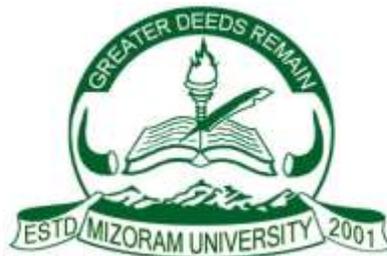


**TOURISM MARKETING IN NORTHEAST INDIA:
A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF MEGHALAYA AND MIZORAM**

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

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MZU Regn. No.: 5754 of 2013
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**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS, MANAGEMENT &
INFORMATION SCIENCE**

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**TOURISM MARKETING IN NORTHEAST INDIA:
A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF MEGHALAYA AND MIZORAM**

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DECLARATION

I, Jyoti Bikash Chakma 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 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.

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Aizawl, the 12th October, 2020

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PREFACE

Tourism is the world's oldest industry and also one of the largest and fastest growing industries today. It is the driving force for poverty reduction, job creation and social harmony. It helps in preserving the nature's beauty, cultural heritage of the land, tradition of soil and strengthens the process of national integration and universal brotherhood.

Tourism being a multi sectoral activity has the capacity to stimulate different sectors of the economy. It is evident from highly developed states and countries that tourism opens up immense opportunities for economic development, poverty reduction and income generation. Being labour intensive, it opens avenues for a host of employment opportunities. Similarly, the tourism industry in India is one of the most profitable industries and contributes substantially to foreign exchange earned. In fact, during 2017, over 10 million tourists visited India and spent over USD 27 billion, thus making India one of the major global tourism destinations.

India as a tourism product is unparalleled in its beauty, uniqueness, rich culture and diversity. With the concrete efforts like *Incredible India* and *Atithi Devo Bhava* campaigns, the National Tourism Policy, 2002, mega tourism projects involving both the central and state governments with the ministry of railways, civil aviation, road transportation and urban development, the tourism industry in India is thriving ever than before.

Tourism is one of the few industries in Northeast India (NEI) that has a lot of potential to develop. Its importance has been growing considerably over the recent years. The NEI, with its wide range of attractions and *Paradise Unexplored* theme, is trying to project as quality destination, which can offer tourists a unique experience. The region possesses varied tourism resources such as ecological, cultural, rural, adventure and wildlife tourism which could bring up benefits and welfare for the people of the region and contribute to enhance the economic development process. In spite of this, the NEI hasn't got its share of the total India's receipts for tourism. Needless to mention, due to socio-political and geographical reasons, the entire NEI has remained neglected

and backward from the development point of view. Though the Government of India is providing some special care for the region by providing funds and programmes for the promotion of tourism, the region still remains the least visited. In spite of having very high tourism potential, economic benefits from tourism sector are yet to be realised in the region even today.

Tourism cannot be developed in a vacuum. It requires social and economic infrastructure for proper growth. More efforts are needed to promote tourism aggressively, so as to tap its potential. There is a need to develop awareness among the people by adopting wider strategies for publicity. With growing competition, the marketing organisations in tourism sector have no option, except to adopt strategic marketing. Therefore, it is in this context, the present study is taken up to study the marketing practices followed by different marketers in the tourism sector in two select states of NEI, i.e. Meghalaya and Mizoram. The findings of the study are expected to enable the governments of the select states to devise plans, policies and strategies in the tourism sector in order to attain targets.

The entire study is divided into six chapters. They are as follows:

Chapter 1 - *Introduction*: The *first chapter* covers the introduction of tourism, its concept, components and highlight important definitions. It underlines the significance of tourism as an industry in Indian context and flashes lights on embracing of marketing for tourism development. The framework of the study containing review of literature, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research methodology, etc. are included in this chapter.

Chapter 2 - *Tourism in India - A Focus on the Northeast*: The *second chapter* attempts to present an overview of tourism in India with special reference to its northeast. Firstly, the chapter discusses the growth and development of tourism in India, major tourism thrusts during the five year plans and the different organisations working for the development of tourism in India. It highlights the facts and figures relating to tourist arrivals, foreign exchange earnings from tourism and India's inter-relationship with world tourism. Secondly, the chapter flashes light on all the eight states of NEI with

regard to prospects of tourism industry. It also highlights the important tourism attractions and the policy implications of all the eight states of NEI.

Chapter 3 - *Tourism Resources in Meghalaya and Mizoram - A SWOT Analysis*: The *third chapter* is an attempt to highlight the growth of tourism industry in Meghalaya and Mizoram and the organisational structure of tourism authorities in select states. Analyses on tourism infrastructures and various tourism resources of the select states have been covered. At the end, a SWOT analysis is also conducted to know the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of tourism industries in the select states.

Chapter 4 - *Tourist Behaviour-A Comparative Study of Meghalaya and Mizoram*: The *fourth chapter* intends to study the demographic profiles, the tour profiles and perceptions of the tourists who visited the select states. The chapter focuses on highlighting the attitudes, behaviours and satisfaction levels of the tourists on various tourism attributes in the select states. Primary data were analysed by using appropriate statistical tools to find out associations of different demographic characteristics of the tourists with their behavioural factors.

Chapter 5 - *Tourism Marketing Practices in Meghalaya and Mizoram*: The *fifth chapter* strives to study the conceptual approaches of tourism marketing. Special emphasis is given on the seven elements of marketing strategy (product, price, place, promotion, people, process and physical evidence) of tourism industry, being followed by the tourism marketers in the select states.

Chapter 6 - *Summary of Findings and Suggestions*: The *sixth chapter* aims to highlight the important findings drawn from the previous chapters and to provide suggestions for different stakeholders based on the findings. This chapter also brought out the areas for further research for the prospective researchers in the field of tourism studies in India in general and Northeast India in particular.

Lastly, the thesis concludes with References and Appendices. The Appendices include the questionnaire used for the tourists, particulars of the candidate and brief bio-data of the candidate.

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ABBREVIATIONS

| | | |
|-------|---|--|
| AD | : | <i>anno domini</i> |
| AEP | : | Act East Policy |
| ASEAN | : | Association of South East Asian Nations |
| BC | : | <i>before Christ</i> |
| CRM | : | Customer Relationship Management |
| DMO | : | Destination Marketing Organisations |
| DTA | : | Domestic Tourist Arrival |
| DoT | : | Department of Tourism |
| DTV | : | Domestic Tourist Visit |
| FEE | : | Foreign Exchange Earning |
| FTA | : | Foreign Tourist Arrival |
| FTV | : | Foreign Tourist Visit |
| GDP | : | Gross Domestic Product |
| GoI | : | Government of India |
| ICT | : | Information and Communication Technology |
| IITTM | : | Indian Institute of Tourism and Travel Management |
| ILP | : | Inner Line Permit |
| INR | : | Indian National Rupee |
| ITA | : | International Tourist Arrival |
| ITDC | : | India Tourism Development Corporation |
| ITR | : | International Tourism Receipt |
| IUOTO | : | International Union of Official Travel Organisations |
| LEP | : | Look East Policy |
| LTC | : | Leave Travel Concession |
| MoT | : | Ministry of Tourism |
| MTDA | : | Mizoram Tourism Development Authority |
| MTDB | : | Mizoram Tourism Development Board |
| MTDC | : | Meghalaya Tourism Development Corporation |

| | | |
|----------------------|---|---|
| NCHMCT Technology | : | National Council for Hotel Management and Catering |
| NEC | : | North Eastern Council |
| NEI | : | Northeast India |
| NER | : | North Eastern Region |
| NGO | : | Non Governmental Organisation |
| NH | : | National Highway |
| NIWS | : | National Institute of Water Sports |
| NTP | : | National Tourism Policy |
| PLC | : | Product Life Cycle |
| POS | : | Point of Sale |
| PPP | : | Public Private Partnership |
| RAP | : | Restricted Area Permit |
| SLTPO | : | State Level Tourism Promotion Organisation |
| SPSS | : | Statistical Package for the Social Sciences |
| STP | : | Sikkim Tourism Policy |
| SWOT | : | Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities Threats |
| TALC | : | Tourism Area Life Cycle |
| TCS | : | Tata Consultancy Services |
| TDPM | : | Tourism Development Plan for Meghalaya |
| TEP | : | Tripura Ecotourism Policy |
| TFCI | : | Tourism Finance Corporation of India |
| TPA | : | Tourism Policy of Assam |
| UNESCO | : | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization |
| UNWTO | : | United Nations World Tourism Organisation |
| USD | : | United States Dollar |
| USP | : | Unique Selling Proposition |
| WTTC | : | World Travel and Tourism Council |

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

“Atithi Devo Bhava”
(*The guest is god*)

This chapter begins with an introduction on tourism, its concept, components and definitions. It highlights the significance of tourism as an industry in Indian context and flashes light on embracing of marketing for tourism development. This chapter also deals with review of literature, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research methodology, etc.

1.1 Introduction

Tourism is a field of human activity known to mankind from time immemorial. No other activity has such a great potential for breaking barriers of caste, creed, and motivating linguistic groups to communicate with one another and to promote inter-regional understanding as tourism has (Kumar, 2001). It is being considered as an agent of social change bridging gaps among nations, regions and people and helping them to open up. It is a promoter of development - material and spiritual both at macro and micro level (Vijayakumar, 1998).

Tourism is the world's oldest industry and also one of the largest and fastest growing industries today. It is an industry that offers solutions to the most priorities – employment, revenue and equitable growth of the population. It is the driving force for poverty alleviation, job creation and social harmony (Deka, 2011). It helps in preserving the nature's beauty, cultural heritage of the land, tradition of soil and strengthens the process of national integration and universal brotherhood.

By the end of 20th century, tourism has become the largest industry in the world, and this is now considered as the most rapidly growing industry of the world (Khanka, 2010). Tourism as an ‘industry’ is a new concept to many countries, plays an intensely important role in the economic development of the nation. It is now widely appreciated as a superlative industry because of its tremendous growth, pace, high economic value, employment multipliers, foreign exchange earning potential and variety of other advantages. It has come to the rescue of many developing countries by singularly

countering their multiple problems ranging from socio-economic backwardness, unfavorable balance of payment, unemployment and imbalanced regional development etc. Thus, this industry is rightly called an agent of holistic development (Mittal, 2013).

