaries accounting for about 5.69 percent of the total geographical area.

Animon et al. (1997) found that most of the protected areas, which would have been converted into ecotourism destinations, are unnoticed and ignored by domestic and international tourists due to lack of basic facilities. They emphasized that ecotourism plays a major role in planning and policymaking and brings employment opportunities to the local community living in and around the parks.

Kerala forms an important part of Western Ghats with 324 km protected areas covering six per cent of the total geographical area of the state. About 26.6 per cent of total geographic areas are under forest cover as compared to 19.4 per cent for India. Tourists with interest in visiting ecotourism places largely pay their visit to the PTR and more than 2, 38,047 tourists visited the Tiger Reserve in 1991-92 that accounted for 8.4 per cent of the total tourist arrivals. Furthermore, it was reported that 216,621 visitors in 1995 and 476,824 visitors in 2009 visited the sanctuary respectively. It is reported to be 45.49 per cent growth between 1995 and 2009. As wildlife is one of the primary motives of eco-tourists and one of the activities of ecotourism, Page and Dowling (2002) came out with a more recent estimate of wildlife-related tourism that represented up to 40 per cent of international travel.

Paradigm of Community-Based Ecotourism

Community-based ecotourism was innovated with an aim for supporting biodiversity conservation, particularly in developing countries to link conservation with local livelihoods, thereby reducing rural poverty and achieving objectives of sustainability. Stanley and Perron (1995) identified that protected areas in the North Western Territory in Canada generated CAD$ 12.86 million in the form of labour income while creating employment to 488 persons. Similarly, tourism generated annually about US$ 7, 00, 000 in a year in Rwanda's Parc National des Volcanoes (WTO/ UNEP 1992). Wells (1994) found that receipts from entry to parks and from trekking permit for those parks generally exceed one million US dollar in Nepal. But, it is found that there are some people who are benefited while a vast majority of local people have been displaced due to the declaration of protected areas. For example, non-locals get menial jobs due to lack of skills and knowledge for which tourism stakeholders hire skilled tourism professionals from outside at Royal Chitwan National Park.

Boo (1990) found out that local people hardly get any benefits from nature-based tourism activities in protected areas in Belize, Costarica, Dominica, Ecuador and Mexico. In order to make more community involvement in protected areas, the Zimbabwean CAMPFIRE and the Nepalese ACAP sincerely sensitize community about their roles and responsibilities towards the protected areas. Community participation would be more effective with the provision of direct benefits if conservation and local livelihood issues are to be resolved in a much better way,

Brechin et al. (1991) highlights that protected areas will not survive for long whenever local people remain impoverished and are denied access to needed resources inside. Ghimire and Pimbert (1997) emphasized that local communities must be given a great role in the decision-making capacity when protected areas need to be maintained sustainably. It is reported that a majority of local people suffer in one way or other from tourism developments in protected areas. Honey (1999) found that ecotourism projects have become ineffective in La Gamba due to lack of community participation. It is reported that there is no much change in demand for local products due to the rise in hotel business. The study suggested that hotels and restaurants should procure the local products and ecotourism operators should work towards better interaction between tourists and local residents through the cultural tours to the villages.

Empowerment is the means to achieve goals of ecotourism as people largely get freedom for participating and sharing their ideas and thoughts for ecotourism projects to sustain for long without having any adverse impacts to ecology and environment. It is proven to be one of the ways for transferring power and authority to take their own decisions and manage the resources for their own benefits and benefits of all those connected with the ecotourism projects.

Origin of the Word "Community"

The word "community" has been used in an aggregated sense to represent a group of citizens in a given geographical space. Godde (1998) defines community which is based on "shared profession, religion, geographical location and interest in tourism" or on "the interactions and relationships between many groups "were all considered. He explained that "Community-Based Tourism" (CBT) could be tourism de-facto planned and managed by a group of individual/households comprising the community as communal enterprise. It could also be managed by a private entrepreneur whose activity agenda is set by community and is accountable to it.

Types of Community Participation

Arnstein (1971) has classified eight types of community participation like Manipulation, Therapy, Informing, Consultation, Placation, Partnership, Delegated Power and Citizen Control. Murphy (1985,p.171) writes that "inputs from the concerned community groups could provide a balance to the sustainable tourism objectives of the business sector and possibly encourage greater variation and local flavor in future projects", The WCED (1987) has been promoting community participation for the protection and improvement of the quality of life of communities influenced by tourism development. Aylward and Freeman (1992) cautioned that if the revenue of ecotourism does not get accrued to national parks systems or local communities, there will be little economic incentive for investment in the recurring costs of conservation activities. Simmons(1994,p.98) asserts that "residents of the destination areas are being seen increasingly as the nucleus of the tourism product". Catley (1999) stressed that the motive behind community development is to educate and remove the stigma of charity and involve local people in the decision-making process.

Woodley (1993) regards community participation as a way of ensuring sustainability of tourism places of interest. Similarly, Pretty's (1995) has classified seven types of community participations such as Manipulative Participation, Passive Participation, Participation by Consultation, Participation for Material Incentives, Functional Participation, Interactive Participation and Self-Mobilization. France (1998) mentioned that local participation includes empowerment and involvement of communities in decision making, implementation and identifying the local problems. Lea (1988) pointed out that community participation is often regarded as one of the most essential tools, if tourism is to make a substantial contribution to the national development of a country.

Tosun (1999) gives a more precise typology of community participation like Coercive Participation in which the participation is mostly indirect, formal, participation in implementation but not necessarily sharing benefits, paternalism, non-participation, high degree of tokenism and manipulation. Induced Participation is top down, passive, formal, mostly indirect, degree of tokenism, manipulation, pseudo participation, participation in implementation and sharing benefits, choice between proposed alternatives and feedback. Spontaneous participation includes bottom-up active participation, direct participation in decision making, authentic participation and self-planning.

Community Participation in Ecotourism

Tosun (2000) commented that community participation is seen as a useful tool for educating locals about their rights and laws and political good sense. Therefore, it is very important for public education through the host-guest relationships. Grossman and Tosun (2000) gave emphasis to the fact that community participation is a tool whose aim is to readjust the balance of power and to modify the local community views against those of developers or local authority. Hardely et al. (2002) stated that the call for community participation is based on the assumption that participation lessens opposition to development; minimizes negative impacts; and revitalizes economies. Keshav (2005) suggested that there are two types of community development namely "general and ad-hoc". The general community development programmes are mostly social in nature and have long-term perspective, whereas the ad-hoc type of programmes is problem specific and have a short-term perspective. Similarly, Tosun (2006) pointed out that community participation gives better opportunities for local people to gain benefits from the diverse tourism activities in their localities with positive local attitudes and conservation of local resources.

About The Site

The Periyar Wildlife Sanctuary (PWS) is a representative of bio-geographic zone of 5-B of Western Ghats and lies between latitudes 9o 15 ' S and 9o 40' N and longitudes 76o 55' W and 77o 25' E. The park is located in the Idukki and Pathanamthitta district of Kerala. The Srivilliputhur Grizzled Giant Squirrel Sanctuary and Meghamalai Sanctuary under the forest division of Theni in Tamil Nadu are adjoined to the park. The national park and the adjoining forest areas used to be the hunting spot for the erstwhile Travancore Kings. As a biodiversity centre in the Western Ghats, primitive tribes such as Mannans, Uralis, Paliyans, Malarayns and Malapandaram residing in the nearby areas primarily meet their livelihood from shifting cultivation, fish, honey and tubers. In 1940, an independent Game Department was created along with the game management practices and it continued even after independence. In 1950, the Nelikkampatti Sanctuary was expanded to PWS (777sq.km.), along with adjoining forest of Rattendon valley (12.95sq.km.) and Mount Plateau (163.17sq.km.) to the Periyar Lake Reserve (600.88 sq.km.). With the shift of the headquarters to Thekkady in 1965, the department was subsequently merged with the Forest department. The PWS was included in the Project Tiger in 1978 as the 10th Tiger Reserve in India.

With the first notification in 1982 to declare the core area (350 sq.km.) as a National Park, indigenous tribes were shifted (except the nomadic Malapandaram) to the periphery and the shifting was over by 1984. Further, lease rights of the Mannans over Ummikuppan cardamom leases of planters in the core areas around Mlappara also continued until 1984 when the government acquired these areas. As per the direction of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru during his visit to the Sanctuary in 1950, the Aranya Niwas Hotel was constructed for providing facilities to the visitors and the Lake Palace was handed over to Kerala Tourism Development Corporation (KTDC) along with the lease of some land for carrying out their tourism activities within the sanctuary. Over the years, the PWS has become a very popular destination by attracting scores of tourist. Later in 1991, the Periyar Tiger Reserve (PTR) was also placed under the Project Elephant. During 1996, the focus was shifted to biodiversity conservation with people's participation as per the implementation of integrated eco-development programme (IEP). Reorganization of PTR as Periyar East and Periyar West were done in 2001. Another facet of the park is to house the typical Sabarimala Temple on the southern part of the park and the temple attract hundreds thousands of pilgrims during 18th century due to roads and trekking routes in connection with the Moozhiyar Power Project in the neighboring Ranni Division

At present, PTR is spread to 925 sq. km. adding 148 sq. km. as critical core area for the tiger habitats from the Goodrical Range. The Tiger Reserve is known for its rare and endemic flora and fauna. This forest supports significant populations of species such as Tiger, Sloth Bear, Elephant, Gaur, Lion Tailed Macaque and Great Indian Hornbill. The sanctuary is a major repository and a living laboratory of rare, endangered, and endemic species of flora and fauna representative of this region. The vast stretches of forest are specially noted for high rate of endemism and harbor many species of flora and fauna exclusive to this part of the world. In addition, the Mullaperiyar Dam built across the perennial Periyar River has become permanent threats to the ecosystem and biodiversity since it was constructed in 1895 during the rule of Travancore kings. The forest around Periyar Lake having an area of 600 sq. km is only a part of the present sanctuary and it was declared as Periyar Lake Reserve in 1899.

Role of EDC in Community Participation

The relationship between park authorities and local people was harmonized through the Integrated Eco-development Project (IEDP) from December 29, 1996 to June 2004. The IEDP worked to improve capacity of Protected Area Management; to conserve biodiversity; and to minimize negative impacts of people. Activities include the management of protected areas, village eco-development, nature education and training research and monitoring. At the end of the project period, 72 EDCs were formed encompassing almost 40,000 people from the forest fringe areas. As a result, negative dependency of people on forest was almost reduced and poaching and wildlife crime rate was reported to be at its lowest. Further, sandal smuggling and forest fires were controlled through participatory management beyond the project period.

Apart from the representations of other members, all SC and ST families, including women members are included as per the bylaw of EDC. There must be one male and female representation from each family. The Range Officer is deemed to be the Assistant Eco-development Officer and the Forester is the Ex-office Secretary. However, one of the best forest guards acts as Assistant Ex-officio Secretary. The General Body of the EDC elects an Executive Committee consisting of seven members and chairperson. Among the remaining six members, three shall be female and three from the SC and ST category (only if the SC and ST representation is there in the General Body).

The Ex-office secretary does not have any voting power. The bank account of EDC is jointly operated by Chairman Ex-office Secretary and one nominated female member of the Executive Committee. The Micro Plans are prepared by the committee and submitted in the meeting of Eco-Development Implementation Committee (EDIC) for approval. All EDC functionaries have passed through 5th years of micro plan implementation. The target population is about 58,000 in selected villages within two km radius of which 25 per cent belongs to the SC and 4 per cent to the ST. Every family of the village EDC is eligible for an amount of Rs 12,500 as project investment and the villages have to contribute 25 per cent in the form of Kind, Cash or Labour. A part of this money thus invested is collected back to the Community Development Fund (CDF).

Community-Based Ecotourism Programme

The community-based ecotourism programmes (CBEPs) aim to equip the local people with technical skills and knowledge to help the visitors learn and experience in the soft adventure activities through their active participations. This programme is unique in meeting the two objectives. One is to diversify ecotourism activities for visitors to prolong the stay that benefits local community in earning livelihoods and the second is to provide a wide range of choices to visitors to spend in various soft adventure activities.

Research Methodology

An attempt was made to get familiarized with the problems of community participation in PTR. Important inputs from interactions with service providers, community members and forest officials were included in questionnaire that subsequently administrated to 320community members at the study sites/ villages adjacent to the PTR. .The researcher himself used the scheduled method for community members to answer the questions correctly as the community respondents found much difficulty in understanding the questions. Both the primary and secondary sources of data with regard to community participation, ecotourism and sustainable development in the PTR were used for analysis, interpretation and inference.

Literature on similar studies was referred to validate the selection of sampling method and sample size. Tosun (2004) used 248 samples for conducting a study on “expected nature of community participation in tourism development”, Okazaki (2008) used 420 samples from the local community members to undertake a study on “Community-Based Tourism Model : Its Conception and Use” and Kibicho (2008) used 176 samples for carrying out a study on “Community-Based Tourism: A Factor Cluster Segmentation Approach”. The questionnaire includes demographic backgrounds along social, economic, cultural and ecological impacts. Finally 300 samples were retained for the final data analysis.

H0: Two Categories Of Community Members Are Not Significantly Different On Their Opinions On Empowerment For Community-Based Ecotourism.

Results and Discussions

Out of the total community respondents of 300, it is found that 203(67.7%) respondents were Male and 97 (32.3%) were Female. As regards the distribution of age of the respondent, as many as 103(34.3%) of respondents fall in the age bracket of 30-39, followed by 63 out of 300 respondents (21.0%) in the age bracket 18- 29 and 73(24.3%) in the age group of 40-49 and the remaining others about 39(13.0%) and 22(7.3%) respondents fall in the category of 50-59 and 60 and above respectively.

The marital status shows that as maximum as 286(95.3%) respondents are married and the remaining 14(14.7%) are single or unmarried. The distribution of monthly income shows that a little more than half i.e. 154(51.3%) of the respondents have monthly income of ₹ 2,000-5,000 that is followed by 141(47.0%) of the respondents had the income of ₹ 5001 to ₹ 10000. It is also reported that only 5 or 1.7 per cent of the respondents had the monthly income between ₹ 10, 001 and ₹ 15,000.

Looking at the educational qualifications, as many as half 153(51.0%) of the community respondents have received Primary Education, followed by 80(26.7%) respondents with Secondary Education and 62(20.7%) of them without having formal education. Looking at the occupations, 86(28.7%) of them are involved in various ecotourism related activities, whereas 75(25.0%) of them were traditional agriculturists and 54(18.0%) of the respondents were daily labours. Surprisingly, 31(10.3) of the respondents were unemployed and 27 (9.0%) of respondents were self-employed. As many as 21 (7.0%) respondents were engaged in the small business and 6 (2.0%) respondents were government employees.

It is reported that as many as 96 (32.0%) respondents spend monthly expenditure varying between ₹ 4001 and ₹ 6000, followed by 85(28.3%) respondents having the expenditures of 6001- ₹ 8000 and 57(19.0%) of them spend amounting ₹ 2001-₹ 4000. As many as 35(11.7%) spend the expenditures between ₹ 8001 and ₹ 10,000. The remaining others were 27(9.0%) with the monthly expenditures of ₹ 10,00-₹ 20,00. The distribution of community respondents on the period of residing at Thekkady as a permanent resident reveals that as many as 131(43.7%) respondents have been the residents for the last 21 to 30 years that is followed by 112(37.3%) of them have been residing for more than 31 years and 47(15.7%) for the last 11-20 years.

Group Statistics and Levene's Independent T-Test

Table 1 presents the results of mean and standard deviation of the first group of community respondents (less than 20 years) and the second group community respondents (more than 21 years). These two categories of respondents were interviewed on 10 key indicators related to the impacts of ecotourism on social and economic empowerment. The results show that there is a marginal difference of means between them.

The first indicator is stated as "social change in local community" and the mean differences between the two groups are 4.00 and 4.10 respectively and the standard deviations of the indicator between two groups are 0.418 and 0.413 respectively. This explains that community members residing more than 21 years construed impacts of ecotourism on community empowerment better than those community members settling down less than 20 years. The results of standard deviation clearly indicate that there is an insignificant dispersion of opinions of two groups of community members on this indicator.

The second indicator is framed as "improvement of living condition "and the results of mean between two groups of respondents consist of 4.56 and 4.65 and the standard deviation for the same indicator between two groups is .703 and .708. As a result, there is no much difference of means and standard deviation between them. It may be inferred that the high means between two groups and relatively low dispersion seem to have explained that improvement of living conditions of local community members largely contribute to the community empowerment.

As regards the role of women in building the strong society, the third indictor is stated as "women working in the tourism establishments". The results of mean between the two groups of respondents are 3.77 and 3.75 and the standard deviation for the same indicator is .726 and .747. The low mean values and standard deviation for this indicator clearly explain that no differences are reported between two groups. It has led to the conclusion that women working in the tourism establishments play a very decisive role in bringing about social community empowerment.

Tourism development largely brings about rapid changes in lifestyle of local households. It may lead to provide some interfaces to adopt lifestyle of tourists. As tourist inflows increase over the period, local people generally tend to be attracted to wear the fancy dresses other than the traditional dress. Thus, the fourth indicator is structured as "wearing traditional dress for my self-pride". The results of means between two groups of community respondents are 4.10 & 4.19 and the standard deviation for the same two groups is .949 & .805. The high mean values and low standard deviation clarify that community respondents have overwhelmingly agreed the indicator focusing the use of traditional dress for self-pride. Thus, it is inferred that community members appear to have given importance to the preservation of traditional dress as a symbol of self-pride to be recognized.

In the process of tourism development, many social changes may also be occurring at tourism destinations at it happen in case of PTR. The fifth indicator is stated as "breaking joint family pattern" and the statement captured the individual opinions from the two groups. The results of means between two groups are 2.51 and 2.83 and the standard deviation is .977 and 1.19. The low mean values and relatively high dispersion tend to imply that community members partly disagreed on the indicator. Many studies have revealed that tourism impacts have broken joint family system. However, tourism development has not made any negative impacts on breaking away the joint family system in the PTR areas.

The host-guest interaction is one of the primary objectives that nurture the relationship between tourists and community members. Taking this philosophy into consideration, the sixth indicator that is "enjoying interactions with visitors" was asked to local community members in order to ascertain their level of agreement on this statement. The mean values between two groups are 4.06 and 4.14 and the standard deviation is .413 and .514. Hence, the high mean values and the low standard deviation clearly signify the strong agreement of community members on the interactions with visitors as a means for fostering relationship with people in different parts of world.

Tourism development can transform the local people towards the tourists and their lifestyle pattern. In most of the time, tourists experience antagonistic behaviour from the local people that result in dissatisfaction of tourists. In order to find out the state of mind of local community members towards tourists, the sixth indicator was structured i.e. "changing perception and orientation" The results of mean for two groups on the indictor are 4.41 and 4.38 and the standard deviation is .649 and .628 for the same two groups. Therefore, the high mean values and the low dispersion from mean values confirm with the fact that community members were happy to interact with the tourists and their perceptions towards tourists are also undergoing changes due to the regular interactions. Furthermore, this clearly explains that tourists are treated as guests for which community members have been sensitized to be friendly with tourists.

The tradition and custom of local people are themselves the attractions for tourists and preservation of social and cultural practices can give a unique identification to the people. The seventh indictor is, therefore, framed as "having strong belief in tradition and custom", the mean values between the two groups for the indicator are 4.15 and 4.31 and the standard deviation for the same two groups is .695 and .491. It may be interpreted that there is a small difference of mean values between the two groups and uniformity on the same indictor is high. Thus, the extremely high mean values and the low standard deviation explain that two groups of community members have strong belief in tradition and custom.

Language is one that recognizes people and their cultural backgrounds. In most of the time, the local people are very much vulnerable to the foreign languages. With the inflows of tourists from different countries with different cultural backgrounds at tourism destinations, local people tend to adopt other languages and forget their own languages. An indicator was framed "taking pride in speaking my own language" to find out the frame of mind of community respondents as to how far they are concerned for speaking their own languages. The mean values of two groups of respondents on the indicator are 4.51 and 4.53 and the standard deviation for the same two groups is .537 and .547. Thus, the high mean values and low dispersion confirm that local community members wish to speak their own languages. This draws the conclusion that community members take pride in speaking the traditional languages.

Apart from speaking traditional languages, local community members usually pick up some functional words and sentences of English to interact with visitors. It is possible for those who come in direct contact with tourists when they work in tourism establishments and ecotourism projects of PTR. While analyzing the results of mean and standard deviation of an indicator that is stated as "no problem in speaking in English with tourists", The mean values between the two groups are 1.51 and 1.31 and the standard deviation between the two groups is 1.01 and .762. The low mean values and relatively high standard deviation explain that local community members did not find problem in speaking English as it is one the soft skills for them to deal with tourists. However, there is a relatively inconsistency of opinions on this particular indicator as per the results of standard deviation.

't' Test for Equality of Variances

H0: Two categories of community members are not significantly different on their opinions on empowerment for community-based ecotourism.

It is important to find whether the value is less than or greater than .05. In the case of Levene's t-test analysis presented in Table 1, two-tailed values of P are as follows; .077 &. 082, .418 & .417, .857 &.854, .438 &.484,.065 & .039, .294 &.218, .750 &.755, .044 &.105,.843 &.842, and .090 &.156. The differences of means across all the 10 indicators between the community members with less than 20 years and more than 21 years of residing at Thekkady are not rejected with P value greater than 0.05 (≥ 0.05) . The inference is that there might be differences between two groups of community respondents on the criterion of duration of residing in the vicinity of PTR. The differences of these two groups of respondents did not arise as far as their opinions and understandings on impacts of tourism on community empowerment.

However, there are marginal differences of mean values between the two groups of community respondents on 10 indicators explaining community empowerment through tourism development at Thekkady. To test the hypothesis, output of one-tailed probability is.038, .395,.917, .683,.026,.009,.520,.802,.915 and.002 respectively for the indicators. The one tailed t-test is still greater than .05 (P<.5) in case of all the indicators excepting the indicator "no problem in speaking in English with tourists". It is inferred that one-tailed t test has validated the test of two-tailed test.

Table 1

Levene's Independent Samples t Test

Impacts of Ecotourism on Community Empowerment	Duration of Stay (in years)	Descriptive Statistics Results		Levene's t-test for Equality of Variance				Sig (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Dev.	F	Sig	t	Df	
Social change in local community	≤10	4.00	.418	4.339	.038	-1.773	298	.077
	≥20	4.10	.413			-1.759	85.633	.082
Improvement of Living condition	≤10	4.56	.703	.726	.395	-.812	298	.418
	≥20	4.65	.708			-.815	86.816	.417
Women working in tourism establishments	≤10	3.77	.726	.011	.917	.181	298	.857
	≥20	3.75	.747			.184	88.238	.854
Wearing traditional dress for my self-pride	≤0	4.10	.949	.167	.683	-.777	298	.438
	≥20	4.19	.805			-.703	77.831	.484

Impacts of Ecotourism on Community Empowerment	Duration of Stay (in years)	Descriptive Statistics Results		Levene's t-test for Equality of Variance				Sig (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Dev.	F	Sig	t	Df	
Breaking joint family system	≤10	2.51	.977	4.977	.026	-1.853	298	.065
	≥20	2.83	1.19			-2.095	102.020	.039
Enjoying interactions with the visitors	≤10	4.06	.413	6.985	.009	-1.051	298	.294
	≥20	4.14	.541			-1.238	109.232	.218
Changing perception and orientation	≤10	4.41	.649	.415	.520	.319	298	.750
	≥20	4.38	.628			.312	84.440	.755
Having strong belief in tradition and custom	≤10	4.15	.695	.063	.802	-2.026	298	.044
	≥20	4.31	.491			-1.643	71.181	.105
Taking pride in speaking my own language	≤10	4.51	.537	.011	.915	-.198	298	.843
	≥20	4.53	.547			-.200	87.560	.842
No problem in speaking in English with tourists	≤ 10	1.51	1.01	9.946	.002	1.702	298	.090

Summary of Findings

Preservation of Wildlife Habitations is a key component of ecotourism and the uniqueness of attraction is tiger. As found from the study, there is a disproportionate increase in wildlife population resulting in the disequilibrium in ecosystem. As a result, it has negatively affected the growth of tiger population.

A vast majority of respondents were young and do not have formal education and primary education to work in skill-based jobs. At the same time, ecotourism projects, after the implementation of IEDP in the PTR, do not seem to have increased the educational level of local community members.

It has revealed that agriculture has remained to be one of the significant sectors for engaging local community members and gross monthly income of community members is meager to meet physiological needs. Thus, economic impacts of ecotourism do not appear to have increased income of community members. However, both tourism and agriculture provide maximum employments given the nature of occupational patterns. Employments being created by the tourism sector are disproportionate to the amount of investment and efforts of government to make ecotourism as a means for income and employment. In addition, majority of them are reported to have stayed more than two decades.

Majority of community members are living in the asbestos, concrete and tiled roofed houses due to the financial support of governments under the Indira Awas Yojana.(IAY). Whatever improvements in the pattern of houses that have occurred at Thekkady may not be fully attributed to the revenue percolated from ecotourism activities in the PTR.

Majority of community respondents do not own vehicles regardless of their occupational patterns and revenue tricked down from ecotourism activities do not seem to have enabled to buy bicycle as a basic requirement for conveyance as well as an asset for an ordinary family. Hence, the monthly income does not seem to be adequate to meet the basic needs and majority community members do have the ability to purchase cycles when the monthly income is taken into consideration. It may further be interpreted that ecotourism activities do not appear to have made any such remarkable impacts on the improvement of socio-economic conditions of local community members.

Majority of community members have got electricity connection with the provision of paying monthly bill as per the amount of consumption of electricity. It is also found that there is a gap between monthly income and expenditures. It must be giving so much of strains to each household to run the family in order to meet the basic needs.

The analysis of mean values and standard deviation of two groups of community respondents across 10 indicators explain broadly impacts of tourism in community empowerment. The results revealed that two groups of respondents do not have much difference in their opinions and understandings on the empowerment of community on social, cultural and economic aspects.

There is uniformity between two groups of community respondents that tourism impacts have brought about so much development for better quality of life and community members along with their concern for duties and responsibilities in preserving traditions and customs. There is a difference of opinions on using ecotourism as the medium of doing conversations with tourists as it is found in case of one-tailed test, but there was no difference of opinions on this indictor in the two-tailed test. Thus, it may be interpreted that no differences exist between the two groups while expressing their own opinions on the 10 interrelated items regardless of their actual differences in residing at Thekkady.

Policy Implications

The study has indentified some important findings on which suggested strategic actions may be initiated to meet the expectations of community members. It is suggested that rich biodiversity of Periyar as a critical part of the Western Ghats should be protected for evenly growth of wildlife population. Promoting Responsible Tourism should be encouraged to effectively position the PTR as a value-based tourism destination with strict adherence to the guidelines of Green Globe and Local Agenda. Capacity Building and Training programmes should be conducted. There must be a government-led, private sector-driven and community-oriented policy and programmes for sustainable ecotourism development. It can be the means for poverty alleviation and unemployment eradication. This goal of the government can certainly be achieved when more awareness campaigns, training and capacity building programmes can be initiated.

Spontaneous Community Participation needs larger community involvement and community members should be treated as custodian of tourism resources at the PTR. As a result, community members may develop a sense of belongingness towards maintenance of tourism facilities and amenities. Community participation and consultation should be incorporated for making effective management of sustainable ecotourism. Community empowerment is a major determinant of sustainable ecotourism development as benefits should do tickle down directly to local residents. The DTPC should be more proactive and should make regular interactions with the community. Adequate representatives from community, government, tourism service providers and NGOs should be given in the DTPC. Efforts should be made to exhibit the unique socio-cultural practices of nearby villages. It is suggested that tour operators should conduct village tour with the support of villagers. Similarly, other tour operators and hoteliers should indentify potential villages and adopt villages for preservation of traditional dance, music and other forms of Art. Moreover, ethnic food should be promoted to give delightful experience to the tourists during the village tour. Local Area Development Fund (LADF). It is suggested that a common fund should be raised to meet the contingencies of tourist destinations. It is a part of the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) of the hotels, resorts, airlines, tour operators, souvenirs and shopping mall owners, etc to share their profits towards the community and its neighborhood development. It is otherwise known in tourism industry as responsible tourism. The fund should be spent for adopting schools, villages and nearby potential tourism destinations.

Conclusion

Ecotourism is a means for community empowerment as it is already proven in hundreds of ecotourism sites worldwide. Kerala, being a pioneering

State in India, has taken this innovative step in removing the differences between community members and tourism development through EDC. Members of community members have now become a part of community-based ecotourism programmes. Their participations have yielded positive results for conservation of ecosystem of PTR and socio-economic development. However, the study has revealed the meager impact of EDC in eradicating poverty and unemployment problems. However, there are differences of opinions of two groups of community members on 10 key issues community-based ecotourism. These differences are genuine and expected. Debates and discussions are underway to save the PTR through community-based tourism. Small impacts of EDC must not be the indicator of success of EDC in community-based ecotourism and more studies need to be taken to assess and suggest innovative modus operandi to ensure wholehearted community participation.

