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Chief Editors

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Prof. Sandeep Kulshrestha

Director

*Indian Institute of Tourism and Travel
Management, (IITTM), Gwalior
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All Correspondence Should be Address to :

Managing Editor

Tourism Innovations

Bharti Publications

4819/24, 3rd Floor, Mathur Lane

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Diversity and Performance Outcomes: The Mediating Role of Diversity Management in Hotel Industry

V.G.Girish

ABSTRACT

This study was done to know the relationship between diversity (i.e. surface level diversity and deep level diversity), diversity management and performance outcome. This study also explains the mediating effect of diversity management on diversity and performance outcome. A conceptual model was developed and suitable propositions were made and the conclusion as well as implications was also discussed. This study gives an idea about the how diversity management plays an important role in influencing the performance outcome especially among diverse group of employees in the organization.

Keywords: Diversity, Surface level diversity, Deep level diversity, Diversity Management, Performance Outcome

Introduction

The service industry provides more than 70% of the employment in most industrialized economies (OECD, 2005). The present market size of Indian tourism and the hospitality industry is around \$120 billion and is expected to pass \$420 billion by 2025 (IBEF, 2013). Indian hotel industry has shown an increasing growth trend of approximately 14% during the last few years and it is predicted a similar growth trend will continue in the coming years (Vardharajan & Rajan 2013). The luxury hotels in India is also experiencing exponential growth. According to a report from the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India (2012), in March 2012 there were 750 hotels in India with 4 or more stars. The figure is expected to reach 1338 by March 2017, and 2457 hotels by March 2022. This growth rate also creates demand for

trained Human Resources; the report forecasts that 587,000 by March 2022 for 4 star upward hotels. It also states that the employee turnover rate in star category (luxury) hotels was between 11 and 12% in 2011, compared with 20% in hotels in general (Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, 2012). The brighter side is that India's working population of 630 million is expected to touch 830 million by 2016, with India having the highest percentage of working people in the BRIC countries (Brazil, Russia, India and China) (Business Today, 2007). Sengupta (2004) writes that HRD is "like a soft version of HRM...is unitary in approach and lays emphasis on building employee competence, commitment and strong organizational culture" (p. 172). Khandekar and Sharma (2005) found that HR capabilities are positively correlated to organizational performance and are a

significant predictor of sustainable competitive advantage while studying 300 HR managers from nine Indian and foreign global organizations in India. According to Fallon and Rutherford (2010), "hospitality employees in one organization ranked the most likely causes for high staff turnover as treatment by superiors, amount of work hours, job pressure, scheduling, training, fringe benefit packages, better opportunities elsewhere, and physical demands of the job" (p. 454).

Managing diverse work groups is one of the most difficult and ongoing challenges in modern organizations, which is part of a "grand experiment" that, by many accounts, is "not going smoothly" (Tsui & Gutek, 1999). Diversity is happening because of the result of changing demographics associated with population, due to the economic pressures on organization as well as other reasons to diversify their workforce (Loden & Rosener, 1991) and the need to attract viable work force for organization to remain competitive, in this era of globalization (Hoffman, 1998). In the general work force, these days we can find, increase in diversity and is widely acknowledged (Carvel, 2001; Johnson & Packer, 1987; Morris, 2002). There is indeed strong and consistent evidence that diversity can positively influence individual, group and organizational outcomes (Cunningham, 2007). Further, the organizations may also experience consistent pressure from increasing social tolerance and positive attitudes towards diversity by both members and customers who expect, and even demand that (their) organizations exercise social responsibility (Cunningham, 2007; Doherty & Chelladurai, 1999). Some organizations might resist these pressures; however, increasing diversity in the workforce appears to be an inevitable outcome of

these demographic, economic, legislative, and social changes (Doherty & Chelladurai, 1999; Gilbert & Ivancevich, 2000). The organizations that can successfully develop racially diverse workforces will derive sustainable competitive advantages which is a growing consensus opinion these days (Cox & Blake, 1991; Thomas, 2004). In order for organizations to achieve success with adverse workforce, employees need to perceive that their organization supports and values the contributions of all employees which are expressed by many diversity researchers since long time. (Kozzek & Zonia, 1993; Mor Barak, Cherin, & Berkman, 1998; Mor Barak & Levin, 2002; Thomas & Ely, 1996; William & O'Reilly, 1998). For instance, Ely and Thomas (2001) concluded that in order for an organization to achieve a benefit from cultural diversity, members of the organization need to integrate the insights and experiences that come from having a diverse group of employees and learn from these differences in order to do business. Merely creating a diverse talent pool is not enough. When you bring together people from different perspectives and value structures, there is a high likelihood that there is going to be miscommunication, disagreement and possibly some friction. But there is also evidence to suggest that, there is more creativity, and that can be a much more effective way to get work done (Whitney, 2007). Organizations must create an environment in which differences are engaged and leveraged to yield higher performance. Ongoing diversity and inclusion efforts are necessary for maintaining awareness, dispelling stereotypes and building more inclusive workplaces (Smith & Kattie, 2009).

In this study, the researcher tries to understand the mediating role of diversity

management on performance outcome. On the basis of review of literature, a conceptual model is developed and suitable propositions are made to understand the relationship between these constructs. As performance outcome is vital for the survival of service industry and hotel industry coming under service industry, the researcher would mainly interpret the relationships with special reference to hotel industry in Indian perspective. This article intends to propose a model focusing surface level and deep level diversity and its impact on performance outcome mediated by diversity management.

Diversity

Diversity among the work force is very common in India. According to Mogashi and Chang (2009), diversity refers to differences in terms of nationality, ethnic group, gender, age, and those with or without physical and mental difficulties. Diversity is readily detectable attributes (e.g. race, ethnicity, sex, age) and underlying deeper-level attributes (e.g. attitudes, values, beliefs etc.) which are explained by Jackson *et. al*(1995) and by Milliken & Martin (1996) in their theoretical framework. A member of a group tends to categorize all of the other members of the group in different ways – by sex, by ethnicity, by physical attractiveness, and many other dimensions. This process of categorization results in behaviors that are modified, depending on the level of diversity present among the categories. That is, social categorization theory tells us that individuals will act differently in the presence of a homogenous group than they would in the presence of a heterogeneous group (Turner, 1987). In this study, the researcher uses the definition by Quinetta (2006) in his study,

that diversity encompasses the many ways people may differ, including gender, race, nationality, education, sexual orientation, style, functional expertise, and a wide array of other characteristics and backgrounds that make a person unique. Diversity researchers have often found that diversity has a negative impact on communication and cohesion, and promotes high levels of detrimental group conflict (Ely & Thomas, 2001; Jackson, Joshi, & Edhardt, 2003; Jehn, Northcraft, & Neale, 1999; Pelled, Eisenhardt, & Xin, 1999) and for extensive reviews see also (Milliken & Martin, 1996; William & O'Reilly, 1998) Many of the firm's diversity initiatives are aimed at changing the corporate culture so as to ensure a workplace where employees of all backgrounds and perspectives feel welcome, and where every employee feels her or his talents are matched by opportunities to grow and contribute.

Surface Level Diversity

Surface level diversity can be defined as differences among group members in overt, biological characteristics that are typically reflected in physical features. These characteristics include age, sex, and race/ethnicity. As expressed by Jackson *et. al.*(1993) and in agreement with David *et. al.* (1998) these characteristics are generally immutable, almost immediately observable, and measurable in simple and valid ways which was again explained by Jackson and colleagues(1995)and by Millikens and Martin (1996). Surface level diversity is presumed to be important because they are thought to reflect underlying differences that can evoke individual prejudices, biases, or stereotypes (Fiske & Neuberg, 1990).Surface-level diversity is equivalent to what other researchers have labeled "social category diversity" (Jehn, et al.,

1999) or “demographic diversity” (O’Reilly, Caldwell, & Barnett, 1989). Most importantly, it is well established that individuals quickly use these characteristics to assign themselves and others to social classifications involving ascribed patterns of thought, attitudes, and behaviors (Fiske, 2000). Similarity-attraction paradigm theory also suggests that people are attracted to and prefer to be with the similar others because they anticipate their own values, attitudes and beliefs will be reinforced or upheld. (Barsade, Ward, Turner, & Sonnenfeld, 2000; Bryne, 1971)

Deep Level Diversity

Deep level diversity is the presumed underlying differences between people in their attitudes, values, and personalities are the basis of similarity-attraction or fit paradigms, including social psychological theories about similarity in attitudes (Bryne, 1971; Newcomb, 1961) and organizational behavior theories about similarity in values and personality (Schneider, 1987). The people find it more pleasurable to interact with others who have similar psychological characteristics, because that interaction verifies and reinforces their own beliefs, affect, and expressed behaviors (Swann, Stein-Seroussi, & Giesler, 1992). Personality differences too might make up deep-level diversity. (Harrison, Price, Gavin, & Florey, 2002). At the individual level, Barrick and Mount (1991) demonstrated that conscientiousness was the “Big Five” personality dimension most consistently and most strongly related to performance in a variety of task settings. In the aspect related to values, O’Reilly, Chatman, and Caldwell (1991) argued that new employees whose individual values differed from the mean values of others in their work groups or small

organizations were less satisfied, demonstrated lower organizational commitment, and were more likely to quit. Attitude similarity is an important predictor of attraction and friendship (Bryne, 1971; McGrath, 1984; Newcomb, 1961).

Diversity Management

Diversity management is defined as “company’s ability to give chances to and utilize resources of people from diverse “cultures”, where culture means nationality, ethnic group, or gender. Cox and Blake (1991) mentioned, that the touted benefits of diversity management may include attracting and retaining the best available talent, enhanced marketing efforts, higher creativity and innovation, better problem solving and more organizational flexibility. Diversity management is regarded as a reflection of commitment philosophy because it fundamentally implies company’s commitment to the diverse composition of the workforce as well as their diverse needs (Mogashi & Chang, 2009). Despite growing academic interest in diversity management, it has been noted that “diversity management” is a poorly understood, increasingly slippery, and controversial concept that is used “in an all-embracing fashion to include not just the social categories of AA [affirmative action] such as race and sex but a wide range of personal characteristics” (Ferner, Almond, & Colling, 2005). In African countries, politics assumes supreme importance in diversity management, while ethnicity dominates “most national debates on diversity” as the central issue (Healy & Oikelome, 2007). This is because some disadvantaged ethnic groups have been oppressed historically, and there are now increasing calls for radical remedial actions to address racial grievances. In

contrast, ethnic groups in Japan and Korea are relatively homogeneous; as a result, gender, women's marital status, and their related employment status may be the key source of workforce diversity (Cooke, 2010). In the U.S. and UK, workforce diversity may include gender, race, ethnicity, religion, age, disability, immigration status, social class, political association, marital status, parental status, sexual orientation, and ex-offenders, among other categories. Society accepts many of these differences, protecting them by law and acknowledging them in company policy. Some characteristics, however, may not be acceptable socially or legally in Asian countries such as China and India (Cooke, 2010). Furthermore, significant differences may exist even within Asian countries. For example, caste, ethnicity, religion, and gender are the main sources of diversity in India, whereas age, gender, disability, and place of origin (e.g., rural vs. urban) are the main causes of social inequality in China (Cooke & Saini, 2010). The above discussion clearly indicates that a universal diversity management practices cannot be implemented and it should be tailored by taking into consideration the national and cultural perspective for maximum effectiveness.

Performance Outcome

A substantial body of research on deep- and surface-level diversity in the workplace has repeatedly shown that whereas the negative impacts of surface-level diversity decrease over time in work groups, deep-level similarity (e.g., in values, goal orientations, and personality) consistently predicts positive workplace outcomes (e.g., turnover, job attitudes, team performance; (Harrison, et al., 2002; Liao, Chuang, & Joshi, 2008; van Emmerik & Brenninkmeijer, 2009). Diversity is a

labor market imperative and a societal value and expectation. Therefore, "managers should do their best to translate diversity into positive organizational, group and individual outcomes" (Kochan et al., 2003). There is growing evidence through research that human resource management practices can positively affect organizational performance (Boselie, Dietz, & Boon, 2005; Combs, Liu, Hall, & Ketchen, 2006; Huselid, 1995), social capital and human capital are two important aspects. Social capital refers to the nature of the relationships (i.e., social structures and processes) among people internal and external to the firm (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998) and human capital is generally defined as the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) individually and collectively contained in the firm's human resources (Becker, 1964) and both these aspects will influence the performance outcome of the organization. Employee performance-management systems are specific HRM systems (Boselie, Dietz, & Boon, 2005) used in "creating a shared vision of the purpose and aims of the organization, helping each individual employee to understand and recognize their part in contributing to them, and in so doing to manage and enhance the employee performance of both individuals and the organization" (Fletcher & Williams, 1996, p. 169)

Conceptual Framework and Proposition Development

Research outcome shows that diversity programs helps to mitigate negative reactions to unfavorable outcomes and decreases the negative repercussions that often follow bad news in the work place (R.J Bies, 1987). This opinion is also expressed by Bies & Moag (1986) as well as by Brockner (1988) and Shiparo (1991).

If trainees disagree in principle with the ideals of the organization’s formal diversity program and are firmly committed to their beliefs, or if they perceive that the organization is not serious about its diversity goals, diversity training is likely to produce little change (Nemetz & Christensen, 1996). In firms

with a well-supported, coherent, and integrated set of diversity activities, diversity training can create norms of behavior that facilitate cooperation and the motivation to solve collective action problems in diverse groups (Barry & Bateman, 1996; Hopkins & Hopkins, 2002; Johnson, 2001).

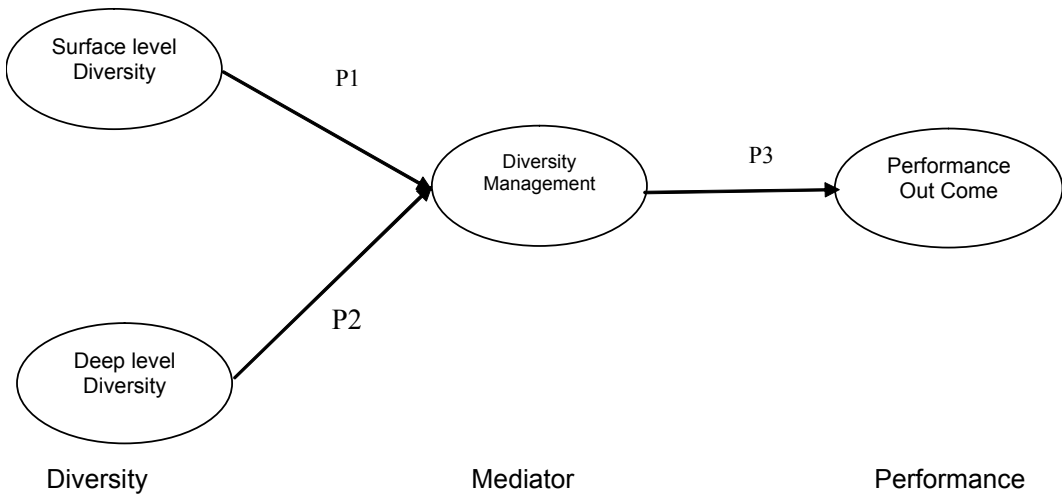


Figure 1: Conceptual Model

Majority of the individual’s stereotyping and prejudices (e.g. diversity training) is corrected by classical diversity management practices that changes the mindset of biased decision makers in a positive way regarding allocation and rewarding decisions (e.g. formalization of HRM procedures), and to compensate for majority’s exclusion of minorities due to their bias (e.g. networking and mentoring programs). Allport (1954) and Pettigrew Tropp (2006) reported that contextual factors play a key role in triggering or diminishing negative in-group/out-group dynamics. Diversity management seeks to promote a broad notion of diversity including differences

of perspective and lifestyle in addition to designated groups. When diversity is understood as an assemblage of difference that is non-hierarchical, however, the concept of difference is extirpated from its links to discrimination and inequality, rendering it difficult to address racism, sexism or systemic disadvantage that produce persistent unequal outcomes (Sara, 2007).It is not the concept of difference that limits diversity management’s utility; instead, it is the particular way that inclusion becomes defined in ways that are detrimental both to collective empowerment of workers and to the inclusion of meaningful differences (Suzanne, 2011) Most of the

research studies reviewed shows that diversity management positively influences diversity (i.e. surface level and deep level diversity) and improves the performance of the organization. On the backdrop of these review, the researcher proposes:

P1: Diversity management positively mediates the relation between surface level diversity and Performance Outcome.

P2: Diversity management positively mediates the relation between deep level diversity and Performance Outcome.

P3: There is a positive relationship between diversity management and performance outcome.

Conclusion & Implications

The researcher in this study is only focused on surface level diversity and deep level diversity other than any other kinds of diversity. The researcher consciously treats diversity management as mediator because mediating events shift role from effects to cause, depending on the focus of analysis (Reuben & David, 1986). Relying on the existing reviews, the current studies focuses on how surface level and deep level diversity is mediated by diversity management in terms of performance outcome. Diversity management is held to be a reflection of

the commitment management philosophy. Companies pursuing commitment HR practices also tend to utilize diversity management, including family friendly policies (e.g., Osterman, 1995). Managers should always keep in mind, how an external intervention (in this research, diversity management) will influence the performance outcome of the organization. Diversity awareness education and awareness about different kinds of harassment as well as flexibility in scheduling the work will improve the performance of the organization.

Limitations and Areas of Future Research

The proposed model is not tested and it may be difficult to universalize the perception of researcher until and unless, it is empirically tested to validate the propositions. Future researchers should carefully analyze other diversity issues related to performance outcome including the moderating and mediating effect. There may be many other diversity variables, that has to be explored (e.g.) seniority diversity or other variables to know the complete mediating and moderating effect related to performance outcome. When testing this model, country specific variables should also be incorporated.

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Enriching Host and Tourist Experience Through Community Organized Cultural & Food Festivals: A Community Perspective

S.P. Bansal, Sandeep Walia

ABSTRACT

Tourism undoubtedly can contribute to the economic growth of any region. Moreover tourism produces social benefits to the region in terms of creating employment, growth of small and medium sized enterprises and improvement in infrastructure particularly in the undeveloped and remote areas strive towards sustainable development by preserving India's cultural heritage. Tourists are seeking authentic and unique experiences through community organized cultural and food festivals and this brings the tourist closer to the host culture. To this particular rural communities are organizing food and cultural festivals to protect and promote local commodities and differentiate themselves from others. Initiatives in these kinds of events help in enhancing the image of destination when food and culture is seen as integral part of the destination image. A community organized cultural and food festival strategy can equally be used as an important marketing instrument for regional development. It is accepted that cuisine is inescapable and expressive part of every culture and Culture always means differentiating particular destination in competitive global tourism markets. The present study has focused on a case study of community organized cultural and food festival in Sangla Village of Himachal Pradesh focusing on development of culture and food festivals as a tourism product and has potential to draw tourists in future and with these kinds of initiatives organized resulting in improved host and tourist understanding.

Key words: - Community, employment, culture, cuisine

Introduction

Building a good image of destination or tourist product so as to make it different and unique from others is a vital condition now days in competitive Global world. This image can be created by taking advantage of local culture, festivals; traditions and thereby organizing special events and local festivals. Studies showed

that there has been observed a change in tastes of tourists in 21st century. Despite from the traditional forms of tourism the tourists have moved towards the other forms of tourism (Guzman et.al 2011). Studies explored that this could be a result of discovery of new places or destinations or may be due to the knowledge of new destinations, may be of that point

S.P. Bansal, Vice Chancellor, Maharaja Agrasen University, Baddi, Himachal Pradesh
Spbansal_mtahpu@rediffmail.com

Sandeep Walia (Corresponding Author), Assistant Professor, Maharaja Agrasen University, Baddi, Himachal Pradesh
sndp.walia551@gmail.com

unexplored by tourists and may be because of a search for new destinations with greater emphasis on Local Customs, Traditions, festivals ,history, cuisine and the particular culture of destination.

Thousands of grass root, low impact, high sustainable initiatives all over the world struggle to tell tourists that they exist. Very few of these inspirational initiatives have the resources and skills to market themselves in an industry dominated by existing traditional forms of tourism. So in this way cultural diversity can be looked upon as a means of enriching the experience of active tourists who are looking for new experiences and new Horizons in tourism.

On the one hand at the local level opportunities can be observed to develop plans for the participation of new plans and strategies and also for the involvement of civil operations in the development. On the other hand tourism can be linked to a community's hidden culture and natural resources which are on the recurrent factors in fostering the development of the associated/ concerned communities. The World Tourism Organization (2002) points out that sustainable development in certain geographical areas may become a fundamental tool for the economic development of the particular area and the reduction of poverty in certain areas. It is possible to create tourism products and services by means of areas own cultural and environmental resources, offering job opportunities for job creation especially for young people and women of the respective areas.

Thus, tourism is also considered as a tool in fighting poverty with the initiatives such as the World Tourism Organizations Sustainable Tourism Eliminating Poverty (ST-EP) Program. This would always be

a complementary activity and is never a substitution for primary touristic activities. In this respect that the promoting tourist exploitation of undeveloped rural areas of the developing countries is not good or bad but it depends on different Political, Social Economic, Environmental and Cultural factors. Thus several tourist destinations can be established through the structuring of tourism supply and demand. The new need to break in traditional tourism is observed and the change in monotony has fostered the local initiatives which incorporate the natural attractions and the leisure activities at the local level. The effect of all these activities is that the rural undeveloped areas are undergoing through a phase of transformation and this transformation is changing both the local economic structure on the first hand and their traditional production on the second hand.

And these kind of new initiatives in the field of Tourism, travel and trade have caused a natural repositioning of market destinations in accordance with the fluctuating demands that have led to make a route/way to certain emerging destinations which are becoming more attractive for increasingly specialized markets. Community based tourism initiatives in the region can reap the benefits of the partnership with tourism for sustainable future alternatives and transforming the lives of people in the host communities. Thus it is more evident that there are opportunities for new projects, such as tourist exploitation of natural, local and cultural resources are to be coordinated at local level and it will help to boost local economic structure that is primarily based on agriculture and live stock farming. So this shows that in order to implement a certain tourist product there is a need to establish a suitable regional tourism policy which is based

on the three activities (Bringas & Israel, 2004) first- training of local people and raising awareness. Second- infrastructure and Equipment. Third- Promotion. There should be two essential components which should be taken into consideration firstly the level of involvement of local community and secondly the number and type of the tourists.

This paper presents a study in which the extent of this new form of tourism could generate vast incoming economic resources and create employment. Similarly a revision of the existing literature in this field related to relationship between tourists and local community which is more interesting than it was in case of the traditional tourism (Zorn and Farthing, 2007) mainly because of the involvement of host and contact with other cultures for its own development.

The concept of Community Based Tourism (CBT) can be found in the work of Murphy in his book *A Community Approach* (1985) where aspects concerning tourism and developing communities are analyzed and was a catalyst for the discussion in this area. It provides an important platform for debate and change at a key stage in the development of the tourism industry and the further study by the same author in 2004 (Murphy and Murphy). At that time when leisure travel was expanding in terms of both visitors numbers and the amount of more easily accessible destinations, the emphasis on considerations such as local initiative, a tourism product being in accord with the community and local benefits being integrated into the principles of tourism planning and management was refreshing and stimulating (Blank, 1989; Haywood, 1988). Studies like Guzman, Canizares and Pavon (2001) has also noted that Community Based Tourism is gaining

Prestige all over the world as a major form of Tourism.

The concept paves the way for new lines of investigation and for the possibility of tourism development together with other alternatives such as community benefit tourist initiatives (CBTI's) (Simpsons, 2008) or community based Enterprises (CBE's) (Manyara and Jones, 2007). All these agree that the local community should be a part of the planning and decision making process so that they can easily adapt to the changes and also open their horizons. The most important feature of this type of tourism is to make a healthy relationship between the visitors and the local people, this is why creation of community events favors this type of tourism, because community based tourism is actually based on the active participation of the local community. The community also perceives this form of tourism beneficial for job creation (Guzman et. al, 2011)

The study will take example from Indian perspective. The main aim of study will be to identify some applications of theoretical model of Community Based Tourism and to give appropriate suggestions for the development of Tourism in Harmony with local community, since Batta and Pathak (2009) through their case study, have advocated the models of community based tourism in compare to other small and medium scale enterprises in tourism especially in Himalayan region. Tourism and community shows a close link with each other. Because of tourism development a community gets opportunity to become more attractive and prosperous (Bansal.S.P, 2013). It is more attractive because of community's mysteriously nature to draw and satisfy tourists and perhaps more prosperous because of money spent by the tourists and seeking economic

development with this money spent. The main benefits of community based tourism are that they provide direct economic benefits to the families, socioeconomic developments to the communities and to the respective areas. It also shows sustainable diversification and improvement in the life styles of the communities concerned and the concerned area (Manyara and Jones; 2010, Rastegar, 2010)

Community based tourism is also an effective way of exchanging knowledge, analyzing and implementing policies, establishing coordination and avoiding conflicts among visitors and the local people (Kibicho, 2008). The study tells about that how a community as a whole can play a decisive role in the development of the area as a tourist destination. The attitude of local community can make a base for the perception and evaluation of tourism including the factors involving infrastructure, environment and events.

The involving and participating nature of local communities in community based tourism exerts a strong impression on visitors experience and thus the tourism planning benefits the whole community which is involved. However some negative results of community based tourism can be seen as it may affect the lifestyle of the concerned community or tourism can result or even can destroy the local culture of the community. There can be a loss of Cultural identity of the concerned area. The large number of tourist volumes can affect the development of tourism product and the destruction of natural resources as well (Teye et al., 2002). In this case the local populations of the area have five ways to cope up with the problem and minimize its effect

on the community- resistance, retreat, boundary maintenance, revitalization and adoption (Dogan, 1989).

Community Based Tourism is based on the introduction of new tourist products with the help of community involvement and participation. Community participation (which can mean a level of control, ownership or influence) in a tourism appears to be closely linked to the derivation of livelihood and other benefits from the tourism to that same community (Murphy, 1985; Scheyvens, 2002: world Wide fund (WWF).2001). The aspect related to community strengthening and their sources of income through tourism is very important and requires further investigations; for example how important is community involvement, authority or freehold to the benefits delivered from tourism and what exact role tourists play in transferring and raising benefits to the community? Community Based tourism can also be a best solution to minimize the negative impacts of mass tourism in the developing nations and can also help to attain better standards of living as the visitor tourist also plays the equal role for the exchange of ideas and knowledge sharing with the host community visited. Community based Tourism is projected and promoted by several International Organizations, such as WTO (2002) keeping the view in mind of so many objectives like ownership and empowerment of the concerned community. It also focuses on protection of cultural and natural resources, high quality visitors experience and social and economic development of the community and the area.

Objectives of the study

1. To study residents attitude towards

community organized cultural and food festivals and tourism development.

2. To identify the impact of Community organized festivals on the residents life style

Geographical Description of the Area

Sangla Valley or the Baspa Valley is in the district Kinnaur in the state of Himachal Pradesh and is the major town. Sangla village is situated at a height of 2680 meters from the sea level. The meaning "Sang" meaning torch, "La" meaning pass. The valley is surrounded by forested slopes and offers views of the high mountains. Its location in the greater Himalayan range gives it a milder climate than the plains. Until 1989 outsiders could not enter the valley without a special permit from the Government of India, due to its strategic position on the Indo-Tibet/China border. Besides the natural beauty of Great Himalaya Kamru Fort, Mata Devi Temple & Bearing Nag Temples are the main attractions of the Valley.

Sangla Valley is a part of Kinnaur and inhabited by Kinnauris. The main livelihood is agriculture while apples are a major cash crop here. The most significant achievement of this region which is worth laudable is that this area boasts of growing the world's best quality potatoes. The weather along with the soil is both conducive to its exclusive and superior variety and quality. A part of the population also depends on tourism. The valley remains closed for six months during winter (from December till May) when the snowfall is heavy. As Kinnaur district is a tribal area, the locals are permitted to prepare local wine by using Apple for their own consumption. Apple plantation and Tourism is the major source of income

of the native residents of the village. From April month till November the villagers work in Apple plantations and tourism related business. Late somewhere around in the year 2005 with the help of Sangla Valley Sustainable Development Society (SVSDS), Shimla-based NGO Himalayan Research Group and the CSK Himachal Pradesh Krishi Vishwavidyalaya (CSKHPKV) of Palampur and FIBL Institute of Switzerland a two days food festival was started. The festival was the initiated by the efforts of Sangla Valley Sustainable Development Society which was formed by the residents of Sangla in order to promote tourism. Around 150 tribals from a dozen-odd villages in Sangla valley of Kinnaur have come together under an umbrella to develop household tourism. They want to cash in the richness of original tribal culture with a bit of value addition in traditional style. The group is preparing to reach out to tourists from India and abroad through a Sangla Valley Household Tourism Festival. They will present the true essence of the Sangla valley by giving tourists a taste of local cuisine, tribal culture and handlooms. Thirty-five tribal households have already applied for registration with the tourism department so they can open their homes and offer other services to the tourists. The two-day Sangla Valley Household Tourism Festival is a promotional drive to invite tourists to relish local cuisine, enjoy folk culture and experience working in the fields and cooking garden-fresh vegetables. The people of Sangla Valley showcase local cuisine, folk culture, handicraft and handloom for domestic and foreign tourists under the home-based tourism initiative.

Methodology

The study was carried out in the state of

Himachal Pradesh and is in Indian context. The study is an empirical study and was mainly focused on community organized cultural and food festival in Sangla Village of Himachal Pradesh focusing on development of culture and food festivals as a tourism product and has potential to draw tourists in future and with these kinds of initiatives organized resulting in improved host and tourist understanding.

The study was carried out with the help of primary data collected with the help of pre structured questionnaire from the local people of Sangla village. The total sample size was 66 which is selected on convenient- cum - judgmental basis. A pre

structured questionnaire was developed consisting of various questions such as social and demographic profile of the respondents in the first part and the second part asked the respondents 12 variables focused to find out relationship between community development and tourism. Likert- type scale values assigned 1 to “strongly disagree”, 2 to “disagree”, 3 to “Neutral”, 4 to “Agree”, and 5 to “strongly agree”. Respondents were asked to give their level of judgment or agreement that most closely corresponds to their perception of 12 statements.

In table -1, we can see the number of foreign tourists visiting Kinnaur district in Himachal Pradesh

Table 1 Foreign Tourists visiting Kinnaur District during 2009-2013

Year	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Tourists	13811	14742	17860	15544	18762

Source: Department of Tourism and Civil Aviation Government of Himachal Pradesh.

According to data provided by the Department of Civil Aviation Government of Himachal Pradesh, There has been observed a gradual increase in the number of foreign tourists visiting Kinnaur District every year. The main reasons for visiting the valley for a holiday and enjoy scenic beauty of the valley. The gradual increase year after year shows that the valley is loved and admired by the foreign tourists. This means that tourism produces more foreign currency income than traditional exports such as apple, which is the major source of income of people of the valley.