1.2 Who is a tourist?

Tourism arises from the movement of millions of individuals which leads to the development of numerous and multifaceted activities, opportunities and approaches related to this industry (Page, 2014). Tourism involves various subjects such as psychology, sociology, economy, geography, etc. Hence, tourism can thus be seen as '*an umbrella concept*' in which multiple disciplines are linked. Due to this interdisciplinary and complex subject, defining tourism is critical, as the meaning of tourism might differ depending on the field of study. To ground on this matter, the tourist can thus be considered as the key element of the tourism industry. It is the essence, the human element, of this field. It is the heart and foundation of the tourism industry (Ghanem, 2007).

The word, 'tourist' derives from the Latin word 'tornus' meaning a turner's wheel. The International Dictionary of Tourism specified that 'tour' in English and in French means a 'journey', a 'circulative trip'.

One of the earliest definitions defines tourists as "people on temporary trips away from home who also spend money derived from their home area and not from the place being visited" (Shaw and Williams, 1994). The Oxford Encyclopedic English Dictionary defines 'tourist' as 'a person making a visit or tour on a holiday; a traveller, especially abroad' (Seth, 1985).

The most widely used technical definition is one recommended by the International Union of Official Travel Organisations, i.e. IUOTO (now UNWTO) in 1968, based the definition of a tourist on the visitor: "A visitor is defined as the person who travels to a country other than that of residence, for any reason other than paid work" (Candela and Figini, 2012). The definition covers that:

- (i) Tourists who are temporary visitors staying at least 24 hours in the country visited and the purpose of whose journey can be classified under anyone of the following headings:
 - (a) Leisure (recreation holiday, health, study, religion and sport);
 - (b) Business, family, mission, meeting;
- (ii) Excursionists who are temporary visitors staying less than 24 hours in the country visited.

1.3 Tourism as a concept

The term tourism and travel are often used interchangeably though literally there is a difference. Tourism refers to the activity of visitors. A *visitor* is a traveller taking a trip to a main destination outside his/her usual environment, for less than a year, for any main purpose (business, leisure or other personal purpose) other than to be employed by a resident entity in the country or place visited. A *trip* refers to the travel by a person from the time of departure from his usual residence until he/she returns: it thus refers to a round trip. A trip is made up of visits to different places. These trips taken by visitors qualify as tourism trips. On the other hand, *travel* refers to the activity of travellers. A *traveller* is someone who moves between different geographic locations, for any purpose and any duration (www.unwto.org).

In order for tourism to happen, there must be a displacement: an individual has to travel, using any type of means of transportation. In the words of Lundberg, tourism as a word appeared for the first time in 1811 and was associated with ‘mobility’ for recreation (Singha and Chakma, 2015). Tourism is a multi-faceted phenomenon which involves movement to and stay in destination outside the normal place of residence.

The World Tourism Organisation states, “Tourism comprises the activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes”.

Schullard, in 1910, defined tourism as “the sum total of operators, mainly of an economic nature, which directly relate to the entry, stay and movement of foreigners inside and outside a certain country, city or a region.” Hunziker and Krapf in 1941,

defined tourism as “the sum of phenomenon and relationship arising from the travel and stay of non-residents is so far as they do not lead to permanent residence and are not connected with any earning activity” (Bezbaruah, 2000).

According to Macintosh and Goeldner (1986) tourism is “the sum of the phenomena and relationships arising from the interaction of tourists, business suppliers, host governments and host communities in the process of attracting and hosting these tourists and other visitors.” Mathieson and Wall (1992) defined tourism as “the temporary movement of people to destinations outside their normal places of work and residence, the activities undertaken during their stay in those destinations, and the facilities created to cater to their needs.”

According to Sarkar and Dhar (as quoted by Khanka, 2010), “Tourism is a multidimensional concept and implies many things to many people. For the tourists it is a travel, a relaxation, a holiday, an exposure to other cultures and traditions. Those who ‘sell’ tourism naturally see things differently. To them, it is an industry, a source of income, especially of foreign exchange. Thus, conceptually it is an amalgam of phenomenon and relationships arising from the movement of the people ‘to’ and their stay ‘in’ the different destinations. The ‘journey’ (a dynamic element) and ‘stay’ (a static element) are the two necessary constituents of the mass phenomenon called tourism.”

Tourism is basically of two types, i.e. domestic tourism and international tourism. Domestic tourism is the type of tourism in which people travel to other places within the country while international tourism is the tourism in which people travel to other countries other than their residing countries. Further, it can be classified into two types: inbound and outbound tourism. Inbound tourism is the type of tourism in which people travel to one country from other countries and outbound tourism is the type of tourism in which people travel from their country of origin to other countries. The phenomenon of tourism began from old centuries when wealthy people in the society were traveling for leisure purpose. In the old centuries people mainly were traveling for the purpose of relaxation from their usual lives after people start traveling according to their type of interests.

The term mass tourism comes with the development of advanced technologies which are capable of taking large number of people from one place to another in a single time. In modern world niche tourism is the fastest growing type of tourism. Niche tourism is the tourism in which people are visiting or going to other places according to their interests and to fulfill their desires. Some of examples of niche tourism are agri tourism, culinary tourism, wild tourism, wellness and spa tourism, religious tourism, ecotourism, culture and heritage tourism, nature tourism, rural tourism, sports tourism and many more.

1.4 Components of tourism

Tourism is considered an industry. This industry is composed of a group of firms that are engaged in the business of selling to or serving tourists (Singh, 2000). Hotels, restaurants, transportation and amusements are examples of the types of firms that collectively constitute the tourism industry (Bhattacharjee, 2001). Hence, tourism has many components comprising the overall travel experience of a tourist.

A travel may range from several thousand kilometers which include one or more forms of transport. It involves the stay of several days, weeks or months which require accommodation, recreation, sight-seeing and a variety of facilities and services for use and enjoyments. The success of tourism depends on all these factors. Components of tourism can be divided into the following categories (Bhatia, 2001):

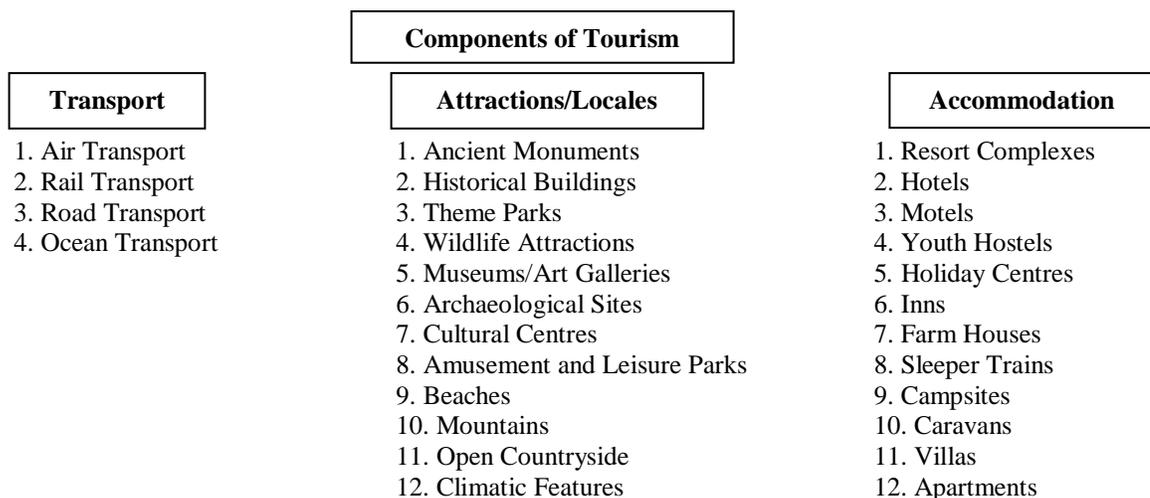


Fig. 1.1 Basic Components of Tourism
Source: Bhatia (2001)

- (i) *Transport:* There can be no travel if there were no transport. Travel involves movement of people and this is possible only if there is some mode of transport. Connectivity is very vital for tourism development. This could be possible only if adequate transportation infrastructure and access to destination is efficient, comfortable and less expensive. A tourist, in order to get to his destination therefore, needs some mode of transport. This mode of transport may be motor car, a coach, an aeroplane, a ship or a train which enables a traveller to reach his pre-determined destination.
- (ii) *Attractions / Locales:* The locale may include the holiday destination and what it offers to the tourist. The holiday destination may offer natural attractions like sunshine, scenic beauty or sporting facilities. The locale, with its attractions and amenities is the most important as these are very basic to tourism. Unless these are there, the tourists will not be motivated to go to a particular place. However, since interests and tastes of tourists vary widely, they might choose from a wide range of attractions available at various destinations all over the world. Tourist demands are also very much susceptible to changes in fashion. Fashion is an important factor in the demand for various tourist attractions and amenities. The tourists who visit a particular place for its natural beauty may decide to visit some other attractions due to a change in fashion.
- (iii) *Accommodation:* Accommodation plays a central role and is very basic to tourist destinations. World Tourism Organisation in its definition of a tourist has stated that the tourist must spend at least one night in the destination visited to be qualified as a tourist. Accommodation may in itself be an important tourist attraction. In fact, a large number of tourists visit a particular destination or town simply because there is a first class luxury hotel or resort which provides excellent services and facilities. Many hotel establishments elsewhere in various countries, especially the resort hotels, have gained a reputation for their excellent cuisine, services and facilities.

1.5 Marketing: A prerequisite for tourism development

Marketing in tourism means the systematic and coordinated efforts exerted by the tourism marketers at international, national and local levels to optimize the satisfaction of tourists, groups and individuals with a view to achieve the sustained tourism growth (Chaudhary, 2012). Different firms in tourism industry employ different types of marketing strategies in order to stay ahead of competition. The strategies may vary from one firm to another, and depend on the customer segment that the firm is targeting. It does not matter what the marketing strategy of the firm is; it has to necessarily account for the following aspects of tourism-service offering: intangibility, inseparability, variability and perishability.

- *Intangibility*: Unlike physical products, services cannot be verified by any of the human senses. However, consumers often infer the quality of the services from place, people, equipment, price, communication and material associated with the service. In case of tourism, a customer would have a different perception about the quality of services, for example, a room or food offered in a five-star luxury hotel as compared to an economy hotel, owing to the various factors listed above. This indicates that a hotel, depending on its value proposition, may target the appropriate segment of the market by leveraging the factors listed above.
- *Inseparability*: A unique aspect of services is that unlike physical goods, they have to be produced and consumed simultaneously. In tourism, the tourist and the service providers interact continuously, right from the tourist's arrival in the destination till the completion of the entire tourism process. The service provider in such cases can continuously gauge the level of satisfaction of the tourists.
- *Variability*: Services vary from one place to another and from one time to another. It is extremely difficult to maintain the same standard of service delivery. The service delivery standard also depends on the person who delivers it. For example, the type of hotels found in a tourist destination known for its beaches is different from the type of hotels found in a hill station. Each type of hotel has its own value proposition and intends to offer a different type of service to the tourists, and hence, the quality

of service would invariably vary. However, the hotels in each case have to ensure that they necessarily meet the consumer expectations as often as possible.