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Deconstructing the Disciplinary under Theorization: Towards an Integrated Conceptual Schema for Heritage Tourism Research

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Abstract

Many scholars have examined the phenomenon of heritage tourism, arguing that it is driven by nostalgia, the desire on the part of heritage tourists to relive a glorified, misremembered version of the past; however, few studies have examined the actual experiences of heritage tourists. The shifting paradigms of tourism and globalization, restless populations and identity conflicts make it incumbent upon researchers to better understand 'heritage' and 'heritage tourism'. The globalization of capital, technology and labor has helped to create a dynamic, interdependent landscape and a culture industry that has multiplied the range of leisure products and places available in the international tourism system. These local–global changes have given rise to increasing academic interest in mobilities and similarly to new introspections on culture, heritage and tourism. Tourism has been portrayed as a socio-political and cultural phenomenon by some scholars and culture is now more frequently being posited as a sociopolitical phenomenon that derives its meaning from the sliding interpretations of tourism. Heritage tourism is a spatial and temporal phenomenon. The 'past' is the focus of this tourism type but the politics of identity, representation and preservation that arise in the instrumental use of the past influence the physical, socio-cultural and spiritual well-being of people and the sustainability of their cultural goods, places and environments (built and natural). The present paper examines the complex and rapidly changing domain of heritage and tourism, drawing upon diverse disciplinary perspectives. The main purpose of this study is to propose an integrated conceptual schema for heritage and tourism research, and offer some considerations towards its development. The interrelated goals of this study are to: Discuss cultural heritage in travel and tourism. Key approaches such as

Introduction

Tourism is frequently acclaimed as one of the world's largest and most pervasive industries. Research into tourism has grown rapidly in recent years with many new books and journals appearing. In particular, this article notes that perhaps three new journals have marked the coming of age of tourism-related research, namely, Tourism Geographies, Tourist Studies and finally Mobilities. While a great deal of other research has been published in books and journals and indeed many other new tourism journals have been started, this article utilises the start of these journals as benchmarks for a theoretical engagement with tourism research. This article thus begins by reviewing research

production–consumption, local–global and economic supply–demand are described, and important theoretical attempts to bridge the hyphens are noted; Propose an interdisciplinary approach and an integrated conceptual schema for heritage tourism that bridge micro–macro research gaps. The schema shows the productive, relational and situated characteristics that make heritage tourism an inherently political and social phenomenon.

Keywords:

Heritage Tourism, Interdisciplinary Research, Integrated Conceptual Schema

into heritage tourism and focuses on work that has examined destination branding in the face of globalising processes. The article goes on to review research that has been concerned primarily with host–guest interactions in terms of tourist studies. Indeed, both residents and tourist's performances have been the focus of much contemporary research particularly by researchers who have begun to view tourism as increasingly constitutive of everyday life rather than being simply an escape from it. The concept of mobilities helps us to understand globalising tourism processes in the context of other social and spatial travel processes.

There was a time when the study of tourism in geography [perhaps like that of transport in geography (Goetz, 2006)] was only found on the margins of geographical knowledge in comparison with more established topics. Issues of movement in geography have arguably now taken centre stage though. However, while contemporary studies of tourism have grown rapidly, this has been largely through case study research that critiques aspects of tourism policies. See, for example, the extreme example of Horner and Swarbrooke's (2004) recent text International Cases in Tourism Management, and, of course, journal publications are literally littered with numerous other examples of empirical case studies. While such engagement with the practical consequences of tourism can be applauded and have their uses, it has also been increasingly recognised that more sophisticated theoretical analyses of tourism are needed. Indeed, Dann (1999) has argued that 'unless issues are problematised – unless we acknowledge that our understanding is incomplete – we will never adequately address issues of tourism development.' Hence, we now find that a new body of tourism knowledge has emerged driven in part by researchers who have sought to re-situate tourism at the core of geographical study. On the one hand, this can be seen in recent issues of established journals such as Annals of Tourism Research and Tourism Management.

On the other hand, the launch of new more theoretically orientated journals concerned with tourism practices, such as Tourism Geographies, (Lew 1999), Tourist Studies, (Franklin and Crang, 2001), and Mobilities (Hannam et al. 2006) and new critical anthologies (Ateljevic et al. 2007; Lew et al. 2004) have demonstrated that research into tourism has begun to take on board theoretical issues that have been the mainstay of geography and other social sciences for some time. Moreover, the recent launch of more specialised tourism journals such as the Journal of Heritage Tourism (Timothy and Boyd, 2006), the Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change (Robinson and Phipps, 2003) and the Journal of Ecotourism (Fennell, 2002), have reflected a renewed interest in the study of tourism as well, but these have also a tendency to revert to the case study syndrome.

However, from the perspective of the new journals mentioned at first, tourism is increasingly viewed not as an ephemeral aspect of social life that is practised outside normal, everyday life. Rather, it is seen as integral to wider processes of economic and political development processes and even constitutive of everyday life (Edensor, 2007; Franklin, 2003). Indeed, Franklin and Crang (2001) point out that tourism has broken away from its beginnings as a relatively minor and ephemeral ritual of modern national life to become a significant modality through which transnational modern life is organised.

Perspectives on the Evolution of Disciplinary Constructs

Over the years, citation frequencies of headwords have changed reflecting the shifting focus of tourism research. Fifty-two headwords were found to represent rising patterns in terms of periodic citation frequency. These represent eight broad subject areas: typology of tourists, community and development, alternative experience/product, socio-cultural aspects and change, geopolitical regions/focus, literature/ research/methods, marketing and management, and environment. In contrast, 27 headwords, grouped into nine broad subject areas–economics, industry and transportation, hospitality, recreation, impacts, North America, tourism (in a conventional/ narrow sense), Third World, and sociology–are appearing with declining frequency.

Four patterns were observed that relate to the evolution of subject coverage. First, while tourism as a subject in its conventional/definitional sense has declined over the years, typological studies of tourists, alternative forms of tourist experiences and/or tourism products are steadily increasing. This confirms Swain et al's observation, "tourism knowledge has gone through an evolution of formulations, beginning in a somewhat inarticulate form, struggling with definitions and the establishment of basic tenets" (1998). This is a natural path of knowledge growth for a young field where earlier writings often focus on the conceptualization or definition of core phenomena. These efforts include discussions on the frameworks of tourism, tourists, and industry; arguments on tourism systems; models of curricula; and definitional debates on the status of tourism as an industry. Though still attracting research interest, the conceptualization and/or definition of tourism as a subject have been declining in terms of citation frequency.

On the other hand, typological studies of tourists and alternative forms of tourist experiences are rising. This is reflected in the increase of citations of headwords such as tourist, traveler, backpacker, guest, ecotourism, rural tourism, adventure, budget tourism, farm tourism, agritourism, and thanatourism (dark tourism). Typological studies of tourists came primarily from sociologists, anthropologists, and marketing researchers. Xiao and Smith (2004) have documented that the development of tourist role typologies was undertaken from both inductive and deductive perspectives. The former is generally adopted by sociologists and anthropologists and is characterized by a theoretical or conceptual underpinning; the latter perspective is the norm for market researchers producing segmentation studies that are empirically rich but often without a theoretical foundation. Over time, some of the typologies proposed in the 1970s have been incorporated into advancements such as database, relationship, or one-to-one marketing. This work has been particularly applied to the development of product strategies for niche tourism and continues as an area of active research.

In general, these patterns are consistent with previous studies of tourism research. Swain et al (1998) observed that the trends in subjects over the 25 years they studied revealed "a relatively close match to Jafari's (2001) four platforms as an emergent paradigm for tourism knowledge".

They also concluded that the content as tourism knowledge can be envisioned as an hourglass: from global (a 1970s' economic development focus), narrowing to local specific analysis (econometrics, leakages, cottage industry, sustainable development), and in the 1990s, back to global with local concerns (transnational analysis, global environment, response to impacts)" (Swain et al, 1998).

The Shifting Contexts

The shifting paradigms of tourism and globalization, restless populations and identity conflicts make it incumbent upon researchers to better understand 'heritage' and 'heritage tourism'.The integrated (micro–macro) approach below is presented as a proactive, future-oriented step towards developing new research and theoretical paradigms for heritage tourism. Addressing the theoretical advances in the sociological treatment of tourism, Dann (2000) points to the importance of engaging in anticipatory theory and establishing viable theoretical agendas: 'just as paradigms are constantly shifting and being broken out of, so too should the theories they contain be open to the challenges again'.

In 2004, the Rockefeller Foundation Humanities Fellowship program called for applications from humanities-oriented scholars/analysts to work on the theoretical development of the concept of cultural heritage and political representation. The problem was stated succinctly in the call for applications: largely determined by experts, cultural heritage is used as a basis for multinational, national, state, and local programs. However, despite its growing popularity across official, community, and even business sectors, the concept of 'cultural heritage' is vastly under-theorized. It has lacked an academic, disciplinary base, has generated only an attenuated theoretical literature … (http://www.folklife.si.edu/CFCH/Rockefeller.htm).

Concern has been voiced similarly among those engaged in tourism studies about the 'apparent reluctance of many tourism researchers to engage in a critical appraisal of theoretical approaches within the social sciences' or to 'view tourism as a particular manifestation of wider social, economic and cultural phenomena' (Meethan, 2003). Still struggling to operationalize old paradigms of economic and social impacts, researchers are unable to keep up with the growth of the tourism industry in a vastly changed cultural-technological world (Franklin, 2003). Consequently, traditional views of travel and tourism as economic and spatially circular phenomena persist in academic research and constrain tourism studies from developing new directions in culture, heritage and tourism. Critical theoretical discussions receive especially less than equitable consideration in the academic areas where functionalist and post-positivistic approaches dominate, particularly in departments oriented toward management and industry-driven applied research (Jamal and Choi, 2003).

A critically informed approach to heritage tourism research recognizes that representations, enactments and displays of heritage are influenced by a network of mechanisms, industries and stakeholders. Marketing intermediaries (e.g. tour operators, packagers, advertisers) and the culture industries (involved in the production of film, literature, art, music, etc.) play an influential role in the production and consumption of cultural and heritage goods. Their power to structure and shape destinations, places, peoples and pasts make them important players in an international tourism industry oriented toward capital accumulation and profit. Yet, much of 20th-century social science is characterized by either micro-level study (e.g. individual, local) or macro-level analysis (e.g. institutional, social, political, economic and global structures); the theoretical gap between the two has been slow to be taken up other than by a few scholars (contemporary sociologists like Giddens (1990) or geographers like Harvey (1997, 2000)).We argue here that this integrative move is overdue in theorizing culture, heritage and tourism. A conceptual framework is needed that relates the individual/local (micro-level) to the social-political (macro-level) and situates heritage within local–global circuits of tourism and within physical-ecological systems.

Heritage tourism is a spatial and temporal phenomenon. The 'past' is the focus of this tourism type but the politics of identity, representation and preservation that arise in the instrumental use of the past influence the physical, social, cultural and spiritual well-being of people and the sustainability of their cultural goods, places and environments (built and natural). Temporality is an important aspect of human experience, and all meaning making and interpretation draws necessarily on historicity and context, that is, individual and collective past, upbringing, traditions, customs and cultural learnings (Heidegger, 1996). Since the notion of heritage is integrally related to the past (historicity), it can be argued that heritage tourism is intrinsically about life, existence, belonging and change – from the past into the present and future – it involves a performative act of appropriating, interpreting, and communicating aspects of the past through performance, storied texts, physical sites and material artefacts. It is these multifaceted dimensions that makes heritage tourism such an important part of tourism studies. The study of heritage tourism, therefore, has much to offer to the future development of anontology of tourism studies, that is, an integrated framework for tourism research. Our contribution takes a step toward this larger agenda by situating heritage tourism research within the rapidly changing context of tourism today, and within an interdisciplinary theoretical framework. Drawing from diverse concentrations such as cultural studies, sociology, geography, philosophy, management, marketing, urban planning, anthropology, and performance studies, key dimensions, topics and needs are identified for the development of such a framework.

The Dynamics of Contemporary Tourism

The globalization of capital, technology and labor has helped to create a dynamic, interdependent landscape and a culture industry that has multiplied the range of leisure products and places available in the international tourism system. Advances in transportation technologies, and the fluid movement of capital and labor via transnational corporations have also enabled new mobilities of population and ethnicities worldwide, driven by economic and sociopolitical needs.

These local–global changes have given rise to increasing academic interest in mobilities (Urry, 2000; Hall, 2005), and similarly to new introspections on culture, heritage and tourism. Hollinshead (1998a) said that while tourism has been portrayed as a socio-political and cultural phenomenon by some scholars (e.g. Rojek and Urry, 1997), culture is now more frequently being posited as a sociopolitical phenomenon that derives its meaning from the sliding interpretations of tourism. What Hollinshead was alerting us to was a significant change in the world in which travel and tourism is engaged, resulting in a vastly different organization of tourism and everyday life in what is variously referred to as postindustrial, late-capitalist or postmodern society. Consider, for example, the implication of the following: Our current era of mobile, disorganized capitalism involves the dominance of non-material forms of production, especially images. In Rojek and Urry's (1997) view, people are tourists most of the time whether by physically traveling or by experiencing simulated mobility through the fluidity of signs and electronic images. Internet sites offer exciting travel adventures and fantastic romantic encounters, while reality television shows deliver new 'Survivor', 'Amazing Race', and 'Lost' destinations for trouble-free, instantaneous, aesthetically heightened experience. Body aesthetics increasingly preoccupy everyday, virtual and travel senses; The density and velocity of sign and images have experienced a quantum leap with new technologies enabling the globalization of culture, capital, and labor. The de-differentiation of cultural products (post-Fordist specialization) and new tourism forms like heritage tourism, ecotourism, special interest tourism (including ‘creative tourism’, for example photography, painting, pottery, cooking etc.), are related to the incorporation of leisure and culture into spheres of capital production (Mowforth and Munt, 2003); Traditional boundaries between high and low culture, work and leisure are rapidly dissolving. Shifts in work and leisure trends, along with the technological advances of the culture industry, have contributed to a different relationship between tourists and cultural/heritage objects, sites and events. As Rojek (1997) points out, visitors interpret cultural objects by indexing and dragging meanings, signs and symbols from other touristic/ cultural spaces and sources of images, signs and symbols (film, novels etc.). The lines between tourism and everyday life are increasingly blurred; Transportation technologies and socio-political factors have facilitated mass movement of populations and tourists. Increased cross-border and international travel and migration create hybrid and diasporic communities that make a singular national heritage less sustainable (Hollinshead, 1998b). Moreover, universalist representations and stable identities (e.g. a fixed, centered ‘sense of place’) are being eschewed by poststructuralists: they prefer the discourse of fluid, decentered, and hybrid interpretations (Kaup and Mugerauer, 2005). The past and ‘heritage’ become more contestable and political due to the slippage of meaning.

Hence, new perspectives, new understandings and new definitions are needed to address the heightened cultural consumption and mobility of population and tourists. These notions of tourism have to be critically examined in terms of the discourses and interests that have engendered them, and the rapidly changing landscapes of travel and tourism. Decentering traditional economics approaches to tourism studies and viewing tourism as a social-cultural phenomenon thrusts culture and heritage to the forefront of investigation. New introspections and insights are enabled by approaching heritage tourism as a social and cultural phenomenon, rather than seeing it simply in terms of supply (e.g. destination-related services and goods), or demand (e.g. visitor motivation and markets).

Heritage Tourism and Nostalgia

Extant work on heritage tourism has predominantly focused on documenting its significance and economic impact (Taylor, Fletcher, and Clabaugh 1993; Makens, 1987), creating typologies of heritage tourists (Chandler and Costello, 2002; Kerstetter, Confer, and Graefe, 2001;

Kerstetter, Confer, and Bricker, 1998), discerning motivations for visiting heritage sites (Poria, Reichel, and Biran, 2006; Pearce and Lee 2005; Poria, Butler, and Airey, 2004), generating advice for practitioners regarding site development and service provision (Apostolakis and Jaffry 2005; Wanhill 2000), and exploring the politics of site production and representation (Jeong and Santos 2004; Waitt 2000; Rudd and Davis, 1998). A considerably smaller body of research has focused on understanding the experience of heritage tourism, and much of this work has specifically emphasized the phenomenon of personal heritage (or legacy) tourism (McCain and Ray, 2003; Timothy, 1997), exploring people's experiences at sites they deem to be related to their own family history (Poria, Reichel, and Biran, 2006). Thus, despite emergent recognition of the importance of the experiential component of the heritage tourism phenomenon (Timothy and Boyd 2003), it remains an understudied concept (Poria, Reichel, and Biran, 2006; Masberg and Silverman, 1996).

One theory that has received much attention in the literature, especially in reference to sites of importance to popular culture, centers on the notion of nostalgia. Davis (1973) defines nostalgia as being distinctive from other subjective states oriented to the past, such as remembrance and reminiscence, because it is necessarily comparative and value laden and because it involves the filtering of memories. Nostalgia involves juxtaposing particular constructions of the past with particular constructions of the present, such that the past is associated with positive effects, such as "beauty, pleasure, joy, [and] satisfaction," while the present, by comparison, is viewed as being "more bleak, grim, wretched, ugly, deprivational, unfulfilling, [and] frightening," or, less dramatically, as simply less promising, engaging, and inspiring than the present or imagined future. Thus, by definition, nostalgia is "a positively toned evocation of a lived past in the context of some negative feeling toward present or impending circumstance". Scholars who view heritage tourism as being driven by nostalgia use the term in Davis's sense, as a longing for a past (constructed of only positive memories) evoked by discontent or anxiety over present conditions (Dann, 1994; Hewison 1987). However, they extend nostalgia beyond lived experience to include the phenomenon of longing for a culturally remembered past that may have occurred before one's birth and, hence, not have been experienced personally.

Several scholars (e.g., Dann, 1994; Hewison, 1987) have criticized the recent heritage tourism boom as being driven by nostalgia. Addressing the heritage industry in Great Britain, Hewison (1987) argued that the trend of dramatically increasing preservation and visitation of heritage sites is driven by widespread anxiety on the part of the British people that their country and culture are in decline. Dissatisfaction with the present leads people to indulge in nostalgia by visiting heritage sites, which present them not with representations of the "true past," but with "fantasies of a world that never was". Dann (1994) also attributes much of heritage tourism's popularity to nostalgia. He argues that tourism advertising capitalizes upon people's "dissatisfaction with current social arrangements and concern over their continuation into the future" by using nostalgic text and images to sell destinations. People then visit the advertised attractions, which provide them with "what they want to see"—a glorified representation of the past, in which negative historical elements are either missing or stripped of their potency (Dann, 1996). Dann (1994) is not alone in implicating destination promotion as a driving force behind the "nostalgiazation" of the heritage tourism experience (Vesey and Dimanche, 2003). Vesey and Dimanche (2003) argue that "destination image has become central to many tourism locales and historical tourism uses nostalgic images to attract those who seek out history for entertainment and leisure". They situate destination promotion within a larger framework of place commodification, in which historic places and events are translated into sets of icons that are used to promote destinations, shape tourist activities, and adorn souvenirs. They argue that the icons chosen reflect "evocative images of what tourists wish to experience about the place they are seeking and its past" (Vesey and Dimanche, 2003). In their view, tourists seek a simplified, romantic version of place and history "without the more difficult aspects of what life was like in the past" and without "the reality of day-today life in the host destination" (Vesey and Dimanche , 2003). Thus, heritage destinations are marketed, sold, and consumed via systems of icons that represent particular meanings of place while omitting other meanings.

Heritage and Identity

Given the conceptual complexities attending both heritage and identity, the interrelationships between them are multi-faceted and both spatially and temporally variable. As we have already implied, not all identity markers are necessarily heritage in the deliberately constrained sense that it is defined here. Heritage is not the 'legacy of the past' as is often implied, for example, in the use of the term, 'literary heritage', to refer simply to past literature. There is a specific canon that becomes heritage, perhaps because it portrays a particular representation that is congruent, for example, with the imaginings of a certain nationalism. Again, music, art and language are not axiomatically heritage although they may become so, again as markers of nationalism or ethnicity. For example, when language is to the fore in the form of a revival or attempts to preserve a 'dead' or dying tongue, the debate is generally about the demonstration or preservation of the identity of particular voices and cultures, even if these are 'already fading away' (Drysdale, 2002). Equally, not all heritage is about identity, given that cultural tourism is one of the world's largest service industries (Timothy and Boyd, 2003; Schroder-Esch, 2006). There remains, too, the question as to how far heritage and identity are interconnected with place and territoriality (Ashworth, Graham and Tunbridge, 2007).

The Politics of Heritage: Postcolonial Spaces

Heritage in postcolonial spaces takes on economic and socio-political meanings that challenge historically apolitical definitions. The notion of heritage involves seeing the past not only as an economic resource but also as a social resource, for example, providing social benefits such as enabling postcolonial subjects to locate their lives in what they see to be a continuity of events, or a termination of events. Lowenthall (1985) sees the past as being integral to individual and communal representations of identity, and to providing purpose, meaning and value to human existence – the sense of belonging in place and time is fundamental to identity, and a people cut off from their past through colonialism, migration or destruction (e.g. war), will seek to recreate it or, rather, recreate something. The global mobility of people, signs and images in the post-Fordist economy, then, has significant political implications for local and national heritage.

Heritage is being (re)constructed as nations, people and places struggle to invent and reinvent their identity and existence in 'in-between' local and regional spaces (Bhaba, 1994). As Graham et al. (2000) argue, heritage resources are particularly capable of responding to demand, and are demand driven – by definition, they cannot be considered other than in terms of it. In the postcolonial space, heritage becomes an important resource for (re)constructing national and local identity, and tourism's political role in this is often disguised by its economic one.

Critical perspectives on tourism production claim that institutionalized forms of international tourism teeter on a double-edged imperialism in newly emerging postcolonial destinations, where the tourist's romanticism for travel modes of the colonial periods contributes unwittingly to the modern state's power over its own and foreign populations (Van den Abbeele, 1980). Mowforth and Munt (2003) argue that despite changes in the ownership of tourism resources, tourism in the Third World continues to remain a special form of domination and control as lesser developed nations are subordinated to the flows of tourists, tourism capital and resources from advanced capitalist economies. Moreover, historic, socio-cultural and material conditions that occurred under colonialism, racism and slavery continue to be perpetuated through forms of subordination and symbolic representations of servility (e.g. unequal relations between local inhabitants serving tourists).They give several examples to illustrate this interplay between local people, local elites and external interests of tourism and capitalism, such as the resurgence of colonial rail travel, and the irony of an eco-safari constructing an eco-colonial landscape as long trails of porters trudge onwards, carrying supplies for a scant handful of foreign tourists.

In addition to the institutional and structural forms of control, critical scholars see the tourist as playing a significant role in the imperial game: the postcolonial tourist gaze nostalgically (perhaps even unknowingly) commodifies local indigenous people as objects to be enjoyed and photographed. However, this is but a partial tale. Other theoretical insights suggest that even under such highly unequal relations of power and development, postcolonial subjects are not cast into total subservience – they can engage in some enabling form of resistance. Nor is their resistance to control and subordination simply enacted by a counter-challenge in the form of tactics of opposition to domination and authority from above. For instance, Kaup and Mugerauer (2005) point out that Glissant and Chamoiseau (two theorists of creolization and the Caribbean) outline a mode of resistance that is in between that of colonizer and colonized, so that the non-western other is opaque: its mode of speaking is orality and its mode of being is that of always becoming other, generated by differences occurring through minor variations in language and in the Caribbean's hybrid environment. In the Caribbean Sea there appears to be two symbiotic universes: the traditional tropical paradise whose images are fixed by globalized homogenizing international tourism, and fluid local places which are always becoming minority, always moving towards keeping a dynamic difference alive (Kaup and Mugerauer, 2005).

This dynamic interplay between the micro-local and linguistic and the macro-social and global is, we believe, best captured through integrated approaches to heritage tourism research. A critical regional/global macro-study might reveal a stratified system of dominant economic capitalist systems of tourism, a micro-study at the local level might show linguistic dynamisms in Creole identification. It is the combined spaces and processes that illustrate how the postcolonial spaces are not merely fixed colonial or capitalistic representations but are also continuously renewed hybrid places and interrelated systems of production and consumption.

The Heritage Production–Consumption System

The appearance of production and consumption as separate events and processes is a problem exacerbated by disciplinary interests, theoretical paradigms and research agendas focusing either on macro-structural aspects like the ones described earlier or micro-individual ones such as those addressing personal psychological dimensions. Diverse contributions to the critical paradigm, for example, have crafted a sobering view of tourism production. The critical theorists of the Frankfurt School argue that the logic and rationality of commodity production have been transferred into the leisure sphere, providing greater opportunities for controlled and manipulated consumption by the masses. A tourism production system based on a political economy perspective is espoused by cultural-critical geography scholars such as Britton (1991), while modernity- based critiques occupy some sociologists of tourism (Wang, 2000). Britton states that institutionalized leisure and tourism are forms of ideological control to maintain capitalist relations of production. The changing landscape of tourism described earlier complements Britton's work by reinforcing the importance of addressing tourism production–consumption as a cultural activity, and viewing the tourism industry inseparably from the culture industry. Driven by an insatiable need for capital accumulation, the culture industry's rapid growth has multiplied the range of leisure products and places available for consumers at home and during travel.

Wang's (2000) critique of tourism and modernity addresses the consequential commodifying and exoticizing of culture, as well as the modern tourist's quest for 'authentic' experiences. Alas, the critical social view shows a similarly dismal picture: globalization and a global tourism production system decontextualize, sensationalize, mediate and control the commodification and production of (cultural/heritage) tourism for consumption by visitors, and serve the instrumental needs of large-scale market capitalism. Aiding the appropriations and reconstructions are a host of intermediaries in the macro-social and political tourism system, including the cultural industries and the travel intermediaries such as tour operators, and promoters such as local and national tourist organizations, private sector industry promoters and so on. Modern symbolic media (e.g. films, novels, television, the Internet) play a significant role in promoting a sense of 'authentic' representations of destinations and cultures.

These include tourist brochures, guidebooks and two other ideological apparatuses of empire: travel writing and travelers' tales (Pratt, 1992; Dann, 1996). Accordingly, travel and tourism are powerful productive forces of personal, ethnic and national identity.

On the consumption side, tourism has become an archetype of social change for postmodern authors such as Baudrillard (1994) and Eco (1987). Hughes (1995) explains that hyper-consumers in a hyper-real world engage in hyperconsumption of mostly intangible objects under social conditions that are expressly 'abnormal' (consumption is a kind of hysterical flight driven by an insatiable sense of 'lack', says Baudrillard). Hughes discusses how tourist space is organized for such hyper-consumption via guidebooks, advertisements, tourist brochures and (heritage) trails. Scholars favoring the postmodern describe consumption in terms of a post-tourist who casts a playful, if somewhat disdainful, gaze upon the simulacra of touristic objects, consumes the signs, symbols and images, and trots back home no more enlightened about the place or people for they, too, are illusions, or so it seems (Feifer, 1985).The cultural theorist Benjamin (1955) offers a similarly trenchant critique of technology and the culture industry that make touristic spaces 'fantastic'. His notion of phantasmagoria refers to the annihilation of stable meanings, especially of stable meaning in culture. Applied to the above, tourism in a postindustrial, post-Fordist era involves the (re)production of places and enactment of events for hyper-real or phantasmagoric experiences.

For Benjamin (1955), commodification was at the heart of the construction of the urban phantasmagoria – a metropolis revolving around artifice, calculated illusion, metronomic spectacle and automated simulation – all of which disguise processes of buying and selling. An ideology of freedom and choice perpetuates consumer culture, reproducing false consciousness. Arrays of advertising and marketing devices enable the consumer to associate consumption with pleasure and fulfillment (for Marx this was the epitome of 'false consciousness', training consumers to celebrate processes that contribute to their enslavement). Orbasli's (2000) study of urban historic cities demonstrates similar concerns. Her discussion of façading shows how the historic city space, like in York (England), is being used as a façade or backdrop for consumption and superficial shopping experiences that do little to engage visitors in its rich cultural heritage and storied past–present.

An overwhelming concern for many critical and cultural scholars is that the crisis in historical and cultural appropriation and representation is occurring at all sites and centres of display and performance where institutions struggle to balance educating and informing missions with entertainment (Hollinshead, 1998a). This includes museums competing to enhance their traditional archival functions with the 'edutainment' provided by technologically sophisticated heritage parks and centres like the Tjapukai Aboriginal Cultural Park near Cairns, Australia.The above tourism scholars argue that cultural/heritage discourses are productively shaped by the needs and interests of the local–global tourism industry. External discourses and relations of power influence from near and afar the sights and performances that are enacted for the visitor (Hall, 1997). Such unrelenting views of domination and control make it rather hopeless to think that tourism can be a genuine facilitator of individual/ community empowerment, heritage conservation and sustainable local economic development. Fortunately, poststructural, feminist and performance theories have contested such universal, ideological domination of seemingly powerless individuals. Their works suggest that the consumption of cultural heritage is related to the production of cultural heritage goods through extensive structures, networks and processes extending temporally and spatially across individuals and their natural and built environments. Discourses, processes and practices bridge the micro–macro and reveal the possibility of agency, resistance and change.

Discourses of Power

A prevailing view of power places the tourist in a global game of cultural commodification and aestheticized consumption controlled by the culture-tourism industries. Bruner (1994) summarized this view succinctly when he stated that tourists are consuming nostalgia (for a vanished past) and buying ideas of progress that are embedded ideologically in heritage and cultural sites, hence 'new Salem and similar sites enact an ideology [traditional America – honest

values, virtue, etc.], recreate an original myth, keep history alive, attach tourists to a mythical collective consciousness, and commodify the past'. So, for those who say that heritage tourism can provide transformative experiences and opportunities for belonging and identity through exploration and learning about the past, how is this possible under the constraining structures and mediated environments described above? Can tourists and locals resist this colonizing game, often disguised under the 'innocent' label of heritage or cultural tourism, or are they doomed to be cultural pawns in the transnational, corporate machinery of market capitalism? game, often disguised under the 'innocent' label of heritage or cultural tourism, or are they doomed to be cultural pawns in the transnational, corporate machinery of market capitalism?

Unidimensional, authorial and top-down discourses of power are modernity's artifices.The micro–macro divide is also a modern artifice of disciplinary interests and methodologies influenced by subject–object dichotomies. A paradigm switch to a relational, dialogic and interpretive approach to touristic practices conveys a different picture.Take, for instance,Michel Foucault's (1980) concept of 'power knowledge' which is a poststructuralist rendition of subjection and discourse. For Foucault, it is what governs statements and the ways in which they govern each other that is of importance. Knowledge becomes ordered through a process of location, of fixing statements in relation to other established statements. Power, therefore, involves a complex relationship which is not necessarily unidirectional and top-down, but rather is relational and productive. The behavior of tourists, residents and other stakeholders in the destination is incited and produced in relation to discursive structures of governmentality and technologies of the self – the participant becomes involved and complicit in producing a particular tourism experience, without necessarily realizing the extent to which his or her participation is being disciplined and controlled (Foucault, 1980; Darier, 1999).