The research carried out to determine the perception of local community towards itself and its assessment about the tourism initiatives in the concerned area based upon the natural and ecological resources of the area particularly customs,

traditions, culture and special events. The subject of study was the local residents of the area and a sample designed was carried out by means of randomized sampling. The distribution of population was also taken into account. The survey statistics are listed below in the Table 2.

Table 2 Survey Statistics.

Area	Sangla Valley (Kinnaur District)
Population	2244 people
Sampling	66 interviews
Procedure	Simple randomized sampling
Time Period	May-July 2014

Table 3 indicates the socio demographic profile of the respondents.

Table 3 Socio-demographic profile

Variable	%age	Variable	%age	Variable	%age
Gender		Educational level		Occupation	
Men	60.6%	below matriculate	3.0%	Public sector	10.6%
Women	37.9%	matriculate	7.6%	Private Sector	22.7%
Age		Graduate	48.5%	Businessman	19.7%
Below 30 years	47.0%	Post Graduate	25.8%	Student	37.9%
30 to 45 years	39.4%	Above Post Graduate	15.2%	Any other	9.1%
45 to 60 years	9.1%				
Above 60years	4.5%				

During the study the respondents were asked to rate their experience regarding community organized cultural and food festivals and impact of these kinds of activities on their routine and life style on 5 point scale. See table-4

Table 4 (T-test)

One-Sample Test	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Test Value = 3			
Tourism promotes pride of their way of life and cultures among community members	3.957	65	.000
Tourism unites various groups inside the community to work together	5.801	64	.000
Tourism becomes a platform for skill training and learning new ideas for the community	2.310	65	.024
Tourism makes the community well known to outsiders	5.138	65	.000
Tourism promotes cultural restoration and conservation	5.009	65	.000
Tourism can help in curving un employment	5.042	65	.000
I think I could learn a lot from interaction with tourists	2.057	65	.044

Tourism invites other organizations to assist the community	2.026	65	.047
The environment of my community has deteriorated because of tourism	3.794	65	.000
Tourism creates new markets for local products	3.789	65	.000
Most tourists are respectful to the community	1.953	65	.055
Tourism is another form of education for tourists to understand and appreciate the life of the host community	4.457	65	.000

Note- Since the value depicts in the last column i.e. significance value for all the variable s or items except one variable that most of the tourists are respectful to the community are less than0.05 and are significant.

Table 5 : Chi-Square Test

Statements												
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Chi-Square	60.818 ^a	48.262 ^b	40.000 ^c	30.515 ^a	25.212 ^a	34.364 ^c	12.333 ^a	12.333 ^a	24.758 ^a	35.091 ^c	25.061 ^a	20.212 ^a
df	4	5	5	4	4	5	4	4	4	5	4	4
Asymp. Sig.	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.015	.015	.000	.000	.000	.000

Results and Discussions:

Table 2 depicts the survey statistics of the surveyed area like the population of the village was 2244 people and out of them66 people were interview on convenient- cum - judgmental basis. There were two major constraints in collecting the large sample size. First one is that the concept of CBT is quite new to the people of the area and second is majority of the people are from rural area and are involved in day to day routines actives of agriculture and farming.

Table 3 indicates about the socio demographic profile of the respondents interviewed. Out of 66 respondents 60.6% were male and 37.6% were female. 47.0% were below 30 years of age while 39.4% were between 30 to 45 years, 9.1% were between 45 to 60 years of age and

remaining 4.5% were above 60 years. Educational level was quite good as only 3.0% were under matriculate, 7.6 % were matriculate, 48.5% were graduate, 25.8% were post graduate and remaining 15.2% people were above post graduate. Majority of the respondents interviewed were students 37.9% followed by private sector employees 22.7% and 19.7% people are indulged in business. 10.6% population of the surveyed group was in public sector or Govt. employees and remaining 9.1% are in any other profession.

In table 4 ‘T’ test was applied to conclude data in a significant manner. The test value was tested on 3 because the variable were drafted in such a manner that a higher value than 3 will give a positive score. The data collected from the respondents was analyzed with the help of SPSS. In

the item No 11 the significance value comes 0.05 which is equal to higher value and cannot be accepted. Therefore the item no. 11 which states that most tourists are respectful to the community was rejected as the result become insignificant.

To test the results statistically Chi-square test was applied by making assumption that the responses of all the respondents are equally distributed amongst all the available options. But after applying the test, this assumptions found to be false, which lead to the conclusion that responses of respondents are significant enough to reach on some conclusion.

Conclusions

The study concluded that community is having a positive attitude towards the new initiatives like organizing special cultural and food festivals. The study also showed that community members have shown remarkable interests to organize

such initiatives as a part of learning and development for the touristic activities in the area. The study revealed that the community members have rejected that most of the tourists are respectful to the community, while community have also advocated that tourism promotes pride of their way of life and culture and holds positive attitude towards the facts like because of tourism development new markets for local tourism products like handicrafts will be created and thereby can help incurving unemployment and will give ample opportunities of self employment also. The study also concluded that the development of touristic activities can unite various groups inside the community to work together thereby improving social and economic status of the area. Community events and festivals can attract local, national and international tourists and visitors. Events help to capture attention and promote attractions and infrastructures.

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Analysis of Online Service Quality Gaps: A Study of Tourism Sector in India

Mandeep Kaur, Nitasha Sharma

ABSTRACT

In present time, service quality is an interesting and dynamic concept. But, it varies from time to time. What is considered as "good" in customer services today may be termed as "bad" tomorrow. Customers are now demanding more individualistic and customized services. Hence, it is necessary to identify and prioritize the customers' expectations for service quality. The efficiency of any sector depends upon how best it can deliver services to its target customers. But quick and efficient delivery of services is not possible with traditional service quality. Therefore, concept of traditional service quality has been replaced with online service quality. Therefore, current study is an attempt to study the expectations and perceptions of tourists in online tourism and tried to find out the gap and significant difference between expectations and perceptions of tourists in online tourism. Data has been collected with the help of a questionnaire. Gap analysis and Paired sample t test have been employed to analyze the collected data. It was found that with regard to gap analysis of tourists' expectations and perceptions in online tourism, the dimension of Responsiveness accounted for the highest gap score. Further, it was noticed that there was no significant difference between expectations and perceptions except for the dimensions Security and Reliability.

Keywords: Tourism, Online, Service Quality, Gap, Expectations, Perceptions

Introduction

In present time, service quality is a fascinating and flexible theory. This theory changes from time to time. What is measured as "good" in consumer services these days may be deemed as "bad" tomorrow. Customers are now demanding more individualistic and customized services and are no longer willing to accept delay in transactions. A "customer centric" vision has been substituted by the previous "product centric view" (Singh and Arora, 2011).

Many researchers have discussed the concept of service quality and connected it to the notion of perceptions and expectations (Parasuraman et al., 1985, 1988). According to Ostrowski et al., 1993, "Service quality is considered as service provider's ability to attract more and more customers". It is a practice to gratify consumers so that they clutch optimistic move towards the shopping as they expected. According to Crompton and Mackay (1989) "Service quality is the relationship between what customers'

Mandeep Kaur, Associate Professor, Department of Commerce, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, Punjab

mandeep.gndu@gmail.com, mkaur02@yahoo.co.in

Nitasha Sharma, Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce, Doaba College, Jalandhar
nitasha.sharma20@yahoo.com

desire from a service and what they perceive". Service quality is the discrepancy between consumers' perceptions of services offered by a particular firm and their expectations about the firms offering such services (Parasuraman et al., 1985). Customer evaluates the service quality as low if perceptions are less than expectations and they take it high if perceptions are greater than expectations. According to Gronroos, 2001, "Service quality has been conceptualized as the difference between customer expectations regarding a service to be received and perceptions of the service being received". Thus, Service quality stems from a comparison of perceptions and expectations toward service quality. The customer perceives the service quality to be high if it is perfect on his expectation and it leads to customer satisfaction with the related service (Santos, 2003). Moreover, service quality may be described as the aptitude of the goods or services to satisfy the requirements of customer as expected. It is commonly said that what is not measured is not managed. Without measurement, managers cannot be sure whether quality of services is better or not or service quality gaps exist (Lovelock et al., 2006). Evaluation is enviable to decide whether purposes for improvement

or maintaining quality of services are being employed. Comparison of customers' actual and expected satisfaction level can be calculated with the help of various service quality scales. But, among them SERVQUAL scale created by Parasuraman et al., (1985, 1988 and 1991) is the best as it covers each and every dimension which is necessary to measure quality of services and it is specifically designed for use in the service sector. SERVQUAL measurement proposed by Parasuraman et al. (1985, 1988, and 1991) has been extensively acknowledged and employed in tourism sector also. Following are the dimensions of SERVQUAL scale:

1. **Responsiveness**—"The willingness to help consumers and to provide prompt service"
2. **Tangibles**—"The appearance of physical facilities, equipment, personnel and communications materials"
3. **Assurance**—"The knowledge and courtesy of employees and their ability to convey trust and confidence"
4. **Empathy**—"The provision of caring, individualized attention to consumers"
5. **Reliability**—"The ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately"

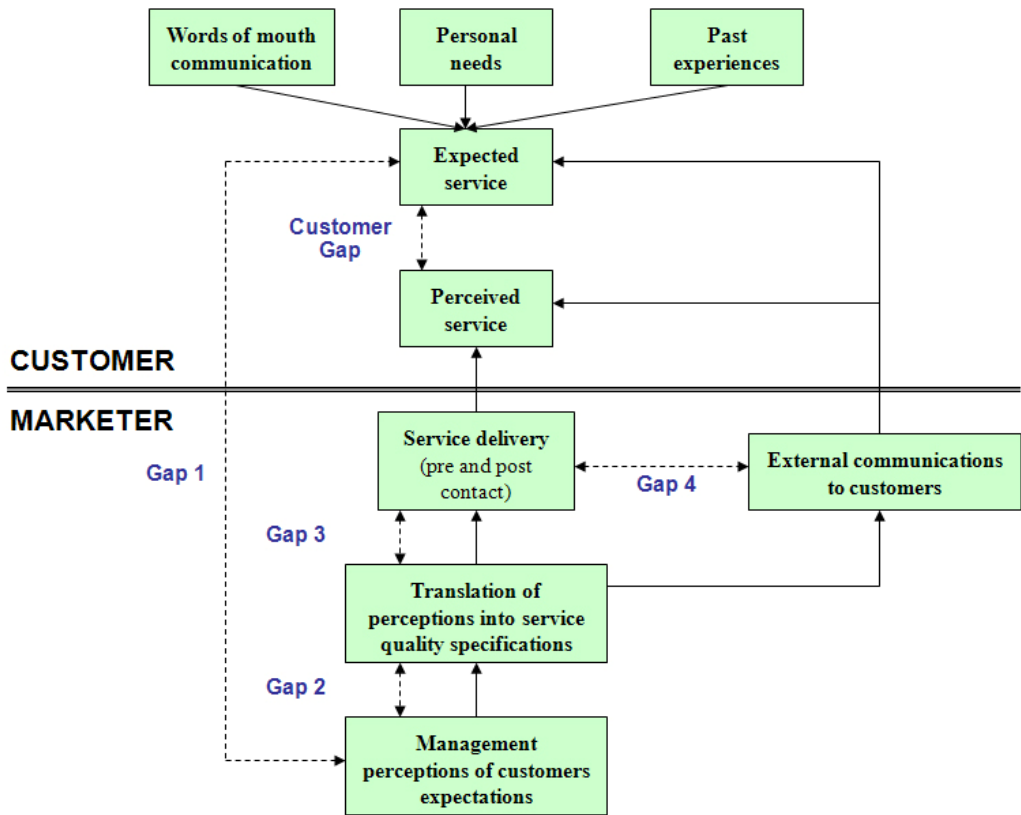


Fig. 1: SERVQUAL Model of Gap Analysis

Source: Parsuraman et al., 1985

Service quality is measured by gap analysis with the help of the following equation:

$$\text{Perceptions} - \text{Expectations} = \text{Gap}$$

Gaps of SERVQUAL scale proposed by Parsuraman et al., 1985, 1988 and 1991 are as follows:

Gap 1 (Positioning Gap)—“It pertains to managers’ perceptions of consumers’ expectations and the relative importance consumers attach to the quality dimensions”

Gap 2 (Specification Gap)—“It is concerned with the difference between what management believes the consumer wants

and what consumers expect the business to provide”

Gap 3 (Delivery Gap)—“It is concerned with the difference between the service provided by the employee of the business and the specifications set by management”

Gap 4 (Communication Gap) –“It exists when the promises communicated by the business to the consumer do not match the consumers’ expectations of those external promises”

Gap 5 (Perception Gap) – “It is the difference between the consumers’ internal perceptions and expectations of the services” (Parsuraman et al., 1991).

Review of Literature:

Some of the reviewed studies in this direction are as follows:

Table 1: Studies on Gap Between Expectations and Perceptions in Tourism and Other Sectors

Author	Country (Sample)	Research Objectives	Variables	Methodology
McQuilken et al., 2000	Otway, Victoria (151 tourists)	To examine the consumer expectations, perceptions and satisfaction levels of tourists	Tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy	Regression Analysis
Lather, 2005	India (150 Indian & 150 foreign tourists)	To explore the difference between expectation and satisfaction level of Indian and foreign adventure tourists and the relationship between the levels of expectation and satisfaction of Indian and foreign adventure tourists	Aesthetic Appeal, Facilities, Food Accommodation, Information and Safety and Security	Gap Score
Parikh, 2006	India (102 respondents)	To measure the gap between the customers' expectations and their perceptions about the service quality of retail store	Physical aspects, reliability, personal interaction problem solving and policy	Factor Analysis
Mohamed, 2007	Egypt (226 respondents)	To assess customers' expectations and perceptions of service provided by travel agents	Responsiveness, reliability, empathy, resources and corporate image and tangibility	Descriptive Analysis
Li and Law, 2007	China (750 respondents)	To measure the gap between the customers' expectations and their perceptions about the service quality of hospitals	Tangibility, reliability, assurance, responsiveness and empathy	Gap score and Paired sample t test
Dhar and Kushwah, 2009	Gwalior (400)	To analyze the service quality of public and private sector banks in terms of customers' expectations and perceptions	Tangibility, reliability, assurance, responsiveness and empathy	Factor and z test

Lin, 2009	Taitung (386 respondents)	To explore the extent of expected importance and perceived satisfaction of tourists regarding various services provided by resort hotels	Tangibility, reliability, assurance, responsiveness, empathy and entertainment	T- test
Naik, 2010	Hyderabad (369 respondents)	To analyze the gap between perceptions and expectations of the customer concerning with services at retail units in the South Indian state of Andhra Pradesh	Tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, empathy and assurance	Reliability Analysis, Correlation Analysis and Regression Analysis
Appaw Agbola, and Afenyo Dehlor, 2010	Italy and (200 respondents)	To evaluate the customers' perceptions of service quality in selected private sector banks	Tangibility, reliability, assurance, empathy and responsiveness	Gap Score
Shahin and Janatyan, 2011	Iran (30 respondents)	To find out service quality gaps and to estimate customer dissatisfaction based on those gaps	Tangibility, reliability, assurance, empathy and responsiveness Analysis	Correlation Analysis, Gap Score and Regression
Renganathan, 2011	India (252 respondents)	To analyze the hotel guests' expectations and perceptions of hotel services	Tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy Analysis and EFA	Descriptive Analysis, Regression
Kariru and Aloo, 2014	Kenya (120 hotels guest)	To investigate hotel guests' perceptions of service quality in hotels within the Western Kenya tourism circuit	Tangibility, reliability, assurance, empathy and responsiveness	Paired sample t test
Khan et al., 2014	Dhaka (150 respondents)	To extract crucial factors affecting the service quality	Tangibility, reliability, assurance, empathy and responsiveness	Paired sample t test

Source: Compiled from different studies; EFA: Exploratory Factor Analysis

Thus, Service quality is a concept that has aroused considerable interest in the literature. Every tourism firm is trying to improve quality of its products and presenting them online due to changing attitude of tourists. Thus, an analysis of service quality perceptions and expectations from tourists' perspectives' is of paramount importance in the today's competitive environment.

Need of the Study:

As far as service quality in tourism sector is concerned, it has been identified as a key factor in differentiating services of different tourism service providers. Moreover, the competitive innovations made tourism service providers more concerned about their survival by providing best services, because with the entry of new generation technology and the expansion of travelling, the notion of quality of services has come out as a major aggressive bludgeon in tourism sector in order to gain larger market share. Outlook of customers have changed after employing the latest technology and they are inspired to explore the alternatives available to them through websites. So it is rightly said that in today's cut throat competition, not only the online presence of tourism service providers is necessary but also they are required to persistently perk up the quality of tourism services to grant continual satisfaction to the tourists (Singh and Arora, 2011). Generally tourists expect high service quality from online tourism service providers but they receive low service quality. So, it is necessary to examine the gaps for e-service quality. However, till date, many researchers have examined service quality in tourism and its allied sectors. Despite the increasing importance of e-tourism on one hand and key role of customer satisfaction on the other hand, very few

studies have been conducted in this regard. Accordingly, current study is going to shed light on online service quality and its gaps in online tourism.

Objectives of the study:

Following are the specific objectives of the current study:

1. To find out the gap between expectations and perceptions of tourists in online tourism.
2. To find out the significant difference between expectations and perceptions of tourists in online tourism.
3. Database and Research Methodology:

To find out the gap between tourists' perceptions and expectations towards online service quality in tourism sector, a modified E-SERVQUAL questionnaire relevant to the tourism industry has been constructed. The questionnaire includes items of the E-SERVQUAL instrument, developed and updated by Zeithaml et al., 2002 as well as some other important items based on review of literature. The data regarding perceptions and expectations of customers were collected on a 7-point interval scale, where 1 stands for strongly disagree and 7 stands for strongly agree. Sampled respondents were selected through convenience cum judgement Sampling Method. The universe of the study was those tourists who have used online tourism at least once in their life. Total 500 questionnaires were distributed among respondents in the three major cities of Punjab i.e. Ludhiana, Jalandhar and Amritsar because these cities are representative of three major regions of Punjab. Moreover, Amritsar was selected due to religious tourism and Jalandhar and Ludhiana were selected due to business tourism.

In order to analyze the collected data, Gap Score and Paired Sample t test have been used. First of all, to find out the gap between expectations and perceptions, mean scores were calculated for expectations and perceptions and then their difference was taken as gap. The negative signs of the gaps indicate that the perceptions are lower than the expectations. It is important to mention that the negative gap is not necessarily implying that the customer is not satisfied. Pearce (1988) and Hughes (1991) have argued that tourists may be satisfied even though their experiences did not fulfill their expectations. Consequently, in order to find out the significant difference between expectations and perceptions of tourists in online tourism, further, Paired Sample t test was employed.

Hypotheses for the Study:

To find out the gap between expectations and perceptions of tourists in online tourism, some hypotheses were set which are as follows:

H₀₁: There is no significant difference between expectations and perceptions of tourists for dimension 'Ease of Use'.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference between expectations and perceptions of tourists for dimension 'Website Design'.

H₀₃: There is no significant difference between expectations and perceptions of tourists for dimension 'Responsiveness'.

H₀₄: There is no significant difference between expectations and perceptions of tourists for dimension 'Empathy'.

H₀₅: There is no significant difference between expectations and perceptions of tourists for dimension 'System Availability'.

H₀₆: There is no significant difference between expectations and perceptions of

tourists for dimension 'Reliability'.

H₀₇: There is no significant difference between expectations and perceptions of tourists for dimension 'Security'.

Sample Characteristics

As far as the demographic profile of the respondents is concerned, the sample comprised of variety of respondents belonging to different economic and professional background. It can be seen from Table 2 that more male respondents participated in survey (55.8%) than female (44.2%) respondents. Furthermore sample population formed the majority (44.7%) in the age group of 30-40 years of age. The next largest category comprised the respondents from 40-50 years of age (23.7%).

The next largest category was made up of those who are less than 30 years of age (22.9%). Furthermore, respondents falling in the age category of above 50 are just 8.8%. With regard to marital status of the sample, then it is clear from Table 2 that almost 60.8% respondents are married and 38.4% are unmarried whereas 0.8% respondents are divorcee. As far as respondents' occupation is concerned, then Table 2 explains that majority of the respondents belong to service category (31.4%), followed by businessmen (31.2%), students (20.8%), retired (8.6%), housewives (5.7%) and others (2.3%).

As far as education level is concerned then Table 2 depicts that 51.4% of the respondents are graduates followed by matriculates (33.33%). The next largest category comprised of those respondents who are post graduate (13.8%). As per income categorization, Table 2 shows that 55.3% respondents are falling in the income category of Rs.20000-40000 followed by 23.1% who belongs to income category of Rs. 40000-60000. Though just 15.3% are

falling in the income category of less than Rs. 20000 yet 6.3% are falling in the income category of above Rs.60000 income group.

Table 2: Demographic Profile of Respondents

Particulars		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	266	55.8
	Female	211	44.2
	Total	477	100.0
Age (Yrs)	Less than 30	109	22.9
	30-40	213	44.7
	40-50	113	23.7
	Above 50	42	8.8
	Total	477	100.0
Marital Status	Married	290	60.8
	Single	183	38.4
	Divorcee	4	0.8
	Total	477	100.0
Education Level	Matriculation	159	33.33
	Graduation	245	51.4
	Post Graduation	66	13.8
	Any other	7	1.5
	Total	477	100.0
Occupation	Student	99	20.8
	Businessman	149	31.2
	Service	150	31.4
	Retired	41	8.6
	Housewife	27	5.7
	Others	11	2.3
	Total	477	100.0
Monthly Income (Rs.)	Less than 20000	73	15.3
	20000-40000	264	55.3
	40000-60000	110	23.1
	More than Rs 60000	30	6.3
	Total	477	100.0

Source: Compiled through Survey

4. Analysis and Interpretation of Gaps between Expectations and Perceptions of Tourists in Online Tourism

Firstly mean score for expectations and perceptions were calculated and their difference was taken as gap. According to Parasuraman et al., 1988, "It is however common for consumer's expectation to exceed the actual service perceived which results in a negative gap score (Perception-Expectation)". The results for gap analysis are as follows:

H₀₁: There is no Significant Difference between Expectations and Perceptions of Tourists for the Dimension 'Ease of Use': According to Al-Momani and Noor, 2009, "Ease of use is defined as the degree to which a person believes that using an information system would be free of effort". Table 3 shows negative gap (-0.0587) between expectations (4.931866) and perceptions (4.873165618) for dimension "Ease of use" which indicates that tourists are satisfied and they find it easy to operate tourism websites. Under dimension "Ease of Use", item wise analysis indicated that the highest level of displeasure was experienced for item 'Tourism websites are easy to use (gap=-0.07547, sig=0.544)'. On contrary to it, satisfaction was found for the item 'Tourism websites load pages fast (gap=0.048218, sig=.466)', followed by 'It is quick to complete a transaction on tourism websites (gap=0.010482, sig=.020)' and 'Tourism websites have minimum scrolling of pages' (gap=0.7891, sig=.000). Moreover, p value for this dimension is more than 0.5 at 5% level of significance; hence null hypothesis is accepted meaning thereby that there is no noteworthy gap between expectations and actual satisfaction level of the tourists for dimensions "Ease of Use". Thus, "Ease of use" is considered as one of the important dimension in e-service quality.

It also reproduces the importance of the tourism website through tourists routing and aims to decrease frustration of customers (Janda et al., 2002). Customers will move to other tourism websites if they found themselves confused during the search process.

Therefore, "Ease of Use" is an important component correlated to service performance. According to Kim and Eom, 2002, "A good level of perceived usability could lead to higher levels of satisfaction, trust and loyalty towards a specific website". It is possible that users who use online mode of booking will abandon and move to other tourism websites if a website takes too long time to download information. Therefore, website access is an important component associated to service recital. For the ease of use for the visitors, the website should be spontaneous, straightforward and accessible for completing transactions (Novak et al., 2000 and Kim and Lee, 2004). There should be easy payment, easy ordering and easy order tracking on the websites. Users should be able to navigate and locate information on the websites easily and they should be able to access the website at a good download speed. Lastly, service providers should organize their site content in a logical and consistent way to ensure that customers view their website as simple and user-friendly.

H₀₂: There is no Significant Difference between Expectations and Perceptions of Tourists for the Dimension 'Website Design': According to Hudson et al., 2000, "Website design defines the tangible aspect of a website". It includes colors, layout, photographs, graphic and animation. As far as dimension "Website Design" is concerned its expected mean score was 5.683089 and perceived mean score was 5.564640112 with a negative

difference of -0.11845. For current dimension, largest negative gap score was observed for the item 'Layout of tourism websites is in a logical sequence with gap score of -0.7631(sig=.257)' followed by 'Tourism websites show creativity (gap=-0.38155, sig=0.000)', 'Tourism websites offer good illustration of services (gap=-0.32704, sig=.000)'. On the contrary, the positive gap was found for the item 'Graphics and animation on tourism websites do not distract users (gap=0.109015, sig=.874)' followed by 'Tourism websites are visually attractive (gap=0.0587, sig=.328)' and 'Tourism websites have good multimedia features (gap=0.010483, sig=.949)'. Moreover, p value at 5% level of significance is greater than 0.5 for website design, so null hypothesis is accepted which shows that there is no notable gap between expected and actual satisfaction level of tourists for the dimension "Website Design". It proves that tourism service providers are using best multimedia features. The lack of proper website design can cause an adverse impact on the users and they may shift to other tourism websites. According to Hoque and Lohse, 1999, "Poor graphic design elements and presentation styles can confuse and negatively affect consumers' willingness to browse or buy through an online channel". These results are in accord with the findings of Park and Gretzel, 2007. As per Nielsen, 1999, "Simple, clear and consistent layout, good use of frame and provision of a site map allow users to skip sections those are of no interest for them". A good web page can motivate the users to use a particular website again and again. Tourism service providers have understood that the deficiency of website design can result in a negative impression of the website quality to the customers, and customers may exit the purchase process (Hongxiuet

al., 2009). Hence, website design must assure a high degree of multimedia features. **H₀₃: There is no Significant Difference between Expectations and Perceptions of Tourists for the Dimension 'Responsiveness'**: According to Kaynama and Black, 2000, "Responsiveness means how the website responds to their customers in an online environment". It was noticed that expected and perceived mean score for "Responsiveness" was 5.30608 and 5.027777778 respectively with negative gap of -0.2783 and higher level of discontent was experienced in items like 'Tourism website compensate for not delivering services as mentioned (gap= -0.70231, sig=0.84)' followed by 'Customers have facility to return to previous pages conveniently (gap=-0.66876, sig=.974)', 'Tourism websites have facility for order cancellation (gap=-0.54717, sig=.417)', 'Tourism websites compensate me for site's problems (gap=-0.12788, sig=.194)', 'Tourism website compensate me for not delivering services on time (gap=-0.08386, sig=.035)'.

On the other hand, positive gap score was found in case of item 'Tourism websites offer a meaningful guarantee about the quality of services (gap=0.002097, sig=.000)'. However, item 'Tourism Website has its address on all documentation' has very little gap score (sig=.000) it means expectations for this item of the customers are being met with their perceptions by tourism websites. Furthermore, "Responsiveness" dimension accounted for one of the maximum downbeat score (-0.2783) which shows poor reply of tourism websites towards tourists' requirements and delivering prompt service. Moreover, p value is greater than 0.05 meaning hereby that null hypothesis is accepted at 5% level of significance which means that there is no significant difference between expected

and actual satisfaction level of tourists for the dimension “Responsiveness” at 5% level of significance. These results also consonance with the findings of Wolfinbarger and Gilly (2003) and Yang et al. (2004), who reported that there is no gap between expectations and perceptions of tourists for the dimension

“Responsiveness” and it is a major contributor towards customers’ satisfaction. Tourism websites should be more responsive and tourism service providers should try to maintain long run relationship because according to Janda et al., 2002, “There is a significant positive correlation between Responsiveness and user satisfaction”.