- *Perishability*: Unlike products, services cannot be stored. In tourism, this implies that during the peak season as well as during unfavourable seasons, a potential mismatch may occur between the demand for tourism services and supply, which is often the case with most hotels in hill stations during summers.

Marketing in tourism is generally carried on at two distinct levels. In the first level, the destination as a whole is sought to be marketed. This responsibility is generally assigned to the tourism promotion organizations. The second level of tourism marketing covers the marketing activity of the main commercial operators (e.g., hotels, airlines, tour operators and the like) for promoting their individual products. Thus, marketing of tourism involves performing all managerial activities of a tourism firm taking on the customer in mind and treating him as the hub of the firm.

Thomas and Gracious (2004) advocated the necessity of marketing of tourism products as tourism plays a major role in the economies of the world. According to them, as the nature and dimension of tourism products differ with physical products marketing strategy for tourism should be based on consumers' expectations, needs, attitudes, likes and dislikes. It should involve the use of multimedia, new advertising techniques in global markets and the importance of relationship marketing for tourism industry. Sharma and Hazarika (2017) analysed various promotional and marketing schemes adopted by various tourism organizations in India. They believed that Indian tourism industry would not be able to get the desired growth and impetus unless it is backed up by intense promotional and marketing strategies. They observed that even though the marketing is carried out for the promotion of tourism industry, it lacks innovation and creativity. At the same time she felt that there is a need to have a good synergy between the organizational structure and culture to make Indian tourism more tourists friendly.

The aim of tourism marketing strategy is to pull together tourism management decisions regarding their objectives, market targets and marketing mix programs in

conjunction with the organization of resources and allocation of responsibilities in carrying out specific marketing activities and tasks. The heart of the tourism marketing strategy is where the emphasis is placed on the manner and extent to which each controllable marketing mix variable is used and the way they are combined into a single strategy for each segment. The main emphasis in strategic marketing in tourism is a dynamic and continuous process with interrelated and interacting variables (Imiru, 2009). However, an effective marketing strategy in tourism industry cannot be formulated without having an in-depth knowledge about the behaviour of tourists, their preference on tourism products, their priority during visit and their opinion on the promotional measures on tourism. Therefore, marketing in tourism is concerned with the needs of identifiable consumer groups (Nimi, 2011). Marketing involves much more than product/service development, place (location and distribution), and pricing. It requires information about people such as what they like, where they buy and how much they spend. A marketer's role is to match the right product or service with the right market or audience.

As tourism is a service industry, consisting of transportation, attractions and accommodation, hospitality plays an important role in its marketing. The success of the tourism industry depends on the effectiveness of the marketing strategies adopted for tourism products. With growing competition, organisations in tourism business have no option but to do organised and targeted marketing.

1.6 Tourism from an Indian perspective

Tourism being a multi sectoral activity has the capacity to stimulate different sectors of the economy. It is evident from highly developed states and countries that tourism opens up immense opportunities for economic development, poverty reduction and income generation. Being labour intensive, it opens avenues for a host of employment opportunities. The tourism industry in India is one of the most profitable industries and contributes substantially to foreign exchange earned. In fact during 2017, over 10 million tourists visited India and spent over USD 27 billion, thus making India one of the major global tourism destinations (*Annual Reports of MoT*).

Table 1.1
Tourism contribution to GDP and employment in India

| Year | Tourism contribution to GDP | | Tourism contribution to employment | |
|------|-----------------------------|----------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| | Rs. in billion | % Share in GDP | Number in thousand | % Share in employment |
| 2001 | 1,693.28 | 7.3 | 40,300.3 | 9.6 |
| 2002 | 2,072.37 | 8.3 | 45,272.6 | 10.6 |
| 2003 | 2,429.06 | 8.8 | 48,163.3 | 11 |
| 2004 | 2,738.79 | 8.7 | 48,874.2 | 11 |
| 2005 | 2,499.64 | 7.0 | 42,439.0 | 9.3 |
| 2006 | 2,953.63 | 7.1 | 43,256.7 | 9.3 |
| 2007 | 3,475.65 | 7.2 | 47,770.9 | 10.1 |
| 2008 | 4,014.08 | 7.2 | 39,928.5 | 8.3 |
| 2009 | 4,130.66 | 6.7 | 38,145.8 | 7.8 |
| 2010 | 4,768.45 | 6.5 | 33,931.0 | 7.8 |
| 2011 | 5,686.44 | 6.6 | 34,854.0 | 7.8 |
| 2012 | 6,385.13 | 6.5 | 35,255.0 | 7.9 |
| 2013 | 7,416.14 | 6.6 | 35,736.0 | 7.6 |
| 2014 | 7,735.40 | 7.5 | 36,693.0 | 9.4 |
| 2015 | 8,309.40 | 7.6 | 37,315.0 | 8.7 |
| 2016 | 8,913.60 | - | 38,441.0 | - |

Source: World Travel & Tourism Council Report
Quoted by Dayananda and Leelavathi (2016)

The tourism industry has become the fastest growing service industry in the country with great potentials for its further expansion and diversification, it has direct and indirect chain link with several sector in an economy (Dayananda, 2016). A World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) report shows that in 2016, tourism has contributed nearly Rs. 9,000 billion to the Indian GDP (Table 1.1). The trend of tourism contribution towards Indian GDP shows a positive growth since the beginning of the millennium. Tourism has contributed 7.3% of the total share of Indian GDP in 2001, furthering its contribution volume to 7.6% in 2015. On the other hand, the total contribution of tourism industry to employment generation, including jobs indirectly supported by the industry, was 8.7% of total employment which was a total of 3,73,15,000 jobs.

Table 1.2
FTAs in India and FEEs through tourism in India

| Year | FTA | | FEE | | FEE | |
|--------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|----------------|-----------------------------|
| | In number | % change over previous year | In USD Million) | % change over previous year | In INR (Crore) | % change over previous year |
| 2001 | 2537282 | -4.2 | 3198 | -7.6 | 15,083 | -3.5 |
| 2002 | 2384364 | -6.0 | 3103 | -3.0 | 15,064 | -0.1 |
| 2003 | 2726214 | 14.3 | 4463 | 43.8 | 20,729 | 37.6 |
| 2004 | 3457477 | 26.8 | 6170 | 38.2 | 27,944 | 34.8 |
| 2005 | 3918610 | 13.3 | 7493 | 21.4 | 33,123 | 18.5 |
| 2006 | 4447167 | 13.5 | 8634 | 15.2 | 39,025 | 17.8 |
| 2007 | 5081504 | 14.3 | 10729 | 24.3 | 44,362 | 13.7 |
| 2008 | 5282603 | 4.0 | 11832 | 10.3 | 51,294 | 15.6 |
| 2009 | 5167699 | -2.2 | 11136 | -5.9 | 53,754 | 4.8 |
| 2010 | 5775692 | 11.8 | 14190 | 30.1 | 66,172 | 23.1 |
| 2011 | 6309222 | 9.2 | 17707 | 22.2 | 83,036 | 25.5 |
| 2012 | 6577745 | 4.3 | 17971 | 1.5 | 95,607 | 15.1 |
| 2013 | 6967601 | 5.9 | 18397 | 2.4 | 1,07,563 | 12.5 |
| 2014 | 7679099 | 10.2 | 19700 | 7.1 | 1,20,367 | 11.9 |
| 2015 | 8027133 | 4.5 | 21013 | 6.7 | 1,34,844 | 12.0 |
| 2016 | 8804411 | 9.7 | 22923 | 9.1 | 1,54,146 | 14.3 |
| 2017 | 10035803 | 14.0 | 27310 | 19.1 | 1,77,874 | 15.4 |
| 2018 (Jan-June) | 5163343 (Jan-June) | 7.9 @ | 14625 | 12.9@ | 95,713 | 12@ |

Source: Annual Reports of Ministry of Tourism, GoI
(Official Website of Ministry of Tourism)

The Indian tourism and hospitality industry has emerged as one of the key drivers of growth among the services sector in India. The fascination for travel has grown immeasurably in the past few decades, so much so that travel and tourism is widely recognized today as one of the most important sectors in Indian economy. In fact, the number of foreign tourist arrivals (FTAs) increased from just 2.5 million in 2001 to 10 million in 2017 (Table 1.2). The year 2017 has seen a 14% growth of FTA over the previous year, which is quite encouraging from the point of industries directly or indirectly related to tourism sector. Tourism has also been a significant source of foreign exchange for the country. The industry has generated USD 27310 million FEEs for the Indian economy in 2017 which was approximately 1,77,874 crore in Indian currency.

India is fortunate enough for its rich tourism destinations as it offers a wide array of places to see and things to do. Tourism in India has countless options which can be relished by tourists on their vacation in the country. The delighting backwaters, hill stations and landscapes make India a beautiful country. Historical monuments, forts, beaches, places of religious interests, etc. add to the grandeur of the country. India is probably the only country that offers various categories of tourism such as history tourism, adventure tourism, medical tourism, spiritual tourism, etc. India possesses rich and living cultural heritage, varied topography, attractions those can spellbound each and every kind of tourist - from the sea surfers to the trekkers in the world's most diverse mountain ranges, to the white water rafters- from the nature lover to the peace seekers. Deserts and the world's rainiest place, and many a uniqueness of the world are present in this country.

With regards to diversity in India the famous orientalist, Max Mueller's observation on India as quoted by Kumar (2000), "*If we were to look over the whole world to find out the country most richly endowed with all the wealth power, and beauty that nature can bestow - in some parts a veritable paradise on earth- I should point to India. If I were asked under what sky the human mind most fully developed some of its choicest gifts ... I should point out to India.*"

Today, Indian tourism is growing with leaps and bounds and has a great potential to be developed as a world class tourism destination. India has an opportunity in tourism to make it better position by considering new marketing strategies to get close with domestic as well as global tourists. In view of this, the Ministry of Tourism (MoT) in India has come up with its own brand – *Incredible India!* It has undertaken many projects to showcase India as a perfect tourism destination and create a visitor-friendly image of the country. The continued *Incredible India* campaign launched by Government of India (GoI) has had a strong impact on the tourist arrivals in India. The GoI has also identified seven key areas to provide thrust for tourism development in the country. They are *Swagat, Suchana, Suvidha, Suraksha, Sahyog, Samrachana* and *Safai*, which means Welcome, Information, Facilitation, Safety, Cooperation, Infrastructure

Development and Cleanliness, respectively. The main aim of the policy was to promote balanced socio-economic development, promote and preserve the rich heritage and culture and also create employment opportunities. Another major tourism campaign *Atithi Devo Bhavah* was also undertaken by the government in 2009 to give a widespread message of 'Honour your Guest as he is always equivalent to God'. Indians have been highly hospitable and this trend is still present in modern India. It appeals tourists from all over the world and provides them unique tourism experience to cherish for lifetime.

