

**HERITAGE TOURISM AND ITS IMPACT ON SOCIO-ECONOMICS IN
SIVASAGAR DISTRICT, ASSAM**

**A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF
PHILOSOPHY**

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**DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY AND RESOURCE
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MANAGEMENT
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**HERITAGE TOURISM AND ITS IMPACT ON SOCIO-ECONOMICS
IN SIVASAGAR DISTRICT, ASSAM**

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**In partial fulfillment of the requirement of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
in Geography and Resource Management of Mizoram University, Aizawl.**

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis entitled “**Heritage tourism and its impact on Socio-economics in Sivasagar district, Assam**” submitted by Krishnamoni Saikia for the award of Doctor of Philosophy in the Department of Geography and Resource Management of the Mizoram University under my supervision.

She has fulfilled all the rules and regulations specified by the university to complete the study. Furthermore, the current thesis is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy. The thesis has neither been submitted as a whole nor any part to any other university for any other research degree. I also certify that the thesis depicts the objectives of the study and the independent work of the scholar.

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Prof. Bobby Beingachhi

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Supervisor

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis entitled “**Heritage tourism and its impact on Socio-economics in Sivasagar district, Assam**” submitted by Krishnamoni Saikia for the award of Doctor of Philosophy in the Department of Geography and Resource Management of the Mizoram University under my supervision.

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OCTOBER, 2025

I **KRISHNAMONI SAIKIA**, hereby declare that the subject matter of this thesis is the record of work done by me, that the contents of this thesis did not form basis of the award of any previous degree to me or to do the best of my knowledge to anybody else, and that the thesis has not been submitted by me for any research degree in any other University/Institute.

This is being submitted to the Mizoram University for the **Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Geography and Resource Management**.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

1. **UNESCO:** United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
2. **WTO:** World Tourism Organisation
3. **IUOTO:** International Union of Official Travel Organisations
4. **IATA:** International Air Transport Association
5. **PATA:** Pacific Area Travel Association
6. **ATDC:** Assam Tourism Development Corporation Ltd.
7. **DTPC:** District Tourism Promotion Council
8. **TPI:** Tourism Potential Index
9. **SWOT:** Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats

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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the study:

Tourism is a dynamic and rapidly growing development process for a particular place. Tourism is directly related to human mental stability and peace. Tourism provides practical knowledge of a phenomenon and a theoretical understanding of a concept. It is also a route for socio-economic and cultural development, and a means of revenue generation. Through the development of the tourism sector, one place, district, state, or country may gather international recognition. Tourism is a platform where people can get employment directly through the government, NGO, and other private and public sectors; there is also a way to link to the local people to create jobs or make an earning source in the particular tourist place by themselves. Tourism is a package of travel and business (including every type or mode of business and travel).

Tourism is a major engine of economic growth and an effective instrument for generating employment, earning revenue and foreign exchange, enhancing the environment, preserving culture and tradition, boosting the national GDP, and improving the country's balance of payments (Bhatia, 2002).

Tourism started with exploration and discovery in the previous era. At that time, people only used to travel by water routes and roadways. During the early period, Africa, Asia, and the Middle East were the pioneers of exploration. During the Middle Ages, from the 5th to the 14th century AD, religious tourism was very popular. People used to visit churches and also religious sites. In the 13th century, Marco Polo discovered good and diverse transport communication. He discovered roadways from Europe to Asia. In the 15th century, transportation was famous for tourist sites. Between the 14th to 17th

centuries in England, there were educational institutions for visitors. Since that time, educational tourism has been popular. Later on, the system of tourism licenses was developed in England. Italy, Paris, Frankfurt, etc, were the most popular places for tourism at that time. After the industrial revolution, from 1750 to 1850, tourism was established as mass tourism. It started basically in Western Europe. At that time, tourism was akin to a grand leisurely tour. Though people used to travel here and there from the beginning of the existence of the place, the tourism sector was properly set up, and the concept of tourism started in India after the Second World War (1945) (Bhattacharya,2004).

According to the WTO (World Tourism Organisation), “Movement of People away from their normal place of work and residence for not less than 24 hours and not more than a year. Simply, the movement of people from one place to another is called tourism. Based on the movement of people on a small scale, which can be international or domestic tourism. International tourism refers to the tourism related to movement outside from own country. Domestic tourism refers to the movement of tourists within their own country. In international tourism, there are two types:

A) Inbound Tourism

B) Outbound tourism.

INBOUND TOURISM = Entering a country

OUTBOUND TOURISM = Going outside the country.

Every tourist has a different aim and purpose for their movement to places. Mostly they visit places to know the culture and history, customs and traditions, meet people, see the sights, discover new places, etc. Appropriately, it is for health purposes, religion, scenic beauty, sporting events, theatres and spectacles, Culture, etc., that are the main motives for a tourist.

The tourism industry has a big connection with different network zones. The Tourism sector is divided into various types. Likewise- Eco-Tourism, Heritage tourism, cultural tourism, Religious Tourism, Health Tourism, Sports Tourism, Adventure Sports Tourism, Leisure Tourism, etc.

Tourism has started gaining the attention of government and non-governmental organizations and planners as economic agents through trade, commerce, exploration, education, pilgrimage, health purposes, education, and many more. Tourism is a salient and vibrant force for the national, international, and regional economy, culture, and society through the mixing and uniting of tourists with the native people of tourist destinations, and helps to rejuvenate things, improve livelihood, and maintain sustainability (Bulter,2015).

The concept of tourism was carried as an intramural term with the notion of travel. Primitive people acclimated to travel in contemplation of food, gathering, and shelter. Gradually, travel has received a spotlight and a new dimension after the civilization, exploration, and discoveries throughout the world. Euro-Asiatic countries started traveling and visiting each other after having transport facilities, and the journey of tourism started thereafter (Bhattacharya,2004). In 1841, James Cook focused on travelling to famous tourist destinations in various countries and was also working to set up copious excursion groups. In 1871, James Cook led a team of British tourists to India. Likewise, travel and tourism have become a broader platform with increasing attraction towards natural resources, like beaches, forest camps, heritage sites, etc. After crossing the years 1874-1939 with so many constructions of tourist destinations globally, motorcar and air travel were boosted in the post-war period (World War II). IUOTO (International Union of Official Travel Organisations-1947), WTO (World Tourism Organisation-1975), IATA (International Air Transport Association-1945), PATA (Pacific Area Travel Association-1951), etc., international organisations of tourism have helped establish the tourism industry in both developed and developing countries. (Malik,2015).

With the contemporary progressive period of tourism, India was competent to set a new era in tourism by crossing over traditional travel and tourism activity. In 1948, a primary traffic committee was set up and endowed with the responsibility for the guidance of tourists. Afterward, various tourism offices and agencies were devising and promoting Indian tourism in a diversified manner. Under the continuum of success and growth of tourism, both international and domestic tourism have started to generate revenue, and the concept of socio-economic development, cultural

development through tourism, eco-tourism, geo-tourism, and heritage tourism came into focus and became effective with sustainable tourism. (Bhatia,2001). UNESCO has become another catalyst for the growth of tourism in a broader sense. In addition to identifying tourist sites from various parts of the world and designating them as World Heritage Sites, this initiative embodies a youthful, vigorous, and powerful spirit. Presently, India is the sixth-largest heritage destination in the world. From 1975 (the recognition period for World Heritage sites) to 2023, 42 World Heritage sites under UNESCO in India have been identified, which has brought a golden glow to the attraction of tourists in increasing numbers. (Hall et al.,2005).

1.1.1. Concept of Heritage Tourism:

The word Heritage carries bright and ancient glories of culture and tradition. Heritage tourism is a way to get in touch with the history of a particular area. It may be tangible or intangible, which includes ancient ruins, architectural masterpieces, sacred sites, traditional crafts, folklore, music, dance, and cuisine, etc. Heritage tourism is one of the most effective ways to impart knowledge of diverse cultures and traditions, helping people understand the significance and context of heritage sites and artifacts (Zeppel, H., and Hall, M., 1990).

According to the Ohio Division of Travel & Tourism (2002), heritage tourism is *"traveling to experience the places and activities that authentically represent the people and stories of the past"*. The term Heritage Tourism is yet to be expanded in a broader sense. Heritage tourism can also be defined as a source of economic development, restructuring, and the establishment of new tourism markets (Oglethorpe, 1987; Urry, 1990; Weiler & Hall, 1992).

Heritage tourism plays a crucial role in promoting and conserving heritage sites, and it helps to generate revenue by attracting people to the sites. Heritage tourism fosters cultural exchange and mutual understanding between visitors and native people. Participating with the local people in cultural activities generates immense love and attraction to the particular culture and tradition, and also there is a big root for the cultural exchange. Heritage tourism generates employment opportunities for the native people by providing a platform for business and other relevant activities, such as

accommodations, transportation, dining, and souvenir sales. It assists in empowering the local community. Heritage tourism leads to the socio-economic development of an area. Heritage tourism is one of the best ways to see the golden past, and it can also generate a way to compare and analyze the various archaeological sites in the world. Tourism and heritage tourism are collaborative in the sense that tourism plays a mediating role in a situation and asserts heritage.

In India, heritage tourism is mostly dominant, with tangible and intangible heritage tourism. Within the world's geographical area, there are many heritage sites recognized by UNESCO. India, a land of incredible diversity and rich cultural heritage, boasts an unparalleled treasure trove of historical, architectural, and natural wonders. With over 38 UNESCO World Heritage Sites, countless monuments, temples, and museums, and a kaleidoscope of festivals and traditions, India presents a unique opportunity for travellers to immerse themselves in the country's resplendent cultural and natural heritage. As the world's seventh-largest country by land area and second-most populous, India's heritage tourism has the potential to not only showcase its glorious past but also contribute significantly to local economic development, community empowerment, and environmental conservation (Tiwari, 2017). Assam is one of the most culturally and naturally rich and beautiful places in India. The Unique geographical location, moderate climate, and fertile soil are the basis of the development of this state. This attracts people to visit this place, and migration has been started to this state since the Palaeolithic age. Assam has four racial traits: Proto-Australoid, Mongoloid, Aryo-Mongoloid, and Arya-Mongoloid Dravidian (Taher, 1988). Assam has been standing as a gateway to the Northeastern states. Since, first millennium B.C. eastward movement of migration of the people started based on the major routes of Assam. Sukapha (First Ahom King) travelled to Assam from the Mong-Mao, China, by crossing the Patkai hills in 1228 AD to search for a wet land for rice cultivation, and later he established the Ahom kingdom in Assam. This proves Assam has a tourism base for a long period. After establishing the Ahom kingdom, various developments have been started in Assam. Simultaneously, development has gained heritage value with various temples, tanks, amphitheatres, etc. In this postmodern era, the legacy of the pride of the Ahom dynasty is still raised by

generating tourists to the sites which established during the Ahom period. There are various historical significances to these heritage sites. Among the various heritage sites, most of the sites are situated in the Sivasagar district, which was once the kingdom of the Ahom dynasty. The sites are now under the Archaeological Survey of India, which generates revenue. There are three World Heritage sites situated in Assam, and one of them is situated in Sivasagar District, which is a group of four maidams, Charideo (Undivided Sivasagar district, and it is under the Guwahati circle. Heritage sites of the Sivasagar district have the power to generate socio-economic development, which has immense potential towards the development of the area and also contributes to the development of the nation. Hence, the study of heritage tourism in Sivasagar district, Assam, is important. Among the various heritage sites, the present study covers 14 sample heritage sites, which have innumerable potential to generate development in the study area.

1.1.2 Profile of Tourist arrivals to heritage sites in the Sivasagar district, Assam:

“Atithi Devo Bhava” is the core principle of respect of the Assamese people towards tourists. Which means “The guest is God”. From this phrase, it is clear that the hospitality of the people of Assam is very well-mannered. Assam’s unique blend of natural beauty, culture, and history makes it an attractive destination for tourists. Every District of Assam has its own attractions. Sivasagar is one of the most historically significant districts of Assam. There are three World Heritage Sites declared by UNESCO that are situated in Assam. These are the Kaziranga National Park, Manas National Park, and the Mound-burial system of the Ahom dynasty, which is locally known as Charaideo moidam and is situated in the Undivided Sivasagar district.

From the colonial period to post post-colonial period there are various tourists visited Assam because of its natural beauty and also due to the availability of resources. With the flow of time, gradually, Assam became a historical place. The contribution of the Ahom ruler is very significant in making Assam as today. Charaideo was the first capital of the Ahom dynasty, which was previously within the Sivasagar district (Undivided Sivasagar district). Lots of Ahom work print has still been in the Sivasagar district. This brings eyesight to every person and makes Sivasagar a historic city. The

heritage sites of Sivasagar district have also generated revenue. Sivasagar attracts tourists with its rich cultural heritage and architectural marvels. There is no particular ideal time to explore heritage tourism in Sivasagar. The whole year is suitable for tourists' arrival at the heritage sites. According to studies, both domestic and foreign tourist arrivals have shown different trends and patterns. The tourism growth has contributed significantly to the region's economy, generating income and employment opportunities for locals. With its historic monuments, scenic beauty, and cultural significance, Sivasagar has immense potential for tourism development.

The number of tourists (Both domestic and foreign) arriving at the heritage sites in Sivasagar district, Assam, is shown in the following table. The following data were collected from the Sivasagar Tourism office, which is under the Archaeological Survey of India, Guwahati circle. The mentioned data are collected from the revenue-generated heritage sites, which are called ticketed sites. Both the number of domestic and foreign tourists is shown here. Based on the availability of tourist data, the researcher has collected data from 2003 to 2023 (20 years).

Table 1.1: Tourists' Flow Data (2003-2023)

Years	Category	Total
2003	Domestic	131,809
	Foreign	299
2004	Domestic	156,280
	Foreign	575
2005	Domestic	181,998
	Foreign	389
2006	Domestic	153,283
	Foreign	643
2007	Domestic	125836
	Foreign	915
2008	Domestic	173,456
	Foreign	987
2009	Domestic	241,352
	Foreign	780
2010	Domestic	342,132
	Foreign	1052
2011	Domestic	338,429
	Foreign	971
2012	Domestic	177,969
	Foreign	1065
2013	Domestic	331,873
	Foreign	1138
2014	Domestic	337,491
	Foreign	1423
2015	Domestic	404,310
	Foreign	1709
2016	Domestic	439,100
	Foreign	1611
2017	Domestic	271,873
	Foreign	1872
2018	Domestic	441,651
	Foreign	862
2019	Domestic	154,143
	Foreign	753
2020	Domestic	0
	Foreign	0
2021	Domestic	42,729
	Foreign	04
2022	Domestic	461,197
	Foreign	492
2023	Domestic	384,329
	Foreign	1344

Source: (Archaeological Survey of India, Sivasagar office)

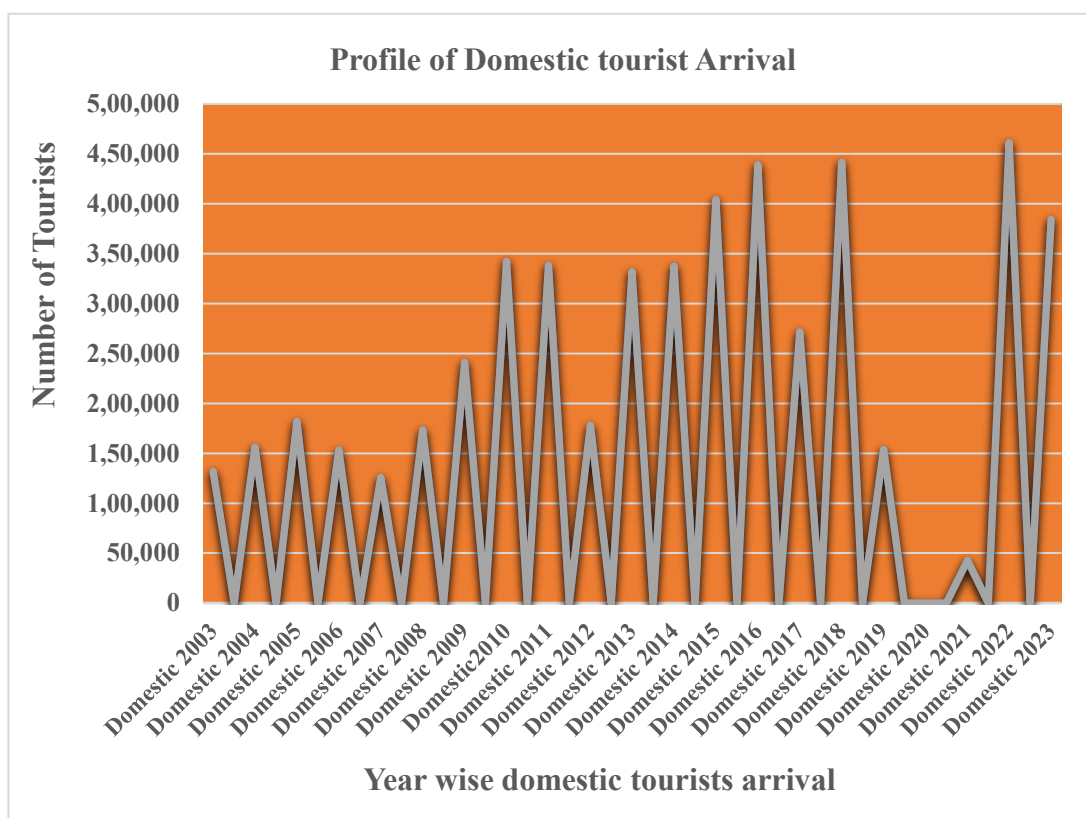


Figure 1.1: Domestic tourists’ arrivals to the heritage sites of Sivasagar district, Assam (2003-2023).

The above graphical representation 1.0 shows the profile of Domestic tourists' arrival at heritage sites. And the arrival rate is not static, as it can be seen in the graph itself. It showcases that the tourist arrival rate varies each year. The highest number of tourists was found in 2022, and the lowest number of tourists was found in 2020, which is 0, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The highest to lowest number of tourists found accordingly: 2008, 2018, 2016, 2015, 2023, 2010, 2011, 2014, 2013, 2017, 2009, 2005, 2012, 2004, 2019, 2006, 2003, 2007, and 2020, and the values of these years are mentioned in Table 1.0.

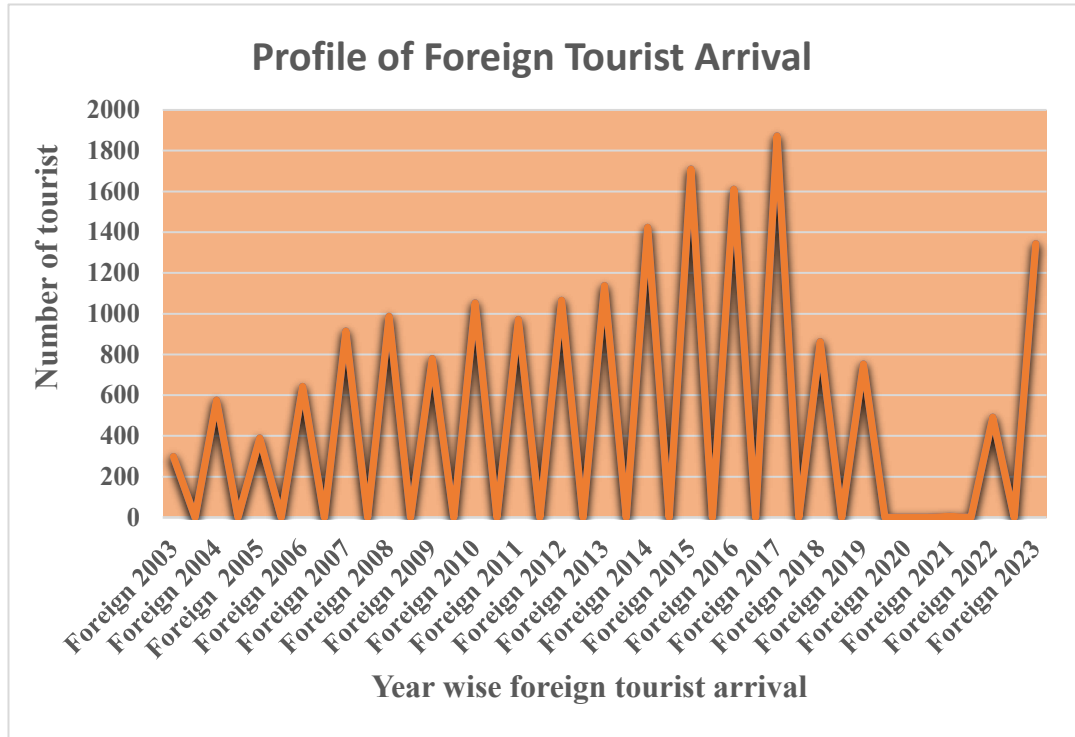


Figure 1.2: Foreign tourists’ arrivals to the heritage sites of Sivasagar district, Assam.

Graph 2. Shows the number of foreign tourists arriving at the heritage sites of Sivasagar district, Assam. The highest value according to the graph profile is 1872, and the year is 2017. The smallest value found in the graph is 0, and the year is 2020, because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The other years, according to the highest to lowest values are: 2017, 2015, 2016, 2014, 2023, 2013, 2012, 2010, 2008, 2011, 2007, 2018, 2009, 2019, 2006, 2004, 2022, 2005, 2003, 2021, 2020, and the values of the years are mentioned above table 1.

1.2 Significance of the study:

Assam has great opportunities for the development of the tourism industry from various perspectives. Various studies have proved that Assam has a great opportunity for Geo-tourism, eco-tourism, heritage tourism, leisure tourism, etc. Kaziranga is one of the world-famous tourist destinations that is listed as a world heritage tourism site, where the number of tourists is very high; Charideo is also listed as a world heritage site, which is also situated in the undivided Sivasagar district of Assam. Various

monuments of the Ahom dynasty are in Assam. Assam is the gateway of the northeastern state, which is a broad opportunity to attract national and international tourists. According to the archaeological survey of India, Sivasagar has the largest scope for tourism and revenue generation through the heritage sites. The scope of the present study has covered the programs and policies regarding the tourism sector of the Sivasagar district, also focusing on the process of development, promotional activities, and identifying the potentialities and obstacles for creating ideas and concepts for better development of that place and the role of tourism in the socio-economic development regarding tourism and infrastructure.

1.3 Statement of the problem:

The growth and development of heritage tourism in Sivasagar District, Assam, is immensely significant. The heritage sites of the study area carry the pride of the Ahom dynasty, which ruled for 600 years in Assam. From this perspective, identification of the potential of heritage tourism, its impact on socio-economic and cultural aspects, recognizing the factors affecting the heritage sites, etc., is highly suggestive to be covered in a broad study. Here, various issues have been found during the pilot survey and also by following various research gaps. This is why an introspective study is needed in the present study area. Therefore, it is a moral responsibility to identify, discover, and regenerate, as well as develop, the heritage sites in Sivasagar district, Assam. Hence, the present study has been stated as: **“Heritage tourism and its impact on socio-economic and culture in Sivasagar district, Assam”**.

1.4. Research Questions: To carry out the present study entitled “Heritage tourism and its impact on Socio-economics in Sivasagar district, Assam,” the following research questions have been formulated:

1. Does Sivasagar district have the potential to become a significant heritage tourism destination, and what factors contribute to its appeal?
2. What are the key factors that determine the tourism potential of heritage sites in Sivasagar district, Assam, and how can they be enhanced?
3. What is the impact of heritage tourism on the socio-economic and cultural fabric of Sivasagar district, Assam?

4. How can heritage tourism be managed to balance economic benefits with socio-cultural sustainability and community well-being in Sivasagar district, Assam?
5. What are the key drivers influencing the development and sustainability of heritage tourism in Sivasagar district, Assam?
6. How can context-specific strategies be designed to ensure long-term sustainability of heritage tourism in Sivasagar district, Assam?

1.5. Objectives of the study:

The present study has been carried out with the following objectives:

1. To examine the potential of heritage tourism in Sivasagar District, Assam.
2. To study the impacts of heritage tourism on socio-economic and culture in the Sivasagar district of Assam
3. To describe the major drivers affecting heritage tourism in Sivasagar.
4. To suggest some suitable strategies for sustainable heritage tourism in the Sivasagar district of Assam.

1.6. Study Area:

The area of the present study is Sivasagar district, Assam, and the sample heritage sites of the present study comprise 14 heritage sites of the Sivasagar district, Assam:

- i. Shivadol complex (Shiva Dol, Devi Dol, Vishnu Dol).
- ii. Sivasagar tank
- iii. Joi Dol
- iv. Jaysagar Tank
- v. Rudrasagar Dol
- vi. Rudrasagar Tank
- vii. Rang Ghar
- viii. Talatal Ghar
- ix. Kareng Ghar

- x. Group of four Moidams (Charaideo Moidam, now renamed as “Moidams-the Mound Burial System of the Ahom Dynasty”)
- xi. Namdang Stone Bridge (Namdang Xill Hanku)
- xii. Bakhar Bengena Tree

* Two Heritage sites are compiled with the Shivadol complex. So, here, the number of heritage sites is shown as 12, but the sample heritage site for the study is 14.

Sivasagar is a district in Assam, India. It is situated in the upper part of the Brahmaputra valley. The latitudinal extension is $26^{\circ}58' 48.0000''$ North and the longitudinal extension is $94^{\circ}37'47.9892''$ East. Sivasagar was the capital of the Ahom kingdom for 600 long years (13th to 19th century). Sivasagar town is the home of various heritage buildings, monuments, and temples. Sivasagar is also known for its rich cultural heritage, including traditional Assamese music, dance, and handicrafts. Agriculture, tea plantations, and small-scale industries primarily drive the town's economy.

1.6.1. Physiography:

The district is characterized by a flat and alluvial plain. The district is bounded by the Charaideo district to the north, the Dibrugarh district to the east, the Jorhat district to the west, and the Golaghat district to the southwest.

1.6.2. Drainage:

The district is drained by several rivers and streams, including the Brahmaputra River, the Dhanasiri River, the Dikhow River, and various tributaries of the Brahmaputra are found here.

1.6.3. Climate

The Climate of the study area is characterized by a warm, humid, rainy summer and cool, dry winter. In winter, there is much less rainfall than in summer. The annual average temperature is 23.7 °C, and in a year average annual rainfall is 2244.5 mm.

1.6.4. Soil:

Sivasagar district has a variety of soils, which can be broadly classified into these types: Alluvial soils, Red loamy soils, laterite soils, forest soils, etc. It helps agricultural productivity, economic growth, food security, biodiversity, etc.

1.6.5. Transportation:

Sivasagar district connects another part of Assam through the national highways 37 and 38. Also connected other parts through state highways. Sivasagar has a network of district roads that connect rural areas to urban centres. Sivasagar railway station and Simaluguri junction are the two nearest railway stations to reach Sivasagar. The Brahmaputra River and some of its tributaries provide water transport facilities.

1.6.6. Language: The primary language spoken in Sivasagar district, Assam, is Assamese, which is the official language of Assam. About 90.24 of % people in Sivasagar district speak Assamese according to the 2011 census. Also, most people have knowledge of English and Hindi simultaneously. The district has various tribes and communities like Ahom, Chutias, Tea-tribes, Mishing, Deori, and others.

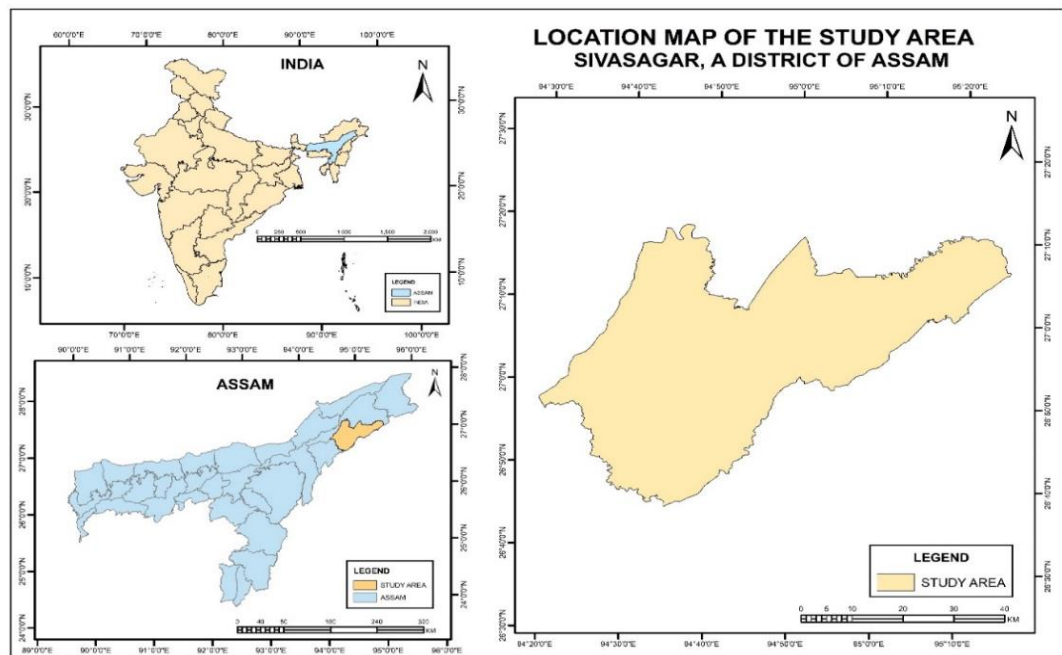


Figure1.3: Study Area Map.

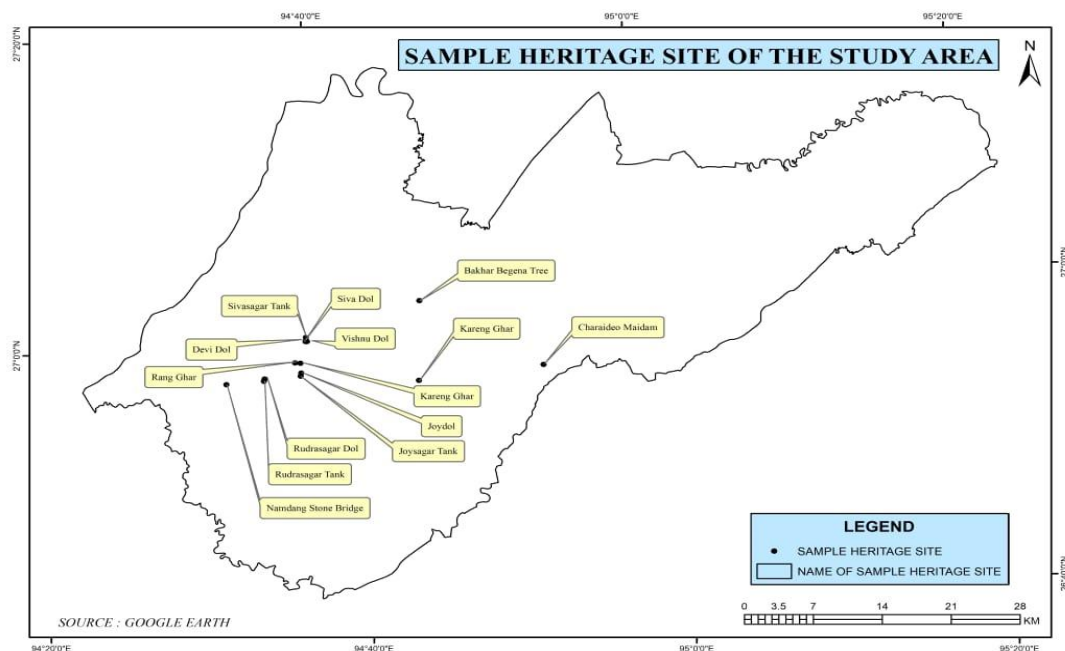


Figure 1.4: Map of the Sample heritage site.

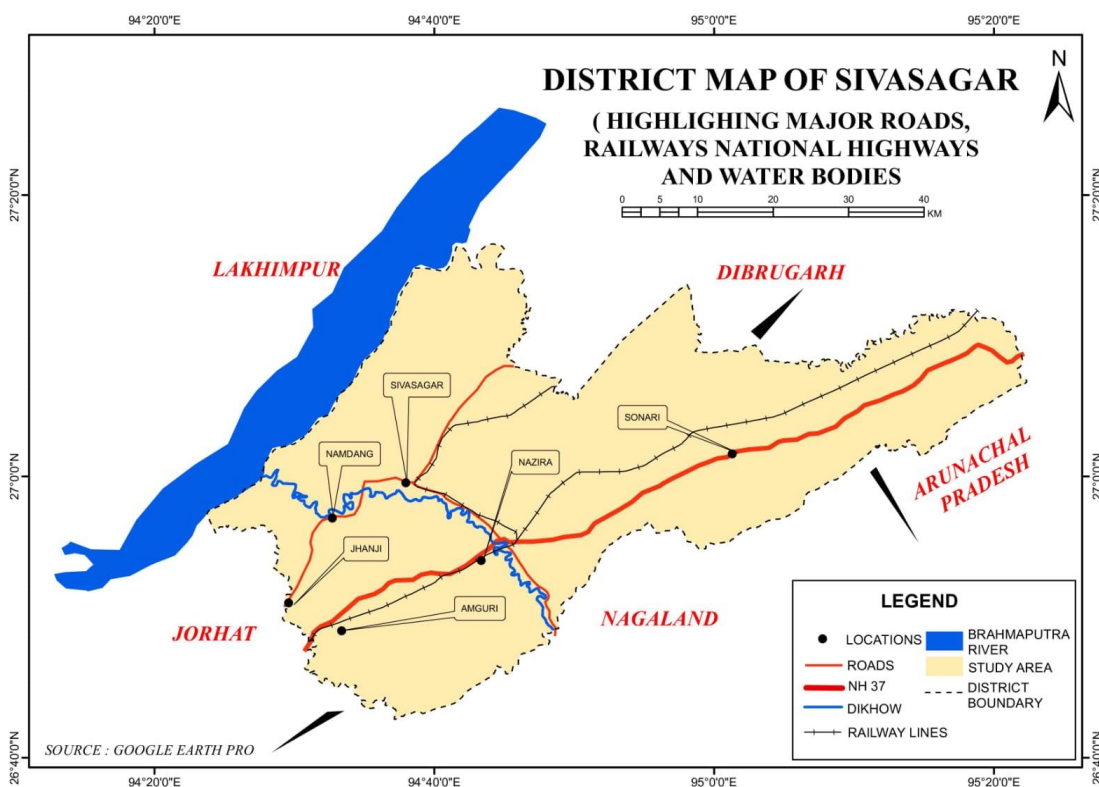


Figure 1.5. Sivasagar district map with adjoining areas.

1.8. Methodology:

Research is a systematic and scientific process of inquiry that aims to generate new knowledge, understanding, or insights about a particular topic, issue, or phenomenon (Creswell, 2014). A well-planned research design enables researchers to make informed decisions throughout the study, ensuring accurate data collection, effective data analysis, reliable conclusions, and valid results. By adopting a proper research design, researchers can enhance the validity, reliability, and generalizability of their findings, ultimately leading to more informed decision-making and more impactful research outcomes (Kumar, 2019). There are various types of research designs based on the approaches: Quantitative, Qualitative, and Mixed methods. Here, a quantitatively driven mixed-methods approach is applied to the study.