Power in the Foucauldian approach can be both enabling and constraining, but since the Foucauldian subject is linguistically and discursively constructed, there is no escape – one cannot get outside of power. Like the clinical gaze described by Foucault in The Birth of the Clinic, the tourist gaze (Urry, 1990) relegates the tourist to an act of visual consumption and subjects the recipient to a discourse of commodification. Foucault's work does not permit a fully fledged theory of agency, but there are other perspectives on practice and performativity that help bridge the structure–agency debate and divide to offer some hope to the heritage 'subject'. In particular, Foucault's work on power knowledge can complement Gramsci's notion of hegemony and resistance.

Practice, Agency and Resistance

Both the critical theories of institutional capitalism and the Foucauldian power knowledge of discursive governmentality portray the subjects of power (e.g. residents, tourists, actors in a heritage event) as possessing little agency to construct their own meanings and understandings. Yet, new social movements and participatory processes in tourism development and community-based tourism planning reveal new voices on the local–global stage, such as grassroots environmental and social NGOs, as well as indigenous women's groups involved in small-scale local enterprises. They engage and conflict with those of foreign developers and large-scale corporate interests vying for intellectual rights to local cultural and biodiversity knowledge and goods. But can agency really be enabled at the individual and local level in light of such extensive structural and economic influences? How can the 'invention of tradition' (Hobsbawm and Ranger, 1983) and the politics of national identity and interests be resisted and personal identity or belonging (re)claimed?

Drawing upon Gramsci (1971), Ateljevic (2000) sees tourism as a hegemonic activity. Meaning is not imposed by dominant interests; rather, it is a process of negotiation and contest over which actual meanings become cemented in the social fabric of discourses as a fundamental consensus of views. Production and consumption are dialectically connected via reproduction, that is, producers and consumers negotiate and communicate with each other in economic, social, political and cultural contestations – consensus and coercion rather than domination maintain social distinction and practices under hegemony. In other words, a dynamic view of tourism production, enactment, consumption and practice is possible if one adopts a critical dialectic. Ateljevic says: 'tourism consumption can be thought of in a similar way [as hegemony]: as a socially constructed activity defined and accepted by those who produce and consume it, socially sanctioned by institutions, customs, rules, ideas and values'.

In addition to such attempts to show active participation by consumers in the production of touristic structures and goods, there are other disciplinary approaches that have reinstated the person as one possessing agency (Giddens, 1984), or as an embodied and dialogic self, for example, embodied lay geographies (Crouch, 2000), hermeneutic-phenomenology (Pons, 2003) as well as feminist and gendered perspectives (Veijola and Jokinen, 1994). Landscapes and townscapes are irreducibly gendered, objects and memory articulate space, time and body, so the shaping and aestheticizing of material culture involve complex social dynamics (Lurry, 1996). Travel and tourism are seen to constitute an educative and self-formative realm of spiritual and creative significance, mobilizing the culturally meaningful, gendered, and sexual self (Pritchard and Morgan, 2000). Dialogic and dialectic perspectives address meaning making, sense of place, and embodied participation. Agency is possible through performative resistance and dialogic participation in the production–consumption space (Jamal et al., 2003).

The theoretical contributions of feminist, geographical, and performance studies to the notion of performativity, as well as power, ideology and critical theories, political economy critiques, and sociological contributions to practice theory (Bourdieu, 1977; Giddens, 1984) enable important theorizing of tourism in terms of production and consumption. Applying Gramsci's notion of hegemony to production–consumption (Ateljevic, 2000) was particularly informative to our micro–macro analysis. Recognizing that tourism is 'inseparable from the spaces and places in which it is created, imagined, perceived and experienced' Ateljevic says we need a framework of production–consumption that provides new ways of seeing tourism and leisure beyond dualisms and binaries, in particular the economic and cultural binary, that is, the production–consumption divide. Our proposed framework adds to her critical dialectic other theoretical perspectives that bridge the micro–macro divide and situate the body as embodied and dialogic, the person as an experiential being, not merely one engaged in dialectic negotiation and contestation. Vacationscapes are 'produced by movement, both of the mind and the body' and the role of movement is not so much to a different geographical space as to a different social space of 'elsewhereness', says Lofgren (1999). Experiences of elsewhere, in the case of heritage tourism, involve travels to the past through its various manifestations (physical sites, literary renditions, contested identities, healing or dark memories).

The philosophy and methodologies of social science have pushed well forward in this regard, moving from the crisis of representation, to blurred genres of research, to the postmodern decentering of metanarratives and to embodied, storied and interpretive approaches to social research.

Discussion and Future Paradigms

Two meta-categories of subject areas (methodology and theoretical constructs, and development and impacts) have emerged, representing two domains of knowledge in tourism research. The growth of literature on methodology reflects dedication to theoretical constructs, while the accumulation of knowledge on development and impacts reflects a major academic perspective on tourism as a broad phenomenon.

The growth of knowledge around methodology and theoretical constructs is indicative of the efforts of a young field to achieve rigor and to be recognized as a "serious" field of enquiry. The emergence of development and impacts as a domain represents a particular substantive concern of many researchers. Following the advocacy of tourism as a passport to development (de Kadt 1979) and as a passport to peace (Jafari 1989), the World Tourism Organization is now promoting it as a means to alleviate poverty, which is a theme in both the summit meeting on world sustainable development (Johannesburg 2002) and WTO's 15th General Assembly (Beijing 2003). All these ideas fall under the umbrella of development and impacts.

Evolution implies change. While specific details of change were not reported in this study, some broad temporal patterns were found in this analysis. Viewed over a 30-year span, the field is changing in terms of research focus and methodological sophistication. With respect to paradigmatic shifts, this research confirms previous findings that the field is still dominated by the scientific-positivistic paradigm while there is evidence indicating an emerging contribution from the interpretive paradigm and/or critical theory (Botterill 2001; Riley and Love 2000; Tribe 2001)

Heritage tourism has gained significant attention as a political and economic engine for local, state and national interests. Intricately involved in meaning making and identity formation, its potential for social good (and misuse) is immense.To be able to have a heritage, to draw upon the past to identify self, group and home (past or present), to exercise a claim to preserve and protect some particular custom, tradition, language or place, all of this is crucially about freedom and democracy, accessibility, choice and voice. Belonging somewhere, and the commonalities or differences between people and places, is understood historically, relationally and culturally, through the interpretation, narration, performance and memorialization of things past into the present and future. The emancipatory potential of heritage tourism in today's globally mobile stage and increasingly diverse populations can hardly be underestimated: it can facilitate and influence how the spirit of a people shows itself through an empathy with land, community, and cultural stories.

But, the importance of (and opportunity for) heritage tourism to foster joint understandings, peace, tolerance and equity is understated in this marketplace of 'new tourisms'. The study of heritage and tourism is currently fragmented and lacking in strong theoretical and conceptual direction, inhibiting effective research and the ability to better inform practice (Garrodd and Fyall, 2000; Franklin, 2003).The problem is due, in part, to the vast interdisciplinary domain in which this growing field of study is situated. In part, it is also due to Intradisciplinary tension among competing research paradigms (theoretical, critical, functional/applied). Deleuze and Guattari (1984) also argue that too much of our understanding in and of the world, today, comes from fixed, static, and sedentary points of view; we need to decenter taken-for-granted understandings and find new ways to understand how peoples, places and pasts are envisioned, represented and sustained.

Disciplinary fragmentations and industry-driven discourses have contributed to tourism (and heritage tourism) being conceptualized in unidimensional, static and rationalized supply–demand terms. Tourism has been described in terms of a discrete activity occurring in a distance location; it is often seen as a specialist consumer product, as a mode of consumption among others, or as a ritual of modern life (going away and returning). Franklin (2003) and Franklin and Crang (2001) argue that tourism should be seen as a significant modality through which transitional modern life is organized – it should be studied as a cultural phenomenon and a social one. We have drawn upon this and other recent learnings to argue for an integrative approach that bridges methodologically and theoretically incited divides in heritage tourism research, especially the micro–macro gap.

For the purposes of our integrative study, three closely related areas were examined in relation to mobilities and the changing landscape of travel and tourism: (a) the postcolonial touristic space; (b) the production–consumption system; and (c) discourses of power and practices of resistance and agency. We attempted to identify some key issues and insights from these in order to propose a preliminary conceptual framework for a micro–macro theory of heritage tourism. The complexity of the topic area, disparate disciplinary and methodological issues, and a fragmented, globally diffusive tourism industry, all point to the need to develop an integrated knowledge base to inform research and practice (contributing to Jafari's (2001) knowledge-based platform).We have proposed here the development of an interdisciplinary theoretical framework plus an integrated database as two important components of a knowledge-based platform for heritage tourism research. The database itself would contain information and relevant references on the key disciplinary theorists, issues, concepts, and challenges identified in the development of the integrated micro–macro framework. The resulting knowledge base could help address some key issues identified in this study, such as:

❖ Tourism and social life: tourism can be viewed as a celebration of modern life rather than an escape from it: it involves the preparation of people to see other places, peoples and objects, and preparation of those other places and peoples to be seen (Franklin, 2003). Heritage tourism can be viewed similarly within the context of global social life today. Drawing upon the 'past' is integral to interpreting the present (and future), and for self, identity and belonging. Heritage tourism brings pasts, peoples, places and cultures into performative contestation and dialogue. It is a social-cultural phenomenon important to personal, local and global social life;

- ❖ The post-heritage tourist? Tourism and culture now overlap greatly. Tourism has become a cultural practice organized around the mass mobility of peoples, signs and images. It should be examined as a cultural activity organized by space, time, the real and the imagined. In this hyper-real and hyper-consumptive world, the ability to achieve sensational experiences via virtual channels and exotic travel experiences suggests an important role for a 'post-heritage tourist'. However, the case of the Texas Renaissance Festival indicates that the consumer/visitor can obtain 'authentic' experiences through embodied participation in phantasmagoric performances. The post-tourist is not as detached as it appears;
- ❖ The body in tourism: the emphasis on the visual is being re-examined, especially in light of interdisciplinary insights from geography, feminist and performance studies (among others).The body in tourism, long neglected and eviscerated of all but modernity's gaze and character, must be (re)situated not merely as embodied and possessing agency, but also as a dialogic, experiential and historical being. It is an integral performative bridge in the micro–macro framework.
- ❖ Performative spaces: no longer trapped in subject–object dichotomies, the body in heritage and tourism is being decentered from modernity's paintbrush and the portrait of the rationally defined tourist (see Pons, 2003). Resituating the body in performative, relational and sensuous spaces an experiences enables a richer interpretation of the past in heritage tourism and helps to efface production–consumption dualisms. It is nonetheless a productive space in which the politics of identity, representation and belonging play out.

Heritage' and its cognate, 'identity', must nearly always be pluralized, even if this often remains an elusive goal in public policy: 'Heritage is a word more widely used than understood. It is often simplistically and singularly applied, and pluralised more commonly in rhetoric than reality' (Ashworth, Graham and Tunbridge, 2007, 236). Yet, this paper amply demonstrate, the interconnections of heritages and identities are all around us, entwining the local with the regional, national and global, everyday life with political ideology. The range of disciplinary perspectives involved and the very seriousness of so many of the issues and examples discussed here demonstrate that we must be conscious of the dangers inherent in the trivialization of heritage and of the constraints of the tangible/intangible dichotomy. The meaning of the past in the present that unites all heritage lies at the very contested core of who we are and of who others want us to be. Despite the shared symbolic and material form of the state, political processes often fail to engage with cultural questions in its theorization

A crucial research agenda for heritage tourism has been advanced in this article: to develop an integrated conceptual schema for heritage tourism research. An interdisciplinary conceptual framework and information database have been proposed as important components of this micro–macro knowledge base. As discussed in this article, the following study areas are particularly important to bridge the production–consumption and other binaries described in the previous sections. Our study offers a preliminary conversation and invitation to take up this important task.

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A study on Service Quality in Indian Restaurants with Decision- and experiential-oriented perspectives

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Abstract

Using the decision- and experiential-oriented perspectives as theoretical guides, this article reported an empirical assessment of service quality in restaurant operations. We proposed and tested a conceptual model of service quality using structural equation modeling. Using data from a sample of 284 customers from two large full-service restaurants in southern India, we investigated the relationships of service quality, customer satisfaction, and frequency of patronage. The results supported the significant links between service quality and customer satisfaction, service quality and repeat patronage, but not customer satisfaction and repeat patronage. The study has provided important insights into service quality and customer satisfaction in the field of restaurant operations.

Keywords:

Service quality; Customer satisfaction; Restaurants; India

1. Introduction

Service quality and customer satisfaction have been identified as key elements of the service-profit chain (Heskett et al., 1997). Higher levels of service quality produce higher levels of customer satisfaction, which in turn lead to higher levels of customer patronage and sales revenue. Customer service quality is a crucial source of distinctive competence and often considered a key success factor in sustaining competitive advantage in service industries (Palmer, 2001). Thus, attention to delivery of a higher level of service quality is an important strategy by which service organizations can position themselves more effectively in the market place. The important relationships of service quality, customer satisfaction, and purchasing behavior have thus been an important area of research (Pettijohn et al., 1997; Sivas and Baker-Prewitt, 2000).

Previous studies on customer expectation and service-quality perception in the food service industry have revealed certain important attributes, such as low price, food quality (food taste and nutrition properties), value for money, service, location, brand name, and image (Johns and Howard, 1998; Tam and Yung, 2003). More specifically, the fundamental factors that contribute to customer satisfaction in restaurants include the food (hygiene, balance, and healthiness), physical provision (layout, furnishing, and cleanliness), the atmosphere (feeling and comfort), and the service received (speed, friendliness, and care) during the meal experience (Johns and Pine, 2002).

India's impressive economic growth rate increased more than six-fold during the last two decades. The steady income growth of the people in India has provided an opportunity for increased spending in restaurants. The city of Bangalore, for example, has attained the highest average disposable income in India (i.e., US$1065 per year). According to the National Bureau of Statistics of India (2002), Bangalore's residents spend US$307.70 monthly on food, of which 35.5% is spent in restaurants. Catering service provision, a booming industry in India, grew 16.6% in 2002.

There were a total of 3.8 million restaurants, employing 18 millions workers. Sales value reached or US$65.26 billion, accounting for 5% of total production value and representing 12.5% of the total retail values. The demand for good quality catering service is expected to grow steadily (Yang, 2004). In the Indian culture, restaurants are a common venue for social gatherings and business entertainment. Food consumption in restaurants provides an experience of excitement, celebration, and establishing social connections (Feng, 2003).

Very little, if any, research has been undertaken to measure service quality of restaurants in the context of India (Swanson and Davis, 2003). The present study examines the relationships of service quality, customer satisfaction, and frequency of patronage in mainland India. It will be of interest in understanding more about how environmental inputs affect perceptions of service quality, satisfaction, and the patronage frequency. Our findings offer important insights into how restaurant operators manage service quality and customer satisfaction. In the following sections, we develop our theoretical model and hypotheses and describe the research method. Then, the findings are discussed, and theoretical and practical implications are provided.

2. Hypotheses

In this study, we draw upon the decision- and experiential-oriented perspectives (Holbrook, 1995) as an overarching framework in developing our nomological network. According to Holbrook's (1995) perspectives, consumers' responses stem from two broad sources. environmental inputs and consumer inputs. These inputs contribute to the consumers' evaluative standards and, in turn, shape their experiential-oriented system and decision-oriented system. In our model (see Fig. 1), we identified three environmental inputs (interaction quality, physical environment quality, and outcome quality) based on the second-order factors of Brady and Cronin's (2001) model. These environmental inputs precede customers' evaluative standards (service quality) and, in turn, shape their experiential views (customer satisfaction) and decision-oriented system (repeat patronage) simultaneously. According to Holbrook's (1995) theoretical framework, individual differences represent an important source of consumer inputs, such as demographics, socio-economics, or lifestyle. We identified four customer inputs in this study, namely sex, age, education level, and income level. We also attempted to link up experiential- and decision-oriented systems and tested the effects of customer satisfaction on repeat patronage.

2.1. Environmental inputs and service quality

Service quality in food-service operations has been characterized as individualized, intangible, and subjective in nature (Johns and Howard, 1998). The customers' perception of service quality comes from their evaluation of what they experienced and what they expected. During the last decade, the conceptualization and measurement of service quality has received a great deal of attention in the literature. SERVQUAL (Parasuraman et al., 1988) has been widely used in research studies across a range of service industries (Buttle, 1996; Carman, 1990). SERVQUAL consists of five service dimensions with a set of 22 items for expectation and perception. The five service dimensions are, tangibles (physical facilities, equipment, and appearance of personnel), reliability (ability to perform the proposed service dependably and accurately), responsiveness (willingness to help customers and provide prompt service), assurance (knowledge and courtesy of employees and their ability to inspire trust and confidence), and empathy (the individualized attention and care that the service provider gives to customers). Gro¨ nroos (1984) also classifies service quality into technical and functional quality. Technical quality refers to what the customer is delivered, e.g., the meal or food quality in a restaurant in this study; functional is concerned with psychological and behavioral aspects and the way in which the service is delivered to the customer through interaction and atmosphere. The functional quality is considered to be more important than the technical side of quality.

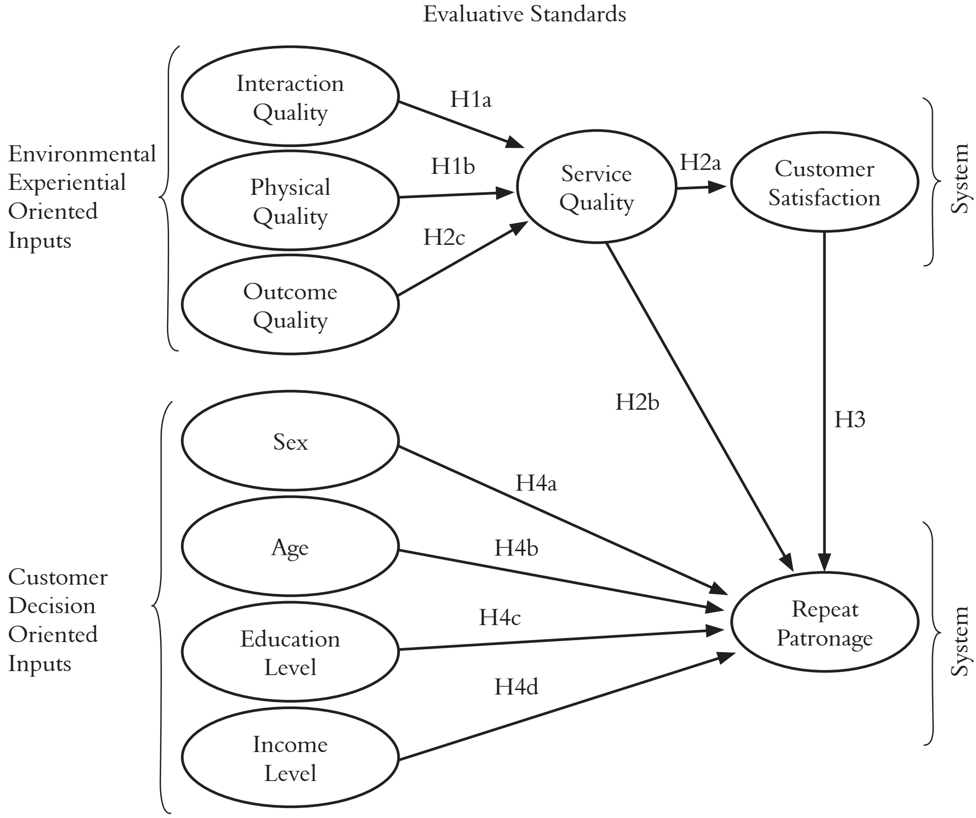

Fig. 1. A model of service quality from decision- and experiential-oriented perspectives.

The service quality model proposed by Rust and Oliver (1994) includes three factors, customer–employee interaction, service environment, and service outcome. Building upon Rust and Oliver's (1994) model, Brady and Cronin's (2001) conceptualization of service quality offers a three-factor model comprising three dimensions (i.e., interaction quality, physical environment quality, and outcome quality). Interaction quality is measured by attitude, behavior, and expertise; physical environment quality is measured by ambient conditions, design, and social factors; outcome quality is measured by waiting time, tangibles, and valence. Drawing upon Holbrook's (1995) perspectives, we employed Brady and Cronin's (2001) three second-order factors (interaction quality, physical environment quality, and outcome quality) as the environmental inputs. These factors have been empirically supported as significantly positive predictors of service quality (Brady and Cronin, 2001). In this study, we predict.

H1a–c. Environmental inputs comprising (a) interaction quality, (b) physical environment quality, and (c) outcome quality will be positively related to service quality.

2.2. Service quality, customer satisfaction, and repeat patronage

From the decision- and experiential-oriented perspectives (Holbrook, 1995), service quality, as an evaluative standard, has an impact on both customers' consuming affect (satisfaction—the experimental system) and buying behavior (repurchase—the decision oriented system). In the consumer behavior research, satisfaction has been empirically supported as a function of expectation confirmation or disconfirmation. Evidence has generally supported the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction (see Anderson and Fornell, 1994; Bitner and Hubbert, 1994; Rust and Oliver 1994). For example, Bolton and Drew (1994, p. 176) argue "customer satisfaction y depends on preexisting or contemporaneous attitudes about service quality". Antony et al. (2004) investigate the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction in UK hotels.

The results also show that service quality emerged as an important determinant of customer satisfaction. Likewise, studies have established the relationship between service quality and repeat patronage, as indicated by customers' willingness to recommend and their intention to repurchase. Hausman (2003) investigates the impact of the technical and functional (social) aspects of high-contact professional services on client satisfaction and repurchase in four different samples (physicians, ministers, hairstylists, and social workers). The findings generally support the positive impact of high-contact professional services on customer satisfaction and the intention to patronize again, although the strength of the relationship varied with the context. Therefore, we predict.

H2a–b. Service quality will be positively related to (a) customer satisfaction and (b) repeat patronage.

2.3. Customer satisfaction and repeat patronage

As profit and growth are stimulated primarily by customer loyalty, which is a commitment to patronize preferred products or services consistently in the future (Oliver,1997), customer satisfaction and repeat patronage are important indicators of restaurant performance. However, Holbrook's (1995) model suggests that the decision-oriented system and experiential-oriented system are associated. In the literature, there has also been evidence of the role of satisfaction in predicting repeat patronage (see Anderson and Fornell, 1994; Cronin and Taylor 1992; Fornell et al., 1996; Oliver, 1999). Thus, we predict.

H3. Customer satisfaction will be positively related to repeat patronage.

2.4. Customer inputs and repeat patronage

According to Holbrook's (1995) perspective, customer inputs are another set of important determinants of customer behavior. In other words, different personal characteristics influence customers' purchasing behavior other than environmental inputs such as service quality. For example, Huang and Yu (1999) find that some consumers who stick with certain products or services with repeat purchase behavior are acting somewhat non-consciously and are influenced by inertia or brand loyalty. Slama and Tashchian (1985) also find that female sex, education level, income level, and family life cycle stage are associated with consumer purchase behavior. In this study, we identified four customer inputs (female sex, age, education level, and income level) to explain the variation in consumers' repurchase behavior. Thus, we predict.

H4a–d. Customer inputs comprising (a) female sex, (b) age, (c) education level, and (d) income level will be related to repeat patronage.

3. Method

We conducted a field study in two large restaurants in Bangalore where the customers assessed the service quality. The top management of these restaurants were approached and consented to the survey of their customers. A self-administered survey questionnaire was used. Restaurant patrons were asked to answer the questionnaire during lunch or dinnertime after they finished and were waiting for the bill. A total of 340 questionnaires were distributed and 284 were usable. The response rate was 83.5%. The majority of respondents (77.8%) belonged to the age group between 25 and 49. Their income level ranged from less than RMB f2000 (US$250) to over RMB f8000 (US$1000) per month. Most of them (76%) had attained junior college level or higher. Frequency of patronage of the respondents ranged from once to over five times per month in restaurants, with an average of twice per month (see Table 1).

3.1. Measures

We adopted the service quality instrument developed by Brady and Cronin

(2001). In this study, three second-order factors (interaction quality, physical environment, and outcome quality) and service quality were used. Each of these variables was measured by two items. An example of interaction quality is "Overall, I'd say the quality of my interaction with this restaurant's employees is excellent". An example of service environment quality is "I would say this restaurant's physical environment is one of the best in its industry". An example of outcome quality is "I always have an excellent experience when I visit this restaurant". An example of service quality is "I would say that this restaurant provides superior service". All items were scored on a 7-point scale (1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree). The Cronbach's alphas for interaction quality, physical environment, outcome quality, and service quality were .76, .74, .81, and .82, respectively. Following Brady and Cronin (2001) and other researchers (Wanous et al., 1997), satisfaction was measured using a single item. Demographic data, frequency of patronage, and customer satisfaction were also measured.

Table 1. Sample profile

	Frequency	%
Gender		
Male	164	63.3
Female	95	36.7
Age distribution		
15–19	2	0.8
20–24	14	5.3
25–34	102	38.9
35–49	102	38.9
50–65	26	9.9
Over 65	16	6.1
Educational attainment		
Elementary and below	5	1.9
Junior high	18	6.9
Senior high	38	14.6
Junior college and above	199	76.5
Income levels		
(Rs/month)	39	15.4
Less than 20000	58	22.9
20001–30000	38	15.0
30001–40000	55	21.7
40001–60000	27	10.7
60001–80000	36	14.2
Over 80000		

	Frequency	%
Frequency of patronage/ month		
1	88	35.2
2–3	69	27.6
4–5	41	16.4
Over 5	52	20.8

4. Results

Descriptive statistics and correlations among variables are presented in Table 2. Service quality and its antecedents were significantly correlated with customer satisfaction and frequency of patronage. Income and educational level had no significant correlation with all service quality factors. Age was significantly correlated with interaction quality, outcome quality, and service quality. Male respondents were particularly concerned with physical environment, with higher expectations of service quality, which thus resulted in significantly negative correlations with environment condition. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was used to assess the validity of the three-factor model (interaction, physical, and outcome quality). The CFA demonstrated that the three factor model had a good fit to the data ($\chi 2$ = 15.60; df = 6; p = 0.075; RMSEA = 0.075; NFI = 0.989; NNFI = 0.983; CFI = 0.993; IFI = 0.993; GFI = 0.982). Structural equation modeling was used to assess the relative impact of these constructs on customer satisfaction and repeat patronage. Following Kelloway (1998), we averaged the items to form a single item indicator for each latent variable. We fixed the common factor loadings (the path from latent variables to indicators) to equal one. For the unique factor loadings (the error variances), the single-item indicator was set to be equal to zero, and multiple item scales were set to be equal to one minus reliability coefficients, all multiplied by variances of observed scores. The results from LISREL showed that the model had a good fit to the data ($\chi 2$ = 28.10; df = 14; p = 0.014; RMSEA = 0.06; NFI = 0.97; CFI = 0.99; IFI = 0.99; GFI = 0.98). The paths and corresponding coefficients of the model are depicted in Fig. 2.

Interaction quality ($\beta = .79$, $p < .01$) and physical environmental quality ($\beta = .48$, $p < .05$) were significant constructs that predicted service quality. However, outcome quality ($\beta = -0.27$, $p > 0.05$) was not a significant predictor of service quality. Thus, H1a and H1b were supported, but H1c was not. The results also indicated that service quality affected both customer satisfaction ($\beta =.31$, $p <.01$) and frequency of patronage ($\beta = .24$, $p < 0.01$). As hypothesized, both H2a and H2b were confirmed.

		M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	Patron-age	2.23	1.15									
2	Satisfac-tion	5.57	3.20	.12a								
3	Gender	1.37	.48	.01	-.07							
4	Age	3.70	.46	.37***	.1	-.12a						
5	Educa-tion	3.66	.69	-.32***	-.01	-.09	-.28***					
6	Income	3.32	1.64	-.07	.08	-.16*	-.04	.40***				
7	Interac-tion	5.00	1.25	.37***	.29***	-.07	.23***	-.05	.04			
8	Environ-ment	4.84	1.17	.27***	.14*	-.18*	.04	-.07	-.02	.67***		
9	Out-come	5.00	1.23	.32***	.24***	-.09	.14*	-.09	.002	.76***	.72***	
10	Service Quality	5.15	1.17	.36***	.33***	-.06	.14*	-.08	.07	.76***	.75***	.79***

*p< .05; **p< .01; ***p< .001.
[a]The correlation is significant at the p< .1 level (two-tailed).

Contrary to our expectations, we did not find that customer satisfaction resulted in repeat patronage of a restaurant (β = .01, p > 0.05). In other words, there is no guarantee of satisfied customers' repeat patronage, i.e.,

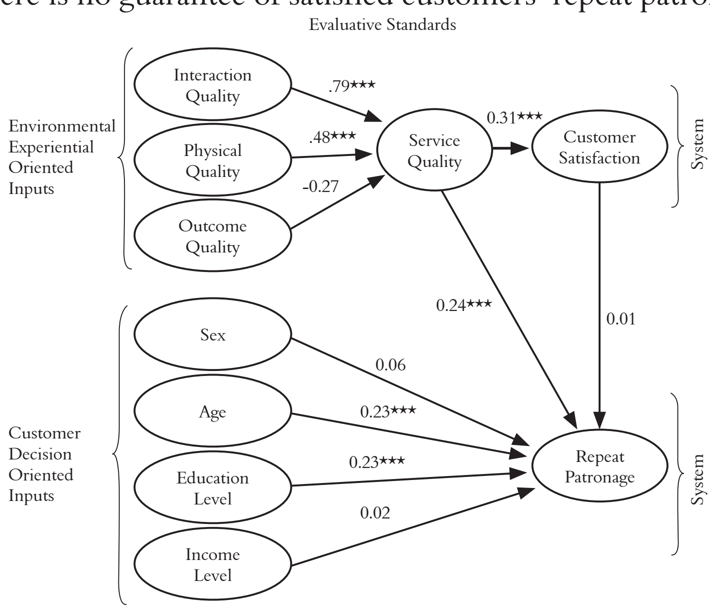

Fig. 2. Results of the hypothesized model of service quality. □2 = 28.10*, df = 14; RMSEA = .06; NFI = .97; CFI = .99; IFI = .99; GFI = .98. Estimates were standardized solutions.