However, India needs to change its traditional marketing approach to a more competitive and modern approach. There is a need to develop a unique market position and the brand positioning will be the essence of the country's tourism products to the potential customer. More discussions on various aspects of tourism in India have been covered in Chapter 2.

1.7 Significance of the study

The growth and contribution of tourism industry to the income and employment is well recognized across many countries. The economic value of tourism is generally measured by its contribution to the national income, the earnings of foreign exchange, its contribution to the country's revenues and the creation of employment. According to the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), tourism has become one of the world's largest industries generating 11% of the global GDP and it employs around 200 million people worldwide. The tourism industry in India too, employed over 38.4 million people and contributed Rs. 89.134 billion to national GDP.

In a developing country like India, tourism contributes to the economic development of an area, creates huge employment opportunities, provides equitable distribution of wealth, helps to acquire the much-needed foreign exchange, brings out a speedy development and improvement of infrastructure facilities, helps in eradicating the regional imbalances, improves the standard of living of the local people, boosts up the local and cottage industries, promotes international understanding by bringing

diverse people face to face, and above all, helps in achieving a social, cultural, political and educational understanding among the people (Mathew, 2002).

The present study focused on marketing of tourism in two select states of Northeast India, i.e. Meghalaya and Mizoram. The study also analyses the buying behaviour of tourists visiting the select states and identifies the factors that influence the decision making process of the tourists. The study also focused on policy initiatives adopted by the governments of the select states for the development of tourism industry. Further, the feedback from domestic and foreign tourists will help a lot in presenting the hospitality services to the required aspirations.

The Northeast India (NEI) is considered to be one of the regions that have enormous potential to develop as a tourism destination. Tourism has the potential for generating incomes and employment opportunities in the region as it is characterized by the blending of flora and fauna; it is also exceptionally rich in bio-diversity. Considered as one of the world's most diverse regions, the bio-diversity of NEI is quite amazing. The land is a blend of wild life, flora and fauna, tribal and non-tribal populations with unique cultural identity, colourful festivals and arts and crafts. All the eight contiguous states of NEI are well bestowed with unique characters and beauties with them. In fact, the region is a kaleidoscope of cultural extravaganza with enormous natural delights. This makes them a centre of attraction for tourists and one of the major tourists' destinations in India (Rizal and Asokan, 2013). In the words of Ryngnga (2011) North eastern region of India has a tremendous potential for tourism development. The region is strategically located at the crossroads of many international boundaries (98%) and its richness in biodiversity could become a place of attraction for tourism industry. The scenic landscape of hills, mountains, plains and plateaus and being situated between the South Asia and South East Asia, the region has many culture groups and inhabited by people of many ethno-linguistic backgrounds with their own colourful traditional art, culture, handicraft, fair and festivals which easily attract tourists from world over.

Northeast India is well blessed by nature and it lies at the centre of one of the world's richest bio-geographic areas. Tourism has potential for generating income and

employment opportunities in the region. Therefore, the foreign as well as domestic investors should be encouraged to set up their export-oriented industries in Northeast India to enjoy the vast potential of contiguous markets of ASEAN countries (Das, 2013). Barman (2013) observed that the Northeast India has a tremendous tourism potential with the main attraction rendered by the great Himalayas, the hilly terrains, picturesque destinations, wildlife, cultural diversity, unique customs and colourful lives in the region.

The state of Meghalaya is blessed with vast tracts of evergreen forests, silvery waterfalls, swift mountain rivers, numerous caves and a cool, temperate climate. Meghalaya resonates with fairs and festivals which are celebrated throughout the year. Music remains an integral part of every festival and ceremony of the state. The state has some of the thickest surviving forests in the country and therefore constitutes one of the most important ecotourism circuits. It is a paradise for nature lovers, nature scientists and ethnologists. The state is also known for its sacred groves and waterfalls. Meghalaya is considered as the wettest state of the country and of the world which provides deep forests, sprawling water bodies, cascading rivers in the hills, the lofty mountain ranges with interplay of lush green valley to form an ideal habitat for flora and fauna. It has special attractions like the Shillong golf course, the wettest place in the world (Mawsynram), wildlife sanctuaries and biosphere reserves. It also boasts of one of the most beautiful high altitude man-made lakes in India at Umiam, also called Bara Pani. The state also offers numerous trekking routes some of which offer an opportunity to encounter rare animals and plant species distinctive to this region of the country.

With regard to Mizoram, it is an elongated tongue-shaped mountainous state nestling in the southern tip of Northeast India. The state is covered with verdant forests dominated by thick bamboo groves, teeming with vibrant wildlife, sheer cliffs and breathtaking waterfalls, dotted with unique landmarks of myriad folklores and picturesque villages of houses built on stilts, a land of dramatic seas of morning mists that enfold islands of hills and peaks. Mizoram is cocooned by the mighty mystic mountains, rare flora and fauna and thick forests. The meandering rivers with a graceful

gait and shimmering waterfalls make up the exorbitant atmosphere of the state. The hilly terrain with excellent flora and fauna makes an ideal destination for the trekkers and nature-loving tourists.

The two select states of Meghalaya and Mizoram hold immense tourism potential due to their natural scenic beauty and rich bio-diversity. Tourism attractions in the select states are quite abundant and exciting. These states are endowed with beautiful treks, charming caves, wildlife sanctuaries, scenic lakes, waterfalls, picturesque villages and so much more. The breathtaking valleys, green forests and the meandering river with a graceful gait and shimmering waterfalls make up the exorbitant atmosphere of the states. The unique cultures of the beautiful tribes through their festivals with folk songs, dances, food and crafts, etc reflect the cultural richness of these states. In addition, the natural beauty, the topography and the rugged hilly terrains, size of population and area are among many of the common features of these two states. One may wonder by seeing the abundance of tourism resources in these states which are still to be explored.

All such factors have prompted the researcher to evaluate the marketing of various tourism products in the states of Meghalaya and Mizoram. The study is expected to enable the governments of the select states to devise plans, policies and strategies in the tourism sector in order to attain targets.

1.8 Review of literature

An endeavor has been made to provide a review of literatures of various studies related to different aspects of tourism. In order to develop an in-depth understanding of the research topic, studies on tourism industry relating to economic impact of tourism, destination branding/marketing, marketing of tourism, perception and satisfaction levels of tourists, role of tour operators and travel agencies in the development and management of tourism have been perused. Eventually, tourism studies on Northeast India and other aspects have also been reviewed.

1.8.1 Economic impact of tourism

Jenkins (1998) cited that expansion of tourist flows helps to sustain and create local incomes, employment and growth, contribute to the costs of providing economic

and social infrastructure, encourage the development of other industrial sectors, and contribute to local resident amenities and services. It is also important as to contribute to the conservation of environmental and cultural resources.

Ashley et al (2000) have examined the effects of tourism on livelihood of poor and enhancement of such positive impacts. The study highlighted the need to enhance economic opportunities for the poor, encouragement to private players to develop pro-poor strategies in tourism destinations.

Patil and Choudhari (2011) examined the performance of the emerging sector in India particularly the tourism sector. According to them, tourism is one of the largest service industries globally in terms of gross revenue as well as service sector earnings. It has the potential to ensure infrastructural development and the capacity to capitalize on the country's success in the services sector and provide sustainable growth model. The tourism sector is particularly important for India as it stimulates other economic sectors like agriculture, horticulture, handicrafts, transport, construction, etc., through its backward and forward linkages and cross-sectoral synergies.

Sahoo and Sahoo (2011) stated that tourism could now be considered as the largest service industry in India with a contribution of 6.23% to the national GDP and providing 8.78% of the total employment generation. But, the tourism industry of India has still a long way to go before it can compete with other countries of Asia Pacific regions which are well advanced in tourist-appealing. They suggested that the tourism sector in India should aim at accommodating and entertaining the visitors in such a way that is minimally intrusive or destructive to the environment and sustains and supports the native cultures in the locations that are operating in.

Kakkar and Sapna (2012) studied the impact of tourism on Indian tourism and its role in India's GDP. They observed that there has been tremendous growth in tourism in India because of the policies of the government and support from all levels. They believed that tourism is not only a major driver of economic growth but a generator of employment opportunities in a developing country like India.

Mishra and Padhi (2013) in their article opined that tourism could be termed as a useful measure for employment generation, poverty alleviation and sustainable human development in India. Tourism sector could be considered as the backbone for allied sectors, like hospitality, civil aviation and transport. They observed that tourism sector accounts for one-third of the foreign exchange earnings (FEE) of India and gainfully employs the highest number of people compared to other sectors.

Sangeetha (2012) in her paper attempted to highlight the different scopes of tourism in India that can help in shaping the society. She observed that the tourism industry offers various career opportunities both in the public and private sector. In the public sector, there are opportunities in the form officers, information assistants, tourist guides etc while in private sectors qualified tourism personnel can work as travel agencies, tour operators, airlines, hotels, transport and cargo companies etc. She advocated that tourism should be seen not only an economic option like foreign exchange earnings, enhance employability and community development, but a dimension of cultural exchange among various nationalities that shall pave the way for universal peace and harmony.

Vijayaragavan (2014) in his paper highlighted the significance and impact of tourism in Indian economy. He stated that in developing country like India tourism has become one of the major sectors of the economy, contributing to a large proportion to GDP and employment opportunities. To attract the foreign tourists, liberal policies and reduction in taxes along with a comprehensive package are the need of the hour.

1.8.2 Destination branding/marketing

Blumberg (2005) opined that tourism destination marketing is an essential component in the management of destinations. He examined the suitability of tourism destination marketing as a tool and of Destination Marketing Organizations (DMO) as a vehicle for tourism destination management and development. In his study on Tasman Region, New Zealand, he observed that DMOs are unlikely to be able to claim too much responsibility for destination management, but they can play an important part in the management of the destination product.