- **Quantitatively Driven Mixed-method approach:** This research approach is a combination of qualitative and quantitative data and findings (Mixed-method), where analyses are run mostly based on the statistical data or numerical values, and the quantitative findings are supported by qualitative analysis. Maximum weightage is provided on the quantitative information (Morse & Cheek, 2014). The present study is done based on the combination of Quan + Qual (quantitative + qualitative) method. This is called a mixed-methods research approach. Here, most of the data has been analysed quantitatively, and some of them are analysed qualitatively. Hence, it is a quantitatively driven mixed-method approach.

Table 1.2: Methodological Design.

Design	Descriptive Survey Research Method (Quan+qual)	
Approach	Quantitatively driven mixed-method approach	
Population	14 Heritage tourism sites of Sivasagar District, Assam (the population comprises Tourists, neighbouring villages, associated business persons, and employees)	
Sampling Techniques	Simple Random sampling	Purposive sampling
	• Adopted in selecting the households near the heritage sites. • Employees of the heritage sites • Business persons of the heritage sites.	• Heritage sites. • Tourists (Both domestic & foreign)

Sample	No of heritage sites	Respondents	Techniques adopted	Total Sample
	14 heritage sites	-	Purposive	920
		Tourists	Sampling	(641 tourists, 200 households, 68 business persons, 7 employees)
		- Local - Community People - Employee - Business Persons	Simple random Sampling	
Tool	Tool-I	Tool-II	Tool-III	Tool IV
	Open-ended questionnaire	Semi-structured interview schedule	Semi-structured interview schedule	Semi-structured interview schedule
	↓	↓	↓	↓
Tool used	Local Community	Tourists (Domestic and Foreign)	Business persons	Employees
Source of Data Collection	Primary		Secondary	

Interpretation technique	Objective-1	Objective-2	Objective-3	Objective-4
	TPI (Tourist Potential Index)	Pearson's Correlation matrix, descriptive statistics	SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats)	Content Analysis

Source: Compiled by the researcher.

1.8.1. Method of the study:

To carry out the present study, the descriptive survey research method has been adopted, and the quantitatively driven mixed method (Quan+ qual) design has been applied.

1.8.1.1 Nature of the data:

The present study has comprised both primary and secondary data, i.e.,

a. Primary Data:

Primary data has been collected through a semi-structured interview schedule and an open-ended questionnaire. The data has also been gathered from the Assam Tourism Development Council (ADTC), Sivasagar Sub-Circle (Guwahati Circle, ASI), 200 households, 7 Employees, 68 Business persons, and 641 Tourists (Both domestic and Foreign) and interviewed with 4 persons.

b. Secondary Data: The secondary data has been collected from the published sources, i.e., journals, published thesis, books, articles, and various websites.

1.8.1.2 Population:

The Population of the present study mainly covers the heritage tourism sites of Sivasagar, Assam (Mainly 14 sites). where the total households is 563.

1.8.1.3 Sample and Sampling Technique:

The sample for the present study comprises 920 respondents, which covers 641 tourists (out of which 585 are domestic and 56 are foreign tourists from 14 heritage sites), 200 households near the heritage sites (from neighbouring 30 villages, 30% i.e., 9 villages have been drawn), 68 business persons, interviewed with 4 persons and 7 employees of the tourist department. (The study focused on 14 heritage sites in Sivasagar district, but only 7 employees were interviewed due to the sites being managed by the same governing body. For instance, Rudrasagar Dol and Tank, Joysagar Dol and Tank, and Shiva Dol complex are managed collectively, resulting in fewer employees across sites. Notably, the number of permanent employees at each site is limited, ranging from 1 to 2 employees, highlighting the lean staffing structure. Considering the governing structure and employee availability, 7 employees were selected to provide insights for this study, offering a representative perspective on management and operations.

For selecting the samples, two sampling techniques have been adopted, i.e., ‘Simple random sampling’ and ‘Purposive sampling’ techniques have been applied.

The purposive sampling technique has been applied for selecting the tourists (both domestic and foreign) and the heritage sites. And the Simple random sampling technique has been applied for selecting the households, business persons, and the employees of the sample sites. Proving the entire data and information was terminated with the proper statistical method, applying a quantitatively driven mixed method approach (Quan +qual design).

Table 1.3: Sample of the Present Study:

Sl no	Name of Heritage sites	No of Tourists		Total Number of tourists	No of business persons	No of households (HHs)	No of Employees
		Domestic	Foreign				
1	Shiva Dol Complex	70	6	76	10	9	7 (Each of the sample heritage sites has no employee to gather authentic information)
						Visited HHs	
						200	
2	Rang Ghar	78	9	87	7		
3	Talatal Ghar	78	9	87	10		
4	Joi Dol and Joisagar Tank	60	5	65	5		
5	Rudrasagar Dol and tank	55	4	59	8		
6	Namdang Stone Bridge	44	2	46	8		
7	Bakhar Bengena tree	40	2	42	5		
8	Kareng Ghar	70	9	100	5		
9	Group of Four Maidam	90	10	79	10		
Total		585	56	641	68	200	7
Total Sample		920					

1.8.1.4 Tools of the study:

Four tools have been developed for the present study. They are:

1. An open-ended questionnaire for the households.
2. One semi-structured interview schedule for the tourists.
3. Another semi-structured interview schedule for the local business person.
4. One more semi-structured interview schedule for the employees of the heritage sites.

Table 1.4: Description of the tools, target group, and objectives where tools were applied:

Tool	Target Group	Objective No.
Open-ended Questionnaire	Local Community	4, 5&6
Semi-Structured Interview Schedule	Tourists (Domestic and Foreign)	3, 5&6
	Employee of the heritage sites	5 &6
	Business Persons	5&6

1.8.1.5 Tools development procedure:

- **Item analysis:**

On developing the tools, the researcher first decided the dimensions of the tools as per the objectives of the study. And to meet the objectives of the study, 4 tools had to be developed since there are 4 different target groups in the present study. After deciding the dimensions of the tools, the items according to each dimension have been developed after discussing with the supervisor and the experts from inside and outside of the institutions.

1.8.1.6. Data Collection Procedure:

For collecting the data, the researcher has personally visited the respondents and, after establishing a rapport with them, gathered the data has been gathered. Here, the open-ended questionnaire, which was prepared for the households, was distributed and provided with necessary directions, and after a time interval, the questionnaires were collected. With the semi-structured interview schedule, data have been gathered from the tourists. On collecting the data from the tourists, firstly, a rapport has been established; after communicating with them and data have been gathered as per the schedules. Likewise, by conducting a semi-structured interview) Data have been gathered from the business persons and employees of the sample sites.

1.8.1.7 Analysis Technique used:

For analysing the data, the Quan+qual (quantitatively driven mixed method approach) design has been adopted.

The following are the techniques that have been applied for analysing the data:

- a) TPI:** Tourist Potential Index (TPI) method has been applied to study the potential of heritage tourism in Sivasagar district, Assam, based on demand and supply index and responses gathered from both domestic and foreign tourists. Which is objective number 1 and chapter 3.
- b) Correlation matrix:** The Pearson's correlation matrix technique has been applied to analyse the impact of heritage tourism on socio-economic and culture in Sivasagar District, Assam, which is objective number 2 and chapter IV.
- c) Content analysis:** Through the content analysis, various qualitative data are portrayed with a descriptive nature and used to support quantitative data analysis also. It is applied to every objective.
- d) Swot analysis:** SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis is used to analyze the drivers affecting heritage tourism in Sivasagar District, Assam, which is objective number 3 and chapter V.
- e) Percentage:** To analyse the various quantitative data of objectives number 1,2and 3, percentage has been used.

- f) **Bar diagram:** Through the bar diagram Socio-demographic scenario of the sample village has been shown (Objective number 2) and also represents the strengths and weaknesses from the SWOT analysis technique (Objective number 3).
- g) **Flow charts:** To portray different models, techniques based on various objectives, flow charts are used accordingly.

1.9. Chapterizations:

To meet the objectives of this study, the chapters are organized as follows:

Chapter 1- Introduction:

This Chapter covers the concepts of heritage tourism, objectives, study area, database, and methodological design, which is a basic design and overview of this study.

Chapter 2- Review of literature:

In this chapter, various literature reviews from studies conducted abroad, India, and Assam are presented.

Chapter 3 - Potential of heritage tourism in Sivasagar District, Assam:

To meet the aim of this chapter, the Tourists Potential Index (TPI) method is applied. Tourists' (Both domestic and foreign) responses have been gathered based on the demand and supply index and identified the potential heritage tourism sites in Sivasagar district, Assam.

A quantitatively driven mixed-methods approach has been applied to analyze the present objective. When analysing the potential of heritage tourism, tourist demand and the local availability of resources are given preference. To quantify the preference pattern and the choice of tourists, a multi-criteria decision-making tool is applied from Ferrario's (1982) model. Also, the modified version from Bhattacharya (2004) has been followed.

The Ferrario's model of potentiality determination has some basic steps as mentioned below:

1. Incipiently, compile *a resource inventory* to identify, categorize, assess, quantify, determine, and calculate the heritage tourism potential in Sivasagar district, Assam. An analysis was done to discern the preferences of the tourists in the Sivasagar district. Information has been gathered by a purposively designed resource inventory, and the inventory was prepared by following various publications and tourist brochures of the state government and private tourism promotional agencies. Furthermore, the researcher's field observation is also added to compile the research inventory.
2. Hinge on the Resource inventory, the *tourist demand index* has been calculated. The index has been made with the views of tourists' preferences and demands in the Sivasagar heritage sites. Data has been accumulated through the interview schedule. The percentage of tourists preferring each category of attraction is considered an index, and the values of the resource inventory are rounded to a simple conversion scale of 1-10. Thus, all potential heritage attraction categories receive a numerical coefficient of tourist demand. The sample size of the tourists of each potential heritage site of Sivasagar district, Assam, varies with the flow of tourists to the sites. Along with this the data that are being gathered from the field have been included and incorporated.
3. Tourist Demand criteria are compiled according to the information gathered:
 - i. **Natural attraction** (the beauty of the surroundings)
 - ii. **Cultural Attraction** (historical sites, landmarks, festivals, etc.)
 - iii. **Man-made Attraction** (Theme parks, museums, shopping centres, architecture, engineering marvels, etc.)
 - iv. **Adventurous Factors** (Outdoor activities, e.g., hiking, skiing, etc., extreme sports, e.g., bungee jumping, skydiving, etc., wildlife experiences, e.g., safaris, zoos, etc.)
 - v. **Entertainment Factors** (Casinos, nightlife, theatres, concerts, etc.)

- vi. **Educational Scenario** (Information centre regarding tourism site, Tourist guide Science centre, educational institutes, zoo, historical reenactments, etc.)
 - vii. **Religious Factors** (places of worship, pilgrimage sites, spiritual festivals, etc.)
 - viii. **Food and Drinks** (Restaurants, wineries, traditional food, food festivals, etc.)
 - ix. **Sports and Activities** (Stadiums, Arenas, sports activities.
4. Evaluating the *supply and availability component* of the attraction to the heritage sites in Sivasagar district, Assam, is considered one of the foremost steps for analysing the supply index of heritage tourism. The availability and supply of heritage sites to tourists in Sivasagar were assessed based on observation and field experience. The qualifying criteria for the resource to attract tourists to the heritage sites are the most important aspects of any supply or attraction for the heritage destination. Following Ferrario's model of assessment of tourist supply and the modified version of Bhattacharya's (2004) components are mentioned below-

- i. **Importance** - Heritage tourism destinations are important because of the services and equipment that they offer a place to attract tourists. Various destinations may be offering similar kinds of facilities, but one may be comparatively very well-equipped and may have better capability to attract tourists to the place. Understanding the importance of a destination is crucial for tourism stakeholders, as it informs strategic decisions on investment, marketing, and development, ultimately impacting the destination's reputation, economic growth, and sustainability. By assessing the importance of a destination, we can unlock its full potential, drive tourism growth, and create a compelling experience for visitors.

- ii. **Accessibility:** Reachability in tourism encompasses various aspects like physical, sensory, cognitive, economic, and social accessibility. By prioritizing accessibility, destinations can enhance the overall tourist experience, foster inclusivity, and drive sustainable tourism growth. A more accessible destination has a greater advantage than a less accessible one.
- iii. **Periodicity:** Periodicity is a ubiquitous phenomenon in tourism, characterized by fluctuations in tourism demand and supply over time, resulting in periods of peak and off-peak activity. This inherent seasonality can have far-reaching consequences for destinations, leading to capacity underutilization, labour market instability, and financial strain on tourism businesses. A long tourist peak season is an asset for expanding tourism.
- iv. **Popularity:** Popularity is a key driver of tourism, reflecting a destination's appeal and attractiveness to visitors. In this context, supply index popularity measures the extent to which a destination's tourism offerings are in demand, sought after, and highly rated by tourists. This includes factors such as online reviews, social media buzz, and crowd-sourced ratings, which can significantly influence tourists' decisions and behaviours. A high popularity score indicates a destination's ability to attract and retain visitors, drive repeat business, and foster a loyal customer base.
- v. **Fragility:** Fragility is a critical aspect of a destination's tourism supply, referring to the vulnerability of its attractions, infrastructure, and resources to external shocks, stresses, and pressures. In today's increasingly complex and dynamic tourism landscape, fragility can manifest in various forms, including environmental degradation, cultural commodification, and socio-economic disruption. A fragile destination is more susceptible to

negative impacts, such as overcrowding, resource depletion, and community displacement, which can irreparably damage its tourism potential and long-term sustainability.

5. The **supply index** has been calculated after identifying supply components (the index developed by Bhattacharya,2004, has been adopted). Each supply component is rated by a nominal scale that is best, good, moderate, bad, etc. (Bhattacharya,2004). To rate the supply index, the nominal scale has been weighted by 1-10. The rating was based on the researcher's empirical observation and interaction, and interviews with the tourists and native people from the concerned destinations. (Table 3.1).

Chapter 4- Impacts of Heritage Tourism on Socio-economic and Culture:

To analyse this chapter, two hypotheses are formulated, which are:

H_0 = There is no significant positive relationship between heritage tourism and its impact on Social, economic, and cultural variables.

H_1 =There is a significant positive relationship between Heritage tourism and its impact on Social, Economic, and Cultural variables.

The Pearson's correlation matrix technique is used based on the scoring of the values gathered from the sub-dimensions of three variables: social, economic, and cultural. Here, Hypothesis H_1 is accepted and H_0 is rejected.

To analyse this chapter "Impact of heritage tourism on socio-economic and culture in Sivasagar district, Assam", a quantitatively driven mixed-method approach has been applied.

- 200 households from the 9 nearest villages of the sample heritage sites (within 5 km distance) are selected to collect the data. 30% households have been considered from the total households for collecting the data.
- An open-ended questionnaire has been developed to collect the data based on the mentioned dimensions and sub-dimensions(impacts) in Table 4.8. The

scoring process involves assigning numerical values to responses to quantify the data. For instance, a self-designed scale with values ranging from 1 to 5.

- Based on 3 main variables, the present objective has been designed. These are Social, Economic, and Cultural variables; impacts are identified based on some dimensions regarding socio-economic and cultural variables.
- After scoring all the 200 responses, descriptive statistics of the scoring data are calculated through JAMOV software, and Pearson's correlation matrix technique is applied to identify the relationship between heritage tourism and its impact on socio-economic and cultural aspects in Sivasagar district, Assam.
- Identified the impacts of heritage tourism within 3 ranges, which are High- 2.97-3.12, Moderate -2.82-2.97, and Low- 2.67-2.82.

Chapter 5- Major Drivers Affecting Heritage Tourism:

The SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis method is used to analyse the drivers affecting heritage tourism in Sivasagar district, Assam.

- Internal factors (Strengths and weaknesses) are identified based on the Likert scale ranging from 1-5, and external factors (opportunities and threats) are described based on the data gathered through interviews with experts and resource persons related to the field of heritage tourism. Content Analysis is applied to meet the objective of this chapter.
- By adopting simple random sampling and purposive sampling techniques, the researcher has collected the data from the villages near the sample sites, tourists, business persons, and employees based on an open-ended questionnaire and semi-structured interview schedule.
- Used Content analysis for the identification of opportunities and threats.

Chapter 6- Summary and Conclusions:

This is the last chapter of this study. A summary of the findings from all the objectives is included and suggests some suitable strategies towards the growth and development of heritage tourism in Sivasagar district, Assam.

Chapter II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 INTRODUCTION:

The significance of heritage tourism in promoting cultural preservation, socioeconomic development, and community engagement has garnered substantial attention in academic discourse. A comprehensive review of existing literature reveals a multifaceted landscape of research exploring the complex dynamics of heritage tourism, its impact on local communities, and its role in shaping cultural identity. This review aims to synthesize key findings, themes, and debates in the field, providing a foundation for understanding the nuances of heritage tourism and informing the investigation of its potential in Sivasagar District, Assam.

In this chapter, the review of literature covers the studies based on these areas:

- i. Studies Conducted in Abroad
- ii. Studies Conducted in India
- iii. Studies Conducted in Assam

2.1. Studies Conducted in Abroad:

Zeppel (2010) explained Heritage tourism as a broad field of travel and explained culture as an important marketing division to attract tourists to heritage sites. Describes the role of heritage tourism in the UK, USA, Australia, and China. Explained the diversity of art and culture to popularize the heritage sites.

Nuryanti (1996) analysed heritage tourism through the view of postmodernism. Traditional tourism and post-modern heritage tourism buildings have vast differences,

according to the study. The researcher has shown four pillars of heritage tourism with post-modernism interpretation, market building heritage, planning for heritage, and interlinking between heritage tourism and the local community. The study explained that Local livelihood was the prime theme for the development of heritage tourism in a post-modern view.

Chang (1999) explores the way local and non-local factors are responsible for creating the forms and functions of tourism development in Singapore. Emphasized local and Global forces, Government policies, and urban land use in the Little Indian Historic Districts. The questionnaires of four groups (Merchants, Residents, tourists, and visitors) collected information regarding the tourists. Studied the locality and globalized view of tourism through various land use models. And concluded with place uniqueness improvement strategies due to globalized media formulation.

Yiping Li (2003) studied Heritage tourism in Singapore and Hong Kong in Asia. Emphasized heritage culture-based tourism practice to help in the conservation process of destinations' cultural heritage. Focused on the issues of the past in the present for heritage tourism development, inherent conditions between conservation and change related to tourism development constitute threats or resources for heritage development, and describe the implications that may be drawn by studying these issues. Secondary data provides an overview of tourist consumption, authenticity, and heritage site development, followed by a comparative analysis method. Suggested various planning processes and conservation and promotion efforts to develop heritage tourism.

Poria et al. (2003) studied the core of heritage tourism. In this study, it is explained that the relationship between heritage tourism and tourists is explained. In the study, the researchers described four groups of variables in the relationship between tourists and heritage tourism. Personal characteristics, site attributes, awareness, and perceptions are taken as the basis of variables and also studied behaviour on the basis of before, during, and after. The result of study portrays the different perceptions and behaviours according to the pattern of tourists and site. This study will be valuable for the site management and behaviour understanding of tourists.

Streaen & Fan (2006) described the impacts of international tourism to grow China's economy. Through input-output, social, accounting, and tourist expenditure data type II input and output model was constructed. A static IO/SAM approach was used. As a result, it is found that the percentage of GDP and household income also identifies the number of Chinese employment rates, which are dependent on international tourism. Differences between various earning sources are explained by the sectoral composition method.

An industrial city is one of the indirect factors to generates tourists to the existing heritage site of an urban city. **Xie (2006)** studied the heritage tourism industry in the city of Toledo, Ohio. The attribute has been analyzed in the issue of the National Historic Jeep Museum. Potential and problems were the basic priorities of the study. The study revealed a lack of support from the jeep industry, weak community involvement, and data was taken from the stakeholders. The study suggested future improvement and growth of the heritage tourism industry.

Landrof (2009) conducted a study on managing sustainable world heritage tourism. The study has followed qualitative data analysis techniques, and the study explores the sustainable key principles in world heritage sites, planning, management, and stakeholders' participation in world heritage tourism. In this study, the researcher has explained the issues related to sustainable growth in the world heritage tourism sector and given ideas to mitigate the issues.

The utilization of heritage tourism for developing countries is the main purpose of socio-economic development. In the context of rural areas, it is challenging to interlink rural livelihoods with heritage tourism (**Kawsan & Nishikawa,2010**). The study found lack of skilled human resources, capital, credits, etc., are the challenges to the growth of heritage tourism in rural areas. The study was conducted in central Java, Indonesia. Concluded with advice to establish rural industry and generate more promotions to better linkages.

Jolliffie & Aslam (2009) studied tea heritage tourism in Sri Lanka. According to the study, Sri Lanka is most famous and rich for tea tourism, and it generates revenue from this. The study showed the dark side of heritage tea tourism. The study reveals that

infrastructure and accessibility, seasonality, market competition, awareness and marketing, environmental concerns, and cultural sensitivity are the basic problems for growing heritage tea tourism with far better results. The study suggests maintaining sustainability, improving infrastructure, effective market principles, and community engagement.

Yang et al. (2010) conducted a study on international tourists' arrival in China, with special reference to world heritage sites. The study has explained that China is rich in cultural and natural heritage tourism. The study explores the tourist arrivals based on 2000-20005 data and also determines the incomes from the tourism sector. The study reveals that the number of tourists is high in natural heritage tourism. Tourists in the cultural heritage are found in less number. According to the study, most of the tourist in China comes from Asian countries.

Garrod (2010) discussed in the study the role and utility of VEP (Volunteer employed photography) in the tourist generation of the heritage sites. VEP is the traditional method for planning tourism. The study showed some drawbacks and potential of the tourism generation through VEP. The study was conducted in a Welsh seaside city, U.K., by interacting with tourists and residents of the region. The concluding remark explained to following proper application and management to generate tourists through VEP in tourism.

Herrera (2013) conducted a study on Heritage tourism, identity, and development in Peru. The researcher explains that there is a significant aspect of the country's identity and development. The study described Peru as renowned for cultural attractions, colonial cities, traditional festivals, indigenous heritage identity, historical narrative, culinary heritage, etc. Also mentioned some points of heritage tourism development, such as economic impact, infrastructural improvement, and sustainable practices. According to the study, there are some challenges also found, like overcrowding, environmental degradation, etc. The study suggests that community involvement, education, awareness, policy, and regulation implementation can address the challenges in Heritage tourism in Peru.

Ismail et al. (2014), analyzed the heritage tourism of Malaysia from a cultural point of view. The study described the gaining popularity of heritage tourism and considered it as an alternative way of socio-economic development. Different ethnic presents are the key to attracting more tourists to the place. Showed various management issues of stakeholders, government, cultural heritage managers, and the local community in Malaysia.

Heritage sites related to war, death, and disaster are the most curious sites for tourists (**Hartmann, 2014**). The study focused on several new concepts regarding dark tourism as a new direction in contemporary tourism research. The study analyzed management as a main indicator of dark heritage tourism and explained the key factors to generate more tourists and revisit tourists to the dark heritage tourism sites. The researcher found various perspectives on tourist attractions.

Carbone (2016) analyzed the cultural heritage management of tourism destinations. Culture is the fourth pillar of sustainable heritage tourism. The study described the supranational guidelines that address the efforts of policymakers and operators regarding the preservation of heritage monuments and sites. Quality management is shown as the prime factor for heritage tourism development at the global level.

In the development and management of heritage sites, tourist experience analysis is one of the major drivers of the analysis (**Wijayanti & Damanik, 2018**). The study discussed cultural heritage including physical goods and local art, in the Sultan Palace, Yogyakarta City, Indonesia by adopting the descriptive survey method and purposive sample technique. They concluded with high cultural value and a moderate tourist satisfaction ratio.

Intangible heritage tourism is a kind of better tourism developmental phase during the globalization period (**Gonzalez, 2008**). The researcher described how intangible tourism can attract more tourists to any intangibly rich area. The researcher specifically studied Japanese flamenco in the study and expressed flamenco as a local identity of the Japanese. which introduces existential tourism in front of tourists. The study found a correlation between tangible and intangible identities that can make one area a better tourism hotspot region.

Armaitiene (2014) studied the rethinking of natural heritage tourism and health tourism of parks in Europe. Natural parks in remote areas in Europe have been facing challenges and peripheral issues. The study emphasized to management and carrying out the natural park tourism in rural areas with the present trend. Suggested innovation and conceptual framework for the health of natural park tourism and to attract tourists to the rural natural heritage sites.

Timothy (2014) studied contemporary cultural heritage tourism and described the issues and trends. The researcher explained that cultural tourism is the salient form of heritage tourism in this era to generate more socio-economic development. Marketization, sustainability, branding, and value of authenticity uplift destination heritage tourism with high cultural value. The study found the involvement of contemporary trends of tourism development in heritage tourism is a milestone for the development of cultural heritage tourism by solving the problem of participation, promotion, maintenance, and management.

Ismail et al. (2014) conducted a study of cultural heritage tourism in Malaysia. D=Study described that Malaysia has a strong hope of generating cultural heritage tourism because art, music, handicrafts, dance, and literature can provide a satisfactory source for tourism. According to the study, although there are lots of amalgamated cultural possibilities, there are some challenges to the proper organization of heritage tourism. Stakeholders, tourism managers Governments should implement some programs and policies regarding the improvement and popularity of cultural heritage tourism in Malaysia.

Heritage tourism entrepreneurship is the leading factor in the improvement of heritage tourism sites by establishing marketization, industrialization, and also involving social media on heritage sites (**Surugiu & Surugiu, 2015**). For the broader coverage in the international market, tourism has to interlink with social media exposure. To attract more tourists, there is a need to show and popularize the heritage tourism industry in front of the world media and markets. The study covers the heritage tourism industry of Romania and investigates the influence of social media on the heritage tourism

industry. The study exposes the positive involvement of social networking in the development of the heritage tourism industry in Romania.

Kausar (2017) expresses the ethnicity, issues, cultural conservation, and community involvement with the ethnic heritage site Toraja, South Sulawesi, Indonesia. The researchers have taken secondary data to analyze the national tourism strategic area of Toraja. The study includes the opportunities for big Asian markets and better transport and communication in the region. The focal issues of the Toraja heritage site are to strengthen local values and improve nature and culture to better balance heritage tourism in the area.

Rasoolimanesh et al. (2017) conducted a study based on community participation in heritage tourism development and management of world heritage sites. The researchers carried out the study by applying the MOA model to analyze the levels of community participation in world heritage tourism. Motivation, Identification, and ability were considered the focal moderators in identifying high-level, moderate-level, and low-level participation. Knowledge and awareness are the keys to getting a high level of community participation in World Heritage tourism. The study revealed that the participation of local people in heritage tourism is one of the major opportunities to develop the economy of a heritage region.

Suarez et al. (2019) studied tourism Gender research to identify the common challenges of research in Latin America through Bibliometric analysis. Focused mainly on academic articles and excluded research notes, book reviews, and conference proceedings. According to the study, tourism gender research is mainly focused on the traveler's analysis based on male and females and also the employment generation based on sex. The researcher found the uneven distribution of gender in the tourism sector in Latin America.

Dans& Gonzaler (2019) studied the social value of heritage tourism. The study followed a mixed-method approach to interlink sustainable tourism and heritage tourism. The study concluded shows multiple factors affect the social value of heritage tourism, which are existential, aesthetic, economic, legacy, and risk associated with understanding the social value.

Lak et al. (2019) explain heritage tourism through urban regeneration and also discuss the policies and strategic management. The study investigated the potential for heritage tourism to regenerate urban and cultural assets. The study adopted a SWOT analysis to find the proper strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of heritage tourism in Birjand, Iran. The study found proper and successful implementation of policies and cultural improvement for the urban generation through heritage tourism, and showed some opportunities to improve broader heritage tourism management and urban renovation.

Architectural heritage, as well as public policies and plans, are the strongest direction of heritage tourism (**Gholitabar et al. 2019**). The study focuses on the potential of architectural heritage through tourist image and perception. A mixed research method has been adopted to carry out the study in Portugal. The study showed the value of architectural heritage and found about lack of preservation of monuments and sites, and suggested planning for the better involvement of tourists and the community in the architectural sites.

Chi et al. (2019) studied the impact of heritage tourism on the community and analyzed the issues related to world heritage tourism in China. The researchers discussed the involvement of corporate sectors and managers of travel and tourism. Data was collected through an open-ended questionnaire, and the SEM (Structural equation modeling) approach was used to examine the psychometric properties of the measurement model. The study suggested that tourism agencies and managers give importance to the observance of the heritage sites as they are the generators of tourism to the sites, and also suggest implementing better policies for the growth of tourism in that study area. for management and planning to preserve heritage buildings.

Boswell & O’Kane (2019) conducted a study on Heritage management and tourism in Africa. According to the study, African tourism has some traditional types of tourism from the colonial period. There is a need for some post-colonial tourism activity to cover a broader market in world tourism. The study explained that Infrastructure, political instability and security, health concerns, conservation and environmental issues, marketing and awareness, visa policies, service quality, and economic barriers

are some issues regarding the development and management of heritage tourism in Africa. Addressing the mentioned challenges, the study suggests implementing government policies and coordination from stakeholders and international organizations to create sustainable heritage tourism.

Park et al. (2019) analysed the role and dimension of authenticity in heritage tourism. The researchers conducted the study in Hahoe Village in South Korea, the world's richest cultural heritage site. 535 tourists were taken to collect the for the statistical analysis. The study reveals that tourist satisfaction from experiencing is constructive, and existential authenticity is a strong indicator of their intention to visit. The results of the study signify the management of heritage tourism.

Sumantri (2020) conducted a study on the strategy for heritage tourism management in India by adopting the SERVQUAL method to analyze the service performance of the sector, and data were collected through a questionnaire and interviews for the in-depth study from several heritage tourism resource regions. The study investigates the services performed by various sectors related to heritage tourism sites and identifies the barriers to the development of heritage tourism. Lack of involvement hours, Promotions, and lack of multi-dimensional strategies are the barriers to heritage tourism. Through tourism supply chain quality management, the researcher has taken multi multi-point of view assessment. Convenience quality, Contemplation quality, assurance quality, responsive empathy quality, reliability quality, communication facility quality, service cape quality, and purposive quality are the prime outputs of the study.

Kaharuddin et al. (2021) discussed the determinants of tourist attraction in heritage tourism. The researchers surveyed Dairi village, Indonesia. According to the study, determinants of tourist attractions are categorized through various lenses. Cultural heritage- traditional practices, arts and crafts, language and folklore; Historical significance-historical sites, archaeological findings; Natural beauty -Landscape, biodiversity; Community involvement, authentic experiences; Infrastructure and accessibility-Transportation, accommodation, amenities; Promotion and Marketing-information availability, social media and online presence, sustainability practices-

environmental conservation, cultural preservation, events and festivals are the strong determinants to attract more tourists to the heritage sites. The study also reveals that three variables- tourist motivation, service quality, and tourist satisfaction directly influence heritage tourism in Dairi village, Indonesia.

Guererro (2021) analyzed the tourism potential index for cultural management and ecosystem preservation in Alicante, Spain. The researcher emphasized the proper utilization and management of heritage tourism by protecting the ecosystem and discussed human welfare in the development of heritage tourism. For the proper indexing, the researcher followed SWOT analysis and Delphi techniques from interviews with experts. The study concludes by discussing how natural heritage tourism can be improved by adding cultural, social, and market value and maintaining sustainability in heritage tourism.

Yang & Wall (2021) conducted a study on heritage tourism in the small town of Guanxi, China. The researcher has gathered information by conducting semi-structured interviews with decision-makers, residents, and businesspeople. Also, self-observation and secondary data have been applied to formulate the study. The study found that through heritage tourism, income level is increasing, growing knowledge and awareness regarding heritage sites, and cultural value is highly increasing in the study area. Challenges have also faced by heritage tourism. Insufficient financial involvement, lack of focus from the stakeholders, proper planning, etc., are the issues regarding heritage tourism. To achieve more equitable development, the researchers suggested proper planning and cooperation among the stakeholders.

Balakrishnan et al. (2021) investigate smart tourism technology for better accessibility, information, interactivity, and personalization in heritage tourism. The study focused on revisiting digital and smart attractions at heritage tourism sites by using tourist experience information of the tourist destination. ELM (Elaboration Likelihood Model) was used to formulate a theory to analyze the pattern of tourists based on sex and age. The study concluded by advising to keep smart tourism techniques; governmental aid, cooperation, marketization, and promotion should be

conducted by analyzing from the view of tourist patterns to generate more tourists to the sites.

Chhabra (2021) worked on the authenticity of heritage tourism. The researcher explained authenticity of heritage tourism is a complex issue, encompassing both the opportunities it offers and the challenges it presents. The study mentioned some opportunities like enhanced accessibility, education and awareness, preservation and documentation, and Broader reach. On the other hand, the study explains that ensuring the accuracy of digital representation is crucial to maintaining authenticity and accuracy; loss of tangible experience, risk in commercialization and exploitation, digital divides, etc, are the challenges to maintaining authenticity in digital heritage tourism. The study suggests maintaining accurate content creation, interactive and engaging experiences, inclusive access, and ethical consideration for the authenticity of digital heritage tourism.

2.2. National level:

P.C. & Johnson (1991) studied the governmental role in mitigating the negative impact of tourism in the tourist sites of Kerala. The researcher used both Primary and Secondary data. Adopted the Random Sampling method and the convenience sampling method for data collection. The study found the important role of government in infrastructural development, promotional activity regarding tourism, coordination of all departments of tourism, and formulation of policies, and also found the role in community development, participation, and control of tourism cost.

Singh &Sing (1997) conducted a study on urban heritage tourism in India. Data has been collected through secondary sources and self-observation. The researchers have aimed to describe the impact of urbanization on heritage tourism and management in India. The study reveals some positive and negative impacts of urbanization on heritage tourism in India. Improved transportation, economic benefits, cultural exchange, and promotion of awareness are some positive impacts, according to the study. Overcrowding, environmental degradation, loss of authenticity, and social displacement are explained as negative impacts of urbanization on heritage tourism in

India. The study suggests some remedies for the mitigation of negative issues by practicing sustainable tourism practices, heritage conservation, community involvement, and balanced urban planning.

Chang (1999) explores the way local and non-local factors are responsible for creating the forms and functions of tourism development in Singapore. Emphasized local and Global forces, Government policies, and urban land use in the Little Indian Historic Districts. The questionnaires of four groups (Merchants, Residents, tourists, and visitors) collected information regarding the tourists. Studied the locality and globalized view of tourism through various land use models. And concluded with place uniqueness improvement strategies due to globalized media formulation.

Sharply (2005) explained Indian religious tourism and its continuum. Through an exploratory research method, divided into two kinds of tourists, permanent and another is non-permanent, also named spiritual and non-spiritual, regarding the Shri Aurobindo Ashram of Puducherry, South East India. Discussed the motivation and experience of foreign tourists regarding the religious tourism of that particular place. Concluded that the Continuum of spiritual inherent tourism development is going on.