***p< .05; **p< .01; ***p.001.**

a favorable relative attitude may not necessarily result in repeat purchases (Dick and Basu, 1994). Thus, H3 was refuted. Since customer inputs are potential factors determining the repeat patronage behavior, it would be interesting in exploring the profile of frequent visitors, because it offers practical implications for the attraction of returning customers. The results showed that both female sex (β = .06, p>.05) and income level (β = .02, p>.05) were not significantly linked to repeat patronage. In contrast, age (β = .23, p < .001) had a significantly positive relationship, while educational level (β = -.18, p < .01) had a significantly negative impact, on repeat patronage. Thus, H4b and H4c were supported, but H4a and H4d were not.

5. Discussion

The present study examines the relationship between service quality, satisfaction, and the frequency of patronage in a restaurant setting. Drawing upon the decision- and experiential-oriented perspectives (Holbrook, 1995) as the theoretical guides, it offers new theoretical perspectives on, and new insights into, service quality in restaurant operations in India. Consistent with Holbrook's (1995) model, the CFA results demonstrate that environmental inputs and customers inputs are significant predictors of repeat patronage, while environmental inputs are significant antecedents of evaluative standards (service quality) and, in turn, shape the customers' experiential-oriented system (customer satisfaction) and decision-oriented system (repeat patronage). From the respondents' perspective, however, interaction and physical environment quality, relative to outcome quality, are more important predictors of service quality. The findings from this study advance our understanding of the ways in which customers assess the quality of service that they experience. A high level of service quality is associated with customer satisfaction as well as frequent patronage. However, no significant link between satisfaction and repeat patronage was found. Results from the present study do not lend much support for the relationships among service quality, customer satisfaction, and behavioral intention in the existing literature. Fornell (1992) argues that high customer satisfaction will result in increased repurchase intention. However, the ability of customer satisfaction scores to predict such loyalty has not been adequately demonstrated (Higgins, 1997).

In terms of customer inputs, female sex and income differences of the respondents had no significant correlation with the perception of service quality, but as those with a higher educational level had higher expectations of service quality, it is thus more of a challenge to keep these highly educated customers. Age of the respondents showed a higher tendency for repeat patronage. One of the reasons may be the older customers tend to be more loyal as a result of inertia or habit. Also, this older group of people may be more involved in traditional business deals and social activities in restaurants in India, while the younger generations in India have much more diverse activities other than gatherings in restaurants.

The results from this study suggest that interaction and physical environment quality are more important than the outcome quality for restaurant customers. The attributes that matter most are physical environment and the quality of interaction. These aspects of quality are judged to be more important in the minds of Indian consumers, and thus will be the critical determinants of customer satisfaction and repeat patronage. Failure to provide favorable results in these aspects is unlikely to enhance customer satisfaction and repeat patronage. In view of Gro¨ nroos's (1984) framework, this study finds that the functional aspects of quality (interaction and physical environment) seem to be more important, at least in the context of restaurant services in India, which is in contrast to Gro¨ nroos (1984) and Brady and Cronin (2001). Further exploration may be needed to determine whether Indian culture (or, more specifically, Guangdong culture) or other factors influence this finding. In hospitality services, socially oriented activities and exchanges often provide the primary impetus for visiting one hospitality establishment over another, and this is particularly true of the restaurant industry in the Indian context (Becker et al., 1999). An important implication of the social nature of services in general, and of hospitality services in particular, is the predominant role that culture plays in influencing customer expectations of service performance and customers' assessment of that performance (Becker et al., 1999). Managers should therefore adjust and formulate their marketing strategies with these considerations in mind.

The success of restaurant business relies on providing superior service quality, value, and customer satisfaction, which in turn enhances consumer repeat patronage (Heskett et al., 1997). Satisfaction is considered to act as an antecedent to loyalty (Bitner, 1990). Surprisingly, the results of this study show no significant link between customer satisfaction and frequency of patronage. However, there is a direct link between service quality and repeat patronage. In one of the restaurants, 97% of the respondents showed the intention to revisit the restaurant and 84% of them would recommend the restaurant to their friends. Such a high tendency of repeat patronage may be just a habit or due to the high quality of interaction and neighborhood environment. Thus it renders no support for H3 that customer satisfaction is hypothesized as a positive predictor of repeat patronage.

The present study controls price level by researching a medium-priced restaurant chain. Situational factors, such as price and value for money, may be important considerations for customers in choosing a particular restaurant. Choice and variety may be another concern. Restaurant customers seek variety, and often visit a number of restaurants to meet different needs for different occasions and purposes (Sivas and Baker-Prewitt, 2000). Further study is warranted to explore these factors, but managers should be alert and concerned about the existence of situational variables, and ensure that these variables are identified and properly managed such that loyalty to their restaurant may be fostered. This is a great challenge, especially in view of the fact that consumers may patronize a number of restaurants. As switching costs are quite low, it is important to try to maintain a lasting relationship with customers, encourage return visits, build customer loyalty, and obtain referrals through positive word of mouth. Other studies have shown that it costs five to eight times more to acquire new customers than to retain existing customers (Schneider et al., 1998), and because of the high transaction costs that are associated with new customers, customer retention is critical to the success of a restaurant. Restaurant operators should go beyond quality and customer satisfaction to focus on what really matters—customer retention and profitability. Customer satisfaction drives customer loyalty and, in turn, leads to growth and profitability. Future studies should investigate the link between quality, satisfaction, loyalty, and profit.

In a highly competitive business environment with low-operating margins, the provision of exceptional customer service gives an organization a competitive edge. To improve customer satisfaction and loyalty, restaurant operators must understand what factors influence customer satisfaction and repeat patronage behavior. The findings on the relationships between service quality, customer satisfaction, and purchasing behavior offer important practical implications for researchers and practitioners alike. In addition, the three environmental inputs of interaction, physical environment, and outcome quality have been examined. The results suggest that the physical and social environment is perceived as more important than outcome. Customer satisfaction may not directly result in repeat patronage. Incentive programs such as free coupons or special discounts or bring a friend to the store program, or advertising that encourages consumers to recommend the store to their friends are important to keep customers returning. The results of this study provide some important directions for management in formulating a strategy to provide a better quality service to customers.

These more comprehensive environmental inputs provide practitioners with detailed information in specific areas to help them to identify the key drivers for success and competitiveness. Relative performance across the dimensions can be tracked, which can help managers to focus their efforts on improving customer perceptions of service quality, and, in the specific case of restaurants, enhancing the dining experience of their customers. The delivery of service occurs during the interaction between service employees and customers, and, together with the attitudes and behavior of service employees, influences customer perceptions of service quality (Hartline and Ferrell, 1996; Iglesias and Guillen, 2004). Good-quality interaction between customers and employees will lead to desirable outcomes, such as satisfaction, repeat patronage, and profit, and will have special implications for service staff development. The service skills of employees are crucial to the delivery of a high-quality service. Good service training equips service staff with the competence to deliver a high-quality service. Moreover, training and development experience enhances the ability of employees to deliver a high-quality service and to meet the needs of customers more effectively and in a more friendly way. Supervisors should thus develop supportive relationships in the work environment, and should provide opportunities for employees to enhance their work-related skills. Employees are also more likely to deliver an excellent service to customers when organizations reward such behavior and establish procedures that support service delivery (Schneider et al., 1992).

As more multinational firms enter the Indian market, the findings of this study will be particularly relevant to practitioners of multinational corporations (MNCs) in designing their management practices and systems. Some global food chains, such as McDonalds and Pizza Hut, have been very successful in entering the India market, possibly because reputation and image are important concerns for Indian customers (Liu and Lin, 2003; Cohen, 2004). Restaurant owners should thus put brand strategy into effect, and initiate the green consumption of goods and beverages (Chen, 2002).

Last, but not least, the limitation of a sample that was based upon a survey of customers in two restaurants in the Bangalore area should be acknowledged. The major concern here is the generalizability of the findings to the large India market, which is characterized by regional differences and various types of cuisine. Every region in India has its distinctive cuisines and tastes, which are not easily duplicated. However, such a sample provides the advantage of greater control over sub-cultural effect that might otherwise contaminate the relationships between the factors. Further study with a larger representative sample from different regions would enhance the generalizability of the results. It is hoped that results from this study will stimulate future research into restaurants in particular, and the hospitality sector in general, both in the context of India and other countries. The influence of the reputation and image of a restaurant is also worthy investigating.

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Tourist Needs Gap in Cherrapunji Destination of Meghalaya, India

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Abstract

The deficiencies in meeting tourist needs leads to tourist needs gap. As such, the present study aims to examine tourist needs gap by conducting a case study on the most popular and famous tourist destination of Meghalaya, namely Cherrapunji through a focus on the analysis of the degree of tourist needs gap. The analysis involves tourist interviews of 100 random samples during August-October, 2013 from nine tourism resources covering variables like information search, experience, amount of money spent, quality of infrastructure, health and sanitary standards and so forth. The study portrays that the tourist needs gap are present across all the variables. Consequently, the policy implications involve a need for transforming the destination, alleviation of the gaps through concerted efforts at all levels of governance and so forth.

Keywords:

Tourist needs gap, Microenterprise, Cherrapunji destination

I Introduction

The term 'tourist needs' is relative in nature as the type, structure and degree of such needs vary on the basis of the physical and psychological make-up of the tourist and destination visited. For example, the needs of a highly demanding tourist will normally be on the higher end and vice versa. Similarly, a high-end destination will predominantly attract higher end tourist needs and vice versa. Hence, taking note of this relativity and flexibility there cannot be a strict definition of the same. Nonetheless, tourist needs are generally expressed in terms of time, place, form and possession utilities (Pearce, 2008) and may be defined as 'the needs of the tourist in relation to travel and tourism with reference to a destination planned for or being visited'. Hence, tourist needs refers to the requirements of a tourist over the course of tourism activity and is different from expectations and perception although it may be influenced by such. In recent times, tourists are becoming more independent in their purchasing decisions (World Tourism Organization [WTO], 2012) and have an increased expectation of the destination culminating from their positive perceptions. In reaction to this demand destinations need to analyse, gear-up, embrace and respond. Failure to do so results in gaps in terms of products and services offered – aptly nomenclature as 'tourist needs gap'. These gaps mainly appear because of the under-supply and/or poor service of a certain tourism component(s). These gaps are to be eliminated as the attractiveness of destinations is only useful if it serves to meet the real needs of the market like holiday, business, health, sports and so forth (WTO, 2012).

In addition, globally and domestically, the tourist needs gaps are mainly related to microenterprises as the tourism sector is dominated by microenterprises and the self-employed (Indian Institute of Tourism and Travel Management, 2010; Oldbell3, 2007). This is understandable as the businesses engaged in tourism mainly involve providing services which can be handled by microenterprises (Tourism and Transport Consult International [TTCI], 2011). In general, microenterprise have been identified as the most viable business structures to fight poverty and kick-start development consistent with the sustainable livelihoods approach to rural poverty reduction (Shen, Hughey & Simmons, 2008) with the tourism sector being no exception (Manyara & Jones, 2007).

Accordingly, the present study aims to examine tourist needs gap by conducting a case study on the most popular and famous tourist destination of Meghalaya1, namely Cherrapunji2 through a focus on the analysis of the degree of tourist needs gap. Consequently, in addition to the introduction the study is classified into five additional sections. Section II portrays the literature on microenterprise and tourist needs. Section III presents the methodology as applied in the study. Section IV depicts the findings from tourist needs gap analysis. Section V details the discussion on tourist needs gap analysis and closes with section VI which pens down the conclusion and policy implications.

II Microenterprise and Tourist Needs

The vast majority of tourism-related enterprise can be classified as small with microenterprise being in the frontline of serving consumers and meeting tourist demands (Coetzer, 2001/2) thereby possessing the scope and opportunity of an overwhelming impact on local livelihoods (Islam & Carlsen, 2012). Tourism creates business opportunities for microentrepreneurs in various tourism-related activities such as accommodations, food outlets, tourist agents, guides, retail, sport facilities and so forth (Othman & Rosli, 2011) as a direct result of tourist needs. Microenterprise not only gain revenue from new contracts or customers but the business advice, scale of demand, access to new markets and enhanced reputation can enable an enterprise to expand further (Overseas Development Institute, 2006).

In addition, tourist needs and microenterprise play an important part in successful destination development and destination competitiveness and the quality of the tourist experience is influenced heavily by the quality of the encounter with such enterprise thereby creating interdependence between tourism and microenterprise (Thomas, 2008). Destinations should therefore improve their capacity to innovate their tourist products and services in order to cater for different visitor flows while delivering to the different market segments at different times (WTO, 2012) particularly with a proactive role of microenterprise.

Overall, tourist needs bring about a positive impact on the local economy and entrepreneurial development (Othman & Rosli, 2011). On sustainable practice of microenterprise, the impacts are mainly seen in socio-economic domains of the entrepreneurs (Ashley, Brine, Lehr & Wilde, 2007; Awang, Aziz & Samdin, 2012; Jamieson, Goodwin & Edmunds, 2004; Kreag, 2001; Mshenga & Owuor, 2009). This passion to achieve positive outcomes is a strong driver in the birth of microenterprise (Rola-Rubzen, et al., 2011). However, there is an ever increasing demand for multiskilling in microenterprises for meeting tourist needs (Marhuenda, Strietska-Ilina & Zukersteinova, 2005) with the challenges of funding and gaining market entry ever present (TTCI, 2011). The opportunity and capability to mitigate tourist needs gap is at the forefront of tourism-related services. Hence, learning for developing human resource is paramount in order to enhance the competitiveness of tourism-related microenterprise through improving knowledge, skills and competence (Jensen, 2001).

III Methodology

The study emphasises on tourist needs gap (henceforth gap) through tourist interviews during August-October, 2013 covering 100 random samples from nine tourism resources of Cherrapunji destination across independent, customised and packaged tourist (Pearce, 2008). Tourist interviews encompassed variables specifically concerning the destination as information search (Pearce, 2008) experience, amount of money spent (Coetzer, 2001/2) quality of infrastructure, health and sanitary standards (Mitchell & Faal, 2008) soft skills (Oldbell3, 2007) knowledgeable advisors, guided tours quality (Abicht & Freikamp, 2005) promotion and publicity (Ruhanen, Whitford & McLennan, 2013).

The gap analysis is based upon the premise of the difference between the services currently offered by the microenterprise and tourist needs. They are quantified using an equal interval scale of 'one' to 'five'. Here, 'one' refers to 'bad' and 'five', 'excellent'. The gap is computed as a difference between the scales recorded against the maximum i.e. 'excellent', which means that a scale recorded of 'five' would depict that there is 'no gap' and otherwise. Hence, the gap ranges from 'zero' (no gap) to '(-) four' which depicts an 'enormous gap'. Here, the other gap scales of '(-) one', '(-) two' and '(-) three' depicts 'small gap', 'visible gap' and 'extensive gap' respectively. Statistically, t-test is applied for testing the significance level of the gaps.

IV Findings from Tourist Needs Gap Analysis

IV.I Respondent Profile

The respondent profile (Table 1) throws some interesting facts regarding the composition and nature of flow towards the destination. The majority of the tourist make the form of leisure tourism (which is also the major form worldwide) with adventure and educational also being undertaken. The other forms like health, business, visiting friends and relatives (VFR) and religious are not that popular. The major part consists of independent tourists with customised making a sizeable share. However, package tourism plan seems to lack popularity and demand. The gender distribution is mostly even whereas the majority of the tourists are in the younger age of group 18 to 27 years thereby comprising the major part as unmarried. The domestic tourists make the significant share and most are from the towns and cities of north-east region of India. However, a good number of tourists also come from the other parts of the country with foreign tourists making a meaningful presence at 10 per cent. Lastly, the majority of the tourists are day-trippers with the number doing overnight and longer stays being very small. This phenomenon contributes as one of the limitations for the vibrancy and growth of tourism and tourism-related enterprise in the destination. As such, tackling of these problems requires a concerted effort from all the stakeholders by focussing on the basics of tourism growth and development.

Table 1: Respondent Profile

Particular	Classification	Frequency (%)
Tourism Form	Leisure	65
	Adventure	16
	Educational	12
	Health	3
	Business, VFR and religious	4
Tourism Plan	Independent	86
	Customised	13
	Packaged	1
Gender	Male	51
	Female	49
Age (in years)	18 – 27	87
	28 – 37	8
	38 – 77	5
Marital Status	Single	89
	Married	11
Nationality	Domestic	90
	Foreign	10
Domicile City	North-East Region	65
	Rest of India	25
	Foreign	10
Days of Stay	Day-tripper	88
	2 – 4 days	4
	5 – 10 days	5
	11 days and above	3

IV. II Tourist Needs Gap

The gap analysis depicts an unfavourable picture of the destination. There are glaring gaps across the variables (Table 2) which are statistically highly significant and this represents a major concern. The information search of the tourist prior to the travel shows a visible gap reflecting a poor availability of information at various platforms – print and electronic. The tourists were unable to find detailed and satisfactory information concerning the tourism resources, food, accommodation and so forth. There is an evident gap in the experience encountered by the tourist in relation to the various services. This perceptive exposure is an indication of the persona that the destination is able to imprint on the tourist. The amount of money spent by the tourist also shows an evident gap and reflects the lost opportunity of generating higher spending by the tourist. This presents as a critical issue as lower spending also negates the possible returns on account of 'economic multiplier effect'. The quality of infrastructure depicts an extensive gap thus highlighting the poor quality of physical systems concerning the services. The poor quality represents behavioural disappointments on the part of the tourist thereby not boarding well in terms of repeat travel and marketing.

Similarly, there is an evident gap in health and sanitary standards and soft skills (customer care, language and communication) depicting a below par status. As tourism is a service-oriented sector such gaps deplete the quality and positive impression. Moreover, they discourage friendliness and relationship building thereby negatively impacting long-term business prospects. There is a visible gap and extensive gap with regard to knowledgeable advisors and guided tours quality respectively. This gap is critical as lack of knowledge on the destination and poor guided tours reflects poorly on tourism development. As such, dissatisfied tourist may result their frustration on non-repeat of their travel plans. Lastly, there is a visible gap in promotion and publicity. This directly impedes upon the growth potential of tourism as less awareness would ultimately result in less business. As such, more efforts of promotion and publicity are required by leveraging on print and electronic platforms.

In general, these gaps are roadblocks on tourism development as tourists are becoming more demanding across the range and depth of services. Poor encounters lead to poor stories thereby enormously affecting the size of the potential clientele and business. Hence, these gaps are to be alleviated at earnest through cooperation, coordination and training of all the stakeholders failing which it may adversely affect the brand and marketability of the destination in the long-run.

Table 2: Tourist Needs Gap

Variable	Gap	T – value (two-tailed, df = 99)
Information search	-1.84**	-19.58
Experience	-2.56**	-33.26
Amount of money spent	-2.52**	-30.64
Quality of infrastructure	-2.71**	-34.08
Health and sanitary standards	-2.60**	-29.67
Soft skills	-2.51**	-27.75
Knowledgeable advisors	-2.30**	-19.55

Variable	Gap	T – value (two-tailed, df = 99)
Guided tours quality	-2.92**	-25.15
Promotion and publicity	-2.49**	-22.71

** Significant at 1%

V Discussion on Tourist Needs Gap Analysis

In the analysis of gap, the respondents whose profile features mainly constitute of – undertaking of leisure tourism, as independent tourist, are of a young age group, unmarried, predominantly domestic source and mostly travelling as day-tripper presents a rather unfavourable and uneasy picture. There are visible and extensive gaps across the variables which are statistically highly significant. This is more so in case of guided tours quality, quality of infrastructure and health and sanitary standards. The information search gap shows that the destination has not been able to leverage on the advantages of print and electronic medium. This also highlights the need for more proactive role on the part of tourist/ tourism information centres. The experience gap is a direct outcome of unfavourable exposure to the various services as and when they are encountered. To this end, the natural beauty of the destination may not be able to mitigate the concerned gap in the long-run and this presents as a major dilemma. The amount of money spent gap is a result of the limitations of the service range, service depth and service quality. As there is no avenues for high spending, the tourist spend only the basic/necessity amount through essentials like food and refreshments. The quality of infrastructure gap results from a low sensitisation, poor sensitivity and less investment in providing ambience to the enterprise. Similarly, the health and sanitary standards gap depict the shortage or non-availability of public washrooms, rest rooms and so forth as most of the enterprises provide less or no investment to this end. The soft skills gap is a result of a casual approach towards tourism development as seen in lack of sensitization and training on facets of customer care, language, communication, empathy and so forth. The knowledgeable advisors gap and guided tours quality gap highlights the lack of interest in taking-up of such a venture on account of its seasonality and relatively low economic returns. As such, even the available ones expose a certain limitation on the narration and explanation of the tourism resources and attractions. Lastly, the promotion and publicity gap highlights the lack of promotion of the destination in appropriate mediums at national and international level. Although such an exercise requires a significant investment, proper feasibility analysis can be done for identifying the right medium, time frame and time slots for the same.

VI Conclusion and Policy Implications

The study depicts an unfavourable picture of tourism in the destination. The gaps are visible and extensive gaps across the variables thereby adversely affecting the image and marketability of the destination. Hence, bridging of these gaps through tourism-related micro-enterprise which are more sensitized and oriented towards professionalism is a possibility and practical preposition for Cherrapunji destination. Moreover, adoption of a holistic approach through involvement of all the stakeholders across micro and macro environment with a focus on 'tourism attractiveness' (for detailed framework; see Lyngdoh, 2013) will yield even better outcomes for tourism development of the destination and Meghalaya as a whole.

Although the study attempted to analyse gap by adopting a broad methodology, it still presents scope for further improvement. A wider study covering the entire state and north-east region of India through more variables over a longer period and depth will yield more extensive and meaningful results. Nonetheless, the present study has evolved as a basic framework for further research or related studies in future.

The policy implications derived from the study show a need for detailed and serious initiatives on the part of the government, non-government organisations, local authorities and so forth. At the outset, there is a need for transforming the destination into a magnet for enticing tourist to have longer stays. To this end, the idea of special tourist zone (Islam & Carlsen, 2012) may be the way forward. Secondly, the gaps are to be alleviated through concerted efforts at all levels of governance. Sensitisation and training can be used as an intervention for tackling the existing gaps. Lastly, more professional micro-enterprise is to be encouraged which are equipped with all the necessary service qualities as demanded in the market. Equally, the stated policy measures calls for a sustained investment over a period of time. Hence, proper feasibility analysis and blueprint of the same before execution is a must.

VII Notes

Meghalaya is a hill state in the north-east region of India bounded in the south-west by Bangladesh. Its total area is 22429 sq. kilometers with a population of over 29.6 lakh as on 2011 (23.2 lakh in 2001) (www.censusindia.gov.in) and mostly dependent on agriculture. The population grew at 27.82 per cent over the last decade (30.65 per cent in 1991-2001) and features a sex ratio of 986 as compared to 972 in 2001. Moreover, as on 2011, 75.48 per cent (62.56 per cent in 2001) of the total population [77.17 per cent male (65.43 per cent in 2001), 73.78 per cent female (59.61 per cent in 2001)] is literate (www.censusindia.gov.in). Meghalaya covers a number of attractive tourism resources ranging from streams and rivers, hillocks and mountains to cultures and indigenous festivals. These are supplemented by a pleasant climate through most parts of the year. In particular, the tourism resources of Cherrapunji destination are a class apart. They are the main tourism resources of the state and form a spectacle that caps a lasting experience.

Cherrapunji (locally known as Sohra) is located in east khasi hills district of Meghalaya at around 50 kilometers south of the capital city, Shillong. Having held the record of 'wettest place on earth' on numerous occasions, its name is familiar to most of the tourist. As a tourism destination, it is one of the most popular and frequently visited destinations in the entire north-east region of India. In Meghalaya alone, it is the number one tourist destination based upon the tourism resources available and tourist visits. It is blessed with a mesmerising natural setting clad with waterfalls, rivers, hills, mountains, mighty cliffs and so forth. It also poses as a heritage destination highlighting the rich and diverse tradition and culture of the local people added up with numerous indigenous cuisines. Cherrapunji destination is so gifted in natural beauty that it earned the tag of 'paradise on earth' from most of the respondents interviewed.

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The Influence of Service Quality on Tourist Satisfaction and Intention to Revisit Kashmir Valley

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Abstract

This study examines the relationship between service quality and tourist satisfaction on the future behavioral intentions of touristsin Kashmir valley using SERVQUAL model. The paper was tested using data collected from 150 tourists. The study analyze that service quality has a positive influence on tourist satisfaction and a positive influence also exists between tourist satisfactions on future behavioral intentions. The result of this study also revealed that reliability and tangible was the most influencing dimension of service quality. The study finds assurance and empathy significantly low in contribution towards customer satisfaction. It is important to focus and emphasize the right dimensions of service quality in ensuring customer satisfaction towards Kashmir valley.

Keywords:
SERVQUAL, Customer satisfaction, reliability, empathy and responsiveness.

Introduction

In the highly competitive tourism industry, tourism is seen as the driving force for regional development. Successful tourism can boost the income, employment and government revenues. To provide high service quality to enhance tourist satisfaction has become an important concern for sustainable tourism destination management. To be able to attract the tourists to revisit and recommend the same to others is important for the promotion of tourism.

In India tourism is an important industry generating more than Rs.77591 crore (US $ 15.56 billion) of valuable foreign exchange earnings and this is growing at the rate of 19.6 %.Through review of literature it has been found that customer satisfaction is an important parameter in travel and tourism industry.[1]

The tourism industry in Kashmir valley has played a major role in economic development and is entering into new phase of tourism development probably as a mature destination with the expansion of mass vacations. The numbers of tourists to Kashmir valley have increased significantly from 2003 to 2013. Specifically, there were

1 Source: Ministry of tourism Government of India.

about 1, 91,164 tourists in 2000, which increased to 13,11,840 by 2012. As per the Directorate of Tourism Kashmir reported that the number of international tourists to Kashmir of the year 2013 was about 11,72,008.

Travel and tourism industry generates both direct and indirect employment opportunities. Therefore, importance of foreign tourists cannot be denied in Kashmir. Government is trying its best to attract foreign tourist through its marketing and publicity campaign in India and abroad. To be more competitive, it needs to explore and enhance its inherent and distinctive values that maximize tourists' satisfaction. Tourism industry is playing a tremendous role in the overall development of J&K State. It is highly imperative for the stakeholders and other trade players to provide best service quality with better planning and execution in order to achieve the goal of tourism satisfaction which in turn will result in the revisit of tourists.

The global tourism industry has evolved into an area of fierce competition, and a fundamental challenge for marketers is to comprehend the distinguishing characteristics of tourist experiences. In order to meet the competition from other tourist destinations around the world, the tourism industry in Kashmir needs to measure the tourist satisfaction and understand tourist's preferences and motives for choosing Kashmir as their repeat visit.

The growing number of tourists each year triggered tourism authorities to implement a high service quality based on the understanding of tourists perceptions (needs and expectations) to enhance the level of tourists satisfaction and willingness to perform future behavioral intentions. Moreover, measurement between tourist satisfactions with service quality allows management to completely understand the tourist expectations and how to fulfill expectations and needs that tourists require. Research on service quality, tourist satisfaction and future behavioral intentions are well conducted in scope of tourism literature. Therefore, the investigation on the influence of service quality and tourist satisfaction on future behavioral intentions in Kashmir is important.

Objectives of the Study

1. To measure service quality and satisfaction level of tourists in Kashmir Valley.
2. To suggest, on the basis of study results, ways and means for improving services qualities in Kashmir valley with a view to make the overall services more effective.

Hypothesis:

1. The five dimensions of service quality has an influence on tourist satisfaction.
2. Tourist satisfaction has an influence on future behavioral intentions.

Review of literature

Service Quality:

Service quality starts from the needs of the customer and ends with customer satisfaction and positive perceptions of service quality. The complete definition of service quality was defined as: A customer' long-term, cognitive evaluations of a firm's service delivery. This means that customers have certain service standards in mind prior to consumption (their expectations), observe service performance and compare it to their standards, and then form satisfaction judgments based upon this comparison.

On the other hand, the level of satisfaction will be achieved, if the expected service is equal to perceived service. Customers will be more satisfied if the gap between expected service and perceived service is related small. In summary, since services are an essential part of the tourism experience, service quality is an important aspect to satisfying tourists.

SERVQUAL is a model of service quality, which was first proposed by Parasuraman in 1985. These models of service quality are the most popular and widely used as a reference in research management and marketing services. SERVQUAL is multiple-item scale for measuring consumer perceptions of service quality. The five dimensions of SERVQUAL are also known as RATER, namely: reliability, assurance, tangible, empathy and responsiveness.

Customer Satisfaction

Understanding tourist satisfaction is of utmost importance for the tourism industry, especially because of its effect on their future economy (Petrick 2003). Satisfied tourists tend to communicate their positive experience to others (word of mouth) and they tend to buy the product repeatedly (re-buy) (Barsky 1992; Hallowell 1996; Kozak and Rimmington 2000; Pizam 1994).

Customer satisfaction is one of the mostimportant factor because it plays an important role in survival and future of any tourism products and services. It also significantly influences the choice of destination, the consumption of products and services, and the decision to return.