Table 3: Results for Gap between Expectations and Perceptions of Tourists in E-tourism

Statements	Mean of Perceptions	Mean of Expectations	Gap between E and P	t- value	Sig.	Results
It is quick to complete a transaction on tourism websites	4.844864	4.834382	0.010482	-2.344	.020*	Rejected
Tourism websites load pages fast	4.838574	4.790356	0.048218	-.730	.466	Accepted
Tourism websites are easy to use	4.901468	4.976939	-0.07547	.607	.544	Accepted
Tourism websites have minimum scrolling of pages	5.408805	4.649895	0.75891	5.855	.000*	Rejected
Ease of Use	4.873165618	4.931866	-0.0587	-1.594	.186	Accepted
The layout of tourism websites is clear and in logical sequence	4.932914	5.696017	-0.7631	1.135	.257	Accepted
Tourism websites show creativity	5.396226	5.777778	-0.38155	5.714	.000*	Rejected
Tourism websites offer good illustrations of the services	5.358491	5.685535	-0.32704	6.421	.000*	Rejected
Tourism websites should be visually attractive	5.765199	5.706499	0.0587	-.980	.328	Accepted
Graphics and animation on tourism websites do not distract users	5.752621	5.643606	0.109015	-.159	.874	Accepted
Tourism websites have good multimedia features	5.719078	5.708595	0.010483	-.064	.949	Accepted
Website Design	5.564640112	5.683089	-0.11845	1.562	.179	Accepted
All the relevant order confirmation details	5.696017	5.691824	0.004193	7.298	.000*	Rejected

should be sent to my e-mail within 24 hours						
Tourism websites have facility of order cancellation	5.075472	5.622642	-0.54717	-.812	.417	Accepted
Tourism Website have its address on all documentation	5.412998	5.422998	-0.01	9.817	.000*	Rejected
Customers have facility to return to previous pages conveniently	5.006289	5.675052	-0.66876	-.032	.974	Accepted
Tourism websites offer a meaningful guarantee about the quality of services	5.004193	5.002096	0.002097	10.439	.000*	Rejected
Tourism websites compensate me for not delivering service as mentioned	4.8826	5.584906	-0.70231	1.731	.084	Accepted
Tourism websites compensate me for site's problems	5.236897	5.36478	-0.12788	1.300	.194	Accepted
Tourism website compensate me for not delivering services on time	4.840671	4.924528	-0.08386	2.117	.035*	Rejected
Responsiveness	5.02777778	5.30608	-0.2783	2.375	.051	Accepted
Tourism websites develop a platform for users to exchange travel experience	4.712788	4.861635	-0.14885	10.222	.000*	Rejected
Tourism websites provide a telephone number for contact	4.702306	5.404612	-0.70231	-.068	.946	Accepted
Tourism websites have customer service representatives online	5.410901	5.406709	0.004192	10.455	.000*	Rejected
Policies for canceling orders laid out on the site are customer-friendly	4.786164	5.461216	-0.67505	8.613	.000*	Rejected
Tourism websites provide FAQs (Frequently asked questions) information	4.773585	5.368973	-0.59539	-1.010	.313	Accepted
Email responses are relevant, accurate and appropriate to customer requirements	5.404612	5.343816	0.060796	-10.030	.000*	Rejected
Tourism websites guide what to do if my transaction is not processed	5.412998	4.691824	0.721174	3.337	.001*	Rejected

Empathy	5.085055406	4.853249	0.231806	.979	.365	Accepted
The tourism websites do not crash	5.104822	5.366876	-0.26205	-1.358	.175	Accepted
Pages at tourism websites never freeze after I enter my order information	4.943396	4.853249	0.090147	1.551	.121	Accepted
Tourism websites have variety of tour packages in stock	4.784067	4.884696	-0.10063	1.416	.158	Accepted
System Availability	4.8	4.837177	-0.03718	.892	.466	Accepted
Tourism websites respond quickly to the order information	4.672956	4.773585	-0.10063	-.126	.900	Accepted
Tourism websites deliver services when promised	4.691824	4.683438	0.008386	-9.050	.000*	Rejected
I get what I booked from tourism websites	5.415094	4.815514	0.59958	-.617	.538	Accepted
Tourism website show sincere interest in resolving any queries	5.436059	5.398323	0.037736	.591	.555	Accepted
Tourism websites are truthful about its offering	5.337526	5.373166	-0.03564	-.805	.466	Accepted
Reliability	5.144234801	5.145073	-0.00084	9.003	.000*	Rejected
Tourism websites protect my personal information	4.840671	5.454927	-0.61426	8.859	.000*	Rejected
Tourism websites protect my credit card information	4.830189	5.371069	-0.54088	9.264	.000*	Rejected
Tourism websites will not give my information to other sites without my permission	4.790356	5.454927	-0.66457	8.479	.000*	Rejected
Tourism websites protect my web shopping behavior information	4.836478	5.381551	-0.54507	-1.714	.087	Accepted
Tourism websites have adequate security features	5.503145	5.400419	0.102726	9.683	.000*	Rejected
Privacy/Security	4.95639413	4.97065	-0.01426	3.216	.032*	Rejected

Source: Calculated through SPSS based on data collected; A Gap mean =perception mean – expectation mean; (*) Indicates significance at 5% level

H₀₄: There is no Significant Difference between Expectations and Perceptions of Tourists for the Dimension ‘Empathy’. Empathy is feeling of caring, individ-

ualized attention toward consumers. Dimension “Empathy” has mean perception score of 5.085055406 and mean expectation score 4.853249 with a gap

score of 0.231806 which is indicating less dissatisfaction for this dimension. Under this dimension, highest negative gap was found for the item 'Tourism websites provide a telephone number for contact (gap= -.67505, sig=.946)' and 'Policies for canceling orders laid out on the site are customer-friendly (gap= -.67505, sig=.000)' followed by Tourism websites provide FAQs (Frequently asked questions) information (gap=-0.59539, sig=.313)', 'Tourism websites develop a platform for users to exchange travel experience (gap=-0.14885, sig=.000)'. Whereas highest satisfaction was found for item, 'Tourism websites guide what to do if my transaction is not processed (gap=0.721174, sig=.001)', 'Email responses are relevant, accurate and appropriate to customer requirements (gap=0.060796, sig=.000)' and 'Tourism websites have customer service representatives online (gap=0.004192, sig=.000)'.

Moreover, p value at 5% level of significance is greater than 0.5 so null hypothesis is accepted for the dimension "Empathy". Web pages should be written in hypertext which provides the opportunity to build individualized relation with tourists (Maroney, 1997). Thus, tourism websites are taking sufficient steps to pay more concentration on these aspects and paying customized attention to satisfy the needs of the tourists.

H₀₅: There is no Significant Difference between Expectations and Perceptions of Tourists for the Dimension 'System Availability': System Availability means easy availability of server and easy to download material from websites. For the dimension "System Availability" the mean score of expected and actual satisfaction level was 4.837177 and 4.8 respectively with negative gap score - 0.03718. Under this dimension the

statement titled 'Tourism websites do not crash' accounted for the highest gap of - 0.26205 with p value of 0.175 followed by 'Tourism websites have variety of tour packages in stock (-0.10063, sig=.158)' and 'Pages at tourism websites never freeze after I enter my order information (gap= 0.090147, sig=.121)'. Moreover the p value is more than 0.05 at 5% level of significance meaning hereby that there is no difference between expectations and perceptions of tourists for the dimension 'System availability'. As per Jandaet al., 2002, "Long waiting time for downloading a web site or poor download speed due to access lags, transmission lags or server lags can be a source of irritation to users".

H₀₆: There is no Significant Difference between Expectations and Perceptions of Tourists for the Dimension 'Reliability'.

According to Parsuramanet al., 1985, "Reliability is the ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately". The mean score for this dimension has been calculated as 5.145073 and 5.144234801 for expectations and perceptions respectively with a negative gap score -0.00084. Under this dimension the statement labeled 'Tourism websites respond quickly to the order information' accounted for the highest negative gap (gap=-0.10063, sig=.900) followed by the item 'Tourism websites are truthful about its offering (-0.03564, sig=.466)' whereas high degree of satisfaction was found for the item 'I get what I booked from tourism websites (gap=0.59958, sig=.538)' followed by 'Tourism websites show sincere interest in resolving queries (gap=0.037736, sig=.555)' and 'Tourism websites deliver services when promised (gap=0.008386, gap=.000)'.

Moreover, p value at 5% level of

significance is smaller than 0.5 so null hypothesis is rejected for the dimension "Reliability" is meaning thereby that there is wide difference between expected and actual satisfaction level of tourists. In order to fill this gap, online tourism providers must offer error-free services to make tourists feel comfortable using online tourism services (Lee and Lin, 2005). To gain the trust of tourists, online websites must be updated frequently and need to be prompt in replying to all queries of tourists as well as ensuring prompt delivery of services.

H₀₇: There is no Significant Difference between Expectations and Perceptions of Tourists for the Dimension 'Security'.

Security means providing secure transactions to the tourists. Security indicates how a website proves its trustworthiness toward its customers. Zeithamlet al., 2002, Security concerns are associated with purchasing behavior and satisfaction with the website. With regard to the dimension "Security" average scores of expected satisfaction level and perceived satisfaction level respectively were noticed as 4.97065 and 4.95639413 with a negative gap of -0.01426. Under this dimension the statement namely 'Tourism websites will not give my information to other sites without my permission' accounted for the highest gap (-0.66457, sig=.000) followed by 'Tourism websites protect my personal information (gap=-0.61426, sig=.000)', 'Tourism websites protect my credit card information (gap=-0.54088, sig=.000)', 'Tourism websites protect my web shopping behavior information (gap=-0.54507, sig=.087)' whereas high degree of satisfaction was found for the item 'Tourism websites have

adequate security features (gap=0.102726, sig=.000)'.

Moreover, p value at 5% level of significance is smaller than 0.5 so null hypothesis is rejected meaning hereby that there is wide difference between expected satisfaction level and perceived satisfaction level for dimension Security. Increasing incidents of misuse of personal information and abuses of privacy are liable for gap between expectations and perceptions for the dimension "Security" (Than and Grandon, 2002). On the other hand, there had been much research that does support the importance of security in online scenario (Szymanski and Hise, 2000; Ranganathan and Ganapathy, 2002 and Santos, 2003). But, some researchers found security as critical dimension which may adversely affect the satisfaction of the tourists. As a result, due to risk related to misuse of personal information, many people are still reluctant to purchase services through internet. Security addresses the mechanical terms of tourism websites. According to Shaohan and Minjoon, 2003, "Security also incorporates company reputation, confidence and general confidentiality among consumers and those operating within the company".

It has been concluded that now a day's tourists are familiar with latest technology. They prefer to book their trips with the help of tourism websites. But they can take the benefits of tourism websites if these websites fulfill the expectations of tourists. Tourism websites should contain adequate information to reduce the perceived risks associated with online purchases and to enhance customers' intentions. Further, summarized findings of hypothesis testing have been shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Summarized Findings of Hypothesis Testing

Hypotheses	t value	Significance level	Results
H ₀₁ : There is no significant difference between expectations and perceptions of tourists for the dimension 'Ease of use'	-1.594	.186	Accepted
H ₀₂ : There is no significant difference between expectations and perceptions of tourists for the dimension 'Website design'	1.562	.179	Accepted
H ₀₃ : There is no significant difference between expectations and perceptions of tourists for the dimension 'Responsiveness'	2.375	.051	Accepted
H ₀₄ : There is no significant difference between expectations and perceptions of tourists for the dimension 'Empathy'	.979	.365	Accepted
H ₀₅ : There is no significant difference between expectations and perceptions of tourists for the dimension 'System Availability'	.892	.466	Accepted
H ₀₆ : There is no significant difference between expectations and perceptions of tourists for the dimension 'Reliability'	9.003	.000	Rejected
H ₀₇ : There is no significant between expectations and perceptions of tourists for the dimension 'Security'	3.216	.032	Rejected

Source: Compiled from the results of Paired sample t-test

The results from Table 4 show that there is no significant difference between perceptions and expectations of tourists except for the dimension "Security" and "Reliability". As far as gap analysis is concerned the dimension of Responsiveness was responsible for the highest gap score. Thus, perceptions of tourists are not fully being met with their expectations (The gaps indicate that the perceptions are lower than their expectations) for the dimension

Responsiveness. Pearce 1988 mentioned that the "gap is not necessarily implying that the customer is not satisfied". Hughes 1991 argued that "tourists may be satisfied even though their experiences did not fulfill their expectations". Therefore, there is need for tourism service providers to improve the matter related to the security and reliability for their customers. They should pay more attention to these critical websites.

Thus, delivering customer satisfaction is at the heart of modern marketing, which is a post-purchase judgment of the consumers. The gap between desirability and availability for these dimensions is an alarming bell for tourism websites and for tourism companies.

Recommendations and Implications of the Study:

- The study will also helpful for tourism service providers to understand those factors which are perceived important by tourists while they use online mode of booking.
- Moreover, it will also enable the managers of tourism and travel websites developers to identify their strengths and weaknesses and consequently help them in investing the available resources in the critical dimensions.
- However, online customers are greatly concerned about website functionality and usability, therefore the study will help tourism web site designers to understand the requirements of the tourists while framing and maintaining their websites.
- Study can be helpful for tourism website designers to understand the importance of ICT to remain competitive.
- As far as recommendations of the study are concerned then results of the study show a significant difference between expectations and perceptions of tourists for the dimensions 'Security'. So tourism

service providers need to awaken to this empirical fact and should take quick steps for the security and privacy of tourists. Managers of tourism companies should allocate specific space for protection and privacy policies.

- There is also significant difference between expectations and perceptions for the dimension 'Reliability'. The study will prompt the managers of tourism websites to develop right strategies to retain customers by concentrating on the dimensions of Reliability. Therefore, tourism service providers should try to provide trustworthy services in order to retain the customers.

Limitations and Scope for Further Research:

- Current study was conducted by taking 500 respondents from 3 cities of Punjab only. The results may differ on increasing the sample size. Moreover, the behaviour of respondents from one part of India may vary from other part of India. Therefore, the results of the present study may not be generalized.
- As questionnaires have been used to collect data, its freeness from personal biasness cannot be claimed.
- Seven dimensions were used to find out the gap between expectations and perceptions of tourists in e-tourism. Some other dimensions may be taken to find out the gap between expectations and perceptions in online tourism.

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A Study on Perception of Tourists towards Himachal Pradesh as a Tourism Product

Suneel Kumar

ABSTRACT

The World Tourism Organization defines tourists as “people traveling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes”. The tourism industry plays a key role in the economic growth of a nation. Tourism is an important driver of world trade and prosperity. Tourism industry play a role of bridge between countries and nations for the exchange of cultures and civilizations and a tool to develop trust between people of different religions, cultures and ideologies. This paper incorporates an analysis of perception of tourists regarding the various tourism services like tourist guide, transportation, medical, banking, police, parking, accommodation etc. in the state. It includes the analysis of the views of tourists about the general image of tourist destination and to put some light on the feelings and comprehension of the value of tourist stay in the state of Himachal Pradesh. The present study is based on Primary data, with the help of convenience and purposive sampling four districts i.e. Shimla, Kullu, Kangra and Kinnaur have been selected. At the second stage, twenty tourist places from these four districts with the help of simple random sampling have been selected. At the third stage, 300 tourists (200 domestic and 100 foreign) @ 15 tourists from each tourist destination are selected conveniently.

Keywords: Value of Tourist Stay, Image of Tourist Product, World Tourism Organization

Introduction and Literature Review

Tourism is the activities of persons traveling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business or other purposes. Tourism is travel and stay of non-resident. Tourism industry consists of three components attraction, accommodation and transport. Tourism is currently one of the fastest growing industries across the world. It is mostly a service industry because it renders services to various classes of people. India has emerged as a single largest net earner

of foreign exchange. Tourism industry is one of the largest sectors of service industry in India. Travel and tourism industry has created more than 198 million jobs all around the world and has made 10% of gross national products (GNP) of many countries in 2002. With reference to World Travel and Tourism Council statistics (WTTC, 2005), travel and tourism which is a fast growing industry and is considered as the biggest industry in the world, would create 249 million jobs and share 10.6% of GNP in different countries all over the World . Tourism promotes

Suneel Kumar, Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce, Shaheed Bhagat Singh College University Of Delhi, New Delhi.

drsuneel.sbsc@gmail.com

national integration and international understanding. Prabir De (2008) in his paper showed that government is actively pursuing PPP model to bridge the infrastructure deficit. Several initiatives have been taken to promote power, ports, highways, airports, tourism and urban infrastructure. Sangeetha (2012) in her study 'Scope of Tourism: Indian Perspectives' concluded that government should promote tourism in less popular area by focusing environment, demography, socio-culture, economic and political background of any place for making it an attractive tourist spot. She further concluded that future of tourism in India is bright and there is a need to develop quality of infrastructure that will harness full tourism potential. Tiwari (2012) highlighted in his paper that tourism growth is faster in India than any other region and India and China will witness fast growth in tourism industry for next 10 to 15 years (WTTC). He had given various recommendations for development of tourism such as NGOs are mostly working together with the government departments, assisting in the implementation of identified policies and government should encourage better infrastructure to boost the tourism sector. Poddar (2015) in his paper explained that "tourism has encouraged development of infrastructure destinations and therefore at the nearby places". "Various modes of transport, health care facilities, sports centers, hotels and high end restaurants are developed due to growth of tourism in that region." He concluded that factors like cleanliness, poor infrastructure, hygiene and issues of internal security is a serious problem and need to be addressed.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

- To analyze the perception of tourists

regarding various tourism facilities in the state of Himachal Pradesh.

- To investigate the opinion of tourists about Himachal Pradesh as a tourism product.

Research Hypotheses

- H_0 : The opinion of the tourists over the various tourism facilities in the study area does not vary significantly.
- H_a : The opinion of the tourists over the various tourism facilities in the study area does vary significantly
- H_{01} : The perception of the tourists about the Himachal Pradesh as a tourism product does not vary significantly.
- H_{a1} : The perception of the tourists about the Himachal Pradesh as a tourism product does vary significantly.

Data Base and Research Methods

The present paper is mainly based on primary data and focused on the perception of tourists towards the various facilities available in the state and the general image of the destination in the mind of visitors. A total of 19 field visits have been made to 20 tourists destinations of four districts of Himachal Pradesh, i.e., Shimla, Kullu, Kangra, and Kinnaur. Of which, four visits were the pilot study visits made to each district. Each tourist destination has been visited once to do the questionnaire survey. The sample respondents have been selected with the help of convenience and purposive sampling from four districts. A total of 300 tourists (200 domestic and 100 foreign) have been selected from 20 tourists destinations of selected districts, thereby taking 15 samples from each destination. While selecting the samples, special care

has been taken to ensure the representation of different regions, age groups, educational levels, sex and income levels. Tourist’s response has tabulated and further interpreted by calculating the simple percentage, mean value, standard deviation and skewness etc. has been used for inference the data. In view of the large size of sample (300), hypotheses have been tested by using chi square test at 1% level of significance.

Perception of the Tourists towards various facilities in the State

It is evident from table 1.1 that majority respondents are of the opinion that transport facility is good in the state. The mean value (3.84) of opinion is quite high from mean standard score. The standard deviation is 1.05 and skewness is – 0.79. It shows that their opinion is distributed

towards higher side of average score. Further, calculated value of chi-square test is significant, which shows that there is a significant difference in the opinions of the respondents regarding the quality of transport facilities in the state. Majority of respondents are of the view that quality of accommodation is good. The mean value (3.84) supports the above opinion. The standard deviation is 0.91, while skewness is – 0.79.

It shows that opinion is scattered towards higher side of mean score. The calculated value of chi-square when compared to table value at 1percent level of significance is significant. It shows that the opinion of the respondents is not equally distributed. It can be concluded that the majority of the respondents agree more strongly that quality of accommodation in the state is good.

Table 1
Perception of Tourists Regarding Various Facilities

S. No.	Tourists facilities	SA	A	NC	D	SD	Total	Mean	S.D.	SK	χ^2	Table value of χ^2 at 1%
1	Quality of transport	44 (14.7)	157 (52.3)	41 (13.7)	45 (15.0)	13 (4.3)	300 (100.0)	3.58	1.05	-0.79	207.67	Significant
2	Quality of accommodation	63 (21.0)	166 (55.3)	35 (11.7)	33 (11.0)	3 (1.0)	300 (100.0)	3.84	0.91	-0.88	264.13	Significant
3	Quality of food	77 (25.7)	144 (48.0)	55 (18.3)	17 (5.7)	7 (2.3)	300 (100.0)	3.89	0.93	-0.90	200.47	Significant
4	Physical setting of the state	72 (24.0)	121 (40.3)	58 (19.3)	40 (13.3)	9 (3.0)	300 (100.0)	3.69	1.07	-0.61	114.50	Significant
5	Sanitary conditions	31 (10.3)	104 (34.7)	66 (22.0)	72 (24.0)	27 (9.0)	300 (100.0)	3.13	1.16	-0.21	67.43	Significant

6	Tourist information, banking, medical and guide facilities	411 (13.7)	130 (43.3)	58 (19.3)	62 (20.7)	9 (3.0)	300 (100.0)	3.44	1.06	-0.41	131.17	Significant
7	Condition of roads	24 (8.0)	108 (36.0)	53 (17.7)	83 (27.7)	32 (10.7)	300 (100.0)	3.03	1.18	-0.16	82.70	Significant
8	Tariffs of the hotels	37 (12.3)	113 (37.7)	60 (20.0)	67 (22.3)	23 (7.7)	300 (100.0)	3.25	1.16	-0.31	79.27	Significant
9	Making booking at the tourist destination was easy	38 (12.7)	135 (45.0)	66 (22.0)	45 (15.0)	16 (5.3)	300 (100.0)	3.45	1.06	-0.60	138.43	Significant
10	Recreation facilities	36 (12.0)	111 (37.0)	88 (29.3)	53 (17.7)	12 (4.0)	300 (100.0)	3.35	1.03	-0.31	105.23	Significant
11	Publicity of the tourist product	31 (10.3)	114 (38.0)	77 (25.7)	63 (21.0)	15 (5.0)	300 (100.0)	3.28	1.06	-0.30	101.33	Significant
12	Shopping areas in the state	44 (14.7)	144 (48.0)	54 (18.0)	44 (14.7)	14 (4.7)	300 (100.0)	3.53	1.06	-0.39	162.00	Significant
13	Sightseeing facilities available in the state	83 (27.7)	136 (45.3)	43 (14.3)	27 (9.0)	11 (3.7)	300 (100.0)	3.84	1.04	-0.94	168.07	Significant

Note: Figures in parentheses indicates as percentage of row total

Source: primary probe

SA:-Strongly Agree, A:-Agree, NC:-No Comments, D:-Disagree, SD: - Strongly Disagree, S.D.:- Standard Deviation, SK:-Skewness

The table shows that quality of food in the state is good. The calculated mean value supports the above opinion. The standard deviation of 0.93 is very less and skewness is - 0.90. This shows that their opinion is scattered towards the higher side of mean score. The calculated value of chi square is much higher than the table value. It also reiterates the fact

that respondents are satisfied with quality of food in the state. The mean value of the opinion regarding the physical setting of state is 3.69 and is slightly higher than the mean standard score. It shows that they are of the opinion that physical setting of the state is good. The standard deviation is 1.07 and skewness is -0.61. It supports the above opinion and shows

that distribution of their opinion is scattered towards higher side of the mean value. It reveals that their opinion is varying from agree to strongly agree over the issue. The calculated value of chi-square is significant at 1 percent level which shows that their opinion is not equally distributed.

It is observed that almost every respondent believes that the sanitary conditions in the state are good. The mean value is quite high, which supports the above opinion strongly. It is clear that standard deviation is 1.16 and skewness is -0.21. It reveals that distribution of their opinion is scattered more towards higher side. Further, while applying chi-square test, it is observed that, value is significant and rejects the null hypothesis with the inference that the respondents agreed more strongly with the opinion that sanitary conditions in the state are good. It is evident from the table 1.1 that the mean value of the opinion with regard to tourist information, banking, medical and guide facilities is 3.44. It is higher than the mean standard scoring. The variation in mean score is 1.06 and skewness is - 0.41. This shows that the opinion of the respondents over this issue is ranging between agree to strongly agree. The chi-square result reveals that distribution of views regarding the tourist information, banking, medical and guide facilities are not equal. Hence null hypothesis is rejected at 1 percent level of significance. Thus, the above analysis leads to the conclusion that the respondents opined that the above said facilities are good at this tourist destination.

Further, while analyzing the views of the respondents regarding the condition of roads, it is evident that majority respondents are of the opinion that the condition of road is good. The mean value

supports the above opinion. The standard deviation is 1.18 and skewness is - 0.16. The chi-square value is significant at 1 percent level of significance, so alternative hypothesis is accepted. It reveals that the distribution of views over this issue is not equal and distributed more towards higher side of mean value. Thus, it can be concluded that the respondents accepted the fact that condition of roads is satisfactory.

The mean score of responses relating to tariffs of the hotels is slightly higher than the average standard score. The variation in opinion is recorded at 1.16 and skewness is - 0.31. This shows that their opinion has shown shift from agree to strongly agree. The chi-square is significant at 1 percent level of significance. It means that the distribution of responses is not equal, thereby indicates that the tariffs of the hotels are reasonable in the state. As evident from the analysis, respondents were satisfied with the booking facilities at this tourist destination. The mean value (3.45) supports the above opinion. The standard deviation and skewness is 1.06 and - 0.60 respectively. The calculated value of chi-square is quite higher than the table value at percent level of significance. It rejects the null hypothesis and reveals that the opinion of the respondents with respect to the booking facilities at this tourist destination is not equally distributed and majority of responses are shifting towards higher side, thereby supporting the conclusion that booking facility was easily available at this tourist destination.

The mean value of views relating to recreation facilities is higher than the average standard score. The variation in opinion is recorded at 1.03 and skewness is - 0.31. It depicts that variation in opinion is minimum and their opinion is shifting towards higher side over this issue. It is

evident that majority of respondents are of the opinion that recreation facilities are adequate. The chi-square value is much higher than the table value at 1 percent level of significance and null hypothesis is rejected. It reveals that there is a significant difference in the opinions of respondents regarding the recreation facilities in the state. The table further indicates that the mean value of responses relating to publicity of tourist products is more than the average standard score. The standard deviation is 1.06 and skewness is - 0.30. It shows that their opinion is distributed more towards higher side of average score. The calculated value of chi-square is very high from the table value. It shows that the opinion of the respondents is not equally distributed over this issue. Thus, the above analysis leads to the conclusion that majority of the respondents agree more strongly with the fact that publicity of tourist product is adequate.

The mean value of shopping facilities available in the state is more than the average standard score and standard deviation is 1.06, whereas skewness is - 0.69. It shows that opinion is distributed more towards higher side of average score. The calculated value of chi-square is very high than the table value. It shows that opinion is not equally distributed over this issue. Thus, the above analysis leads to the conclusion that the majority of the

respondents are of the opinion that there are adequate shopping facilities available in the state. The table further highlights that majority of responses regarding the sight-seeing facilities are distributed towards higher side of average standard score. The mean value of responses is 3.84 and standard deviation is 1.04. The skewness of responses is - 0.94. Further, chi-square is significant at 1 percent level, which indicates that the opinion of the majority of the respondents is changing from agree to strongly agree, thereby emphasizing that respondents found sightseeing facilities as adequate.

1.6 Perception of the tourists towards Himachal Pradesh as a tourism product

It is evident from table 1.2 that majority of tourists have positive opinion about this tourist destination. The mean value of the opinion is quite high from the mean standard scale. The standard deviation is 0.83, whereas skewness is - 1.40. It shows that their opinion is distributed more towards higher side from the average. The calculated value of chi-square is significant at 1 percent level of significance, which shows that the majority of tourists have strong positive opinion about this destination. According to majority of respondents, staff at this tourist destination is friendly with the guests.

**Table 2
Perception of Tourists about the Destination**

S. No.	Statements	SA	A	NC	D	SD	Total	Mean	S.D.	SK	χ^2	Table value of χ^2 at 1%
1	Tourists have positive opinion	103 (34.3)	158 (52.7)	26 (8.7)	7 (2.3)	6 (2.0)	300 (100.0)	4.15	0.83	-1.40	305.57	Significant

	about this destination											
2	Staff is friendly towards the guests	74 (24.7)	151 (50.3)	50 (16.7)	21 (7.0)	4 (1.3)	300 (100.0)	3.90	0.90	-0.84	220.57	Significant
3	Destination has a unique image	93 (31.0)	149 (49.7)	46 (15.3)	10 (3.3)	2 (0.7)	300 (100.0)	4.07	0.81	-0.82	251.17	Significant
4	Staff always gives priority to guests	75 (25.0)	128 (42.7)	60 (20.0)	33 (11.0)	4 (1.3)	300 (100.0)	3.79	0.98	-0.61	145.23	Significant
5	Destination respects the nature	73 (24.3)	136 (45.3)	47 (15.7)	26 (8.7)	18 (6.0)	300 (100.0)	3.73	1.10	-0.93	150.57	Significant

Note: Figures in parentheses indicates as percentage of row total

Source: primary probe

SA:-Strongly Agree, **A:-**Agree, **NC:-**No Comments, **D:-**Disagree, **SD:-** Strongly Disagree, **S.D.:-** Standard Deviation, **SK:-**Skewness

The mean value (3.90) supports the above opinion of the tourists. The standard deviation is very less, whereas skewness is 0.84. It shows that their opinion is scattered towards higher side of the mean score. The calculated value of chi-square, when compared with table value at 1 percent level of significance shows that the opinion of the respondents is not equally distributed. It can be concluded that majority of the tourists strongly support this fact, that staff at this destination is friendly towards the guests.

The table also reflects the positive image of the tourists about this destination. The calculated mean value supports the above opinion. The standard deviation is 0.81 and skewness is - 0.82. This shows that their opinion is scattered towards higher side of the mean score. The calculated

value of chi-square is much higher than the table value. It also supports the opinion of tourists about this tourist destination. The mean value of the opinion that the staff of the tourist destination always gives priority to the guests is 3.79 and is slightly higher than the mean standard score. The standard deviation and skewness are 0.98 and -0.61 respectively. It supports the above opinion and shows that distribution of their opinion is scattered more towards higher side of the mean value, which reveals that their opinion is varying between agree to strongly agree. The calculated value of chi-square is significant at 1 percent level showing that their opinion is not equally distributed.

It is observed that almost every respondent opines that the tourist destination respects

the natural environment. The mean value is quite high, which supports the above opinion strongly. It is clear that standard deviation is very low and the calculated value of skewness is -0.93 . It reveals that the distribution of their opinion is scattered more towards higher side. Further the results of chi-square test support the fact that respondents are agreeing more strongly with the opinion that this tourist destination reflects the natural environment.

Conclusion of the Study

It can be concluded that respondents

opined that transport, accommodation, food, sanitary, tariffs of hotels, shopping, sightseeing, recreation, tourists information, banking and medical facilities are adequate in the state of Himachal Pradesh. It can also be concluded that respondents have positive opinion about this tourist destination. They are of the view that the staff at this tourist destination is friendly towards the guests and has a unique image. Further the staff of this destination gives top priority to their guests and it is a perfect amalgam of nature and enjoyment.

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Social Media Influence on Holiday Decision Making Process

Joby Thomas, Ponny Thomas

ABSTRACT

Social media is enabling people to express and share ideas and thoughts with others, it also enables them to connect with others. Social networking has made it simple to create relations irrespective of age, culture and geographical differences. Social media strongly influence the consumer decision process. In tourism, social media plays an important role in obtaining information especially in the pre-trip stage of one's travel and it influences the travel decision. Consumer's access to internet and other social media technologies are opening opportunities for new and diverse sources of information concerning traveler behavior. Consumers use social media during travel planning process in three stages i.e., pre trip, during trip and post trip. The decision making process is usually considered a complex process involving different stages. Online travel reviews have a significant influence on the purchase decisions of travellers. The study is undertaken with the objective to identify the role and relevance of social media communication in travel decision making process. A survey is undertaken for the study and the sample population consists of respondents from Bangalore. The term social media in this study refers to sites where one can upload and exchange information with other users which includes discussion forums, facebook pages, review sites and twitter.

Keywords; Social Media, Holiday Travel, Decision Making.

Introduction

Tourism is an extremely information-intensive sector. The rapid development of information technologies facilitates the speed and efficiency with which the industry's information is processed, stored, retrieved, distributed and otherwise manipulated. It is not a computer or telephone or video brochure or teleconferencing that is being used by the industry, but a whole system of computer and communication technologies. These include: computerized reservation

systems, electronic funds transfer, digital telephone networks, smart cards, satellite printers, mobile communications and more. All players will have to become users of information technology, in order to ensure their own survival and competitiveness. Information technology will leave no player in the travel and tourism sector untouched and escape from its impacts.

Technology has advanced so rapidly that it is not only possible for visitors to find out the price, availability and location of

Joby Thomas, Associate Professor, Department of Tourism Studies, Christ University, Bangalore
 joby.thomas@christuniversity.in

Ponny Thomas, Research Scholar, Department of Tourism Studies, Christ University
 ponny.thomas.n@gmail.com

their future vacation spot but the technology is already available on systems such as Sabre Vision to allow clients to take a visual tour of the hotels they will stay at, to pre-view the beds they will sleep in and to visit the rain forest they will walk in, before departure. The development in information technology has changed the way people behave and interact with each other.