Binoy (2011) studied Heritage tourism in India from an economic development perspective on local livelihoods. Discussed the need for authentic interpretation to attract tourists to that site and suggested an authentic heritage interpretation mechanism. explained 6 principles of effective heritage tourism development and concluded by providing important factors for the development of sustainable and effective tourism, are education and skill development for generating the interpretation mechanism in the heritage tourist sites.

Anvekar (2012) studies tourism from a medical perspective. The paper mainly focused on an integrated branding strategy by adopting various value drivers of the brand image of medical tourism products. It builds the PPP model for promoting medical tourism in India.

Subhash (2015) in his paper Tourism India: Potentials and Opportunities, explained infrastructure, inclusive growth, and skill development in the tourism sector of India.

Described governmental assistance for tourist accommodation in Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh. Suggested some ideas or necessary steps which are responsible for the tourism development, like transport and communication, Language and conversation skills, infrastructural development like the hotel, food, and all, Market facilities, Digital promotion, etc.

Chandra & Kumar (2020) studied sustainable tourism in Uttarakhand, India. By using the SWOT Analysis Method, Interviews with stakeholders, and QSPM analysis, investigate the sectoral strategies for sustainable tourism growth in Uttarakhand. The study reveals that due to incongruous practices of tourism, unplanned activities for tourism, and a high flow of tourists, sustainability is neglected. It is not suitable for their fragile ecology. Concluded with some 12 strategies to improve tourism's sustainable behavior or activities.

Shankar (2015), studied the impact of heritage tourism in India. The researcher conducted the study based on secondary data. The study revealed that heritage tourism is the best way to cultural exchange and foreign exchange and explained that India has a vast scope for heritage tourism generation. The research suggested government to involve the private sector for better improvement of heritage tourism in India.

Sharma & Sharma (2017) conducted a study on Heritage tourism of India through the stakeholders' perspective. Data has been collected through an open-ended questionnaire, and the area under study is Himachal Pradesh. According to the study, heritage tourism influences the economy, social, cultural, and ethnographic livelihood of the local community. Also described are some limitations of heritage tourism, such as seasonality due to weather. The researchers suggested implementing some Post-modern activities and digital planning to attract tourists to the place.

Ahmed (2017) studied Cultural heritage tourism in West Bengal. The study aims to highlight the promotional activity regarding the heritage tourism industry of West Bengal and also shows issues and prospects. Described cultural heritage tourism as the vehicle of the socio-economic development of the local community and showed heritage tourism as the moderator of revenue generation. The study suggested

maintaining sustainability by adapting programs and policies in growing heritage tourism.

Binoy (2011) described heritage tourism from an archaeological point of view. The researcher explained the need for heritage tourism development in an area. Archaeological assets have been taken as a strong source of tourist generation in a place. To attract people and value addition, the researcher has elaborated on the cocurricular tourism activity to generate a place in a tourism hotspot city. The researcher has mentioned that park tourism, lake tourism, market tourism, and ethnic tourism can be added as additional recreational activities in the archaeological heritage tourism sites. The researcher also suggested taking the media as the right hand to work strongly for the growth of archaeological tourism in an area.

Appadurai & Breckenridge (2004) analysed museum tourism through the lens of heritage tourism. The researchers described museum tourism from British rule and explained it as an old way to generate a strong and broader market of tourism. Preservation and media have been taken as the key to the hope to generate opportunities for the local people to provide job opportunities related to tourism. The study said India has various emotion-related museums and heritage sites that carry a sense of memory of the past. To achieve a better future, memory should interlink with the present, so it is mandatory to preserve the museum as a heritage site. Here, the study provides advice to interlink museum tourism with socio-economic development.

Chauhan (2020) conducted a study on community participation in heritage tourism development. The data has been collected through field observation and interviews. Qualitative techniques were also adopted for the study in Nizamuddin Basti and Shahjahanabad in Delhi. The study explained the need for an integrated policy for community participation for effective community participation in heritage tourism. The study aims to explain that community participation is a kind of social change and economic development of a place. The surveyed sample sites have a vast opportunity for heritage tourism, and in that manner, if the community is involved properly, then the scenario of the heritage sites society will be changed in a positive sense. The study suggested raising awareness and maintaining sustainability for future development.

Pandey &Sahu (2020) studied the relationship between service quality and place attachment in heritage tourism. The researcher has collected data from 327 foreign tourists visiting the Golden Triangle, India. Data were analyzed through structural equation modeling. The study reveals that heritage tourism has a positive impact on place attachment and service quality.

Sing et al. (2020) described the heritage tourism of Satna district, Madhya Pradesh. According to the study, the place is full of attractions from a natural, cultural, and devotional point of view. The area has lots of temples and heritage sites related to faith and devotees. The prime aim of the study is to promote and conserve the heritage sites. Historical facts and explanations about the sites are also one of the motives of this study. It is found that the nature and environment of the area are stunning, but there is a need to maintain sustainability to keep the sites for future tourism development. The study advised applying proper sustainable planning and interpreting needs properly.

Ranawat &Rathore (2019) Heritage tourism in Udaipur city. Considered, Udaipur is one of the best lake cities in India. Showed ample opportunities to generate tourism in that place. The study reveals that there is a lack in the growth of heritage tourism, like participation of the stakeholders, Lack of eyesight of government oversight, less promotional activity, marketing issues, and cleanliness are also described as big issues of heritage tourism in Udaipur city of Rajasthan.

L.G. & Chandrasekhara (2014) studied rural heritage tourism in India. They explained both the positive and negative impacts of Heritage tourism on rural livelihood. The study followed secondary data sources to analyze the study. Marketization, cultural exhibitions, and socio-economic and cultural development of rural people are the benefits of heritage tourism, but the study identifies the problems of attracting tourists to the rural heritage sites is like, bad conditions of roads, transport, and communication, far away from the main city, cleanliness, etc. So, the study suggests taking some post-modern techniques like promotion, branding, unique cultural shows, etc., to improve heritage tourism in rural areas.

Ranwa (2021) studied community participation in heritage tourism regarding Kalbeliya dance of Rajasthan, India. The study explores the socio-economic condition of the dancers related to Kalbeliya in Rajasthan. Data were collected from the Kalbeliya dancers and non-dancers. It has been proven that the Kalbeliya dancers have been facing problems from the ground level. Commercialization, economic conditions, social stigma, changing lifestyles, lack of institutional support, and less effort from various individual institutions and organizations are the main problems of generating heritage tourism through Kalbeliya dance.

Bansal & Chhabra (2023) conducted a study on heritage tourism in Shimla, Himachal Pradesh. Data has been gathered from the local community, tourism-related service holders, and business persons related to tourism, and also collected secondary data from authentic sources. According to the study, Shimla is the colonial hill town of Himachal Pradesh; from that point of view, there are strong opportunities for generating heritage tourism. Nature, weather, monuments, etc., are attractive sources for heritage tourism. The researchers showed the pros and cons of heritage tourism in Shimla. Preservation of heritage, economic benefits, cultural exchange, infrastructure development, and promotion of arts and crafts are found as the pros of heritage tourism in Shimla. On the other hand, environmental impact, overcrowding, cultural erosion, dependency on tourism, infrastructure strain, etc., are revealed as the cons of the establishment of heritage tourism in Shimla, Himachal Pradesh.

Lata et al. (2023) studied heritage tourism based on sustainability (economic, cultural, environmental) in Delhi. The Red Fort, Qutub Minar, and Humayun Tomb were the heritage sites for the study. Data were collected from 220 residents of Delhi. Data were analyzed by using structural equation modeling. The findings of the study are that the sample sites have not maintained proper conservation efforts, practice fewer eco-friendly activities, and community involvement, have less proper tourism management, lack modern technologies, and have poor legislation and policies to enforce laws to protect the heritage sites. The study suggests maintaining a rich cultural heritage while promoting sustainability and responsible tourism.

Kumar et al. (2023) worked on the potential of heritage tourism in Punjab. The study reveals that Punjab has a rich historical, cultural, and religious heritage. Historical sites- temples, monuments, cultural heritage – music, dance, and festivals are shown as the prime potential for heritage tourism in Punjab. Religious tourism, cuisine, handicrafts and art, agritourism, accessibility, and infrastructure are also strong hopes for heritage tourism in Punjab, according to the study. The study suggested adopting essential investments in preserving heritage tourism, promotion, marketing strategies, etc., to maintain and provide broader opportunities regarding heritage tourism.

Jha (2023) conducted a study on the impact of COVID-19 on heritage tourism in India. The study reveals that due to this pandemic decline in tourist numbers, economic losses job loss, conservation challenges, shift to digital tours, etc. bad impacts have been faced by the heritage tourism sector in India. The study suggests taking adaptive strategies to get rid of these vulnerabilities.

2.3. State level:

Mili (2012) studied rural tourism in the Tipam Phakey Village of Naharkatia District in Dibrugarh, Assam. The potentialities of Rural Tourism, the challenges of rural Tourism, and the impact of rural tourism on the socio-economic conditions of the villagers were explained through primary and secondary databases. Describes the role of rural tourism in the development of Ecotourism, cultural tourism, village-based tourism, natural resource conservation, and revenue generation. Language problems, insufficient financial support, communication problems, lack of trained tourist guides, and lack of business planning skills are found to be the barriers to the development of rural tourism in that area. Concluded by providing some ideas about the potentialities to grow the rural tourism of that place as from the angle of abundant natural resources, manpower, and the socio-cultural overview of the area.

Das (2012) in his paper Prospects and Problems of the Tourism Industry of Assam; described the tourism sites and their infrastructural development, natural resource utilization, explained accommodation facilities for tourists, and economic development. through secondary data, identify the prospects and problems of the area.

Lack of infrastructural development, Lack of funds, communication gap, and geographical isolation are the factors found as drawbacks. Suggested maintaining political stability, proper policy generation, and the need to invest funds for infrastructural development of the area.

Hussain (2012) conducted a study on the livelihood linkages of tourism in Kaziranga, Assam. Data has been collected through focus group discussions and interviews. Also visited the tourism-related service providers and stakeholders to gather proper data. The study reveals that in Kaziranga tourism, there is a lot of opportunity to generate income for the local people. As per the gathered data, it is proven that the income of the stakeholders during the study conducted is not satisfactory as compared to the industry and tourist visits. The study suggests proper and broader market facilities, cottage businesses, and proper viewpoints to enjoy the wildlife environment. This will attract more tourists to the site, and revisiting will also happen.

Das et al. (2013), studied the problems and prospects of the heritage tourism industry in Assam. The study explains that Assam has various ways of generating heritage tourism. Tea tourism, cultural tourism, religious tourism, eco-tourism, etc, are opportunities for generating economic development through tourism. The study reveals that inadequate infrastructure, lack of promotion and marketing, insufficient funding and investment, encroachment, urbanization, cultural and environmental degradation, political and social instability, lack of skilled workforce, language barrier, and limited community involvement are some problems regarding heritage tourism in Assam. The study suggests the necessary steps for the better development of heritage tourism in Assam.

Bordoloi & Agarwal (2015) conducted a study on tourism potentialities in the Tinisukia district, Assam. The researcher has explained the opportunity for the development of the tourism industry as a much broader one. The study also mentioned that the Tinisukia district is rich in biodiversity and cultural heritage and discussed the key attractions of tourism in the Tinisukia district. Dibru-Saikhowa National Park, Tea gardens, Oil refinery, Bherjan-Borja-pneumonia wildlife sanctuary, adventure tourism,

etc., are mentioned as the attractions of tourism in the Tinsukia district. The researchers have also analyzed the infrastructure and planning of the tourism sector in the Tinsukia district, Assam. The study also has suggested improving infrastructure, promoting eco-tourism, and preserving its natural resources and Cultural heritage. Also suggests maintaining collaboration with local people to create a sustainable tourism environment.

Brahma (2016) studied Tourism in the Bodoland Territorial Council Area, Assam. Explained trends and Prospects for the development of Tourism sites in BTAD (Bodoland Territorial Area). By Exploratory research, the method collected both primary and secondary data and analyzed the developmental process, facilities, potentialities, and demand of the tourist sites of BTAD. Concluded positive findings of the study, due to the NGO's aid, concerned local people, and available accommodation facilities.

Hazarika (2016) conducted a study on rural tourism and sustainable livelihood in Majuli, Assam. The study mentioned the role of rural tourism in the economic field. According to the study, Majuli is the world's largest river island, so the number of tourists is very high in the area, and there is ample potential for eco-tourism, agricultural tourism, religious tourism, cultural tourism, etc. The main aim of the study was to identify the role of rural tourism in sustainable rural livelihood. The report reveals some problems that hamper the sustainability of rural tourism in Majuli are seasonal dependence, lack of marketing and promotion, cultural erosion, limited awareness and training, etc. The study suggests adopting some remedial measures like implementing policies, community involvement, environmental protection, training, and awareness etc.

Gogoi & Borman (2017) studied tourist satisfaction and expectations in the heritage sites of the Sivasagar District of Assam. Through Primary and Secondary data, researchers calculated the data by using various statistical techniques, such as weighted index, mean, and average. Taken 200 samples from the 3 subdivisions of the study area, which are Sivasagar, Gargaon, and Joysagar. Concluded with the findings that there is a very low satisfaction rate in Gargaon tourist sites, and need to work on the

heritage site of Sivasagar. There are 553 monuments available from the Ahom rule period. Only 19 monuments are added by the Archaeological Survey of India, and 22 monuments are added by the Archaeological Sites of the State. Suggest implementing programs and policies for the better development of heritage tourism.

Das (2017) analyzed heritage tourism in Tezpur, Assam. According to the study, Tezpur is the cleanest city in Assam; it has beautiful hillocks, monuments, temples, and different heritage sites. The study described that the natural beauty and historical sites are the prime factors to attract people to the village. The economic livelihood of the people in Tezpur city is improving due to the involvement of the business sector in the heritage sites. Tourist guides, markets, shops, transport sectors, etc., are the sectors from which the people of Tezpur are generating income. The study also explained some issues like inadequate tourist amenities, limited promotion and awareness, poor maintenance and conservation, lack of infrastructure, etc. The study suggests taking some remedial measures to protect Tezpur's rich cultural legacy.

Saikia (2017) explained the tourism and economic development of Assam. Described the economic growth, problems and obstacles, and revenue generation of the tourism sector of Assam by collecting primary and Secondary data. Through various statistical techniques like Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression, the Binary Logit regression method was used to analyze the data. As a finding, it is found that the tourism sector of Assam is well developed but needs to work on infrastructural development, and concluded by showing the potentialities of the tourist sites.

Mehdi (2018) analyzed the gap in skills in the hospitality sector in Assam. The study discussed the employment generation based on skill in the hospitality sector, the skill gap in the hospitality sector, and district-wise human resource requirements in the specific sector in Assam. Data was collected through the secondary survey. 2011-12 was the base year for conducting the survey. The results disclosed that the study is a kind of bridge for the investigation of skill-based requirements in the hospitality sector.

Rahman (2019) studied the role of media towards sustainable tourism in Assam. The study was conducted based on a regional newspaper of Assam. The study reveals that

the role of media toward sustainable tourism is not satisfactory. It is supposed to raise a voice by addressing challenges, highlighting success stories, encouraging responsible behaviour, etc. According to the study, the role of media in the above-mentioned points is very poor. It suggests improving the standard of media towards sustainable tourism development.

Bhuyan (2019) described cultural tourism and its potential and Prospects for Assam. Explained about the religious Heritage, Architectural remains, flora, fauna, fairs and festivals, art and craft. Mentioned: Lack of manpower and poor infrastructural development are the drawbacks of the tourism development of Assam. Suggested to take some action plan and celebrate some festival like Kameswari, which is famous in Kamakhya temple, which is one of the most important tourism attracting festivals of Assam.

Bora (2019) studied heritage tourism of the Sonitpur district of Assam in her Doctoral Thesis. Behavioural characteristics and participation of tourists, facilities of the sites, and participation of the local community of that area are studied through the research work. Followed by primary and secondary data sources, random and purposive sampling were used, and various statistical tools were used for analyzing the data. Through the descriptive method, the researcher explained the findings. concluded with some positive findings that attraction to tangible heritage sites is increasing in a fast manner. Homestays, hotels, and other infrastructural facilities are also developing. which indicates positive socio-economic growth in the study area. Through the calculation of the SWOT analysis, there a positive and negative indications regarding the tourist sites. Though there are various threats and many potentialities. Suggested taking the necessary steps regarding the negative growth.

Das et al. (2020) studied heritage tourism related to bamboo craft and associated knowledge of the Karbi tribe of Assam. The study explained that Bamboo craftsmanship is the alternative, viable way to economic generation. The Karbi tribes of Assam have their kind of bamboo craft and culture, through which they can generate income, and the Karbi tribal area is developing due to its craft and culture. Tourists are more curious to know about their pattern of craft, and the culture is very attractive to

the tourists. According to the study, gradually, the influence of bamboo craftsmanship on heritage tourism is decreasing due to various factors. The study showed potential ways to generate more income through this. And the study suggests involving people in this sector to attract more people.

Roy (2021) worked on biodiversity conservation and sustainable eco-tourism in Manas National Park, Assam. According to the study, various programs and policies are implemented through the government and NGOs to conserve biodiversity. The study mentioned that different kinds of flora and fauna found in Manash National Park are valuable for generating eco-tourism. Also mentioned is that there is a need to take another step for villagers to depend on rather than timber and firewood found in Manash National Park. To maintain the sustainability of biodiversity and eco-tourism, the study suggests maintaining environmental protection and a pollution-free zone, and implementing new and advanced programs and policies toward the development of tourism in Manash National Park.

Saikia (2022) examined the impact of heritage tourism on the accelerating economic growth in Assam. The researchers have collected the data from secondary sources. According to the study, job creation in various sectors including hospitality, transportation, guiding services and local crafts, income generation through accommodation, food, souvenirs, and other services, infrastructural development, providing financial incentives for the preservation of cultural heritage, promotion of local crafts, foreign exchange, community development, cultural exchange, and global recognition are the impacts towards the accelerating economic growth of tourism industry in Assam. The study suggests maximizing the benefits by maintaining sustainability, training, investment, etc.

Banik & Longjam (2023) Studied River tourism in Assam by using SWOT analysis. The study reveals that rich natural resources, biodiversity, and wildlife, unique river cruises, and adventure tourism are the strengths of river tourism, limited infrastructure, seasonal restrictions, and connectivity challenges are found as the weaknesses, untapped potential, cultural experiences, river-based adventure experiences, etc. are mentioned as the opportunities and environmental concerns, competition from other

destinations, safety and security are explained as the threats in the development of river tourism in Assam.

Dey & Bora (2023) study tourism and its trends in special reference to Sivasagar district, Assam. The study explained that Sivasagar is famous for its history and culture and mentioned that there are lots of heritage sites and cultural heritage (both tangible and intangible) to attract people to the district. The researchers have followed linear regression, time series analysis, the Mann-Kendall test, and Sen's slope estimate has been utilized to conduct the study. The study also has taken data from domestic and foreign tourists. According to the study, there is a need to take some remedial measures to maintain sustainability and development in the tourism sites.

Borthakur (2024) conducted a study on Assam tourism through SWOT analysis. The Study explored the current status of tourism in Assam. According to the study rich cultural heritage, natural beauty, diversity, riverine beauty, etc are found as strengths, infrastructural issues, political instabilities, limited promotion, seasonal tourism, etc. are the weaknesses, eco-tourism, adventure tourism, cultural tourism, tea tourism, etc. considered as the opportunities and environmental degradation, climate change, competition, health pandemics etc are mentioned as the threats of the tourism in Assam.

Puzari & Upadhyay (2024) analysed eco-tourism prospects and possibilities in Dihing Patkai National Park of Assam. The researchers gathered the information through surveys and interviews, and the data were analyzed through qualitative and quantitative techniques. According to the study, the Dihing Patkai region has vast prospects for rural tourism, eco-tourism, adventure tourism, biodiversity, and cultural tourism, and also there are various possibilities like infrastructure development, community involvement, promotion and marketing, research and education, events and festivals, etc.

Chapter III

POTENTIAL OF HERITAGE TOURISM IN SIVSAGAR DISTRICT, ASSAM

3.1. INTRODUCTION:

The potentiality of tourism in an area is indeed the result of the interaction of tourist demand and the supply of local availability of tourist resources (Demand and supply are crucial components in heritage tourism potential analysis, as they directly impact the viability and sustainability of heritage tourism development. Demand refers to the sectors that tourists prefer from a destination to travel, and supply refers to the facilities that a destination provides. (Nelson,2002).

Sivasagar district, nestled in the heart of Assam, is a treasure trove of rich cultural heritage and historical significance. With its majestic monuments, vibrant traditions, and breathtaking natural beauty, Sivasagar has immense potential to emerge as a prominent heritage tourism destination in India. The district's unique blend of Ahom and Assamese culture, reflected in its ancient temples, palaces, and historical sites, offers a fascinating experience for tourists. The region's pristine lakes, forests provide a serene backdrop for exploring the great outdoors. As India's tourism industry grows, Sivasagar district is poised to capitalize on its untapped potential, showcasing its hidden gems and contributing to the state's economic development. The attraction of tourist destinations is directly or indirectly related to elements like climatic conditions, infrastructural development, attitude and behaviour of the host community, etc. Potentiality measurement is directly related to the attraction power and the facilities of the place. Analysing the potential of heritage tourism is crucial for several reasons: informed decision-making, sustainable development, competitive advantage, resource optimization, and community engagement. Cultural preservation, economic benefits,

tourist experience, marketing and promotion, monitoring and evaluation, etc. (Bhattacharya,2004).

Studying the potential of heritage tourism is necessary due to its multifaceted benefits. It generates significant revenue and creates jobs, contributing to local economic development. Additionally, it raises awareness and funds for preserving cultural and historical sites, fosters community pride and engagement, and facilitates cultural exchange between visitors and locals. By understanding its potential, sustainable tourism strategies can be developed, balancing economic benefits with environmental and cultural concerns. Ultimately, this study helps unlock tourism's economic, cultural, and social benefits while preserving cultural heritage for future generations (UNWTO,2018).

This assessment aims to evaluate the potential of heritage tourism in Sivasagar district, identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to inform strategic development initiatives.

The present chapter aims to identify potential sites and resources for the development of heritage tourism in the Sivasagar district of Assam, utilizing the demand and supply index, ranking scheme, and tourist potential index method.

3.2. Potentiality of heritage tourism Destinations in Sivasagar district, Assam:

Heritage tourism entails a composite role of factors that influence the management, conservation, and experience of cultural and natural heritage sites. According to McKercher and du Cros (2002), heritage tourism dynamics can be understood through the lens of a “tourism-heritage continuum”. where the interactions between tourists, local communities, and site managers shape the authenticity and integrity of heritage sites. At present, the flow of tourists is increasing at a high rate. At the same time development and competition of heritage sites is also increasing day by day. So, it is very necessary to give proper insight into the pros and cons of heritage sites to maintain their reputation and to attract a greater number of people to the sites.

Sivasagar heritage sites have several potentials to generate tourism and to attract people. There are several scopes within the sites, and the native villages are closely

related to and responsible for the growth and development of heritage tourism in the sites. For the present study total of 13 heritage sites in the Sivasagar district have been taken purposively. Sivasagar was the kingdom of the Ahom dynasty for 600 long years, one of the UNESCO World Heritage sites. Charideo Moidam is also under the Sivasagar revenue circle; in that perception, this place has high potential for heritage tourism. This chapter examines the potential of heritage sites of Sivasagar district by using the Tourist Potential Index, where places are ranked as very high potential sites, highly potential sites, moderately potential sites, and low potential sites. And it depends upon the scales prepared according to the TPI (Tourist Potential Index).

Table 3.1: Ranking Scheme for assessing ‘local availability’ of tourist resources in Sivasagar.

Criteria selected	Rating Scale	Weight
Importance	Best attraction	2
	Good Standard	1.5
	Moderate standard	1
	Appeal	0.2
Reachability	Excellent	2
	Good	1.5
	Limited	1
	Difficult	0.2
Periodicity	More than 6 months	2
	4-6 months	1.5
	2-4 months	1
	Less than 2 months	0.2
Fragility	Extremely fragile	2
	Highly fragile	1.5
	Moderately fragile	1
	Low fragile	0.2
Popularity	Very Popular	2
	Popular	1.5
	Moderately popular	1
	Low Popular	0.2

Source- Bhattacharya (2004)

The ***tourist potential index (TPI)*** is calculated after the weighted supply index. Hereby using demand (A) and supply (B), **TPI** is calculated with this formula-

$$P = (A+B) /2.$$

Here,

P = Potential index,

A = Tourist demand index at each site,

B = Tourist supply index at each site.

Responses gathered towards the identification of high, moderate, and low preferred attractions categories in the sample heritage sites. It ranges from 1-10 on a nominal scale.

Here,

Below 4 =Low preferred attraction category,

4-7= Moderately preferred attraction category,

Above 7= High preferred attraction category.

3.2.1. Description of the heritage and tourist's preferences based on attraction category:

1. Shiva dol complex (*Shiva dol, Vishnu dol, Dev dol*): The Shiva dol complex is situated in the heart of the town of Sivasagar. Shiva Dol is a Hindu Temple. The complex has three individual temples, which are Shiva Dol (Temple), Bishnu Dol (Temple), and Devi Dol (Temple).

a) Shiva dol: Sivasagar Shivadol is a magnificent temple complex in Assam, India, dedicated to Lord Shiva. It's renowned for its towering spire, intricate architecture, and deep-rooted historical significance. The Shivadol temple stands at an impressive 104 feet tall, making it one of the tallest Shiva temples in India. The temple is crowned with an 8-foot-high golden dome, adding to its grandeur. The Shivadol temple was

constructed by Queen Ambika, the wife of Ahom King Swargadeo Siba Singha, in 1734. The temple is a testament to the Ahom dynasty's patronage of arts, culture, and religion. Shivadol is a symbol of Assamese pride and cultural heritage, attracting thousands of devotees and tourists each year. The most significant festival is celebrated at Shivadol, attracting thousands of devotees who offer prayers and perform rituals. The month of Shravan is considered highly auspicious for Lord Shiva worship, with special Monday prayers and Rudrabhishek pujas performed throughout the month.



Figure 3.1: Shiva Dol.

b) Vishnu Dol: Sivasagar Vishnu Dol is a sacred Hindu temple dedicated to Lord Vishnu, located in the heart of Sivasagar, Assam, India. This ancient temple is part of a group of structures that include the Shivadol (Shiva temple) and Devi Dol (Durga temple), showcasing stunning Ahom architecture. The Vishnu Dol temple's tower features a honeycomb design with an ornamental criss-cross framework, setting it apart

from other temples. Built in 1734 by Queen Ambika, wife of Ahom King Siva Singha, this temple is a testament to the region's rich cultural heritage. Two major festivals celebrated here are:

- Dol Yatra: A significant festival honouring Lord Vishnu.
- Rath Yatra: Another important celebration showcasing the temple's vibrant traditions

It is situated on the banks of the Sivasagar tank, also known as Borpukhuri tank. The temple offers a serene atmosphere for devotees and tourists alike.



Figure 3.2: Vishnu Dol.

c) Devi Dol: Devi Dol Sivasagar is a historic temple dedicated to Goddess Durga, located in the heart of Sivasagar, Assam. This 18th-century temple is part of a group of structures that include Shivadol (Shiva temple) and Vishnudol (Vishnu temple), showcasing stunning Ahom architecture. The temple stands 60 feet tall with a 120-foot

diameter base, featuring intricate carvings and sculptures depicting various Hindu deities and mythological scenes. It was built in 1734 by Queen Madambika, wife of Ahom king Swargadeo Shiva Singha. Devi Dol reflects the rich cultural heritage and religious significance of the Ahom dynasty. The temple celebrates Durga Puja with great fervour, attracting devotees from across the country. Visitors can also experience the local culture and traditions during this time. The Dol is situated near Shivadol and Vishnudol temples. Devi Dol is adjacent to the Sivasagar tank, also known as Borpukhuri tank, offering a serene atmosphere.



Figure 3.3: Devi Dol.

The Shiv Dol complex showcases the unique blend of Assamese, Hindu, and Southeast Asian architectural styles, reflecting the Ahom Kingdom's cultural exchange and syncretism. The complex also features beautiful Sculptures, intricate carvings, and ornate decorations, making it a treasure trove of artistic and cultural expression. At present, the Shiva Dol complex is not only a religious site but also a famous tourist

destination, attracting tourists from entire the globe to marvel at its historical significance, architectural beauty, and cultural importance.

2. Sivasagar Tank: Sivasagar Tank is situated beside the Shiva Dol complex. The tank was built by Queen Ambika in 1734. The surface area of the tank is 120 acres, and the average depth is 64 feet. Sivasagar tank is the second-largest man-made tank in Assam. The tank provides mesmerizing beauty with migratory birds, fish, tortoises, etc. The tank is locally known as Borpukhuri.

The demand of tourists who have visited the Shiva Dol complex and Sivasagar Tank is presented in Table 3.2. Total responses gathered on that site are 76. (70 responses collected from domestic tourists, and 6 responses have been collected from foreign tourists).



Figure 3.4: Sivasagar Tank.

Table 3.2: Tourists' preferences based on the attraction category of the heritage site Shiva Dol Complex and Sivasagar Tank.

Attraction Category on the site	Number of tourists preferring each category (responses)		Total no. of tourists preferring each category of attraction	Conversion to scale (1-10)	Rounded value for demand rating Scale.
	Domestic (N=70)	Foreign (N=6)			
Natural attraction	55	6	61	6.1	6
Cultural Attraction	70	6	76	7.6	8
Man-made Attraction	70	6	76	7.6	8
Adventurous factors	-	-	-	-	-
Entertainment factors	10	2	12	1.2	1
Educational scenario	59	4	63	6.3	6
Religious factors	70	6	76	7.6	8
Food and drinks	50	4	54	5.4	5
Sports& activities	10	-	10	1.0	1

(Source: primary survey)

From Table 3.2 above, it is highlighted that:

- Cultural attraction, man-made Attraction, and religious factors are highly preferred categories or potentials in this heritage site.
- Natural attraction, educational scenario, and food and drinks are found in the moderately preferred potential attraction category in this site.
- On the other hand, Entertainment factors, sports, and activities come under the low preferred attractions in this heritage site.
- There are no adventurous activities to attract tourists from that perception.

When researchers interacted with visitors, it became clear that, beyond the mentioned expectations, tourists also desired quality accommodation options like, homestays and luxury hotels near the heritage site. Additionally, they expressed a preference for traditional food and markets. As this Shiva dol complex (Shiva dol, Devi dol, and Vishnu dol) is situated in the heart of Sivasagar town, there are various opportunities to generate more potential by adding different attractions and implementing various programs to attract tourists to this site. Table 3.2 highlights the attractions and amenities offered by the site.

3. Rang Ghar: Rang Ghar is the largest and oldest Amphitheatre of the Ahom dynasty in Asia, situated in Sivasagar district, Assam. It is one of the sources of revenue generation through tourism. It was built during the period of Ahom king Pramatta Singha in the 18th century. It served as a royal sports pavilion where Ahom Kings and nobles watched traditional sports like buffalo fights and other cultural events. The two-story building is notable for its unique architectural style, combining Indigenous techniques with Mughal influences, which reflects the cultural syncretism of the Ahom dynasty. Rang Ghar is renowned for its unique architectural style, blending Assamese and Mughal. Rang Ghar is of historical significance as a symbol of Ahom power and culture. Today, Rang Ghar is a popular tourist destination and a revered cultural icon, showcasing Assam's rich heritage and history. So, Rang Ghar has a high potential to attract people.

Table 3.3: Tourists' preferences based on the attraction category of the heritage site Rang Ghar.

Attraction Category in the site	No. of tourists preferring each category (Responses)		Total no. of tourists preferring each category of attraction	Conversion to scale (1-10)	Rounded value for demand rating Scale.
	Domestic (N=78)	Foreign (N=9)			
Natural attraction	78	9	87	8.7	9
Cultural Attraction	78	9	87	8.7	9
Man-made Attraction	78	9	87	8.7	9
Adventurous Factors	-	-	-	-	-
Entertainment Factors	68	4	72	7.2	7
Educational Scenario	65	4	69	6.9	7
Religious Factors	-	-	-	-	-
Food and Drinks	50	4	54	5.4	5
Sports and Activities	15	-	15	1.5	2

(Source: Primary Survey)

From Table 3.3, it has been found that:

- Natural attractions, cultural attractions, and man-made attractions are highly preferred attractions for the tourists in Rang Ghar.
- Entertainment factors and educational scenario, food and drinks are found as moderately preferred attractions on the sites.
- Sports and activities are considered a low-preferred attraction (because only during Bhugali Bihu, there is a celebration of some sports activities).
- On the other hand, religious factors and adventurous factors are not counted among the preferred attractions or potentials of this site.

During the survey, tourists expressed a desire for attractive markets and food facilities near the heritage site. Following interviews with stakeholders involved in the program and policy-making, it was confirmed that a project would be initiated to enhance opportunities and attract more visitors.



Figure 3.5: Rang Ghar.

4. Talatal Ghar: Talatal Ghar, the subterranean marvel of the Ahom dynasty, stands as a testament to the ingenuity and craftsmanship of Assam's rich cultural heritage. Beneath the earth of Talatal Ghar, a hidden treasure showcases the Ahom kingdom's military powers and architectural innovation. In the heart of Sivasagar, Talatal Ghar, the underground palace, whispers secrets of the past, revealing the Ahom dynasty's mysterious past, where ancient stories, myths, and legends await discovery. 'Ahom Swargadeo (King) Rudra Singha primarily built the Talatal Ghar, later expanded by the Ahom King Rajeswar Singha built the Talatal Ghar during 1751-1769 AD. Talatal Ghar is one of the most popular destinations in the Sivasagar district, Assam. The destination provides various attractions to tourists. The researcher has received 87 responses. There are 78 responses are domestic tourists and 9 responses from foreign tourists from the site Talatal Ghar. To gather information regarding the attraction of tourists preferring Talatal Ghar, the researcher has taken 71 tourist samples (62 domestic and 9 foreign tourists) in the particular heritage site.