Alhroot (2007) in his thesis studied the internal and external environmental factors that affect destination marketing in Jordan and the use of the destination marketing concept by tourism companies. He used survey methods to develop and test the critical factors of a destination marketing success model that can be used to market and promote Jordan, regionally and globally, as a preferred tourism destination area. The findings indicated that quality of accommodation, access to natural areas, tour guides, tourist information, transportation, etc. were the important factors that influence the tourists' satisfaction most. It was observed that most of the tourists wished their tourism experience must be safe, secure, comfortable and relaxing. The findings also revealed that the most critical factors of destination marketing development should be improving the tourism products, identifying and exploring new opportunities and upgrading visitor services and facilities.

Wang and Krakover (2008) in their paper tried to understand the business relationships among the tourism industry stakeholders in conducting collaborative destination marketing activities. The paper provided practical implications to tourism businesses in their efforts to collectively market their destination, particularly in relation to how they balance the relationship between cooperation and competition, individual benefits and common benefits in order to achieve success for both the destination and their individual businesses.

Ekonde (2010) in his thesis tried to explore the factors that influence visitors to choose a particular destination. The study was a comparative study on tourism destination marketing conducted in a town in a developed country (Sweden) and a town in a developing country (Cameroon). The results revealed that factors like safety and security, attractiveness of the destination, recreational places play important roles in determining choices of the visitors to a particular tourism destination.

Bhat and Gaur (2012) in their study in New Zealand addressed the issue of balance of power among various stakeholders in destination marketing. In the study, they used a combination of three sources of evidence – interviews, documents and physical artefacts. They believed that the wide variety of organizations and even the

entire population of the country who are affected by destination marketing decisions should be recognized as destination stakeholders. The study also educated global tourism practitioners and policy makers that management of various stakeholders in the context of destination marketing is not a given one, but it is a strategic choice which is affected by the existing network structure and climate.

Soteriades (2012) in his study examined the potential contribution of some approaches, i.e. value-chain, strategic marketing, electronic marketing and clustering towards promotion of tourism destinations. The paper provides insights into a comprehensive approach to destination marketing planning and implementation and suggests a conceptual framework encompassing approaches contributing to improve effectiveness and efficiency in the field of destination marketing.

Schaar (2013) in her paper tried to present tourism marketers a snapshot of the concept of destination branding in a context of everyday marketing operations. She believed that destination marketers can use a brand as a quick and cohesive way to convey key messages to potential tourists. Her paper emphasized the importance of emotional and inspirational appeals in brand messages, as travel choices are a form of self-expression and self-actualization for a consumer. She conceived that, to run a successful rebranding campaign, a destination marketing organization must work closely with tourism suppliers of their location, consider the values of the local stakeholders and conduct extensive research on the perceptions already held by the tourist on the tourism destination.

Pike and Page (2014) made a narrative analysis of various literatures on destination marketing organizations and destination marketing. Their review was mainly structured around one principal question: 'To what extent is the Destination Marketing Organisation (DMO) responsible for the competitiveness of the destination?' In pursuit of this underlying question, they addressed a number of themes including nomenclature and the DMO, the evolution of the destination marketing literature, and effectiveness of DMO including issues of branding and positioning, and future research themes in the field.

Dundar (2015) examined whether perceived destination image of Turkey's capital Ankara differs by socio-demographic features of foreign tourists. He found that the difference in destination image demonstrates that some diversifications are needed in destination marketing and image forming efforts. Because of that, different positioning strategy, image forming process and marketing mix have to be developed for every single target markets in the marketplace which are segmented according to socio-demographic features.

Efstathios and Theocharis (2017) in their paper aimed to explore the potential of city tourism development in Thessaloniki (Greece) by analyzing the destination and proposing a strategic marketing plan to promote the city as an all year round tourism destination. They opined that cities throughout Europe are increasingly importing the concept and techniques of product branding for use within place marketing, in pursuit of wider urban management goals, especially within the new conditions created by European integration. They advocated that regional tourism marketing strategies should be adopted to develop destinations that can compete globally by capitalizing on regional identities, authenticity and local distinctiveness.

1.8.3 Marketing of tourism

Edgell et al. (2000) in their study presented a new approach to strategic marketing planning for the tourism industry. In the marketing process emphasizes were mainly given on quality, efficiency, and effectiveness. They recommended a six-step approach to strategic marketing planning which include analysis, research and analysis, creative infusion, strategic positioning, marketing plan development and training, implementation, evaluation, and adjustment. In addition, they presented a framework to provide a road map for any tourism organization or destination to help enhance and improve their marketing efforts.

Bhattacharjee (2001) in his doctoral thesis carried out an extensive research on promotional strategies and marketing practices of the State Level Tourism Promotion Organisations (SLTPOs) in two select states of Northeast India (Assam and Meghalaya). He observed that Northeast India has failed to find a respectable position for itself in the

national tourism map. This remains true despite the fact that all the seven states of the region have SLTPOs and at least two of the states, viz., Assam and Meghalaya are even having state level tourism development corporations. In fact, due to ineffective marketing strategy, the seven states of Northeast India together are unable to attract even one percent of the foreign tourist arrivals in India, or even five percent of the national domestic tourist traffic.

Mohanty (2004) in his paper underlined tourism's vast potential in employment generation in India, much of which still waits for proper marketing and utilization. India is still way behind the developed as well as some developing countries with respect to tourism. Hence, the satisfaction of the tourist should be the top priority of the tourism industry in order to invite a higher tourist inflow into the country. The tourism sector also requires an environment of peace and stability where the tourists are sure for their safety and security.

Jamrozy (2008) in his paper proposed a sustainable marketing strategy based on a collaborative network marketing approach. Collaborative networking occurs at various levels, including all the travel agencies, tourism organizations and businesses engaging and interested in sustainable tourism development. Taking a case study of Montenegro, his paper demonstrated how commitment towards sustainability and collaborative network marketing can create synergies that enhance further sustainable development. Within this system sustainable development objectives do not need to compete with tourism marketing practices. Rather, within the sustainability network system, sustainability goals are interrelated and interdependent and support each other.

Pillai (2010) observed that ideal mix of marketing tools is an essential component of successful marketing. He tried to examine the configuration of a developed service marketing mix applied in marketing of tourism programmes at Thekkady, a much sought after wildlife tourism destination in South India. In his paper, the seven elements (Ps) of tourism marketing mix, i.e. product, place, price, promotion, people, process and physical evidences linking to tourism in Thekkady have been studied.

Nasreen and Thang (2011) in their paper entitled, “Marketing of Asian Countries as Tourist Destination - Comparative Study of India and Malaysia” studied the behavioural patterns of tourists and the marketing practices adopted by the governments of the select countries of India and Malaysia. The paper also examined the differences in the purpose of visit or similarities in the tourist’s decision making process when they opt for tourism in these two countries.

Nimi (2011) in her doctoral thesis studied the marketing strategies adopted by tourism industry in the states of Kerala and Tamil Nadu. The perception of the tourists visiting the select states was studied. The study also focused on policy initiatives adopted by respective state governments and also covered the promotional and pricing strategies adopted by supportive industries like tour operators and hoteliers.

Mihailovic and Moric (2012) in their paper discussed the role of marketing concept in the process of the sustainable rural tourism development. They observed that marketing of rural tourism should be seen as a means to achieve the strategic goals of rural tourism destinations such as long-term prosperity, guest satisfaction, profit maximization, extension of the tourist season, neutralizing the negative social impacts, stabilization of employment and spatial distribution of tourist demand. Therefore, marketing cannot be understood simply as propaganda or simply as printing leaflets, but as a platform for defining business objectives and strategies, and creation of tourist products which deliver unique experience to consumers.

Shaheeda (2012) in her paper evaluated service marketing mix concepts and its application in promoting Karnataka tourism. She observed that due to vast potential of various markets such as medical tourism and ecotourism, the tourism market of Karnataka is growing at a quick rate and considered to be one of the most favoured tourist destinations for both domestic as well as international tourists. She suggested that the state government should apply an aggressive marketing strategy and try to expand and develop integrated infrastructural facilities which could ease the vast inflow of tourists into the state.

Amin (2014) in his thesis studied the contemporary situation of Pietarsaari (a small town in Finland) - tourism resources accommodation, transportation, attractions and events. He attempted to develop a strategic marketing plan for the tourism market of Pietarsaari. The study revealed that in spite of many potentialities, the tourism industry of this town had not developed much as it should be due to lack of proper strategic tourism marketing. He observed that marketing of tourism for a small town like Pietarsaari was not an easy process which requires solid plans to put them into action.

According to Candea et al. (2014), a tourism marketing strategy plan has to comprise a vision, a mission and several objectives. They believed that in the existing conditions of a globalized and competitive tourism market, a company cannot be maintained to a competitive level without conceiving a general and sectoral plan. In the marketing mix structure, the promotion component is essential because it enhances the popularity of the products/services offered, determines the attractiveness and also has the final influence on the buying decision. According to them, a good promotion strategic plan has to determine a low degree of errors and negative results and ensure an integrated system approach of the promotional issues.

Joshi (2014) conducted a study on the development and marketing of tourism in Maharashtra. She observed that although Maharashtra offers various kinds of tourism attractions, lack of effective marketing strategy is one of the main reasons for poor performance of tourism in the state. As tourism is a multi-dimensional activity and basically a service industry, she believed that all wings of the central and state governments, private sector and voluntary organizations should become active partners in attaining sustainable growth in tourism. In addition, positive attitude of the local community and tourists' friendly atmosphere is also vital to create awareness and promote tourism.

Lotter et al. (2014) in their paper studied the demographic profile of adventure tourists in Pretoria, South Africa for market targeting and integrated marketing decision-making. In order to implement an effective target marketing strategy, they believe that

every tourism organisation should follow the three major steps of target marketing. They are market segmentation, market targeting and market positioning.

Sara and Amata (2014) in their paper created a Tourism Marketing Knowledge Grid and used it as a framework for the review. The grid revealed that existing tourism marketing research has primarily focused on how service promises are made and kept, and has mostly generated frameworks to improve managerial decision making or provided insights about associations between constructs. These findings pointed to exciting opportunities for future research, including increased attention on enabling promises made to tourists and development of strategic and research principles.

Alisher (2017) observed that in almost all tourism-developed countries, tourism companies and firms use innovative marketing strategies to maximize their competitiveness in the market. He believed that the same strategies can be applied in the context of Uzbekistan (though considered a developing country) as the country is rich in various tourism resources. He observed that majority of tourism companies in Uzbekistan do not use innovative marketing strategies, but they do business with the current market data, without setting up their future prospects.