Social media is enabling people to express and share ideas and thoughts with others, it is also enabling them to connect with others. Social networking has made it simple to create relations irrespective of age, culture and geographical differences. Social media strongly influence the consumer decision process. In tourism sector, social media plays an important role in getting information especially in the search and decision-making stages. Consumer's access to internet and other social media technologies is opening opportunities for new and diverse sources of information concerning traveler behavior. Consumer's use social media during travel planning process in three stages i.e., pre trip, during trip and post trip. The decision making process is usually considered a complex process involving different stages. Online travel reviews have a significant influence on the purchase decisions of the consumers. The process of purchasing a tourism product is usually considered as a complex process as the decision making involves a variety of activities and also deals with intangible products.

Tourists need high level of reliable information in the purchase decision of tourism products in order to minimize the risk factor caused by the complexity of the product. The main stages involved in decision making process are need recognition, information search, search for alternatives, analyze the authenticity

of information and post purchase evaluation of experience. Depending on the type of tourism and the selection of destination the need for information also varies.

Need is the perceived gap between the existing and the desired state of a person. The felt or perceived gap creates a feeling of discomfort and the tourist begins to act on it to remove the dissonance (Chaudhary,2010). Once the need is felt, efforts begin to fill the gap. As a result, tourists start looking for information that suits them best. During information search, the customer will get a number of options available in market. The next stage is to select the best choice. Each alternative is evaluated and the one which gives the best result is selected by the customer. Customers go for final decision making only after confirming that the product they are about to purchase is real and genuine. For this purpose it is necessary to analyze the authenticity of information they have collected. During post-purchase evaluation of experience stage the tourist will experience the product and will be able to differentiate the gap between the promises and the actual outcome. The tourists compare their experiences with expectations. The final judgment of the product occurs at this stage.

Review of literature

Advancement in technology has changed consumer behavior and consumers collect as much as information about the product before purchasing it. Because of the unique characteristics of tourism products like intangibility, perishability, seasonality, interdependence etc, tourists have special behavior in decision making process. The decision to purchase a tourism product takes a long period of planning and also involves emotional significance. A holiday

or travel is considered as an important event in a person's life and so while purchasing the product one should be careful in order to reduce the risk. Due to the nature of the tourism product the information is not collected at a single stage but it is an ongoing process. According to the study tourists use social media as the primary source of information while travelling (Rodriguez, 2009).

Social media is an important marketing channel which helps tourism enterprisers and destination marketers to reach the potential visitors. Internet is a major platform for exchange of information between the suppliers and customers and also it serves various other purposes. Travel information search contains three main components or travel information search process which includes the interaction of online tourism domain, online traveler and the search engine. The findings of the study shows the growing importance of online travel information search and also the role of search engines in promoting social media directly or indirectly to the travel information searchers (Xiang, & Gretzel, 2009).

Tourism products require a large quantity of information in all the stages of buying behavior. Because of the modern technological advancements in communication to a large extent, tourist as a consumer has been influenced by new media and also new media has evolved as an important interactive tool. The influence of new media is not only confined to information search alone but also is used in the entire decision making process. The study reveals that information search is very crucial in decision making process. The study also focuses on the role played by new media in need identification, information search, in choosing right travel option, in giving feedback and sharing

the experiences (Dileep, Sindhu, & Ismail, 2013).

The technological advancements has changed the social and economic life, the way people communicate, conduct business and work. According to the study there are three phases in travel experience formation process i.e., (a) pre-experience based on other peoples travel stories, (b) experience during travel or stay and (c) post-experience which includes comments and evaluation. Credibility of the information available online and overload of information are some of the issues concerning social media communication. Because of the increasing popularity of travel information sites, tourism marketers cannot ignore the role of social media in distributing travel related information (Milano, Baggio, & Piattelli, 2011).

The service industry depends on social media to reach the customers and also social media is a strong marketing tool that encourages communication between consumers and suppliers. Social media has enabled customers to react and express their views and it acts as a channel that allows interaction between the suppliers and customers (Seth, 2012).

Need for the study

Social media have been widely used by travelers to search, organize, and share travel experiences. Consumer's use social media during travel planning process in three stages i.e., pre trip, during trip and post trip. Travel reviews have a significant influence on the purchase decisions of the consumers. Information gained from social media has a higher influence in choosing and finalizing a destination.

Scope of the study

The respondents covered under the scope

were limited to Bangalore and were from the age group of 11 to 50 years. Active internet users with an account in any of the social networking sites such as facebook pages, discussion forums, review sites and twitter were the participants of the sample survey.

Objectives

- 1) To study the influence of social media in selecting a travel destination.
- 2) To study how social media is used throughout the decision making process of holiday travel cycle.
- 3) To study the use of social media communications in analyzing the authenticity of expected travel experience.

Hypothesis

H1: There is no significant difference in the decision making process of holiday travel based on gender.

Research methodology

Sources of data collection

Sources of data include both primary and secondary data. The primary data was collected by administering structured questionnaires. The secondary data was collected from journals, publications, newspapers, websites of tour operating companies and social networking sites.

Method of data collection

The data was collected with the help of structured questionnaires distributed to the respondents in Bangalore. The first section of the questionnaire was designed in such a way to get the profile of the respondents including their usage level of social media and the main information

sources used while planning a holiday travel.

The main stages involved in travel decision making process were focused while framing the questionnaire with a 5 point Likert scale to measure the degree of agreement or disagreement to the variables.

Sample size

A sample size of 100 respondents has been taken for the present study.

Techniques used in Data Analysis

A pilot study was conducted using a sample size of 30 respondents selected at random and the data collected was put through a reliability test to validate the questionnaire. A Cronbach Alpha score of 0 .833 was obtained.

Independent samples t- test has been used to study the decision making process based on gender.

Findings of the study

Out of 100 respondents approached for the survey, 54% were males and the remaining 46% were females. Regarding the age group of the population, 7% were between 11 to 20 years, 59% were between the age group 21 and 30, 27% were between the age group 31 to 40 and the remaining 7% were of the age group 41 to 50 years. It was also found that 54% of the sample population was married and the remaining 46% were unmarried. Majority of the respondents were in the age group 21 to 30 years. Most of the respondents of the study were married.

The variables were framed in the form of statements with a 5 point likert scale to measure the degree of agreement or disagreement regarding the decision making process of holiday travel. Majority

of the population (87%) agreed that they depend on social media to gather information regarding the products compared to other media.

Majority of population were of the opinion (61%) that social media gives both positive and negative feedbacks about a particular product and this allows customers to have more critical thinking during purchase decisions.

It was also found that the majority of the population (54%) was of the opinion that purchase of tourism products consist of a long term decision process involving high emotional significance. Also the experience shared by others in social media has a positive influence in decision making.

But a major portion of the population (42%) was of the opinion that because of the vast number of reviews available and the difference in opinion regarding the same product, the decision making process has become more complex. This is because of the vast amount of information and opportunities available in social media. It was also found that the more expensive and valuable a product is, the more research is done before buying the product and in tourism products more extensive information search is required due to the nature of the products.

The variables in the study also focused the influence of social media on the different stages involved in the holiday buying decision. From the study it was found that majority of the population used social media in the first stage of holiday buying decision making, i.e., need recognition stage. Travel reviews, travel related blogs, travel websites and online advertisements has a significant influence in the need recognition stage of the decision making process.

In the second stage of holiday buying decision, i.e., the information search for

products, 36% of the respondents agreed and 20% strongly agreed that social media is used mostly at this stage. This shows that internet has become the main source of gathering information during buying decision. Also 52% of the population agreed that social media is used to search for alternatives. Because of the variety of information available, consumers can compare the services available and select the best. Also majority of the respondents were keen in testing the authenticity of the available information. Consumers rely more on others experience while making buying decisions in order to reduce risk. Most of the respondents have social media accounts and they share their happiness, worries, tensions and anxieties with their social media friends. As a result they have a strong feeling that their social media friends will be in a position to help them in finding right product or services and reduce the risk in holiday decision making process.

According to the study there is a significant relationship between information search process through social media and final decision making process. This shows that, the information collected from social media positively affects the decision making process. The final decisions on holiday travel are taken after comparing the products and services offered by different organizations and the final choice is influenced by the information collected from social media at the earlier stages of travel planning.

The study also shows that the final decision on holiday travel is taken only after analyzing the authenticity of information collected from social media. Variations were observed in the reviews of each traveler based on their experiences and verifying the authenticity of social media comments made the final holiday buying decisions too complicated.

Independent samples t- test has been done to test the hypothesis that, there is no significant difference in the decision making process of holiday travel based

on gender.

Table showing the mean and standard deviation for the variable decision making process

Decision making process	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
	Male	54	4.203	0.5623
	Female	46	3.673	0.9900

Table showing the output of independent samples t-test for the variable decision making process

Levene's Test for Equality of Variances	t-test for Equality of Means							
	F	Sig.	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
							Lower	Upper
Decision making process Equal variances assumed	5.768	.018	3.350	98	.001	0.530	0.216	0.844
Equal variances not assumed			3.214	68.73	.002	0.530	0.201	0.859

From the output table of independent samples t-test it is observed that the p value is 0.001 which is less than 0.05 and is statistically significant. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected. That is there a significant difference in the decision making process of holiday travel based on gender.

From the study, the mean value for decision making process of male population is high as compared to female population. That is, the male population is more dependent on social media communications to make the final decision on holiday travel. It was also observed that men spend more time in collecting information regarding the product than female population. They spend more time and effort to access the

value of their purchase.

Conclusion

Social media communication has taken a major role in our day to day activities. Decision making regarding travel has become more difficult activity involving different stages. The study shows that social media communications are used by almost all age groups which signify the growing importance of social media. Also it was found that even if the number of people using social media has increased, there are differences in its usage level to take final decisions on different stages of holiday travel. As per the study young travelling population depend mainly on internet and social media to gather

information. Social media is also used to compare the alternatives and to evaluate the product features. Online travel reviews influence the purchase decisions of the consumers and also act as a motivational factor for travelling. Even if large number of people are using social media communications in information search and decision making process, at certain stages they are confused. The decision making process has become more complex and people are confused in selecting the products. The credibility of the information available online and

overload of information are some of the major challenges faced by users of social media communications for holiday travel decisions. Many a time the information available on websites are not updated information and people trust the information shared by social media friends than the details provided by holiday travel suppliers. Social media provides greater interaction between customers and service providers. Hence service providers should use social media as a powerful tool in communication mix while marketing their holiday products and services.

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Concept of Tourism in the Period of Chanakya

Meenakshi Saxena

ABSTRACT

In ancient times like that of Mauryan Period, India was viewed as one of the most civilised, learned, educated, prosperous and worth visiting group of small Janpadas. Travellers from Greece, other part of Europe and Asia like China used to tour India in search of their good fortune, higher education, trade, spread of their religions etc. travellers outnumbered their counterparts who ventured out of their Indian Territories for such gains.

In the period of Mauryas, such travelling was regulated in a meticulous way by the King Chandragupta Maurya 's famous Prime Minister Acharya Vishnugupta better known as Chanakya or Kautilya (hereinafter called Chanakya)

To enhance the foreign relations and for the well being of self, family or State, people used to travel other states very often. There were many reasons of tourism as exist today, i.e., business, education, spread of religion (though not a reason today), Tirthatan i.e., pilgrimage etc. One of the prevalent reasons was entertainment, which has taken complex form of leisure today, etc. Entertainment included dance, music, mimics, reciting, jugglery, etc. The shows used to be a day and night affair. Foreign entertainers paid a special tax. Some families specialized in the entertainment business. Arthashastra specifically states that any beautiful, young, talented girl could be appointed as head of the entertainment establishment.

Apart from peripatic people like entertainers, traders and foreign merchants, ordinary people also travelled. They did so for family reason, to go on pilgrimages or to attend fairs and festivals. In those times when transport system was not so up to date, most journeys had been done on foot, some rode animals, or carts. The traders and caravans of merchants used to travel either by road or ferries, and they paid a road access and escort charges. Boats and ships could also be hired.

There are many references when foreign merchants used to travel in Indian subcontinent. A few foreign countries like Ceylon, Barbara and Arachosia used to send their traders to India for selling pearls. Custom duty as per today's system also existed in Chanakya's period. The chief controller of shipping was responsible for the welfare of sea traders and seamen, elimination of piracy, ensuring the seaworthiness of vessels and rescuing vessels in distress. It is also mentioned in Treatises of Chanakya that whosoever was coming for any business activity, was given full protection by boundary guards (Anant Pals). They all entered into the country with valid passport and visa duty stamped by appropriate officer with about one year's validity. It was a very appropriate concept of Acharya Chanakya, which was later, followed by whole of the world

Meenakshi Saxena, Vice Principal (Retd.), D-143A, 3rd Floor, East of Kailash, Delhi
meenakshisaxena2504@gmail.com

This research paper explores compares and contrasts of the concept of Tourism then and now. There is not much literature available from that period but whatever details related to Regulation of tourism taken up in Chanakya period are surprisingly worth mentioning

Keywords: Chanakya, Tourism, Arthshastra, Magadha, Maurya, Tirthatan

In ancient times like that of Mauryan period, India was viewed as one of the most civilized, learned, educated, prosperous and worth visiting. Travellers from Greece, Europe and Asia used to tour India in search of their good fortune, higher education, trade, and spread of their religion. Concept of tourism was developed in three forms since ancient period. Initially it was Tirthatan, which means touring for spreading their own religion, acquiring knowledge of religious places and traditions of other states (later such independent states were called nations). Later on it took the form of Deshatan, which comprised of touring for trade, sight-seeing and good fortune. Present form of tourism is mix of all other past formats including Vidyatan i.e. tourism for acquiring knowledge and higher education in other state or nation and it is called 'Paryatan'.

In the period of King Chandra Gupta Maurya, his famous and learned Prime Minister Acharya VishnuGupt better known as Chanakya or Kautilya regulated travelling or tourism in a most meticulous way. For the material well-being of the people, for earning livelihood any economically productive activity was supported by Acharya Chanakya as it enriches the Kosha or wealth. Wealth only multiplies more wealth and wealth only makes the backbone of the nation, according to Chanakya's concept in his treatise Arthashastra.

The source of wealth in India in olden or ancient times was agriculture, when agriculture resulted in accumulation of surplus, it became necessary to export it

by natural water ways or rivers, resulting in more trade commerce and tourism. Agriculture gave birth to internal tourism. The famous cities of Varanasi, Champa, Rajagriha, Ujjain, Kosambi, Saket, Kusinagar grew into market places and attracted artisans from far and near for the availability of raw material and for ready products ¹. With accumulation of wealth these cities were called Kubernagri and they became the capitals of new states.

The volume of trade and commerce and its export outside states could be gauged from the fact that textiles were next most important trade in Indian states. The flourishing agriculture made cotton industry so important that a separate Vibhag was created for textile industry under a superintendent during the Maurya Period. The superintendent of weaving was responsible for getting complete knowledge of the material and engages qualified persons to manufacture threads, coats, cloths, ropes, cut wool, fiber, cotton, panicle, hemp and flex ². Employment was also given ³. Kashi, Vanga, Vatsa produced best cotton fabrics. In costly fabrics Kasi, Magadha, Bengal, produced silk and linen and they were chief regions of textile industry. Their silk competed with China. It is however, unfortunate that in later Gupta period textile trade with Roman Empire declined as they learnt technique from China.

Woodwork also took the shape of industry. The art of carpentry attained a high skill. India excelled in ivory work also. Various ornaments and useful articles were prepared from this material. The

skins of deer and goat were used for clothing. Leather workers prepared a great variety of things. It is mentioned by Acharya Chanakya that there are five kinds of fragrant wood such as Chandan. They further have variety according to their origin and colour. These fragrant woods came from Kamrupa (now Assam) the Himalaya region.

India had developed extensive inland trade. One trade route was from East to west. Principally they ran along the great rivers. (It started from Champa and ended at Sindhu) Second route was from North to South West, i.e. from Saravasti to Godavari. Third route was from North to South East, i.e. Saravasti to Rajgriha. Fourth route was from Punjab (from five rivers) to Central and Western Asia.

There are references that merchants travelling from Kashmir and Gandhara to Videha, from Banaras to Ujjaini, from Magadha to Sauvira etc. A lot of wealth came from inland trade⁴. However trading was not easy. Robbers against whom merchants hired the services of forest guards invested roads. Deserts were crossed at night with the help of land pilots, guiding the caravan by the stars. Some roads were called Royal or great Roads (Rajpatha or Mahamagga). However rivers were not bridged so ferries crossed them. There are references to merchants voyaging from Bharukachcha on the western coast to the same destination. There are references to merchants travelling from Banaras to Babylon.

The rise of Maurya helped greatly to improve India's inland and foreign trade. Mauryas brought all great inland trade routes under their control. Their rule was helpful for the growth of trade in other ways. Mauryas had a special department for the construction of roads. The officer

in charge had to construct roads and at every ten stadia set up a pillar to show the bye roads and distances. The most famous road of that time was the Royal road connecting the North West frontier with Patliputra and leading thence to the mouth of Ganges. The stages of that road together with their distances have been given a special mention by the Roman writer Pliny in his work called Natural History. External trade was carried on with Syria, Egypt, Greece, etc. in the West. After the conquest of Kalinga with its seaport on Eastern Coast of India trade and tourism was carried with South East Asia and China. The chief articles of export were – spices, pearls, diamonds, sandalwood, ivory, cotton cloth, silk yarn, muslin, etc. The principal imports were linen, silver, gold, dry fruits, etc.

The Mauryan state exercised a rigid control over all the trades and industry that yielded profit. The superintendent of commerce fixed the prices of commodities. The superintendent of weights and measures enforced the standard weights and measures. The superintendent of market safeguarded against the fraudulent practices of the trading class. The superintendent of ships regulated river traffic and collected ferry charges⁵. The superintendent of tolls collected custom duty ranging from 1/5 to 1/25 from the traders.

An important aspect of Mauryan Economy was the state monopoly of mining and metallurgy. It was a source of great income. The largest number of punch marked (mostly silver) coins are assignable to the Mauryan period and came from Eastern UP and Bihar. Besides the coins there was a considerable use of instruments of credit. The great merchants in the large towns gave letters of credit on one another⁶. There are references to promissory notes. There is a reference

to the charging of interest although the rate is not given. A written record of the transaction was kept.

According to Jataka story merchants used to go to Burma and Siam and traded in silk, muslins, cutlery, armour, brooches, rugs, perfumes, ivory, jewelry, gold, silver. The state enjoyed unrestricted monopoly in the trade of salt. And a superintendent looked after the salt ⁷. Indian merchants carried their goods to the various parts of the vast Persian Empire that added to the Commercial prosperity of the country.

To enhance foreign relations, tourism was done for entertainment also. It included dance, music, mimics, reciting, jugglery, etc. The foreign artists used to come to India to conduct a show. The show used to be a day and night affair. People of villages shared cost of putting on shows. Foreign entertainers paid a special tax. Amount earned thereby was enormous. Some families specialized in the entertainment business and Arthshastra specifically states that any beautiful, young, talented girl could be appointed as head of the entertainment establishment ⁹. These establishments used to produce extra revenue in the time of financial distress and half of their earning was realized as tax and thereby enriched the state revenue.

Besides that Indian scholars and philosophers moved freely in the Persian empire and that led to the closer relations with Western countries in general and Greece in particular ¹⁰. Indian philosophers have been referred to as putting question to Socrates. In India Takshashila or Taxila and Kashi were centers of learning. Ambitious men from all over the country went to Taxila to acquire knowledge. Even princes were sent there for education. According to Dr. A. S. Altekar Heir-apparent of Banaras were usually seen being educated at Takshashila. King

Prasenjit of Kosala a contemporary of Buddha was educated in Takshashila. Prince Jivak (an illegitimate son of Bimbisar) spent seven years in Takshashila in learning medicine and surgery. Panini (writer of Ashtadhyayi, Great scholar of Sanskrit Grammar) was an alumnus of Takshashila. Chanakya himself was also associated with Takshashila. Three Vedas and eighteen paranas were taught in the institution of Taxila. Taxila was famous for teaching of medicine, law and military science ¹¹. Kashi was another center of learning. The king of Banaras used to send their sons to Taxila and in return students prepared at Taxila taught in Kashi which became famous for high-class teachers and attracted a very large number of students.

Apart from it sports and games were also given preferences. But Acharya in his Arthshastra has cautioned the King, not to spend too much on sports and they should not disturb other activities of the town and they should not be like a luxury activity ¹². Along with education sports, and other entertainments influence of Persia is evident like ChandraGupta Maurya borrowed the concept of "hair washing" ceremony from Persian kings. The utmost faith with friendly state like Persia is noticeable when Mauryan Kings employed Persian nobles as their Governors. Persian women (Yavanis) were employed by Indian rulers as their bodyguards and that must have brought many families from Persia to India in search of fortune. The Persian taught the Indians the technique of giving lustrous polish to stone. The example of the great empire of Persia must have given birth to the idea of the unification of Northern India.

In all the activities and strong influence of neighboring countries on India and India's impact on far and near countries,

it proves natural and abundant tourism and travelling of people in the period of Acharya Chanakya. This travelling and tourism was done to meet many responsibilities of the state, but one major cause of tourism in that period was due to spread of religion. It is very well accepted that religion of Buddhism started in one corner of India and spread not only in India but also made its way to Ceylon, Burma, Tibet, Java, Sumatra, Borneo, Champa, China, Japan, Siam and Central Asia.

Buddhist Sangha was responsible for the spread of Buddhism. They had no worry about finances as they got royal patronage also. Buddhism had no serious rival. The success of spread of Buddhism was its adaptability. The changes were made in the religion with the new time and with the new countries and this is the reason that Mahayana was adopted by most of neighboring countries while Hinayana spread within India in general. Even today tourism is done inside and outside India for religion. It may be any religion. As far as Hinduism is concerned – Chardham Yatra within India is done. Amarnath Yatra, Mansarovar Yatra (Passing through China and Tibet), Pashupatinath Darshan (Nepal).

Though we do not find the official arrangements for issuing passport, visa to incoming and outgoing tourist, it can

be safely presumed that Chanakya’s prescription was being followed.

Author could not lay hands on data related to purpose of visits of incoming and outgoing tourists during Maurya or subsequent period in the past, but present day trend prevailing in India reveals that tourism and hospitality continues to be a major factor in prosperity of India. Trend of tourism has not changed as purpose of visits of foreign and domestic tourists is almost same i.e. business, leisure, meeting friends, education and learning, etc. However, present day data reveal that share of leisure has become prominent i.e. about 26% in ‘Paryatan’ form of tourism as against insignificant during ancient times i.e. Trithatan days. Present new trend in India tourism is medical tourism, which is picking up @28% and now contributes to about 4% of total foreign tourist arrival. It is because of medical treatment facilities in India. So, a comparison of purpose of visits of ancient and present day tourists would reveal that tourism was meant for elite class in past except that traders used to visit for imports and exports. Tirthatan was prominent in ancient India.

As per data available at website of Market Research and Statistics, Ministry of Tourism¹³, Government of India, following are the purposes of outgoing and incoming domestic and foreign tourist:

S. No.	Year	Total No. of Purpose of Visit (in percentage)						
		incoming Tourist/ Foreign Tourist	Business	Leisure	Visiting friends or relatives	Medical Tourists	Edu- cation	Others
1	2013	6.98 million	20.9	30.3	25.9	3.4	1.9	17.6

S.No.	Year	No. of outgoing Tourist (in million)
1	2009	5.17
2	2010	5.78
3	2011	6.31
4	2013	16.0

The number of foreign tourist arrival FTA in India during 2013 was 6.98 million. The share of India in International Tourist arrivals in 2010 was 0.61%. India's rank improved to 40th in 2010 from 41st in 2009. India accounted for 2.83% of tourist arrival in Asia Pacific Region in 2010 with the rank of 11.

Tourism continues to play an important role as foreign exchange earns for the country. As per latest data as available on Government of India website foreign exchange earnings (FEE) from tourist are USD 18.13 billion registering a growth of 18.1 percent over the last year. Tourism in India now accounts for 6.8% of the GDP and is the third largest foreign exchange earner for the country.¹⁴

According to the available information it appears that in ancient times most of the tourist used to go out or came to Magadha for the purpose of trade, commerce and second main category appears to be those who wanted to learn religion and philosophies followed by entertainment (leisure) purposes.

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Current Scenario of Kashmir`s Tourism Industry-An Analysis of Issues, Opportunities and Challenges

Reyaz A. Qureshi

ABSTRACT

Tourism has emerged as one of the fastest growing industries in the world and has become a major and an integral part of economic, social and physical development. The Valley of Kashmir which abounds with rich natural, cultural and architectural assets of tourist interest is one of the most celebrated tourist destinations in India and has distinct prospects and potential of tourism. Kashmir tourism has seen encouraging trends in recent past and has been able to attract more number of tourists to its diverse and varied destinations.

Since the tourism industry in the valley of Kashmir occupies the predominant position in view of its commanding growth potential and plays an important role in the socio-economic development, this paper provides an analysis of the issues, opportunities and challenges to the Kashmir tourism industry. An attempt has been made to identify effective measures that would assist policy makers in future growth and development of the industry. The paper also presents some recommendations and suggestions that could be useful for sustainable development of tourism in the valley of Kashmir.

Key Words: *Tourism, Sustainable development, Kashmir valley, Planning.*

Introduction

Tourism is one of the world`s largest industries and there can be no denying that tourism is a major global economic force. It is a principal catalyst of global economy and one of the most important tools for socio-economic development throughout the world. National and International tourism has grown substantially in recent decades, with technological improvements, rising living standards and broader processes of globalization leading to rapid increases in visitor numbers. Tourism has emerged as a key driver of socio-economic progress

through export revenues, the creation of jobs and enterprises, and infrastructure development. As per UNWTO (2015), International tourist arrivals increased by 4.3% in 2014, reaching a total 1133 million after topping the 1 billion mark in 2012. Travel & Tourism generated US\$7.6 trillion (10% of global GDP) and 277 million jobs (1 in 11 jobs) to the global economy in 2014 – 9.8% of total world GDP. Its growth of 3.6% was faster than the wider economy and out-performed growth in the majority of leading sectors in 2014.

Tourism is a complex industry; it provides

Reyaz A. Qureshi, Coordinator, Tourism & Hospitality Management, The Business School, University of Kashmir, Jammu and Kashmir.
dr.riyaz@yahoo.co.in

employment opportunities and tax revenues and supports economic diversity. It has very different impacts, both positive and negative, or even mixed ones. However, from a national, regional or local planning point of view, tourism should support the development of the quality of life of residents too (Puczko & Smith, 2001). Tourism comes in many shapes and forms such as social, cultural, economic and environmental (Godfrey & Clarke, 2000). Tourism has been a source of social-economic change in many developing countries. According to the World Tourism Organization (2009), tourism is one of the world's fastest growing industries and is one of the global engines of development. The tourism industry is an important economic activity involving different groups of community. Tourism is a multi sector, and as a means of economic, social and cultural exchange, it has many aspects and types (Mowforth & Munt, 2003). Tourism growth provides significant economic benefits such as creating employment and additional income in both host countries and tourists' home countries (Delibasic et al., 2008). Realizing the contribution of tourism industry all countries throughout the globe are vying to secure the best share of tourism for themselves. States, regions, countries and even continents are looking at this industry to fight with their problems of unemployment, poverty and rural and urban development. Further to this, countries and regions are looking at tourism to improve their image so that they can attract large number of investors.

The valley of Kashmir located between the Karakoram and the Pir Panjal range in the state of Jammu and Kashmir enjoys an extraordinary place in the tourism map of India. The Almighty has been kind enough to this part of the universe by bestowing it with innumerable natural attractions and rich cultural heritage. Due to eruption of the

Table 1
Tourist arrivals in Kashmir during
1988 – 2013

Year	Home tourists	Foreign tourists	Total
1988	662097	59938	722035
1989	490212	67762	557977
1990	6095	4627	10722
1991	1400	4887	6287
1992	1175	9149	10324
1993	NA	8026	8026
1994	500	9314	9814
1995	322	8198	8520
1996	375	9592	9967
1997	7027	9111	16131
1998	99636	10247	109883
1999	200162	17130	217292
2000	104337	7575	111912
2001	66732	5859	72591
2002	24672	2684	27356
2003	192300	8959	201259
2004	358095	18634	376729
2005	585702	19680	605382
2006	412879	20009	432888
2007	417264	24576	441840
2008	551041	21588	572629
2009	577348	23904	601252
2010	710504	25984	736488
2011	1282360	32110	1314470
2012	1274674	37166	1311840
2013	1104000	30124	1134124
2014	1140446	27172	1167618

Source: Directorate of tourism, Govt. of J& K, Srinagar.

Political instability in the Kashmir valley the travel advisories of most foreign

countries later advised their citizens to avoid travel to Kashmir. Government of the Jammu and Kashmir has now placed emphasis on the tourism sector in view of its potential as a promising industry in the new millennium and has included the development of the tourism sector among its top priority.

As a result of improvement in political situation and the keen interest by the Government for tourism development Kashmir has been able to maintain a continues flow of tourists to the valley of Kashmir. There has been a remarkable increase in tourist arrivals from 2011 and the figure reached 1311840 in 2012. Due to protests after Afzal Guru Execution and uncertain political situation in valley during 2013 and devastating floods in 2014 respectively, there was a decrease in the tourist arrivals. The tourism sector has started showing remarkable resurgence with the return of peace and normalcy in the Kashmir Valley. The negative travel advisories have been withdrawn by many countries and emphasis is now on getting the industry back on track. The Kashmir government regards tourism as a priority sector from the viewpoint of achieving sustainable economic growth. With this back-ground, the aim of the paper is to investigate the issues, opportunities and challenges of the tourism industry in Kashmir. This analysis will provide policy makers with a clear picture of the industry and hence will help them to make appropriate policy decisions regarding the future growth and development of the industry. The analysis is based partly on a field survey carried out during May-September 2014 - where tourists, tourism stakeholders, concerned government and non government agencies and host population were interviewed using a structured questionnaire. The interviews were conducted at major tourist

destinations namely Dal Lake, Mughal Gardens, Gulmarg, Manasbal, Pahalgam, Sonamarg, Yusmarg and newly opened destinations Doodhpathri, Bungus, Gurez and Aharbal. The other part of the analysis is derived from official government documents.

Structure of Tourism Industry in Kashmir

For the development of tourism the following government organisations are functioning in the valley:

- Directorate of Tourism, Kashmir.
- 10 Tourism Development Authorities at main tourist destinations.
- Jammu and Kashmir Tourism Development Corporation (JKTDC).
- Sheer-i-Kashmir International Convention Centre (SKICC).
- J&K State Cable Car Corporation (JKSCCC).
- Royal Spring Golf Course (RSGC).

All these organisations are working under the aegis of State Department of Tourism, which in turn is working in synergy with the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, other State Governments and the private stake holders.