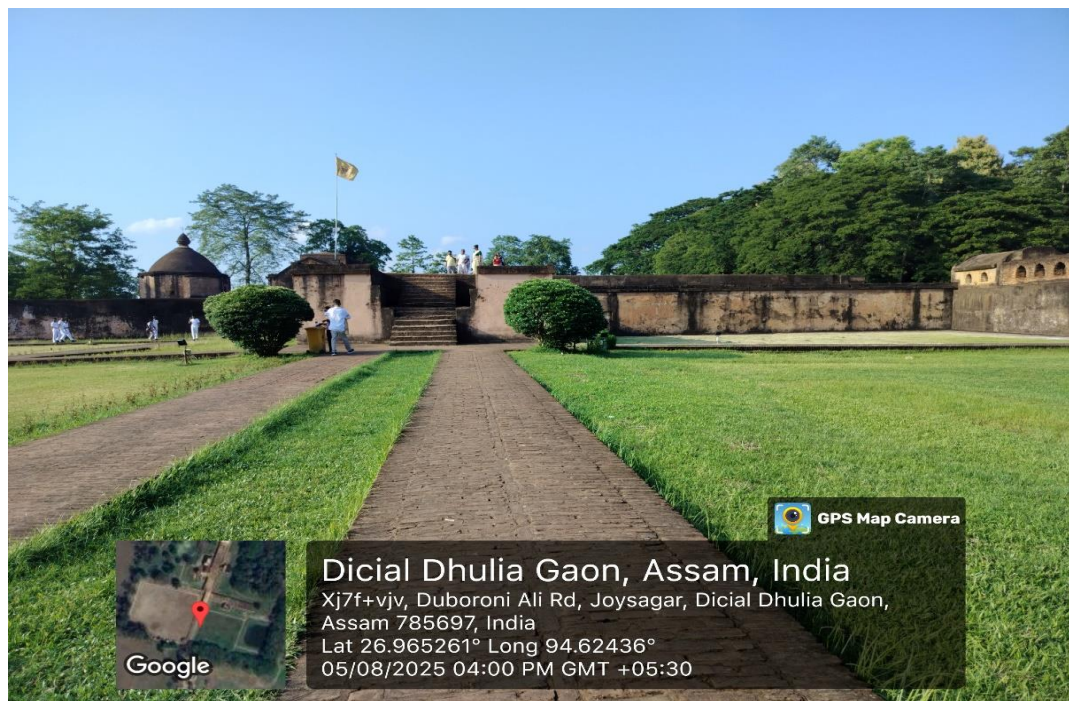


Figure 3.6: Talatal Ghar

Table 3.4: Tourists' preferences based on the attraction category of the heritage site Talatal Ghar.

Attraction Category in the site	No. of tourists preferring each category (Responses)		Total no. of tourists preferring each category of attraction	Conversion to scale (1-10)	Rounded value for demand rating Scale.
	Domestic (N=78)	Foreign (N=9)			
Natural attraction	78	9	87	8.7	9
Cultural Attraction	78	9	87	8.7	9
Man-made Attraction	78	9	87	8.7	9
Adventurous Factors	30	4	34	3.4	3
Entertainment Factors	50	-	50	5.0	5
Educational Scenario	65	6	71	7.1	7
Religious Factors	50	4	54	5.4	5
Food and Drinks	30	2	32	3.2	3
Sports and Activities	-	-	-	-	-

(Source: Primary Survey).

The above Table 3.4 shows that:

- Natural attraction, cultural attraction, man-made, the Attraction of the site are highly preferred for tourists.
- Entertainment factors, educational scenario, and religious factors are considered as moderately preferred attractions.
- Food and drinks and adventurous factors are found as low preferred sectors in the sites.
- There is no scope for sports & activities according to Table 3.4.

Tourists surveyed highlighted the need for better amenities, proper ethnic food facilities, and accommodation near the Talatal Ghar to boost visitor numbers. It is also observed that all seasons are suitable for visiting Talatal Ghar. During festival times like Bihu and Me-dam-me-phi, a comparatively high number of tourists are found at the site.

6. **Joi Dol:** Joi Dol, a magnificent monument of Assamese architecture, stands tall in the heart of Sivasagar, Assam. The height of the temple is 32 meters (105 feet), and the temple was built by the King (Ahom Swargadeo) Rudra Singha. It is a testament to the Ahom dynasty's engineering prowess and cultural heritage. Dedicated to Lord Shiva, Joi Dol is a revered site for devotees and a marvel for architecture enthusiasts. Its intricate carvings, ornate designs, and majestic presence make it a symbol of Assam's rich history and spiritual significance. As a prominent landmark, Joi Dol continues to inspire wonder, awe, and devotion, making it an integral part of Assam's cultural identity.

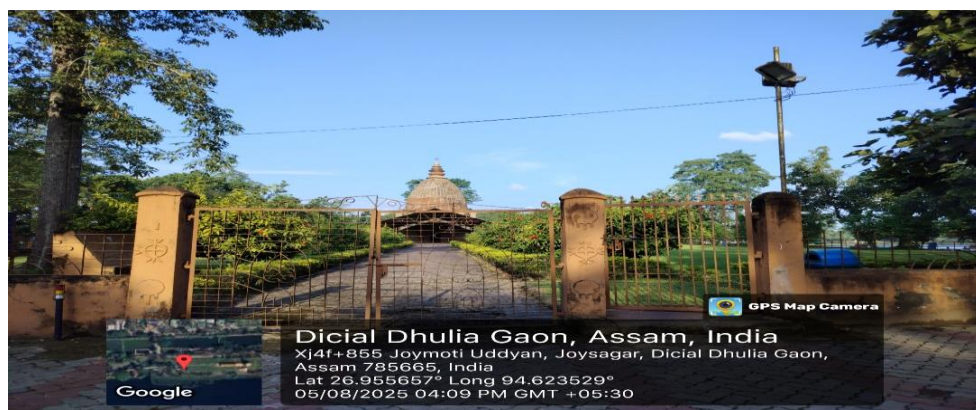


Figure 3.7: Joi Dol

7. **Joisagar Tank:** Joisagar Tank is situated beside the Joi Dol. The Tank was built by the Ahom King (Ahom Swargadeo) Rudra Singha in 1677 to honor his mother Joimoti. The area of the tank is 318 acres. The tank is located in the southern part of the Rangpur Nagar. It is almost 5 km. far from the Sivasagar town. This is the largest man-made tank in Asia. The tank is surrounded by greenery and historic monuments. The tank is heaven to nature lovers, photographers, and history enthusiasts. The tank's tranquil atmosphere, punctuated by the sounds of birds and the gentle lapping of water against its embankments, offers a serene escape from the hustle and bustle of city life. As a vital part of Sivasagar's cultural and ecological landscape, Joisagar Tank continues to inspire wonder, peace, and a deep connection to the region's rich heritage.



Figure 3.8: Joisagar Tank

Table 3.5: Tourists' preferences based on the attraction category of the heritage site Joysagar Dol and Tank.

Attraction Category in the site	No. of tourists preferring each category (Responses)		Total no. of tourists preferring each category of attraction	Conversion to scale (1-10)	Rounded value for demand rating Scale.
	Domestic (N=60)	Foreign (N=5)			
Natural attraction	60	5	65	6.5	7
Cultural Attraction	45	2	47	4.7	5
Man-made Attraction	60	5	6.5	7	7
Adventurous Factors	-	-	-	-	-
Entertainment Factors	58	8	66	6.6	7
Educational Scenario	58	6	64	6.4	6
Religious Factors	40	2	42	4.2	4
Food and Drinks	30	2	32	3.2	3
Sports and activities	50	4	54	5.4	5

(Source: Primary Survey).

According to table 3.5:

- There is no highly preferred attraction category.
- Natural attractions, Cultural attractions, man-made attractions, entertainment factors, educational scenario, religious factors, sports, and activities are moderately preferred attractions.
- Food& Drinks are found as low low-potential attraction category in this heritage site.
- There is no scope for adventurous activities according to Table 3.5.

Although there is a park, namely Aqua Park, this park has the potential to attract tourists to this site. Boating, capturing photographs, and having relaxing surroundings. Still, there is a need for some introspective study to attract more tourists to the site. If good homestays, various traditional and non-traditional food facilities, and traditional market facilities are added here, it will likely increase the potential to attract more tourists to this area.

7. Rudrasagar Dol: Rudrasagar Dol was built by the Ahom king Rudra Singha in 1714. This Shiva temple showcases the unique blend of Assamese and Hindu architectural styles, reflecting the region's rich cultural diversity. With is an imposing structure, with intricate carvings, and serene surroundings. Rudrasagar Dol is a secret destination for devotees, a marvel for architecture enthusiasts, and a haven for nature lovers.



Figure 3.9: Rudrasagar Dol.

8. Rudrasagar Tank: Rudrasagar Tank is situated beside the Rudrasagar Temple. The tank was built by the Swargadeo (King) Lakshmi Singha in 1773, dedicated to his father Rudra Singha. The Tank is also known as Na-Pukhuri (New Tank). Rudrasagar Tank and Temple Complex is one of the heritage tourism attractions in Sivasagar, Assam. This massive tank covers an area of approximately 150 acres. Rudrasagar Tank is an iconic blend of tradition, innovation, and harmony with nature. The tank is a popular destination for various migratory bird species. The researcher has taken 59 responses from the Rudrasagar Dol and the tank. Of these, 55 are domestic tourists, and 4 are foreign tourists.



Figure 3.10: Rudrasagar Tank.

Table 3.6: Tourists’ preferences based on the attraction category of the heritage site Rudrasagar Dol and Tank.

Attraction Category in the site	No. of tourists preferring each category (Responses)		Total no. of tourists preferring each category of attraction	Conversion to scale (1-10)	Rounded value for demand rating Scale.
	Domestic (N=55)	Foreign (N=4)			
Natural attraction	55	4	59	5.9	6
Cultural Attraction	54	4	59	5.9	6
Man-made Attraction	55	4	59	5.9	6
Adventurous Factors	-	-	-	-	-
Entertainment Factors	50	3	53	5.3	5
Educational Scenario	40	2	42	4.2	4
Religious Factors	45	2	47	4.7	5
Food and Drinks	20	2	22	2.2	2
Sports and Activities	32	2	34	3.4	3

(Source: Primary Survey).

From Table 3.6 above, it is highlighted that:

- Natural attractions, cultural attractions, man-made attractions, entertainment factors, educational scenarios, and activities are moderately preferred attractions.
- Food and drinks and sports& activities are shown as low-preferred attractions.
- Adventurous factors are not preferred in the particular heritage site.
- Based on the data, no high-potential attraction categories are found here.

Through the researcher's self-observation, there is a need to work on the promotional activity towards the site and also in the surroundings of Rudrasagar Dol, where hectares of wetland are found, where various tourism activities and attractions like boating, floating market, adventurous activities can be generated to attract more tourists to the site. which will create more potential or tourism value to this site, as it is already a revenue-generating site.

9. Namdang Stone Bridge (Namdang Xill Hanku):

This unique rock formation is the Namdang Stone Bridge, a stone bridge built by the Ahom King Rudra Singha in 1703. The Stone Bridge is 60 m (200 feet) long, 5.5 m (21 feet) wide, and 1.7 m (5.6 feet) high. It has much historical significance. It was built due to the military strategy, economic development, and as a symbol of power. Now, Namdang Xill Hanku is a protected monument under the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) and a popular tourist destination in Sivasagar. The researcher has taken 46 responses from this heritage site. 44 responses were collected from domestic tourists, and 2 responses were gathered from foreign tourists.



Figure 3.11: Namdang Stone Bridge (Xill Hanku).

Table 3.7: Tourists’ preferences based on the attraction category of the heritage site Namdang Stone Bridge (Xill Hanku).

Attraction Category on the site	Number of tourists preferring each category		Total no. of tourists preferring each category of attraction	Conversion to scale (1-10)	Rounded value for demand rating Scale.
	Domestic (N=44)	Foreign (N=2)			
Natural attraction	35	1	36	3.6	4
Cultural Attraction	-	-	-	-	-
Man-made Attraction	44	2	46	4.6	5
Adventurous Factors	-	-	-	-	-
Entertainment Factors	-	-	-	-	-
Educational Scenario	39	2	41	4.1	4
Religious Factors	-	-	-	-	-
Food and Drinks	-	-	-	-	-
Sports and activities	-	-	-	-	-

(Source: Primary Survey).

In the heritage site, Namdang Xill Hanku, out of nine selected attractions, there are three main types of attractions found to as potential attractions to generate tourists to this site. According to Table 3.7:

- There are no high and low potential attraction categories in this site.
- Natural attractions, Man-made Attraction, and educational scenarios are found as the moderately preferred attractions according to the scale.
- The above table clearly shows that entertainment factors, religious factors, adventurous factors, food and drinks, and sports& Activities are not preferred attractions in the particular heritage sites.

Through the researcher's observation, the inner cause of the comparatively low rating preference is mainly due to improper conservation and low maintenance of the site. Based on the physiography and location, and its historical importance, there are lots of possibilities to attract more tourists. In that manner, there is a need for some introspective study to develop the area properly and maintain the heritage value.

10. Bakhar Bengena Tree:

The Bakhar Bengena tree is located in the Bokata, Sivasagar, Assam. A six-hundred-year-old wonder tree. One of the major tourist attractions of the Ahom dynasty. There are number of folktales and myths about this tree that, the tree has some mysterious power and quality that this tree can't be grown or planted in any other places except the place itself, Various groups of scientists came for breeding and research, initially, they failed to breed at any other places in Assam but later some of the people claims that they are succeed in plantation but there has been no prove found so far. The tree has been here since the time of the Ahom dynasty. So, some people believe that there are some spiritual significances about the tree since the seeds of the tree can't be plucked; if somebody plucks, they will face major consequences like serious health issues. The main scientific reason behind it has not been discovered yet, even though natives claim it as a spiritual and mysterious reason. In recent years, it has become one of the most important heritage sites of Sivasagar district, Assam. The tree has extensive aerial systems. The surrounding nature of the tree is very peaceful. The tree is also an important source to generate the socio-economic development of the native people.

The collected responses from this site are 42. Here, 40 responses were gathered from domestic tourists and 2 responses from foreign tourists.

Table 3.8: Tourists' preferences based on the attraction category of the heritage site Bakhar Bengena Tree.

Attraction Category on the site	No. of tourists preferring each category (Responses)		Total no. of tourists preferring each category of attraction	Conversion to scale (1-10)	Rounded value for demand rating Scale.
	Domestic (N=40)	Foreign (N=2)			
Natural attraction	40	2	42	4.2	4
Cultural Attraction	20	-	20	2.0	2
Man-made Attraction	-	-	-	-	-
Adventurous Factors	-	-	-	-	-
Entertainment Factors	-	-	-	-	-
Educational Scenario	34	2	36	3.6	4
Religious Factors	40	2	42	4.2	4
Food and Drinks	-	-	-	-	-
Sports and activities	-	-	-	-	-

(Source: Primary Survey).

The Location of the Bakhar Bengena tree is purely a rural background. From Table 3.8 above:

- There are no high-potential attractions based on the categories mentioned in Table 3.8.
- Natural attractions, educational scenarios, and religious factors are found as moderately preferred attractions.
- Cultural attractions are found as low-preferred attractions in this site.
- And other attraction categories (Man-made Attraction, Adventurous factors, Entertainment factors, Food and Drinks, Sports and activities) are not preferred at that site, or have no potential to attract people based on these attraction criteria, according to the tourists.

Through self-observation, the researcher has come to know that the site has abundant heritage value. Due to the lack of additional opportunities, the heritage site is unable to attract a larger number of tourists. Additionally, it has been observed that the promotional strategy is weak on the sites. Transport and communication are also found as another drawback to attracting more people to the sites.

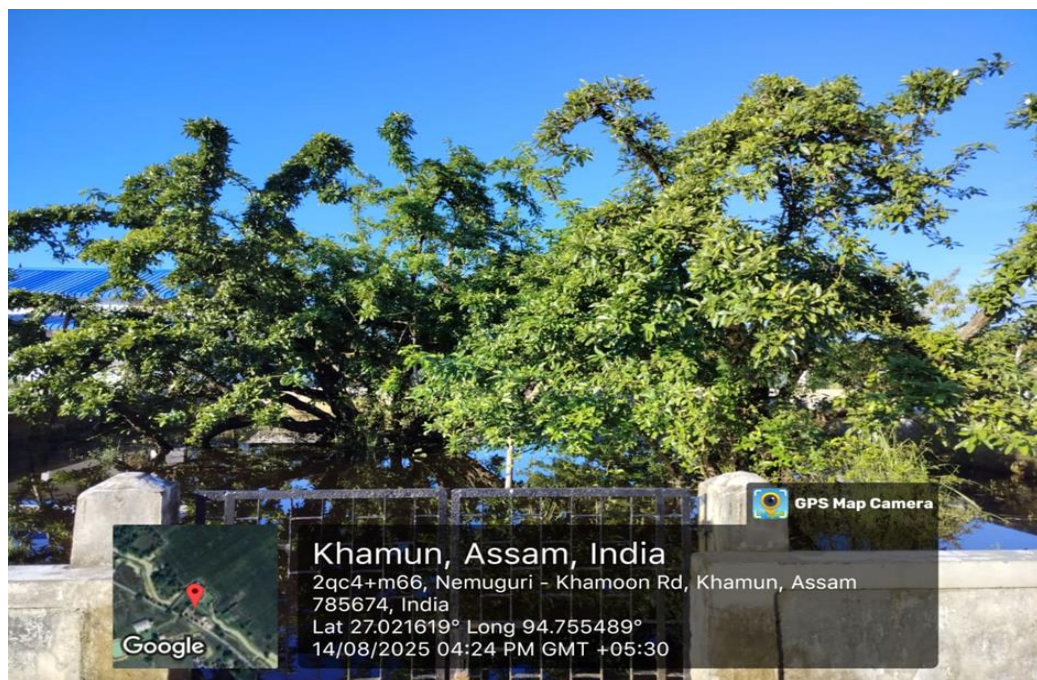


Figure 3.12: Bakhar Bengena Tree.

11. Kareng Ghar:

Kareng Ghar is situated in the Gargaon, Sivasagar. The Monument is historically and culturally very significant. Kareng Ghar was initially built by the Ahom Swargadeo Suklengmung in 1540 CE, and Ahom king Pramatta Singha added a masonry gateway in 1747CE to this palace. and it was completely built during the period of Ahom King Rajeshwar Singha in 1751- 1769 CE. Kareng Ghar showcases the Ahom Dynasty's engineering prowess, artistic flair, and strategic thinking. This imposing structure, with its intricate carvings, imposing arches, and stunning architecture, is a window into the region's tumultuous history, royal grandeur, and cultural resilience. Based on the tourist flow, the researcher has randomly collected 79 responses from the heritage site Kareng Ghar. Here, 70 responses are gathered from domestic tourists, and another 9 responses are collected from foreign tourists.

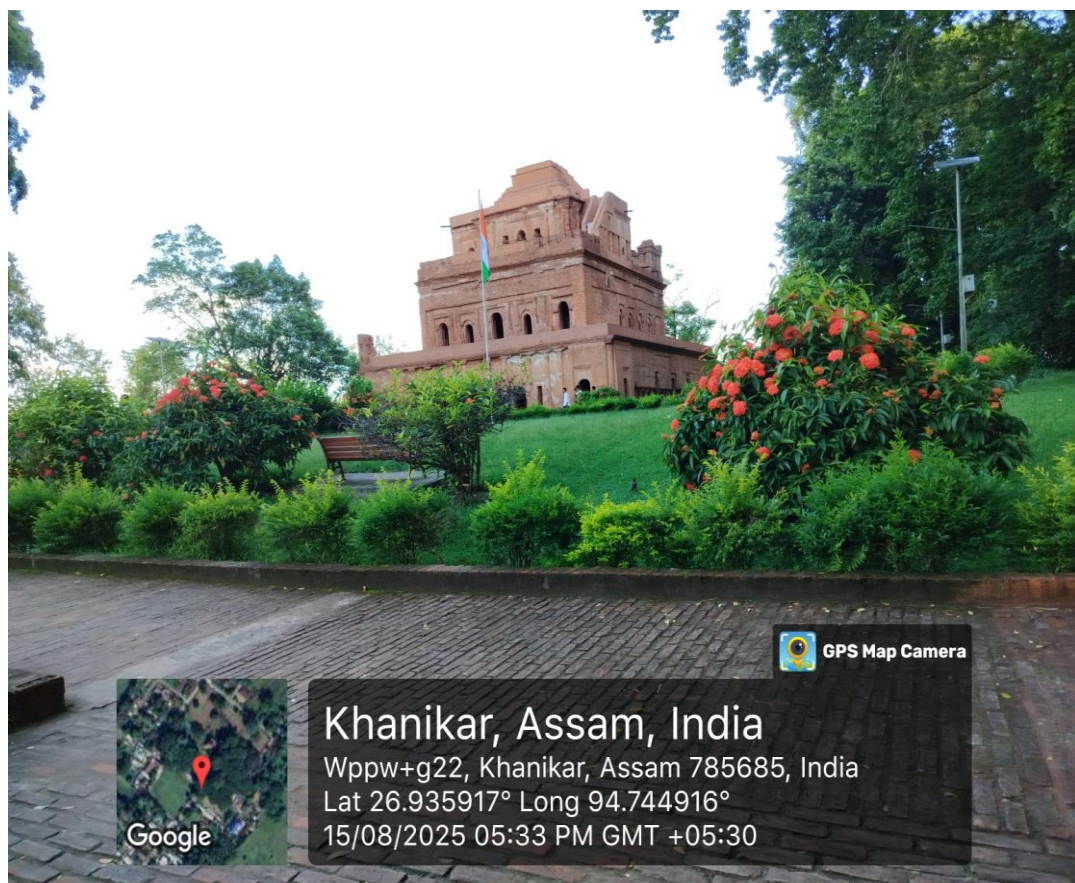


Figure 3.13: Kareng Ghar

Table 3.9: Tourists’ preferences based on the attraction category of the heritage site Kareng Ghar.

Attraction Category on the site	No. of tourists preferring each category (Responses)		Total no. of tourists preferring each category of attraction	Conversion to scale (1-10)	Rounded value for demand rating Scale.
	Domestic (N=70)	Foreign (N=9)			
Natural attraction	70	9	79	7.9	8
Cultural Attraction	60	6	66	6.6	7
Man-made Attraction	70	9	79	7.9	8
Adventurous Factors	-	-	-	-	-
Entertainment Factors	45	6	51	5.1	5
Educational Scenario	65	4	69	6.9	7
Religious Factors	-	-	-	-	-
Food and Drinks	30	2	32	3.2	3
Sports and Activities	-	-	-	-	-

(Source: Primary Survey).

Based on the Table 3.9, it is highlighted that:

- Natural attractions, man-made Attraction, are found as highly preferred attractions in Kareng Ghar.
- Cultural attraction, entertainment factor, and educational scenario are found as moderately preferred attractions or potential of this heritage site.
- Food & drink is distinguished as the low preferred attraction on the site.
- On the contrary, it is remarkable that sports & activities, adventurous factors, and religious factors are not the preferred attractions in the Kareng Ghar.

The researcher collected the data during the Ahom Fest ‘Mai-dam-meh-phi in Kareng Ghar. To attract more tourists to the heritage site Kareng Ghar, there is a need to establish homestays, high-class restaurants and bars, night culture, and a proper ethnic market to explore and attract more people to the site. Through self-introspection, it is notable that the transport and communication are suitable for the tourists, and also the surrounding environment is very peaceful. Maintenance of the Kareng Ghar compound is also very attractive. So, it stands as a potential heritage site in Sivasagar, Assam.

12. Group of four Moidam (Charaideo Moidam):

Charaideo Moidam is situated under the Sivasagar revenue circle. It is an ancestral burial site of the Ahom kings, who ruled Assam from 1228-1826. The place has a high potential for tourists to learn about the Ahom Dynasty’s history, culture, and architecture. This is one of the unique heritage sites all over the world. Recently, this site has been recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage site. From that perspective, it has a high potential to attract tourists to the site. The transport and communication near the site are also very suitable for maintaining tourism. Based on the nature of the tourist flow in the Charaideo Moidam (a Group of four Moidams), the researcher randomly selected 100 responses. 90 responses were collected from domestic tourists, and 10 responses were gathered from foreign tourists.

Table 3.10: Tourists' preferences based on the attraction category of the heritage site
Group of four moidam (Charaideo moidam).

Attraction Category on the site	Number of tourists preferring each category (Responses)		Total no. of tourists preferring each category of attraction	Conversion to scale (1-10)	Rounded value for the demand rating Scale.
	Domestic (N=90)	Foreign (N=10)			
Natural attraction	89	10	99	9.9	10
Cultural Attraction	85	8	93	9.3	9
Man-made Attraction	83	6	89	8.9	9
Adventurous Factors	-	-	-	-	-
Entertainment Factors	60	6	66	6.6	6
Educational Scenario	69	7	76	7.6	8
Religious Factors	65	8	73	7.3	7
Food and Drinks	30	4	34	3.4	3
Sports and Activities	-	-	-	-	-

(Source: Primary Survey.)

The UNESCO World Heritage Site Group of four Moidam has a very high potential to attract people to the site. From Table 3.10 above, it is visible that:

- Natural attractions, cultural attractions, man-made Attraction, and educational scenarios are highly preferred attractions on this site, which has the utmost potential to attract tourists to the site.
- Meanwhile, Religious factors and entertainment factors are displayed as the moderately preferred attractions in Charaideo Moidam.
- Food and drinks are exhibited as the low-preferred attraction.
- There is no scope to prefer sports and adventure attractions in the Charaideo Moidam.

The researcher collected the data during the Charaideo festival celebrated in the Charaideo Moidam in January 2024. Through self-observation, there is a need to establish good homestays and restaurants for tourists. On the other hand, the surrounding circumstances of the Group of Four Moidam are very attractive and potential to attract more tourists.

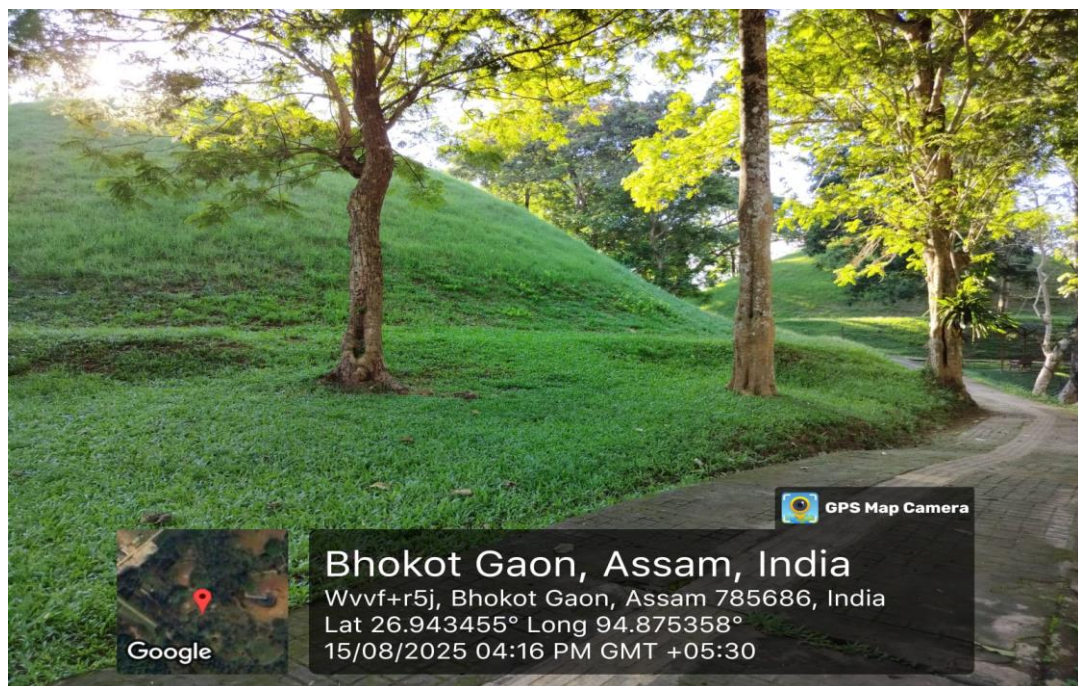


Figure 3.14: Group of Four Moidam.

3.3. Calculation of Tourist Potential Index:

To identify the potential heritage sites based on the demand and supply index value (After identification of each sample heritage site's potential or attractions, depending upon the tourists' responses), the Tourist Potential Index method (TPI) has been calculated. Based on the formula $P = (A+B) / 2$, the Tourist Potential Index (TPI) for the sample heritage sites in Sivasagar district, Assam, is calculated below (Table 3.11). Depending upon the total weight of the potential index, various ranges are scaled. The tourist potential index (TPI) categorises heritage destinations as having very high, High, Moderate, or Low potential sites.

Demand Components(D) represents:

D^1 =Natural Attractions,

D^2 = Cultural Attractions,

D^3 = Man-Made Attraction,

D^4 = Adventurous factors,

D^5 = Entertainment factors,

D^6 = Educational scenario

D^7 =Religious factors,

D^8 = Food and drinks,

D^9 = Sports & activities.

Supply Component(S) represents:

S^1 =Importance,

S^2 =Accessibility,

S^3 =Periodicity,

S^4 =Fragility,

S^5 =Popularity.

Table 3.11: Tourist Potential Index (TPI).

Selected potential sites	Demand Component										Supply component						TP
	D ¹	D ²	D ³	D ⁴	D ⁵	D ⁶	D ⁷	D ⁸	D ⁹	ΣD	S ¹	S ²	S ³	S ⁴	S ⁵	ΣS	
Shiva Dol Complex & Sivasagar Tank	6	8	8	-	1	6	8	5	1	43	2	2	2	1.5	1.5	9	26.00
Rang Ghar	9	9	9	-	7	7	-	5	2	48	2	2	2	1.5	1.5	9	28.5
Talatal Ghar	9	9	9	3	5	7	5	3	-	50	2	2	2	1.5	1.5	9	29.5
Joi dol & Joisagar Tank	7	5	7	-	7	6	4	3	5	44	1.5	1.5	2	1.5	0.2	6.7	25.35
Rudrasagar Dol & Tank	6	6	6	-	5	4	5	2	3	37	1.5	1.5	2	1	0.2	6.2	21.6
Namdang Stone Bridge (Xill Hanku)	4	-	5	-	-	4	-	-	-	13	1.5	1.5	2	1	0.2	6.2	9.6
Bakhar Bengena tree	4	2	-	-	-	4	4	-	-	14	1.5	1.5	2	1	0.2	6.2	10.1
Kareng Ghar	8	7	8	-	5	7	-	3	-	38	2	1.5	2	1.5	1	7.2	23.00
Group of four Moidam (Charaideo Moidam)	10	9	9	-	6	8	7	3	-	52	2	2	2	2	2	10	31.00

(Source: compiled by the researcher).

Table 3.11 highlights the tourist potential index in Sivasagar district, Assam. Tourists' potential values for different Sample heritage sites of Sivasagar district, Assam, (Under the Sivasagar district heritage tourism revenue circle) range from 9.6 to 30.1. For prioritization of destinations for future tourism promotional ventures, all the associated tourist potential index values are grouped under the four categories as mentioned below:

Very High potential heritage site (Index value above 30),

High potential heritage site (Index value 20-30),

Moderately potential heritage site (Index value 10- 20).

Low Potential Heritage Site (Index value below 10)

Very High Potential Sites: According to the index value of heritage sites, calculated through the Tourist Potential Index (TPI) method, it has been identified that among the 14 sample heritage sites, the Group of four Moidams (Charaideo moidam) is identified (31.00 indexed value) as the very high potential heritage site of Sivasagar, Assam. Recently, this heritage site has been recognized as a World Heritage Site (UNESCO) and renamed as “Moidam-the mound-burial system of the Ahom Dynasty,” still, it is registered in the Tourism revenue circle as the Group of Four Moidam.

High potential sites: Based on the identified ranges of indexed value 20-30, six heritage sites fall under this range. Shiva dol complex & Sivasagar tank (26.00), Rang Ghar (28.5), Talatal Ghar (29.5), Joi dol & Tank (25.35), Rudrasagar dol & Tank (21.6), and Karang Ghar (22.6).

Moderate potential site: The above ranges showed that heritage sites ranging from 10-20 have been categorized as moderately potential heritage sites. The heritage site Bakhar Bengena tree (10.1) is displayed as a moderately potential heritage site of Sivasagar district, Assam.

Low-potential site: Heritage sites with an indexed value below 10 are identified as low-potential heritage sites. Namdang Stone Bridge (9.6) is listed as a low-potential heritage site according to the indexed value.

3.4 Discussion:

The analysis of the present chapter has identified the potential heritage tourism sites among the 14 sample heritage sites in Sivasagar district, Assam. Based on the four ranges, very high, high, moderate, and low potential heritage sites are identified (identified through the TPI method). Here, The group of four Maidam is considered a very high-potential heritage site among the sample heritage sites. This heritage site has been recognized as a world heritage site declared by UNESCO, and also the location and scenic beauty add more attraction value to the site. It is basically a Mound burial system of the Ahom dynasty. This is very unique among the sites. It is the reason behind the very high potential heritage site in the study area. Shiva dol complex & Sivasagar tank, Rang Ghar, Talatal Ghar, Joi dol & Tank, Rudrasagar dol & Tank, and Karang Ghar are found a high high-potential heritage sites. These heritage sites are situated at the heart of Sivasagar city. Communication is convenient for visiting these heritage sites. The distance between each site is very convenient for tourists to cover all the heritage sites together in a day for visiting. The architecture and surroundings are very calm and peaceful, so that people can relax there. The heritage site Bakhar Bengena tree is found to with moderate potential value. This heritage site is mainly rural-based, and the communication is not as developed as compared to the other heritage sites. Also, the distance of this heritage site is far from the other heritage sites. It came to know through self-observation that the promotional activity is very low towards the tourist generation to this site. And there is a need for some introspective study towards the entertainment and activity, and market facility near this site. Hence, it comes as a moderate heritage potential value. The source of tourists is found in the nearest area. So, there is a need to work on it to attract more tourists from the different zones. This will also help with cultural exchange. Namdang stone bridge (Xill Hanku) has the lowest potential value among all the sample heritage sites. Although this heritage site has very much historical significance and carries the glory of the Ahom dynasty, it still comes as a low-potential heritage site to generate more tourists to the

site. Unmaintained and negligence towards the conservation of this site is the key factor to justify the reason. Supply or availability and demand are the most suitable criteria to identify the tourism potential of a sites, which helps to identify the pros and cons of the heritage sites. Based on the values of TPI, there could be work on the particular heritage sites based on the needs towards the development of heritage sites. This chapter also identified the Tourism potential sites according to different indexed values. This will be fruitful for further study and development of the heritage sites of the study area.

3.5. Concluding Remark:

Sivasagar district in Assam holds immense potential for heritage tourism, boasting a rich cultural and historical legacy that showcases the region's glorious past and architectural brilliance. The district's numerous ancient monuments, temples, and archaeological sites offer a glimpse into the Ahom dynasty's glorious reign. By leveraging these assets, Sivasagar can attract tourists to its history, culture, and heritage, which is a major way to boost the local economy, promote cultural exchange, and generate employment opportunities. With proper infrastructure development, effective marketing strategies, and community engagement, Sivasagar's heritage tourism can flourish in preserving its legacy while empowering local communities and contributing to sustainable development. This would not only enhance the district's tourism profile but also ensure the conservation of its invaluable heritage for future generations. Furthermore, collaborative efforts between government, local stakeholders, and tourism operators can unlock Sivasagar's full potential, creating a unique blend of tradition, culture, and economic growth that benefits both locals and visitors alike. According to the above potentiality analysis, based on the selected range, sample sites are identified within the range of very high, high, moderate, and low potential sites.