Kaur (2017) in her paper evaluated the basic determinants of digital marketing and the importance of the same in the tourism industry. She explained the increasing role of digital marketing that has affected the way businesses promote their offerings to existing as well as new customers. She observed one of the main reasons of the success of digital marketing vs. traditional marketing is that the former allows businesses to track users' behaviour in real-time. She envisaged that for any tourism business to be successful digitally, six factors - quality website, search engine optimization, email marketing, presence on social media, content, mobile-friendly play a very crucial role.

Basera (2018) in his research article sought to explore the tourism marketing strategies adopted to market domestic tourism in Kariba resort (Zimbabwe), and their effectiveness in influencing domestic tourism demand. The results showed that marketing of Kariba was affected by lack of cooperation among tourism stakeholders, resulting in low domestic tourism demand. The findings highlighted that instead of

organizations putting their efforts together and market the destination collectively they were actually competing with one another for the share of the market that adversely affects the progress of domestic tourism in the study area. It was also revealed that the demand of the resort was low because of the locals opting for outbound tourism in neighbouring countries like Mozambique and South Africa, which they perceive to be better destinations and reasonable on pricing. This, therefore, signifies that tourists' travel decisions are mostly influenced by destination competitiveness attributes such as image and cost.

1.8.4 Perceptions of tourists

Ranjanthran and Mohammed (2010) examined the perception and satisfaction level of the domestic tourists visiting Penang Island, Malaysia. They also examined the tourism products preferred by the tourists, revisit intentions of the tourists and their recommendation of the tourism products of the island to others. They cited that tourism image is a direct antecedent of perceived quality, satisfaction and tourist behavior; and perceived quality has a positive influence on the satisfaction level that determines the domestic tourists' behaviour.

Henderson (2011) in his paper cited that improper arrangement of infrastructures of a country seems to be perceived negatively by the international visitors to choose a destination. He also highlighted the factors that influence the decision makings of inbound and outbound tourists like political instability, security and safety.

Rahman (2012) in his research evaluated the tourist's perception in the selection of a destination in the context of Bangladeshi tourism environment. He tried to identify the most significant attributes that satisfy tourists' needs. He observed that destination brand image, internet adoption and customers' satisfaction played a significant role in influencing tourists' perception in the selection of a tourism destination.

Raddar and Han (2013) examined the relationships between perceived quality, satisfaction and conative loyalty of the visitors visiting South African heritage museums. The findings indicated that visitors' perceived quality has both an indirect effect

(through satisfaction) and a direct effect on their behavioral intentions, with the former effect being greater than the latter.

Aliman et al (2014) conducted a study in Langkawi Island, Malaysia in which they attempted to identify the effects of tourist expectations, perceived quality and destination image on perceived value and tourist satisfaction. They identified that destination image prevailed as the most important antecedent of perceived value and tourist satisfaction. They considered that tourism managers and operators in Langkawi should devote more efforts to improve the island's image by upgrading the attractions, amenities, accessibility, activities, ancillary services, and available packages.

Begum et al (2014) studied the role of stakeholders (public, private and local community) for tourism development in Malaysia based on the perceptions of tourists who visited the Melaka city. The findings indicated that the government, private and local community stakeholders have played positive roles for satisfying the demands of the tourists. The implication of their study was that majority of the tourists were positively satisfied and receptive towards tourism in Melaka.

Alarape et al (2015) in their study assessed the tourists' satisfaction and perception in Makurdi Zoological garden, Nigeria. The study revealed that tourists expressed dissatisfaction over diversity/welfare of fauna species in the zoo, route network, etc. The tourists perceived that good management, proper advertisement, good landscape, restocking and rehabilitation of dilapidated facilities would promote patronage, create satisfaction and also step up the revenue of the garden. The findings indicated that age and gender of the tourists had no significant effect on visitation to the zoo, while marital status and occupation was observed to have. The researchers suggested that government should increase its financial commitment, improve its management strategies and renovate dilapidated and abandoned structures to make the garden attractive and viable.

Birdir (2015) analysed and segmented the tourists who visited Istanbul and identified tourist profiles based of the demographic and travel characteristics. In his study, six factors were identified as the most important factors affecting tourists visiting

Istanbul. They were destination security, friendliness of local people, comfort at accommodation, low crime rate and natural beauty and scenery.

Gnanapala (2015) conducted a study in Sri Lanka, in which he attempted to identify the relationship between the tourists' perception and satisfaction and its influence on destination management. He identified that most of the tourists were satisfied and have positive perception on revisiting and recommending Sri Lanka as a tourism destination. But, a considerable number of tourists were also found to be dissatisfied and developed negative perceptions about certain areas i.e. poor road conditions, behaviour of local vendors, less entertainment and recreational facilities, poor communication skills of the employees, price discrimination and behavior of the custom and airport staff.

Huang et al (2015) in their study aimed to empirically explore the effects of motivation, satisfaction and perceived value on tourists' recommendation through a structural equation modeling approach. The results showed that all the hypotheses were supported at a significant level. It indicated that the effects of perceived value and satisfaction on recommendation are greater than that of motivation. However, motivation can be used as a predictor of recommendation.

Philemon (2015) opined that tourism industry is very much affected with the perception that tourists carry with them about a destination. In this vein, he conducted a study to assess the perception of international tourists on various attributes in Tanzania. His findings revealed that Tanzania has been doing relatively well on the basic factor endowments such as culture, wildlife, landscape, and accommodation facilities, but fairly poor on tour guidance, tourism infrastructure, and restaurants.

Wang (2015) examined the perception, level of satisfaction, and interpretation needs of ecotourism visitors to the Taijiang National Park in Taiwan. The results showed that most ecotourism visitors believe that interpretation by tour guides is necessary. At the same time, visitors who expressed a greater need for interpretation services had a more comprehensive understanding of ecotourism. The results also showed that visitors

who supported “giving back to the community” had higher levels of ecotourism satisfaction.

Wang et al (2017) in their paper studied the effects of gender and visit frequency as moderating variables on the relationships among destination perceived quality, tourist satisfaction and word-of-mouth. The results indicated that destination perceived quality has significant, positive and direct effect on tourist satisfaction; word-of-mouth is positively influenced by destination perceived quality and tourist satisfaction; and there is significant relationship between visit frequency and word-of-mouth. The study also observed that the impacts of destination perceived quality on word-of-mouth are different between genders, and this impact was stronger for female rather than male tourists.

Hettiarachchi and Lakmal (2018) in their study investigated the drivers of customer value and their influence on satisfaction level of domestic adventure tourists in Sri Lanka. The findings showed that there was a direct and positive influence of perceived value on satisfaction level in an adventure tourism setting. It was observed that Sri Lankan domestic tourists attached more importance to novelty value and emotional value. The researchers suggested that adventure tour operators, especially who are focusing within the country need to be innovative and keep exploring the latest improvements in equipments that allow them to design and offer afresh, dynamic and challenging experience.

Rahman et al (2018) empirically examined a conceptual framework on tourists’ preferences in selecting local foods. The framework includes tourists’ satisfaction, quality of food, tourist’s perception, purchase intention and behavior among tourist’s selection for local foods. They observed that tourist’s satisfaction and perception have a positive and significant impact on the intention of purchasing local foods. The findings indicated that there was a significant relationship between tourists’ satisfaction and perceived quality towards the tourists’ perception of local foods. A significant relationship also existed between tourists’ intentions and tourists’ purchase behaviour.

Veerakumar and Suresh (2018) evaluated tourists' level of expectation and satisfaction towards various services offered by the hospitality industry in Kumbakonam, Tamil Nadu. Their study revealed that there was no significant relationship between expectations and perceptions with respect to many attributes. They suggested various attributes required to be improved by hospitality industry to satisfy the tourists including improvement in quality of services of the attentive staff, changing of pricing strategy, establishment of travel help desk, etc.

Chakma and Jyoti Kumar (2019) studied the tourists' satisfaction on tourism attractions in Meghalaya and Mizoram. They observed that majority of the tourists were found to be satisfied with the scenic nature of the two states. On the other hand, the tourists were found least satisfied with entertainment and night life of these states. The findings revealed that there was a significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the tourists of both states with regard to many attributes except nature and scenic beauty.

1.8.5 Role of tour operators/travel agencies

Taking Indonesia as a case study, Gartner and Bachri (1993) examined the role of tour operators in packaging travel to developing countries. They stated that because of its economic importance many governments in developing countries, including Indonesia, have assumed active roles in developing tourism industry. The study put forward that government's role should include focusing on tourism distribution channels, especially tour operators, if most of the common problems that hinder tourism development are to overcome.

Koutoulas (2006) in his paper examined the relationship between tour operators and resort hotels. The study focused on the Mediterranean, a destination that would not have developed so rapidly over the last 50 years without the tourist flows generated by tour operators. Greece was considered for the study to illustrate this relationship as the country's resort hotels predominantly outsourced their marketing function to tour operators. He observed the fall down in Greece-bound inclusive tour traffic and the

increasing pressure applied by the tour operators has forced Greek hoteliers to explore other markets and distribution channels.

Mohamed (2007) conducted a study to assess customers' expectations and perceptions of the services provided by travel agents in Egypt, and to discover how the service factors were related to overall satisfaction. The findings revealed there was a notable gap between customer expectations and perceptions corresponding to the service quality introduced by travel agents, indicating the customers' expectations on the service quality were not met. It, thus, sent a message that the travel agencies shall have to implement strategies for human resources in short terms as well as long terms to recruit, train and develop qualified employees.

Mihajlovic (2012) in his paper evaluated the mission and usage of ICT through its influence on the development of tourism subjects supply, especially intermediaries (Croatian travel agencies) on tourism market. The paper presented an overview of the theoretical insights that complements the role of technology in tourism. Secondly, the paper also explored the role of technology in the business of travel agencies through the reviews of managers.

Mulec and Wise (2012) conducted a research to analyze the knowledge and awareness of the tourists about the developing destination of Vojvodina, Serbia. The findings indicated that Vojvodina is 'not known' as a tourism destination among foreign tourists. This suggests that the customers (tourists) are not well-informed about this region. Hence, Vojvodina can be considered as a 'non image' tourism destination. Meanwhile, they assumed that a 'non image' is better than having a 'negative image' because with the 'non-image' of a destination, tour operators and travel agents still have the possibility to creatively market and promote a good image for a particular emerging tourism destination.