The Directorate of Tourism, Kashmir looks after the tourism activities in Kashmir Valley and Ladakh region and also regulates the tourist inflow and coordinates with the other related departments. The Directorate has the more important assignment of publicity and marketing the tourism resources of the state at national as well as international level. Jammu and Kashmir Tourism Development Corporation (JKTDC) undertakes commercial activities like construction of accommodation facilities, running cafeterias, restaurants and organisation of food festivals. JKTDC has

its own in-house Tour and Travel Division, which looks after reservation, sales and marketing of its properties. JKTDC has a fleet of luxury coaches meant for usage in the package tours offered to the tourists by its tour and travel division. Jammu and Kashmir Cable Car Corporation is responsible for construction of passenger rope ways and chairlifts in the state. The Gulmarg Gondola is run by this Corporation. For the integrated and focused development of identified tourist areas the government of Jammu and Kashmir has created 20 Tourism Development Authorities in the state out of which 10 are in Kashmir valley. These are for Gulmarg, Pahalgam, Sonamarg, Yousmarg, Doodpathri, Veerinag, Kokernag, Aharbal, Wular-Manasbal and Lolab-Bungus-Drungyari.

The major initiatives taken by government for the development of tourism in the state can be summarised as follows:

- Tourism in Jammu and Kashmir has been declared as an industry by the government in 1995 and a special package of incentive has been announced for the development of tourism infrastructure. This package of incentives will be available till 2015.
- Creation of tourism development authorities for integrated development of selected potential tourist destinations.
- Promotion and marketing of various destinations through the print and electronic media to boost tourist arrivals and diversify source markets, as well as for sponsoring participation of state's travel trade delegations in various travel trade fairs, marts and expos within and outside the country.
- Organization of familiarization tours of leading travel agents, tour operators, and travel writers from within the country and abroad to different parts of the state.
- New infrastructural development and up gradation of the existing and damaged infrastructure.
- Strengthening linkages with the rest of the economy by launching the scheme of conversion of residential houses into guest houses and development of rural tourism.
- Opening of new and lesser known tourist areas and development of infrastructure thereof.

Incentives

Under the J&K Tourism Incentives Rules-2012 an individual, a firm, a public/private limited company would be eligible for incentive provided the project for which the incentive is sought has the prior approval in writing of the Director Tourism Jammu and Kashmir. The incentives available include:

- 30% capital outright investment subsidy on the fixed assets including cost of land for new tourism units. This subsidy is also be available for expansion of the existing units but is restricted on investment made on the extension of the unit only. However, subsidy on both accounts is restricted to an upper ceiling of Rs. 30, 00 lakh and will be available at the time of commissioning of a unit in the specified area.
- New unit investing Rs. 25.00 crore in fixed assets including cost of land in any area of state, will be treated as a 'Prestigious Unit' and a capital outright investment subsidy of Rs. 100.00 lakhs is given to it at the time of commissioning.
- 75% of the actual cost in the case of

non-polluting, noise-free diesel generating sets with a ceiling of Rs.4.00 lakh shall be reimbursed after its successful installation.

- 60% subsidy of the premium up to a ceiling of Rs. 50,000/- only for a period of two years for an entrepreneur to have a new tourism unit insured.
- 40% subsidy of the total cost of the project would be provided to house owners for conversion of their private houses into paying guest houses subject to ceiling of Rs.2.00 lakh in each case.
- 50% of the actual cost of the expenditure on the training of managers and other executives shall be reimbursed subject to the condition that such training courses are conducted by reputed institutions within the country with the prior approval of the government.
- 50% subsidy of the cost of specified adventure/recreation equipment, subject to a maximum of Rs. 7.00 lakh as a onetime measure would be available for establishment of equipment store duly registered with the tourism department.
- 50% subsidy up to a limit of Rs. 1.00 lakh in each case shall be available to registered tourism projects for the purchase of equipment related to the of kitchen, health and hygiene related facilities.
- 50% subsidy for the replacement/purchase of new tourist coaches, with a ceiling of Rs.7.00 lakh, shall be available to Jammu and Kashmir state permit holders plying their coaches on recognised tourist routes for transport of tourists.
- A subsidy of Rs.2.00 lakh shall be available for providing air-

conditioning and for getting toilets/urinals retrofitted in existing tourist coaches in new tourist coaches purchased and operated by permit holders of J&K state plying their coaches on recognised tourist routes.

- 50% subsidy of the cost of office automation/communication networking/computing system and other equipments with a ceiling of Rs.4.00 lakh would be reimbursable to travel agencies registered with tourism departments for up gradation of existing travel agencies in the tourist areas specified in the list as a onetime measure.

Critical issues in Kashmir Tourism

In light of the important role that the tourism industry plays in the Kashmir economy the government should have drafted a tourism policy for proper tourism development. But till now the Ministry of tourism, Government of Jammu and Kashmir has not formulated any tourism policy. Jammu and Kashmir is the only state in the country which is without a tourism policy. Keeping in view the present scenario of tourist inflow to the valley and the competition with other states, it has become very important for the state government that they should come up with a Tourism Policy that will provide guidelines for the tourism sector. Mill and Morrison (1992) and Hall (1994) suggested that the government could play various roles in planning, coordinating, controlling and implementing national tourism policies. Moreover, in a developing country where resources are scarce, an active role by the government in the development of tourism is essential (Jenkins and Henry, 1982), although deregulation and liberalization are important to ensuring a well-organized and developed private sector.

In a developing country where resources are scarce, it is essential for a government to take an active role in the development of tourism (Jenkins and Henry, 1982). Without active government involvement, it is unlikely that a tourism industry would be able to formulate a series of actions that foster and promote the development of tourism. The need for the policy arises because tourism is a multidimensional industry and involves various players in producing the tourism product, both in public and private sector. In order to direct the development of tourism at a destination there has to be a policy with identified targets and a plan to achieve them. This is more so necessary in order to maximise the benefits, remove or prevent the negative impact of uncontrolled mass tourism and go in for sustainable development. Every developer has a tendency to make decisions on development with reference to its own role. Therefore, in order to avoid conflict among actors and also to ensure the optimum utilisation of resources, the policy has to lay down a coordinated framework of objectives so that the actors work out further details along the lines. Another important task to be accomplished through a sound and effective policy is to balance the demand and supply of the tourism industry. Depending upon the potential of the tourism activity in the area, the priority areas and projects need to be identified for development (supply side) and the marketing strategy (demand side) has also to focus on the relevant tourist group only. The situation of imbalance could be the tourist expectations aroused due to generic publicity of the areas and tourists from all segments like adventure, pilgrimage, sight-seeing, nature lovers visiting the area with their own agenda and returning dissatisfied due to the non availability of facilities. Equally

undesirable scenario would be a situation of excess supply when the infrastructure is created but due to lack of promotional efforts to the right segment, there is under utilisation of capacity.

As the process of creation and utilisation of capacity generates socio-economic and environmental effects, the policy has to aim at balancing the number and activities of the tourists and the capacity of the resource system to support them without degradation of the resources that make the tourism product. These roles will vary according to the situation and needs of the industry

Due to the absence of tourism policy unplanned infrastructural development is going on throughout the valley which results to various ecological problems. In Kashmir valley tourism has developed without planning. Three decades of such development increased tourist arrivals and foreign exchange receipts but led to serious environmental and socio-cultural problems and the degradation of the tourism product.

Tourism has developed in Kashmir without proper planning. Essentially, tourism has grown with government encouragement and private sector participation but without a blueprint on the type of tourism desired, growth rate control, and consent by local communities which are the arenas for guest-host interactions. Lack of planning soon leads to serious environmental and socio-cultural problems. Tourism becomes uncompetitive and is ultimately unsustainable. Hill stations and lakes of Kashmir are examples of tourism development without a plan. Consequently, serious difficulties threaten further development. The hill stations of Gulmarg, Sonamarg and Pahalgam have become congested, the physical

infrastructure has broken down, and local communities are up in arms with the authorities on revenue. The rationale for tourism planning is threefold: developing and managing tourism in an integrated, controlled and sustainable way; generating optimal benefits for the stakeholders; and minimising environmental and socio-cultural problems (Inskeep, 1994). Although many countries prepared tourism plans in the 1960s and 1970s it was not until the 1980s when international recognition was given to the role of tourism in development and the need to include tourism in national planning (Inskeep, 1991; de Kadt, 1979). Planning provides the rationale for utilising relatively large financial resources from a country's treasury. Such resources are required to develop infrastructure such as airports and hotels. As resources are frequently in short supply in Africa, there must be prior planning and policy justification for the development of tourism.

Only planning can guide the type of tourism desired, the respective roles of the government, the private sector and local communities, and the source markets of the tourists (Inskeep, 1994). This is the approach of integrated tourism planning which also recognises local interests in tourism development (Murphy, 1985; Gunn, 1988; Inskeep, 1991; 1994). Without local support and involvement in the planning, development and implementation of tourism projects, medium- and long-term tourism activity would be impossible. True local participation as a partnership with the national and international interests can help sustainable tourism development. It is only governments which have the power to provide the legal and financial framework which tourism requires.

Opportunities

Nature of Kashmir's tourism product.

Kashmir is internationally renowned for its natural beauty, rich cultural heritage and its hospitable people. The valley has been paradise for tourists since ages and has been a traditional haunt for lovers of beauty and adventurous travelers. Kashmir as a tourist destination offers the maximum opportunities for entertainment, enjoyment, adventure and travel. Historians, Kings, Poets and travelers had praised the natural beauty of Kashmir. Kashmir's greatest historian Kalhan writes about his native land: "It is a country where the sun shines mildly, big and lofty houses, learning, Saffron, icy cool water and grapes rare in Heaven are plentiful here - Kailash is the best place in the three worlds (Tri-lok), Himalayas the best place in Kailash, and Kashmir the best place in Himalayas".

Renowned Sanskrit poet Kalidas writes about the valley: "The place is more beautiful than the heaven and is the benefactor of supreme bliss and happiness. It seems to me that I am taking a bath in the lake of nectar here. Sir Walter Lawrence writes "The valley is an emerald set in pearls; a land of lakes, clear streams, green turf, magnificent trees and mighty mountains where the air is cool, and the water sweet, where men are strong, and women vie with the soil in fruitfulness." He further writes that the valley contains everything which should make life enjoyable. There is sport varied and excellent; there is scenery for the artist and the layman, mountain for the mountaineer, flower for the Botanist, a vast field for the Geologist and magnificent ruins for the archaeologist. Praising the beauty of the valley the Mughal Emperor, Jahangir, said,

"If there is ever a heaven on earth, it's here, it's here, it's here".

Kashmir contains relatively abundant, lush green forests, mountain ranges, enchanting geographical landscape, lakes and pleasant climate which apart from providing a good scenic view are an attractive source of sporting activities and has the Potential to cater almost all tourist tastes.

Research for Promotion and Marketing:

The expansion of the tourism industry in Kashmir calls for up to date, appropriate, comprehensive, reliable and timely statistics for policy analysis, market research, budgetary allocation and programme development and management. The department of tourism is only compiling the tourist data of tourists visiting the valley from other states and countries only. Except for Gulmarg and Pahalgam resorts no statistical data is being maintained about the tourist arrivals at various tourist destinations of the valley. No research is done about tourist carrying capacity, environmental impact assessment, the economic impact of tourism, its environmental consequences and the potential for ecotourism development. Tourism industry and its products needs effective marketing decisions so as to match these decisions with the changing needs and result in the balance between demand and supply. In recent years the number of visitor arrivals has increased with various ethnic compositions hence research into the characteristics, behaviour, preferences and expectations of these visitors is crucial, as it will reveal the different needs of different nationalities of tourists. The results of this research will be useful in infrastructure planning, product

development, service provision and marketing. Further-more, the fact that tourism industry of Kashmir is on the revival stage and is competing in the national and global market for its share of tourists means there is a need for more analytical and qualitative studies concerning the perceptions, expectations and satisfaction of tourists, and more extensive surveys into the lifestyle oriented leisure activities of the foreign market. A research in the area of determinants of demand and visitor expenditure pattern is pertinent to the types of campaigns and programmes to undertake. The more we know about visitor spending profiles the greater are the opportunities for increasing the cost effectiveness of initiatives by the department of tourism government of Jammu and Kashmir. Undertaking of greater promotion and marketing campaign will assist in achieving higher tourist arrivals in Kashmir.

Increased Demand for Nature:

Nature with its full glory and diversity has always been captivating to man. Realizing the uncompensated catastrophe that modern tourism generates, the patagonists of sustainable development emphasize the need for making resilience to nature. The growing concern among tourists for cleaner environment has fostered a strong desire on them to share the experience at destinations well known for their natural and cultural attraction. No wonder, after many decades of mass tourism concomitant with industrial revolution and deteriorating ecosystem, today the option is nature/eco-tourism, viz tourism basically depending on natural attractions in pollution free environment. Now a day's people are becoming less

interested in traditional vacations and instead want to travel new destinations, including remote and exotic places. The nature based tourism is and will be the fastest growing trend in the world wide tourism industry. The interest in natural areas can be attributed to change in life style, development of better technologies, and trend among people seeking refuge from the high pressure pace of living, finding escape in natural environment. The nature of Kashmir offers varied attractions to the tourists who always make Kashmir a land of great fascination and charm. Due to its rich nature based resources which is the USP of Kashmir, the development of ecotourism has huge potential and importance. The search for an alternative to mass tourism is fostered by the growing concern for environment, global environment movements and fast deteriorating ecosystem that supplement the ecological balance. The several alternative forms to mass tourism in Kashmir can be wildlife tourism, adventure tourism, health tourism, rural tourism, ecotourism, nature tourism, green tourism and farm tourism etc. These forms of nature based tourism offers numerous prospects to potential entrepreneurs, mainly the indigenous people. Its major strength draws from the fact that it truly blends with the Kashmir's rural structure and provides a unique opportunity for rural population to participate in the tourism activities. Kashmir's natural environment combined with its distinctive cultural heritage will give Kashmir an added advantage in its pursuit for ecotourism development.

Niche Markets:

Niche market include catering to special events, study missions like ecotourism,

sport and leisure like jet set golfers and tapping the youth travel market in educational and cross country exposure trips (Chiang, 1999). For Kashmir there are growing opportunities for increasing visitor arrivals by tapping the specialised markets such as health tourism, honeymoon tourism and MICE tourism. There is also this opportunity of growing specialised markets especially those where Kashmir has a natural resource base and competitive advantage such as skiing, ice-skating, trekking, mountaineering, hot air ballooning, white water rafting, golfing and angling. The youth travel market especially in the area of education can also be targeted by signing memorandum of understandings with various Indian and foreign universities for student exchange programmes and reservation of seats for outside students in various international professional programmes in various universities of Kashmir.

Development of Tourism Culture:

Development of tourism culture at tourism destinations is the pre requisition for the successful tourism. In this regard there is dire need of tourism awareness among the host population. The concerned authorities need to conduct special awareness and training programmes to sensitise the host population and especially the stakeholders. These awareness and training programmes need to be conducted at both the primary tourist destinations as well as in the areas indirectly related to tourism trade. Through such measures the authorities will succeed in incorporating a responsible and tourist friendly mindset among the stakeholders and host population. Besides the host population will be apprised regarding the impacts of tourism and its contribution

in overall socio-economic development and role of tourism in conservation and international understanding.

Challenges

The major challenges which the tourism industry of Kashmir is facing at present may be summarised as follows:

Lack of proper infrastructure:

Provision of proper tourist infrastructure at tourist destinations is the pre requisition for the overall tourism development. Although the term infrastructure refers to all resources required for the establishment of an organisation, we normally use it to refer to some components of the economic infrastructure. These are public works and transport, public utilities such as power, telecommunications, water, sanitation and sewage and solid waste collection and disposal (World Bank, 1994). Lack of adequate and efficient utility supplies and under-developed infrastructure in case of transport and accommodation is an obstacle in the tourism development of the valley. The National Highway 1A (Srinagar-Jammu) via Banihal is the only road connecting the valley with rest of the world. This road accounts for more than 80 percent of the total passenger traffic. This road remains mostly blocked due to landslides, rain and snowfall and causes much inconvenience to the visiting tourists. Although a new road namely "Mughal Road" is being constructed as an alternative highway for the valley of Kashmir but its pace of development is very slow. The poor conditions of roads connecting the valley's tourist attractions and the traffic jams causes much inconvenience and displeasure to the visiting tourists. The present research

indicates that tourists are unhappy about the condition of roads and heavy traffic jams enroute to various tourist destinations of the valley. The road connecting Srinagar with various tourists' destinations like Yousmarg, Sonamarg, Manasbal, Gurez, Lolab, Bungus, Doodpathri, Veerinag, Kokernag and Aharbal has seriously deteriorated because of low maintenance standards and consequently results to uncomfortable and prolonged travel.

Government of India in the year November 2002 started the construction work for extension of railway link from Udhampur to Qazigund and the project was supposed to be completed in August 2007 but the slow pace of work and lack of adequate funds from the central government has been coming in its way.

International tourism in the valley of Kashmir has received a serious setback due to absence of international airport. Though the Srinagar airport had been declared as an international airport but presently no international or chartered flights are operating from here. Provision of international flights to and from Srinagar will pave way for attracting the foreign tourists to this part of the world.

Lack of adequate accommodation for varying tastes at various destinations is also one of the major challenges for the tourism industry of Kashmir. There has been increase in the bed capacity at Srinagar and Pahalgam but many other destinations of the valley like Gulmarg, Sonamarg, Manasbal, Yousmarg and Aharbal have short of accommodation. Besides, many other tourist destinations like Daksum, Veerinag, Doodpathri, Lolab, Bungus, Gurez and Dachigam are such where either no accommodation is

available or very little or insufficient accommodation facilities are available.

Lack of basic amenities like water and electric supply, telecommunication facilities and destination specific services like adventure and rescue equipments for adventure activities and knowledgeable guides at wildlife destinations and heritage cites of the valley of Kashmir adversely effects tourist movements.

Environmental Impacts:

Mountain areas, as distinct from other physiographic units, have certain objective conditions or specificities (Jodha 1991). These conditions of inaccessibility, fragility, diversity, 'niche' or comparative advantage, and marginality add a particularly critical dimension to tourism in the mountains and call for particular ways of responding to the objective conditions. (Jodha 1991 and Sharma 1994). Although mass tourism leads to the over utilisation of the extant resources, the problem is worsened by the heavy concentration of tourists in the lakes and hill stations namely Dal lake, Amarnath cave, Gulmarg, Pahalgam and Sonamarg which are most popular with visitors visiting the valley. Dal lake is one of the prime tourist attractions and an important tourism component of Kashmir's tourism industry. As a consequence majority of the establishments that cater to tourists are located in and around the lake. Spontaneous and unplanned tourism infrastructural development as well as increased tourism activities, in and around the lake have taken a toll of the lake's recreational and scenic values. The degradation of the lake ecology, environment and assimilative capacity of the lake are the major tourism led, development induced activities that are

impacting the environmental carrying capacity.

The flow of pilgrims to the holly cave of Amarnath situated at an altitude of 3888mts has been increasing continuously over the period of time which has resulted to ecological imbalances and environmental degradation of this mountain eco-system. During the year 2012 above 6.5 lac pilgrims visited the cave, during peak time over 20,000 pilgrims are at the cave against the recommended 3000 per day, plundering the glaciers. Geologists have time and again raised the fears of environmental degradation, ecological imbalance and adverse impact on the Nehar glacier, situated at a height of 4,200 meters around Baltal near Sonamarg, from the heavy rush of pilgrims. The ecology, the environment and the health of the glacier can be under severe threat if the Baltal route to the holly cave is frequented by thousands of pilgrims (The Tribune July 5,2005). The forest land handed over to Shri Amarnath Shrine Board (SASB) at Baltal near Sonamarg houses the Nahar and Thajiwas glaciers. Environmentalists have often raised concern that apart from the sewage generated by pilgrims, they also throw tons of non-biodegradable items made from polythene and other plastics in the water resources in the mountain area. This has resulted in the deterioration of water quality. Ironically, while central government has taken tough measures restricting the tourist and pilgrimage traffic to save the Gangatic glaciers, it tends to side step the Kashmir glaciers, which are source of water for Indus and Jhelum. Unfortunately the central government overlooked a report prepared by Dr Nitish Sengupta in 1996 asking for regulating Amarnath-bound

pilgrims to preserve the fragile ecology and environment of the region. It is interesting to note that the government applied Dr Nitish Sengupta's report in Gangotri in Uttarakhand, where in May 2008 they issued a notification restricting the number of pilgrims and tourists to 150 a day to Gomukh, the origin of the Holy river Ganges. Gomukh is as holy a shrine for Hindus as Amarnath in the southern mountains of Kashmir. To save this ecologically fragile mountain region from environmental deterioration there is immediate need of regulating Amarnath bound pilgrims.

In case of the Dal lake, hill stations of Gulmarg, Pahalgam, and Sonamarg and Amarnath cave carrying capacities have been exceeded. As a result, these destinations are facing increasing environmental deterioration are losing their visitor appeal. Since the valley of Kashmir depends heavily on tourism for its development, there are intense economic pressures on the people to over exploit their natural resources which have resulted to ecological and environmental degradation. However, when the only way to obtain the meal is to mine the available natural resources, the area is going to lose. If we have to save our precious ecology and environment, the authorities must provide people with alternatives to destruction.

Political Instability:

Political instability in the valley of Kashmir has all along inhibited the growth of tourism in the region, the industry, however, suffered a great blow with the outbreak of armed struggle in 1988. The resultant political disturbance stopped the potential tourists from visiting the valley of Kashmir. The tourist traffic during this

period has fallen from heights of sky to the ground touching the zero level as shown in the table-1. The travel advisories of most foreign countries later advised their citizens to avoid travel to Kashmir, in light of the instability in the valley. The political instability has been the prominent obstacle and irritant to the smooth functioning of tourism industry in the valley which has prolonged the growth of tourism industry and it would take a long period for the industry to enjoy a pre 1988 business. Investment in tourism industry in Kashmir is regarded as having the highest risk as compared to investment in other sectors. The high risk is mainly due to cyclical nature of tourism business which is highly correlated to various volatile external and internal factors such as economic performance of source and destination markets, cost of imported goods, variation in exchange rates, dependence on vulnerable transport and communication systems, impact and frequent incidences of natural disasters and above all the political uncertainty in the valley.

Competitiveness:

Kashmir tourism is meeting with stiff competition with other north Indian states especially with Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand. During the last two decades of political instability the tourists moved towards these states that have over the time developed good infrastructure to cater the increasing demand of the tourists and had also diversified their tourism products. To cope with the competition, Kashmir needs to upgrade its infrastructure and the quality of its tourism product, and conduct an aggressive promotional and marketing campaign both within and outside the country. The

tourism promotion and marketing efforts made by the ministry of tourism government of Jammu and Kashmir in association with the private travel trade for the revival of tourism both at home and overseas has brought fruit full results in the recent past. Also Kashmir's reputation as a tourism destination is passed on by word of mouth by people who have already visited the valley. Kashmir's varied ecology, environment and natural beauty are also subject of many documentary films, books and magazine articles. These provide free publicity to the Kashmir tourism. But all these are no longer sufficient for the valley of Kashmir to maintain a competitive edge. Department of tourism, government of Jammu and Kashmir has tourism offices in Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Hyderabad, Kolkata and Ahmadabad. These offices can serve as a best tool for promotion and marketing of Kashmir tourism if their scope of activities is increased and budget allocation for them is enhanced. Domestic tourism has always been more significant than international tourism to the valley of Kashmir. The large number of tourists visiting the valley originates from, Maharashtra, Gujarat, West Bengal, Delhi and Uttar Pradesh. The study shows that major tourist generating market for Kashmir is West Bengal, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Delhi and Uttar Pradesh. The uneven spread of tourists indicates the inadequacy of promotional efforts of the department of tourism to attract large number of visitors from different parts of the country.

The place of origin of Kashmir bound tourists is wide spread as the globe itself. In the beginning Europeans were the major market for Kashmir. With the betterment in means of transportation, Kashmir became more accessible and tourists from different parts of the world started visiting it, including as diverse as countries Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Hong Kong, Italy, Japan, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, the Netherlands, New Zealand, South Africa, Spain, Switzerland, U.K, USA, and Germany. During the last decade there has been increase in the tourist arrivals from Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore, UK, USA, and Israel. This market needs to be diversified to insure the stability of tourist flow. The tourist market (Japan, Korea, Australia and New Zealand) and the Middle East have not been exploited.

Another strategy for increasing Kashmir's competitiveness is provincial cooperation within the state of Jammu and Kashmir. Provincial cooperation is intended to encourage the movement of tourists across the three provinces of Jammu and Kashmir and to establish joint packages for multi-destination travelers. At present the tourist traffic to the shrine of Vaishnu Devi is above 11 million and the distance between Katra and Kashmir is just 266km's. Besides this after the operation of direct flights to Ladakh from Delhi the foreign tourist traffic to this province has increased manifold. The provision of intra province tourism by establishing joint packages for multi destination travel can give boost to tourism in Kashmir.

Table-2
SWOT Analysis of Kashmir Tourism

Strengths	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Innumerable natural resources. · Pleasant weather. · Various kinds of tourism available to be exploited. · Base/terrain for various adventure tourism activities. · Famous for tourism since ages and a known tourist destination. · Experienced people due to past tourism booms. · Rich cultural heritage and religious harmony. · World class handicrafts · Archaeological and historical places. · Hospitable people. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Increased disposable income of various classes of people. · Potential of Kashmir to cater almost all tourist tastes. · Increased demand for nature. · Development of unexplored and lesser known areas. · Scope to develop adventure, health tourism. · Scope of making the tourist spots more attractive. · Research and development to attract more tourists. · Development of tourism culture. · Promotion and marketing.
<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · No tourism policy. · Unplanned infrastructural development. · Tourism stress on few developed destinations only. · Lack of investment. · Lack of hygiene. · Poor connectivity with rest of the country. · Poor promotional and marketing activities. · Lack of coordination between different agencies. · Lack of trained human resource. · Lack of proper research. · Limited availability of tourist information offices in potential tourist generating market. 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Absence of proper tourism policy. · Environmental degradation. · Political Instability. · Harassment by the security agencies. · Diversion of tourists to neighbouring states. · Strong competition within the region. · Lack of awareness among the mass people regarding the benefits of tourism. · Shortage of sufficient accommodation, food and beverage services and other amusement services and night tourism. · Negative media coverage.

Suggestions and Recommendations:

The following suggestions and recommendations are made on the basis of the present research and the present scenario of tourism industry in the valley of Kashmir:

1. Formulation of Tourism Policy: For the overall sustainable tourism development formulation of proper tourism policy for the state of Jammu and Kashmir is essential. The important elements of the much desired tourism policy are recommended as follows:

- Tourism development should be integrated in to the overall development policy, planning and strategy of the region.
- It should be planned and organised systematically so that it does not result in serious ecological, social and economic problems.
- All ancillary services should be designed to reflect and represent Kashmir's distinctive architecture styles and local material.
- It should be put on operation in an efficient and integrated manner to meet the needs of national and international tourists.
- Emphasis should be placed on employment of local persons and be given maximum opportunity for career development and job satisfaction.
- The local population should be educated so that they could understand the importance of tourism and its role in area's economic development.

2. Infrastructural development: Transport is one of the primary components of tourism industry and lack of convenient and comfortable transport make the

tourists visit tiresome and uncomfortable. In view of this, the whole transport system in the valley, both air and surface transport need to be developed properly as per the need of the hour. The authorities should make all efforts to ensure the modernisation of the Srinagar-Jammu highway and should speed up the construction work of Mughal road that will enable the valley to have a round the year tourist traffic. Roads connecting various tourist destinations need to be improved immediately with provision of way side amenities for the visiting tourists. The railway authorities should also speed up the construction work of Udhampur-Banihal railway track and special funds should be making available for this important project to give stimulation to the tourism industry of the valley of Kashmir. The international air transport services should be operated from and to the Srinagar airport with provision of night landing facility for both domestic and international flights.

3. Construction of Adequate Accommodation: Construction and development of different classes of accommodation to cater the demand of both high end and budgetary class, especially at the new coming tourist destinations and at the traditional destinations having either no are little accommodation. At the hill stations the new accommodation by way of hutments and tented accommodation should be encouraged and extended in conformity with the local environs. In addition, accommodation units should be encouraged to purchase locally made products that can be efficiently produced domestically such as hotel furniture and food ingredients. In light of the high leakage of tourism earnings, it is recommended that the government identify appropriate support services

pertinent to the tourism industry to minimise the leakage factor. Agro based products for example will reduce imported food content. The authorities should also work in partnership with the private sector to set up appropriate support services which will further increase linkages with the rest of economy.

Besides, in view of emergence of budgetary and youth tourist traffic setting of tourist villages and camping sites at appropriate places with reasonable comforts is required to be considered and provided. For the speedy development of lodging and boarding facilities at newly opened tourism destinations private sector should be encouraged to come forward and the government must lease land to them and arrange fiscal benefits, facilitate imports and provide marketing and training opportunities.

4. Regulating Tourist Flow: The mountain regions of Kashmir especially the hill stations of Gulmarg, Sonamarg, Pahalgam and the holly cave of Amarnath receives lakh of tourists every year. Unfortunately, most of these places lack adequate facilities of transport, accommodation, waste disposal and other amenities for the ever growing number of tourists and pilgrims. Also, there is a gross lack of regulatory mechanism for infrastructure creation, management, and for controlling the tourist inflow in such sites. As a result the sensitive ecosystems and cultural values of these areas are facing pressures far beyond their carrying capacities. There is an urgent need to develop and implement guidelines for sustainable pilgrimage in the region encompassing the concept of carrying capacity of the area and adoption of "best practice" norms on the pattern of regulation of tourist traffic to Gomukh in Utrakhnad and appropriate land-use planning for infrastructure construction to avoid or

minimize damage to sensitive ecosystems and despoiling of landscapes.

5. Promotion of Sustainable Tourism: Sustainable tourism enhances and preserves our natural and cultural heritage and improves Kashmir's quality of life. Tourism development needs to balance economic viability, environmental conservation and social impacts. Sustainable tourism endeavours to minimize environmental and cultural impacts while contributing to economic development. The long-term success of the industry depends on business owners and operators being stewards of the environment and adopting quality practices. Promotion of sustainable tourism through adoption of "best practice" norms of eco-friendly and responsible tourism, creation of appropriate facilities and access to ecological resources, and multi-stakeholder partnerships to enable local communities to gain livelihoods, while leveraging financial, technical, and managerial capacities of investors. All players in tourism like government, non-governmental organizations, tourism industry and the tourists have to do their bit to promote sustainable tourism. Inskeep (1991) discuss the role of various actors in tourism process and suggest the following actions.