Chapter IV

IMPACT OF HERITAGE TOURISM ON SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND CULTURE IN SIVASAGAR DISTRICT, ASSAM

4.1 INTRODUCTION:

Heritage tourism stands as one of the most powerful catalysts for socio-economic development and cross-cultural exchange in a region, fostering economic growth while promoting mutual understanding and respect among diverse communities. Heritage tourism can shed light on the sustainable livelihood of the people. The growing interest in heritage tourism has brought substantial socio-economic benefits to local communities, but it also poses significant challenges to cultural preservation and community well-being. As heritage tourism continues to expand, understanding its impacts on local societies and cultures is crucial for ensuring sustainable and responsible development of tourism (Bhattacharya,2004).

On the other hand, heritage tourism can generate substantial economic benefits, create employment opportunities, and promote cultural exchange. It can also contribute to the preservation and conservation of cultural heritage sites, fostering a sense of community pride and identity. Unchecked tourism growth can lead to cultural commodification, the displacement of local communities, and the degradation of heritage sites. The influx of tourists can disrupt traditional ways of life, erode cultural authenticity, and create socioeconomic disparities (Bhatia, 2002).

Heritage tourism can have a multifaceted impact on various sectors, including Social, economic, and cultural. By influencing societal variables and social standards, heritage tourism can shape community dynamics and social norms. Heritage tourism can boost

local economies by generating revenue, creating employment opportunities, and fostering economic growth. It can impact cultural norms, traditions, and adaptability, either preserving or transforming cultural practices (Smith,2006).

The impact study of heritage tourism on Socio-economics and culture has a broad scope, encompassing the development of heritage sites, the maintenance of sustainable livelihoods, community development, and the preservation of cultural authenticity, as well as promoting cultural exchange. It also contributes to tourism theory, interdisciplinary approaches, destination management, and policy implications (UNWTO, 2018).

This Chapter aims to investigate the relationship between heritage tourism and its impact on socio-economic and cultural aspects. Based on an open-ended questionnaire, data and information from local communities near the sample heritage sites were collected. Some dimensions and sub-dimensions of the variables: social, economic, and cultural, are prepared in the questionnaire for the impact assessment. This research seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of the impacts of heritage tourism and inform strategies for sustainable tourism development that balance economic, social, and cultural considerations.

4.2. The hypothesis of the present objective is:

H_0 = There is no significant positive relationship between heritage tourism and its impact on Social, Economic, and Cultural variables.

H_1 = There is a significant positive relationship between Heritage tourism and its impact on Social, Economic, and Cultural variables.

4.3. Socio-Demographic Scenario of the surveyed villages:

Socio-demographic Scenario generally refers to the profile of social and demographic attributes that identify a population or group. It comprises various factors that influence an individual's or group's lifestyle, behaviour, and interactions. Studying socio-demographic scenarios is crucial for understanding the complex relationships

between social and demographic factors that shape populations and societies. Demographic trends and patterns provide insights into cultural and social norms, such as attitudes towards family, education, and work. Demographic analysis helps researchers understand how social change occurs and how it is influenced by demographic factors. (Chang,1999).

In the present chapter socio-demographic scenario of the 9 sample villages near the 14 sample heritage sites (within a 5 km range) is described based on surveyed information. Here, socio-demographic characteristics cover: age, sex, educational qualification, marital status, income, etc.

Neighbouring villages are selected based on their proximity to the sample heritage sites. After taking the details of the total household information from the landlord, 30% of households (According to Yung, 2003) are selected for the survey. Here, a total of 200 households from 9 villages are taken as sample households. Some sample villages are urban-based, and some of them are from rural backgrounds. For an impact study, it is essential to know about the socio-demographic scenario of the particular area.

Detailed information on the household survey (name of the villages, Total households, visited households, latitudinal extension and longitudinal extension, etc.) is shown in Table 4.1. The frequency distribution of socio-demographic data is shown in the tables below, and the total percentage of the frequency distributions is shown through graphical representation.

Table 4.1: Showing Household Survey (HHs).

Sample sites	Surveyed villages	CD Block	Total Number of HHs	Number of Surveyed HHs	%of Surveyed HHs	Location
Shiv dol complex (Shiva dol, Devi dol, Vishnu dol) & Sivasagar Tank	Jamuna Nagar	Sivasagar	80	24	30	Lat 26.988002 ⁰ N Long 94.633086 ⁰ E
Rang Ghar	Junaki Nagar	Sivasagar	64	20	30	Lat 26.966662 ⁰ N Long 94.620721 ⁰ E
Talatal Ghar	Chipahi Gaon	Sivasagar	99	30	30	Lat 26.965261 ⁰ N Long 94.624323 ⁰ E
Jaysagar Dol& Tank	Dicial Dhulia Gaon	Gourisagar	82	25	30	Lat 26.955657 ⁰ N Long 94.623529 ⁰ E
Rudrasagar dol& tank	Bon Gaon	Amguri	70	21	30	Lat 26.952638 ⁰ N Long 94.584055 ⁰ E
Namdang stone bridge	Namdang Xill Hanku Village		98	30	30	Lat 26.950541 ⁰ N Long 94.545384 ⁰ E
Bakhar bengena Tree	Silikhaguri Chetia Gaon	Demow	77	24	30	Lat 27.021619 ⁰ N Long 94.755489 ⁰ E
Kareng Ghar	Paniduar suburi	Sivasagar	48	15	30	Lat 26.935924 ⁰ N Long 94.744914 ⁰ E
Charideo Maidam	Sukafa Nagar	Sonari	35	11	30	Lat 26.943677 ⁰ N Long 94.87418 ⁰ E
$\Sigma x =$			563	200		

Source: Primary Survey.

Table 4.2: Frequency distribution of the Gender of native people:

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	124	62
Female	76	38
Total	200	100%

Source- Primary survey.

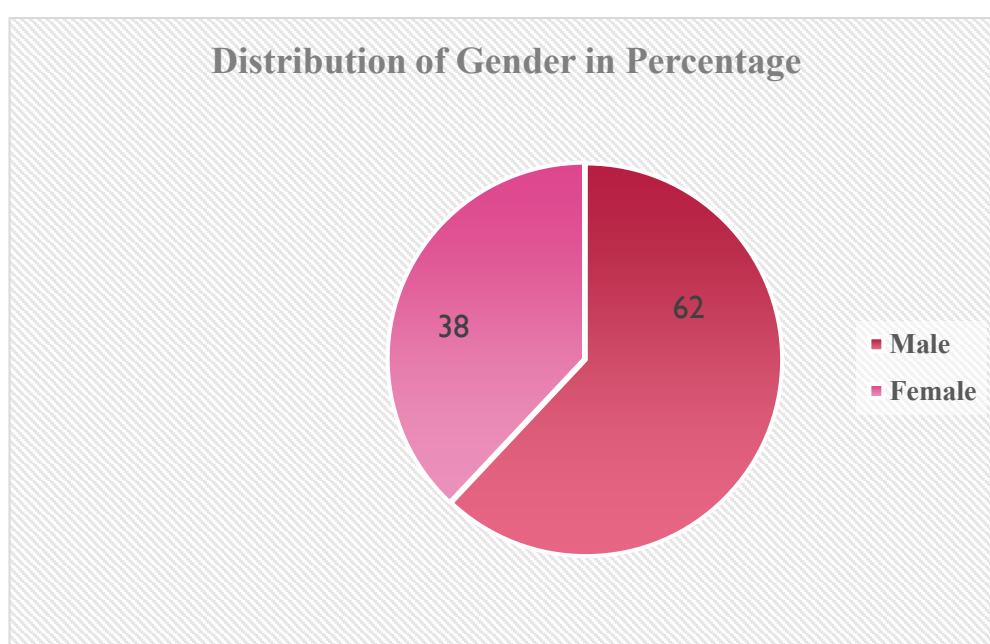


Figure 4.1: Distribution of Gender in percentage of local people.

Graph 4.1 reveals that out of 200 respondents, 62% are male, and 38% of respondents are found to as female among the local respondents.

Table 4.3: Frequency distribution of the age group of Native People:

Age group	Frequency	Percentage
Below 30	28	14
30-40	74	37
40-50	54	27
Above 50	44	22
Total	200	100%

Source- Primary survey, 2024.

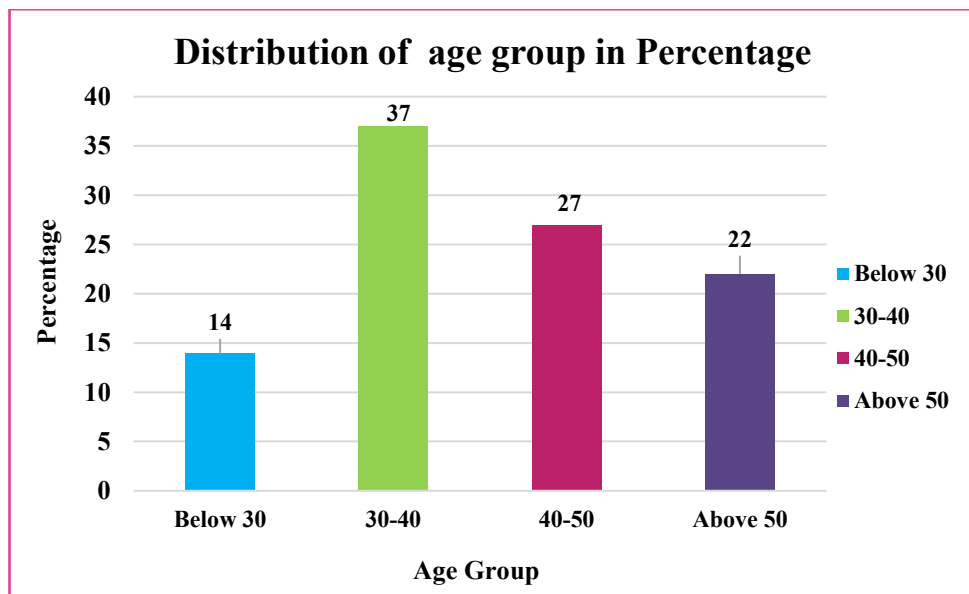


Figure 4.2: Distribution of age groups in percentage of local people

Graph 4.2 shows, out of 200 respondents 37% are found between the age group 30-40 years, which is the maximum. 27 % respondents are found in the age group 40-50 years which comes under the second-highest age group according to the data. 22% respondents are found in the age group above 50 years, and 14% of respondents are found in the age group below 30 years, which is found lowest age.

Table 4.4: Frequency Distribution of Educational Qualification:

Educational Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
H.S.L.C	64	32
H. Ss	87	43.5
Graduate	38	19
Others	11	5.5
Total	200	100%

Source: Primary Survey,2024.

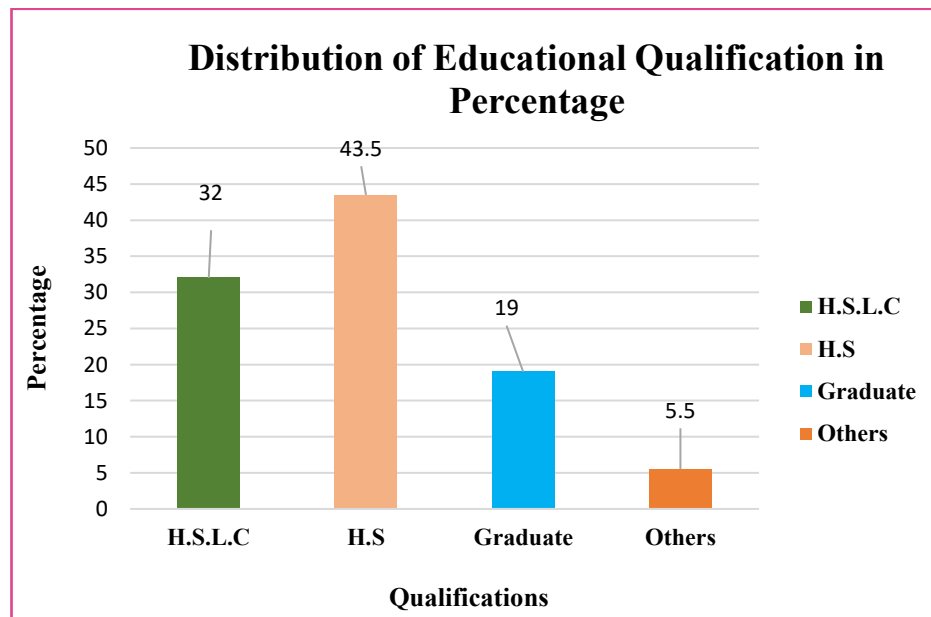


Figure 4.2: Distribution of age groups in percentage of local people

In this graph, the highest percentage of educational qualification of the respondents is found as H.S. pass, and the percentage is 43.5 %. The percentage of H.S.L.C qualified respondents is 32% which is the second highest percentage according to the data. 19% of respondents are found as graduate respondents, and the percentage of respondents with other qualifications are found as 5.5% respondents.

Table 4.5: Frequency Distribution of Marital Status:

Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage
Married	143	71.5
Unmarried	57	28.5
Total	200	100%

Source: Primary Survey.

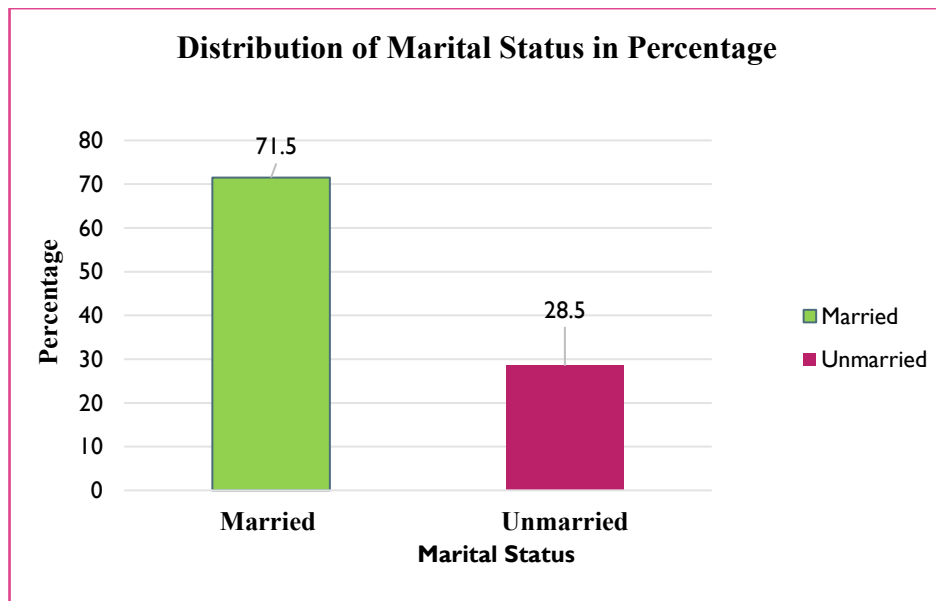


Figure 4.4: Percentage distribution of Marital Status of local respondents.

Graph 4.4 shows the percentage of Married and unmarried people. Here, married respondents are 71.5 % and unmarried respondents is 28.5%. The percentage of unmarried respondents is higher than the percentage of married respondents

Table 4.6: Frequency distribution of occupation of the residents.

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Tourism related	136	68
Tourism non-related	64	32
Total	200	100%

Source: Primary survey.

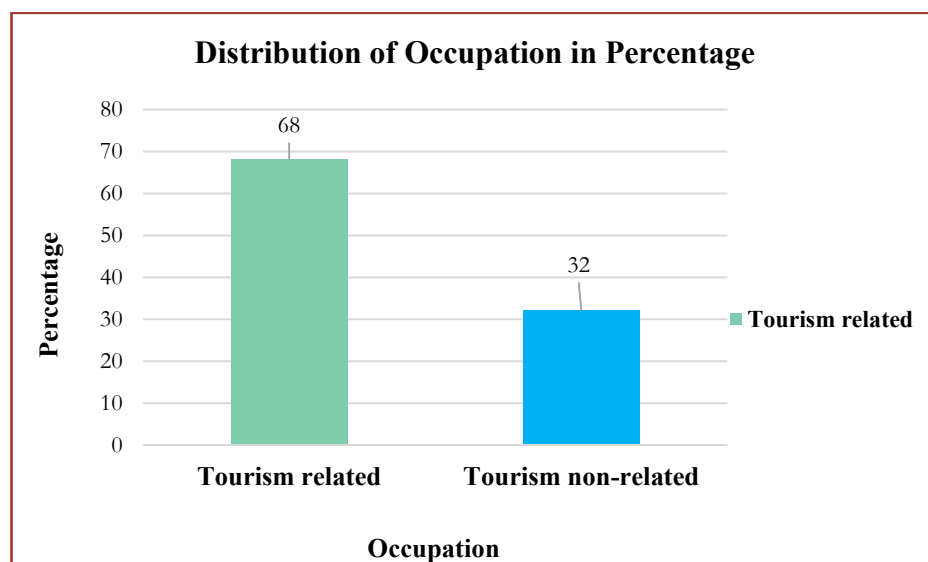


Figure 4.5: Distribution of occupation of residents in percentage.

According to the survey, it is found that the percentage of occupations related to tourism is higher than the percentage of tourism non-related occupations. The percentage of respondents related to tourism is 68%, and the percentage of respondents not related to tourism is 32%.

Table 4.7: Frequency distribution of monthly income of residents.

Monthly income	Frequency	Percentage
Below 10,000	32	16
10,000-30,000	89	44.5
30,000-50,000	38	19
50,000-70,000	21	10.5
Above 70,000	20	10
Total	200	100%

Source: Primary Survey.

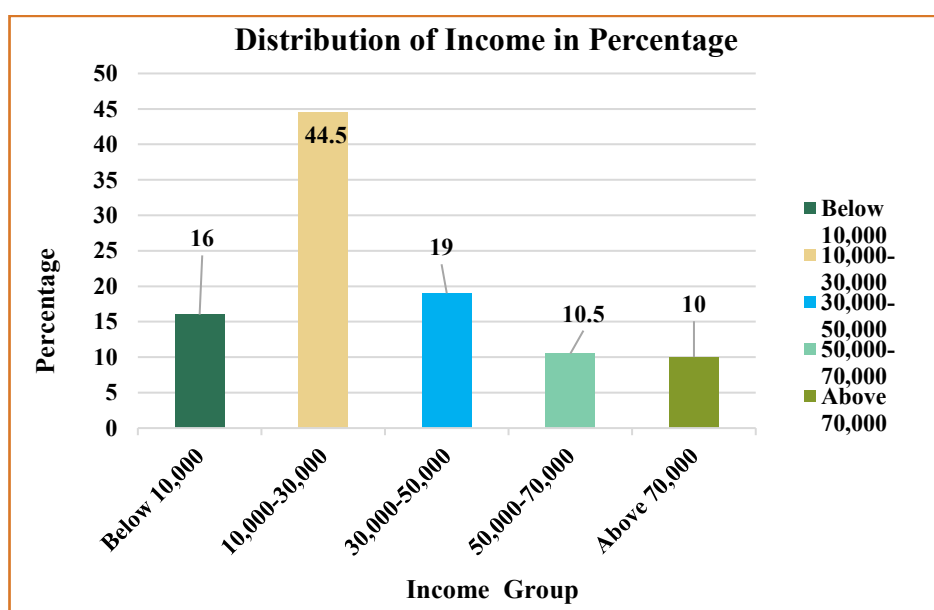


Figure 4.6: Percentage distribution of income of residents.

The above figure shows that the highest percentage of the income group is between 10,000 – 30,000, which is 44.5%. 16% of respondents are found in the income group below 10,000 rupees. A 19% response rate was found among the 30,000 -50,000

income group. 10.5% responses are identified in the 50,000 -70,000 income group. And 10% responses are found above the 70,000-income group.

4.4. Descriptive analysis of the impact of heritage tourism on socio-economic and cultural aspects in Sivasagar district, Assam:

The heritage tourism regime has a significant impact on the social structure of an area. It can lead to changes in community dynamics, cultural values, and social norms. As tourism increases, residents may experience shifts in their traditional way of life, potentially influencing their social relationships and community cohesion. The influx of tourists can also bring new cultural influences, which may be adopted by residents, further altering the social fabric. Additionally, the economic benefits of tourism can create new social hierarchies, with those involved in the tourism industry potentially gaining economic and social status. However, if not managed carefully, heritage tourism can also lead to social disruption, cultural commodification, and loss of traditional practices. Effective management and community engagement are crucial to mitigating these impacts and ensuring that the benefits of heritage tourism are equitably distributed among residents

This study aims to assess the impact of heritage tourism on the socio-economic and cultural fabric of local communities. To meet this objective, surveyed 200 households in various villages (as detailed in the preceding table), utilising a comprehensive open-ended questionnaire to collect primary data. The collected data were subsequently scored, and statistical analysis was performed to explore the relationship between heritage tourism and its impact on socio-economic and cultural aspects of the communities. The findings of this analysis are presented in the following sections, providing insights into the complex dynamics between heritage tourism and local communities. The gathered data were scored according to the dimensions specified in the questionnaire, with separate scores calculated for social, cultural, and economic impacts. The scored data were subsequently analysed using JAMOV software, revealing significant correlations between heritage tourism and its impact on socio-economic and cultural aspects, as well as a notable impact on socio-economic cohesion and cultural preservation.

The impacts (Items) of heritage tourism are being assessed based on the flow of impact or pattern of impact on this particular item, and the assessment scale, ranging from 1-5: Limited impact (1), Moderate impact (2), Significant impact (3), Substantial impact (4), Transformative impact (5).

Table 4.8: Impact assessment of heritage tourism on socio-economic and cultural aspects.

Impact assessment	
Dimensions	Variable 1
	Social
	Sub- Dimensions (Items)
Standard of Living	• Social Service
	• Family Members
	• Monthly income
	• Infrastructure
	• Education
	• Healthcare Facility
	• Community Engagement
	• Community events
	• Leadership development
Poverty Alleviation	• Tourism demand
	• Employment Generation
Dimensions	Variable 2
	Economic
	Sub-dimensions (Items)
Livelihood	• Income Source
	• Income Level
	• Job Opportunity

Economic Stability	• Seasonal income
	• Seasonal employment
Marketization	• Market Diversification
	• Market demand
	• Market competition
Dimensions	Variable 3
	Cultural
	Sub-Dimensions (Items)
Cultural Exchange	• Cross-cultural Understanding
	• Cultural learning
	• Cultural Sharing
	• Story Telling
	• Cultural Authenticity
Cultural Workshop	• Hands-on Cultural Experiences
	• Local Artisan Engagement
	• Cultural Immersion

Source: Compiled by the researcher.

According to Table 4.8, these are the impacts of heritage tourism on socio-economic and cultural aspects, shown based on various dimensions. There are various responses gathered based on a self-designed rating scale ranging from 1-5.

The scoring of items or subdimensions involves assigning numerical values to responses or measurements, allowing for quantitative analysis. These scores were ranked from highest to lowest based on their values, enabling the identification of patterns, trends, and correlations. By examining the scored values, determine the relative importance, prevalence, or impact of each item or subdimension, facilitating data-driven decision-making and insights. Items with higher scores usually indicate

stronger agreement or more significant effects, while lower scores might suggest weaker agreement or lesser effects. By ranking these scores, it can prioritize areas of focus, identify key drivers, or track changes over time. The scored items or sub-dimensions were ranked in descending order based on the employed scoring system. The pattern of the impacts of heritage tourism on social, economic, and cultural variables (Highest to lowest) are shown below in the table 4.9.

Table 4.9: The impacts of heritage tourism on social variables in descending order based on the scored values.

SL No.	Impact on social variables	N	Mean
Item 1	Community Engagement	200	2.96
Item 2	Monthly income		2.91
Item 3	Education		2.88
Item4	Healthcare Facility		2.83
Item 5	Tourism demand		2.82
Item6	Infrastructure		2.81
Item 7	Employment Generation		2.81
Item 8	Leadership development		2.79
Item 9	Family Members		2.78
Item 10	Social Service		2.76
Item 11	Community events		2.67

Source: Primary Survey.

Table 4.9 shows the impacts of heritage tourism on social variables. There is are total of 10 items, and each item is showing in a descending order with mean values accordingly.

Table 4.10: The impacts of heritage tourism on Economic variables in descending order based on the scored values.

SL No.	Impacts on Economic Variables	N	Mean
Item 1	Market competition	200	3.12
Item 2	Market Diversification		3.1
Item 3	Seasonal employment		3.04
Item4	Income Level		2.99
Item 5	Market demand		2.98
Item6	Job Opportunity		2.97
Item 7	Income Source		2.85
Item 8	Seasonal income		2.85

Source: Primary Survey.

Table 4.10 shows the Impacts of heritage tourism on economic variables. There is a total of 8 items, and these items are ranked in a descending order according to the mean values.

Table 4.11: The impacts of heritage tourism on cultural variables in descending order based on the scored values.

SL. No.	Impacts on culture	N	Mean
Item 1	Hands-on Cultural Experiences	200	3.04
Item 2	Local Artisan Engagement		3.04
Item 3	Cultural Authenticity		2.97
Item 4	Cultural learning		2.97
Item 5	Cultural Sharing		2.94
Item 6	Cross-cultural Understanding		2.92
Item 7	Story Telling		2.85
Item 8	Cultural Immersion		2.83

Source: Primary Survey.

Impacts of heritage tourism on cultural variables are shown in Table 4.11. Where the number of impact items is 8, and all are arranged in descending order based on the mean value.

4.5. Statistical Analysis:

Statistical literacy is more than being able to crunch numbers. Statistical literacy is the ability to think critically, objectively, and logically to assess claims and data that are presented to us. Statistics is not merely a supplementary tool in geographical research; it is an integral and indispensable component that allows geographers to move beyond mere description to rigorous analysis, interpretation, prediction, and theory building. The "Quantitative Revolution" in geography during the mid-20th century cemented the importance of statistical and mathematical methods, transforming the discipline into a more scientific and analytical field (Cohen, 1988).

Geography deals with spatial data such as locations, distributions, and relationships. Statistics provides the language and tools to quantify these spatial patterns and the processes that create them. For instance, instead of just saying "crime is high in certain areas," statistics allow us to measure how high, where it clusters, and what spatial factors are associated with it (Longley, Goodchild, Maguire, & Rhind, 2015).

In essence, geographical research aims to understand the Earth as the home of humanity, exploring the intricate relationships between people, places, and environments, and seeking solutions to complex challenges that have a spatial dimension (Cohen, 1988).

A correlation matrix based on Pearson's correlation coefficient is a powerful tool for analysing the relationships between multiple variables. By displaying the correlation coefficients between each pair of variables in a matrix format, one can quickly identify patterns, trends, and correlations in data.

This matrix is beneficial in multivariate analysis, allowing users to visualize the strength and direction of linear relationships between variables. Whether in social sciences, economics, or other fields, Pearson's correlation matrix provides valuable

insights into the complex relationships within datasets, facilitating data-driven decision-making and further investigation.

Correlation is quantified by a correlation coefficient, often denoted by 'r' (for Pearson's correlation coefficient).

- This coefficient ranges from -1 to +1:
 - +1: Perfect positive correlation (variables move perfectly together in the same direction).
 - -1: Perfect negative correlation (variables move perfectly together in opposite directions).
 - 0: No linear correlation.

- Values closer to +1 or -1 indicate stronger relationships, while values closer to 0 indicate weaker relationships (Field, 2018).

To examine the hypothesis of the present objective, “Heritage tourism and its impact on socio-economic and culture in Sivasagar district, Assam,” the Pearson’s correlation matrix technique has been applied. The analysis of the correlation is presented through a graphical representation (Scatter plot 4.7) and narrated values in a matrix chart (4.13).

This correlation matrix is calculated from the scored value of the responses gathered in an open questionnaire based on the items or sub-dimensions mentioned in Table 4.8. and descriptives of these scored values are shown in Table 4.12.

Table 4.12: Descriptives of the statistical measures based on the scoring values of the impact assessment through the sub-dimensions.

	Descriptives		
	Social	Economic	Culture
N	200	200	200
Missing	0	0	0
Mean	31.0	23.9	23.6
Median	33.0	24.0	24.0
Standard deviation	11.8	8.62	8.47
Minimum	11	8	8
Maximum	55	40	40

Table 4.12 shows the descriptive statistical values of the scoring. Where N (total sample) is 200 for each variable. Mean of Social Variable is 31.0, mean of cultural variable is 23.9, and the mean of economic variable is 23.6. Median of social variable is 33.0, median of economic variable is 24.0, and the median of cultural variable is 24.0. Standard deviation of these three variables, social, economic, and cultural, is 11.8, 8.62, and 8.47, respectively. The minimum value of the social data is 11, and the maximum value is 55. In economic data, the minimum value of scoring is 8, and the maximum score is 40. In the Cultural variable, the minimum score value is 8, and the maximum value is 40.

Table 4.13: Correlation Matrix

Correlation Matrix				
		Social	Economic	Culture
Social	Pearson's r	—		
	df	—		
	p-value	—		
	95% CI Upper	—		
	95% CI Lower	—		
	N	—		
Economic	Pearson's r	0.983***	—	
	df	198	—	
	p-value	<.001	—	
	95% CI Upper	0.987	—	
	95% CI Lower	0.978	—	
	N	200	—	
Culture	Pearson's r	0.986***	0.992***	—
	df	198	198	—
	p-value	<.001	<.001	—
	95% CI Upper	0.990	0.994	—
	95% CI Lower	0.982	0.989	—
	N	200	200	—
Note. * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001				

Table 4.12 displays a matrix with three rows and three columns, each labelled with a distinct variable: "Social," "Economic," and "Cultural." The diagonal elements of the matrix are empty, as the correlation of a variable with itself is always 1 and not typically shown in a correlation matrix. The off-diagonal elements contain the correlation coefficients between the variables.

The correlation matrix shows the relationships between three variables: Social, Economic, and Culture. Here's the analysis:

Sample size (N) for all correlations is 200.

Degrees of freedom (df) are 198.

The 95% confidence intervals for Pearson's "r" are narrow, indicating precise estimates of the correlations.

Significance level is: *** $p < .001$.

The Correlation Coefficients (Pearson's r) are:

1. Social & Economic: $r = 0.983$ (very strong positive correlation)
2. Social & Culture: $r = 0.986$ (very strong positive correlation)
3. Economic & Culture: $r = 0.992$ (very strong positive correlation)

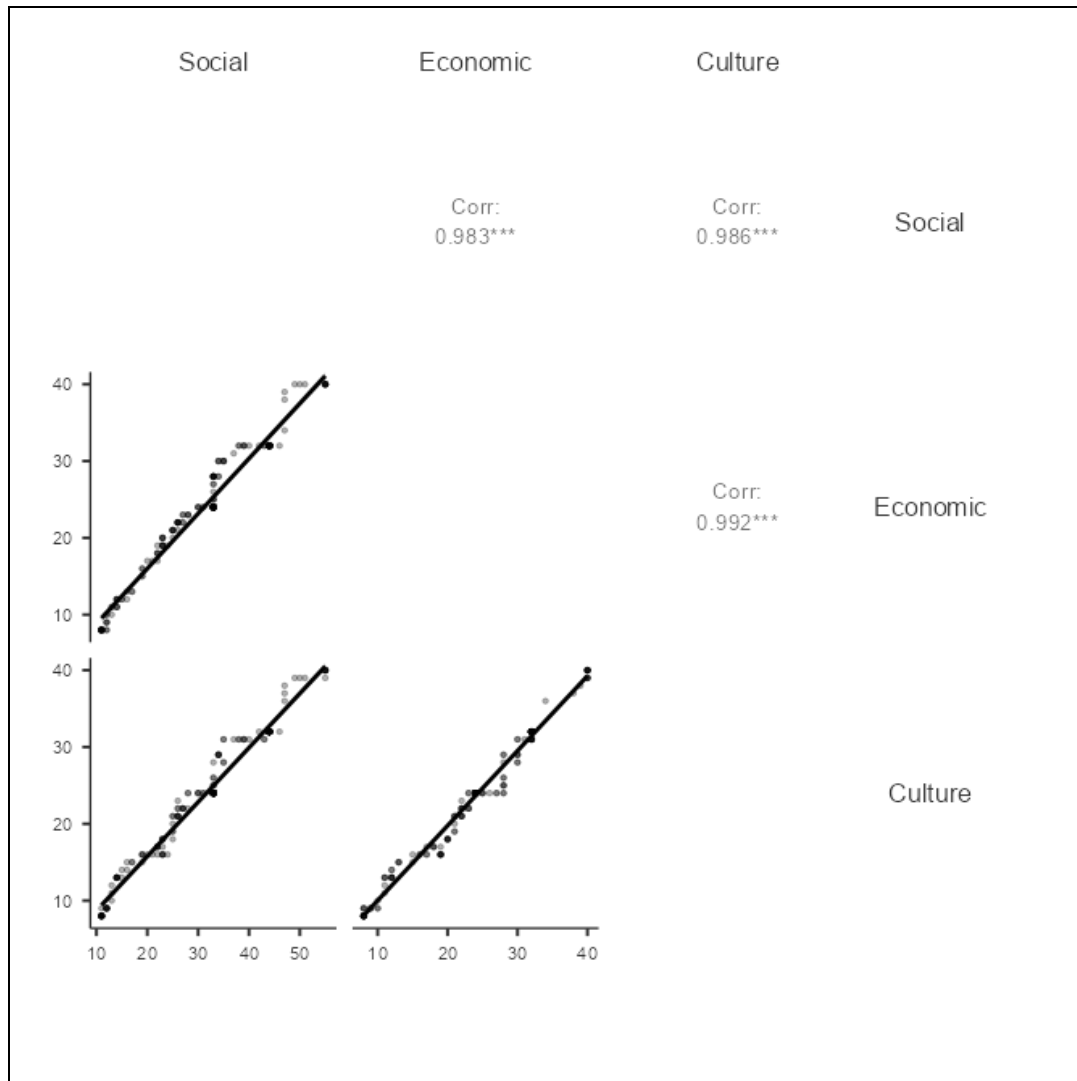
All three variables (Social, Economic, and Cultural) are strongly and positively correlated with each other.

The strongest correlation is between Economic and Culture ($r = 0.992$).

The correlations suggest that these variables tend to move in proximity to one another.

Hence, the Null hypothesis **H₀** is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis **H₁** is accepted.

Graphical representation 4.10: Scatter Plot



The relationship between variables is represented by a straight line on a scatter plot. The scatter plots (4.7) comparing three variables: Social, Economic, and Culture.

Correlations are:

- Social vs. Economic: Corr = 0.983***
- Social vs. Culture: Corr = 0.986***
- Economic vs. Culture: Corr = 0.992***

All correlations are very high (close to 1), indicating strong positive linear relationships between the variables. Each plot shows a tight clustering of points around a diagonal line, confirming the strong positive correlations. The relationships appear linear with minimal outliers. In summary, Social, economic, and cultural variables are strongly positively correlated with each other, suggesting that they tend to increase or decrease together linearly.