In content of tourism, satisfaction has been found to be the outcome of the comparison between expectations and experiences (Truong & Foster, 2006). Satisfaction is primarily referred to as a function of pre-travel expectations and post-travel experiences (Pizam, Neumann &Reichel, 1978). When experiences are compared to expectations it results in feelings of enjoyment, the tourist is satisfied and leave that destination with their good memory. Even, they agree to pay more for the service. However, when they result in feelings of displeasure, the tourist is dissatisfied. For example, Chon, (1989) examined tourist satisfaction by comparing travelers' previous images of the destination and what they actually see, feel and achieve at the destination. He reported that tourist satisfaction is the result of the relationship between tourists' expectations about the destination based on their previous images of the destination and their evaluation of the outcome of their experience at the destination area. Overall tourist satisfaction is based on the service quality provided at the destination.

The time between need recognition and actual travel is important when analysing tourist satisfaction. It consists of many aspects, such as deciding with whom to travel, what destination to travel to, where to buy the product, etc. This period includes getting information about these aspects as well. The journey, from leaving home to return, consists of a series of elements, including infrastructural aspects, activity amenities, as well as service elements: transportation, hotel, restaurants, types of activity, number of activities, service level in general, specific activities, the nature/surroundings, travel party, food, etc. After the journey all these elements are viewed as possible influences on overall satisfaction (with the destination) and subsequently on the intention to re-visit and communicate via positive word of mouth.

Generally, tourist who feels satisfied after visiting a destination means that tourists enjoy their time at the destination. When the satisfaction and enjoyment at a certain destination will increase, the possibility of likelihood to revisit the destination in the future.

The linkages among service quality and tourist satisfaction are arguably the most widely studied relationships in tourism literature. The growing interest of researchers to the issue of influence of service quality on tourist satisfaction and its widely accepted today that service quality has a direct effect on tourist satisfaction.

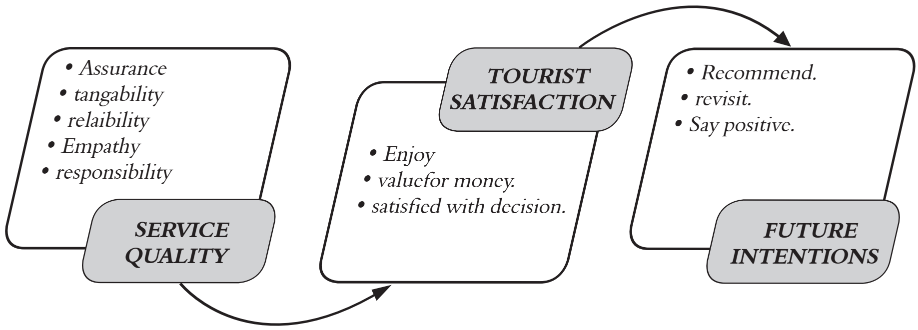

Fig. 1. Conceptual Framework

Research Methodology

This study usedrandomsampling by gather the samples directly at three tourist destination Dal Lake, Gulmarg and Pahalgam and distributed questionnaires to the 150 tourists who currently visit these destinations. The distributions area of questionnaires was in the exit gate and respondent asked to fill out questionnaire at a most convenient place. An analysis was executed to survey the distribution of various variables based on demographic profiles, such as gender, age, level of education, occupation and average monthly expenditures.

A questionnaire of 28 statements were framed, which are service quality (20 statements), tourist satisfaction (5 statements) and future behavior intentions (3 statements). The statements were scored on a five-point Likert scale which are 1 for "strongly disagree" 2 for "disagree", 3 for "slightly agree", 4 for "agree" and last but not least, 5 for "strongly agree".

Data Analysis and interpretation:

Table I displays background information and characteristics of respondents who participated in this study. From table 1 it as been observed that most of the tourist fall in the age category of 31-45. 60.7 % of the tourists are males and the rest are females. It is interesting to that that 42% of the tourist visits Kashmir with families, 27.3% are newly married couples, 18% tourists comes with friends and the rest alone. 39.3% are from business family with average income 3-5 lakhs.

Table I

Demographic Characteristics

S.No.	Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage (N=150)
1	Gender		
	Male	91	60.7
	Female	59	39.3

S.No.	Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage (N=150)
2	Age		
	15-30	29	19.3
	31-45	57	38
	46-60	43	28.7
	61-80	21	14
3	Level of education		
	High School	20	13.3
	Collage	77	51.3
	University	53	35.3
4	Profession		
	Student	13	8.7
	Government Employee	18	12
	Private Employee	39	26
	Businessman	59	39.3
	Housewife	21	14
5	Average Annual income		
	1-3 lakhs	23	15.3
	3-5 lakhs	69	46
	5-7 lakhs	47	31.3
	Above 7 lakhs	11	7.3
6	Length of stay		
	1-3 days`	41	27.3
	3-5 days.	63	42
	6-8 days	32	21.3
	Above 8 days	14	9.3
7	Travel with		
	Alone	19	12.7
	Family	63	42
	Friends	27	18
	Couples	41	27.3

Table II: Regression

Model	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2
1	.594	.351[a]	.334

[a] Predictors: reliability, assurance, tangible, empathy, responsiveness

Table II and III shows that the overall significance at p-value < 0.05 and all the five dimensions of service quality (reliability, assurance, tangible, empathy and responsiveness) has influenced on tourist satisfaction by 33.4%.As the result of the analysis, the five dimensions of service quality had an influence on tourist satisfaction. The influence was equal to 0.334 or 33.4% (Adjusted R Square).

Table III: ANOVA

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Regression	211.968	5	42.394	20.011	.000[b]
Residual	410.987	194	2.118		
Total	622.955	199			

a: Dependent variable: Satisfaction.

b: Predictors: reliability, assurance, tangible, empathy, responsiveness

Table III shows that the p-value is equal to 0.000, which is smaller than the significance level (0.05). Therefore, the Hypothesis 1 that stated the five dimensions of service quality have an influence on tourist satisfaction is accepted.

Table IV: Pearson Correlation Analysis

Independent Variable	Correlation Coefficient[a]
Reliability	.712
Empathy	.670
Responsiveness	.636
Tangible	.589
Assurance	.579

[a] correlated with customer satisfaction.

Table IV shows reliability has the strongest relationship with customer satisfaction at significant level of 0.01 compared to the other independent variables. It is follow by tangibles, empathy, responsiveness and assurance. All variables of service quality are positively correlated with customer satisfaction.

Table V: Multiple Linear Regressions

Variables	Beta	t-value	P-value
Reliability	.341	4.572	.000
Empathy	.050	.691	.491
Responsiveness	.151	2.636	.000
Tangible	.296	5.171	.000
Assurance	.059	.962	.337

Table V, T-test analyses were adopted to reveal which service quality dimensions have most influential on tourist satisfaction. The results revealed that reliability(.341) was recognized as the most influencing dimension of service quality that influence on tourist satisfaction, followed with the second highest which was tangibility (.296), responsiveness (.151), assurance (.059) and empathy (.050) was recognized as the least important dimension of service quality that influence on tourist satisfaction.

Table VI: Coefficient[a]

Model	Beta	T	sig
Satisfaction	.586	9.701	.000

[a] Dependent variable: Future intention to visit

It has been observed from table VI that the influence of tourist satisfaction on future behavioral intentions intends to be equal to 0.586 or 58.6%. According to the result of Hypothesis 2, the p-value (0.000) was lower than the significance level (0.05). Thus Hypothesis 2 that stated the tourist satisfaction has an influence on tourist satisfaction is accepted.

Accordingly, the higher rate of tourist satisfaction with the service quality, the higher possibility to perform future behavioral intentions, such as recommend, say positive thing and revisit the destination.

Major Findings and Recommendations

By observing demographic data of the tourists it has been found that most of the tourists visit Kashmir belong to young group with average age of 40 years. Department of tourism and other stakeholders must concentrate upon the needs of the young tourists they should design their travel package to meet the requirements of the travelers belonging to this age group. Therefore Adventures and less hectic schedule could be designed for the tourists visiting Kashmir.

Reliability is the most important variable in determining customer satisfaction. Thus, the department and other stakeholders should further enhance their problem solving skills in promptly attending to and solving customer problems. Training should be provided to employees working at different destinations. Employees at destinations should attend comprehensive and more practical training courses.

Tangible is the second most important determinant of customer satisfaction with cleanliness as one of its key elements. At most of the destinations many hoteliers do not project an absolutely satisfactory cleanliness standard of their environment, equipment and facilities. Hygiene issues are critical not just for guest satisfaction but also for health reasons. Food and beverage services also affect customer satisfaction. A good and creative variety of food and beverages is important to the customer. The present study reported that the highest numbers of complaints were related to food and beverages. Hence it is necessary for the hotelier to take their food and beverage services very seriously.

The third important key determinant of customer satisfaction is responsiveness. This indicates that tourist felt that employees are lack of desire or willingness to help customers and provide prompt service.

Tourism authorities should improve and enhance tourist satisfaction by conducting a periodic post-evaluation of each service quality factors, which considered still far from tourists' needs and expectations. The authorities may provide systematic training programs for the employees and tour guides who are considered can significantly improve on responsiveness aspect. The training programs intended to enhance the importance of the aptitude and desire to provide tourists with the best possible service.

Front-line personnel should keep customers informed and updated at all times. Internet facilities should be available at the main enter points in order to enhance service quality and inspire customer satisfaction.

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Quality of Services to Tourists in Selected Hotels of Manipur

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Abstract

Service quality and customer satisfaction are the key factors for successful business in tourism industry particularly hotels.

The present study aims at investigating the service quality of hotel industry in Manipur. The population of the study consists of the customers of 6(six) hotels located in Imphal. 10 customers each from 6(six) hotels under study who who had availed the services of these hotels at least for a day were selected and asked to fill the questionnaire on the tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy parameters. These parameters have been derived from the SERVQUAL model suggested by Parasuraman, Ziethaml and Berry (1988). T-test was used to checked significant difference between perceptions and expectations. It was found that significant difference was observed in responsiveness and empathy. No significant difference was observed in other dimensions. Customers suggest Wifi facilities, parking space, Lift service, hygiene maintenance, trained and reliable staffs and reasonable prices of food and beverages to minimize the service quality gap.

Keywords:

Service Quality, Customer satisfaction, Tourism industry, Hotels

Introduction

Service quality and customer satisfaction are the key factors for successful business in tourism industry. In hotel industry, customer satisfaction is largely hooked upon quality of service. Survival and growth of hotels hinges on the quality of service offered to its customers/tourists which is the crucial determinant of the volume of sales. Service quality leads to higher profitability (Gundersen et al., 1996) and customer satisfaction (Oliver, 1997).

Customer's satisfaction is critical for a hotel's success. Service quality and customer satisfaction in fact have a cycle-system since service quality proportionally affects customer's satisfaction. On the other hand, customer satisfaction indicates service quality (Williams & Buswell 2003)

Knowledge of customer's attitudes and perceptions allows lodging companies to improve services provided which leads to the growth of customer's satisfaction. Companies with accurate information about customer's attitudes may determine how well the business process is going and also how to know where to make changes to create improvements as well as determine whether changes leads to improvements (Hayes, 1989).

In this scenario, providing high quality services and improving customer satisfaction are widely recognized as fundamental factors boosting the performances of companies in the hotel and tourism industry (Barsky &Labagh, 1992; Le Blanc, 1992,; Le Blanc et al., 1996; Stevens et al., 1995, Opermann, 1998). Hotels with good service quality will ultimately improve their profitability (Oh & Parks, 1997). In a competitive hospitality industry which offers homogeneous services, individual hoteliers must be able to satisfy costumers better than their counterparts (Choi & Chou, 2001).

Service quality and customer satisfaction are key factors in the battle to obtain competitive advantage and customer retention. Customer satisfaction is the outcome of customer's perception of the value received in a transaction or relationship, where value equals perceived service quality, compared to the value expected from transactions or relationships with competing vendors (Blanchard & Galloway, 1994; Heskett et al.,1990; Zeithaml et al., 1990). In order to achieve customer satisfaction, it is important to recognize and to anticipate customers' needs and to be able to satisfy them. Enterprises which are able to rapidly understand and satisfy customers' needs, make greater profits than those which fail to understand and satisfy them (Barsky &Nash, 2003). Since the cost of attracting new customers is higher than the cost of retaining the existing ones, in order to be successful managers must concentrate on retaining existing customers implementing effective policies of customer satisfaction and loyalty. This is especially true in the hotel industry.

Zeithaml et al in 1988 defined service quality as the degree and direction of discrepancy between consumers' perceptions and expectations in terms of different but relatively important dimensions of service quality, which can affect their future behavior.

Service quality is usually expressed as a function of customer's expectation of the service to be provided (based upon their previous experience, the organisation's image, the price of the service for example) compared with their perceptions of the actual service experience (Gronroos,1984; Berry et al, 1985; Johnston & Heineke, 1990)

Parasuraman et al. (1985; 1988) developed the SERVQUAL scale, which became the most popular instrument for measuring service quality. Since the development of SERVQUAL, it has been extensively applied in a variety of businesses or better business models. They identified five key dimensions of service quality – reliability, tangibles, responsiveness, assurance and empathy

Tangibles: The appearance of the physical facilities, equipment, communication , material and personnel.

Reliability: The ability to perform a promised service dependably and accurately.

Responsiveness: The willingness to help customers and to provide prompt services.

Assurance: The knowledge and courtesy of employees and their ability to inspire trust and confidence in the customers.

Empathy: The caring, individualized attention a firm provides its customers

To evaluate these five aspects of service quality, Parasuraman et al., designed "Servqual Model". The SERVQUAL scale consists of 22 items for assessing customer perceptions and expectations regarding the quality of service. A level of agreement or disagreement with a given item is rated on a seven-point Likert scale. The results are used to identify positive and negative gaps. The gap is measured by the difference between perceptions and expectations scores and indicates the level of service quality. If the result is positive, perceived service exceeds expected service. A negative result means low quality of service. According to this instrument, service quality occurs when Perceived service meets or exceeds customer's expectations. Accordingly, service quality is measured as follows : Perception- Expectation = Service Quality.

Similarly, Customer Satisfaction can be present as a formula:

Satisfaction = Perception (Percieved value how happy a customer was with the service) – Expectations (One's attitude about the service before receiving it)

Rationale of The Study

Tourism has emerged as the most lucrative business of the world, having tremendous potentiality for earning foreign exchange, yielding tax revenues, promoting growth of ancillary industries, generating income and employment and in the development of industrially backward regions through its various linkage effects. In addition to the economic benefits it adheres, there are various social, political and developmental benefits for which it has received worldwide recognition.

Manipur is a late starter in this field. However, not many will deny the fact that Manipur holds a huge potential for tourism development. The uniqueness of Manipur lies with her comfortable climate, mystique cultural heritage and sublime natural beauty, exotic flora and fauna, rich arts and culture, indigenous games and artistic handlooms and handicrafts, making Manipur "a little paradise on earth and a fertile ground for a tourist to explore".

India's Look East Policy which ushers co-operation in various fronts with neighboring Asian countries, Trans Asian Highways and Railways provides huge opportunities for nascent industries of Manipur to flourish. Tourism is one main sector, among others, which Manipur would gain from these initiatives. As a result, Keen efforts have been intensified on the part of the Government of Manipur to take advantage of these developments and therefore seek to create a unique brand to market Manipur Tourism as "The Gateway to south East Asia". In its pursuit towards this end, Tulihal Airport, Imphal has recently been included in the International Civil Aviation Map, with the maiden landing of a chartered Golden Myanmar. Various Regulations and barriers are unshackled and efforts are made to remove the bottlenecks for this purpose. Permitted Area Period has been relaxed. Inner Line Permit has been revoked. Visa on Arrival facilities has been extended. Apart from this, State sponsored festivals are organized with adequate resources and huge budgetary allocations. Particularly, Manipur Sangai Festival is growing in popularity which is evident from the rise in the number of foreign delegates and tourist both domestic and foreign during the last edition. Considering this initiatives, huge inflow of both domestic and foreign tourist is anticipated in the near future.

In view of this anticipation, development of hotels in conformity with the growing tourism market becomes inevitable. Needless to say, tourism and hotels are complementary to each other. Tourism is one of the fastest growing businesses in the 21st century and hotel industry plays an important role in this regard. Hotels hold the key role to the success and development of tourism and result in economic growth of a region as a tourist hotspot. Since this sector directly deals with tourists and travelers, hotels play a big role in the tourist satisfaction.

A hotel refers to a commercial establishment providing lodging and meals on temporary basis to its customers. Hotels play the role of providing guests a home away from home. And it is this facility that facilitates the further attraction of guests towards a place because it makes their visit more convenient.

Tourism industry being a "people industry", service quality is of utmost importance. The success or failure of the industry hinges on the quality of services provided to the tourists.

That said, the biggest challenge facing hotel industry of Manipur is providing quality service and customer satisfaction. Consequently, the present study aims at measuring service quality in selected hotels of Manipur.

Objectives of The Study

The present study is undertaken to investigate the difference between provided services and customer's expectations in terms of the 5 dimensions of Servqual tools including tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy

Review of Literature:

Although service quality in the hotel industry has been well researched, there is dearth of comparative research across the Indian hotel sector and Manipur in particular on service quality aspects.

Kumar Babita et al.,(2012) studied the service quality of hotel industry in Ludhiana using the Servqual Model. The study concluded that hotel industry in Ludhiana is not performing as per the customers' expectations.

Hsieh Ling-Feng et al., (2008) explores customer's expectations of service quality in hot spring hotels in Taiwan based on the five dimensions of Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry service quality applying Analysis network process (ANP) to find the relative weights among the criteria and to emphasize the interdependent relationships.

Briggs Sengal et al., (2007) examined service quality across small, medium and large hotels in Scotland to established management and customer's current perceptions of service quality performance.

Hessamaldin M.S (2007) studied customer satisfaction in application of servqual model among two four star hotels in Isfahan, Iran and found significant difference between perceptions and expectations in all the service quality dimensions.

Grzimic Jasmina S.C (2007) examined the importance of service quality in hotel industry from both the conceptual standpoint and that of service quality measurement using Servqual model in Croatian hotel industry.

Shergill (2004) examined travelers' perceptions when evaluating the service quality of hotels in New Zealand and identified factors considered important to customers using factor analysis.

Ekaterina Makeeva (2010) examine the satisfaction level of Russian customers using the services provided by the hotels in Russia and found that perception exceeds their expectations.

Rahman M.A & Kamarulzaman (2012) investigated the effect of relationship quality and switching costs on business customer loyalty from the customer's perspectives in the context of the hotel service outsourcing.

Hypothesis of The Study

H1: There is no significant difference between the provided services (perception) and expectations related to tangibles dimension in the study hotels.

H2: There is no significant difference between the provided services (perception) and expectations related to reliability dimension in the study hotels.

H3: There is no significant difference between the provided services (perception) and expectations related to Responsiveness dimension in the study hotels.

H4: There is no significant difference between the provided services (perception) and expectations related to Assurance dimension in the study hotels.

H5: There is no significant difference between the provided services (perception) and expectations related to Empathy dimension in the study hotels.

Research Methodology

The research design of the study is exploratory in nature. A purposive sampling method has been adopted for the study. The target population consists of the customers of 6 (six) hotels located in Imphal selected by the researcher purposively considering that these are most visited hotels by tourist coming from outside the state. Primary data was collected using the structured and non-disguised questionnaire which was administered with the help of the receptionists of the six hotels. 10 customers each from the Six hotels under study who had availed the services of these hotels at least for a day were selected and asked to fill the questionnaire on the tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy parameters. These parameters have been derived from the SERVQUAL model suggested by Parasuraman, Ziethaml and Berry (1988). The statements in the model were adapted as per the hotel industry.

The respondents were asked to mark their expectations and perceptions on a 5 point scale ranging from Low i.e. 1 to High i.e. 5. Service quality gap for all dimensions for each of the 6 hotels was calculated. Then overall service quality gap for all the dimensions in case of all the six hotels was drawn. Further T-test was carried out to see whether the results were significant or not. The various statistical tools that were used on the data were mean, Standard deviation and T-test. The results were analysed using statistical package for social science (SPSS)

Findings of The Study

The findings of the study have been divided into three sections- first section deals with the demographic analysis of guests, second section deals with comparison of overall perception and expectation of guests in the study hotels by applying T-test and third section deals with inter hotel comparison of service quality gap.

i) Demographic Analysis

Table 1. Guests distribution based on gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	42	70.0	70.0	70.0
	Female	18	30.0	30.0	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey

According to the result obtained from table 1, 30% of the total guests in the study hotels were female and 70% were male.

Table 2 Guests distribution based on the purpose of visit

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Business	21	35.0	35.0	35.0
	Recreation	10	16.7	16.7	51.7
	Meeting	12	20.0	20.0	71.7
	Official	14	23.3	23.3	95.0
	Others	3	5.0	5.0	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey

From table 2, it is observed that 35% of the guests visits relates to business and 23.3% for official purpose.

Table 3 Guests Distribution based on length of stay

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1-3	29	48.3	48.3	48.3
	3-5	22	36.7	36.7	85.0
	5-7	4	6.7	6.7	91.7
	7-10	2	3.3	3.3	95.0
	10-15	1	1.7	1.7	96.7
	15 days & above	2	3.3	3.3	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey

Table 3 reveals that 48.3% of the guests stayed for 1-3 days, 36.7 for 3-5 days and only 3.3% stayed for more than 15 days.

Table 4. Guests distribution based on Mode of Reservation

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Travel Agency	10	16.7	16.7	16.7
	Phone	26	43.3	43.3	60.0
	E-mail	7	11.7	11.7	71.7
	Online Reservation	5	8.3	8.3	80.0
	At the Front Desk	12	20.0	20.0	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey

Based on the table 4 above, 43.3% made reservations through Phone and 8.3% uses online reservation mode.

ii) Hypothesis Testing

H1: There is no significant difference between the provided services (perception) and expectations related to tangibles dimension in the study hotels.

Table 5. Comparing the means between expectations and perceptions related to tangibles

	X	S	T	P
Expectation	4.16334	0.260191	0.971	0.36
Perception	4.37334	0.407659		

According to the results obtained in table 5, the observed p value (0.36>0.05) is insignificant. So H1 is accepted for this dimension. In other words, no differences can be seen between expectations and perceptions related to tangibles in the study hotels.

H2: There is no significant difference between the provided services (perception) and expectations related to reliability dimension in the study hotels.

Table 6. Comparing the means between expectations and perceptions related to reliability

	X	S	T	P
Expectation	4.320825	0.127193	0.803	0.453
Perception	4.224975	0.202074		

Based on Table 6, the observed p value (0.453>0.05) is insignificant. So H2 is accepted for this dimension. In other words, no differences can be seen between expectations and perceptions related to tangibles in the study hotels.

H3: There is no significant difference between the provided services (perception) and expectations related to Responsiveness dimension in the study hotels.

Table 7. Comparing the means between expectations and perceptions related to Responsiveness

	X	S	T	P
Expectation	4.505	0.596008	2.51	0.046
Perception	3.6325	0.348377		

According to the results obtained in table 7, the observed p value (0.046<0.05) is significant. So H3 is rejected for this dimension which means differences can be seen between expectations and perceptions related to responsiveness in the study hotels.

H4: There is no significant difference between the provided services (perception) and expectations related to Assurance dimension in the study hotels.

Table 8. Comparing the means between expectations and perceptions related to Assurance

	X	S	T	P
Expectation	4.33332	0.096442	1.601	0.148
Perception	3.94	0.540638		

From Table 8, the observed p value (0.148>0.05) is insignificant. So H4 is accepted for this dimension. In other words, no differences can be seen between expectations and perceptions related to Assurance in the study hotels.

H5: There is no significant difference between the provided services (perception) and expectations related to Empathy dimension in the study hotels.

Table 9. Comparing the means between expectations and perceptions related to Empathy

	X	S	T	P
Expectation	4.2675	0.039476	2.88	0.028
Perception	3.36	0.626791		

The observed p value (0.028<0.05) in Table 9 is significant. So H5 is rejected for this dimension. In other words, differences can be seen between expectations and perceptions related to Empathy dimension in the study hotels.

iii) Service Quality Gap

Table 10: Service Quality Gap in the study hotels

Service Quality Dimension	Expectation (E)	Perception (P)	Service Quality Gap (P-E)
CLASSIC HOTEL			
Tangibles	4.18	4.68	0.50
Reliability	4.52	4.95	0.43
Responsiveness	4.56	4.92	0.36
Assurance	4.45	4.82	0.37
Empathy	4.62	4.97	0.35
HOTEL ANAND CONTINENTAL			
Tangibles	4.08	4.24	0.16
Reliability	4.10	3.85	-0.25
Responsiveness	4.32	3.87	-0.45
Assurance	4.20	3.18	-0.20
Empathy	4.05	3.43	-0.62
HOTEL NIRMALA			
Tangibles	4.22	4.34	0.12
Reliability	4.27	4.02	-0.25
Responsiveness	4.22	4.08	-0.14
Assurance	4.17	3.87	-0.30
Empathy	4.25	3.75	-0.50
HOTEL KRISTINA			
Tangibles	4.06	4.08	0.02
Reliability	4.10	4.00	-0.10
Responsiveness	4.36	3.78	-0.58
Assurance	4.25	3.90	-0.35
Empathy	4.10	3.87	-0.23
HOTEL NEW AIRLINES			
Tangibles	4.36	4.46	0.10
Reliability	4.45	4.12	-0.33
Responsiveness	4.50	3.52	-0.48
Assurance	4.30	3.87	-0.43
Empathy	4.32	3.72	-0.60
HOTEL BHEIGO			
Tangibles	4.08	4.42	0.34
Reliability	4.37	4.25	-0.12
Responsiveness	4.16	3.90	-0.26
Assurance	4.25	4.12	-0.13
Empathy	4.42	4.10	-0.32

Source : Field Survey

From table 10, it is vividly evident that only Classic Hotel has a positive score for all its service quality dimensions. The rest of the hotels have a negative score for reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy with the exception of tangibles dimension. In other words, the customers' perception has fallen short of their expectations in the 5 study hotels. The widest gap is observed in empathy (-0.62) followed by responsiveness (-0.45) at Hotel Anand Continental. In the case of Hotel Nirmala, the gap between perception and expectation is maximum in empathy (-0.50) and followed by assurance (-0.30). The performance of Hotel Kristina is least in responsiveness (-0.58) and assurance (-0.35). Service quality gap is maximum in empathy (-0.60) and responsiveness (-0.48). The performance of Hotel Bheigo is more or less the same with the 4 under performing hotels. Service quality gap is maximum in empathy (-0.32) and responsiveness (-0.26).

Customers' suggestions for minimizing the gaps between Perceptions and Expectations:

1. Hotels should provide lift service
2. The service sector should improve
3. Good co-ordination of staff is required
4. Prices of food and beverages should be reasonable
5. Wifi availability
6. More Manpower
7. Service and quality of foods require special care
8. Parking space for vehicle
9. Hygiene system needs improvement especially in the toilet. Toilets should have the facility of health faucet instead of a plastic mug.
10. Noise proofing near elevator shelf

Conclusion

The study concludes that the hotel industry of Manipur is not performing as per the customer's expectations on most of the service quality dimensions except the Classic Hotel. Considering that the hotels under study are the most visited hotels by tourists coming from outside the state, there is a lot of improvement to be made in this sector. In terms of tangibles, expectations are met. However, there is no reason to be complacent. It lacks modern facilities like Wifi facilities, Lift service, Parking Space, entertainment and hygiene systems require special care. Most importantly, lack of well trained, groomed and reliable staff is a big issue in the hotel industry of Manipur. In this regard, sound human resource practices and policies pertaining to compensations, career advancement opportunities and better work environment should be put in place to lure educated and professional staffs. Efforts should be made to provide adequate training facilities to the existing staffs for better service efficiency and quality delivery. By and large, a firm's human resource management (HRM) practices can create an environment that encourages positive employee behavior, thereby enhancing service quality.

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The Role of Social Media in the Tourism Sector of India

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Abstract

The digital revolution that modern technology has ushered in has dramatically changed the channels through which prospective customers may be reached. The convergence of audio, video, the internet and web based applications all on one platform has changed the way people live, work, communicate, interact, transact and access information. Invariably today, people use handheld devices such as mobiles, Smartphones, electronic tables and readers, iPhones and iPads to perform any or all of these activities. The implication here is that if customers are to be targeted, information dissemination and transactional functionalities have to be enabled, across sectors on these devices. Social Media is based on web, mobile and cloud technologies and includes such widely networked sites as Facebook, Google, Linkedin, Skype, Yelp, Bing, Twitter and Trip Advisor. They offer unparalleled access to people including tourists, global accessibility, immediacy, anytime, anywhere operations and ubiquity. The author hypotheses that all of these advantages may be leveraged to showcase India as a preferred tourist destination. Thus this paper will explore the role social media has to play in the tourism sector of India.

The quantitative methodology will be followed in this paper including theoretical and empirical approaches. Theoretical studies will explore the potential opportunities that social media opens up to the tourism sector. The empirical study includes administering an online questionnaire to a sample set of 50 foreign tourists in India to understand how they accessed information on India, which online sites they frequent and what they liked or did not like about those sites and how it affected their decision making processes during their visit to the country. This paper would have served its purpose if it succeeds in alerting the tourism sector to the importance

1. Background of the Research

E Tourism may be defined as the digitization of all processes and procedures in the tourism industry using electronic and information technologies and is built on four disciplines of computer technologies, information technology, management and tourism knowledge (Peel, 2011). According to Berry (2011), the two most common tasks tourists perform is searching for information and conducting transactions. E Tourism refers to the process through which tourists perform all of these tasks through internet based or electronic systems (Gee, 2010). E Tourism has now become a preferred means of planning travel due to its manifold benefits. According to Gibson (2010), E Tourism allows tourists access to reliable, timely and accurate information, the ability to make reservations quickly and easily, enable comparison of prices and offerings, customization of travel experiences and a one stop solution for of social media in the marketing of tourism in India.

Keywords:

Digital revolution, Social Media, Global accessibility, Tourism Sector

booking and issuing tickets, for blocking seats and for meal bookings. It may be inferred that a tourist destinations ability to market itself to an international audience will now depend on how it leverages latest technologies to reach potential tourists and induce them to visit that destination.