- a) The government should:
 - Promote and undertake area and sector specific research into the environmental, cultural and economic effects of tourism,
 - Support the development of tourism economic models to help define appropriate types of economic activities,
 - Develop standards and regulations of environmental and cultural impact

assessment,

- Design and implement the public consultation strategies,
 - Design and implement educational and awareness programmes.
- b) The non-government organisations should do the following:
- Should take part in tourism planning process.
 - Should continue to seek local support for tourism development.
 - Should become more involved in public education.
 - Should undertake local research and data collection and offer information to other agencies.
- c) The tourism industry should undertake the following activities:
- Protect the biosphere,
 - Sustaining the use of resources,
 - Reducing and disposing the waste by recycling and reusing,
 - Adopting energy saving devices,
 - Incorporating environmental values in management operations,
 - Providing complete and credible information to the tourists.
- d) The individual tourist should:
- Learn to respect human and natural heritage,
 - Adopting environmentally responsible tour operator,
 - Refrain from purchasing the products and services which endanger the environment,
 - Follow environmental regulations,
 - Supporting conservation activities.

6. Development of Ecotourism:

Operationalization of ecotourism in various modes, such as village tourism, nature tourism, wildlife tourism, trekking/adventure tourism, and cultural tourism in the valley and institutionalization of tourism management at the community level may be useful. For ecotourism promotion the following approach should be adopted:

- 5-Star approach in respect of hospitality industry should be replaced by home stay approach to promote mountain tourism.
- Eco-tourism villages, parks, sanctuaries and other areas should be identified to establish a primary base for ecotourism.
- Village communities, especially youths, and rural women should be involved in Ecotourism.
- Restriction should be placed in terms of visitors per day/ per group to the eco-tourist sites in order to minimise adverse impact and maintain the sustainability of the eco-tourist destination.
- Restrictions on the entry of vehicles should be imposed in sensitive ecological sites.
- Fund raised should be used for basic resources, eco-tourism element conservation, and education and awareness campaigns for visitor/ host community sensitization.
- Incentive structures should be developed by according specific roles to the locals in management of tourism and allied industries. Their capacity building in different segments of the enterprise should be built so that they feel involved and react in a responsible manner.

- Local art, crafts, cuisines, and dishes should be promoted and made an integral part of tourist experience in order to ensure that most benefits go to locals and, at the same time, their cultural integrity/ entity is not lost in the face of acculturation and cultural drift.
- It should be mandatory for expedition to remove and take out the garbage, refuse and particularly the non-degradable materials. Expeditions should be asked to leave a deposit as security with an appropriate authority to ensure that the regulation is met.
- Best practices on commercial trekking should be imposed on a mandatory basis in consultation with institutions having the necessary expertise and Government approval.
- Interactive websites relating to mountain access, trails, availability of facilities should be set up which should also provide the facility of online request, approval for visit to parks, restricted sites and payment of fees, etc.
- Creation of log/ wooden huts should be promoted in busy mountain areas.

7. Promotion and Use of Local Art & Craft: Promotion and use of local art & craft cuisines, etc., along with organizing tourism fairs and festivals will boost tourism in the valley and will provide the visiting tourists an opportunity to experience the rich cultural heritage of Kashmir.

8. Promoting Awareness: There is a strong need for promoting awareness both among local communities and visitors about various issues pertaining to the specificities and sensitivity of the Kashmir environment. Effective use of media and

imparting training through informal conservation education is required. Various research organizations and NGOs from the region can play important role in this context. Apart from awareness and inculcating interest among school and college students, the programme subsequently needs to attract and motivate other stakeholder groups. In particular, there is a need for designing a special course on "Kashmir Ecology and People" and making it mandatory for those serving the region as administrators, natural resource planners, policy makers, and military & paramilitary forces, etc. The Institutions mandated for Kashmir Research & Development need to be strengthened to design and implement such courses in collaboration with Institutions of higher learning and Administrative Training Centres.

9. Political Stability: Kashmir government should give high priority to restoration of political stability in the valley. The Kashmir problem calls for the national and international efforts for the final resolution of the problem. Appropriate measures need to be undertaken for creating sense of security and confidence among the local population. Besides, the government and department of tourism should counter the negative publicity campaign carried out by the outside print and electronic media and made all possible efforts to stop negative publicity regarding Kashmir tourism.

10. Promotion and Marketing: Kashmir tourism must consider the effective use of the Information technology for the promotional activity of this industry. For this purpose an effective system of communication and proper media planning is required. Large scale advertising through national and international print and electronic media, tourism literature,

installation of attractive hoardings at airports and railway stations at metropolitan cities is direly needed for the promotion of Kashmir tourism.

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Sufism a Heritage in Itself for Touristic Interpretation

Syed Ahmad Rizwan

ABSTRACT

Sufism and dargahs have been a site of visitation and often are included in 'rites of passages'. These are reminders of early wandering of holy people for discovery of 'self' and to enlighten 'others'. In south Asia sufi ascetics who would wander through the rolling hills of the countryside came from the west, from Iran and Afghanistan and wandered, finally settled in communities far away from their own, helping people and talking to strangers. The ascetics became saints. Wherever these ascetics - called pirs - died, the site became a dargah — a sacred site. The Dargahs, Sufi shrines that abound on the subcontinent, are testament to this story. They are in Pakistan, India, and Bangladesh. The dargahs are in cities and rural areas, on the sides of main roads, and tucked away in villages. As technological development created railway systems and highways, and urban planning took hold, the dargahs have often been deliberately preserved. The most important dargahs in India are the Dargah of Nizamuddin Auliya in New Delhi and the Dargah Sharif at Ajmer, Rajasthan. These both belong to the Chishti order of Sufism. At these dargahs the lost art of travel could be retraced. The current paper being theoretical in nature tries to view Sufism as a tourism product classified into "experience economy". It would help interpreters, guides and tourists to understand this new product and create new mythologies that give us a sense of hope and understanding. Knowingly performing aspect of Sufism has been excluded as that would have extended the paper to considerable length and would be discussed as a separate study.

Keywords: Sufi; Pir ; Mawlay ; Shaikh ; Naugaza-Pir; Barakah ;Sunnah.

Intorduction

Sufi's philosophy of 'Sulah-e-Kul' or 'peace to all,' a formal policy of multiculturalism and inclusivity was propagated and practiced by these religious people. Even today, people of all faith and religion often visit the Dargah. Dargah is by origin a Muslim sacred space, Indians of all faiths feel culturally connected to the Sufi tradition and its history. People visit the Shrine when they or a loved one are sick. They visit it to seek blessings and make wishes. Slowly it will merge into wellness

and spiritual tourism market.

Sufism is unique: religion, food, music, and tradition has blended into a heterogeneous Indian culture, the way words from Arabic and Persian had been integrated into the language. At a time, when religions seem discrete, and polarized, Sufism look deeper at this example of syncretism and hybridity.

Research Method

The current paper has been compiled mainly from secondary sources and

Syed Ahmad Rizwan, Consultant, Al Jazeera, Sultanate of Oman.

syedahmadrizwan@gmail.com

observation method. The researcher has himself been interpreting Sufism for almost decade and a half and has done extensive reading on the subject. Besides this many interviews were conducted, lectures attended of theologians, anthropologists, cultural enthusiasts and interpreters to chart out the easiest language for interpreting Sufism as a concept for tourism.

Islam's Monastic Order

Islam like Christianity developed its monastic order later and saints the underlying basis, of which is the mystic interpretation of the religious life known as Sufism. Sufism can be described as the interiorization and intensification of Islamic faith and practice.

The original sense of 'Sufi' seems to have been 'one who wears wool' because in the eighth century word was applied to muslims whose ascetic inclination led them to wear coarse and uncomfortable woolen garments. Gradually it came to designate a group who differentiated themselves from others by emphasis on certain 'sunnahs' or traditional way and life of prophet. By the ninth century of gerund form 'tasawwu' literally 'being a Sufi' or 'Sufism' was adopted. (Badlick 1989).

The Sufis have looked upon themselves as Muslims who take seriously god's call to perceive his presence both in the world and in the self. They tend to stress inwardness over outwardness, contemplation over action, spiritual development, over legalism, and cultivation of the soul over social interaction. On the theological level, Sufis speak of God's mercy, gentleness, and beauty far more than they discuss the wrath, severity, and majesty that play important roles in both *fiqh* i.e., jurisprudence and *kalam* i.e., dogmatic

theology. Sufism has been associated not only with specific institutions and individuals but also with an enormously rich literature, especially poetry.

Given the difficulty of providing an exact definition of Sufism, it is not easy to discern, which muslims have been Sufis, and which have not. Being a Sufi certainly has nothing to do with the Suuni/Shi'i split nor with the schools of jurisprudence. It has no special connection with geography, though it has played a greater role in some locations than in others. There is no necessary correlation with family. Both men and (less commonly) women become Sufis, and even children participate in Sufi ritual activities.

If one wants to call the Sufi dimension 'mysticism' then one needs an exceedingly broad description of the role that mysticism plays in religion, such as that provided by Louis Dupre, who writes that religions 'retain their vitality only as long as their members continue to believe in a transcendent reality with which they can in some way communicate by direct experience') Dupre (1987).

Sufism: A Modified Gurukul

Like other branches of Islamic learning, Sufism is passed down from master (typically called a *shaykh*) to disciple. The master's oral teachings give life to the articles of faith, and without his transmission, *dhikr* remembrance of God's name is considered invalid if not dangerous. As with *hadith*, transmission is traced back through a chain of authorities (called *silsilah*) to the Prophet (PBUH). The typical initiation rite is modelled on the handclasp known as *bayat al-ridwan* (the oath taking of God's good pleasure) that the Prophet (PBUH) exacted from his companions at *Hudayhiyah*, referred to in the Qur'an, surah 48.10 and 48.18. The

rite is understood to transmit an invisible spiritual force or blessing (*barakah*) that makes possible the transformation of the discipline's soul. The master's fundamental concern— as in other forms of Islamic learning – is to shape the character (*khuluq*) of the disciple so that it conforms to the prophetic model.

If moulding the character of students and disciples was a universal concern of Islamic teaching, the Sufis developed a science of human character traits that had no, religion and was beyond boundaries.

Sufi Orders:

Though, Sufism is found so extensively it is not the religion of a sect. It is rather a natural revolt of the human heart against the cold formalism of a ritualistic religion. It is an attitude of the mind and heart towards God and problems of life which is as different from strictly orthodox Islam. Sufis tended to gather themselves around men of piety and spiritual gifts and form themselves in religious orders. These have taken special form of organization.

Sufi orders represent one of the most important forms of personal piety and social organization in the Islamic world. In most areas, an order is called a *tariqah* (pl. *turuq*), which is the Arabic word for 'path' or 'way.' The term *tariqah* is used for both the social organization and the special devotional exercises that are the basis of the order's ritual and structure. As a result, the 'Sufi orders' or tariqahs include a broad spectrum of activities in muslim history and society.

Mystical explanations of Islam emerged early in muslim history, and there were pious mystics who developed their personal spiritual paths involving devotional practices, recitations, and literature of piety. These mystics, or Sufis, sometimes came into conflict with

authorities in the Islamic community and provided an alternative to the more legalistic orientation of many of the '*ulama*'. However, Sufis gradually became important figures in the religious life of the general population and began to gather around themselves groups of followers, who were identified and bound together by the special mystic path (*tariqah*) of the teacher. By the twelfth century (the fifth century in the Islamic era), these paths began to provide the basis for more permanent fellowships, and Sufi orders emerged as major social organization in the Islamic community. The orders have taken a variety of forms throughout the Islamic world. These range from the simple preservation of the *tariqah*, as a set of devotional exercise to vast interregional organizations with carefully defined structures. The orders also include the short-lived organizations that developed around particular individuals and more long-lasting structures with institutional coherence. The orders are not restricted to particular classes, although the orders in which the educated urban elite participated had different perspectives from the orders that reflected a more broadly based popular piety, and specific practices and approaches varied from region to region.

In all Sufi orders there were central prescribed rituals which involved regular group meeting for recitations of prayers, poems, and selections from the Qur'an. These meetings were usually described as acts 'remembering God' or *dhikr*. In addition, daily devotional exercises for the followers were also set, as were other activities of special meditation, asceticism, and devotion. Some of the special prayers of early Sufis became widely used, while the structure and format of the ritual was the distinctive character provided by the individual who established the tariqah.

The founder was the spiritual guide for all followers in the order, who would swear a special oath of obedience to him as their *shaykh* or teacher. As orders continued, called a *silsilah*, which stated that the person took the order from a *shaykh* who took it from another shaykh in a line extending back to the founder, and then usually beyond the founder to the prophet Muhammad (PBUH). As orders became firmly established, leadership would pass from one *shaykh* to the next, sometimes within a family line and sometimes on the basis of spiritual seniority within the *tariqah*. At times, a follower would reach a sufficient degree of special distinction that his prayers would represent a recognized subbranch within a larger order; at other times, such a follower might be seen as initiating a whole new *tariqah*.

Within all this diversity, it is difficult to provide a simple account of the development of Sufi orders, but at least some of the main features of the different types of orders and their development can be noted.

Premodern Foundations

Different type of orders developed in the early centuries of *tariqah* formation. These provides important foundation for Sufis orders of modern era.

Large Inclusive Traditions

In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries some major figures emerge as the organizers of orders that were to become the largest in the Islamic world. In some cases the orders may actually have been organized by the immediate followers of the founders. These are Qadiriyyah - Abdul-Qadir Jilani (d. 1166), such crew ardiya-Abu-al-Najib al Suhrawardi (1168), Rifeuiyyah- Ahmad al Rifai (d 1182),

Shadhiliyyah Abu-al-Hasan-al-Shadhili (d 1258) in Egypt and North Africa and Chistiyah-Mun-al-Din Chisti in Central and South Asia.

Orders Based on 'Ancient Ways'

A major style of Sufi order developed within less clearly defined traditions that appealed to the early Sufis, but developed distinctive identities of their own.

Kubrawwiyyah and Maw lauiyyah are orders based on *Junaydi*- Abu-al-Qasim-Al-Junaid (d 910) and *Yasuiyyah* and *Naqshbandiyyah* are orders based on Bistmi— Abu-al-Yazid Bastami (d 874).

Individual Based Order

The founder trace their inspiration from prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and are called Muhammadiyyah eg. *Al Khidr*, *Tijaniyyah*, *Khatmiyyah*, *Samusiyyah*.

Shrine Tariqahs

Local orders centered on particular shrines or families. Tombs of pious teachers are focus of popular piety and rituals surrounding the ceremonies of membrane and homage become a local *tariqah* eg. Tombs of the 'marabouts' in North Africa, various pilgrimage centres of Central Asia.

Sufi Orders in Present Scenario

There is an underlying continuity of experience in the Sufi orders which provides an important backdrop to specific modern developments. The rituals of popular piety among Muslims— educated and uneducated, rural and urban—cannot be ignored. Although, over the past three centuries educated Muslims have paid less attention to the more miraculous and magical elements of saint visitation and other aspects of popular Sufi piety, the intellectual appeal of Islamic mysticism has remained strong, and the

sense of social cohesion provided by the Sufi organizations has been important, especially in areas like the Muslim Central Asian societies of the former Soviet Union. Popular participation in regular Sufi gatherings and support for various types of *tariqahs* remain at remarkably high levels throughout the Muslim world. Estimates of membership in Sufi orders in Egypt, for example, are in the millions, in contrast to the hundreds or thousands in the more militant Islamic revivalist organizations.

Many observers also thought that as societies became more modern and industrialized, the social functions of the Sufi teachers and their organizations would decline. In the mid-twentieth century, many analyses painted a picture of reduced and possibly disappearing Sufi orders. Despite the opposition and the predictions, however, Sufi orders continue to be remarkably strong in most of the Islamic world and also in communities of Muslims where they are minorities.

The Sufi orders continue to provide vehicles for articulating an inclusive Islamic identity with a greater emphasis on individual devotional piety and small-group experience. The contrast with the more legalist orientation with its emphasis on the community as a whole is a long-standing polarity in Islamic history. It is clear that the great transformations of the modern era have not destroyed the basis for this polarity.

In the changing contexts of the late twentieth century, the traditions of the Sufi orders have special strengths in situations where there is a high degree of religious pluralism. They allow the believer to maintain an individual Islamic devotional identity in the absence of a national or society wide muslim majority. These traditions also allow for an articulation of Islam in a form compatible

with secularist perspectives. Thus, Sufism has importance in the non-muslim societies of Western Europe and North America. In additions, as it becomes clear that it is not possible simply to transfer institutional copies of Western -style associations such as labour unions, political parties, and other nongovernmental organizations, *tariqah* traditions may provide ways of adapting modern institutions to the needs of emerging civil societies throughout the Islamic world.

Prominent Sufi Orders in India

India has become the hospitable home for a large number. Abu-l-Fadl mentions fourteen orders or 'families' (*khandan*), which he says were common in his time, and gives their names as follows:

1. Habibiyah
 2. Tayfuriyah
 3. Karkhiyah
 4. Saqatiyah
 5. Junaydiyah
 6. Kazruniyah
 7. Tusivah
 8. Firdawsiyah
 9. Suhrawardiyah
 10. Zaydiyah
 11. Iyadiyah
 12. Adhamiyah
 13. Hubayriyah
 14. Chishtiyah
- (Jarret 1984)

Method of Organization

The government of the order or fraternity centres in the *pir*. He is either an appointed or hereditary successor to the position of authority, and is variously called *khalifah*

or *sajjadah nishin*. On him devolves the duty of regulating the functions of the members, of passing on the divine knowledge of the order, maintaining its practices, and of initiating new *murids* as they seek admission to the fraternity. The *pir* takes up his residence at the headquarters of the fraternity, which usually goes by the name of *khanaqah* (monastery). The *khanaqah* is an ancient institution of the *darwish* fraternities. Sometimes it is endowed, but sometimes not. It is often built around or over the tomb of the *pir* who founded it, which forms the inner sanctuary of the building. Membership is of two kinds. The lower order consisted of the laity in the villages and towns round about, who carried on their regular occupations of butcher, baker, water-carrier, tailor, mason, schoolmaster, lawyer, practically all classes being represented. The other class was connected with the monastery itself, and this in turn is divided into two classes or parties: the travellers and the dwellers. The travellers were those to whom was assigned the task of going out into the surrounding country and collecting gifts from the lay members of the order. The countryside was divided into circles (*halqahs*), and each of the travellers was assigned his particular circle for visitation and collection. In due course he must return to the *khanaqah* with the results of his labours, which income was disposed of according to the rules of the institution. The dwellers, or those who constantly stay in the *khanaqah*, were divided into three classes: the *ahl-i-khidmat* (servants), the *ahl-i-suhbat* (associated), and the *ahl-i-khilwat* (recluses). The first named are novices who do service in order to become acceptable to the men 'of deeds and stages', who are engaged in practices and have advanced some staged on the path or way. By service they acquire fitness

for 'kinship', admission to the next degree in the order, and thus become a 'slipper out of the garment of alienation and farness', or put off the garment of separation from the Divine.

The *khanaqah* exercises extensive influence for good or ill in the religious life of the Muslim of India who have elected to follow a spiritual guide, for the various *darwish* fraternities touch all classes.

Beliefs and Practices

As has already been indicated, the underlying philosophy and theology of the religious orders is Sufism; however, it does not follow that all sufis are necessarily members of a religious order are Suffis. Nevertheless, there is a close and fundamental connection between the views of Sufis and the religious orders, so much so that the latter could not have come into being without the former. Sufism, with its warm, mystical yearning after union and fellowship with God, nowhere found a more suitable soil in which to thrive than India, where the very atmosphere was charged with a deep religious longing to find God, with the result that today it is estimated that majority of India's Muslim population are under the influence are under the influence of some one or the other of the *darwish* orders. The effort to effect union of man's soul with God, which is deemed the highest bliss is the chief function of the religious orders. Thus Sufiism has provided the objective or philosophy of life, while it remains for the *darwish* orders to apply the philosophy to the everyday needs of the man in the street.

In doing this the religious orders have performed a great service to the natural mystical instincts of the masses. Their message is something like this. God has endowed all His servants with the capacity

for union with him. They have this capacity hidden in their hearts. But it cannot be developed without guidance. Therefore, it is necessary that every person should voluntarily seek to attach himself to some illuminated soul, who has become qualified to lead men to God. To perform the function of spiritual leadership there have arisen pious souls, who, because of their peculiar spiritual gifts and diligence in seeking God, have been divinely blessed with the gift of miraculous powers (*karamat*). These men, out of their practical experience in the way (*tariaah*) of coming into union (*wasl*) with God, have defined the stages (*maqamat*) of progress and laid down rules for the guidance of all men who desire to live on terms of the closest possible intimacy with God and His saints. (*walis*).

The spiritual guide is known as the *musrshid*, *pir* or *shaykh*, and his disciple is called a *murid*. The practice of spiritual preceptorship, therefore, is known as *piri-muridi*, which has its counterpart in the *guru-chela* relationship among Hindus, and is very common throughout India. It is for the *pir* to win the favour of men through his hold living, or manifestation of the favour of God upon him, through some well attested *karamat* such as miraculous healing or the revelation of hidden mysteries or secrets. Having won his reputation for piety, he begins to make disciples of men who voluntarily come to him. He then proceeds to initiate them into the religious fraternity by some pledging of devotion on the part of the *murid* to the *pir*.

The *murid* is now designated a traveller (*salik*) on the way (*tariqah*) and he must carefully observe the rules of the order and the ritualistic practice of *dhikr* if he is to make progress on the way to union (*wasl*) with Allah. Having become a traveller on the way, his aim now is to

be guided by the *pir* until he has advanced through the various stages (*maqamat*) of divine illumination (*khattratt*). Consequently, the problem becomes one of endeavouring to regulate the illumination or the divine ideas that are ready at all times to descend into the heart of man. Various orders of Sufis have arisen, differing from one another in respect of the rules for meditation (*fakir*) and ritualistic observance (*dhikar*), which are prescribed for the regulation of the divine illumination (*khattrat*).

The stages through which the *murid* is to pass are variously described by the different orders in India, but in the main they are the described by Hughes. The first stage is that of our common humanity (*Nasut*), for which one has the law (*Shariat*) of Islam; perfection in this leads on to the stage of Malakut, where one has the nature of angels and must walk in the pathway of purity. The third stage is called *Jabarut* (possession of power), for which there is *Marifah* (knowledge). The fourth is *Lajut* (absorption in divinity), where one has *Haqiqah* (absolute truth) (Hughes 1914)⁴⁰.

The religious practices by which the *salik* proceeds along the way are of vital importance. Those which are known as *dhikr* (remembering) have for their object the production of spiritual ecstasy (*wajd*), in which state (hal) the one who is engaged in the *dhikr* may shut out all other thoughts than that of Allah himself. The term *dhikr*, which is so commonly used among Muslims, means remembrance, hence it is the practice of remembering, or bringing Allah to mind. The methods are various, some of which are worth mentioning. There is the *dhikr jali* (perceptible *dhikr*) when the exercise are performed aloud, when the voice may be raised very high, in order deliberately to shut out any other thoughts. There is the opposite of this,

the *dhikr khafi* (imperceptible dhikr), where the person practises his repetitions quietly. Finally there is a still further advanced *Khafi* form in which the *salik* shuts his eyes, closes his lips and fixes his attention on his inhalations and exhalation, and when the breath goes out he thinks he says '*La ilahah*' (There is no God)... He annihilates all external objects; and when it comes in, he thinks he says '*illa Allah*' (except Allah). (Khan 1923). According to certain *darwish* there is still another and more advanced form of the *dhikr khafi*, which is as follows: Every person in his breathing consciously or unconsciously utters the name Allah, the syllable '*A*' being the natural sound produced by the incoming breath, and '*lah*' being the natural sound of the outgoing breath.

The loud and vociferous form of *dhikr* one not infrequently meets in India.

To observe people engaging in silent exercises (*dhikr khafi*) is not uncommon. For this purpose the rosary (*tasbih*) is often employed, to enable one to keep account of the number of times one repeats the formula.

In addition to the dhikrs that may be classed according to the voice used. It can be also considered for another standpoint. The *dhikr* may be practised alone, or it may be performed by a congregation or group. The first kind may be performed at any time and any place. Such meetings are held in India usually on Thursday evening; but there seems to be no such attempt to make public displays of them as is the case in Egypt even at the present time, and used to be the case in Turkey. As women belong to *darwish* fraternities as well as men, it is necessary for them to arrange these meetings for *dhikr* at such times and places as will be convenient for the women who are together. Such meeting can be observed in a private *zanana*.

Sufi Terminology

It is a Persian derived word meaning 'old man' and is referred to sufi teacher. He is revered elder who initiates disciples i.e., '*Murids*' into sufi order. They are the ones who reveal the inner meanings and teachings i.e. '*batin*' of Quran through the spiritual experience of sufi master and spiritually transmitted from *pir* to disciple (Katherine 1984).

Often *pir* is a descent form a pious sufi ancestor. The devotee of a *pir* may attribute supernatural power to him and typically asks him to write amulets, cure diseases and solve problems for financial contribution to *pir* or the shrine to which he is attached.

With *pirs* associating themselves with politics has led to its criticism. (Katherine 1983).

Mawlay

The Arabic word *Mawlay* means 'my lord' or 'my master'. In Quranic texts used to denote God.

In the Sufi sense, *mawlay* is related to the terms *wali* and *wilayah*; the former is often inadequately rendered as 'saint' although a better definition would stress the holy person as being close to God or His protégé, while the latter signifies something approximating sanctity. In both Sufism and Shiism *mawla* can be understood as a spiritual protector or patron as well as a client. The great thirteenth-century Persian Sufi and poet Jalal al-Din Rumi is still referred to as Mawlana, 'our master,' because of his immense piety and uncommon spirituality. In the Turco-Iranian world and in South Asian Islam, *mawlana* (or *mawawi*) is a title in widespread use even in the 1990s and can denote Muslims of high religious status, such as Sufis or members of the '*ulama*'. In the Indian subcontinent it is applied to

scholars of the Islamic religious sciences-meaning once again 'my tutor' or 'my lord'- or to saints, implying spiritual lordship and hence protection.

Shrine

The Arabic term '*qubbah*' (tomb surmounted by dome) refers throughout Muslim World to saints shrines and mausoleums and places of special spiritual significance. Shrines are never just buildings, however. They stand for a complex of rituals, symbols, and shifting social and spiritual ties that link believers to Islam and create a sacred geography.

The shrine where a saint is worshiped and at which his favours are sought is not always his tomb. It may be presumed, however, that tombs receive more regard than the memorials shrines, which are not infrequently set up by the saint's devotees. On the part of those who believe in saints, it is conceived that it is possible to erect a memorial to a saint anywhere, to call it by his name, and that, by virtue of this act prayers and offerings made at this shrines will be quite as effective as a visit to his actual resting-place. The shrine, which has been so dedicated to a saint, may be made of bricks stone or mud. Sometimes it is made in the form of a tomb with a head stone, provided with niches to receive lights placed there by the worshipper. It may be of any size and crude piles of earth doing service for shines can be noticed; and not infrequently the neighbouring trees and bushes are considered especially sacred to the saint, and must not be violated. Thagases or threads tied on a shrine are in testimony of prayers answered.

Spatial Composition

A saint's tomb is usually step up inside a building specially constructed for it, and it often has a cupola. Sometimes the

building or shrine is situated in a cemetery. Other institutions such as mosques, Sufi training lodges, or facilities for visitors may also be annexed to large shrines.

The tomb itself usually consists of a rectangular boxlike structure with a catafalque, a cloth cover, and other elements, with some variation. The catafalque (*tabut*) is a wooden box or frame set up over the spot where the saint is buried. It is covered completely with a piece of cloth called *Kiswah*, which is generally donated by a devotee. In a place on the upper part of the catafalque (on one of the shorter side, or at the center of the rectangle) an *immah* is set up, which consists of a wooden post draped in a green cloth, looking like a head with a turban. The *immah* is supposed to symbolize the saint's authority.

There are other items, however that are not necessarily found in all shrines. Some tombs, especially those belonging to renowned saints, are enclosed by a cage. A donation box may be set up to receive money offerings from devotees. Other features may include lamps, candles, copies of the Quran and plaques on which phrases from the Quran are written or on which pictures of sacred places such as the Kabah are drawn. Most of these like the *kiswah*, are donated by pious devotees. There are of course neither pictures nor statues of the saint anywhere in the shrine.

Some of the items, however do raise theological problems. In the shrine of Sayyid al Badawi, for instance, there is a black stone in the corner of the chamber. On it can be seen two footprints, which are said to be those of the Prophet (PBUH), and many devotees, mostly peasants of the Nile Delta, are eager to touch and rub it. This practice recalls pilgrims' rituals relating to Abraham's

footprints at the 'Black Stone' in the Kabah at Mecca.

The shrine and other facilities are in many cases maintained financially through a *waqf*, an endowment provided by the Sufi order related to the saint enshrined. In the case of a large shrine custodians or a committee, are responsible for the upkeep of the buildings and facilities.

Shrines are often associated with natural phenomenon in Indonesia, for example, they are frequently located in elevated spots and have their own sources of water. In North Africa, the shrines of marabouts, or *al-salihun* ('pious ones'), dot the landscape so pervasively that they are rarely out of sight. Some are squat, whitewashed buildings. Other are quite elaborate a visit to one of these shrines is thought to offer spiritual blessings, particularly if ties exist between the client (or client group) and the descendants of the *marabout*. Every rural settlement has such a shrine, sometimes just a semi derelict, sporadically maintained structure in a cemetery. In western Morocco, there is roughly one shrine for every 6 square kilometer and 150 people. These tombs constitute a framework that concretely symbolizes social groups and their relations. As alliances change, derelict shrines can be restored or new ones constructed to reflect new identities.

In addition to these modest local shrines, there are more elaborate complexes linked to major religious figures. Major shrines have annual mawsims (festivals) that draw tens of thousands of pilgrims annually and have full-time caretakers often descendants of the saint or pious one. Jews in North Africa also have shrines, most of which have been maintained despite the ammunition of the Jewish population since the 1950s. Indeed, some Jewish shrines have been 'relocated' in Israel as

their North African supporters have emigrated there. In Morocco, some shrines attract both Jewish and Muslims pilgrims.

Shii Muslims also have elaborate shrine complexes associated with the principal *imams* and religious centers, and many of these, such as Qom in Iran and Karbala in southern Iraq, have religious schools associated with them along with bureaucracies to accept donations, support humanitarian works, and administer the endowed properties (*awqaf*; sg., *waqf*) that produce revenue for their upkeep. In Java the texts and oral traditions associated with them offer a vivid view of Java's past and suggest its future directions. Thus, shrines for many Javanese spatially represent their history and identity.

Shrines also separate sacred and secular space. People can seek sanctuary in them and await the intervention of religious intermediaries to negotiate a truce or settlement. Oaths sworn at shrines are especially binding, because their violation incurs the wrath of the shrines *marabout* or *wali*. Some are known as center for healing. Visitors to the shrine of Bu Ya Umar, located near Marrakesh, Morocco, is reputed to cure the mentally ill.