4.6. Discussion:

The analysis of the impact study of heritage tourism on Socio-economic and cultural variables exhibits that the impacts of heritage tourism are different in each variable. Impacts on social, Economic, and Cultural variables are analysed based on the scored values and are organized according to the scored values in descending order. Considering the items listed in Tables 4.9, 4.10, and 4.11, the impact scenario is studied based on the responses of native people. Due to the heritage tourism industry, social standards have started changing because various impacts of heritage tourism have been found based on the 10 items (Table 4. 9). The Tourism industry provides opportunities to local people to engage with tourism activity, which leads the changes in social standards. Different economic (4.8) and cultural (4.9) impacts also describe the different trends of the impacts of heritage tourism. The rate of heritage tourism development and tourists' arrival is fluctuating (Showing 20 years of tourists' arrival data in chapter 1), the trend graph, not show the trend of continuously increasing or decreasing year-wise. So, the impacts of heritage tourism definitely vary with the linear motion of the tourists' arrival. Still, based on market competition, market diversification, various hands-on cultural experiences, and sharing-like activities, the district's heritage tourism industry is gaining strength, which directly leads to job opportunities and income generation. So, every item or impact is closely related to the other. If there is a generation on the strength of heritage tourism, then definitely it will influence others. From the impacts of heritage tourism on social, economic, and cultural variables, it can be discussed that the impact pattern of heritage tourism among the three variables, Social, Economic, and Cultural, is market competition and low is community events. On the other hand, based on the mean values, we may categorize

the impacts into 3 different ranges: highest impact, moderate impact, and lowest impact. The range is: High- 2.97-3.12,

Moderate- 2.82- 2.97, and

Low is- 2.67-2.82.

Table 4.14: Identification of impacts based on the 3 ranges.

Mean value	Impacts
	HIGHEST (2.97-3.12)
3.12	Market competition
3.1	Market Diversification
3.04	Seasonal employment
3.04	Hands-on Cultural Experiences
3.04	Local Artisan Engagement
2.99	Income Level
2.98	Market demand
2.97	Job Opportunity
2.97	Cultural Authenticity
2.97	Cultural learning
MODERATE (2.82- 2.97)	
2.96	Community Engagement
2.94	Cultural Sharing
2.92	Cross-cultural Understanding
2.91	Monthly income
2.88	Education
2.85	Income Source
2.85	Seasonal income
2.85	Story Telling
2.83	Healthcare Facility

2.83	Cultural Immersion
2.82	Tourism demand
LOW (2.67-2.82)	
2.81	Infrastructure
2.81	Employment Generation
2.79	Leadership development
2.78	Family Members
2.76	Social Service
2.67	Community events

Source: Constructed by the researcher.

The identification of impacts based on the ranges is very beneficial to easily understand the scenario of the impacts of heritage tourism on socio-economic and cultural variables, which will be fruitful for the further development of the heritage tourism industry, and also maintain sustainability.

From the highest impacts found in Table 4.13, the reasons gathered from the self-observation and native people are that there are various markets and the versatility of shops is increasing, according to the registered data from the municipality board of Sivasagar. Basically, the heritage sites are situated in an urban area, so due to the heritage tourism sites, the rate of people gathered is high as compared to other areas, so the impact of heritage tourism is high on market competition and market diversification, which leads to the market demand and has a positive impact on income level. As most of the heritage sites are urban-based, and the climatic event is not vulnerable in most areas. So, there is no negative impact on employment based on seasonality. Although there is a sample heritage site, which is the Bakhar Bengena tree, situated mainly in rural areas, and the nearest road for tourists from the heart of the Sivasagar city is sometimes inundated by flood, it may create an issue regarding seasonality, but there is another way, which is a little bit longer in distance as compared to the shorter one. So, it can't totally hinder the arrival of tourists to the site. Hence, it can't be said that there is seasonal tourism, which may influence employment

generation throughout the year. Hands-on Cultural experiences are provided in various heritage sites by involving local artisans and people, which creates job opportunities for the native people. Also, this is not happening yet in each of the sample heritage sites properly. It depends on the development and the tourists' arrival rate at the particular heritage site. It comes under the highest impact because it generates income and helps to showcase the culture of Sivasagar and Assam in front of the domestic and foreign tourists by maintaining cultural authenticity, which is a strong opportunity to learn the cultural values.

Heritage tourism of the Sivasagar district influences community engagement in various tourism-related activities. It provides native people to engage, generate income, and maintain mental health by engaging with different tourism-related activities. Near most of the sample heritage sites, cross-cultural understanding by organizing traditional dance, music, and wearing traditional cloths, like cultural sharing activities, has started generating, compared to the last decades, directly influencing monthly income. Heritage tourism influences the monthly income differently. The monthly income of the people who are directly employed in heritage tourism is taken as the basis of the analysis of this item. The impact of heritage tourism on monthly income falls within a moderate range.

As seasonality did not hinder the rate of tourists' arrival to the heritage sites as mentioned in the above paragraph, the impact of heritage tourism on seasonal income (all the entire season) is moderate. The impact of heritage tourism on education is noticeable in the impact study. Here, due to the heritage tourism, People are getting opportunities towards income generation and engagement in various activities regarding tourism, so that they are now able to send their children or family members for formal education, hence the rate of employment generation is comes under low impact yet it comes under moderate level because heritage tourism provides an opportunity to learning the historical importance and values, also they are learning hospitality and cultural importance. The rate of tourists is not similar, and based on the rural-urban contrast, the impact of heritage tourism on education is moderate, according to the information gathered. Due to the gradual development of heritage

tourism, heritage values are added by creating various tourism-oriented sessions, like storytelling sessions, through which tourists may benefit from that session. It creates a positive mindset towards the conservation of the heritage sites and also increases the value of the particular area. As this session is not regular basis and has not started at every site yet; So, it comes under the moderate impact of heritage tourism. The growing nature of tourism is also influencing healthcare facilities. According to the people near the heritage site, the Healthcare facility near the heritage site is developing. Healthcare is not all about the dispensary and medicine. Here, it signifies all the clean environment, peace surrounding, clean toilets and washroom facilities, hygienic food facilities, drinking water facilities, and restroom facilities. Based on this criterion, along with the dependency and nursing home, the impact of heritage tourism is found out as the moderate range. Heritage tourism of Sivasagar district significantly impacts on cultural immersion by allowing visitors to experience the rich history and traditions of the Ahom kingdom. During festivals like Bihu, Sivaratri, Durga Puja, Dol yatra, and Mai-dam-me-phi, they provide tourists with opportunities to witness traditional dance, music, and feasts, thereby immersing themselves in local culture. Visitors can savour local delicacies like Khar, tenga, pithas, masor tenga and Jalpan has gained insight into Assam's culinary heritage. From the native people's perspective, the impact of heritage tourism on cultural immersion is moderate. As already mentioned above, the hands-on cultural experience is high in this study area, still, the cultural immersion is under a moderate range, because these festivals are seasonal, so it is found as moderate. (Hands-on experience is mentioned above based on other criteria like dressing experience, learning Assamese music, dance, and tradition, etc.)

In the native area of the sample heritage sites, the impact of heritage tourism on infrastructure is low. The development of infrastructure can be categorised into two directions. One is household infrastructure, and the other is tourism site infrastructure. Based on the opportunities and benefits of heritage tourism, the impacts are studied based on well-equipped and well-developed. Based on the rate of tourists' arrival, the impacts of heritage tourism on infrastructure are measured. The rate of damage, decreasing cultural authenticity, and economic norms are valued to identify the impact of heritage tourism on this item. Hence, the impact of heritage tourism on

infrastructure is low in this regard. Through self-observation, it is found that although the rate of tourists' arrival is not negative, it fluctuates; some of the heritage sites still need proper maintenance and a promotional agenda for the heritage sites. Here, is already discussed about the job opportunities, income generation, and income level are already discussed as having high and moderate impacts; still, employment generation comes under low impact. Because each heritage site does not equal the number of tourists, and the distance from each other is also a factor. Employment generation is analysed based on people getting an opportunity to generate employment based on tourism-related activities and business (All kinds). Due to the heritage tourism, there are various events like cross-cultural understanding, cultural sharing, storytelling, and other events that are organized and influence in them high to moderate impact, still the impact of heritage tourism on leadership development is low. The heritage tourism industry also impacts family members. Based on the number of family members, the rate and direction of impacts vary. The number of family members and tourism-related engagement and employment is correlated to analyze the impacts of heritage tourism on family members. Here, according to the analysed data gathered from the 9 native villages, the impacts of heritage tourism on family members are low. For survival, the dependency rate of the native people on the sample heritage sites is considered high, but based on family size, it comes under the low range. It means people of some heritage sites are getting an income source based on tourism, but the rate of tourist arrival to the site influences on income source, and the rate differs from each heritage site, so from that perception, the rate of impact is Low. Social service is also one of the items of social variables. Based on the growth and development of heritage tourism, the number and trend of social services are found within a range. Which simply means the organizing flow of the tourists' health camp, awareness, childcare, cleaning mission, etc, is low according to the information gathered. Community events are one of the key factors in planning and gathering information for socio-economic and cultural development, as well as heritage conservation. As there are various impacts found on community engagement, Hands-on cultural experiences, and cultural sharing, storytelling sessions, the impacts of heritage tourism on community events like town hall meetings, panchayat meetings, and workshops regarding the broader

promotion, development, and conservation of heritage tourism are found as low range. This is also correlated with the low range of leadership development.

From the overall discussion on the impacts of heritage tourism on socio-economic and cultural variables in Sivasagar district, Assam, it is found that the impacts of heritage tourism on tourism demand are moderate, with a mean value of 2.82.

The discussion reveals that the impacts of heritage tourism are closely related to one another, although they vary in intensity, ranging from high to moderate to low. And proves by the statistical analysis correlation matrix, where the relationships between the three variables, socio-economic and cultural, are strongly and positively correlated. Hence, if there is a change in the impact pattern on one variable, it will linearly impact another variable also.

4.7 Concluding Remark:

The correlation matrix analysis has provided valuable insights into the relationships between Social, Economic, and Cultural variables. The exceptionally strong positive correlations ($r > 0.98$, $p < 0.001$) underscore the intricate interconnections between these constructs. These findings suggest that changes in one variable are closely linked to changes in the others, highlighting the complex dynamics at play.

While the analysis reveals significant associations, the strong relationships observed between Social, Economic, and Cultural variables have important implications for understanding the multifaceted nature of these constructs and their potential impact on various outcomes.

Future research can build upon these findings by exploring the causal relationships and underlying mechanisms driving these correlations, ultimately contributing to a deeper understanding of the complex interplay between Social, Economic, and cultural factors.

Furthermore, these findings have practical implications for policymakers, researchers, and practitioners seeking to address social, economic, and cultural issues. By recognizing the interconnectedness of these variables, interventions and strategies can

be designed to account for their potential impact across multiple domains. Additionally, the strong correlations highlight the importance of interdisciplinary approaches that consider the social, economic, and cultural contexts in which individuals and communities operate. As research continues to uncover the complexities of these relationships, it is crucial to develop nuanced and evidence-based solutions that address the multifaceted nature of these constructs.

Chapter V

MAJOR DRIVERS AFFECTING HERITAGE TOURISM IN SIVASAGAR DISTRICT, ASSAM

5.1 INTRODUCTION:

The heritage tourism landscape of Sivasagar is characterized by a rich tapestry of cultural, historical, and natural attractions. The iconic heritage buildings, monuments, and temples are testaments to the region's architectural and artistic prowess. The district's vibrant festivals, such as the Disangmukh festival, the Sivasagar festival, and the Charideo festivals, showcase the resilience and diversity of Assamese culture. The unique culture and hospitality attract people to the heritage tourism sites. To maintain 600 years of respect and pride, the people's authority and governments usually take necessary steps, which help to preserve the socio-economic and cultural beauty of Sivasagar. The study of heritage tourism in Sivasagar, Assam, is crucial for understanding the complex relationships between cultural heritage, tourism development, and local community empowerment (Kumar,2015). However, the rapid growth of tourism poses significant challenges to the conservation of these heritage sites and the cultural identity of the local community (UNESCO,2013). Therefore, investigating heritage tourism in Sivasagar can provide valuable insights into sustainable tourism practices, community engagement, and cultural heritage management (Timothy&Nyaupane,2009). By examining the factors affecting heritage tourism in Sivasagar district, Assam, researchers can inform policy decisions that balance economic development with cultural preservation and community well-being (World Tourism Organisation,2017).

This chapter aims to investigate the positive and negative factors affecting heritage tourism in Sivasagar district, Assam, and to analyze the collected data to identify key

factors influencing tourist experiences and local community engagement. To conduct the analysis, the researcher applied the SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis method.

SWOT analysis is a widely employed strategic management tool utilized to identify, evaluate, and prioritize an organization's or destination's internal strengths (S) and weaknesses (W), as well as external opportunities (O) and threats (T) (David, 2011). This framework, developed by Stanley F. Stasch and Kenneth Andrews in the 1960s and 1970s (Andrews,1971), enables organizations to assess their situation comprehensively, informing informed decision-making and effective strategy development (Stasch,1978). By categorizing these factors, SWOT analysis provides valuable insights into areas of competitive advantage, potential vulnerabilities, and untapped opportunities, ultimately guiding organizations toward sustainable growth and improved performance (Hill&Jones,2013).

Strength(S):

“Strengths are internal factors that contribute to an organization's success and provide a competitive advantage.” (Hill & Jones, 2013). Strengths can include skills, expertise, resources, or capabilities that distinguish an organization from its competitors.” (Barney, 1991). Strength identifies the positive factors of heritage tourism.

Weakness(W):

Weaknesses are internal factors that hinder an organization's success and create vulnerabilities (David, 2011). These deficiencies can be addressed through strategic planning and resource allocation (Hill & Jones, 2013). Weakness is a negative factor of heritage tourism.

Opportunities(O):

Opportunities are a positive factor of heritage tourism. Opportunities are also external factors that can benefit an organization, enabling growth and competitiveness (David, 2011). These emerging trends, changes, or events can be leveraged through strategic planning and resource allocation (Hill & Jones, 2013). Capitalizing on opportunities

requires organizations to be adaptable, innovative, and responsive to changing market conditions (Porter, 1985).

Threats(T):

Threats are external factors that can harm an organization, potentially impacting its success and survival (David, 2011). These challenges can arise from various sources, including changes in market trends, government policies, technological advancements, and competitive actions (Hill & Jones). Threats can also emerge from economic downturns, environmental concerns, supply chain disruptions, and negative publicity (Barney, 1991). Recognizing and mitigating threats is crucial for organizational resilience and long-term sustainability (Porter, 1985).

Figure 5.1: Presented SWOT analysis model.

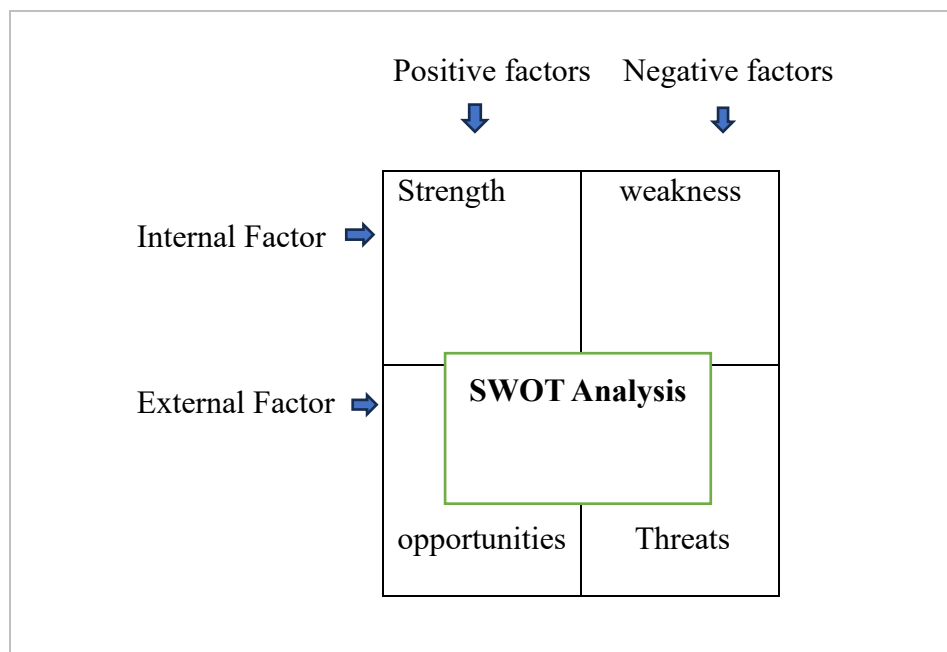


Figure: SWOT analysis Model

Source: (Gierszewska & Romanowska, 2002)

5.2. Analysis of the drivers affecting heritage tourism in Sivasagar district, Assam:

This study undertakes a comprehensive analysis of the factors influencing heritage tourism in Sivasagar district, Assam. To identify the factors affecting heritage tourism, the researcher has collected data from 641 tourists, where 585 tourists are domestic and 56 are foreign tourists (from the 14 heritage sites). Surveyed 200 households near the heritage sites (from 9 nearest villages), .68 business persons, and 7 employees of the tourism site. A total of 920 responses have been gathered in regards of factors affecting heritage tourism in Sivasagar district, Assam. Total responses are applied for all the sample heritage sites that are mentioned in previous chapters.

Table 5.1: Assessment of Internal factors affecting heritage tourism in Sivasagar district, Assam.

Sl. No	The internal component of heritage tourism	satisfaction index (1-5) (Based on Responses)					Mean
		Strongly disagree	disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	
		1	2	3	4	5	
1	Rich Cultural heritage	-	-	99	155	666	4.62
2	Accommodation	-	29	145	150	596	4.43
3	Other amenities (bank, police station, health etc.)	-		194	320	406	4.23
4	Host behaviours	-	-	134	231	555	4.46
5	Aesthetics	-	-	164	210	546	4.42
6	Market	-	-	65	344	511	4.48
7	Tourist information service	581	246	93	-	-	1.67
8	Tourist guide facilities	666	151	103	-	-	1.38
9	Site management	629	230	29	39	-	1.45
10	Local transportation	555	219	100	46	-	1.61
11	Internal road condition	488	234	121	77	-	1.76

Source-Primary survey.

A 5-point Likert scale has been prepared to analyse the responses towards the factors affecting heritage tourism, and also the SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis method is applied to analyse the data.

To better understand, respondents' perceptions are further divided into two categories.

1. Positive Perception (mean above 3)
2. Negative Perception (mean below 2)

From the response-based satisfaction indexed table, both positive and negative factors are identified. The list of positive and negative factors is described properly below, and these are called strengths and weaknesses according to SWOT analysis.

5.2.1 Strengths and weaknesses of heritage tourism in Sivasagar district, Assam.

Strengths and weaknesses affecting heritage tourism in the Sivasagar district are identified based on the tourists, local community, and employee perception, and also considering the input from the semi-structured interview. From the clear view of table 5.1, strengths are considered those that have a mean value above 3, and weaknesses are identified as which factors that have below 2 mean values.

Table 5.2: Identification of Strengths and Weaknesses of heritage tourism in Sivasagar district, Assam.

Sl. No	Strengths	Sl. No	Weakness
1.	Rich Cultural heritage	1	Tourist information service
2.	Accommodation	2	Tourist guide facilities
3.	Other amenities (bank, police station, health, etc.)	3	Site management
4.	Host behaviours	4	Local transportation
5.	Aesthetics	5	Internal road condition
6.	Market		

Source: Primary Survey.

Table 5.2 clearly expresses the strengths and weaknesses of heritage tourism, which are the factors affecting heritage tourism. A broader explanation of these factors is described below.

5.2.1.1 Data-driven evaluation of internal factors:

A. Strengths: The strengths that are found through the data analysis are broadly discussed below.

1. Rich Cultural Heritage: Sivasagar district, Assam, boasts a rich cultural heritage, making it an attractive destination for heritage tourism. Sivasagar was the capital of the Ahom kingdom (1228-1826), which carries the Ahom Kingdom's legacy till now. The oldest amphitheatre in Asia, Ahom royal Palaces, historic water reservoir, temples, etc. showcase Ahom Architecture. Handloom weaving, handicrafts, etc., traditional crafts, festivals and celebrations, Folk music and dance, and cuisines: traditional Assamese delicious like Masor Tenga, pitha, and Jalpan demonstrate the region's culinary richness. During the data collection and semi-structured interview with experts, the above-mentioned information is gathered by the researcher. and after analyzing the data, it comes with a mean of 4.62. In that manner, it comes as a strength factor of heritage tourism in Sivasagar district, Assam.

2. Accommodation: Sivasagar, Assam, offers a range of accommodation facilities catering to diverse budgets and preferences, supporting heritage tourism. Heritage hotels, luxury resorts provide upscale amenities. Hotels, lodges, and guest houses cater to budget-conscious travellers. Local families offer authentic Assamese experiences and homemade cuisine through homestay facilities. Accommodation facilities of Sivasagar have various benefits like comfort and convenience, where quality accommodations enhance the tourist experience. Employment opportunities, revenue generation, and cultural exchange are also the profitable outcomes of accommodation facilities, according to the respondents. Through the surveyed data analysis, accommodation facilities were expressed as a strength factor of heritage tourism in Sivasagar district, Assam, with a mean value of 4.43.

3. Other amenities (bank, police station, health, etc.): Other amenities like bank, police station, health service, etc. have a strong role in Sivasagar heritage tourism. State Bank of India, Axis Bank, HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank, and Assam Gramin Vikas Bank are located in central positions, easily accessible from heritage sites. Also, ATM, currency exchange, and money transfer services are available near the heritage sites. Sivasagar Police Station, Joysagar police outpost, Nazira Police station, Simaluguri Police Station, Nemourid Police station, Mathurapur Police station, etc., are the Police service facilities near the heritage sites. They provide 24/7 assistance and a tourist help desk. On the other hand, health service facilities are also good in the Sivasagar district, Assam. Sivasagar Civil Hospital, Joysagar Hospital, Nazira Hospital, Nemuguri Hospital, and various private clinics and nursing homes are available near the heritage sites. And there are emergency care and medical tourism facilities. In that perception, it is bringing light to the Sivasagar heritage tourism as a strong factor. Through the gathered data analysis, this factor comes with a mean value of 4.23.

4. Host behaviours: Warm hospitality is a very attractive point of heritage tourism in the Sivasagar district, Assam. Hosts show respect for tourists' culture and tradition. Locals are friendly and eager to interact with tourists. Hosts provide useful information and assistance. Locals offer courteous service in hotels, restaurants, and shops. Warm hospitality creates an emotional connection with tourists. Friendly hosts encourage repeat visits. "Atithi Devo Bhava" (Guest is God) is a kind of belief of the local people of Assam, so they treat guests as God, as revealed by the semi-structured interview, self- observation, and data collection from the sources mentioned above. The analysis explained that it is a kind of strong factor of heritage tourism in Sivasagar district, Assam, and through the calculation of data, it is valued at 4.46 means.

5. Aesthetics: Distinct architecture and natural beauty create a unique visual identity. Cultural landscapes like traditional Assamese villages, tea gardens, and paddy fields create a picturesque landscape. Traditional attire, handicrafts, and festivals add to the region's visual appeal. A peaceful environment and tranquil surroundings provide a relaxing experience, which enhances regional identity. Aesthetics appeal to evoke emotions, creating lasting memories. So, Aesthetics is a vibrant way to generate more

tourists to the heritage sites of Sivasagar district, Assam. Hence, this positive factor is visualized with the mean value of 4.42.

6. Market: Sivasagar district, Assam, has a satisfactory level of market facilities near the heritage sites. The unique shopping experience, local artisans and handicrafts, cultural exchange, economic benefits for locals' authentic Assamese products like handloom and handicrafts (Gamocha, Assamese silk), Traditional attire (Mekhela chadar), Local cuisine, Tea and coffee, Handmade jewelry, wood and bamboo crafts, Cane and basket product, etc. are the strength of the market in Sivasagar, Assam. These market facilities help to preserve traditional crafts and skills, empower local artisans and communities, promote cultural heritage, generate revenue for the local economy, and enhance the tourist experience. At present market is one of the strongest factors for heritage tourism growth and development in the Sivasagar district, Assam. In the responses, this factor is strongly visible with the mean value of 4.48.

From Table 5.1, based on the mean value, strengths are categorized in descending order below in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3: Identification of strengths in descending order based on mean value.

Strengths	Mean
Rich Cultural heritage	4.62
Market	4.48
Host behaviours	4.46
Accommodation	4.43
Aesthetics	4.42
Other amenities (bank, police station, health, etc.)	4.23

Source: Primary Survey.

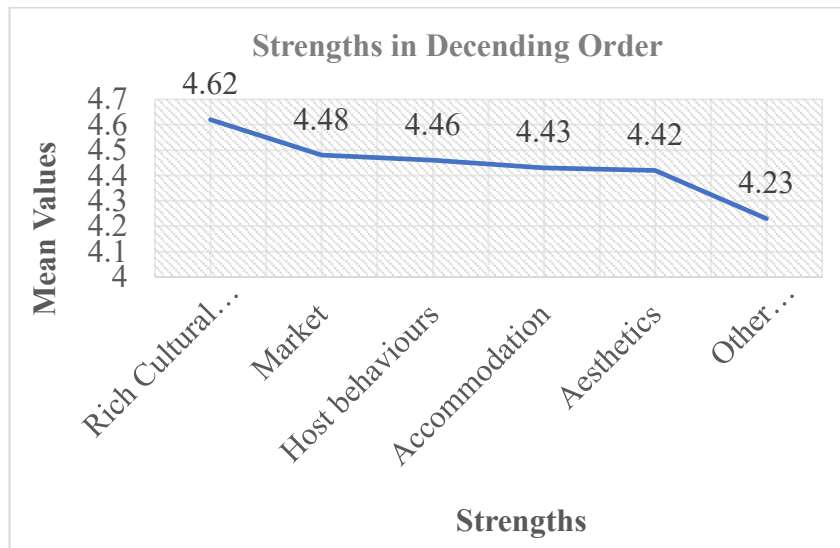


Figure 5.2: Strengths in descending order.

Table 5.3, it has been found that among the strengths in descending order, rich cultural heritage is found as the highest strength, having a mean value of 4.62, and other amenities (bank, police station, health, etc) are found to be the lowest strength among the strengths, having a mean value of 4.23. Market, Host behaviours, Accommodation, and Aesthetics are ranked as 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th among the identified strengths. Graph 5.1 represents the strengths with a trend curve in descending order.

B. Weakness: The following weaknesses were identified from the analysis.

1. Tourist information service: Heritage tourism of Sivasagar district, Assam has limited availability of tourist information. Lack of digital presence and online resources, with limited accessibility for physically challenged tourists. Inadequate signage and directional signage, insufficient tourist literature and brochures, no centralized tourist information centre, and limited coordination between stakeholders. This brings difficulty in navigating tourist sites, a lack of awareness about local culture and history, reduced tourist satisfaction and experience, limited economic benefits for local communities, and a bad impact on online reviews. So, data reveals it is a negative factor affecting heritage tourism in Sivasagar district, Assam, with below 2 mean values which is 1.67.

2. Tourist guide facilities: In the heritage tourism sites of Sivasagar district, Assam has a shortage of trained and licensed guides, limited multilingual guiding services, inadequate guide training programs, a lack of standardized guiding practices, and insufficient guide resources and equipment. This brings challenges to heritage tourism in Sivasagar, Assam. Unqualified guides provide inaccurate information, limited knowledge of local history, culture, and heritage, and limited availability of audio guides and multimedia resources. No centralized management system is there, so, it impacts heritage tourism badly, like poor tourist experience and satisfaction, misinformation and misinterpretation of heritage sites, reduced tourist engagement and interaction, etc. So, according to the analysed data, it is proven that this factor is a negative factor affecting heritage tourism in Sivasagar district, Assam, by having 1.38 mean value.

3. Site management: The study found some weaknesses in site management that hinder the development of heritage tourism in Sivasagar district, Assam. Infrastructural weakness, conservation and maintenance weaknesses, such as structures of historical monuments and structures are not properly maintained, leading to deterioration and damage. Inadequate restoration and conservation efforts have resulted in the loss of original architectural features. Uncontrolled construction and urbanization threaten the integrity of historical sites. Lack of coordinated efforts, inadequate funding, unregulated tourism, etc., are the weaknesses of site management in Sivasagar district, Assam. So, the data visualized this factor as a negative factor affecting heritage tourism in Sivasagar district, Assam, having a mean value of 1.45.

4. Local transportation: The local transportation facilities pose significant challenges to the development of heritage tourism in the area. Infrequent services like public buses and trains operate sporadically, making it difficult for tourists to plan their itinerary. Private operators dominate the transportation, but their services are often unreliable and expensive. The absence of app-based services like ride-hailing apps is scarce, making it challenging for tourists to book transportation. No commercial airport in Sivasagar, forcing tourists to rely on nearby airports (e.g., Jorhat) and subsequent road travel. Inadequate infrastructure and transportation options hinder accessibility. Also, inadequate parking facilities and poor traffic management hinder tourists' movement.

Hence, Local transportation comes as a weakness or a negative factor affecting heritage tourism in Sivasagar district, Assam. The analysed data proves it with a mean value of 1.61.

5. Internal road condition: The internal roads in Sivasagar are often narrow, congested, and poorly maintained, making it difficult for tourists to navigate. The roads are filled with potholes, making travel uncomfortable and potentially damaging vehicles. Inadequate signage and poor lighting make it challenging for tourist to find their way around the town. narrow roads and inadequate traffic management lead to congestion, causing frustration among tourists. Some heritage sites are located in remote areas, making it difficult for tourists to access due to poor road conditions. During monsoons, the road becomes slippery and prone to flooding, further hindering travel. Poor road conditions deter tourists from visiting Sivasagar, negatively impacting local businesses and the economy. In that perception, data demonstrate this factor as a negative factor affecting heritage tourism in Sivasagar district, Assam, with a mean value of 1.76.

The weaknesses identified in Table 5.1 are arranged in descending order (Highest to lowest) below Table 5.4.

Table 5.4: Identification of the Weaknesses in descending order based on the mean value.

Weaknesses	Mean
Internal road condition	1.76
Tourist information service	1.67
Local transportation	1.61
Site management	1.45
Tourist guide facilities	1.38

Source: Primary Survey.

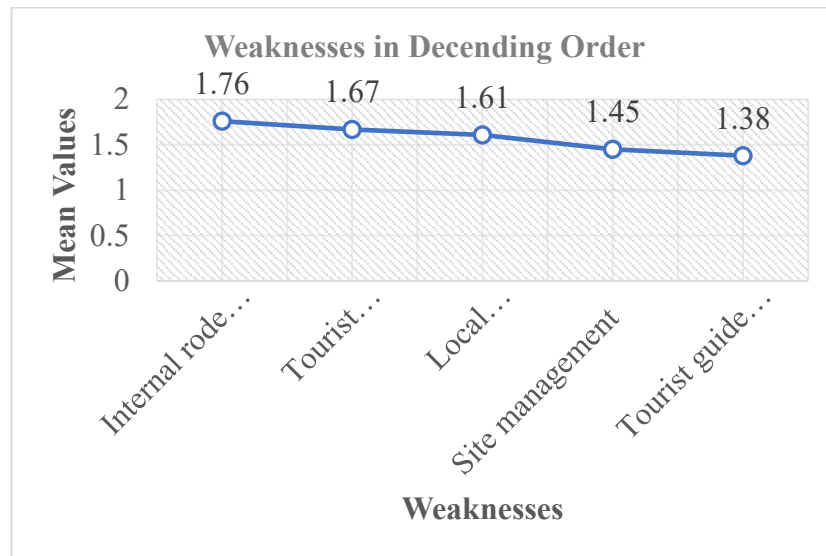


Figure 5.3: Weaknesses in Descending Order.

Table 5.4 shows the weaknesses in descending order. Among the identified five weaknesses, internal road condition is found in 1st position, having the mean value 1.76 among the identified weaknesses from table 5.1, and tourist guide facilities are last. In this sense, it holds the 5th position with a mean value of 1.38. On the other hand, tourist information service, local transportation, and Site management are holding the positions 2nd, 3rd, and 4th, respectively. Graph 5.2 represented the weaknesses in descending order with a trending curve for better visualization of the trends.

5.2.2 Analytical assessment of External factors in the study area:

“External factors” refer to influences or elements that affect an individual, organization, or system from outside, beyond their control or internal environment. Understanding external factors is crucial for making informed decisions, identifying opportunities and threats, and developing effective strategies. The identification of opportunities and threats is done in the study area through self-observation in the field, discussions with experts, semi-structured interviews with resource persons, native people, and also assessing various literature.

5.2.2.1 Opportunities of heritage tourism in Sivasagar: Opportunity is the spark that ignites the flame of possibility, presenting us with a chance to transform our lives. According to the analysis, the opportunities found in the study are described below.

1. On 27 January 2023, one of the heritage sites from Sivasagar revenue circle, which is a Group of four maidams (Charideo maidam), got recognition as a **world heritage site**. This carries golden opportunities for the entire heritage tourism industry. People love to visit that kind of heritage site. So, there is a strong scope to generate more tourists to the sites. In Sivasagar, each heritage sites are situated in the very nearest location. This shows the number of opportunities for the development of the heritage tourism industry. This sheds light on the socio-economic and cultural development of the study area.
2. International promotion like “**Awesome Assam**” is a strong external factor for the growth of tourism in Assam, along with the Sivasagar district. The promotional committee has appointed Actress Priyanka Chopra as a brand ambassador to promote Assam tourism broadly and internationally. This offers a unique chance to uncover the hidden gems of this captivating region, showcasing its cultural richness, historical significance, and natural beauty to the world. It helps economic growth, cultural preservation, and community empowerment.
3. The recently launched project, “**Project Rang Ghar,**” is also a strong external factor in generating the development of heritage tourism in Sivasagar district, Assam. This project by the Assam Government has launched various new initiatives to develop the infrastructure, provide job opportunities to the native people, proper parking facilities, etc. The heritage site Rang Ghar is one of the largest and oldest amphitheatres in Asia. So, it has and should have a strong capacity to develop heritage tourism in Sivasagar district, Assam. Hence, the aims of the Rang Ghar

project prove that it is a strong opportunity for the native people to improve their standard of living and regional development.

4. The Mission of “**Soulful Sivasagar**” is a new and vibrant opportunity for the external factor for the growth of heritage tourism in Sivasagar district. The District Administration has taken various steps toward heritage tourism development in the study area. Prepared a comprehensive and tourist-friendly road map of the heritage sites. With a vision to develop the district historically, architecturally, mythologically, and culturally rich to attract more people to visit the heritage sites. Hence, it is also a strong external factor affecting heritage tourism in Sivasagar district, Assam.
5. Sivasagar was the **Ahom kingdom for 600 long years**. And still, the district carries the significant pride and glory of the Ahom Kingdom. In that manner, by implementing proper programs and policies, Sivasagar has a strong opportunity for the development of heritage tourism.
6. “**Act East Policy**” has indirect impacts on heritage tourism in Sivasagar district, Assam, and Northeast India are seen as key areas within this policy. While the Act East Policy primarily focuses on broader economic and strategic partnerships with Southeast Asia, some aspects of the policy have been implemented in ways that support Sivasagar’s heritage tourism. Enhanced connectivity; the focus on infrastructure and connectivity has improved transport links in Assam. These enhancements make heritage sites like Sivasagar more accessible to tourists, including those from Southeast Asian countries, thus helping integrate Sivasagar’s tourism with a wider regional audience. The policy encourages cultural exchange programs between Northeast Asian Nations. Sivasagar, with its Ahom heritage, is often highlighted in cultural showcases that target international audiences, especially in Southeast Asia, fostering awareness and attracting interest from international tourists. Under the Act East Policy, Sivasagar, Assam, has received attention for skill development and tourism initiatives

to improve the local economy. Tourism development programs in Sivasagar, such as local handicrafts promotion, hospitality training, and tour-guiding skills, align with this goal and help local communities benefit from tourism.