This has implications for the tourism sector in India. India is currently ranked 11th in the list of most attractive tourist destinations in the world (Barot, 2012). According to Gill and Gill (2012), by 2019, India is projected to become the third most favoured travel destination and the fifth most favoured business destination in the world. However it may be noted that the number for foreign visitors who visit the country in 2011 was just 5 mn (Dabas and Manaktola, 2012). This is just 0.4% of global tourist traffic. Moreover, though tourist traffic to India has growth at an average of 16% over the decades starting from 2000, smaller countries like Malaysia and Thailand attract three times more tourists than India (Krishnan, 2010). The total revenue earned by the tourist sector in India is just 0.5% of the global tourist industry annual turnover (Marothia, 2012). It may be inferred that there is an urgent need to market the country and its manifold tourist attractions using modern channels of communication to target maximum number of potential visitors.

According to Teare and Olsen (2012), leveraging social media as a channel of communication would be most effective to market India as a tourist destination. Social Media thus becomes a part of E Tourism. Social Media maybe defined as websites based on Web.2 technologies that enable in-depth social interactions, formation of online communities and collaborative projects amongst persons of similar interests (Wolfinbarger and Gilly, 2012). Reichheld and Schefter (2012) said that it facilitates interactive dialogue which creates a viral impact. Its numerous advantages include (i) global reach even to the remotest corners of the world, (ii) immediacy with no time lag, (iii) anytime, anywhere accessibility (iv) round the clock operation (v) ubiquity and (vi) interactivity of exchange (Gray and Byun, 2011). The most popular social media sites include Facebook, Google, LinkedIn, Yelp, Bing, Twitter and Trip Advisor (Hagel and Armstrong, 2012). A measure of the popularity of these social media may be gauged from the fact that 60% of Americans regularly interact with companies on social media sites with 43% of internet users across the world saying that firms ought to use social networks to solve consumer problems and to market themselves (Chaffey and Smith, 2011).

Social Media has particular relevance for the tourism industry. According to Dabholkar (2011), social media may be used to solicit endorsements for the tourism product or service, maximize revenues per seat sold, provides opportunities to bond with guests, reach out to new customers, create buzz and build reputations. In addition, it may be leveraged to take advantage the growing demands for more interactivity, networking, entertainment, customization and personalization and for virtual communities including chartrooms and bulletin board systems amongst customers from the E Tourism Sector. However, Churchill and Peter (2010) said that social media has to be treated with utmost caution. This is because while it's rapid spread of communication may be used to develop the reputation of a tourist destination, any untoward incident gets immediately reported which may adversely affect the prospects of a tourist destination seeking to popularize itself.

While only 37% of India's population have access to the internet, it is evident that regional governments have realized the potential of social media in promoting their states as tourist destinations (Kulins, 2011). For example the governments of West Bengal and Kerala regard social media as important tools to acquaint tourists with local hotspots in these two states and have tied up with Facebook to provide details on how to reach these spots, transport options and accommodation facilities. By placing tickers on Facebook and other social network sites, they hope to attract more viewers and generate interest in tourist destinations in these states. Despite this however, it is true that there is concerned effort to leverage social media by the government of India to popularize India as a tourist destination.

2. Methodology

The quantitative method used in this research which included both deductive and inductive techniques. The deductive method involved study of secondary literature on social media and its potential for the tourism sector in India. The inductive method involved administration of an online questionnaire to 50 foreign tourists who the author contacted through his circle of acquaintance. The respondents could answer the questionnaire on a four point Likert scale. The results of the questionnaire were summarized and analyzed in excel. The results of the analysis have been presented through weighted average tables. The main purpose of the questionnaire is to understand the importance of social media as a tool for information dissemination and attracting tourists to the advertised destination.

3. Discussion and Analysis

The respondents were first asked as to how they usually made their bookings while planning their travel. Their responses are summarized in Figure 1.

	Yes	Total No. of Respondent	% Saying Yes
I make travel bookings through travel agents	0	50	0%
I invariably use the internet to make travel bookings	50	50	100%

Figure 1. Mode of Making Bookings

From figure 1 it is evident that all respondents indicated that they use the internet to make travel bookings. This indicates the value of E Tourism and related sectors like social media in the modern tourism sector. This also corroborates theoretical findings which state that search for travel information and travel bookings to be amongst the top five internet activities ever since its inception (Kim and Lee, 2011). According to Lennon and Harris (2011) in the US, making online travel arrangements was the third most frequent activity after purchase of books and clothes in 2009. In the UK travel related activity is the number one internet operation and in both the US and UK it is the primary source of information for tourists planning a trip (Macefield, 2012). The total value of the E Tourism industry in 2006 was \$ 74 bn and this is expected to reach the \$ 200 bn mark by mid-2014 (Madhu and Madhu, 2011). The implication here is that the internet and related technologies offers an unparalleled means of targeting potential tourists.

The respondents were then asked as to why they preferred the internet in comparison to other modes of transacting. Their responses are summarized in figure 2.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disa-gree	Strongly Disa-gree	Weight-ed Aver-age	Inter-preta-tion
	4	3	2	1		
The internet is faster than conventional means of making bookings	15	35	0	0	3.3	Agree
I get more information on the internet than from travel agents	45	5	0	0	3.9	Strongly Agree
I can compare and contrast offering much more faster on the internet	50	0	0	0	4.0	Strongly Agree
I feel transacting on the net is safer and more secure	2	10	25	13	2.0	Agree
It is far more convenient and easy to do bookings on the net	4	46	0	0	3.1	Agree
I can access the internet anytime, anywhere to make, change or cancel bookings etch related to my travel	50	0	0	0	4.0	Strongly Agree

Figure 2. Preference for the Internet

From figure 2 it can be seen that the internet is regarded as being much faster than conventional methods of making bookings. The quality and quantity of information on the net is far superior to that disseminated by travel agents. In addition, the internet enables other functionalities such as comparing and contrast tourist offerings, convenience and ease of making bookings, anytime, anywhere access and the convenience of changing bookings whenever required. However, the internet has not been regarded as being very safe to transact on.

The respondents were then queried about their primary sources of information whilst planning a trip and their responses are summarized in figure 3.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disa-gree	Strongly Disa-gree	Weight-ed Aver-age	Inter-preta-tion
	4	3	2	1		
My friends and relatives	17	22	8	3	3.1	Agree
Official Tourism organizations of the destination	15	18	12	5	2.9	Agree
Travel agencies, tour operators	12	16	12	10	2.6	Agree
Independent travel reviews and blogs	48	2	0	0	4.0	Strongly Agree

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disa-gree	Strongly Disa-gree	Weight-ed Aver-age	Inter-preta-tion
	4	3	2	1		
Social Networking Sites	5	45	0	0	3.1	Agree
Printed Media	2	6	35	7	2.1	Disagree

Figure 3. Primary Sources of Information

It can be seen from figure 3 that conventional, non – electronic forms of information dissemination have not been considered as being important sources of information on tourism. Rather it is internet based sources of information such as travel blogs, travel reviews and in particular social networking sites or social media that have been regarded as preferred sources of information. From this it may be inferred that social media plays an important role in determining tourist destination amongst foreign tourists.

Respondents were asked as to which social media sites they preferred and their responses are indicated in figure 4.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Weighted Average	Interpretation
	4	3	2	1		
Trip Advisor	45	5	0	0	3.9	Strongly Agree
Facebook	50	0	0	0	4.0	Strongly Agree
My Space	13	28	9	0	3.1	Agree
Lonely Planet	50	0	0	0	4.0	Strongly Agree
You Tube	26	24	0	0	3.5	Strongly Agree
Twitter	16	22	12	0	3.1	Agree

Figure 4. Preferred Social Media Sites

It can be seen from figure 4 that Trip Advisor, Facebook, Lonely Planet and You Tube are the most frequently patronized social media sites followed by My Space and Twitter.

What role social media actually plays in determining tourist choice of destination and in making travel plans has been summarized in figure 5.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disa-gree	Strongly Disa-gree	Weight-ed Aver-age	Inter-preta-tion
	4	3	2	1		
To get an inspiration to visit my travel destination	22	28	0	0	3.4	Agree
To search for reviews of hotels, restaurants and other attractions	36	14	0	0	3.7	Strongly Agree
To share my experiences, photos, videos comments	50	0	0	0	4.0	Strongly Agree

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disa-gree	Strongly Disa-gree	Weight-ed Aver-age	Inter-preta-tion
	4	3	2	1		
To interact with other fellow travellers	48	2	0	0	4.0	Strongly Agree
To meet with like minded persons	49	1	0	0	4.0	Strongly Agree
To search for specific Campaigns and offers	46	4	0	0	3.9	Strongly Agree

Figure 5. Role of Social Media in Tourism

The findings from Figure 5 corroborate those from the theoretical research. It may be seen that social media facilitates more interactivity, collaboration, sharing and efficient information searches as compared to other forms of E Tourism such as a Google search. It is because of these functionalities that social media becomes relevant for tourism and is widely used by travelers to plan their journeys and choose their tourist destinations.

Figure 6 provides another clue as to the role of social media in tourism.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disa-gree	Strongly Disa-gree	Weight-ed Aver-age	Inter-preta-tion
	4	3	2	1		
I take the feedback given on social media sites very seriously in planning my trip	46	4	0	0	3.9	Strongly Agree
I consider the view posted on social media sites along with recommendations from travel agents	15	35	0	0	3.3	Agree
I rarely consider feedback from social media sites	0	0	0	50	1.0	Strongly Agree

Figure 5. Feedback from Social Media

Social Media which enables different persons to post about their experiences and share about their travel is used as a source of information for potential tourists. Any negative feedback would adversely the attractiveness of a tourist destination amongst would be visitors. Conversely, positive feedback would increase its attractiveness immensely.

Figure 7 summarizes the views of respondents on why social media is so attractive nowadays.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disa-gree	Strongly Disa-gree	Weight-ed Aver-age	Inter-preta-tion
	4	3	2	1		
It is reliable	24	26	0	0	3.5	Strongly Agree

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Weighted Average	Interpretation
	4	3	2	1		
I can get quick replies on my request	13	15	12	10	2.6	Agree
It is neutral	36	14	0	0	3.7	Strongly Agree
I can read about personal experiences of other travellers	50	0	0	0	4.0	Strongly Agree
It provides audio visual impressions of other travellers	2	48	0	0	3.0	Agree
I don't use social media	0	0	0	50	1.0	Strongly Agree

Figure 7. Attractiveness of Social Media

Reliability, quick response, sharing, collaboration, multimedia capacity and interactivity have all been touted as the reasons for the attractiveness of social media. Having established the popularity of social media and how it is serves as modern tool information dissemination and sharing, the author now tested what relevance social media has in the context of Indian tourism.

The respondents were asked as to their sources of information on India prior to making their visit. Figure 8 summarizes their responses.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Weighted Average	Interpretation
	4	3	2	1		
Friends and Relatives	4	46	0	0	3.1	Agree
Tourist Sites of Indian Tourism	10	38	2	0	3.2	Agree
Travel Agencies, Tour Operators	7	42	1	0	31	Agree
Travel Reviews Online	50	0	0	0	4.0	Strongly Agree
Social Networking Sites	46	4	0	0	3.9	Strongly Agree
Printed Media and Guide Books	0	10	36	4	2.1	Disagree

Figure 8. Sources of Information on India

It can be seen from figure 8 that the internet and social media sites provided most of the sources of information on India. Figure 9 summarizes respondent experience with Indian tourist websites.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Weighted Average	Interpretation
	4	3	2	1		
It is easy and convenient to make bookings over the internet on Indian E Tourism sites	12	15	18	5	2.7	Disagree

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Weighted Average	Interpretation
	4	3	2	1		
The sites download fast and are easy and convenient to navigate	2	5	36	7	2.0	Disagree
I consider them safe to transact on	0	0	48	2	2.0	Disagree
They provide accurate and detailed information	12	14	18	6	2.6	Disagree
I feel cared for, entertained and happy when dealing on these stes	0	0	48	2	2.0	Disagree
I would prefer using travel agents for planning my trip to India	15	12	16	7	2.7	Disagree

Figure 9. Quality of E Tourism – India

It can be seen that the Indian tourist websites do not have the desired functionality and information content as is desirable by international tourists. Figure 10 summarizes tourists' views on social media in India.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Weighted Average	Interpretation
	4	3	2	1		
I did but I could not find much information on tourism	10	36	4	0	3.1	Agree
There are lots of links on tourist sites on social media sites in India	0	0	45	5	1.9	Disagree
Social Media still needs to be adequately leveraged to provide adequate information on tourism in India	50	5	0	0	4.0	Strongly Agre

Figure 10. Quality of Social Media – India

From figure 10, it can be seen that social media is still not been leveraged to disseminate information on the manifold attractions of India. This has serious implications, given the choice of social media as the preferred channel of information dissemination amongst tourists.

4. Conclusion

This paper sought to establish the importance of social media in facilitating more tourist footfalls into a tourist destination. It was found that social media, with its unparalleled reach and functionalities that enable people to share information and experiences has a very relevant role as a disseminator of information amongst potential tourists. It may be inferred from this that leveraging social media tools to popularize tourist destinations is imperative. From the empirical review it was identified that tourists routinely use social media to search for information about India. However, this seems relegated to tourist blogs and feedback posted on social sites only. The danger here is that anything unflattering instantly negates India as a potential tourist attraction. It was also found that almost none of India's manifold attractions get advertised on social media nor does the government leverage social media tools to attract more footfalls. It is therefore recommended that the tourism department realize the importance of social media immediately and invest in tie ups with such popular sites as Facebook, Lonely Planet and You Tube to popularize India as a tourist destination.

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Overtourism – A Blight to Sustainability: Case Study of Shimla

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Abstract

Over tourism is the perceived congestion or overcrowding from an excess of tourists, resulting in conflicts with locals. The term has only been used frequently since 2012, but is now the most commonly used expression to describe the negative impacts ascribed to tourism. The growth of tourism can lead to conflicts over the use of space between residents, commuters, day-visitors and overnight tourists. Although much attention is currently given to over tourism in cities, it can also be observed in rural destinations, or on islands. Several media outlets have published lists of destinations that are not recommended because of an excessive number of tourists. Over tourism is related to the terms carrying capacity, which describes a maximum number of tourists that a destination can host and overcrowding, which describes a situation where too many people visit a specific place for safety or comfort reasons. Particularly in city destinations, the number of residents and commuters has risen rapidly in recent years, which has led to increased pressure on infrastructure and facilities and a heightened sense of crowdedness.

1. Introduction

The word Overtourism has become the point of concern these days in tourism industry. It is defined as overcrowding by excess of tourist at a given place resulting in conflicts with locals. The term Overtourism or Mass tourism has been the term for concern and discussion in tourism industry. Still, it seems to remain an 'ambiguous' term, lacking clear viewpoint for the definition (Torres, 2002), may be due to its multidimensional character that evokes different meanings for different people (Miller and Auyong, 1998), and overall, the nature of tourism is multifaceted (Pearce, 1992).The growth in tourism sector can cause the overtourism at given place as same is to be used by tourists, commuters and local community. It has been known that tourism demand and supply have become more independent, individual, flexible and active (e.g. Boissevain, 1996; Ioannides and Debbage, 1998; Kontogeorgopoulos, 2004; Poon, 1993; Swarbrooke and Horner, 2007;Torres, 2002), which is understood either as the end of mass tourism (e.g. Poon, 1993) or its development into different forms (e.g. Ioannides and Debbage, 1998; Torres, 2002). These different interpretations suggest that the term mass tourism or over tourism should be critically examined. To have the relevance of different other forms of tourism the term overtourism need to be defined and explained carefully. One of the good examples of is the case of comparison between mass, alternative and ecotourism. Where Ecotourism has been identified as opposite to mass tourism (Walpole and Goodwin, 2000) but also as its variant (Weaver, 2001), or the separation between them is seen as blurred (Collins-Kreiner and Israeli, 2010). As for India is concerned it should not be an issue, as with a population of 1.3 billion the no. of foreign tourist arrival is just 10 million approximately per year. Whereas it is 38 million to the country like Thailand with total population of 69 million only. There are many destinations in India which are not recommended to be visited by the travel experts due to overtourism and are overcrowded by tourists and most of the part of the nation is still to receive numbers of foreign tourists. Basically what our Indian tourism Industry need to develop new niche for tourism and learn crowd management. Many sites which are frequented by domestic tourists require more attention toward crowd management. Best examples can be seen as long queues in front of any religious destination be it Tirupathi or Sai Temple at shirdi. Not only the popular sites visited by mass tourists, but it has started affecting the alternate sectors tourism industry as well. In adventure tourism there are certain treks and trails which have become the modernised tent jungle. One of the reasons for that may be mushrooming of unlicensed adventure tour operator in the region which is hampering the sustainability.

1.1 Development of Overtourism

Increase in number of host population and commuters: In recent past, the growth of number of residents and commuters particularly in cities has risen sharply. Which ultimately exert more pressure on resources and spread more crowdedness.

Changing lifestyles: The increase in disposable income and changing lifestyle patterns of the residents lead to a monoculture of hospitality facilities which ultimately tends to share the common sphere by residents and visitors.

Social media: This platform has played major role for overtourism over the years. Experiences are shared on social media which ultimately lead to overcrowding of the place which is shared and have received more likes.

1.2 Measures against Overtourism

In September 2013, the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) published a report on overtourism and how to deal with it. It highlights the importance of looking at tourism in a local context and details strategies to deal with overtourism:

Promote lesser unknown routes and attractions in a given destination

- Use regulations including restrictions on numbers of visitors within a certain time frame
- Improve guest segmentation
- Ensure local tourism benefits, especially through skilled jobs and participation of locals in tourism development
- Infrastructures with experience qualities for guests and population offer
- Public infrastructures, especially in transport, continue to improve
- Take local stakeholders seriously and involve them
- Inform and sensitize guests regarding local rules and values
- Use control and exchange mechanisms based on secure data and new technologies.

In the present chapter the case study of Shimla has been discussed which is about to pay price for overtourism in coming years if certain preventive measures would not been taken by policy makers. Shimla "Jewel of the Crown" (Pubby Vipin, 1996) is one of the most favourite place of Britishers for which they declared it as summer capital of India during British Raj. It is famous for its scenic beauty, pleasant weather during summers and heritage buildings. It is one of the most favourite places of North India for foreign visitors. But nowadays face of Shimla which once was known as queen of hills, is over exposed and has become very congested. Due to heavy rush in traffic, deforestation, pollution the quality of the air has been degraded. There are also many other problems which are faced by not only the tourists but local community also. The most common problems are monkey menace, water scarcity, parking, waste disposal etc. In nutshell the "queen of hills" has become the jungle of concrete. This chapter cater the study of environmental and infrastructural problems of the town related with overtourism. Both primary and secondary data has been used in the study.

2. Study Area

One of the lovely hill stations of North India, Shimla, a capital city is located in the middle ranges of Himalayas in the state of Himachal Pradesh with average altitude of 2100 meters above sea level. It is also one of the 12 districts of HP which is bounded by the state of Uttrakhand in the south-east, districts of Mandi and Kullu in the north, Kinnaur in the east, Sirmaur in the south and Solan in the west. According to 2011 census, it has population of 169,578 with 93,152 males and 76, 426 females. Major religion is Hinduism with 93.5% population followed by Islam 2.29%, Sikhism 1.95%, Budhism 1.33%, Christianity 0.62% and Jainism 0.10%.

2.1 Main Attractions of Shimla

There are number of places for tourists to visit in shimla most common are like the Mall, The Ridge, Lakkar Bazaar etc. Among the heritage buildings available in Shimla are Viceregal Lodge also known as Indian Institute of Advanced Studies, Kufri, Jakhoo hills, Christ Church, Annadale, Summer Hill, Chadwick Waterfall, State Museum, Kali Bari Temple, Gaeity Heritage Complex, Gorton Castle, Bantony Castle, Baba Bhalku Railway Museum, Sankat Mochan, Scandal Point, Naldehra, Rothney Castle, Mashobra, Fagu etc.

3. Study Design

To get the bird view of the implications of overtourism in Shimla, a survey has been conducted on Tourists, local community and service providers (Hoteliers and Travel Agents). Main problems which are being faced besides overtourism has been asked and those are affecting tourism in Shimla directly or indirectly. To avoid homogeneity samples has been taken from different parts of the town.

3.1 Demographic Profile of Tourists

Among domestic and foreign tourists, total 153 tourists have been surveyed from different parts of Shimla like Advanced Studies, The Mall, Lakkar Bazaar, Jakhoo, Tara Devi, Summer Hill, Kufri, Kali Bari etc. Among demographic profile, place of origin, gender, age, marital status, education, occupation, income etc have been asked. Besides demographic profile their travel pattern and travel behaviour has also been taken into consideration by asking their decision of visiting Shimla, leisure activities they took part in Shimla, their satisfaction level regarding the services being provided in Shimla etc. Among all 63.52% were male and 46.48% were female. Data of 33.14% foreign and 66.86% domestic tourists has been surveyed. Majority of domestic tourists were from Punjab, Haryana, Delhi and some of them were from UP, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Rajasthan and Gujrat. Among foreign respondents most of them were from Israel, Germany, UK, Lebanon, Ukraine and Spain. From the educational profile the quality of data has been assessed only 12. 14% respondents were below graduation, about 67. 14% were graduates and rest of them possessed Post graduation or higher degree.

3.2 Profile of Service Providers

The travel agents and hoteliers are the one who are directly engaged in tourism related activities in Shimla. They are the one who have been witnessing the changing face of tourism in Shimla over the years. They are the one who are directly or indirectly affected due to problems generated by overtourism besides local community and tourists of course. Majorly budget class hotels and travel agencies at Mall road, Lakkar Bazaar and Sanjauli have been surveyed. They were asked about basic information facilities they are providing, number of years they are in tourism business and mainly problems faced by them over the years due to overtourism or any other issue. Total 20 travel agents and 33 budget class hotels have been surveyed. One of the questions asked from service providers was is there any conflict they have encountered due to overtourism with tourist. Only 7 % responded no and 93 % responded yes. Apart from problems related to tourists they shared their own problems as well. For example one of the major concern of all the hoteliers in Shimla is scarcity of water and second is parking. Other problems like traffic jams, space constraint, deforestation and other environmental factors were shared.

3.3 Perspective of host community

As overtourism is seen as one of the major reason for most of the problems be it traffic jam or scarcity of water. The perception of the local community is also very important for any measure to be taken by the policy makers. Around 71 local people including teachers, shopkeepers, porters, drivers have been approached and surveyed from Summer hill, Boileuganj, Tutoo, Jatogh, Sanjauli and Vikasnagar.

4. Main Findings

After assessing the secondary and primary data collected from the responses of the Tourists, Service providers and Host community it has been found that to some extent overtourism plays a destructive role for sustainability in Shimla. Some of the main problems which are being faced by host community as well as visitors and service providers are given below:

1. Highly mismanaged traffic jams, although administration is playing their role judiciously, but due to rise in the number of taxis and private vehicles of tourist from outside slow downs the pace on almost all the roads linked to main city. The worst time is between 9 am to 11 am and then between 4 pm to 9 pm.
2. Other concern Parking for the vehicles, most of the site seeing of Shimla lacks this facility due to which already specified parking lots in lower Shimla gets overburdened which leads to high parking charges as well. In that case tourists are forced to park their vehicle at the edge of the road which again causes traffic jams. Except some good hotels, most of the budget class hotels or guest houses do not have their own parking lot.
3. Poor public transport of Shimla force tourists to bring their own vehicle or higher private taxi which leads to congestion as road density of Shimla is very poor as compared to the other cities of the region like Chandigarh.
4. The summers in Shimla witnessed where host community themselves pleaded to tourists not to come Shimla due to scarcity of water. According to CAG report, between 2009 to 2014 the per capital average water supplied in Shimla was 110 litres against the prescribed limit of 135 litres. But this year it had fallen below 50 litres per capital per day with piped water being supplied once a week. The only water sources which cater Shimla are Dhalli Catchment Area, Chair Nallah, Nauti Khad, Cherot jagroti Nallah and Ashwani Khad. Situation gets worst when this scarce of water in summer is shared with excess of tourists staying in hotels. In summers not only host community but tourists also complain for scarcity of water.
5. Still during the summers to avoid scorching heat of the plains and insurgency in Kashmir, most of the tourists chose Shimla for vacations and about 95% high-end hotels in Shimla have been booked to full capacity. ATMs of most of the banks except on The Mall went out of cash.
6. For providing facilities to the tourists, in the name of infrastructural development Shimla witnessed deforestation and environmental degradation in past years. Due to which forests have been vanished in and around the town. This lead to monkey menace in Shimla. Anyone can witness dozens of Monkeys or Langurs roaming around in every part of the Shimla.
7. Other concern which arises due to overtourism is solid waste. This solid waste asre polluting the town badly. Being a plastic free area, wrappers of toffees, chocolates or other eatables should not be seen in open. Due to lack of space the present solid waste treatment plant at Darani Ka Bagicha at Lal Pani, Shimla is not sufficient for proper disposal. So MC Shimla is planning to shift its present Solid Waste Management Plant to Bhariyal at Tara Devi Totu bye pass road.
8. Over the years Shimla is being seen as destination with fresh and pleasant environment. Tourists use to come here with the perception of physical and mental rejuvenation But due to increase in number of tourists every year the carrying capacity of the town is at stake. Government has no option but to develop more infrastructure to cater the needs of the tourists as tourism is one of the major contributor in the economy of the state. This year four laning of NH 5 lead to land slides and many mishaps during monsoons.

5. Conclusion and Suggestions

Shimla once known as queen of hills still bears same charm in the heart of tourist. This is the only reason the number of tourists visiting Shimla every year has been increasing. This is very good to some extent as far as economic growth of the state is concerned. But at the same time it also make policy makers as well as others a bit worried about the ill effects of overtourism in the town for sustainability. One of the most important things which we need to sustain for our next generation is its colonial heritage buildings. Which requires upliftment if we want to sustain them. The excessive pressure of the tourists and local community as well as administration on these buildings leads to their degradation to some extent. In case of Shimla Overtourism lead to urbanisation, where there was a little scope for it. Still there are some measures which could be taken or adopted for the benefit of local community, tourists and industry. It is advisable that before taking any necessary measure the sustainability of the region should be given top priority. Some of the suggestions are as under:

1. First and the foremost is the awareness about the sustainability development among host community, tourists, service providers and of course other stake holders. Among tourists this awareness can be spread during peak season and events which are majorly organised for the tourist for example summer festival, apple festival etc. For host community it can be shared by organizing special awareness programs in community centres, parks, shopping complex, schools, colleges or any other educational institutes even in offices and other work places. To encourage the service providers special sops to be given to them under some program of sustainability by local administration.
2. A group of educated unemployed youth could be selected and trained them to be excellent professional guides who can speak influent English and Hindi. Their services could be utilized by the tourists and other stake holders.
3. To save all heritage building some NGOs or participation of locals is very much important. Although Government is trying its level best to protect them. But it will be sustained only if host population and tourist community both are engaged for the sustainability of these buildings.
4. One of the major cause of degraded quality of the air in hills is vehicular traffic. For host population, if people are encouraged to use local transport instead of their personal vehicles it will lead to decongestion in the roads and control pollution also. For that first we require very good road network and good public transport system. For tourists the green tax on the vehicles from outside the state or exemption of the tax to the CNG vehicles can also improve the quality of air in the town. For better air quality vehicles older than 15 years should be restricted and there should be check on the number of diesel vehicles entering Shimla everyday.
5. It has been observed over the years there is no scope of widening the road in main town of the Shimla. The only option left with us is one way traffic and restriction of any vehicle in small roads except ambulances.
6. Before every tourist season (assuming that the main tourist season starts sometime in March/April) the PWD and National Highways Department should be asked to rectify all road defects and each important road should be travel-worthy. Each Superintending Engineer should be held responsible for the maintenance of these roads.
7. Railways must be given a boost so that tourists can enjoy ride from plains to Shimla and avoid their own vehicle to bring with them. Frequency of Low cost airlines and helicopter services can also be increased during peak season.
8. Till date the main attraction of Shimla is The Ridge which houses water storage tank below it and had developed cracks and the other is The Mall road. It is not possible if a tourist has come to Shimla and does not visit these 2 places. So, there must be some more places to be developed in the outskirts of Shimla which attract the tourists and release the pressure on these 2 sites. Some amusement park or theme park can be one of the good options.

9. The State Government of Himachal Pradesh should encourage people's participation in promotion of rural tourism to take tourism to the remotest corner of the State and acquaint visitors with the rich cultural heritage, customs and traditions of the villages so that tourism could become a household affair and number of tourists throughout the state can be rationalised.
10. Although after the year 2000, Government has taken very good measures to prevent deforestation and promote afforestation. Almost 55% of area around Shimla is covered with forest. Due to which so many landslides have been prevented. Further to prevent more landslides it is advisable to grow more OAK trees wherever we get place in Shimla.
11. One of the main concerns highlighted by all stake holders is the concern about the water scarcity. It can be minimized by taking help of rain water harvesting concept. This concept has already been proven a boon for the places like Andaman and Nicobar Islands, remote villages of Andhra Pradesh and Telengana. Unlike these places Shimla receives rain water in abundance during monsoons. This potential can be utilised to solve water problem of Shimla. Other alternative is to fetch water from the nearby perennial tributaries or Pabbar and Giri River.
12. All Centrally Sponsored Schemes under the Ministries of Tourism, Surface Transport, Health, Water Resources, Rural Development, Forests should be collectively tapped for promoting sustainability in the Shimla.