Gender divisions are often associated with shrines. The shrines of *Lalla Hniya*, a daughter of Sidi Mohammed al-Sharqi in Boujad, Morocco, is visited almost exclusively by women seeking a remedy for infertility. Visitors tear strips of cloth from their clothing and affix it to the door of the shrine as a *wadah* (promise) to offer a gift or sacrifice if they bear a child. Such offerings are not made at Lalla Hnyia's tomb, but at the nearby shrine complex of her father. Until recently, women in rural Turkey were largely confined to their homes, except for visitors to local shrines on religious and secular festivals. Visits to shrines secure blessings for the

household and can be used to signal changes in personal status-marriage, the birth of a child, or mourning. Women say prayers at these shrines and are more conscious that men of local sacred geography. Men occasionally visit shrines with women, but rarely do so on their own.

The sacred geography of shrines is not confined to supposed vestiges of the past, although shrines, such as that at Mecca, and pre-Islamic significance, and other shrines, as in Java, are not associated exclusively with Islamic figures. Instead, they constitute a physical representation of the sacred, defining not only relations of particular social groups and categories with the divine but also the relations among social groups and between genders. Thus, they offer a rich means of ordering the religious and social universes, and for many, they serve as a means of aligning one with the other.

Shrine Culture in India

As the Sufi orders penetrated into common Muslims' lives and influenced their ritual behaviours, some of the Sufi leaders, usually the founders of order or the heads of branches began to develop reputations as saints (*awliya'*, *sg.*, *wali*) who had supernatural power or divine blessing (*barakah*) granted by God. Though this power, it was believed, the saint could work miracles (*karamat*) such as foretelling the future, mind reading, flying in the air, treating illness, and other extraordinary acts. Devotees from both within and outside the order often visited the saint asking for a small share of divine blessing, so that he gradually began to be venerated as if he were a divine being. When the saint died, it was firmly believed that he would still respond favourably to requests made at his tomb. Therefore, followers erected a special building at the

site of the tomb.

Sufi-saint shrine culture displays great variation in factors such as the person enshrined, the social categories of devotees, the architectural structure of the shrine, the rituals performed in and around it, its economic and political significance and the forms and activities of sufi order that provides its main support.

The common name which is applied to the saint, living or dead, as well as to his tomb or shrine, is *pir*. Another name which is often employed for the shrine, especially in Kashmir, is *ziyarat*. The number of such ubiquitous *pirs* is legion. They are found in every village, town, or city where Muslims live. Even in lonely lanes of the countryside, in the fields and groves, in forest, and in the mountains one may find the grave of a *pir*, who though he may have been dead hundreds of years, is still an active source of blessing to all who believe in him. Sometimes in the course of years, a shrine of a *pir* will become neglected, then forgotten, and then obliterate, The saint thus forgotten may remain disregarded for generations, and then something will occur to bring him back to active usefulness again.

The tombs and shrines of saints are usually under the care of guardians. If the tomb is that of a very important saint, such as that of Mu in -ud-Din Chisti at Ajmir, it is well cared for. The guardians of the shrine are usually the direct lineal or spiritual descendants of the saint. In addition to the income that is derived from the collection made by the wandering members of the religious order, there is that which comes from visitors, even including tourists from foreign lands, who go only out of curiosity. Besides this, emperors used to repair certain tombs at public expense, and sometimes the

tombs were endowed by them. Even today the Government of India is at some pains to keep the tomb of the saint, Salim Chishti, at Fathepur Skiri, in repair, because of its undoubted archaeological interest.

Various Kind of Tombs of India

The tombs and shrines of saints of *pirs* may be also considered for the standpoint of their origin. Some have a historical connection with some religious order; and these have already been considered in their relation to the religious life of Indian Muslims. These have come into the calendar of saints in a perfectly regular manner, but there are other whose legitimacy is not so well attested, and the records of whose lives are so overlaid with legend that it is really impossible to give an accurate account of their origin. Some of these come in the class of *shahids*, or martyrs, who died fighting the battles of Islam in the early days of Muslim conquest. Two of the most important of these semilegendary character are known as Ghazi Miyan Salar Masud and Sakhi Sarwar Sultan. The former was a nephew of Muhd of Ghazni. While still youth of only nineteen he is said to have invaded Oudh, where he met his death in a battle in the year A.D 1033, near Bahriach. His tomb is venerated by Muslims, who regard him as a *martyr* (shahid). Sakhi Sarwar Sultan belongs to the Punjab, and though little is historically certain about his origin he has many devotees. Shrines raised to his honour are found in every village of the central Punjab (Rose 1920). At Dhonkal, Sultan had taken up his abode, and produced a well with a marvellous stream of water, which is now regarded as sacred. There is a fair held here every year, which lasts for a month in June and July, to which come as many as two hundred thousand people, 'who

drink the sacred water and take away fans and springs of menhdi (henna) as mementos of their visit (Rose 1920).

Hindu-Muslim Saints

Other well known saints, or more or less legendary character, that have a certain amount of standing with certain classes are numerous. Some of them, while having Muslim names today, seem to have little connection with the Muslim community or faith. Mere mention will be made of them, as they have more of a bearing on the influence of Islam on the indigenous faiths of the country than with Islam itself. However, they should be mentioned, as showing the manner in which saint-worship among Muslims gradually shades off until it is scarcely distinguishable from some of the animistic phases of primitive religious life. One such 'saint' is *Guga Pir*, or *Zahir Pir*, who is thought to have been a Hindu convert to Islam, and is said to have flourished toward the middle of the twelfth century. He is particularly associated with Rajputana; but his devotees, mainly low-caste people, are found throughout large areas of northern India and the northwest where his shrines are built even in the houses. *Lal Beg* is another such 'saint', who is particularly patronized by the sweeper community of India. There is also a flowing of a group of saints known as the *Panj Pir* (five *pirs*). Worshippers of this group erect shrines to all five of the saints and worship at of this group erect shrines to all five of the saints and worship at them. The lists, however do not agree. Lucknow, for instance, has one list, Banaras another, Bihar another, the Punjab another. One list includes *Ghazi Miyan Pir Hathili* sister's son of *Ghazi Miyan, parihar, Sahja Mai*, and *Ajab Salar*. Benares has no less than five lists that are current. They, too are worshiped by the low caste

Hindus. A more respectable list is the following : *Baha-ul-Haqq*, of Multan; *Shah Ruq ah-i-Alam Hadrat*, of Lucknow; *Shah Shams Tabrix* of Multan; *Makhдум-i-Jahaniyan*, of Uch; and *Baba Farid-ud-Din* of Pak pattan (Crooke 1894).

Legendary Saints

Attention must be paid, also, to the wholly legendary saints of Islam. *Khwajah Khidr* goes by various names in different parts of India, such as *Raja Kidar*, where Hindu influence is strong. In Bengal his name is *Kawaj*, or *Pir Badr*. There may also be other local corruptions of the name, which one must always be prepared to meet. *Khwajah Khidr* is a legendary saint of Muslim lore, who is said to trace his connection to Noah, and throughout the Muslim world he is associated with water. Thus, he comes to be a saint of the sea. His special vehicle is a fish, one which he is often pictured as riding. His garments are green, whence his name *Khidr* is derived, and he is thought to have life-giving powers. In fact, he is considered to be alive in the world still, though unseen. Shrines are not built to this saint but he is worshipped in connection with such ceremonies as the '*aqiqah*', or shaving of the head of a child for the first time. Offerings are also made to him at wells; and person who are travelling by sea, or who are descending into a well, will seek his favour. He is also propitiated when the water in a river is low or there is danger of a flood. In addition to the occasional or special worship of *Khwajah khidr*, Indian Muhammadans make much of what is called his *Bera*. This is a festival which takes its name for the *bera*, or raft, on which the worshippers place burning lamps (*chiragh*), bouquets of flowers, fruits, sweetmeats, and other eatables, There are then set afloat on the stream in the name of *Khidr* whose blessing they

seek. (Anwar 1892).

Another saint of the very opposite character to the beneficent *Khidr* is *Shaykh Saddu*, who has votaries throughout India, particularly among women. The legend goes the he was an Arabic scholar, with occult powers, who used certain verses of the Quran for magical purposes, by which he is popularly supposed to have been able to bring the *Jinn* under his control. It is related that, at one time, he fell in love with a beautiful princess; and finding it impossible to secure her hand in marriage he invoked the help of his friends, the *Jinn* to bring her by night to his residence. This became a regular performance, and she was also returned to the place before dawn all this appeared to the princess as a dream; but, being at last overcome by the performance, she reported the matter to the king, who had the *Shaykh* executed. Another account says that he was ultimately torn to pieces at Amroha, near Moradabad, by the *Jinn* he was supposed to control. In any case, many ignorant Muslims still believe that haunts and worries their women, and he is also supposed to harm children. Women become 'possessed', as they believe, by *Shaykh Saddu* through the performance known a *baithak*, where dressed in men's clothes they gather and sit the whole night listening to the music that is supposed to induce the possession of the *Shaykh's* spirit. In this state of ecstasy they are supposed to be able to reveal the *Shaykh's* advice as to how to attain their desires, or those of their friends.

In addition to the legendary saints above mentioned, there are many other, such as *Pir Shitab*, *Pir Milao*, *Pir Didar Kath Bawa Sahib*, *Pir Imam Zamin* and the like. It is always of interest to try to ascertain the names of the saints who are being worshipped by the Muslims of a given locality, in orders to discover how many

of them are more or less universally venerated, and how many enjoy only a local provincial celebrity.

Nau-Gaza Pirs

The *nau-gaza pirs* form a curious class of shrine which deserves closer study than it has yet received. The term refers to the length of the tomb, *nau-gaza* meaning nine yards, and merely indicates that the saint was a personage of great stature. One such tomb is at Multan, where *Shadma Shahid* is said to be buried, but as a rule *nau-gazas* are not connected with *shaheeds* (martyrs). Historians and authorities noted on the subject. There is one of these tombs at Nagaur, in Rajputana, and several other have been discovered in the course of the Archaeological survey five of them at Vijhi measure respectively twenty-nine, thirty-one, thirty and thirty-eight feet.... Adam himself is supposed to have been sixty yards in height, and there was a monster called 'Uj in the days of Adam, a the flood of Noah reached only to his waist. There is a tomb of Noah at Faridabad which is said to have been built by Alexander the Great and not far off are those of Seth and Job. The later, curiously enough, are gradually growing in size. They are now seventeen and twelve feet long respectively, but when Abu l -Fazl wrote they were only ten and a half and nine feet long. (Crooke 1894). One such tomb can be seen in the fields lying between Moradabad and Ramput, which was said to be a *nau-gaza pir*, and it measured between twelve and fifteen feet in length.

Patron Saints

Patron saints deserves special study, because of their close relationship to certain classes of work and particular classes of individuals. First of all, the patron saint may be considered from the

standpoint of the immediate vicinity or village, or quarter of a city with the may be connected.

The local descendants of the famous 'Abdul-Qadir-i-Jilani, known as the *Pir Dastgir*, have given some patron saints to India especially associated with industrial castes or local guilds in the Punjab. At Lahore, Firuz Shah *Jilani*, a disciple of *Shah Alam*, is the saint of the *dandigars* or *kheradis* (turners). *Hassan Teli* is the patron saint of the oilmen (*telis*) while the dyers of Lahore look to Pir Ali Rangrez. *Malum-i-yar* is another patron saint of boatmen and sailors while Sher Shah, of Multan, cares for the interest of persecuted lovers. *Shah Dawlah* takes care of 'microcephalic children', called *Shah Dawlah's rats*.

Khanqah

The institution of a residential teaching center for Sufis seems to have emerged in Iran with the formalization of Sufi activity in the late tenth or eleventh century. Support for these religious institutions by the ruling elites gradually broadened and led to significant patronage in building *khanqahs* developed rural functions in later periods, serving as centers for devotions such as listening to poetry or music and the performance of the *dhikr* and same ceremonies of specific Sufi orders. Some Sufi leaders were buried in their sites. The residential function of the *Khanqah* does not seem to be essential, and the name indicates the function performed by a space rather than any inherent physical structure, since the same buildings could shift their usage, for example by becoming schools.

The term is of Persian origin and probably derives from word meaning 'a place of residence' (*Khana-gah*) for sufis.

Several other terms have a similar connotation. *Zawiyah*, based on Arabic *Zawa*, "to bring together, gather contract,

conceal, or going into seclusion. *Ribat* is an Arab term that originally indicated a fortress or outpost for the defence of the faith, associated in Sufi contexts with centers for Sufi striving (*jihad*) against the lower self (*nafs*). While some sources used the above three terms as equivalents. On the basis of Mamluk endowment documents (*waqfiyahs*) that each had a distinct function. In Mamluk, Egypt *ribats* served as refuges for sufis as well as for the needy and homeless of both sexes. *Tekke* (Turkish) or *takiyah* (Arabic and Persian) is the term used for the Sufi institution of the dervish lodge in Turkey and other parts of the Ottoman Empire. It is said to be derived from the Arabic root w-k-’ which conveys the idea of a chamber in which one rests while being fed.

Mashhad

Meaning ‘a place where a martyr died. It holds high reverence in Shiism as *mashhad* of Imams from Ibn Ali to others as they were poisoned or persecuted, thus all are revered as martyrs and their tombs have become a site for annual visitation for those who believe that their devotion will win forgiveness. Ibn Ali enjoys the status of chief of martyrs unlike Hajj annual visitation i.e., ‘ziyarah’ has no fixed times.

The *mashhads* of all imams were richly endowed and lavish gifts were bestowed by rulers. Towns grew around them and ‘*haram*’ (sacred areas) were adorned with magnificent and costly ornamentation. The shrine architecture is as follows, the tomb lies in a courtyard surrounded by arched halls and cells. Its walls are decorated resplendently with coloured tiles. The entrance to the main rectangular building is through a golden outer hall. In the middle of the central golden-domed chamber lies in the shrine, surrounded by a *darih* (silver enclosure). Two golden

minarets usually flank the entrance to the shrine. (Hamid 1969).

The longing to find a last resting place in the holy precincts of beloved Imams, martyrs, saints has resulted in development of extensive cemeteries at all shrines and areas, cemeteries attached to them has resulted in ‘development of ‘death tourism’.

Tombs of Kings

Tombs of kings at places even in the case study undertaken is taken in high regards. This is because Muslim caliphs and kings claimed to be shadow of God, vicegerent of God on Earth. Certain ancient text mentions. ‘God has two guardians over the people; his guardian in heaven are the angels, and his guardians on earth are kings’ (Nizam 1960).

Kings were expected to be a symbol of earthly redemption, perhaps, because the king was the linkage with Almighty (Bajne 1968).

Barakah

The concept of *Barakah* attains a lot of importance when it comes to Sufism. The most fundamental meaning of ‘*barakah*’ is “blessing” ‘beneficent force’, ‘supernatural power’ conferred by Almighty upon human king.

It is believed that uncommonly plus individuals-prophets and their house are privileged with *barakah*. In turn those blessing with *barakah* either living or dead can transmit it to ordinary mortals who thereby benefit in both material fortune and spiritual reward. For ‘*awliya*’ (those close with God) *barakah* represent a sort of badge of saintly status. *Barakah* signified an ineffable supernatural substance grace, blessing superabundance, purity, piety-communicated from God to the believers via those who in this life and next were endowed with heroic *ihsan* (virtue). The

poser had to convey it to others. The barakah holders would perform miracles 'Karamat' (Christian 1988).

Barakah is not associated only with beings but also with specific places, things and acts such as certain foods, animals, plants, events, words and gestures. Barakah's mysterious, wonder working qualities were often concretized in charms, amulets and other means of protection from evil spirits. Folk medicines and healing were also connected with barakah which in the hands of extraordinary individuals could cure illness, bestow fertility and ward off harm.

In this way *barakah* as an ideology as well as a set of diverse cultural practices

spanned the fluid uneasy boundaries between scripturalist, mosque-centered Islam and the more popular or local Islamic beliefs.

Conclusion

Thus, Sufism in itself has hazy chances of becoming *raison d'être* for tourist but is welcomed as a part of a package. But a SIT markets' interest may not be ruled out. May be the transformation may take place at a later stage where Sufism instead of being a part of a package may become a package in itself. The acceptance could be gauged by the fact that already ILF&S (2012) has submitted its report on a full-fledged sufi circuit to the government.

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M-commerce in Indian Tourism - A Case of Buddhist Tourism

Charu Sheela Yadav & Suyash Mathur

Introduction

The Buddhist Circuit is a sacred route that follows in the footsteps of Buddha. This iconic route only includes places where Buddha actually spent time, and these sites – all of which are over 2500 years old – are among the most significant

and revered for all Buddhists. The Buddhist Circuit is an important pilgrimage destination for the approximately 487 million practicing Buddhists as well as travelers interested in history, culture or religion (Pew Forum – Global Religion Landscape). The places included in the circuit are:

Lumbini (in Nepal)	:	The Birthplace of Lord Buddha.
Bodh Gaya (in Bihar)	:	He Attained Enlightenment.
Kapilvastu (in Uttar Pradesh)	:	He Grew up as a Child.
Sarnath (in Uttar Pradesh)	:	He held his First Public Discourse.
Kaushambi (in Uttar Pradesh)	:	Buddha Delivered many a Sermons.
Sankisa (in Uttar Pradesh)	:	He Descended after Addressing his Mother in Heaven.
Sravasti (in Uttar Pradesh)	:	His Favorite Monsoon Resort.
Nalanda and Rajgir (in Bihar)	:	He Lived and Taught, and Nalanda, in Particular, Became the Center of Buddhist Learning and Teaching.
Vaishali (in Bihar)	:	Buddha Delivered Last Sermon.
Kushinagar (in Uttar Pradesh)	:	Where he Attained Mahaparinirvana (Demise)

With more and more travelers choosing to book and select their travel products via their computers and hand held devices, M-Commerce is now paramount to the future of the tourism industry. The M-commerce in tourism in India is still

in its infancy. M-commerce can serve as a unique tool for the tourism industry to enhance their services as there is a growing demand of M-commerce. Mobile phones account for about 40% of online travel search and this share is bound to go up

Charu Sheela Yadav, Indian Institute of Tourism & Travel Management, NOIDA-201309
charupg@rediffmail.com

Suyash Mathur, Indian Institute of Tourism & Travel Management, NOIDA-201309
suyash.mathur@gmail.com

in India where smart phone penetration is expected to grow to 50 million devices by 2020 (The Economic Times, June 2015).

M-commerce is a subset of electronic commerce (E-commerce) where M-commerce or mobile commerce enables customers or users to buy, sell, or exchange information on goods and services by using mobile devices such as smartphones (E. W. T. Ngai, A. Gunasekaran). Tourism mobile e-commerce refers to transaction activities between tourism service consumers and suppliers by mobile devices via wireless and wired integrated network, with certain means of payments (Siqing Liu, 2005). These advantages help tourists enter the network of mobile e-commerce in a more flexible and convenient way.

The objective of this research paper is to ascertain the profile of the tourist who is visiting the Buddhist destinations in India and also to understand where do M-Commerce stand currently with respect to Buddhist destinations in India, and the gap between the demands of m-commerce services for travel products related to Buddhist tourism in India vis a vis supply. The source of information of this research paper is secondary data collected from books, reports, journals, newspapers, internet (surveys, blogs, and websites of DMOs etc).

Understanding the dynamics of Buddhist tourist in India

Buddhism though born in India, has more prominent Buddhist population beyond its borders. Today there are 450-500 million practicing Buddhists in the world

which is about 6% of the total population of the world. The following Table 1 and 2 lists the main Buddhist Countries and Top 10 countries with most Buddhist population respectively.

Table 1: Main Buddhist Countries

S. No.	Main Buddhist Countries
1	Bangladesh
2	Bhutan
3	Cambodia
4	China
5	Hong Kong
6	India
7	Indonesia
8	South Korea
9	Laos
10	Japan
11	Macau
12	Mongolia
13	Myanmar
14	Malaysia
15	Nepal
16	Singapore
17	Sri Lanka
18	Taiwan
19	Thailand
20	Vietnam
21	Philippines

Source: http://www.adherents.com/Religions_By_Adherents.html

Table 2: Top 10 Countries with Most Buddhist Populations

Country (Year 2010)	Estimated Population Buddhists Population	Percentage Of Population Buddhist	Percentage Of World
China	244130000	18.2%	50.1%
Thailand	64420000	93.2	13.2
Japan	45820000	36.2	9.4
Burma (Myanmar)	38410000	80.1	7.9
Sri Lanka	14450000	69.3	3
Vietnam	14380000	16.4	2.9
Cambodia	13690000	96.9	2.8
South Korea	11050000	22.9	2.3
India	9250000	0.8	1.9
Malaysia	5010000	17.7	1
Total	460610000	15.3	94.5
Remaining World Total	26920000	0.7	5.5
World Total	487530000	7.1	100

Source: Pew research centre forum on religion and Public Life. Global religious landscape 2011(Estimates)

It is interesting to note as per the HVS report 2015, some of the Buddhist practices are very popular in the West. More than 40% of the international tourists visiting the Buddhist Circuit are from Europe and North America. Another major contributor to tourism along this circuit is the domestic traveler. The Buddhist population in India may be less than 2%, but the estimated absolute numbers of nine million practicing Buddhists are a good number to boost the Buddhist Circuit.

The top 15 Source Countries from where India receives Foreign Tourists in 2013 are USA, UK, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Russian Federation, Canada, Germany, France, Malaysia, Japan, Australia, China(Main), Singapore, Thailand and Nepal. **Table 2** gives top 10 countries with

most Buddhist population –China, Thailand, Japan, Burma (Myanmar), Sri Lanka, Vietnam, Cambodia, South Korea, and Malaysia.

The important source market for India especially for Buddhist circuit are China, Thailand, Japan, Sri Lanka, Malaysia and they are also the countries in the list of top 10 countries with most Buddhist population. It was observed by the official Govt. figures, that arrivals from Buddhist countries comprised more than 18 percent of total foreign tourist arrivals to India in 2011. The growth in arrivals from Buddhist countries in 2011 was substantially higher than the overall growth in arrivals.

The shares of total arrivals of some Buddhist countries were significant from

countries like Sri Lanka (4.9 percent), Japan (3.1 percent), China (2.3 percent), South Korea (1.7 percent) and Thailand (1.5 percent).

The travelers from specifically the above said countries are technologically friendly, but are not linguistically English speaking and would prefer information in their own language, which is not used extensively in India. These travelers are majorly travelling as GIT (Group Inclusive Traveler).

Bihar is ranked 8th overall among all states

receiving foreign tourists and received 7, 65,835 foreign tourists in 2013, which is 3.8% of the total FTA in India in 2013 (Source Ministry of tourism, Govt. of India annual report 2014). Table 3 gives the statistics of domestic and foreign tourist visits to the places of Buddhist interest in Bihar. The table reveals that Bodhgaya is the most visited site by both domestic and foreign tourists.

Table 3: Statistics of Domestic and foreign tourist visits to the places of Buddhist interest in Bihar

PLACE	TOURIST	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
BODH GAYA	DOMESTIC	297155	464790	479860	745305	847731	832364	1006132	933153	398876	1647701
	FOREIGN	37001	52917	120431	143880	137985	96103	293519	207933	139556	225668
RAJGIR	DOMESTIC	322559	348277	890612	777350	1064882	1971454	1341433	3700446	1381121	1525107
	FOREIGN	5491	10885	32572	85497	107006	130570	201137	373186	162452	164314
NALANDA	DOMESTIC	0	0	0	0	0	255469	891799	934125	502341	1057317
	FOREIGN	0	0	0	0	0	47773	177884	190162	104580	124810
VAISHALI	DOMESTIC	233987	261223	226112	121227	46767	81004	63322	53276	90346	202509
	FOREIGN	8865	11461	9475	16709	8210	15600	29951	37533	71701	60108

Source: <http://bihar2025.in/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Tourism.pdf>

Uttar Pradesh is ranked 4th among all states receiving foreign tourists. The FTA for 2013 is 20, 54,420.

Table 4: Statistics of Domestic and foreign tourist visits to the places of Buddhist interest in Uttar Pradesh in 2014

SARNATH	DOMESTIC	838566
	FOREIGN	362113
KUSHINAGAR	DOMESTIC	750171
	FOREIGN	62292
SRAVASTI	DOMESTIC	109876
	FOREIGN	98642
KAPILVASTU	DOMESTIC	161434
	FOREIGN	30219

Source: http://up-tourism.com/oldwebsite/pdf/tourist_flow.pdf

In 2014 Sarnath is the most visited place by domestic and foreign tourists followed by Kushinagar and Sravasti.

According to the IFC-Ministry of Tourism joint report 2014, the average age of domestic tourists visiting the Buddhist Circuit was between 30 and 31, lower than the average age of international tourists of 38 to 39 years. Moreover, with international tourists, the average age of religious travelers was higher than that of the non-religious travelers. Sri Lankan, Thai, Japanese, and Myanmar tourists had the highest average age among tourists.

The respondents of the IFC-Ministry of

Tourism joint report 2014 reports destination information in the tourists own language is the most demanded facility, along with travel arrangements with local destination weather patterns. Travel bookings options, day sightseeing options along with booking facility with high speed internet mobile connectivity. The tourists also demand that the destination information should be on light and lean websites which use less media content, as it affects their data usage limits and with long buffering and stop start webpage and applications, the smooth experience can turn rather a troublesome case.

India is facilitating tourist with E Tourist visa. Table 5 shows E Tourist visa given by India to Main Buddhist countries.

Table 5: Availability of Tourist Visa on Arrival Enabled with Electronic Travel Authorization (ETA) facility to Main Buddhist countries

S. No.	Main Buddhist Countries	E Tourist Visa Facility is available to passport holders
1	Bangladesh	Not Available
2	Bhutan	Not Available
3	Cambodia	Available
4	China	Not Available
5	Hong Kong	Not Available
6	India	Not
	Applicable	
7	Indonesia	Available
8	South Korea	Not Available

9	Laos	Available
10	Japan	Available
11	Macau	Not Available
12	Mongolia	Not Available
13	Myanmar	Available
14	Malaysia	Not Available
15	Nepal	Not Available
16	Singapore	Available
17	Sri Lanka	Available
18	Taiwan	Not Available
19	Thailand	Available
20	Vietnam	Available
21	Philippines	Available

From the above table it can be seen that as nationals of Nepal and Bhutan do not require a visa to enter to India so this facility is not applicable on them. E Tourist visa is still not available to countries - Bangladesh, China, Hong Kong, South Korea, Macau, Mongolia, Malaysia and Taiwan. China shall be the 77th country to be eligible for e-visas to India, and the government’s goal is to hit 150 countries by 2016 as conveyed by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi during his visit to China. Japan had the most tourists opting for visa on arrival.

A study conducted by online accommodation specialist AsiaRooms, and Lenovo, the technology company, comparing the travel habits of 6,000 Asia Pacific tourists with 6,000 non-Asia Pacific tourists revealed that in the year of 2013, 33% booked through mobile and 59% searched travel products on the smart phones and tablets. This exceeds the global average of 25% for booking and 46% for search considerably.

In 2015 there has been a sharp increase in bookings by Smartphone. China (10% share) took first place in the share rankings, followed by the USA (7% share) and Japan (5% share). Social media channels such as review portals, blogs and forums have also become very popular for planning trips, and are used intensively by more and more travelers around the globe. (ITB World Travel Trends Report 2014/2015)

Current scenario

Big private players in Indian Tourism technology like MakeMyTrip and Cleartrip are offering Smartphone enabled mobile applications, which allow the tourists to gather required information along with booking and transaction options. The Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India tourists information application has 5 million downloads till June 2015 from Google Play store with an average user rating of 3.8 on 5. The application gives out the names of local guides when Bodhgaya and Rajgir are searched for who speak Asian languages like Japanese and Mandarin to assist the multi or bilingual tourists. The Ministry of Tourism application is although more information based and does not allow any transactions. It is not exhaustive, as when the hotels section is clicked upon, it does not come up with any available pages. The Ministry has collaborated with Google Maps to give out destinations of interest on the

Buddhist circuit as an automated Google map location. Taking this forward, WoNoBo, an Indian mobile application developer, along with the Ministry of Tourism, has come up with 360 degrees street views of major tourist important cities in 2014, but does not include the sites on the Buddhist circuit like Bodhgaya, Rajgir and Sarnath.

The Bihar State Tourism Development Corporation (BSTDC) website is presenting a Buddhist image, as Bodh Gaya temple is the first image on the website; but there is only 1 tour package available and that too in Hindi language only. The website although does touch upon the Circuit concept. The state tourism board does not have a specific mobile interface of its own, but destinations like Gaya have various applications of themselves. One specifically developed by the Bodhgaya Temple Management Committee, the main management body of the Bodhgaya temple. There is a new website of BTMC - www.bodhgayatemple.com - and an online donation facility for World Heritage Site Mahabodhi Mahavihara. With this, the Mahavihara has become the first religious shrine in Bihar to have an online donation facility.

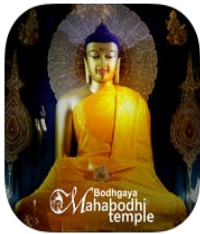
The app is named "Bodhgaya" and devotees and the tourists willing to visit Bodhgaya from anywhere in the world can get information about the heritage city on their mobile phones too. The mobile app can be downloaded from Google Play Store or iTunes.

View More by this developer

Bodhgaya Bihar

By Umbrella Systems Pvt Ltd.

Open iTunes to buy and download apps.



View in iTunes

Free

Category : Travel

Updated : 17 March 2015

Versin : 1.2

Description

Bodhgaya (Buddhagaya) in Bihar, India, is the place where Siddhartha Gautama, the prince of Kapilavasthu attained enlightenment and became the Buddha 2600 years ago. The land is venerated as the holiest place of Buddhist pilgrimage in the world. The main shrines of this holy land, the Mahabodhi (Mahavihara) Temple Complex with the

Bodhgaya Bihar Support:

What's New in Version 1.2

Minor Bug Fixes

...More

iPhone Screenshot

Fig 1:The official mobile Application of the Bodhgaya Temple Management

Committee

Source: <https://itunes.apple.com/in/app/bodhgaya-bihar/id959833752?mt=8>

The Uttar Pradesh tourism website enlists the various Buddhist site locations with all other destinations and the picture gallery contains good images of the various destinations all over Uttar Pradesh, including the Buddhist destinations. While there is a separate page dedicated to tourism Circuits in Uttar Pradesh the webpage does mention the Buddhist Circuit as an option. The Buddhist circuit is mentioned in heading "Important Websites" which comes when one scrolls down the whole page of U P Tourism website- <http://uptourism.gov.in/>. The state tourism board's mobile application is absent, but the destinations are covered by the Tripgator-Incredible India Application.