5.2.2.2 Threats to heritage tourism in Sivasagar:

Apart from the weaknesses in the heritage sites of Sivasagar district, the present study found some threats to the sites. These are external and out of our control. It brings the unwanted scenario to the sites. These are the prime causes for discouraging tourism to the sites:

1. **Sustainability issues:** The study reveals that certain heritage sites are facing sustainability issues due to irresponsible tourist behaviour. It has been observed that littering of disposable items and vandalism, with visitors writing on bricks or walls, thereby damaging the aesthetic appeal of these historical structures. This highlights the need for better maintenance and management to preserve the integrity and sustainability of these sites.
2. **Traffic Congestion:** Traffic congestion is a significant challenge for heritage sites, exacerbated by inadequate road infrastructure and poor parking facilities. This issue not only affects locals but also visitors, leading to frustration and a negative experience. Moreover, the chaos can compromise the site's integrity and detract from its cultural value.
3. **Geological event:** During the monsoon period, Sivasagar district, Assam, faces severe flood problems. Flooding poses a significant threat to both natural and man-made properties in the area, impacting the local tourism industry, although the tourism industry is not seasonal. Tourists from flood-affected areas face problems to visiting the sites, also the heritage site like the Bakhar Bengena tree faces this problem. This issue not only affects socioeconomic development but also hampers revenue generation. As a result, flooding can be considered a major obstacle to the region's progress and development."
4. **Over-dependence on tourism:** Most of the people related to heritage tourism through business have taken this profession as a single profession. So,

sometimes during flood season, political protests, during the social war, and also during the pandemic period, they face severe economic problems to survive. And the competition in business is increasing day by day, which also influences the people who are completely dependent on tourism for earnings. It may lead unidentical and unequal socio-economic distribution in Sivasagar district, Assam.

5. **Lack of proper policies:** Lack of proper policies regarding infrastructural development is also becoming a threat to the development of heritage tourism in Sivasagar district, Assam. Because the infrastructural issues have been facing for a long time. This leads to unattractiveness and tourist dissatisfaction with the sites. The study found it is one of the external factors affecting heritage tourism in Sivasagar district, Assam.

5.3 Concluding remarks: The analysis of factors affecting heritage tourism in Sivasagar district, Assam, has revealed various important information and identified the internal and external factors affecting heritage tourism through SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis. This highlighted the scenario of the development of the heritage tourism industry in Sivasagar, Assam. By evaluating these factors, sustainable strategies would be adopted for the better growth and development of the study area. Since the study area has various strong points for the growth of heritage tourism, it still, due to the above analyzed drawbacks, the area portrays a negative view due to the above-mentioned drawbacks. So, Proper planning and action are highly recommended for the study area as it carries the glory of the Ahom dynasty.

Chapter 6

Summary and Conclusion

6. 1. INTRODUCTION:

Tourism is not only an industry or a leisure activity of human beings, but also carries a strong relationship between humans, the environment, and the place. Tourism is a strong mode of social, cultural, and economic development. It is also a way of stress relief, which helps to restore mental peace and eye satisfaction. From the developing countries' perspective, India needs foreign exchange for growth and development. Mainly, tourism can collect more revenue. So, there is a need to focus on the development of the tourism sector. In Assam, there are various types of tourism. In that manner, there is strong hope for the foreign exchange. From the natural viewpoint to man-made, Assam has a strong base for tourism satisfaction. Modernisation has started to change the living standards of human beings, along with creating a vibe and sophisticated phenomenon, which helps the rapid growth of tourism. On the other hand, the easily accessible nature also deals with the increasing and decreasing number of tourists to a destination. Assam is the gateway of northeastern states, so if there will apply a tourist attraction strategy then there is a strong chance to attract tourists easily.

Tourism is a booming industry globally, generating substantial foreign exchange and aiding economic growth in peripheral areas of developed countries. Developed countries manage tourism effectively, balancing tourist demands with local cultural and ecological interests by incorporating expertise from fields like geography, economics, and anthropology. In contrast, developing countries often have ad-hoc tourism approaches despite having rich tourism potential for earning foreign exchange. The scenario in India, especially Assam, highlights tourism's potential for strengthening the local economy and creating jobs.

Sivasagar is a historical district of Assam, India. Heritage tourism in the Sivasagar district is widely known and famous amongst people around the world. Sivasagar was once the capital of the Ahom dynasty, which ruled for 600 years in Assam. From that

period to till now, Sivasagar provides ultimate Natural and man-made tourism satisfaction. So, the district stands with vast tourism activity. From that perception, the importance of the study stems from there. Sivasagar tourism is something we can prioritise as heritage tourism. This has various impacts on Social, economic, and cultural variables. It has various strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Heritage tourism in the Sivasagar district also has various potentials.

The research entitled” Heritage tourism and its impact on socio-economics in Sivasagar district, Assam” has various findings from the four objectives. The study followed a quantitatively driven mixed-method (Qualitative and quantitative) study. This study has a total of 920 samples to fulfil the objectives. This research seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of the existing state and prospects of heritage tourism in Sivasagar district, Assam. Through which improvements and drawbacks are identified somewhat which will be fruitful for the future development of heritage tourism in the study area.

6.2. Major findings of the study: The following chapters delve into a thorough analysis of the objectives, and a summary of the findings related to each objective is outlined here.

6.2.1. Finding of Objective number-1, “Potential of heritage tourism in Sivasagar district, Assam”

1. It has been found that each sample heritage site does not have the same potential. Heritage sites are found according to the TPI index within a 4 range.

Which is:

Very High Potential Sites: Sites with exceptionally high tourism potential

High Potential Sites: Sites with significant tourism potential

Moderate Potential Sites: Sites with moderate tourism potential

Low Potential Sites: Sites with limited tourism potential

2. The group of four moidams (Charideo moidams) was identified as a very high-potential heritage site according to the observed data. This heritage site is

recognized as a World Heritage Site declared by UNESCO. So, the number of tourists is compared to other sample heritage sites of Sivasagar district, under the Sivasagar Archaeological Survey of India, Sivasagar sub-circle. Recently, the name of this site has been changed. The renamed “Moidams-the Mound-burial system of the Ahom Dynasty”. Still, the name of this heritage site is added in the Archaeological Survey of India, Sivasagar sub-circle is a Group of Moidams, and locally this heritage site is known as Charaideo Moidam.

3. Siva Dol Complex & Sivasagar tank, Rang Ghar, Talatal Ghar, Joi dol & Tank, Rudrasagar dol & Tank, and Karang Ghar are categorised under high potential index. This heritage site is situated at the heart of Sivasagar city. Communication is convenient for visiting these heritage sites. The distance is very convenient for tourists to cover all the heritage sites together in a day for visiting. The architecture and surroundings are very calm and windy, so that people can relax there.
4. The Bakhar Bengena tree comes within a moderate potential site. The area of these heritage sites is basically a rural background, and public transport-communication are not very convenient for visiting at any time of the day. Also, the distance of this heritage site is far compared to other heritage sites. Therefore, it is considered a moderately preferred or potential heritage site.
5. Namdang stone bridge (Namdang Xill Hanku) is displayed as a low-potential heritage site according to the index. Although this heritage site has very much historical significance and carries the glory of the Ahom dynasty, it still comes as a low-potential heritage site to generate more tourists to the site. Unmaintained and negligence towards the conservation of this site are the key factors justifying the reason.

6. Among the 14 sample heritage sites, each site is not equally potential.
7. The identification of a potential heritage site showcases the strengths and drawbacks of the site and management
8. It has been identified that the supply and demand of the sample heritage site vary from each other.
9. Findings from this objective identified the need to conduct an introspective work towards the balance of each heritage site's development and attraction.
10. It is noticeable, according to the responses, that there is a lapse in the sport and adventurous activities and entertainment factor to attract more tourists to the site.

6.2.2. Findings from objective-2

“Impact of heritage tourism on socio-economic and culture in Sivasagar district, Assam”

1. There are various impacts of heritage tourism on socio-economic and cultural variables are found from the analysis of this chapter. Impact analysis on social variables is done based on 10 items, and economic and cultural variables are analysed by 8 items, respectively.
2. Based on the mean values of the items, impacts were found in descending order based on 3 ranges: High-2.97-3.12

Moderate- 2.82-3.12

Low-2.67-2.82

HIGHEST (Mean: 2.97-3.12)

Market competition (3.12)
Market Diversification (3.1)
Seasonal employment (3.04)
Hands-on Cultural Experiences (3.04)
Local Artisan Engagement (3.04)
Income Level (2.99)
Market demand (2.98)
Job Opportunity (2.97)
Cultural Authenticity (2.97)
Cultural learning (2.97)

MODERATE (2.82- 2.97)

Community Engagement (2.94)
Cultural Sharing (2.94)
Cross-cultural Understanding (2.92)
Monthly income (2.91)
Education (2.88)
Income Source (2.85)
Seasonal income (2.85)
Story Telling (2.85)
Healthcare Facility (2.83)
Cultural Immersion (2.83)
Tourism demand (2.82)

LOW (2.67-2.82)

Infrastructure (2.81)
Employment Generation (2.81)
Leadership development (2.79)
Family Members (2.78)
Social Service (2.76)
Community events (2.67)

3. It has been found from the analysis that each impact can influence other impacts. And it is proved by the statistical analysis of Pearson's correlation matrix.
4. The output of the correlation matrix chart shows that the variables are closely related to each other. There is a significant positive correlation has been found. This indicates the movements of the variable are closely linearly related. If the rate of impact changes on one variable, then it will definitely influence another variable.
5. Pearson's r is found close to 1.
 - Social-Economic Relationship: Pearson's $r = 0.988$ indicates a very strong positive correlation.
 - Social-Cultural Relationship: Pearson's $r = 0.988$ indicates a very strong positive correlation.
 - Economic-Cultural Relationship: Pearson's $r = 0.992$ indicates an extremely strong positive correlation.
5. The analysis of this objective accepted the alternate hypothesis H_1 and rejected the null hypothesis H_0 .
6. The analysis of this objective highlights the pattern and trend of impacts of heritage tourism on socio-economic and cultural aspects, which will be fruitful for the planning and programmes towards the development of the heritage tourism industry of Sivasagar district, Assam.

6.2.3. Findings from objective number-3

“Major drivers affecting heritage tourism in Sivasagar district, Assam”

1. The study reveals several internal and external factors. Internal factors are called strengths and weaknesses; on the other hand, external factors are opportunities and threats. (Applied SWOT analysis).
2. Internal factors found based on the responses gathered from the 920 sample are: Rich Cultural heritage, Accommodation, Other amenities (bank, police station, health, etc.), Host behaviours, Aesthetics, and Market (Strengths).

Tourist information services, Tourist guide facilities, Site management, Local transportation, and internal road conditions are found to as Weaknesses.

3. External factors identified in this analysis include Opportunities and threats. The study found various opportunities related to heritage tourism in Sivasagar are tourism promotional campaign Awesome Assam, the mission soulful Sivasagar, the Act East Policy, Project Rang Ghar, and there is a world heritage site recognised by UNESCO, which is Charideo Maidam (Group of four Maidam), which is found as one of the strongest factors of heritage tourism in Sivasagar district, Assam.

Within the external factors, certain elements emerged as threats, which are: Unsustainable environment, Traffic congestion, Geological events, Overdependence on tourism, and lack of proper policies.

4. The entire analysis or identification of drivers affecting heritage tourism indicates a strong introspective study towards the minimization of weaknesses and threats of the heritage sites, which hinders the development of the sample heritage sites; and the identification of strengths and opportunities portrays the positive scenario of the sample heritage sites of Sivasagar district, Assam.

6.3. Summary of Findings:

The analysis of heritage sites revealed varied potential across sites, with each exhibiting unique strengths and weaknesses. By developing a Tourist Potential Index, the sites are categorised into very high, high, moderate, and low potential categories. This categorisation enables prioritisation of development efforts and resource allocation. It indicated that the rate of development regarding various sectors is needed, as identified categories. Analysing tourist satisfaction data helped identify areas for improvement, enhancing the overall tourist experience. Our findings highlight opportunities for growth and investment in heritage tourism. These insights inform targeted development strategies, providing valuable recommendations for stakeholders, policymakers, and heritage tourism professionals to unlock the potential of these sites. Although the findings of this chapter analysis suggest that there is a need for some in-depth study towards the development of heritage sites in Sivasagar district, Assam.

Impact analysis indicates that if one variable changes, then other variables will also change. The impact of heritage tourism is directly or indirectly related to each of these variables. So, it can be concluded that correlation matrix analysis between the impact of heritage tourism on socio-economic and cultural aspects will help for the future development, and it could show a path to generate or adopt new actions or policies towards the growth of heritage sites and community development of the native people of Sivasagar district, Assam.

The identification of factors affecting heritage tourism in Sivasagar district, Assam, through SWOT analysis provides a comprehensive framework for strategic planning by understanding internal and external factors, identifying areas for improvement or problem-solving.

6.4. Implications of the study:

The present study: **“Heritage Tourism and Its Impact on Socio-Economics in Sivasagar district, Assam”** will be beneficial for Stakeholders, tourists, and people related to heritage tourism, and also will help researchers for further study from this point of view:

1. The present study would be a valuable contribution towards the identification of the potential heritage sites for visitors.
2. The study will help to promote the growth of the heritage tourism industry by decreasing drawbacks or negative elements.
3. It has been revealed that the impacts of heritage tourism on socio-economic and cultural aspects are closely related, so it will be beneficial for every implementation of programmes, policies, and acts.
4. The study will generate positive sensations concerning the importance of the heritage sites in Sivasagar district, Assam, which is described in this study through content analysis.
5. The findings of this study will provide valuable insights for residents and tourism industry stakeholders, enabling them to better cater to tourist needs and demands, which in turn is expected to increase the tourism rate.
6. The study would have a significant impact on generating social awareness and developing leadership based on the drawbacks, potentialities, and relationships of impacts of heritage tourism on different variables.
7. The study can educate local communities, stakeholders, and tourists about the value of preserving cultural heritage sites and traditions. This awareness can lead to increased support for heritage conservation and sustainable tourism practice.
8. This research will serve as a foundation for future studies, offering a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities in Assam's heritage tourism sector, as well as its growth potential and trends.

9. The study will provide a foundation for future research, enabling researchers to further investigate the issues and concerns identified in this study.

6.5. Limitations of the study:

As learning is a life-long and vast process, research on a particular topic by an individual researcher has some limitations in the research journey because of various circumstances. Here, the study “**Heritage tourism and its impact on socio-economics in Sivasagar district, Assam**” also has some limitations.

1. The study has not covered all the heritage sites of the Sivasagar district; Due to the various connectivity and information gaps.
2. The study covers employees of the heritage site is only 7 among the 14 sample heritage sites, because there are no employees in some heritage sites.
3. The study mainly covers the heritage tourism in Sivasagar district, Assam; there is no comparison applied with other districts.
4. The study has analysed the impact of heritage tourism on socio-economic and cultural but there is not analysed the impacts on the environment. Hence, there is a scope for further study.

6.6. Suggestive strategies for sustainable heritage tourism:

Through the entire evaluation of heritage tourism in Sivasagar district, Assam, suggestions are provided for the development of heritage tourism in the study area:

1. Proper Heritage Tourism information and Centres with trained staff should offer comprehensive services, including 24/7 information and on-site package bookings, as Sivasagar was once the Ahom kingdom, and also one world heritage site (declared by UNESCO) is under the Sivasagar circle. So, there is vast potential to attract more tourists in the future.

2. A comprehensive promotional campaign should be launched by the government and private agencies through national and international print and electronic media to showcase the importance of heritage sites.
3. Potential analysis of heritage tourism in Sivasagar district reveals that some heritage sites should have more potential, but were shown as moderate to low potential sites. So, there is a need to work on road, transport, communication, and lodging facilities. Hence, an introspective study is needed on it.
4. The Department of Tourism and ATDC/DTPC should establish a Research and Development wing to conduct regular assessments of tourism infrastructure, monitor changing tourist demand, and inform demand-driven tourism development. The existing statistical cell can be leveraged for this purpose. To enhance data collection, a tourism card system can be introduced, offering benefits such as:
 - a). Concessions on tourist packages and facilities
 - b) Streamlined data collection for better planning
 The tourism card can be issued at entry points and destinations for a nominal fee, valid for a fixed period (e.g., 15 days). This system will help:
 - a) Track tourist arrivals and stay patterns
 - b) Provide valuable data for tourism planning and development
 By introducing this system, the department can make data-driven decisions, enhance the tourist experience, and promote sustainable tourism development.
5. Capacity-building programs should be implemented by the Department of Tourism to enhance the skills of stakeholders, including hotel staff, travel agencies, and tourist guides.
6. Urgent infrastructural development is required for the heritage site, such as the Vishnu Dol, Namdang Stone Bridge (Xill Hanku), and the need for proper maintenance and repair of other sites to continue to be a tourist attraction.
7. Proper law should be followed to regulate good tourism services, prevent exploitation, and ensure quality experiences for tourists.

8. Given tourism's growing importance in economic development and people's lives, the state should promote awareness among all segments of society, particularly teenagers. This can be achieved through various initiatives such as:
 - a) Seminars and competitions
 - b) Short Films and documentaries
 - c) Festivals and events
 - d) Distribution of informative literatureBy creating awareness and engaging the younger generation, the state can foster a deeper appreciation for tourism and its benefits.
9. Heritage tourism sites offer immense potential for developing market facilities showcasing traditional crafts and local textiles. However, these resources remain underutilised and require development to attract international attention and gain global recognition.
10. Recreational activity, good resort facilities, and proper ethnic food facilities are highly needed near the heritage sites of the Sivasagar district. Although there are various ethnic food restaurants near the sites, still the number is very less to fulfill the tourists' desire according to the number of tourist arrivals in Sivasagar district, which is described in the introduction chapter properly. Also, each of the sample heritage sites cannot provide the taste of ethnic food because there are no such kind of facilities near the sites.
11. To preserve the integrity of heritage sites, strict measures should be implemented to prevent vandalism and destruction. This can include:
 - a) Increased security presence
 - b) Proper Surveillance systems (Each of the sample heritage sites has no surveillance systems)
 - c) Frequent Awareness campaigns
 - d) Collaboration with local authorities
 - e) Need to maintain strict Penalties for Vandalism.

12. Revenue is not being generated from each of the sample heritage sites; there are only 5 heritage sites under the Sivasagar sub-circle (ASI, Guwahati circle) from where revenue is being generated. Although through this present study, there have been found various scope to generate revenue from other heritage sites also. So, there is a need for some discussion and proper action in this matter.

6.7. CONCLUSION:

Tourism is a thriving industry globally, generating significant foreign exchange earnings and boosting local economies. While developed countries have successfully promoted tourism by leveraging expertise from various fields and balancing tourist demands with local interests, developing countries often adopt ad-hoc approaches. Assam, India, rich in cultural heritage and natural beauty, has immense tourism potential. Tourism is a growing industry in Assam, with vast potential for expansion. To realize this potential, effective tourism development policies grounded in scientific principles and sustainable practices are essential. Assam is home to numerous places with immense tourism potential, and Sivasagar district is no exception. With its rich heritage tourism potential, we can gain insights into the region's architectural development, religious perspectives, festivals, and economies driven by tourism activities. Therefore, studying the role of tourism in the district's socioeconomic development is crucial. Understanding a country's democracy involves exploring its historical roots and evolution. Studying the past, including monarchies and their rule, provides valuable context for appreciating the development of democratic systems, how past events, institutions, and governance structures have shaped current democratic systems. The transition from monarchical rule to democratic governance, including key milestones and reforms, and how monarchs and other historical figures have impacted the development of democratic institutions and values, is necessary to know. Sivasagar was once the kingdom of the Ahom Dynasty. Which carries significant importance and glory. The heritage sites of this area portray the pride of the Ahom Dynasty. Without history, we can't frame the present. So, if one wants to make

the present beautiful then it should be important to look back once. Hence, this study extends the value of the Heritage tourism Industry of Sivasagar District, Assam.

Drawing together the threads of this research, it highlights the significance of heritage tourism in Sivasagar District, Assam, and its multifaceted impact on the region's socioeconomic and cultural landscape. Through a comprehensive analysis of potential factors affecting heritage tourism and its impact, this research underscores the importance of preserving and promoting the district's rich cultural heritage. The findings suggest that heritage tourism can be a powerful tool for socioeconomic development, cultural preservation, and community engagement. By leveraging its unique heritage assets, Sivasagar District can unlock new opportunities for economic growth, cultural exchange, and sustainable development, ultimately enhancing the quality of life for its residents and promoting a positive image of the region globally.

Moreover, the study emphasises the need for collaborative efforts among stakeholders, including government agencies, local communities, and tourism operators, to ensure the sustainable development of heritage tourism. By working together, they can create a robust framework for heritage conservation, tourism infrastructure development, and community engagement. This will not only preserve the district's cultural heritage but also generate economic benefits, promote cultural exchange, and foster a sense of community pride.

Ultimately, this study provides valuable insights for policymakers, tourism stakeholders, and local communities, highlighting the potential of heritage tourism to drive socioeconomic development and cultural preservation in Sivasagar District, Assam. By harnessing the power of heritage tourism, the district can embark on a path of sustainable development, cultural revitalisation, and economic growth, benefiting both present and future generations.

Furthermore, the study's findings can inform policy decisions and strategic planning for heritage tourism development, ensuring that the district's unique cultural assets are protected and showcased effectively. By prioritising heritage tourism, Sivasagar District can differentiate itself as a premier tourist destination, attracting visitors from around the world and contributing to the region's economic prosperity.

The study on “Heritage tourism and its impact on socio-economic and cultural aspects in Sivasagar District, Assam” has several limitations. The geographical focus on a single district may limit generalizability to other regions. Methodological constraints, such as sample size and data collection methods, may also impact findings. Additionally, data availability and quality, stakeholder perspectives, and cultural context may influence results.

This study demonstrates that heritage tourism can be a transformative force for Sivasagar District, Assam, driving economic growth, cultural preservation, and community development. By embracing its rich cultural heritage and leveraging the potential of heritage tourism, the district can create a brighter future for its residents and showcase its unique identity to the world.

APPENDIX :1

Open-ended questionnaire

Target: Local People

This is a Ph.D. research-based open-ended questionnaire for the local people of heritage sites in Sivasagar district, Assam. The researcher is presently a research scholar at Mizoram University. So, if you generously answer the questions appropriately, then it will be fruitful for further investigation.

1. Name: _____

2. Gender: (Tick✓ on the correct box).

Male ☐

Female ☐

Others ☐

3. Locality: _____

4. Nationality: _____

5. Religion: _____

6. Caste: _____

7. Occupation: _____

8. Family Member: Nuclear family below 2-4 persons ☐

Nuclear family with 5-6 persons ☐

Nuclear family with more than 6 persons ☐

Joint Family with 10 persons ☐

Joint family with more than 10 persons ☐

9. Educational Qualification: Under H.S.L.C ☐

H.S.L.C ☐

H.S ☐

Graduation ☐

Post Graduation ☐

Any other (Specify please)

10. Monthly Income: Below 10,000 ☐

10,000-30,000 ☐

30,000-50,000 ☐

50,000-70,000 ☐

Above 70,000 ☐

10. Infrastructure: ☐

Well-equipped ☐

Equipped ☐

Average ☐

Marginal ☐

Below marginal ☐

12. Healthcare Facility: Dispensary ☐

Govt. Hospital within 5 km of the Distance ☐

Private Hospital ☐

Private Chamber ☐

Community health service ☐

13. Does Heritage tourism in this area provide opportunities for local people and tourists to engage in community activities and interact with each other?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Unsure ☐

If yes,

what types of activities or events? Specify please.....

14. Do you believe that heritage tourism can help foster leadership skills and development in your local community?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Unsure ☐

15. Does Heritage tourism provide opportunities for you and your local community to participate in tourism-related activities?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Unsure ☐

16. Is tourism demand in your locality increasing?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Unsure ☐

If increasing, what factors do you think are contributing to this growth?

Specify Please.....

17. Do you believe that heritage tourism has helped alleviate poverty in your community?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Unsure ☐

If yes, how?

Specify please.....

18. Does heritage tourism provide opportunities for generating jobs in your locality?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Unsure ☐

19. What kind of income source does heritage tourism provide in your locality?

Hospitality Job ☐

Cultural Performances ☐

Heritage site management ☐

Local Entrepreneur ☐

Tourism Marketing ☐

20. Do people in your Locality who work in heritage tourism face seasonal unemployment?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Unsure ☐

If yes, how many Months?

1-2 Months ☐

2-3 Months ☐

3-4 months ☐

4-5 months ☐

Above 5 months ☐

21. Does heritage tourism support cultural workshops in your local community?

Yes ☐

No ☐

If so, what types of cultural workshops are supported?

Specify please.....

22. Have you observed any cultural exchange programs or activities through tourism in your locality?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Unsure ☐

If yes, can you describe the type of cultural exchange programs you have observed?

.....

23. Has heritage tourism influenced traditional cuisine in your locality?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure ☐

Other (Specify please)

If yes, how has heritage tourism affected traditional cuisine?

.....

24. Are there any storytelling sessions or programs about heritage tourism in your locality?

Yes, regularly ☐

Yes, occasionally ☐

No ☐

Unsure ☐

If yes, what themes or topics are typically covered in these storytelling sessions?

:

25. Is heritage tourism influencing cultural authenticity in your locality?

Yes, positively ☐

Yes, negatively ☐

No ☐

Unaware ☐

If yes, can you describe how heritage tourism impacts cultural authenticity?

.....

26. Are you directly or indirectly related to the heritage tourism in Sivasagar?

:

27. How is heritage tourism influencing your livelihood?

: _____

28. How is heritage tourism contributing to the socio-economic development in your view?

: _____

29. Are there any changes in your locality due to heritage tourism?

: _____

30. Did you visit every heritage tourism site in Sivasagar?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If not, then is there any reason behind this?

: _____

31. How would you interpret the progressive state of heritage tourism in Sivasagar district?

: _____

32. Have you seen any accommodation facilities for tourists in your locality?

: _____

33. Is there any scheme or welcoming process to attract tourists to your locality?

: _____

34. Is there any negative impact of heritage tourism on your livelihood and locality?

If yes, then please explain in detail.

: _____

35. Do you think that there is ample scope for economic development through heritage

tourism in your locality? If yes, then explain in detail below.

: _____

36. Among the heritage sites of Sivasagar, which is nearer to you?

: _____

37. Which heritage sites are the strongest influencers in your locality?

: _____

38. Do you think heritage tourism is going on sustainably?

: _____

39. Is there any possibility for sustainable livelihood through heritage tourism in your locality?

: _____

40. Is there any governmental or non-governmental scheme for the local people to engage With the heritage sites?

: _____

41. In view of your experience, what are the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of Heritage tourism in Sivasagar district?

: _____

42. How will you rate these impacts of heritage tourism on socio-economic and cultural variables (Tick on the correct box).

Items	Ratings				
	1	2	3	4	5
	Limited impact	Moderate impact	Significant impact	Substantial impact	Transformative impact
Occupation					
Monthly income					
Family Members					
Infrastructure					
Education					
Healthcare Facility					
Community Engagement					
Community events					
Leadership development					
Tourism demand					
Employment Generation					
Income Source					
Income Level					
Job Opportunity					

Seasonal income					
Seasonal employment					
Market Diversification					
Market demand					
Market competition					
Cross-cultural Understanding					
Cultural learning					
Cultural Sharing					
Story Telling					
Cultural Authenticity					
Hands-on Cultural Experiences					
Local Artisan Engagement					
Cultural Immersion					

43. Give satisfaction scores on the factors affecting heritage tourism:

Internal component of heritage tourism	Responses (1-5)				
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Rich Cultural heritage					
Accommodation					
Other amenities (bank, police station, health, etc.)					
Host behaviours					
Aesthetics					
Market					
Tourist information service					
Tourist guide facilities					
Site management					
Local transportation					
Internal road condition					

44. Do you want to suggest anything for the development of heritage tourism in Sivasagar

district, Assam?

: _____

APPENDIX:2

Semi-structured Interview Schedule

Target Group: Tourist

This is a Ph.D. research-based semi-structured interview schedule for tourists of heritage sites in Sivasagar district, Assam. The researcher is presently a research scholar at Mizoram University. If you generously fill out the questionnaire appropriately, then it will be fruitful for further investigation.

1. Name: _____

(Tick ✓ on the right box)

2. Gender: Male ☐

Female ☐

Others ☐

3. Nationality:

4. Religion:

5. Occupation: _____

6. What is your purpose for visiting these heritage sites?

Entertainment	☐
Religious vision	☐
Information	☐

Research	
Natural view	
Explore the culture	
Randomly visited	

Others (specify please):

7. With whom you have visited this place?

Friends ☐

Colleagues ☐

Family ☐

Others: _____

8. How many times have you visited these heritage sites?

: _____

9. How did you come to know about these tourist sites?

Social media ☐

Friends ☐

Books ☐

Google ☐

Satellite channels ☐

Others (Specify Please) _____

10. How many heritage sites have you visited in Sivasagar?

: _____

Sample Heritage Sites of the study	Visited site (Tick ✓ on the Correct box)	
	Yes	No
Shiva Dol Complex (Shiva Dol, Devi Dol, Vishnu Dol)		
Sivasagar Tank		
Rang Ghar		
Talatal Ghar		
Joi Dol		
Joisagar Tank		
Rudrasagar Dol		
Rudrasagar Tank		
Namdang Stone Bridge (Namdang Xill Hanku)		
Bakhar Bengena Tree		
Kareng Ghar		
Group of four Moidam (Charaideo Moidam)		

11. Are you satisfied with the facilities of the tourist sites?

Facilities	Highly satisfied	Satisfied	Moderately satisfied	Less satisfied	unsatisfied
Transport and communication					
Accommodation					
Hospitality					
Infrastructure					
Management					

Market					
Tourist guide and information					
Geographical location and variables					
Sanitation and Hygiene					
Health facilities					
Safety and Security					

12. Would you suggest your native people to visit these heritage sites?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Think it later ☐

13. Would you add these heritage sites to your bucket list for the next time?

Yes ☐ No ☐

14. How much score will you provide to this heritage site based on these criteria mentioned below:

Criteria	Scores				
	1	2	3	4	5
Natural attraction					
Cultural Attraction					
Man-made creatures					
Adventurous factors					

Entertainment factors					
Educational scenario					
Religious factors					
Food and drinks					
Sports& activities					

15. Which sectors can you consider as the pull factor for the tourist attraction of the heritage sites in Sivasagar, and why?

: _____

16. How did you book your holiday in Sivasagar? (Tick on the appropriate box).

Travel agent (online /offline) ☐

Email or phone ☐

Others (Specify please): _____

17. Give satisfaction scores on the factors affecting heritage tourism:

Internal component of heritage tourism	Responses (1-5)				
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Rich Cultural heritage					
Accommodation					
Other amenities (bank, police station, health etc.)					

Host behaviours					
Aesthetics					
Market					
Tourist information service					
Tourist guide facilities					
Site management					
Local transportation					
Internal rode condition					

18.What type of accommodation did you stay in?

: _____

19.How long did you plan to stay in Sivasagar?

: _____

20.Will you suggest anything for better improvement of the heritage tourism sites in Sivasagar?

Yes ☐

No ☐

If yes, then What will you suggest?

: _____

If not, then what is the reason behind this?

: _____

APPENDIX :3

Semi-Structured Interview Schedule

Target: Business persons of heritage sites

This is a Ph.D. research-based semi-structured interview schedule for businesspersons at heritage sites in Sivasagar district, Assam. The researcher is presently a research scholar at Mizoram University. Therefore, if you complete the questionnaire accurately, it will be beneficial for further investigation.

1. Name.....

2. Gender.....

3. Nationality

4. Religion.....

5. Caste.....

6. What is your business type? (Tick on the box)

Shop

☐

(Mention the kind of Shop _____)

Restaurant

☐

Hotels for accommodation

☐

Transport and communication

☐

Others _____

7. How much is your monthly income from this work?

(Tick on the box).

Below 10,000

☐

10,000-30,000

☐

30,000-50,000 ☐

50,000-70,000 ☐

Above70,000 ☐

8. What is the maximum requirement of tourist from your Business?

: _____

12. In your view, what is the trend of tourists to these heritage sites?

(Tick on the appropriate box)

Increasing at a very satisfactory rate ☐

Increasing at a satisfactory rate ☐

Increasing at a moderate rate ☐

Increasing at a low rate ☐

Decreasing ☐

Others (Explain Please): _____

10. In which season is the rate of tourist arrival high?

(Tick on the appropriate box)

Monsoon (June to September) ☐

Summer (March to May) ☐

Winter (December to February) ☐

Post monsoon (October to November) ☐

All seasons ☐

11. Are you able to maintain your economic life, when there is lowest number of tourists?

(Tick on the appropriate box)

Yes ☐ No ☐

12. Do you think to can survive only with this profession?

(Tick on the appropriate box)

Yes ☐

No ☐

If not, what is the reason behind this?

: _____

Do you have any other business?

: _____

13. Do you think there is a broader platform for business growth in heritage sites?

(Tick on the appropriate box)

Yes ☐

No ☐

If no, mention the reason please:

14. Is there any scope for sustainable economic development?

(Tick on the appropriate box)

Yes ☐ No ☐

15. Do you think, that adding different kinds of amusement facilities near the heritage sites could attract more tourists?

(Tick on the appropriate box)

Yes ☐ No ☐

Is there any amusement activity here?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, please mention the activities

: _____

16. Give satisfaction scores on the factors affecting heritage tourism:

Internal component of heritage tourism	Responses (1-5)				
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Rich Cultural heritage					
Accommodation					
Other amenities (bank, police station, health, etc.)					
Host behaviours					
Aesthetics					
Market					
Tourist information service					
Tourist guide facilities					
Site management					
Local transportation					
Internal road condition					

17. What would you suggest for the better improvement of this heritage tourism industry?

: _____

APPENDIX:4

Semi-Structured Interview Schedule

Target Group: Employees of heritage sites

This is a Ph.D. research-based semi-structured interview schedule for employees of heritage sites in Sivasagar district, Assam. The researcher is presently a research scholar at Mizoram University. Therefore, if you complete the questionnaire accurately, it will be beneficial for further investigation.