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Sustainable Tourism in Manipur: Experience From Indonesia

Research Notes

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Introduction

That the Look East Policy of the government of India has entered into a fairly advanced and crucial stage is manifested in the many decisions taken by the national and the local government on the hand and those of the corresponding developments in the neighbouring countries, particularly, Myanmar and Thailand on the other hand. The recent announcements by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) for investment of Rs.1,800 /-crores in Manipur only for the development of road infrastructure is a significant indicator. The Ministry of Civil Aviation's decision to convert Tulihal into an International Airport, the recent visit of Shri O.Ibobi Singh, Chief Minister of Manipur along with his officials to meet their counterparts at Mandalay, followed by the visit of Shri Gautam Mukhopandhyay former India's Ambassador to Myanmar1, Indo-Myanmar Friendship Car Rally (13-14 March 2012) sponsored by NEFIT (North East Federation on International Trade), the Indo-ASEAN Car-Rally, (26 November-20 December 2012) sponsored by CII (Confederation of Indian Industries) etc. are all positive indicators for opening of Manipur to the outside world. The visit of the chief Ministers of Sagaing and Mandalay provinces of Myanmar along with a huge contingent consisting of academics, policy planner to participate in the 'Sangai festival'2 of Manipur gave further boost to the inflow of Myanmarese visitors to Manipur. Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn of Thailand along with a big delegation consisting of entrepreneurs and government officials also participated in the recent festival of the Angami Nagas held at Khonoma3 on the 25th and 26th February,2014.That Manipur has been endowed with beautiful valleys, dales, hills, fresh water lakes and natural and scenic beauties, with a salubrious climate, makes it conducive for all categories of Tourism, be it eco-tourism, country-tourism or cultural-Tourism.

The state is also endowed with internationally recognised forms of 'Classical dance and Theatre'. Recently UNESCO has given recognition to 'Nat Sankirtan" as an approved and refined traditional performing art. All these gifts of nature as well as the cultural and physical potentialities of the native ethnic groups have been perceived by the late Jawaharlal Nehru and had appropriately described the place as the ''Switzerland of the East''. The Japanese called it as a flower on lofty heights 'Takane No.Hana' 1. Every year many II World War Japanese war veterans along with the relatives of more than 20000 soldiers who died in Manipur during the War visit Manipur to pay homage to the departed souls. Similarly, the "British Royal Legion'' consisting of war veterans also visits Manipur to pay their respect to those Allied soldiers who died in the Manipur-Nagland sector of the last great war.

II During the last few years, local papers intermittently reported the debate among the policy makers, entrepreneurs, and civil society activists regarding the possible economic impacts of India's Look East Policy to the State. The argument that the coming of tourists, notwithstanding the job opportunities that tourism would provide for a good number of local people in different sectors, i.e. hospitality industry, health care, higher education etc. would expose the relatively traditional economy and society of the north eastern region in general and Manipur in particular to the rapid and devastating onslaughts of international capital and this has stirred the consciousness of the policy planners, social activists and academics. Strong opinions were however expressed that the initiatives to develop the required infrastructure like roads, railways, airports, motels, hotels etc. for the development of the economy would certainly expand the employment opportunities of the people in the region. The general notion that 1 tourist would create 12 jobs seem to appeal to the conscious people.

There is however, a counter to these rosy pictures. The possibility of the existing community life and culture of the different ethnic groups in the hills and the valley to be swept away by the fast currents of trade and tourism as had happened in many places in the world are some of the genuine fears amongst the thinking people of the region. The rich culture and way of life of the various communities of Manipur reflected in various forms of dances, rituals, festivals and ceremonies etc. which give identity as well as livelihood to the people of the state, may get eroded in the process of the opening of the state to the new economic forces. Indeed, the said troublesome relationship between tourism and culture is a much discussed theme. Of late this relationship has been subjected to some critical anthropological scrutiny both at the international and the national levels. An examination of two places of Indonesia i.e. Toraja and

Bali both of which are important destinations for cultural tourism will illuminate our understanding of the complexity of the problem.

A) International tourism started in Indonesia in the 1960's but rapidly picked up by the 1970's. As many tourists visited the country to enjoy its coastlines and beaches, over two decades the country became a centre of attraction for cultural tourism. Tourists from many countries visited Indonesia to see the festivals, rituals, ceremonies dances, traditional arts and crafts and historical monuments. Initially, the influx of the tourists did not have much negative effects. But, with the passage of time and the increase in the number of tourists, many problems started emerging. In Toroja, particularly the increase in the tourist traffic was sudden. The area had passed directly from obscurity to elitist ethnic tourism and tourism and further, the place became a target for culture related chartered tourism which left the local people bewildered and uncertain of their future. If the local people opened the villages and their ethnic rites, rituals and other ceremonies to tourists for the sake of economic gain, they might have to compromise their cultural identity and integrity and on the contrary if they avoid the tourists, then they might have to be deprived of the possible economic gains, accompanying the influx and some other people might reap the profits.

Over a period of time ,due to practical compulsions and liberalised policies of the local authorities, some of the core elements of the rituals and festivals of the local Torjan communities were being compromised as spectacles' for the foreigners including even re-scheduling of their customary timings at the request of the tourist guides. A more significant issue is the disappearance of a good number of sacred and precious antiques as souvenirs, including even the mortuary statues which were invariably carved on precious jackfruit woods. The tourists mostly go for very old, weathered but original statues which eroded the ancient sacred practices of the Torajan mountain people. In fact, such ancient statues were sold at a high price by the antique dealers. Many tourists took the pictures of these statues by tele-photo-lenses for exhibiting to the prospective buyers in Europe and America. Many of such sacred statues have been moved from Toraja in connivance with thieves and smugglers. In reality so sacred are these statues that no one would dare to sell such artifacts within the region itself.

B) The contrast was the case of Bali. The Balinese dances and cuisines are internationally known. Despite the inflow of a great number of tourist, through a process called 'Cultural involution', negative effects of tourist influx were less in Bali. While tourism introduced new ideas and was a major source of fund, both controlled opening and economic necessity encouraged the Balinese, to maintain their skills as carvers, dancers and musicians. They needed money for modernization of their culture. But simultaneously, the resilience of the Balinese culture and moral strength of their performers and artists have withstood the impact of cultural invasion normally associated with tourism. The Balinese people achieved it by separation of tourism and their own spiritual and social identity and rendering unto each what was its own. In Bali, the rush towards standardization of the souvenir arts began on a priority basis, and thus the local people could avoid the painful experience of the total loss of customary fine arts. Further, indigenous institutions also continued to demand high quality craftsmanship as appropriate offerings for the divine world. Balinese could ignore this practice only at great personal and community loss. In Balinese ethos to offer inferior gifts to divine power would incur the displeasure of the divine force. They would not mind selling inferior goods to tourists, but they would not do it for the divine forces.

During the last 40 years the earlier agrarian based economy of Indonesia has been undergoing rapid transformation. As on date a number of hotels, private houses, shops, malls, restaurants, govt. offices have emerged in different parts in an uncontrolled way. Rice terraces of Bali are sold to foreign investors. Although Indonesian law does not permit selling of land to foreigners, foreign investors hold 'benami' land in the name of the local people. Unauthorized blocking of 'subaks' (traditional irrigation canals linked with volcanic lake) due to unplanned construction and developmental works led to shortage of water in the rice fields. This coupled with use of excessive fertilizers and pesticides not only affected the fertility of the soil but also polluted the ground water of the land. Further, burgeoning tourism is taking heavy tall in the local environment of Bali and Toraja. Plastic bags, hospital wastes, chemical dye with less garbage cleaning by the municipality make the place unhygienic in many ways.

III Coming back to the existing situations in the state of Manipur, due to the opening of the state to the national & international visitors a great deal of visible and invisible socio-economic changes have been taking place at a rapid pace. It is important that some kind of a 'Sustainable tourism policy' need to be formulated by the government in consultation to the wider civil society and policy planners. Sustainable tourism would focus on initiatives to meet the requirements of the present time without compromising the socio-economic possibilities of the future generation. In short the present tourism industry should not jeopardize the requirements of the socio-economic needs of the people in the centuries to come by careful management of the available resources. Indeed necessary initiatives should be taken up to avoid the negative impacts of tourism as far as possible although socio-economic changes both negative as well as positive have already started rolling.

A) Similar to the Torajan experience, one notices a great deal of deviations practiced by the Manipur cultural troops while giving performances for the outside visitors, violating the customary dress codes, rituals and other customary norms. Modernization of the tradition can take place without violating the kernel of the different ethnic art forms. Manipur has a good number of temples and Umang Lais (sylvan deities). Many of them are very old which may have great antique values. The tribal communities inhabiting the hills maintained a good number of mortuary megaliths. Many old 'morungs' (dormitory for the youths) and chiefs houses have majestic structures of wood in the form of doors, windows etc well carved by the indigenous artisans. All these precious things need to be well protected, so that the Torajan experience is not repeated. The urgency for care and concern to be taken up for the preservation of Manipuri rituals, dance, ceremonies, etc. expressed by a number of pundits and scholars are important aspects which needs to be taken seriously.

B) Although the idea of Manipur as a viable state for tourism has been in the mind of the administrators and politicians for decades, it was only with the openin g of the Indo-Myanmar border trade in 1993 as an integral part of India's Look East Policy thaing tt 15 years, the state government with funding from the Government of India particularly Department of North Eastern Region (DONER), and Ministry of Urban Development has been taking up road construction programmes at a rapid pace. Broadening of roads by cutting of hillocks which were the traditional sources of the livelihood adversely affected the common people's life. The construction off schools, offices, private homes etc at paddy fields not only lead to continuous shrinking of the cultivable agricultural area but also tremendously disturbed the traditional habitat of the rich flora and fauna of the region. The broadening of the National Highway no. 39 and 37, notwithstanding the compensation given by the state government to the local pattadars have destroyed a good number of community and private religious congregational halls and temples like 'Mandabs', 'Mandirs', etc. Many such places at Sagolband, Uripok, Yaiskul, Thoubal etc have become dysfunctional due to inundation of rain water during the rainy season. As many of the traditional water reservoirs like Waithou Lake, Yaral Lake, Loushi Lake and other natural water bodies have been filled up by private pattadars without any proper planning many of the traditional 'Iram-Nala' (Drains and waterways) have been clogged resulting to frequent inundation of the valley area.

Another issue of serious dimension is the faulty waste management system. Before the introduction of plastic bags, biodegradable paper bags, banana leaves etc were used in shops markets and customary feasts and rituals. However, increasing amount of trace garbage, construction and demolition debris coupled with biomedical wastes from hospitals, health care centers, clinics etc. have made Imphal and its surrounding areas look unclean and unhygienic. It is interesting to note that about 2500 kg of solid waste was dumped directly into the 'Naga stream' within less than one km stretch between Khoyathong and Maharani bridge at Imphal Bazar. Another 1800 kg of solid waste are thrown into the Nambul river between Naoremthong and Keishamthong.

C) A significant issue is the dramatic transformation in the natural eco-system of the Loktak Lake which has bearing to the greater parts of Manipur valley due to human and technological intervention in the last four decades. The Loktak Project which was commissioned by the National Hydro Electric Power Corporation (NHPC) fin 1983 for generation of 105 MW of electricity required the maintenance of the water level at 679 m at Ithai barrage. Due to distortions in the natural process of water movement, a fall out of the construction of the said barrage, the traditional wetland ecosystem of the lake was disturbed resulting to large scale destruction of flora and fauna in the lake and the surrounding catchment area. High water level maintained by the Ithai barrage also leads to inundation of large tracts of agricultural land amounting to 30000 hectares thereby adversely affecting the livelihood of a great number of farmers in the neighboring villages of Moitrang, Kumbi, Bishenpur, Mayang Imphal and Wabagai assembly constituencies. These hydrological changes affected the production of Heikak (Trapa Natans), Thangjing (Euryale ferox) and Thamchet and Thambouu (edible fruit and rhizome of lotus plant) which are exotic traditional Manipuri recipes.

The government of Manipur in collaboration with the Ministry of DONER (Department of North Eastern region) and Ministry of Forest & Environment have been taking up a number of measures for conservation of the lake. The Loktak Development Authority (LDA) which was set up by the government of Manipur in 1986 for conservation purposes successfully completed the hydrographic and meteorological survey of the lake and its drainage system. The government of Manipur also passed Manipur Loktak Lake Protection Act 2006 to prevent indiscriminate use of lake resources. Under the said Act, the lake was divided into two zones – a core zone comprising of 70.30 km which is a totally protected zone and a buffer zone of other areas outside the core one. Building of huts in this core zone is absolutely prohibited.

In November 2011, the government in compliance with a government notification issued by LDA dated 11-11-2011 burnt around 200 Khangpokshang (Floating huts) built on the Phumdis (Floating biomass) belonging to the fishing communities and in the process about 1000 fishermen in Khuman Yangbi, Nambul Machin and Karang Sabal were made homeless. The dispossessed fishermen were seeking shelter at Ningthoukhong Makha Leikai Community Hall for a number of days in 2011. Each household was however offered compensation of Rs. 40000 by the government.

Another significant development closely related with the Loktak project is the gradual erosion and destruction of the floating Keibul Lamjao sanctuary (floating biomass), the home of the famous 'Sangai' (bro antlered deer), due to increased poaching and burning of Keibul Lamjao area. Changing ecology and degradation in water quality have also disturbed the seasonal visits of Siberian cranes and other birds in the last few years.

Sustainable tourism, thus seem to be the need of the hour. Proper resource management that would focus on rationalization of socio-economic, cultural and aesthetic needs while maintaining the crucial ecological and environmental balances may be the broad contours for the formulation of future tourism policy of the state.

Notes:

1. The Chief Minister of Manipur, Shri O.Ibobi Singh visited Mandalay and Moneya at Myanmar on May 28-29,2013 to apprise the Myamareese counterpart of the available opportunities in tourism,health care and higher education sectors in Manipur. The then Indian ambassador to Myanmar also visited Manipur on 30-31 Jully,2013 to assess the developing scenario in Manipur.
2. The Chief Minister of Sagaing and Mandalay provinces of Myanmar came to Manipur by Golden Airline and landed at Tulihal Airport with a huge contingent about 55 numbers on consisting of entrepreneurs, academics, cultural personalities etc. on 20 November 2013 and left Imphal for Bodha Gaya two days after.

3. Business delegations from Thailand used to participate every year in the Sangai Festival of Manipur.

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Battlefield Tourism in Manipur (II World-War): An International Attractive Destination

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Introduction

Manipur was a key battleground during the Second World War. A quiet corner of the Sovereign country until then, in 1942 it suddenly found itself on the frontier between the Japanese in Burma (now Myanmar) and the British in India. It turned into a massive battlefield in 1944 when the Japanese, together with Indian National Army (INA) units, launched Operation U Go, with its main objective of capturing Imphal, Manipur's capital. The period from March to July of that year saw fierce fighting taking place across the state in what is called the Battle of Imphal. In April 2013, the combined battle of Imphal/Kohima was named Britain's Greatest Battle by the National Army Museum in the United Kingdom.

Manipur today is literally littered with sites related to its Second World War experience. If one arrives in Imphal by air, the airfield one lands on (Imphal International Airport) was first constructed during the War. If one comes to Manipur over land from Dimapur/Kohima or from Tamu in Myanmar, the roads one travels on were first upgraded to tarmac or rehabilitated in 1942-43. Around Manipur, there are several memorials, cemeteries, remains of airfields and museums, among others, all of which are connected either directly or indirectly to the War.

Of course, these are the formal reminders of the War. The remains of bunkers and trenches from the Battle of Imphal continue to be discovered to till date. Finally, there are the villages and mountain peaks and ranges around which some of the fiercest fighting of 1944 took place. These include villages such as Shangshak, Ningthoukhong and Torbung, and peaks such as Nungshigum/Hill 3833, Scraggy/Ito and Point 5846/ Laimaton.

The aims and objective of the present study is to explore the story of the Battle of Imphal of 1944, including who fought it; how the fighting unfolded; where in Manipur it took place; and the link with the INA. It then looks at Manipur's Second World War-related assets and heritage. It goes on to make the argument that, given all of the above, there is tremendous Tourism potential for battlefield (Second World War) or Remembrance tourism in Manipur. Finally, it suggests the way forward for realising this Tourism potential.

Methodology

To understand and reconstruct the story of the Battle of Imphal, this study has relied and drawn on the available literatures based on the battles in Manipur (Second World War experience). Since many of the Japanese accounts of the Second World War are yet to be translated in common language. The available literature mainly consists of war accounts of then officers of the British Army who served in North East India and Burma/ Myanmar during the Second World War. The listing of Manipur's Second World War-related assets and heritage has resulted from explorations and on-site visits to the different sites spread out across the state. Therefore, by the nature of the events the literature of the maximum accounts is base on the oral history of the eyewitnesses' public accounts of the nearby village of the battle-ground.

Review of Literature

Operations in Burma (during the battle) were under the new South-East Asia Command and the promoted Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten. Mountbatten in turn promoted Lieutenant-General William Slim from command of XV Indian Crops to command of the new Fourteen Army in November 1943. At that date, he had never won a battle but it was his strategy that decided the fate of the campaign. Anticipating a renewed Japanese offensive, he opted for an initial withdrawal as soon as the shape of the Japanese offensive was clear. This would force the Japanese to extend there lines of communication accurse difficult country and shorten his own which reached back into India. 'I wanted a battle before we went into Burma,' Slim later recalled, 'and I was as eager as Kawabe to make it decisive.' It was to be what the text books call an 'offensive defence'. In this way, Imphal, in canter of a plain that dominated the mountainous border state of Manipur, become vital to both sides. (Mountbatten, 1944)

In this manner, John Harman won his VC. But all through the 14-day battle around Kohima, similar feats kept the besieging Japanese out, while down on the plain; the decisive struggle around Imphal was taking shape. After month of discussion, Lieutenant-General Renya Mutaguchi had been given the final go-ahead for Operation U-GO from Imperial General Headquarters on 7 January 1944. His plan called for a four-pronged offensive. One would approach Imphal from the south through Tiddim, another would approach from south-east via the Kabaw Valley, Tamu and Palel, the shortest routh for lorry transport between the Chinwin and Imphal.(Images of War, 1943-1944)

The Battle Of Imphal of 1944

Imphal-Kohima

With the given facts and finding of the War scenery of the II World-War, the fighting around Imphal, and Kohima in Nagaland (known as the Battle of Imphal-Kohima), was the turning point in the Burma Campaign of the Second World War. It was at Imphal-Kohima that the Japanese invasion of India and its march through Asia was stopped, with the British-led Allies subsequently driving them out of Burma in 1945. Although estimates vary, more than 30,000 Japanese soldiers are believed to have died due to fighting or disease in the greatest defeat on land in Japan's history.

British military historian Robert, Lyman(2011) describes the importance of the combined battle: "It is clear that Kohima/Imphal was one of the four great turning-point battles in the Second World War, when the tide of war changed irreversibly and dramatically against those who initially held the upper hand." The battles at Stalingrad, El Alamein, and in the Pacific between the US and Japanese navies were the other three.

Importantly, the significance and intensity of the battle is reflected in the fact that five Victoria Crosses were awarded during the Battle of Imphal. The Victoria Cross is the highest possible military award given for bravery by the British Monarchy. There is considerable interest internationally in the Victoria Cross and in the circumstances in which the award is won. India's very own Param Vir Chakra was the successor to the Victoria Cross after Indian independence.

The warring sides

Involved in the Battle of Imphal were more than 120,000 men of the British Army, including a mix of Gurkhas, Indians and the British. They made up the Imphal-based 4th Corps of the British 14th Army, which initially consisted of three infantry Divisions – the 17th, 20th and 23rd Indian Divisions – as well as the 50th Indian Parachute Brigade and the 254th Indian Tank Brigade. Later, two Brigades from the 5th Indian Division and one from the 7th Indian Division were flown to Imphal from the Arakan (present-day Rakhine State, Myanmar) in March and

May 1944. The British also had in place the intelligence gathering V Force in the mountains to the east/north-east and west/south-west of Imphal.

On the Japanese side in Manipur were around 70,000 men, including two Divisions – the 15th and the 33rd – of its 15th Army. Over 6,000 men from the INA's 1st Division also participated in the Battle of Imphal. This included the Gandhi and Azad Brigades, part of the Subhash Brigade, as well as INA Special Groups attached to the Japanese Divisions.

The fighting

The Battle involved Japanese and INA units attacking Manipur from three broad directions in March 1944: the 31st Division from the north/north-east; Yamamoto Force from the southeast; and the 33rd Division from the south/south-west. The British had always planned to withdraw their two forward Divisions deployed along the India-Burma border – the 20th Indian Division at Tamu and the Kabaw Valley and the 17th Indian Division at Tiddim – to the edges of the Imphal Valley at the first sign of a Japanese attack. The idea was to fight the latter in conditions favourable to the British. Despite some scares, this was ultimately achieved as the Japanese were forced to fight at the end of a long and precarious supply line extending all the way back over the mountains to the Chindwin River in Burma. Confronted with mounting logistical difficulties, the onset of the monsoon, and a better trained and supported – medically and from the air – opponent, the Japanese attack failed and its forces, together with INA units, were forced to return to Burma by July.

It is not easy to describe the flow of the Battle of Imphal as the fighting was spread out across Manipur and involved simultaneous actions in several sectors. In his memoir General William J. Slim, commander of the British 14th Army, notes: "Like unevenly spaced spokes of a wheel, six routes converged on to the Imphal plain to meet at the hub, Imphal itself… It was by these that the Japanese strove to break into the plain. The fighting all round its circumference was continuous, fierce, and often confused as each side manoeuvred to outwit and kill". Perhaps then the simplest way to understand the Battle is to look at what happened on each of the said spokes:

(i) Significances of the Imphal-Kohima Road during the II World War:

This road was in 1944 – and remains today – Manipur's main connection to the outside world. On March 30, 1944, the road was cut by the Japanese, who then reached as far as Sekmai, before the British began to push back. One of the main battles on the Japanese advance down the Road took place at Kanglatongbi, where the Indian Army has erected a

War Memorial. The fight to open up the road northwards from Sekmai was a slow, difficult one. The Japanese had taken up defensive positions in the hills overlooking the road, each of which had to be prised from them. The Road was not opened until June 22 when men of the 2nd British Division coming from Kohima and those of the 5th Indian Division from Imphal met at Milestone 109 near Kangpokpi.

Imphal-Kohima Road near Milestone 109

(ii) The Iril River Valley

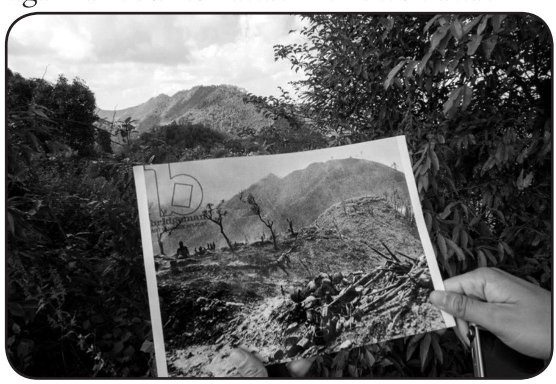
The Iril River Valley runs almost parallel to the Imphal-Kohima Road. The two are separated by a collection of hills. According to Lyman, these hills, bound by Molvom in the north and Mapao in the south, became during the Battle of Imphal “a Japanese defensive arena par excellence”. After the initial thrust by the Japanese, aimed at capturing Imphal, the bulk of the subsequent fighting consisted of British efforts to dislodge the former from the area. The hills known as Nungshigum and what the British called Runaway Hill along the Iril River, as well those around Molvom and Mapao, were some of the major battlefields here.

(iii) The Ukhrul Road

The Ukhrul Road and its environs saw continuous action from the second half of March to July 1944. While the Japanese 15th Division was active here, the area was also affected by the 31st Division that was en route to Kohima – especially in the Battle of Shangshak and in Jessami. Facing the Japanese were British formations that were rotated on several occasions over the four-month period. The Battle of Shangshak, from March 22-26, and the one at Ukhrul, from July 1-8, were the iconic battles of this sector. Places such as Nongada-Kameng, Yaingangpokpi, Litan, and Shongphel, among others, were also witness to clashes between the British and Japanese forces.

(iv) The Tamu-Palel Road

Perhaps the most stirring introduction to the fighting in this sector is by Evans and Brett-James. They write: "'Nippon Hill' – 'Sita' – 'Crete East and West' – 'Scraggy' – 'Gibraltar and Malta'. These were the names which went to make up the Shenam Saddle position. They are hills unknown to the outside world, but they will remain always in the memories of those who fought there. They were the scene of some of the most ferocious fighting of the whole war, and hundreds and hundreds of British, Indian, Gurkha and Japanese soldiers lost their lives on these hills which changed hands time and again as counter-attack followed attack."



Scraggy peak in the aftermath of the battle, and now. In the background are Malta and Gibraltar peaks where more battles took place.

The fighting here involved repeated attempts by the Japanese to get past the British defensive positions around the Shenam Pass/Saddle en route to Imphal. The British defences held, but only after months of fighting in conditions likened to the Somme in World War I. As on other sectors, one of the hardest parts was to dislodge the tenacious Japanese from their bunkers once the British went on the offensive to clear out the area (which was completed by end-July). Some of the iconic peaks around the Shenam Saddle position where fighting raged were Nippon Hill / Maejima, Sita, Crete East / Ikkenya and West / Kawamichi, Scraggy / Ito, Gibraltar, Malta and Ben Nevis. Places such as Tengnoupal, the Lokchao Bridge and Moreh also saw heavy fighting.

(v) The Tiddim Road

The Tiddim Road stretches northwards from Tiddim village in the Chin Hills of Myanmar right up to Imphal. According to Slim, it was on the Tiddim Road and on the Silchar-Bishenpur Track that some of the heaviest fighting in the entire Battle of Imphal-Kohima took place. The fighting involved repeated and determined attempts by the Japanese to break through to Imphal, this time from the south. The British were equally determined to prevent this from happening. And the result again was ferocious to-and-fro fighting between the two sides for several months, until the British finally prevailed. Almost every village between Churachandpur and Bishenpur witnessed clashes of varying intensity, with Potsangbam, Ningthoukhong, Ninghthoukhong-Kha-Khunou, Thinunggei, Phubala, and Moirang possibly being the most affected. Some of the iconic battles on the Tiddim Road were those of Potsangbam and Ningthoukhong, the Torbung roadblock and Red Hill (Maibam Lokpaching).

(vi) The Silchar-Bishenpur Track

The Track is the section of the Old Cachar Road from Bishenpur up to the suspension bridge over the Leimatak River. The fighting here is interconnected with simultaneous events on the Tiddim Road. As always, the Japanese objective was to get through to Imphal, this time from the west/south-west, as well as to block the use of the Silchar Track by the British. As with Shenam, the Track and its environs were witness to intense, close, hand-to-hand infantry fighting. Peaks such as Point 5846, Wooded Hill and Three Pimple Hill (or Mitsukobu), and spots such as Water Piquet and Mortar Bluff were the sites of many a clash in this sector, while mountain villages such as Ngariyan (or the British-named Halfway House), Mollou, Laimanai, Sadu, Tokpa-Khul, Kungpi, Kha-Aimol, Kokaden, Khoirok, Laimaton, and Nunggang, were on routes used by the Japanese to approach the Silchar Track and Imphal from the west.

The Siege of Imphal

Ironically, Imphal saw little fighting during the 1944 Battle to which it lends its name. For, clashes raged all around the city and even occurred as close as Nungshigum to the north and Maibam Lokpaching in the south. Perhaps what affected Imphal most was that it was cut off from the rest of the world by land for over two months – thanks to the blocking of the all-important Imphal-Kohima Road on March 30, and the blowing up of the suspension bridge over the Leimatak River on the Silchar-Bishenpur Track on April 15. Thus until June 22, when the Imphal-Kohima Road was re-opened, the city was effectively under siege, with supplies being flown in to airfields around Imphal.

Militarily, of course, Imphal remained the nerve centre from where the British 4th Corps directly ran and coordinated the Battle of Imphal, under the overall command of 14th Army headquarters in Comilla (in present-day Bangladesh). 14th Army HQ moved to Imphal for a few months towards the end of 1944 to coordinate the unfolding operations in Burma.

The Air Battle

Koirengei Airfield (Imphal Main)

All British military accounts acknowledge that without support from the air, the Battle of Imphal would have been very hard to win, if at all. Brett-James and Evans write: "Undoubtedly one of the most remarkable was the part played by the Royal Air Force, the Indian Air Force and the United States Army Air Force, without whose contribution the outcome of the battle could well have been very different." Thus it was as much an air battle as one fought on land. Reinforcements were flown in the nick of time; the troops on the ground were often supplied only by air; while Japanese lines of supply and communication were under constant attack from the skies.

The Royal Air Force, the Indian Air Force and the United States Army Air Force also played a particularly crucial role during the Siege of Imphal. Lyman notes that at its peak in the second half of April 1944, the airlift into the Imphal Valley employed 404 aircraft in fifteen squadrons. In 1944, there were six airstrips scattered around the Valley. The three all-weather strips were Imphal Main (or Koirengei Airfield), Palel (or Kakching Airfield) and Tulihal (the current Imphal airport). The fair-weather airstrips were Kangla, Wangjing and Sapam.

The Battle of Imphal and the INA

INA Memorial Complex, Moirang

It is hard to overstate the centrality of the Battle of Imphal to the INA story. For it is here where the men of the INA first entered India and engaged militarily with their former Indian comrades of the British Army (thus fighting on both sides of the Battle). As Peter Ward Fay explained: "Bursting into India, after all, is what the Indian National Army is all about, its raison d'être, the excuse for its existence". Men of the INA Special Groups entered Manipur together with Japanese forces in mid-March 1944. On April 14, Col. Malik of the Bahadur Group hoisted the INA flag for the first time in India at Moirang.

As noted earlier, more than 6,000 men from the INA's 1st Division also participated in the Battle of Imphal. The Division's HQ was set up in Chamol. Its Gandhi Brigade was deployed on the left flank of Yamamoto Force on the Tamu-Palel Road and set up its HQ in Khanjol at the end of April 1944. A group of some three hundred soldiers from this Brigade set off via Purum-Chumpang for a joint attack (with the Japanese) on the Palel airfield. This did not come to pass and the INA men were repelled. Through May, despite attacks by British forces, this Brigade stayed in and around Khanjol and Mittong-Khunou. The 2nd and 3rd battalions of the Subhash Brigade that had earlier been active in the Chin Hills reached as far as Ukhrul in mid-May. The Azad Brigade was deployed in June on Yamamoto Force's right flank and set up its headquarters in Narum. However, the INA met the same fate at the Battle of Imphal as the far larger force they accompanied, the Japanese, and all Brigades began their withdrawal on July 18, 1944.