Peric et al (2013) in their paper cited that selling of tourism services (products) demands specific capabilities in working process because of the nature of the product. To succeed in tourism business it is necessary to pay attention to the working process to achieve the basic goal of every travel agency, i.e. satisfaction of tourists. They were of

the view that tour guide is a key resource for any arrangement in tourism. Without adequate service, there would be no satisfied tourists, whereas satisfied tourists are the main initiators of all activities in tourism development.

Bhatia (2014) in his study examined the perception of Indian inbound tour operators on destination competitiveness between India and Singapore. It was observed that Indians prefer Singapore for outbound tourism while Singaporeans have no such preference for India as a tourist destination. In India, spiritual tourism, wildlife tourism, medical tourism, rural tourism, adventure tourism and cultural and heritage tourism are prevalent while in Singapore, ecotourism, adventure and wildlife tourism and educational tourism are prevalent.

Pastiu et al (2014) underlined the role of travel agencies in sustaining tourism development in Alba County, Romania. According to their study, the most important factors affecting the implication of travel agencies in tourism development of Alba County are the slow development of tourism resources, lack of financial resources and poor infrastructures. They suggested that travel agencies operating locally, nationally or internationally should be encouraged to promote the tourism products of the county. Cooperation between all the tourism stakeholders should be improved so that they offer high quality tourism products to address the needs of tourists.

Spasic et al (2015) in their study evaluated the trends of online travel and tourism services distribution in Serbia. They attempted to identify the reasons that let potential tourists choose traditional travel agencies/tour operators instead of availing travel or tourism services online. The results of the study indicated that tourists were not well educated of the facilities available online and were afraid of discrepancies on the part of tourism distributors. Hence, there was disparity and inconsistency in the use of internet for online booking compared to the traditional approach of tourism distribution.

Terblanche (2015) in his study presented a better understanding of the benefits customers perceive when they use a travel agent for service. The study identified three benefits that customers consider more important. They are expertise, financial and support benefits. For that reason, the travel agents could use these factors to assess the

perceived benefits fancied by the customers, as it will allow travel agents to better the service quality to customers, enhance customer satisfaction and subsequently establish emotional bonds with customers.

Bandara and Silva (2016) evaluated the use of e-tourism and roles of travel agencies in pulling Japanese tourists into Sri Lanka. The analysis revealed that 75% of travel agencies in Sri Lanka have been engaged in promotional activities to attract the Japanese inbound tourists exclusively. Majority of the travel agencies were observed to be using e-tourism in many ways.

Dahiya and Batra (2016) forecasted the future prospects of online retail in travel industry in India. It observed that online retail or e-retail travel is a platform that brings two market forces - demand and supply (tour operators and the customers) together, and both these forces are more inclined towards online mode in near future. The adoption of e-retail by tour operators are gaining importance as it helps expanding their businesses with low operating costs, while the customers also get what they desire as per their convenience.

Gupta (2016) examined the key reasons that influence the adoption of services offered by offline or online travel agencies among travellers in India. In her study, she elucidated and categorized the factors that motivate the travellers towards offline and online travel agencies. The findings revealed that the personalized counselling services and human interface are two most influencing reasons for the choice of offline travel agency, whereas, anywhere-anytime services and large variety of offerings are the two most influencing reasons for the choice of online travel agency.

Bawa et al (2018) in their study discussed the adaptation strategies airline travel agencies adopted in Nigeria to remain in business. The results indicated that the main constraint affecting the operations of airline travel agency is the e-commerce. They suggested that travel agencies should intensify diversification of business operations, carry out merging or partnership arrangements, innovate the products they offer and embarking on rigorous marketing to enlarge the customer base.

Devaraja and Deepak (2018) attempted to study the relationship between tour operators and tourists towards development in Mysore district. Their study focused on how tour operators and tourists build relation for development of tourism industry. The study identified numerous differences in the perceptions of tourists regarding the tour operators such as foreign language skills, group cohesion, holiday experience creation, entertainment, representation skills, contract compliance, image creation, itinerary compliance, etc. They observed that when tourists are satisfied with the services provided by the tour operators, they would obviously look for the same type of tour operators in their next visit. Hence, a positive relationship among the tour operators and tourists has definite effect on the developing process of tourism industry.

Rajasekaran and Sudarsan (2018) conducted a study to examine the impact of e-commerce on Indian tourism industry and its opportunities and challenges. The findings indicated that there are plenty of opportunities for e-business in tourism especially for new start-ups and budding entrepreneurs. The study highlighted certain challenges like absence of face to face business relationship, technology upgradation, safety and security, etc.

1.8.6 Role of accommodation sector/hoteliers

Sharpley (2000) observed that the overall success of a tourism destination is directly related to the growth and development of the accommodation sector. Therefore, in order to ensure that supply of accommodation contributes more effectively to tourism development plans and objectives, it is imperative the development of the accommodation sector should be a fundamental element of the overall destination planning process.

Prayag et al (2010) evaluated hoteliers' perceptions on sustainable tourism development in Mauritius. He also examined the impacts of hotel development in the country. The findings indicated that hoteliers on average agreed that hotel development should contribute to environmental sustainability and hotel development should also have positive economic, social and cultural impacts. The hoteliers also acknowledged

that hotel development can have negative environmental impacts, which they believe that government and the private sector should share the role of managing such impacts.

Gunasekaran and Anandkumar (2012) in their study coined commercial homes, bed & breakfast and guest houses as alternative accommodation. The study was carried out in Pondicherry to identify the factors that lead tourists to choose such alternative accommodation. The findings indicated that there are four factors, namely homely atmosphere, value for money, local touch and guest-host relationship that influence the tourists to choose alternative accommodation.

Sukthankar (2013) in his paper traced the origin and development of tourism and hotel industry in the state of Goa along with their significance and ill effects. He said that Goa has started attracting tourists straightway it joined Indian mainstream. The findings indicated that the arrival of both domestic and foreign tourists in Goa has an increasing trend. Similarly the hotels, rooms and beds were also showing a healthy growth which is projected to grow further with increases in the numbers of tourist arrivals in coming years. Meanwhile, the findings also did not leave out the ill effects of mass tourism in the state such as nudism, drug abuse, flesh trade, etc., which are affecting the local culture to some extent.

Sivadasan (2015) conducted a study in Sarawak state, Malaysia to examine the economic impacts of budget hotels in the tourism sector. The employment generation potential of the budget hotels and the customer satisfaction towards the budget hotels was also examined. During the study, she observed that budget hotels provide a lot of job opportunities to the local people, thus reducing unemployment problems to some extent. The findings of the study indicated that a higher percentage of tourists were satisfied in staying budget hotels because of the service quality, accessibility and the hospitality offered. However, majority of the tourists were found to be dissatisfied with the public transportation in the state.

Sufi (2015) observed that the growth of hotel industry in India is propelled by the increase in the tourism activities in the country. In his paper he traced the development of the hotel industry in India through different stages right from the colonial times. He

also highlighted the role the Government of India has played in the development of tourism industry at different stages of history and the forces that shaped those decisions.

Attila (2016) studied the impact of the hotel industry on the competitiveness of tourism destinations in Hungary. The study drew attention to the importance of hotels and enhancing it on the basis of the tourism destination competitiveness models. The study observed that hotel industry was number one in terms of employment providers for the local population in small tourism destinations.

Using historical evidence, Magombo et al (2017) analysed the development of the accommodation services sector in Malawi. They examined the unfolding evolution of accommodation services as a factor in enhancing tourism destination competitiveness in the country. The study unfolded the history of accommodation sector in Malawi from British colonial rule to the post-independence period.

1.8.7 Tourism in Northeast India

Kumaran (2008) in his paper cited that Northeast India is blessed with abundant of tourism resources. Tourism resources of the region may include the one-horned rhino of Assam, Cherrapunjee, the wettest place on earth, classical dance of Manipur, crafts of Tripura, the bamboo dance of Mizoram, the four century old Buddhist Monastery of Tawang and Kanchendzonga of Sikkim. Besides, all these attractions the study indicated that the region gets less than 1% of India's tourists inflow. He suggested that an integrated tourism policy must be initiated at the earliest to attract more tourists in the region. He also suggested that instead of going for the mass tourism the stakeholders should target niche or sustainable tourism taking into account the fragile environment of the region.

Meena and Das (2012) opined that Tripura has high potential of nature based tourism because of its rich floral and faunal biodiversity, treasure of plants, shrubs and herbs of medicinal value, unique ecosystems, wet lands, etc. To encourage more ecotourists into the state, they suggested that the government should take necessary steps to improve infrastructures including transport and communication system, accommodation facilities, tourist guides, proper advertising etc. At the same time,

relaxation facilities should be upgraded in wildlife sanctuaries, eco-parks with clean, hygienic food outlets. Deployment of more “tourist police” should also be encouraged to cater the needs of the tourists.

Rizal and Asokan (2008) conducted a comparative study of tourism industry of all the states of Northeast India. They observed that despite of so many unique and natural beauties the region is still the least visited place in India. The major problems of this imbalanced development in tourism are insufficient funds, lack of infrastructure, improper transportation, lack of marketing facilities, international and national boundary problem, safety reasons like terrorism, permit system, etc.

Singh and Singha (2010) opined that the northeastern region of India fails to attract tourists due to the geographical toughed and economically unsound conditions of the region. The nature has blessed the entire northeastern region and the state of Mizoram in particular with all the facets of cultural-heritage and ecotourism. But, due to the absence of good infrastructural facilities and lack of awareness on tourism among the residents the development of tourism in the region is growing at a very low pace. They suggested that the underperformance of Mizoram in the field of tourism can be checked by encouraging the youth and business persons to undertake tourism activities and the government and NGOs of the state should focus on different training courses to develop entrepreneurial skill among local residents.

Ezung (2011) in his paper highlighted the hidden resources of rural tourism in Nagaland. He opined that rural tourism is intrinsically related to ecotourism, cultural tourism and agro tourism. He believed that Nagaland has all the ingredients to develop rural tourism in it as the state boasts of exquisitely picturesque landscapes with virgin forests, rivers and mountains. People of the state are rich in culture and traditions which can easily be distinguished with others by their colourful dances and festivals throughout the year. The ethnic tribes of the state still survive on the practice of agriculture as it is evident from the fact that about 68.03% of the total state work forces are engaged in agriculture and its allied activities. They suggested the tourism industry in the state should be properly promoted through visual advertisement. The government should also

lift up its restriction policies such as Inner Line Permit (ILP) and Restricted Area Permit (RAP) to encourage the vast inflow of tourists into the state.