1. Name: _____

2. Gender:

Male ☐

Female ☐

Others ☐

3. Nationality: _____

4. Religion: _____

5. Caste: _____

6. Occupation: _____

7. How are you related to the heritage site?

Employee ☐

Worker ☐

Others (Specify Please): _____

8. How long have you been working in this sector?

(Tick on the box)

Below 10 years ☐

10-20 ☐

20-30 ☐

30-40 ☐

Above 40 Yea ☐

9. How much is your monthly income from this work?

(Tick on the box).

Below 10,000 ☐

10,000-30,000 ☐

30,000-50,000 ☐

50,000-80,000 ☐

Above 100000 ☐

10. Have you seen any changes in these heritage sites during your work Period?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, then please explain the changes_____.

11. What is the trend of development of these heritage sites?

Very slow ☐

Slow ☐

Moderate ☐

Improving ☐

Fast Improving ☐

12. In your view, what is the trend of tourists to these heritage sites?

Increasing at a very satisfactory rate ☐

Increasing at a satisfactory rate ☐

Increasing at a moderate rate ☐

Increasing at a low rate ☐

Decreasing ☐

Others (Explain Please):

13. According to you, what kind of changes are needed to improve these heritage sites?

Infrastructure ☐

Transport and communication ☐

Safety and Security ☐

Hospitality ☐

Management ☐

Tourist guide and information ☐

Food and Culture ☐

Sanitation and hygiene ☐

Market ☐

Health facilities ☐

14. Is there any scope for sustainable heritage tourism in these heritage sites?

Yes ☐

No ☐

If yes then, please explain the reason behind this _____

15. Is there any prospect of socio-economic development through these heritage sites?

Yes ☐

No ☐

If yes, then explain in detail: _____

16. Do you have a feedback-taking system for the tourists?

Yes ☐

No ☐

If yes, then mention the feedback please _____

17. Do you think that the safety and Security system is strong in these heritage sites?

Yes ☐

No ☐

18. Which season is suitable for visiting the sites?

Monsoon ☐

Summer ☐

Winter ☐

All seasons ☐

19. Do you think any drives are affecting the tourist sites?

Yes ☐

No ☐

If yes, mention the drivers please: _____

20. In your lens, which things are the most striking for attracting tourists?

: _____

21. Give satisfaction scores on the factors affecting heritage tourism.

Internal component of heritage tourism	Responses (1-5)				
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Rich Cultural heritage					
Accommodation					
Other amenities (bank, police station, health, etc.)					
Host behaviours					
Aesthetics					
Market					
Tourist information service					
Tourist guide facilities					
Site management					
Local transportation					
Internal road condition					

22. What will you suggest for the development of these heritage sites?

: _____

Appendix:5

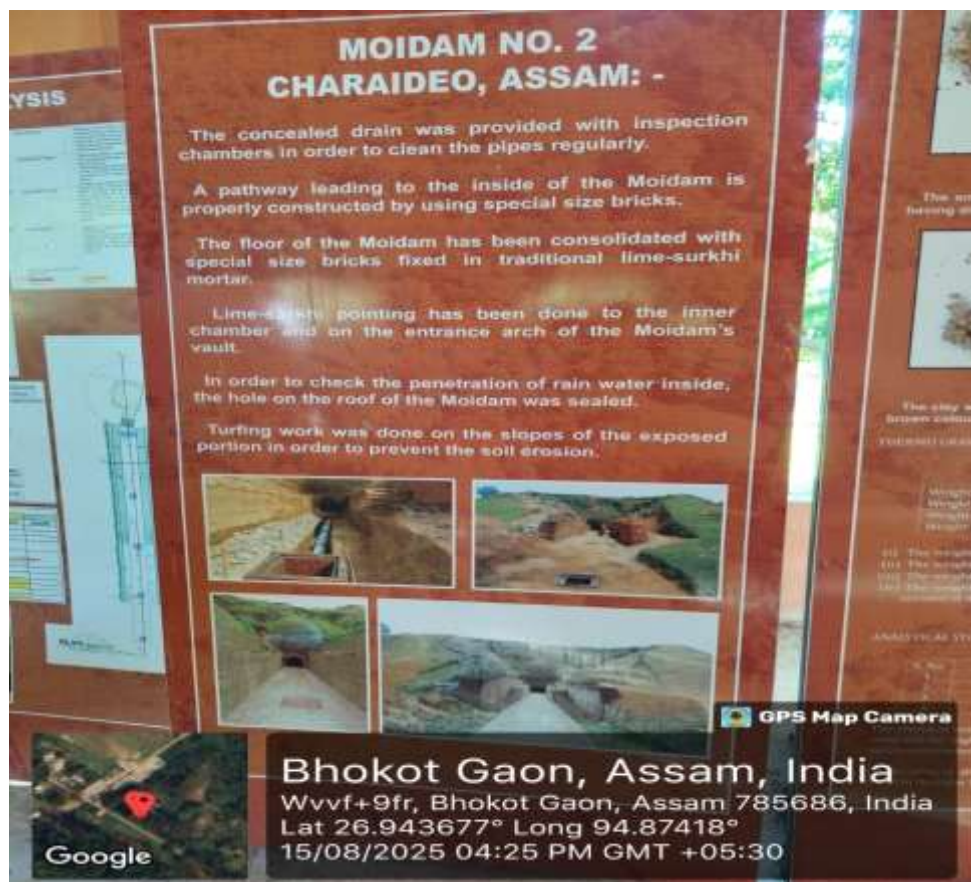
Photo Gallery

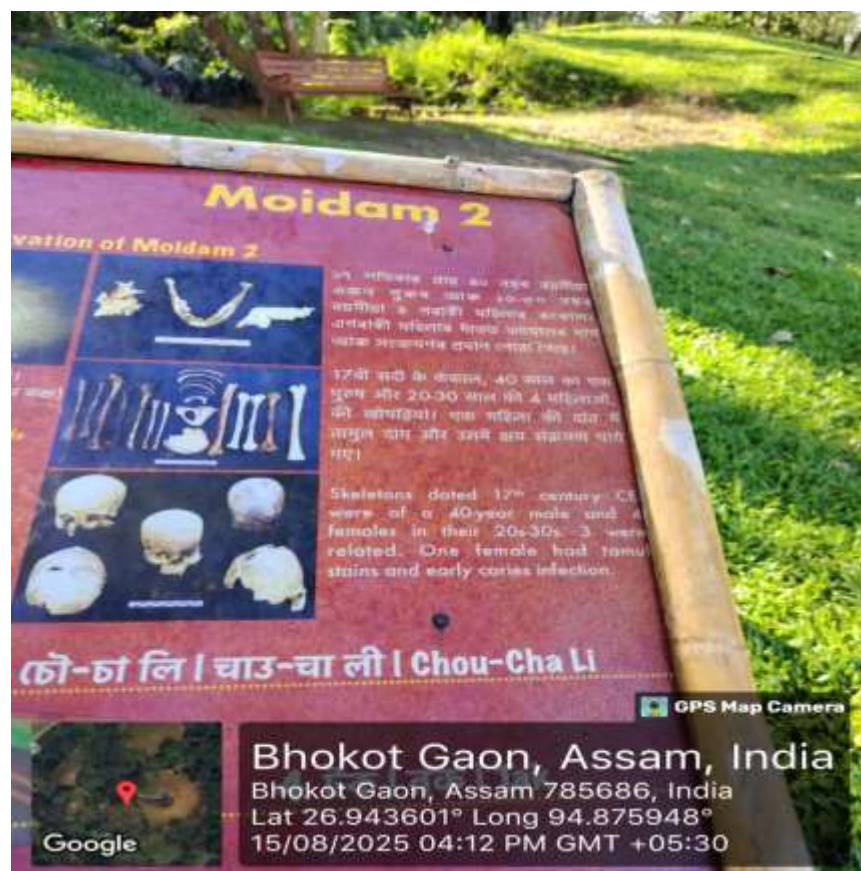
(Photos are captured and collected during the data collection period)

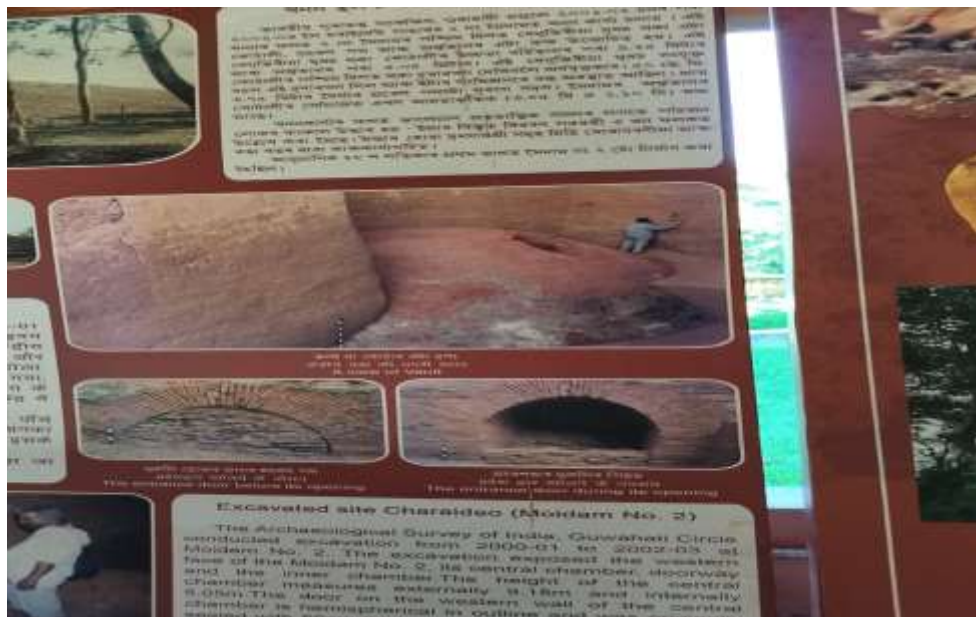




















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ABSTRACT

**HERITAGE TOURISM AND ITS IMPACT ON SOCIO-ECONOMICS IN
SIVASAGAR DISTRICT, ASSAM**

**AN ABSTRACT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF
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**HERITAGE TOURISM AND ITS IMPACT ON SOCIO-ECONOMICS
IN SIVASAGAR DISTRICT, ASSAM**

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**In partial fulfillment of the requirement of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
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ABSTRACT

Tourism is the heart of a place's socio-economic and cultural development. It brings joy to people's minds and is a key to generating revenue. It has many capabilities to change a place's socio-economic and demographic profile. Based on the places' physiography, social and cultural phenomena, Tourism can be categorised in different forms. Heritage tourism is a kind of tourism where people can gather information about a place's past, glories, and history, which is very necessary to learn for better development and path creation in any field. Without history, we cannot think of the needful development of the present and future. Hence, to acquire proper information, people should visit the places or sites physically. Heritage tourism provides this opportunity to all tourists, accompanied by many other entertainment opportunities. Sivasagar district is a historical place in Assam, which was once the capital of the Ahom Dynasty. Various monuments, amphitheatres, temples, tanks, mysterious trees, and a Cemetery system of Ahom kings and queens are found in the Sivasagar district. It carries the pride of the Ahom kingdom, and it showcases the glorious past of Sivasagar district, Assam. Each heritage site of the Sivasagar district, Assam, has a different important story of the Ahom kingdom. There is a one heritage site which is called Group of Four Moidam got recognition as a world heritage site declared by UNESCO. It is necessary to know about the importance of these heritage sites. Most of the native people have been earning bread depending upon this heritage tourism industry in Sivasagar district, Assam. Hence, there is a need for some introspective study to learn more about this heritage tourism and its impact on the socio-economic and cultural aspects of the local community; from here, this study signifies. To carry out the present study entitled “Heritage tourism and its impact on Socio-economics in Sivasagar district, Assam,” the following research questions have been formulated:

1. Does Sivasagar district have the potential to become a significant heritage tourism destination, and what factors contribute to its appeal?
2. What are the key factors that determine the tourism potential of heritage sites in Sivasagar district, Assam, and how can they be enhanced?

3. What is the impact of heritage tourism on the socio-economic and cultural fabric of Sivasagar district, Assam?
4. How can heritage tourism be managed to balance economic benefits with socio-cultural sustainability and community well-being in Sivasagar district, Assam?
5. What are the key drivers influencing the development and sustainability of heritage tourism in Sivasagar district, Assam?
6. How can context-specific strategies be designed to ensure long-term sustainability of heritage tourism in Sivasagar district, Assam?

This study is conducted based on the four objectives, which are:

1. To examine the potential of heritage tourism in Sivasagar District, Assam.
2. To study the impacts of heritage tourism on socio-economic and culture.
3. To describe the major drivers affecting heritage tourism.
4. To suggest suitable strategies for sustainable heritage tourism.

To fulfil the objectives, data has been collected by adopting a simple random sampling technique and a purposive sampling technique. Simple random techniques have been applied in Business persons, Household surveys, and employees of the sites. On the other hand, purposive sampling techniques have been applied for the selection of heritage tourism sites and Tourists. The population of the study is 14 heritage sites of the Sivasagar district, native people of the sample heritage sites, business persons related to tourism, tourists (both domestic and foreign), and employees of the heritage sites. Sources of the data for this study are Primary and secondary. Primary data has been collected through four different tools. This is a semi-structured interview schedule (3 different schedules) for tourists, business persons, and employees, and an open-ended questionnaire for the native people. Secondary data are collected from books, published articles, theses, and different online sources. The study is designed by following the descriptive survey research method. A qualitatively driven mixed-method approach has been followed for the analysis of the chapters. The total sample for the entire study is 920. There are

various interpretation techniques that have been applied for the analysis of the data. Those are TPI (Tourists Potential index), Pearson's Correlation, SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats), and also applied content analysis.

To provide a comprehensive examination of heritage tourism in Sivasagar district, Assam, the study is organized into six chapters.

Chapter 1- Introduction

Chapter 2- Review of literature

Chapter 3 - Potential of heritage tourism in Sivasagar District, Assam

Chapter 4- Impacts of Heritage Tourism on Socio-economic and Culture.

Chapter 5- Major Drivers Affecting Heritage Tourism

Chapter 6- Summary and Conclusions

Chapter I lays the foundation for this research, providing an in-depth introduction to the study's background, geographical context, research questions, and specific objectives. It delineates the database and methodology employed, underscoring the significance and scope of the investigation. A notable feature of this chapter is the inclusion of a comprehensive 20-year analysis of tourist flow data, visually reinforced by graphs, and the data of tourist flow has been collected from the tourism office of Sivasagar district, sub-circle under Guwahati circle. These sites encompass Siva Dol Complex (Shiva Doll, Devi Doll, Bishnu Doll), Sivasagar Tank, Rang Ghar, Talatal Ghar, Joysagar Dol, Joysagar Tank, Rudrasagar Dol, Rudrasagar Tank, Namdang Stone Bridge (Xill Hanku), Bakhar Bengena Tree, Kareng Ghar, and Charaideo Maidam (comprising a group of four moidams). Furthermore, this chapter provides an overview of the research's organizational structure, detailing the chapterizations scheme that guides the entire study.

Chapter II of this research presents a thorough examination of existing literature on tourism, heritage tourism, and their socio-economic impacts, drawing from

international, national, and regional studies. The review explores key concepts, including the significance of tourism and heritage tourism in promoting cultural preservation and community development, the economic and social benefits of heritage tourism, such as job creation and revenue generation, and the role of tourism in fostering local economic growth and cultural exchange. It also identifies challenges and opportunities in heritage tourism development. By analyzing current research, this chapter aims to pinpoint areas requiring further investigation, recognize limitations in current practices, and provide a foundation for future research, ultimately informing strategies for sustainable heritage tourism practices that benefit both local communities and the environment.

The first objective of this study comes under the Chapter III, which is “Potentials of heritage tourism in Sivasagar district, Assam”. A quantitatively driven mixed-methods approach has been applied to analyze this objective. When analysing the potential of heritage tourism, tourist demand and the local availability of resources are given preference. To quantify the preference pattern and the choice of tourists, a multi-criteria decision-making tool is applied from Ferrario’s (1982) model. Also, the modified version from Bhattacharya (20024) has been followed. A resource inventory is prepared. The supply and demand index is the basic source of the calculation of the Tourism Potential index. Based on the responses (on the preference of the site) gathered through semi semi-structured interview schedule from the domestic and foreign tourists, TPI is calculated.

The formula of the TPI is $P=A+B/2$.

Where,

P = Potential index,

A = Tourist demand index at each site,

B = Tourist supply index at each site.

Potential heritage sites are found within this range:

Very High potential heritage site (Index value above 30),

High potential heritage site (Index value 20-30),

Moderately potential heritage site (Index value 10- 20).

Low Potential Heritage Site (Index value below 10)

The analysis of this chapter reveals that:

1. It has been found that each sample heritage site does not have the same potential. Heritage sites are found according to the TPI index within a 4 range. Which is:

Very High Potential Sites: Sites with exceptionally high tourism potential

High Potential Sites: Sites with significant tourism potential

Moderate Potential Sites: Sites with moderate tourism potential

Low Potential Sites: Sites with limited tourism potential

2. The group of four moidams (Charideo moidams) was identified as a very high-potential heritage site according to the observed data. This heritage site is recognized as a World Heritage Site declared by UNESCO. So, the number of tourists is compared to other sample heritage sites of Sivasagar district, under the Sivasagar Archaeological Survey of India, Sivasagar sub-circle. Recently, the name of this site has been changed. The renamed “Moidams-the Mound-burial system of the Ahom Dynasty”. Still, the name of this heritage site is added in the Archaeological Survey of India, Sivasagar sub-circle is a Group of Moidams, and locally this heritage site is known as Charaideo Moidam.
3. Siva Dol Complex & Sivasagar tank, Rang Ghar, Talatal Ghar, Joi dol & Tank, Rudrasagar dol & Tank, and Karang Ghar are categorised under high potential index. This heritage site is situated at the heart of Sivasagar city. Communication is convenient for visiting these heritage sites. The distance is very convenient for tourists to cover all the heritage sites together in a day for visiting. The architecture and surroundings are very calm and windy, so that people can relax there.

4. The Bakhar Bengena tree comes within a moderate potential site. The area of these heritage sites is basically a rural background, and public transport-communication are not very convenient for visiting at any time of the day. Also, the distance of this heritage site is far compared to other heritage sites. Therefore, it is considered a moderately preferred or potential heritage site.
5. Namdang stone bridge (Namdang Xill Hanku) is displayed as a low-potential heritage site according to the index. Although this heritage site has very much historical significance and carries the glory of the Ahom dynasty, it still comes as a low-potential heritage site to generate more tourists to the site. Unmaintained and negligence towards the conservation of this site are the key factors justifying the reason.
6. Among the 14 sample heritage sites, each site is not equally potential.
7. The identification of a potential heritage site showcases the strengths and drawbacks of the site and management
8. It has been identified that the supply and demand of the sample heritage site vary from each other.
9. Findings from this objective identified the need to conduct an introspective work towards the balance of each heritage site's development and attraction.

In the Chapter IV “Impact of Heritage Tourism on Socio-Economic and culture in Sivasagar district, Assam” (Objective number 2), analysed the impacts of heritage tourism on the socio-economic variables. The hypothesis of this chapter is H_0 = There is no significant positive relationship between heritage tourism and its impact on Social, Economic, and Cultural variables and H_1 = There is a significant positive relationship between Heritage tourism and its impact on Social, Economic, and Cultural variables. To identify the impact of heritage tourism, data has been gathered from the native people through household survey based on an open-ended questionnaire. After, the gathering all the responses data were compiled through MS Excel and descriptive statistic were calculated through the JAMOV software. Impacts were analysed in descending order according to the mean values of the

impacts. Pearson's correlation matrix technique has been adopted to analysed the dimension wise compiled data. And showed the relationship between the impact of heritage tourism on socio-economic and culture. Pearson's r value between the socio-economic, socio-cultural and economic-cultural are highly statistically significant. Values are-

Social vs. Economic: Corr = 0.983***

Social vs. Culture: Corr = 0.986***

Economic vs. Culture: Corr = 0.992***

which indicates that, if one variable will change then the other variables will tend to move together. Here, Alternate Hypothesis H_1 is accepted and null hypothesis H_0 is rejected. The study "Impact of heritage tourism on socio-economic and culture in Sivasagar District, Assam" Will be beneficial for the further policy making, decision making, development of heritage tourism sites and also socio-economic and cultural development and conservation.

The major findings of this chapter are:

1. There are various impacts of heritage tourism on socio-economic and cultural variables are found from the analysis of this chapter. Impact analysis on social variables is done based on 10 items, and economic and cultural variables are analysed by 8 items, respectively.
2. Based on the mean values of the items, impacts were found in descending order based on 3 ranges: High-2.97-3.12

Moderate- 2.82-3.12

Low-2.67-2.82

These are:

HIGHEST (Mean: 2.97-3.12)

Market competition (3.12)

Market Diversification (3.1)
Seasonal employment (3.04)
Hands-on Cultural Experiences (3.04)
Local Artisan Engagement (3.04)
Income Level (2.99)
Market demand (2.98)
Job Opportunity (2.97)
Cultural Authenticity (2.97)
Cultural learning (2.97)

MODERATE (2.82- 2.97)

Community Engagement (2.94)
Cultural Sharing (2.94)
Cross-cultural Understanding (2.92)
Monthly income (2.91)
Education (2.88)
Income Source (2.85)
Seasonal income (2.85)
Story Telling (2.85)
Healthcare Facility (2.83)
Cultural Immersion (2.83)
Tourism demand (2.82)

LOW (2.67-2.82)

Infrastructure (2.81)
Employment Generation (2.81)
Leadership development (2.79)
Family Members (2.78)

Social Service (2.76)

Community events (2.67)

3. It has been found from the analysis that each impact can influence other impacts. And it is proved by the statistical analysis of Pearson's correlation matrix.
4. The output of the correlation matrix chart shows that the variables are closely related to each other. There is a significant positive correlation has been found. This indicates the movements of the variable are closely linearly related. If the rate of impact changes on one variable, then it will definitely influence another variable.
5. Pearson's r is found close to 1.
 - Social-Economic Relationship: Pearson's $r = 0.988$ indicates a very strong positive correlation.
 - Social-Cultural Relationship: Pearson's $r = 0.988$ indicates a very strong positive correlation.
 - Economic-Cultural Relationship: Pearson's $r = 0.992$ indicates an extremely strong positive correlation.
5. The analysis of this objective accepted the alternate hypothesis H_1 and rejected the null hypothesis H_0 .
6. The analysis of this objective highlights the pattern and trend of impacts of heritage tourism on socio-economic and cultural aspects, which will be fruitful for the planning and programmes towards the development of the heritage tourism industry of Sivasagar district, Assam.

Chapter V studied the “Major drivers affecting heritage tourism in Sivasagar district, Assam” (Objective 3). The study is conducted through the SWOT (Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) method. Drivers were identified and analysed in two categories which is internal factors and external factors. A 5-point self-designed scale is prepared to identify the internal factors (strengths, weaknesses) affecting heritage tourism in Sivasagar district, Assam. Here, identification of opportunities and threats (External Factors) is done in the study area through self-observation in the field, discussions with experts, semi-structured interviews with resource persons, native people, and also assessing various literature.

These are the major finding from this chapter V:

1. The study reveals several internal and external factors. Internal factors are called strengths and weaknesses; on the other hand, external factors are opportunities and threats. (Applied SWOT analysis).
2. Internal factors found based on the responses gathered from the 920 sample are: Rich Cultural heritage, Accommodation, Other amenities (bank, police station, health, etc.), Host behaviours, Aesthetics, and Market (Strengths).

Tourist information services, Tourist guide facilities, Site management, Local transportation, and internal road conditions are found to as Weaknesses.

3. External factors identified in this analysis include Opportunities and threats. The study found various opportunities related to heritage tourism in Sivasagar are tourism promotional campaign Awesome Assam, the mission soulful Sivasagar, the Act East Policy, Project Rang Ghar, and there is a world heritage site recognised by UNESCO, which is Charideo Maidam (Group of four Maidam), which is found as one of the strongest factors of heritage tourism in Sivasagar district, Assam.

Within the external factors, certain elements emerged as threats, which are: Unsustainable environment, Traffic congestion, Geological events, Overdependence on tourism, and lack of proper policies.

4. The entire analysis or identification of drivers affecting heritage tourism indicates a strong introspective study towards the minimization of weaknesses and threats of the heritage sites, which hinders the development of the sample heritage sites; and the identification of strengths and opportunities portrays the positive scenario of the sample heritage sites of Sivasagar district, Assam.

Chapter VI summarizes the key findings of the study, aligning with the research objectives. Implications, Limitation of the study and proposes remedial measures to enhance the development of heritage tourism in Sivasagar district, Assam. These recommendations aim to inform future studies and support sustainable tourism practices in the region.

The analysis of heritage sites revealed varied potential across sites, with each exhibiting unique strengths and weaknesses. By developing a Tourist Potential Index, the sites are categorised into very high, high, moderate, and low potential categories. This categorisation enables prioritisation of development efforts and resource allocation. It indicated that the rate of development regarding various sectors is needed, as identified categories. Analysing tourist satisfaction data helped identify areas for improvement, enhancing the overall tourist experience. Our findings highlight opportunities for growth and investment in heritage tourism. These insights inform targeted development strategies, providing valuable recommendations for stakeholders, policymakers, and heritage tourism professionals to unlock the potential of these sites. Although the findings of this chapter analysis suggest that there is a need for some in-depth study towards the development of heritage sites in Sivasagar district, Assam.

Impact analysis indicates that if one variable changes, then other variables will also change. The impact of heritage tourism is directly or indirectly related to each of these variables. So, it can be concluded that correlation matrix analysis between the impact of heritage tourism on socio-economic and cultural aspects will help for the future development, and it could show a path to generate or adopt new actions or policies towards the growth of heritage sites and community development of the native people of Sivasagar district, Assam.

The identification of factors affecting heritage tourism in Sivasagar district, Assam, through SWOT analysis provides a comprehensive framework for strategic planning by understanding internal and external factors, identifying areas for improvement or problem-solving.

The present study: “Heritage Tourism and Its Impact on Socio-Economics in Sivasagar district, Assam” will be beneficial for Stakeholders, tourists, and people related to heritage tourism, and also will help researchers for further study from this point of view:

1. The present study would be a valuable contribution towards the identification of the potential heritage sites for visitors.
2. The study will help to promote the growth of the heritage tourism industry by decreasing drawbacks or negative elements.
3. It has been revealed that the impacts of heritage tourism on socio-economic and cultural aspects are closely related, so it will be beneficial for every implementation of programmes, policies, and acts.
4. The study will generate positive sensations concerning the importance of the heritage sites in Sivasagar district, Assam, which is described in this study through content analysis.
5. The findings of this study will provide valuable insights for residents and tourism industry stakeholders, enabling them to better cater to tourist needs and demands, which in turn is expected to increase the tourism rate.

6. The study would have a significant impact on generating social awareness and developing leadership based on the drawbacks, potentialities, and relationships of impacts of heritage tourism on different variables.
7. The study can educate local communities, stakeholders, and tourists about the value of preserving cultural heritage sites and traditions. This awareness can lead to increased support for heritage conservation and sustainable tourism practice.
8. This research will serve as a foundation for future studies, offering a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities in Assam's heritage tourism sector, as well as its growth potential and trends.
9. The study will provide a foundation for future research, enabling researchers to further investigate the issues and concerns identified in this study.

As learning is a life-long and vast process, research on a particular topic by an individual researcher has some limitations in the research journey because of various circumstances. Here, the study “Heritage tourism and its impact on socio-economics in Sivasagar district, Assam” also has some limitations.

1. The study has not covered all the heritage sites of the Sivasagar district; Due to the various connectivity and information gaps.
2. The study covers employees of the heritage site is only 7 among the 14 sample heritage sites, because there are no employees in some heritage sites.
3. The study mainly covers the heritage tourism in Sivasagar district, Assam; there is no comparison applied with other districts.
4. The study has analysed the impact of heritage tourism on socio-economic and cultural but there is not analysed the impacts on the environment. Hence, there is a scope for further study.

Through the entire evaluation of heritage tourism in Sivasagar district, Assam, suggestions are provided for the development of heritage tourism in the study area:

1. Proper Heritage Tourism information and Centres with trained staff should offer comprehensive services, including 24/7 information and on-site package bookings, as Sivasagar was once the Ahom kingdom, and also one world heritage site (declared by UNESCO) is under the Sivasagar circle. So, there is vast potential to attract more tourists in the future.
2. A comprehensive promotional campaign should be launched by the government and private agencies through national and international print and electronic media to showcase the importance of heritage sites.
3. Potential analysis of heritage tourism in Sivasagar district reveals that some heritage sites should have more potential, but were shown as moderate to low potential sites. So, there is a need to work on road, transport, communication, and lodging facilities. Hence, an introspective study is needed on it.
4. The Department of Tourism and ATDC/DTPC should establish a Research and Development wing to conduct regular assessments of tourism infrastructure, monitor changing tourist demand, and inform demand-driven tourism development. The existing statistical cell can be leveraged for this purpose. To enhance data collection, a tourism card system can be introduced, offering benefits such as:
 - a). Concessions on tourist packages and facilities
 - b) Streamlined data collection for better planningThe tourism card can be issued at entry points and destinations for a nominal fee, valid for a fixed period (e.g., 15 days). This system will help:
 - a) Track tourist arrivals and stay patterns
 - b) Provide valuable data for tourism planning and developmentBy introducing this system, the department can make data-driven decisions, enhance the tourist experience, and promote sustainable tourism development.

5. Capacity-building programs should be implemented by the Department of Tourism to enhance the skills of stakeholders, including hotel staff, travel agencies, and tourist guides.
6. Urgent infrastructural development is required for the heritage site, such as the Vishnu Dol, Namdang Stone Bridge (Xill Hanku), and the need for proper maintenance and repair of other sites to continue to be a tourist attraction.
7. Proper law should be followed to regulate good tourism services, prevent exploitation, and ensure quality experiences for tourists.
8. Given tourism's growing importance in economic development and people's lives, the state should promote awareness among all segments of society, particularly teenagers. This can be achieved through various initiatives such as:
 - a) Seminars and competitions
 - b) Short Films and documentaries
 - c) Festivals and events
 - d) Distribution of informative literatureBy creating awareness and engaging the younger generation, the state can foster a deeper appreciation for tourism and its benefits.
9. Heritage tourism sites offer immense potential for developing market facilities showcasing traditional crafts and local textiles. However, these resources remain underutilised and require development to attract international attention and gain global recognition.
10. Recreational activity, good resort facilities, and proper ethnic food facilities are highly needed near the heritage sites of the Sivasagar district. Although there are various ethnic food restaurants near the sites, still the number is very less to fulfill the tourists' desire according to the number of tourist arrivals in Sivasagar district, which is described in the introduction chapter properly.

Also, each of the sample heritage sites cannot provide the taste of ethnic food because there are no such kind of facilities near the sites.

- 11.** To preserve the integrity of heritage sites, strict measures should be implemented to prevent vandalism and destruction. This can include:
 - a) Increased security presence
 - b) Proper Surveillance systems (Each of the sample heritage sites has no surveillance systems)
 - c) Frequent Awareness campaigns
 - d) Collaboration with local authorities
 - e) Need to maintain strict Penalties for Vandalism.
- 12.** Revenue is not being generated from each of the sample heritage sites; there are only 5 heritage sites under the Sivasagar sub-circle (ASI, Guwahati circle) from where revenue is being generated. Although through this present study, there have been found various scope to generate revenue from other heritage sites also. So, there is a need for some discussion and proper action in this matter.

Tourism is a thriving industry globally, generating significant foreign exchange earnings and boosting local economies. While developed countries have successfully promoted tourism by leveraging expertise from various fields and balancing tourist demands with local interests, developing countries often adopt ad-hoc approaches. Assam, India, rich in cultural heritage and natural beauty, has immense tourism potential. Tourism is a growing industry in Assam, with vast potential for expansion. To realize this potential, effective tourism development policies grounded in scientific principles and sustainable practices are essential. Assam is home to numerous places with immense tourism potential, and Sivasagar district is no exception. With its rich heritage tourism potential, we can gain insights into the region's architectural development, religious perspectives, festivals, and economies driven by tourism activities. Therefore, studying the role of tourism in the district's

socioeconomic development is crucial. Understanding a country's democracy involves exploring its historical roots and evolution. Studying the past, including monarchies and their rule, provides valuable context for appreciating the development of democratic systems, how past events, institutions, and governance structures have shaped current democratic systems. The transition from monarchical rule to democratic governance, including key milestones and reforms, and how monarchs and other historical figures have impacted the development of democratic institutions and values, is necessary to know. Sivasagar was once the kingdom of the Ahom Dynasty. Which carries significant importance and glory. The heritage sites of this area portray the pride of the Ahom Dynasty. Without history, we can't frame the present. So, if one wants to make the present beautiful then it should be important to look back once. Hence, this study extends the value of the Heritage tourism Industry of Sivasagar District, Assam.

Drawing together the threads of this research, it highlights the significance of heritage tourism in Sivasagar District, Assam, and its multifaceted impact on the region's socioeconomic and cultural landscape. Through a comprehensive analysis of potential factors affecting heritage tourism and its impact, this research underscores the importance of preserving and promoting the district's rich cultural heritage. The findings suggest that heritage tourism can be a powerful tool for socioeconomic development, cultural preservation, and community engagement. By leveraging its unique heritage assets, Sivasagar District can unlock new opportunities for economic growth, cultural exchange, and sustainable development, ultimately enhancing the quality of life for its residents and promoting a positive image of the region globally.

Moreover, the study emphasises the need for collaborative efforts among stakeholders, including government agencies, local communities, and tourism operators, to ensure the sustainable development of heritage tourism. By working together, they can create a robust framework for heritage conservation, tourism infrastructure development, and community engagement. This will not only preserve the district's cultural heritage but also generate economic benefits, promote cultural exchange, and foster a sense of community pride.

Ultimately, this study provides valuable insights for policymakers, tourism stakeholders, and local communities, highlighting the potential of heritage tourism to drive socioeconomic

development and cultural preservation in Sivasagar District, Assam. By harnessing the power of heritage tourism, the district can embark on a path of sustainable development, cultural revitalisation, and economic growth, benefiting both present and future generations.

Furthermore, the study's findings can inform policy decisions and strategic planning for heritage tourism development, ensuring that the district's unique cultural assets are protected and showcased effectively. By prioritising heritage tourism, Sivasagar District can differentiate itself as a premier tourist destination, attracting visitors from around the world and contributing to the region's economic prosperity.

The study on “Heritage tourism and its impact on socio-economic and cultural aspects in Sivasagar District, Assam” has several limitations. The geographical focus on a single district may limit generalizability to other regions. Methodological constraints, such as sample size and data collection methods, may also impact findings. Additionally, data availability and quality, stakeholder perspectives, and cultural context may influence results.

This study demonstrates that heritage tourism can be a transformative force for Sivasagar District, Assam, driving economic growth, cultural preservation, and community development. By embracing its rich cultural heritage and leveraging the potential of heritage tourism, the district can create a brighter future for its residents and showcase its unique identity to the world.

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