An initiative by the Indian Railways in collaboration with the Ministry of Tourism

has been the *Mahaparinirovana Express*, the exclusive Buddhist circuit train. With a 7 nights/8 days commencing from Delhi, the journey covers Bodh Gaya, Nalanda, Rajgir, Sarnath, Varanasi, Kushinagar, Lumbini (Nepal), Sravasti and Agra. At roughly USD 1155 per person it helps the tourist to cover the entire circuit comprehensively. Tourists and pilgrims from over 30 countries have travelled on this special train in the last six years (The Hindu, August 2013). Bookings can be done online but the train does not have a mobile application of its own which highlights the point of a service available which is not able to cater the M-Commerce market of the Buddhist tourists. Although, the website is available in Mandarin language, to help the travelers from China book their travels.

Challenges

Challenges for the M-Commerce for the

Buddhist circuit remains primarily focused on the products which are sold mostly by the very few specialist Buddhist Circuit operators, like Jataka Travels, Shashi Tours, Lall Buddhist tours etc and not by the general tour operator community. This hinders the growth of the vast network which can be developed for the tourist circuit. Also, as there is no clear brand identity which remains fragmented among private and public-sector role-players. The State Tourism Boards are not developing a focused view of the circuit which is evident on their official websites and web pages.

Very limited online or mobile marketing adds fuel to fire and takes the potential tourists away from India, which in turn look for other destinations to fulfill their travel plans. The reach and spread of the internet is a major roadblock to develop Tourism M-commerce related services as it is directly related to all the things under the umbrella of online travel services. More specifically poor internet connectivity at most tourist destinations and sites does not help the cause of the travelers which have no use of their modern devices if there is no connectivity.

During the early developing period of tourism mobile ecommerce, the content of traditional e-commerce websites were simply transferred into mobile friendly websites, which were actually original websites or their corresponding mobile web pages. This unfiltered content caused problems like unnecessary and harder reading, and poor pertinence (Xingyang Liu, 2009).

India is a major Buddhist destination and also the land where Buddhism was born, but still it is unable to attract the large chunk of Buddhist tourists from China. In 2014, 1.70 lakh Buddhist tourists visited India, which is not a high number

compared to the Buddhist population across the globe.

Conclusion and Suggestions

This research paper underlines that India, has only touched upon the massive tourist potential in attracting a worthy percentage of religious Buddhist travelers. According to the Govt. of India official figures year 2012, arrivals to India from Buddhist countries of south and south east Asia is 0.5 million, comprised an approximate, a mere 0.10 percent of all 487 million Buddhist followers in the world. Since the Buddhist Circuit is the area where Buddhism originated and where the Buddha lived his life teaching the sermons, the potential for Buddhist tourism growing large is massive.

Given that both domestic and foreign tourism on the Circuit has grown exceptionally well in the recent past, indicating potential for growth at destinations like Bodhgaya, Sarnath, Rajgir, Nalanda, and Kushinagar, which are so evidently the focal points on the Circuit and could become important role as destinations for a growth oriented approach. The Ministry of Tourism has to come up with various suggestive itineraries at both the physical level and mobile device level, with the complete circuit and also with single destinations

The *Mahaparinirvana express* train is a good tourism product and can catalyze the Buddhist tourism circuit but need to launch its mobile application in various Asian languages and integrate the same with the Incredible India page. The studies suggest that Asian tourists are growingly active on mobile and willing to book via mobile devices given the services is marketed well.

The markets need to be expanded of the Buddhist Circuit beyond just the

pilgrimage aspect segment. It will mean targeting to young, more educated tourist audience both domestically and internationally. This can be understood as, according to the IFC-Incredible India 2014 report, the mean age of the domestic traveler to the Buddhist sites is between 30 and 31. The international tourists mean age is in between 38 and 39. The averages help us to understand that the target audience is young and are accustomed to the use of hand held devices for their travel needs and will appreciate efforts made to connect to the right audience.

Because the profile of Buddhist tourist is young and technology friendly, this should be the segment where in the travel operators should design their M-commerce interfaces in the forms of Apps, websites, Beta information and transaction pages. This in turn should lead the private players to come up with user interfaces which are seamless and provide the destination information and the opportunity to transact for buying travel the ever dynamic future, which the tourism industry is looking at.

products and services. Growing digitalization in India, catalyzed by the Digital India movement launched by the current government and beginning of WIFI facilities at world heritage sites, along with recently launched E-Kranti – Electronic delivery of services are steps in the right direction.

The opportunity of M-commerce should not be missed by Bihar and Uttar Pradesh Tourism Boards also, where Buddhist circuit is an important tourism product. Such efforts will attract higher income and higher spending from travelers who will use their hand held devices to transact and gather information.

This paper covers the broad perspective of the M-commerce situation in the Buddhist tourist destinations of India, and has immense scope and can be taken further on studying at an individual country level of Asia, and its Buddhist tourists coming to India with the help of their Mobile phones and linking technology with tourism, because that is

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Vandna Dubey Cooking Classes: A Community Participation Entrepreneurship

Ramesh C. Devrath, Aditya Ranjan

If you have any interest in Indian food, visit Vandana.
–Kitten Shamrock, Melbourne, Australia (via Trip Advisor)

Wonderful evening learning the basics of Indian cookery
– Shelly, Auckland, New Zealand (via Trip Advisor)

Desi¹ Khana² for Videshi³ Mehman⁴

Food is one of the necessity for human survival, and it's essence is more realized while one is on the tour. We all love to enjoy food as per our taste and preferences, but homemade have no comparison. But, is it possible in some foreign country, where only tour managers/guides could hardly able to understand the innate desires of tourists? Rest all God knows.

Vandana cooking classes is just a paradise for all such food lovers, who want desi taste in videshi khana. From food to beverage all are prepared and served in Indian style, but the taste as per the tourist desire.

The exquisiteness of attending Vandana cooking class is, to enjoy in a relaxed atmosphere, learn Indian tricks, secrets and cooking tips from chef to choose your ingredients, make delicious recipes and

prepare beautiful dishes and last but not the least tasting what is being demonstrated.

Introduction

Vandna Dubey is the owner of *Vandna Cooking Classes*. Being an entrepreneur she believes in the customer service rather than earning profits. Her success story can be portrayed from the fact that a simple village girl is now a well known name in the international market. Starting from the *Heena Tattoo* (A temporary tattoo which Indian women carve on hand for some religious/festive purpose) fifteen years back in 2001, now she is successfully running few ventures, which attracts a lot of foreign tourists.

The idea of setup a tourism business, come to her mind when an Australian tour escort Debbie Kindness (Debbie), impressed by her *Heena Tattoo*, offered to carve it on the tourists accompanying the tour. The

Dr. Ramesh C. Devrath, Assistant Professor, Indian Institute of Tourism and Travel Management, Gwalior, India

rameshdevrath@gmail.com

Aditya Ranjan, PGDM- International Business, Indian Institute of Tourism and Travel Management, Gwalior, India

adityaranjan@outlook.com

earning form designing the *Heena Tattoo* was more than expectation. This idea flicked her mind to start a business of carving *Heena Tattoo* to the foreign female tourists who comes to visit Orchha (A small village in district Tikamgarh in Madhya Pradesh province of India).

Another business she started, serving Indian Spice tea "*Masala Chai*" to the foreign tourist. It is a tradition in India to welcome the tourist and treat them as "GOD". Indians generally offers welcome drink to the guest in form of tea, butter milk and lime water. She tapped this idea and successfully implemented it.

Later on, she come up with the concept of serving Indian cuisine to the tourist and also make them learn how Indian cuisine are prepared. Thus, this way "Vandna cooking class" came into existence.

Why Orchha?

Orchha means hidden places and famous for the Temples and Palaces in Tikamgarh district. During 2011, Orchha was visited by more than 29 lakh tourists, more than the total number visiting other major cities of the province Madhya Pradesh.

The famous attractions includes *Ram Raja Mandir* (Temple), *Raja Mahal* (King's Palace), *Chaturbhuj Mandir*, *Lakshmi Narayan Mandir*, *Phool Bagh* (Garden of Flowers), *Jehangir Mahal*, *Chhatris* (Cenotaphs) Which were build around 16th and 17th AD. Apart from these, there is a light and sound show organized by Madhya Pradesh State Tourism Development Corporation Limited (MPTDCL) from 7:30 pm to 8:30 pm in English and 8:45 pm to 9:45 pm in Hindi at these places during summers (March to October). And from 6:30 pm to 7:30 pm in English and and 7:45 to 8:45

pm in Hindi during the winters.

Early days of vandna dubey

Vandna dubey was born in middle class family at Dinara village of Shivpuri District of Madhya Pradesh. Her father was a Postmaster and mother was housewife. At the age of 5 years, her mother passed away because of some disease. Her father remarried to support her family.

She was studying with her cousin since childhood. Unfortunately when they were about to write the secondary examination, her cousin died. Her death jolted Vandna inner sense and she secured very poor marks in secondary examination. As a result, at age of 16, she got married with Mr. Manmohan Dubey, who was a priest at nearby temple in Jatara village of district Tikamgarh in Madhya Pradesh province. After seeking her husband support, she completed her secondary and higher secondary education.

After two years, when the couple was devoid of any child, the in laws, started raising questions and neglecting them. Then her husband decided to find a new job away from home town. Vandna Father-in-law was a forest guard and was recently deputed to Orchha. So, he asked his son to come with him. Her father-in-law financially helped her husband to open a shop in Orchha.

Her husband was not a good businessman, so he was just only able to manage some earnings. So, she decided to come to Orchha and support her husband. Because of financial crisis they were not able to rent a house for them in Orchha, so they settled on to live in the same shop. Being a shop, it doesn't have any facility and the river Betwa was the lifeline for them.

She started teaching in one of the school, G. K. Convent in Orchha at the basic pay of Rs. 350/- per month. The amount was very less but it gave them some add on to total earning. She loved teaching and the students.

One day, Debbie kindness, an Australian lady and tour manager from Intrepid

Travels came to visit school with some Australian tourist. She met Vandna along with the children. The next day, fortunately, Debbie again come across Vandna on her husband shop and offered the job for carving Heena Tattoo to the tourists accompanying her. Vandna carved the *Heena tattoo* and also offered tea as a welcome drink to them.

Women Tourism Entrepreneurship in India

Way back in 1955, First Planning Commission, which graded tourism 269th on their priority list of industries – poorer than even the development of light houses, tourism, in the twenty- first century, with its multi-sectoral spin-offs is believed to be the catalyst to bring about enhanced development and prosperity in India. But the fact is, India is a treasure trove for tourism development.

In India Tourism was declared as an industry in 1986 and became eligible for several incentives and facilities including tax incentives, subsidies and priorities in the sanctions of loans by the State Financial Institutions. In July 1991, tourism was also declared as priority sector for foreign investment.

Ever since the emergence of the concept of tourism, tourism development has taken place with a very satisfactory pace and rate in some of the countries.

By now, tourism has emerged as number one largest smokeless and fast growing industry in the world due to its ample promises and prospects. However, less attention has been paid to the unequal ways in which the benefits of tourism are distributed between men and women, particularly in the developing world. Tourism presents both opportunities and challenges for gender equality and women's empowerment.

Tourism offers a wide range of income generation opportunities for women in both formal and informal employment. Tourism jobs are often flexible and can be carried out at various different locations such as the workplace, community, and household. Additionally, tourism creates a wide range of opportunities for women through the complex value chains it creates in the destination economy.

There are also known to be challenges facing women in tourism.

Women are often concentrated in low status, low paid and precarious jobs in the tourism industry. Gender stereotyping and discrimination mean that women mainly tend to perform jobs such as cooking, cleaning and hospitality. Much tourism employment is seasonal and fluctuates according to the volatile nature of the industry. In some destinations links have been found between tourism and the sex industry which could make women more vulnerable to sexual exploitation.

Business Idea:

The earning from carving *Heena* tattoo was Rs.500/-, more than the salary what she use to get from the teaching. Dabbie Kindness impressed by her tattoo promised next time revisit and gave her a business idea that she can have a good earning through carving *Heena* tattoo to the foreign tourist and serving the *Masala tea* to the tourist.

“Dabbie motivated me how best I can utilize my skills of carving *Heena tattoo* and offering *masala tea* to the foreign tourists and also generate some earning.”

The tourist while enjoying the *Masala tea*, always use to ask the recipe of *Masala Tea*. Thus, she thought of starting a cooking class in which she will make the tourist learn the recipe of Indian *Masala Tea* and serving the same.

“I studied in a Hindi medium school, and I had a little knowledge of English. The tour managers helped me a lot as they use to work as interpreter for us and also give suggestions how best I can improve my English and business skills. The suggestions by them motivated me to come up with new business ideas and best utilization of my skills like *Heena Tattoo*, *Cooking Classes*, and *Indian dressing classes*. These all were something of my interest and I was always excited to interact with tourists.”

Need Gap:

“Earlier, when tourists praise me for tattoos and tea, I always felt surprised, these are the basic things which an Indian lady use to do. Even I had learned these things from my mother and friends. In Indian tradition, ladies always have the

Heena Tattoo on their hand on special occasions and we always offer tea to guests. What special I have done which has given them such a special satisfaction”.

The tour manager knows the fact that most of the tourist who visits India come through the tour operators and remain confined to the luxurious holiday having fixed itineraries. They were mostly confined to the forts, palace, history of kings, Mughals and British invasions and Indian independence. They rarely get chance to interact with the local people and thus couldn't enjoy the cultural diversity of the country. The tourism prospects are changing day by day and now, the tourist want to learn the different prospects of Indian culture. The tourists are willing to interact with local community and also wants to spend time by learning while tourism.

So, the need of such tourism product in the market, compel them to come up with the new ideas how to fulfill the demand-supply gap. Orchha is one of the desirable destinations among the tourist because of its historical as well as religious synergy. But, there were no centre for community participation. So, they were willing to have some activity, where the tourist can spend time with the locals, while learning some Indian culture. Dabbie Kindness, when offered Vandna to carve *Heena Tattoos*, this gave the tourists, a way to interact with the local and also had some beautiful carving of *Heena Tattoo* with a cup of nice *Masala Tea*, a part of Indian culture.

After this interaction the tourist find themselves very rejuvenated, and had a pleased smiling faces indicating that this was something they were missing in the tour. They also thanked tour manager and Vandna for a short but healthy interaction.

“I was very happy to have an interaction with the foreigners for the first time and seeing them satisfied I can surely say that they also enjoyed the moments with me.”

Dabbie, The tour manager decided to bring all her tourist while on the trip of Orchha to Vandna and asked her to carve the Heena tattoo on the tourist hands and serve them the Masala Tea for the next visits.

Taking a Decision?

Vandna was also pleased with this interaction, as she for the first time interacted with the foreign tourists and also because of the earning. This few hours earning was more than what she has ever in a month from teaching. She was very eager to have the next visit of Dabbie, with another group of tourist. But, this also left Vandna unhinged.

Vandna had completed her schooling in Hindi and she doesn't have the knowledge of English language. While carving the Tattoo and serving the tea, foreigners use to ask many things, but she was unable to answer. The tour manager helped her regarding communication, but she couldn't understand whether proper message were exchanged or not. Thus, various doubts were staining her,

Should she trust Dabbie, a foreigner lady?

If Yes, Another group of tourist will be also from different country and she knows only Hindi, how she will be able to communicate with them?

Will tour manager help her another time?

Will she be able to please another group also?

But the most critical question was,

should she continue with teaching or indulge in this activity as suggested by Dabbie?

Market Research:

Orchha is a popular tourist destination all round the world. Tourist visit Orchha throughout the year from different parts from globe. Hence, the tourist needs and demand are different. So, it is not possible to trap the needs of all tourists at a time. So it's become necessary for Vandna to understand consumer behaviour to grab market share and generate maximum revenue.

“Not all the tourist always liked the *Masala Tea* in the same way. For some, it was a wonderful experience, for others it was not. I couldn't understand the logic behind that. How can the same tea is giving a splendid flavor to someone and a normal experience to other? They all are foreigner and they all use to say it as a unique experience, but different views about the product.”

For Vandna, it was a complete new experience. So, in initial days she continued with the instructions given by the tour managers. This gave her a brief idea who is her prospective customers. She found that most of the tourists were from English speaking countries. She started learning English through reading newspaper, watching English news channel and also interacting with the tourists.

For few years, she was unable to differentiate the tourist. Gradually she began to realize that tourists are coming from different countries and their taste and preferences also varied. They also varied in nomenclature for example, Brinjal (*Baingan*) is known as Egg plant for Americans and Aubergine for French.

Cross-Cultural Intelligence

In order to live within a specific culture, the individual is supposed to adapt with the differences in that culture. According to Peterson (2004), Cultural Intelligence is the aptitude to exhibit definite behaviors, including skills and persona, which are culturally refrained to the attitudes and ethics of others. Cultural Intelligence covers other vicinities (Chaney & Martin, 2011) such as:

1. Linguistic Intelligence: It is helpful to learn about the costumers' native language and using international business. English can increase effectiveness when communicating with persons of other cultures.
2. Spatial Intelligence: It involves the space used during meetings and introductions.
3. Intrapersonal Intelligence: It involves awareness of one's own cultural style in order to make adjustments to international counterparts.
4. Interpersonal Intelligence: It includes the ability to understand other people and their motivations. In simple words, when dealing with people from another culture, one may know something about their language, the space to use while dealing with people, awareness about your culture and how to apply one's cultural behavior with that of the other culture.

Thus, tourism entrepreneurs through cultural intelligence especially rural and ethnic communities are push motivator for the development tourism and responsible for the sustainable tourism development. Their involvement in sustainable tourism development helps using natural resources more efficiently in the region.

The foreign tourist while having cup of *Masala Tea* with Vandna always ask how it was prepared. She realized that the foreign tourists are also interested in knowing the recipe of the *Masala Chai*, as they never got a chance to learn Indian recipes on tour. They come to India, stay in the hotels, had lunch in the restaurants where they are served with Indian dishes but never come to know about the ingredients and how it was prepared. They just use to enjoy the taste of Indian dishes.

Market Segmentation:

Orchha is one of the prime destination for the tourists from Oceania, Far east Asia, USA(United States of America) and UK (United Kingdom). They generally travel through the tour operators, which

give them real life experience in the tourism. These countries varied from each other in terms of climatic condition, customs and traditions and also the culture.

Thus, the behaviour of tourists from these countries is also different. So, the same product would not satisfy the needs all the tourists at a same time. The same product can satisfy the tourists in different ways. For example, Some tourists can be satisfied by the taste of the tea, but at the same time some may be satisfied because they are involved in community participation. Whatever the reason be, but one thing was common that is the time what Vandna and tourists spend together with a cup of *Masala Chai*.

She started segmenting the tourists as per

their requirements. She use to make them learn the recipe of *Masala Tea*, serve them hot. If there is any lady in the group, she use to offer her *Heena Tattoo* carving, and thus, indulging different tourists in different activities in a given scheduled time. She also started having variations in the Spices (*Masala*) as per the customer demand, so that the best can be delivered.

She also started offering breakfast and lunch to the tourist as well as to the tour manager free of cost to show her gratitude towards them. The tourists and tour manager enjoyed the food being served by Vandna. If something went wrong, the tour manager would suggest the proper ingredients and quantity so that it would be as per the requirement of the tourists.

"I usually cook food in traditional Indian style, using lots of oil and species. But, later on I get to know that the foreigner tourist doesn't use lots of spices and oil for cooking. Even I also found that some of them are allergic to certain spices. The tour leader always helped me to know how best I can cook for them."

Later on, she finds that the cooking class can be one option to make tourists learn about Indian recipe along with the *Masala tea*. The tourists are much interested in learning Indian recipes and through this cooking class she can spend more time with tourists as well as can generate good revenue.

But few things were restricting her,

- Will the tour manager agree to increase the time slot?
- Will the tourist be ready to spend more time in learning than other touristic activities?
- Will she be able to deliver the recipes as per tourists taste and flavor?

Business Plan:

"The cooking classes, was a new concept and I find the tourist are ready to pay for such services. These activities made them feel the real sense of tourism as well as community participation. They come to know about Indian style of cooking and also how an Indian family enjoys the meals at their home. The time duration for such classes was 2-3 hours depending on the group, but tourist always felt that they are at their home, learning new recipe from some master chef."

Different tour managers suggested Vandna to start "Cooking Classes". They also suggested that the cooking classes must be meant in such a way that it can trap concentration of all the tourists. To break the ice, she has to start her class introduction of the tourists, serving them *Masala tea*, giving time to relax and feel comfortable with her and preparing and serving the food to them.

But, biggest challenge was deciding the fee and menu for the cooking class. She consulted *Mr. Parvat Lal Kewat*, owner of *Ram Raja Restaurant* in *Orchha*, and enquired about the quantity and dishes which is being served in the restaurant

In 2005, The fixed Indian *Thali* (platter of Indian food) costs around INR 60/- which includes two seasonal vegetables, either lentil or yoghurt as per the season, *Vegetable Pulao* (Mix vegetable rice), 6 *Chapati* (Indian Bread), Salad and one sweet dish (as per the availability). She also get to know that the tourists likes *Brinjal*(*Egg plant/Aubergine*) the most.

Now she carked by options,

- Will she continue with the same menu?
- If yes, Will she able to deliver all the recipes mentioned in the menu?
- What if some inclusion or delusion is made in the recipe?

- What should she charge from the tourist as she was also demonstrating the cooking to the tourists?

She ideated to continue with the same menu as any change in the menu will affect the customer taste and moreover she doesn't know what can be the best alternative for the given menu. Also, any change in menu would cost her more than restaurant's cost. And also she has to continue with her main business, that is demonstrating and serving *Masala Chai* and carving *Heena Tattoo*.

Vandna's distant brother *Mr. Nitin Dami*, a tour guide in Himachal Pradesh, helped her out in preparing varieties of *Masala Tea* that were liked by tourist. He also cognized her the recipe of *Vegetable Pulao*.

She decided to charge INR 100/- from each tourist for the cooking classes. But the tour manager, *Dabbie Kindness* suggested that it is not justifiable, So she revised the fee to INR 150/- which makes her earn more profit. This cost include the demonstration, ingredients and serving of *Masala Chai*, Carving *Heena Tattoo* and demonstration, ingredients and serving food to the tourists. This was also decided, fluctuation in the prices of ingredients will not be reflected in the fee.

Operation Plan

Until 2005, Vandna stayed in the shop only. So space was a major problem as only few people can sit inside the shop. She doesn't have enough funds to rent a new space and purchase utensils to meet the demand of large group of tourists. It was also a bulk investment. So, she decided to cater small groups or individual tourists. Since, clientele was fixed, she was alone able to cater the small groups as she had

a practice of cooking for 6-7 persons in her in laws house.

It was assured that the tour manager will inform her about number of tourists few days prior to the arrival. She could not afford bulk purchasing, so the purchasing would be done as per the number of tourists. The purchasing would be done by her husband. And if required he will help her. The power facility will also be taken into consideration, as Orchha is a small village, there was the problem of power crisis.

The timing for the tourist arrival will also be taken care of, as the tourist must be demonstrated and served on the time, so that they can properly enjoy the other activities or get back to the hotels.

The tour managers also make tourists aware of the facts that the place they are going to visit is a small shop and they have limited facilities to avail, but this would give them a lifetime unique experience.

The foreign tourists are very much concerned about the health and hygiene factor. Keeping this in mind, hygiene of the shop and the surrounding areas will be taken care of. There must be proper availability of the basic thing like hand sanitizer, Napkins, proper cleanliness of the shop.

The feedback should be taken care of, as it will improve the quality of the food being served and inclusion/delusion of new recipe if there is more demand or any alternative of current recipe.

Marketing Plan

Tourism is a labor intensive industry. With the advancement of technology, especially mobile handsets, it has become necessary

to build contacts and loyalty with the people involved in it.

She ideated that her client base is not in India, so the promotional strategy would not work in India. Even she was unaware, how market base is developed. She received through Intrepid tour managers.

So, she left it on the Intrepid travel and decided to follow their instructions. Intrepid travel added "Vandna Cooking Classes" in their itinerary and also provided assistance for the full fledged setting for the classes. Even later, she used only a banner to display her shop.

Relationship Marketing

Relational marketing involves the creation, maintenance and strengthening of the relations with buyers and the other business partners of an enterprise, aiming at long-term actions. Ensuring the best relations with buyers and – based on that – making them as loyal as possible are the essential end of all attempts typical of relational marketing.

American Marketing Association (AMA) has defined , relational marketing as "marketing made real by the planning and execution of activities to set up, assess, promote and distribute ideas, goods and services with the purpose to achieve exchanges meant to meet various individual and organizational goals".

In the contemporary conditions of doing business at the tourist market, characterized by strong competition and sophisticated demand, implementation of relationship marketing concept with focus at development of high quality relationships with consumers and stakeholders is becoming imperative of gaining mutual benefits and satisfaction. Thus there are lots of advantages in the shift of traditional transactions marketing approach toward relationship marketing.

The main benefits of relationship marketing are related to higher degree of consumers' satisfaction with social and financial effects. In marketing practice companies are mostly focused at providing higher level of quality than expected, organizing more intensive contacts and more effective communication with consumers and shifting to more personalized treatment of individual consumer.

Successful implementation of relationship marketing is based on principles of modern management of products/services, tourist destinations and Consumer's demand.

Now- a -days, Consumers are getting status of partners of tourist companies which must build long term relations of mutual respect in order to keep mutual relations based on adequate quality and service innovation. Goal of relationship marketing is to deliver long term value to consumers, and level of success is long term satisfaction of consumers.

Thus, relationship marketing is business philosophy assume that both individual consumers and companies prefer to keep long term relations with actual organization instead of searching continually for new offers. With this assumption and with the fact that usually it is more cost effective to keep actual consumers than to attract new consumers, successful marketers join their efforts on developing effective strategies to keep loyal consumers.

Vandna come to know that the tour manager shifts the companies for increments or other reasons. So, she remained in contacts with the tour managers, guides, etc. whoever can generate the tourist. This helped her to get tourists from other tour operators apart from Intrepid. Even today Intrepid is the maximum tourist provider company. The marketing plan and pricing strategy is decided by them. The other tour manager who are working with different companies or has opened up new tour and travel Companies, also brings the tourists for cooking classes and also they are suggesting other manager to have inclusion of "Vandna Cooking Classes" in the itinerary.

She has adopted the simplest and best possible marketing strategy for the cooking classes. Vandna very well knew that, she doesn't have enough funds to promote her cooking classes in the international market. She is highly dependent on the tour operators and tour manager for its customers. Hence, to maintain the business relations she offers some gifts to the tour manager and tries to be touch with them as if they shift their companies or set up new business, her clientele would not get disturbed.

The tourists were fond of the cooking classes, even when they get back to their countries, helped in the marketing through word of mouth publicity. That has generated a curiosity among the different tourist who is planning for India tour. Even she has got repeated customers from all round the globe, indicating the success of the cooking classes and they are also helping in generating the customers for the cooking classes at their native places.

Future plan

Vandna cooking classes is now a renowned name in the international tourism market. She wants to continue the business as it is.

"Whoever and whatever I am today is because of the cooking class. I will never change the profession and continue to serve the tourists in the Orchha. My life is incomplete without cooking classes. Yes, being a lady I will always look forward for woman empowerment and employment generation. I never want to expand my cooking classes business, as I am self satisfied with it and wants to thank God for giving me such opportunity. The tourism is a vast industry and there is lots of areas which are being untapped, so, I want more people to indulge in such type of activities and grab the opportunities."

She has some future goals which she wishes if, would be possible can come into reality.

- She wants to open a restaurant, fully managed by women in the Orchha, where tourists will be facilitated with the different Indian recipes along with the demonstration.
- She wants to train women in Orchha, to run different small scale business or cottage industry like embroidery, painting, arts and crafts, cooking, etc.

Brain Quest:

1. Vandana cooking classes is an endogenous entrepreneurial approach. Should such business adopt exogenous approach for profit maximization?
2. "Serve what is being demanded" is a right business approach. So is it a necessity for small entrepreneurs to undergo changes?
3. Cooking classes are generally run by women, but, men are known for best cooking. Should such ventures be more successful if it would run by men?

Diversity and Performance Outcomes: The Mediating Role of Diversity Management in Hotel Industry

V.G.Girish

ABSTRACT

This study was done to know the relationship between diversity (i.e. surface level diversity and deep level diversity), diversity management and performance outcome. This study also explains the mediating effect of diversity management on diversity and performance outcome. A conceptual model was developed and suitable propositions were made and the conclusion as well as implications was also discussed. This study gives an idea about the how diversity management plays an important role in influencing the performance outcome especially among diverse group of employees in the organization.

Keywords: Diversity, Surface level diversity, Deep level diversity, Diversity Management, Performance Outcome

Introduction

The service industry provides more than 70% of the employment in most industrialized economies (OECD, 2005). The present market size of Indian tourism and the hospitality industry is around \$120 billion and is expected to pass \$420 billion by 2025 (IBEF, 2013). Indian hotel industry has shown an increasing growth trend of approximately 14% during the last few years and it is predicted a similar growth trend will continue in the coming years (Vardharajan & Rajan 2013). The luxury hotels in India is also experiencing exponential growth. According to a report from the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India (2012), in March 2012 there were 750 hotels in India with 4 or more stars. The figure is expected to reach 1338 by March 2017, and 2457 hotels by March 2022. This growth rate also creates demand for

trained Human Resources; the report forecasts that 587,000 by March 2022 for 4 star upward hotels. It also states that the employee turnover rate in star category (luxury) hotels was between 11 and 12% in 2011, compared with 20% in hotels in general (Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, 2012). The brighter side is that India's working population of 630 million is expected to touch 830 million by 2016, with India having the highest percentage of working people in the BRIC countries (Brazil, Russia, India and China) (Business Today, 2007). Sengupta (2004) writes that HRD is "like a soft version of HRM...is unitary in approach and lays emphasis on building employee competence, commitment and strong organizational culture" (p. 172). Khandekar and Sharma (2005) found that HR capabilities are positively correlated to organizational performance and are a

V.G.Girish, Assistant Professor, The Catholic University of Korea, Korea
girishcuk@gmail.com, www.catholic.ac.kr

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- Generally main articles should not exceed 5000 words.
- *First sheet:* Title, subtitle (if desired), author's name, affiliation, postal address, telephone, fax number and email. Respective affiliations and addresses of co-authors should be indicated.
- *Second sheet;* Abstract of 300 words with at least 3 keywords.
- Subsequence sheets: main body of text; list of references; appendixes; tables (numbered consecutively); illustrations and captions to illustrations (large tables and illustrations may be on separate sheets).
- The abbreviations and terminology should be fully spelled out and defined when first used in text.
- *References* should be submitted as following; listed at the end of the articles should be titled as References. References should be numbered as per numbering mentioned in the main article. Each reference should be as per **APA Format–6th Edition**.

Manuscript Submission:

The whole submission should be printed with 1.5 line spacing on one side of paper only with ample margins provided, preferably on A4 size paper. Two hard copies and one soft copy using MS Word are required to be submitted to the Managing editors.

Referencing should strictly be according to APA referencing Style

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