Manipur and The Second World War

For Manipur the Battle of Imphal was not its only experience of the War. Indeed, one can arguably make the case that Manipur is the part of India that was most affected by the War. Imphal became the first major entry point for refugees fleeing Burma in 1942 – over a hundred and fifty thousand are said to have trooped through en route to Dimapur and Silchar. On what later became Koirengei Airfield was established a large camp to house the refugees. Imphal itself was bombed for the first time on May 10 and 16, 1942, sending most of the population of the city fleeing.

In the months that followed, Imphal became an important forward supply base and Manipur's infrastructure was developed like never before. Bridle paths were turned into tarmac roads, additional jeep tracks were laid, airstrips built where none existed, and thousands of troops from other parts of India and the world began pouring in. Business boomed in Imphal, with the arrival of the soldiers requiring all sorts of goods and supplies.

Things built up to a crescendo when in March 1944 Manipur and its people were thrust headlong into the Battle of Imphal. Many had to evacuate their homes and seek shelter elsewhere; villages were bombed; and houses destroyed during some the bitterest fighting the world had ever seen. And those were just the physical costs. Psychologically, besides being exposed to people from other parts of India and the world in large numbers, Manipur's people were subjected to intense propaganda both in favour of the British War effort and, to a more limited extent, the INA and Japanese. While some sections of the people did side with the latter, others – led by Maharaja Bodhachandra – extended their support to the War effort. By the time the War ended, Manipur had changed forever.

Manipur's Second World War assets and heritage

Memorials

(i) India Peace Memorial, Maibam Lokpaching

The only Japanese war memorial in the country, this was constructed by the Japanese Government on the site of the Battle of Red Hill at Maibam Lokpaching, along the Tiddim Road. The Battle took place from May 20-29, 1944, and was the closest the Japanese got to Imphal from the south. The Memorial was inaugurated in 1994 on the 50th Anniversary of the Battle of Imphal.

(ii) War Memorial, Kanglatongbi

This Memorial marks the site of a brief battle at Kanglatongbi in early-April 1944 during the Japanese drive south on the Imphal-Kohima Road towards Imphal. The Memorial was renovated and re-dedicated by the Indian Army in April 2011.

Commemoration Memorial in the Imphal Indian Army War Cemetery

(iii) INA Memorial, Moirang

This is a replica of the original Indian National Army (INA) Memorial whose foundation stone was laid by Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose in

Singapore on July 8, 1945. The original was subsequently demolished by the British when they retook Singapore. The replica is part of the larger INA Memorial Complex in Moirang which is the only such complex in the world.

(iv) Shangshak War Memorial

This Memorial in Shangshak village in Ukhrul district marks the historic battle that took place here from March 22-26, 1944.

Cemeteries

There are two Second World War cemeteries in Imphal. These are maintained by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. The first one, the Imphal War Cemetery, contains some 1,600 graves of Commonwealth soldiers, including Indians, the British, Australians, Canadians, and East Africans.

The second cemetery is the Imphal Indian Army War Cemetery. This contains 828 graves, most of which are of Muslim soldiers of the British Indian Army. The cemetery also includes the Imphal Cremation Memorial which commemorates 868 Sikh and Hindu soldiers who were cremated.

Imphal War Cemetery

INA War Museum

The Indian National Army (INA) War Museum in the INA Memorial Complex in Moirang is the only official museum dedicated to the Second World War in Manipur today. Its focus is primarily on the rise of the INA and on the role and activities of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose in particular. Remnants of war from across Manipur dating back to 1944, including arms and ammunition, bayonets, helmets and bottles, among others, are also displayed here.

Slim Cottage

The headquarters of the British 14th Army moved from Comilla in present-day Bangladesh to Imphal for a few months towards the end of 1944 to oversee the unfolding operations in Burma. The colonial-era cottage in which General Slim stayed at the time, and which has since been named 'Slim Cottage', can still be seen in the Kangla Fort complex today.

Airfields

There were six airfields scattered around the Imphal Valley in 1944. The three all-weather airfields were Imphal Main (or Koirengei Airfield), Palel (or Kakching Airfield) and Tulihal. Of these, Imphal Main or Koirengei Airfield was considered the most important and it can be seen almost in its entirety along the main Imphal-Kohima Road (National Highway 2) on the outskirts of Imphal. Tulihal today serves as the site of the Imphal Airport, while a major part of the Palel Airfield also survives today.

The fair-weather airfields, which were essentially carved out of paddy fields at the time, were Kangla, Wangjing and Sapam.

Battlefields

Perhaps Manipur's greatest assets when it comes to the Second World War are the different villages, peaks and hills where the fighting took place in 1944. Some of these 'battlefields', such as Nungshigum, Point 5846 (Laimaton), Red Hill and the hills near Tengnoupal, have not changed much in the last seventy years. Others, such as Shangshak, Ningthoukhong and Kanglatongbi, while they might have become larger, their present state and surroundings still enable visitors to visualize the dramatic events that unfolded there during the War.

Allied soldiers on the Imphal-Kohima Road- then and now.

Trenches and bunkers

As one visits the old battlefields today, one still comes across the remains of trenches and bunkers that date back to the War. This is particularly the case near Shangshak, Laimaton and Tengnoupal, but it can be said with some certainty that as more and more old battlefields are identified and visited, more such remains will be found. These are sites of immeasurable value which help us understand and imagine the fighting and conditions during the War as perhaps no spoken word can.

Analysis

It is clear that the Battle of Imphal in particular and Manipur's Second World War experience in general is of significance at the international, national and state levels. In terms of the former, it is no small matter that the combined battle of Imphal/Kohima was named as Britain's Greatest Battle by the National Army Museum of the UK. The Battle of Imphal has great significance in view of the national perspective as well International importance. Among others one interesting things is that the Indian soldiers fighting on both sides in the War – together with the Japanese as part of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose's INA and with the British as part of the British-Indian Army. The INA flag was hoisted for the first time in the country at Moirang on 14 April 1944.

On Manipur and its people, too, the War period had a major impact. 1944 saw destruction and fighting take place on an unprecedented scale across the state. Many thousands of people were displaced/suffered. It was for the first time that the land had seen such a diverse gathering of nationalities and people from around the country and the world. Indeed, it would be hard to find a household in Manipur today that was not affected in one way or another by the dramatic happenings of 1944 and the War.

Tourism Potenticels

When the above fascinating narrative is taken together with Manipur's impressive Second World War heritage, one can arguably make the case that the state has what it takes to emerge as a popular battlefield (Second World War) tourism destination. This is because battlefield tourism involves visiting a site where a battle took place between opposing sides, which in some way, holds a significant meaning to the tourist. This can be seen in the case of battlefields around the world that are significant tourist resources such as the Western Front in France and Belgium, Waterloo in Belgium, Culloden in Scotland, Pearl Harbour and Gettysburg in the U.S. What all these places have in common are historic battles that took place there, together with attractions or places of interest linked to those battles to visit. The attractions may be war memorials, war museums, cemeteries, trenches, battle re-enactments and so on. Just having the key ingredients – a great story and varied sites of interest – may not be enough, however. For the current state of affairs in Manipur leaves a lot to be desired and need to turn the stone.

For one, despite their historical significance, the main sites of the fighting some seventy years ago are for the most part neglected and long forgotten. The vast majority of these sites lie unmarked, underutilised and in need of urgent repair and/or preservation. Secondly, there are lack of awareness of the importance of war events and consequences. Therefore there are no regular tours and travel that cover the momentous events of 1944 and the War years in Manipur and present them to a domestic or international audience. Instead, there are sporadic tours organized by veterans' associations primarily from the UK and Japan, and even more irregular ones by domestic tour operators. Third, tourist amenities are in short supply, from the lack of availability of clean toilets around the major attractions, to the absence of reliable information about them.

The urgent need of the hour then is to take stock of the current situation and to draw up an action plan for the future – with the immediate aim of making Manipur's Second World War attractions be known to the outside world, and with the longer-term aim of developing Manipur as the pre-eminent battlefield destination of India. The potential for this to happen undeniably exists; whether this is materialised or not will depend on the actions taken on the ground in Manipur by interested individuals and Government.

Conclusion and The Way Forward

If one looks at its Second World War experience in general and the Battle of Imphal of 1944 in particular and puts it together with the memorials, cemeteries, battlefields and museums spread across the state, it is hard not to recognise the potential for battlefield tourism in Manipur. Significantly, the following are some measures that could be considered to enable the state to translate this Tourism potential into socio economic realitie:

- Site Markers: To create awareness about the Battle of Imphal, markers should be installed at certain key sites related to the fighting. These markers should include information about the site and mention its overall significance to the events of 1944 and the War. They should have an attractive design and be instantly recognisable. Places where they could be displayed include Koirengei Airfield, Red Hill, Ningthoukhong, Tengnoupal and Nungshigum, among others.

- Road Markers: These should give a brief overview of the fighting that raged on the respective road axis. There should be two of them along each axis – one at the beginning of the road and another near the end. The objective would be the same as with the site markers: to create awareness of the Battle of Imphal and to connect the respective route with the overall battle. These would be on the Imphal-Kohima Road, the Ukhrul Road, the Palel-Tamu Road, the Tiddim Road and the Silchar Track (Old Cachar Road).
- Tours: To explain the Battle of Imphal, interactively connect sites to actual historical events and, most importantly, give a visitor to Manipur interested in the War something concrete to do and a reason to stay longer, the creation of half-day and full-day guided tours around the Battle of Imphal is essential. These should cover sites linked to the fighting in 1944.
- Trekking Routes: The world over trekking is a popular means for tourists to discover the natural beauty of any destination. Manipur is fortunate to be blessed with a stunning countryside. To encourage tourists to come and visit it, Battle of Imphal-themed treks should be launched.
- Mark the 70th Anniversary in 2014: With the recent naming of the Battle of Imphal/Kohima as Britain's Greatest Battle, general interest in knowing more about this event can only be expected to increase in future. For Manipur, an opportunity to capitalise on growing curiosity about the Battle of Imphal will be the year 2014, which will be its 70thAnniversary. An effort should be made to draw up possible events that could be held to commemorate this anniversary; at the time of writing this paper, there is some evidence that this is now being done. In the longer-term, the focus should be on the 75th Anniversary of the Battle of Imphal in 2019.
- Improve the existing sites: As mentioned earlier, Manipur already has several important sites related to the Battle of Imphal. A simple way forward would be to better maintain and renovate some of these sites.
- Establish a Battle of Imphal Museum in/around Imphal: Any visitor to the state capital today is hard pressed to find that one central venue that presents the Battle of Imphal or what Manipur experienced during the Second World War. Fortunately, this situation can be

remedied by the establishment of the "Battle of Imphal Museum". Its focus would be on the Battle of Imphal in particular and on Manipur's Second World War experience in general. It would aim to present the perspectives of all sides: the Allies, the Japanese, the Indian soldiers serving in the British Indian Army and the INA, and, of course, the people of Manipur.

- Develop new sites: Looking forward, a major initiative should be the development of new sites linked to the Battle of Imphal and the creation of tourist-friendly infrastructure around them. Certain infrastructure will naturally be common to all of them, regardless of the site in question. Among other things, this would include signage/ markers that explain the importance of the respective site (see point on Site Markers above); construction of clean and functioning toilets, as well as the availability of hygienic food and beverages. In addition, each site should have an evocative and poignant monument that recalls the extraordinary events of 1944. Some suggested sites are: Ningthoukhong, Shangshak, Shenam-Tengnoupal, Chamol and Koirengei Airfield.

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Tourism Industry in Nagaland - Exploring Potentials for Cultural Tourism

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Tourism in the recent years has gained ground as the largest and the fastest growing industry with the potential for bringing about inclusive socio-economic development. Tourism is defined as the activity undertaken by "tourists". The World Tourist Organization defines "tourists" as temporary visitors staying at least twenty four hours in the country visited and the purpose of whose journey can be classified under one of the following heads (a) leisure –recreation, holiday, health, study, religion, sport; and (b) business (family, mission, meeting).[14]

In India, Tourism has become one of the enormous service industries with its contribution of 6.23 percent to national GDP and 8.78 percent of total employment.[15] In order to develop this industry further, effort are now being made to open up hitherto remote and inaccessible areas for the tourists especially the North-Eastern part of the country. The Northeast today is the centre of the government tourism efforts. The government has adopted a number of new schemes for tourism development: it is now offering financial incentives to travel industries; promoting infrastructural development; organizing trade fairs and festivals; and withdrawing the Restricted Area Permits that prevent outsider travel in the region.[16] The government has also devised a logo and a brand line for the Northeast titled "India's North-East, Paradise Unexplored'[17]. Thus Northeast region is now being widely publicized all over the country as well as abroad. According to Soumendra Mohan Patnaik not only the international organizations but the central and the state governments are more than keen to showcase these untouched beautiful 'exotic' lands for tourists purpose.

Northeast India which is composed of eight sister states namely Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Manipur, Nagaland, Mizoram, Tripura and Sikkim are regarded as backward regions of the country. Even though the Northeast region has been blessed with beautiful landscapes, varied flora and fauna along with a rich cultural and ethnic heritage, it has remained

14 Patnaik Mohan Soumendra.(2007). 'Anthropology of Tourism:Insights from Nagaland', The Eastern Anthropologist, 60:3-4.

15 Das Dinesh. (2012-13). ' Tourism Industry in North-East Indian States: Prospects and Problems', Global Research Methodology Journal, Vol-II, 7th Issue, Nov-Dec-Jan.

16 Patil Vrushali. (2011). 'Narrating Political History About Contested Space- Tourism Websites of India's Northeast', Annals of Tourism Research, Vol.38,No.3.

17 Ministry of Tourism. Annual Report 2012-13, Government of India.

relatively unexplored. According to Praveen Rizal and R. Asokan, despite being tribal states, in general, and having similar geographical features of hills, forests and beauties, the growth of the North-eastern states of India is not same in terms of tourism. Tourism as argued by them has not developed equally among the states. While Assam has the highest number of inflow of tourists in the northeast region, Nagaland has been found as the least visited state with the lowest tourist inflow.[18]

Cultural Tourism

Studies have shown that a substantial percentage of tourists seek cultural experiences such as visiting cultural attractions and participating in diverse cultural activities. The World tourism Organization suggests that more than 40 % of all international tourists are "cultural tourists"[19].Cultural tourism is defined as travel concerned with experiencing the visual and performing arts, heritage buildings, areas, landscapes and special lifestyles, values, traditions and events. It includes handicrafts, language, gastronomy, art and music, architecture, sense of place, historic sites, festivals and events, heritage resources, the nature of the work environment and technology, religion, education and dress [20]. It is also defined as the movement of tourist to a place of cultural attraction away from their normal place of residence to gather new information and experience. It includes tourism in urban areas particularly historic and religious places and its cultural centers such as the museum and archives. It also include tourism in rural areas showcasing the traditions of indigenous cultural communities, their values, lifestyles and cultural traits such as festivals, folk dances, songs, food and games etc. Cultural tourism is different from regular or recreational tourism in the sense that here the tourists seeks to gain an understanding and appreciation of the nature of the place being visited.

Cultural Tourism is a new and a fast growing sector of the tourism industry. It brings new challenges as well as a host of opportunities especially for those untouched regions of the world. This form of tourism is becoming popular throughout the world as it is now considered as an important way to preserve and promote a country's unique cultural heritage along with creating new jobs and business opportunities for different communities. Cultural Tourism if promoted with the cooperation of the state and the

18 Rizal Praveen and R. Asokan. (2013). 'A Comparative Study of Tourism Industry in North-Eastern States of India' , IOSR Journal of Business and Management, Vol 12, Issue 4 (Jul-Aug).

19 Doongkoo Yun, Sean Hennessey, Robert Macdonald, Melissa Maceachern. "A study of Cultural Tourism" University of Prince Edward Island, Page 1.

20 Jamieson Walter 1998. "Cultural Heritage Tourism Planning and Development: Defining the Field and its Challenges", APT Bulletin, Vol.29, page 65

people can become an important means of bringing about regional and economic development in different parts of the world.

In recent years there has been a focus over the tourism potential of North-East India. It is now regarded as one of the hot spots for cultural tourism. It can well be stated that the whole Northeast region is endowed with diverse tourist attraction- Arunachal Pradesh particularly known as the 'land of the rising sun' is one of the loveliest state with tourist spots like Tawang and Bomdila, Meghalaya known as the 'home of the clouds' is also known as 'Scotland of the East'. Besides these, the state of Assam, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura and Sikkim possess unique natural beauty, different species of wild life, innumerable varieties of flora and fauna and diverse attractive cultural heritage. Since these regions have the presence of an almost bewildering cultural variety, the region is a cultural paradise and it can become a unique attraction to the cultural tourists if promoted on a bigger platform. North-East India is also rich in cultural and heritage assets - historic buildings, monuments, historic places, archaeological sites, craft museum, art galleries etc. Some examples of it being places like Sivasagar which is famous for royal palaces, monuments such as Rangghar, Karrenghar, Joydol, Charaidio which is the cemetery of the Ahom kings, Namdang stone bridge and so on. The region also has some well known places like Kaziranga which is a world heritage site and home of the great Indian one horned rhino and the world largest river island Majuli which is an excellent centre of satiya art and culture.

North-East India is also rich in terms of folklore or folktales which are important components of cultural tourism. Different ethnic communities living in different plains and hills of North East India possess their own distinctive oral traditions, folk customs, folk art paintings, traditional colourful dresses and ornaments, festivals, material culture, physical artifacts, folk performing arts, folk dances and songs. Being home to different tribal and non-tribal groups, these region witnesses festivals all throughout the year which can become another attraction for cultural tourists. Through these festivals the tourists can experience for themselves not only the rich culture and traditions but can also taste traditional food dishes prepared by indigenous people. In addition to all these, the Northeast can be publicized for its various local products like handloom textiles, handicrafts, cane and bamboo products. All these products also showcase the rich heritage and culture of the people in the region. If all these resources are fully utilized then it can become one of the richest components of cultural tourism in the region.

Cultural Tourism in Nagaland

Nagaland with its rich cultural heritage is home to various tribes and communities each having their own festivals, customs and traditions. With its pleasant climate and beautiful landscape it is often talked about as a potential tourist hotspot. What contribute to this potential are the unique customs and traditions of the people. However though the state is blessed with a rich history, culture and beautiful landscape the potentials of the region has not been fully tapped till date. The tourism industry in Nagaland took a start only in 1981 when the Department of Tourism was bifurcated from the Department of Information and Public Relations.[21] The tourism industry in Nagaland is still in its infancy state and it has not witnessed much development till now mostly due to long drawn insurgency movements. Since the state is relatively unexplored it makes it all the more exclusive and fascinating to visiting tourists. Given the rich cultural heritage, it could be used to attract tourists both domestic and international to the state. Thus, there is a need for the tourism industry to focus on cultural tourism given this rich resource.

Each district in Nagaland has a variety of resources that can be of interest to the tourists. Dimapur, which is also known as the commercial capital of the state is also home to the medieval ruins of the Kachari Kingdom. The tourist can find the reminiscences of the glory of this kingdom on the ruins that are scattered in and around the town. The War Cemetery in Kohima is another attraction. It was built as a memorial in honor of all those officers and soldiers who were killed in the Battle of Kohima during the Second World War. It is beautifully designed with series of terraces and magnificent stone steps. It is an ideal place to reconnect with the colonial past and learn about the history of the place. The state museum in Kohima is a perfect place for those tourists looking for a deeper understanding of the Naga society. The museum offers the visitors a peek through the vibrant culture of Nagaland as well as the rich history. It is a house of rare collection of artifacts of each tribe, precious stones, ancestral weaponry, status posts that records the feast of merits, carved gatepost and traditional Naga costumes and jewelry. For art lovers, the state museum has an art gallery that houses collections of paintings by different local artists.

Tseminyu which is the headquarter of the Rengma Naga is famous as the ancient migration route of many Naga tribes such as Lotha, Sema, Sangtam etc,. There are still some old sites of abandoned villages with signs of graveyards, broken pottery pieces which are yet to be archeologically examined and studied. For those tourists who are on the lookout for a

21 Department of Tourism. (2001). Tourism Policy 2001, Government of Nagaland, Kohima.

personal experience of the tribal life, Touphema Tourist Village is the perfect place. The interesting thing about this village is that each khel from the village has set up an ethnic house with modern facilities for the tourist to lodge. Here the tourists are offered an opportunity to live a tribal life in a tribal set up. The tourist village in Benreu under Peren district also provides an ethnic experience for the tourists. Chilise located in Thonoknyn under Tuensang district is another village of importance from the historical point of view. It is regarded as the place where head hunting was last practised. Nagaland has a lot in store for those tourists who are interested in tribal myths and legends. Almost all districts in the state has a rich history or legend associated with it. Examples are – 1)Longthurok or Longtrok or the legendary six stones located in Tuensang. The Sangtam Nagas consider these stones as personifications of their ancient holy Gods that gave birth to other stones and they have a belief that these stones moved from one place to another. 2) the legend of the twin stones in Kiphire district which is believed to compete with each other as to who will be the taller one 3) the legend associated with Longritzu Lenden or the valley of the departed soul which used to hold a popular belief among the Ao community that after death their spirits would pass through this valley.

Other than the rich cultural resources, Nagaland also has a lot to offer in terms of wild life and adventure tourism. The state has a number of forest reserves and wildlife sanctuaries located at different districts. Some of them are the Rangapahar Reserve forest (Dimapur), Fakim Wildlife sanctuary (Kiphire district), Itangki Wildlife Sanctuary (Peren district), Ghoshu Bird Santuary (Zunheboto). These areas are home to some rare species of animals and birds. It also has a rich wealth of varied flora and fauna. Nagaland can also be considered as a destination for adventure tourism. Saramati, the highest peak in Nagaland has the thickest and biggest chunk of virgin forest in Nagaland. It is the loftiest mountain in the region and is ideally suited for trekking and scaling. The Tizu river in Yangphi (Kiphiri district) has good spots for angling and trekking. Dzukou valley(Kohima District) is another well known destination. This valley is adorned with lilies of varied colours, rhododendrons and is home to 360 varieties of orchids. There are also many interesting caves in the low hillocks that cluster inside the valley making it a trekker's paradise. Phek district in Nagaland has some exciting destinations for tourists with varied interest. Some of the places worth visiting are Shilloi Lake, Dzudu Lake, and Pfutsero/Glory peak. These places are blessed in terms of flora and fauna and are an ideal place for nature lovers, trekkers and bird watchers.

Realizing the potential of these resources, the government of Nagaland has been taking initiatives to publicize and promote tourism in the state. The government sponsored Hornbill Festival can be seen as a good beginning in encouraging inter-tribal interaction as well as promoting cultural heritage of the state. The main aim of the festival is to revive and protect the rich culture and showcase its history, culture and traditions. This event has gained recognition for Nagaland not only at the local level but also at the global level as 'the Land of Festivals'. This festival has not only managed to attract the attention of the tourists worldwide but has also brought the various tribes of Nagaland at a common platform enabling greater interaction and understanding with other tribes as well as the global community. The hornbill festival has also provided a market for indigenous goods, handicrafts, handloom, food products etc. Since this event has managed to gained global as well as local attention, the tourism industry should exploit the current curiosity and interest of the tourist by organizing various other events so as to showcase the rich culture thereby promoting cultural tourism. Some of the steps which can be taken are the following:

1) Nagaland being a tribal state with each tribe having its own district, customs, traditions, food habits and festivals, the government can organize events and shows all throughout the year in line with the different festivals of each tribe.
2) The government can set up cultural centers at each district with provisions for accommodation, fooding, etc. These centers should also have a small museum and an information centre regarding details about the tribe/tribes that dominates that area. This could be supplemented by providing detailed information through brochures and booklets about the history of the people as well as their contemporary existence. Also, descriptions about the village organization, festivals, types of songs and dances etc could be added.
3) To give an authentic experience to the tourists, tours or heritage walks could be organised within villages highlighting the sync of life with nature in the rural areas. This will also provide the tourists with firsthand experience of the life led by people in the villages. Identification of ancient worship sites, heritage buildings, migration sites etc which may be of interest to the tourists could be done with the help of locals.
4) Since most of the attractions are scattered over the entire state and are largely located in remote areas like that of Mon, Tuensang, the

tourism department should make efforts to open up these areas to the larger tourists. Tuensang which is home to six different ethnic groups (Chang, Phom, Sangtam, Khiamniungan, Yimchunger and Sumi)[22] has the unique potential of exposing the tourists to six different cultural styles of life. As suggested by Soumnedra Mohan Patnaik, these villages can be adopted as model villages where tourists can have glimpses of the traditional houses, handicrafts, dresses and ornaments, styles of wearing and textile designs- all in considerably compact location. Since the impact of Christianity in these areas is relatively new, and their culture not influenced by modernization as of now they can become the hub for cultural tourism.

Since culture constitutes our USP, an accurate and proper representation of it is very much essential. With the arrival of Christianity and modern education, our society has undergone tremendous changes and a process of cultural change is taking place within the society. This is in a way inevitable and is experienced by all cultures in today's modern world. Here, cultural tourism should try to strike the balance between the contemporary life of the people and its continuity with the past. In our state apart from a few towns, people in the rural areas still practice and hold onto remnants of the age old traditions and customs. Cultural tourism within our state thus could be organized and developed with emphasis on the rural areas. The tourists are in the end looking for a genuine and authentic experience and the rural areas would be better equipped to provide this experience.

All this should begin by educating the local people and encouraging their participation in the tourism industry. An enlightened community involvement and an understanding of partnership approaches is a vital prerequisite for its success. A proper coordination and cooperation between the government, private players, and the local people is essential for growth and development of cultural tourism. Given the highly autonomous character of our villages, any sort of development that takes place without proper consultation with the local people might result in much misunderstanding. Proper feedback has to be taken from the locals and due importance and weightage given to the suggestions from them so as to ensure good cooperation. A dedicated commitment and sincere response is also required from the local people. Their role may include hosting of cultural performances such as songs and dances for the visiting tourists. Food stalls which serve local cuisines, display and sale of local handicrafts, shawls, ornaments etc would also interest the tourists while

22 Patnaik Mohan Soumendra.(2007). 'Anthropology of Tourism:Insights from Nagaland', The Eastern Anthropologist, 60:3-4.

providing economic returns for the local people. Such activities would encourage local artisans to hone their crafts and also help them depend in part upon the tourists to support their trade.

Certain exceptionally charming areas and scenic places could be developed to make it more accessible and provided with facilities such as guides, transportation, homestays, bed and breakfast type accommodation etc. The revenue generated could also be utilized for the preservation of these places which is very important for sustainability of the industry in the long run as many of the ancient sites face the danger of disappearing if proper action is not taken soon. Efforts should be made to maintain a constant inflow of tourists so as to avoid seasonal unemployment and encourage better participation from the local people. A proper advertising campaign could go a long way in achieving this objective. Also, these activities should not be seen only from an economic point of view. Cultural tourism could also help in the preservation and development of the local culture. The industry could help educate the people about our tribal heritage and provide a sense of identity especially among the younger generation. The interest shown by the tourists would most likely help develop a local interest in our culture. Sharing of our culture with people from other parts of the country would also help bridge the lack of information and knowledge about our place and its people.

Economic development should take place with minimal negative impacts on the local culture and population. The planning process should involve the local people and the development activity should be a step by step process depending on the responses from both the tourists and the hosts. The success of the tourism industry should be in the end measured in the way it has been able to integrate tourism into the existing communities and `how the tourism activities have been able to benefit those communities. The challenge for cultural tourism therefore would be to provide an authentic and satisfying experience for the tourist, generate employment and economic opportunities for the local people while preserving the cultural resources and providing opportunities for its development.

Problems and Issues

Nagaland has a lot of potentials for the growth of tourism however there are some major problems regarding tourism development like that of 1) Geographical isolation, 2) lack of adequate infrastructure, 3) Improper marketing facilities, 4) the issue of insurgency 5) Ethnic clashes leading to political instability and 6) lack of proper amenities and facilities for the tourists. Along with these all, the wrong mind set of the tourists, especially domestic tourists, about the state is another major constraint. All these issues have to be dealt with to bring about the fullest development of tourism in the state. Further, the problem of permits system and period of permit for both inbound and outbound tourists is another major hurdle in the development of tourism in the region. In order to encourage tourism and flow of tourists in the region, the government needs to relax the rules regarding the permits of Restricted Area Permit (RAP), Protected Area Permit (PAP) and the Inner Line Permit (ILP).

Conclusion

Nagas have a rich history of rituals, folk songs, dormitory life and a very rich cultural heritage. Although there is now a growing realization of the value of the 'ethnic' and 'traditional' in the tourism market, much more needs to be done to preserve and revive the age old traditions. There is a need on the part of the government to promote the 'cultural aspect' of tourism by laying focus on cultural tourism. To overcome the aspect of seasonality and to promote Nagaland as a 365 days destination, it is necessary to exploit the unique tourism aspect which is that of culture where the state enjoys comparative advantage. The government should make an effort to publicize the unique culture of the various Naga tribes and organize fairs and festivals at the state level all throughout the year. This will not only provide employment opportunities but through these events even the various tribes in the state would be able to understand the culture of the other tribes which in turn would help in developing harmony and a deeper understanding. Thus if developed fully, tourism industry has the potential for bringing about development though employment generation, income redistribution and it can even serve as a mechanism towards overall peace building process. However all measures like marketing campaigns or mass publicity would mean nothing if the potential tourists are afraid to visit the region because of the failure of the government to provide the tourist a safe and a pleasant visit. Therefore the government needs to make a serious effort in resolving the problems and issues relating to the security of the tourists.

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