Neog (2011) pointed out that the Southeast Asia holds great prospects for Northeast India as a market and vice versa within the ambits of the India's Look East Policy (LEP) and the NER Vision 2020 document. She highlighted that Northeast India holds great potential in tourism sector, but tourism policies of Northeast states do not have a targeted tourist market and are quite unfocussed. She suggested that a combined vision for tourism is the most important for the successful implementation of various tourism policies of Northeastern states.

Gurung and Pant (2013) in their study on Arunachal Pradesh observed that the state holds diversity in various ethnic tribes who are rich in cultures and traditions. They opined that Arunachal could be poised to become an important cultural tourism destination with a multi-cultural tribal population offering a rainbow of unadulterated traditions. They advocated that cultural tourism should be the 'focal point' in Arunachal Tourism's positioning; showcasing its cultural diversity with sustainable policies would help in realizing its true potentials for the development.

Nayak and Mishra (2013) opined that Meghalaya is endowed with the gift of nature such as lofty mountain ranges with interplay of lush green valley, sprawling water bodies, waterfalls, caves, and living root bridges. The national parks and wildlife sanctuaries of the state hold an ideal habitat for flora and fauna with a pleasant and bracing climate. With all these natural assets, ethnic diversity and the societal ethos, tourism holds high potential in the state. They observed that though state government has taken a number of steps to improve the tourism sector yet it is at the nascent stage and has a long way to develop. The main reasons behind this stagnant development are the air and road connectivity, infrastructural facilities at tourist sites in terms of accommodation, transport, banking including credit card use, drinking water, sanitation, health care, etc.

Singha and Chakma (2013) remarked that Mizoram has ample scope to promote and develop various fields of tourism in the state such as rural tourism, cultural tourism,

adventure tourism, wildlife tourism and particularly eco-tourism. But, some constraints come in the way of tourism development in the state are: geographical isolation, high transportation costs and lack of tourism awareness campaign. The study offered some suggestions to strengthen the tourism sector in the state.

Adak and Guha (2014) in their article perceived since the Look East Policy of Government of India is in progress, Mizoram holds a strategic position because of its location. The state can achieve sustainability in earning revenues from tourism industry and can solve multiple unemployment problems. However, the difficult terrain with transport bottlenecks, limited alternative for tourist accommodation, wayside amenities, etc. have become constraints for promotion of tourism in the state so far.

Boruah (2014) described that the Northeast India is blessed with abundant ecotourism resources but its potentiality hasn't been fully explored yet. In his paper, he pointed out some positive and negative aspects of ecotourism. Positive aspects include income generation in the form of foreign exchange earnings, employment generation, improvement and preservation of parks and cultural heritage properties etc., while negative impacts include depletion of natural resources, physical damage to soil in fragile environments, threat to wildlife etc. He suggested that the principles of sustainable tourism should be incorporated while designing tourism plan in the region.

In her paper, Borah (2015) argued that eco-cultural tourism is a potent force for overall economic, social and cultural development, in addition to biodiversity conservation in Northeast India. She opined that though Northeast India is still backward in different levels of economic development, with the availability of vast ecological and cultural resources, the region has immense potential for development of eco-cultural tourism in the region.

Das (2015) described that Northeast India is well blessed by nature with beautiful hills and plains with green cover and a wide variety of rare and exotic flora. His study indicated that vast potentiality of tourism industry in the region can contribute in generating huge incomes and employment opportunities through tourism sector and thereby contributing towards inclusive growth. However, much of the tourism prospects

remained unexplored which calls for serious government intervention in terms of policy formulation and necessary direction.

Lonchung (2017) conducted a study in Arunachal Pradesh to know the impact of tourism especially of rural tourism on environment. The study observed that the state has high rural tourism potential. However, owing to lack of required favourable factors such as transport, communication, accommodation and other tourism related facilities, most part of its areas remain undiscovered to the tourists. At the same time, impact on environment including pollution of rivers and lakes was least affected by tourism in the state. But, he cautioned that, as the tourism grows in the states, the environmental impact of tourism needs to be assessed from time to time and steps to check adverse effects must be implemented whenever the need arises.

Saha et al (2018) studied the importance of adventure tourism in Khasi hills of Meghalaya. Their research indicated that 88% of the tourists prefer to undertake adventure activities in Meghalaya and almost 50% of the tourists like to participate in trekking. They observed that the state has numerous potential to develop adventure tourism, and by means of extensive promotion the state can be at the top list among the adventure hubs in India.

1.8.8 Other aspects of tourism

Manoharan (2004) conducted a SWOT analysis with respect to marketing products. The major thrust of marketing tourism products is to upgrade the quality of the products like beaches, backwaters, hill stations, wildlife sanctuaries, waterfalls, ayurveda and culture including festivals and provide infrastructural facilities.

Panigrahi (2005) in his paper 'Development of Ecotourism in Tribal regions of Orissa' emphasized upon the potential of ecotourism in the scheduled areas which are largely dominated by the tribal communities. These communities are mostly dependent on nature to collect their livelihood requirements. He conceived that if the government establishes the possible effects of ecotourism, it can uplift the inhabitants of the region by generating more revenues. But, attempts should be made to conserve the physical

ecology as well as the cultural ecology of the tribal communities by empowering them to enrich their ethnic heritage and skills.

Chauhan (2010) in his paper ascertained that Tamil Nadu has been significantly successful in its tourism efforts with the fact that the state holds the lion's shares of India's total tourist arrivals, both foreign and domestic. As the state still has vast untapped tourism potentials, it was suggested that these resources are fully exploited with active community participation so that problems like poverty and unemployment could be reduced to some extent.

Mili (2012) conducted a study in Assam to identify various challenges of rural tourism and to find out its impact upon the socio-economic conditions of the local people. She observed that rural tourism promotes the local economy, socio-cultural changes and life style of the local people. She observed that language and communication barriers, insufficient financial supports, lack of trained tourism guides are amongst the constraints of rural tourism in the study area.

Patel (2012) explored the problems and challenges of the country as well as the pitfalls to address the constraints in tourism planning in India. He suggested that a policy to be put forth that encourage eco-tourism for sustainable livelihood and rural tourism to be considered as a byproduct of Indian tourism.

Rathore (2012) discussed the positive and negative impacts of rural tourism in the society. Positive impacts of rural tourism are employment creation, rise in income level, knowledge about preservation of natural resources and historical monuments, reduction in migration of rural people to urban areas as well as the improvement of the education and health of the rural people. The negative impacts include exploitation and under payment of rural people, disturbance of natural ecology, gradual loss of traditional values and cultural activities of rural people are pertinent due to rural tourism. The study called for environmental management, local involvement, sound legislation, sustainable marketing and realistic planning are crucial for the development of rural tourism.

Sati (2013) examined the practices and approaches for the tourism development in the Uttarakhand Himalaya. He observed that all forms of tourism such as pilgrimage tourism, natural tourism, adventurer tourism, wildlife tourism, cultural tourism, etc. are practiced in the region. He also studied the positive and negative impacts of tourism on the economic and cultural lives of the local people. Since the Uttarakhand Himalaya is considered one of the most fragile landscapes, he had suggested the sustainable approaches must be adopted by both the state and central governments to ensure that the tourism resources in the region exist forever.

Sati, V.P. et al (2013) studied the prospect of developing tourism industry in Madhya Pradesh taking with sustainable approach. Located in the heart of the country, the state has a historical glory of culture such as pilgrimages, folklore, customs, archeological treasures, and fairs and festivals that provide the base of tourism in the state. However, lack of proper infrastructural amenities at tourist spots are generally noticed due to uneven economic development of the state. They recommended improving the accommodation sector in the state so that tourists of all income groups can visit the tourism attractions.

Singh et al (2013) in their study distinguished the initiatives undertaken by the state authorities and central authorities in promoting tourism in India. They attempted to identify the gaps in centralized campaign (e.g. Incredible India campaign) vis-à-vis state wise campaign of tourism promotion. They observed that the central government in its centralized campaign (Incredible India) doesn't mention any vital information about its major tourist attractions, cities or state (regions that attract the maximum number of foreign tourists) as other countries do, to provide foreign tourists a beautiful, ideal and true picture of India. Thus, the centralized campaign needs to be more properly informative, clear and user friendly which foreign tourist would actually be interested in. The study disclosed gaps in the form of missing information, promotion strategy and key events and places which should be included in the centralized campaign (Incredible India). The study recommended that coordinated efforts should be made amongst

central, state and private authorities to establish India as a world class tourism destination.

According to Choudhury et al (2014), development of rural tourism can be considered a way to enhance economic empowerment and employment generation of rural communities through sustainable livelihood. Rural tourism is the showcase of rural life, art, culture and heritage, picturesque landscape at rural locations or in villages. It is also the concept of 'homestay' that can provide direct benefits to local communities, both economically and socially. It also enables interactions between tourists and local population for a mutually enriching experience. In their paper, they attempted to study the potentiality of rural tourism in Northeast India and how it can help to generate sustainable livelihood in the region.

The review of literature indicates that a number of studies have been conducted at national and international level on tourism. From the above review, it can be observed that tourism can play as a catalyst for the development of a region. It brings tremendous infrastructural development and earns foreign exchange to the region without exporting national wealth. Further, it is also revealed that a number of studies have been made on tourism industry in Northeast India. But, majority of them have addressed on the prospects and problems of tourism development in the region. Research studies focusing on marketing practices adopted in tourism sector in Northeast India are scanty, particularly in the context of Meghalaya and Mizoram. Hence, the present study is an attempt to fill up the research gap that exists in the area of marketing practices adopted by different stakeholders of tourism sector in the states of Meghalaya and Mizoram.

1.9 Statement of the problem

Tourism is one of the few industries in northeastern part of India (henceforth, Northeast India (NEI)) that has a lot of potential to develop. Its importance has been growing considerably over the recent years. The NEI, with its wide range of attractions and *Paradise Unexplored* theme, is trying to project as quality destination, which can offer tourists a unique experience. As noted, the NEI possesses varied tourism resources such as ecological, cultural, rural, adventure and wildlife tourism which could bring up

benefits and welfare for the people of the region and contribute to enhance the economic development process. In spite of this, the NEI hasn't got its share of the total India's receipts for tourism. It is unfortunate that due to socio-political and geographical reasons, the entire NEI has remained neglected and backward from the development point of view. In spite of very high literacy rate in the region (around 80%), progress and benefits have not fully reached the region even today.

The concept of tourism in Northeast India is relatively of recent phenomenon. A few states viz. Assam, Sikkim, Tripura and Meghalaya have taken strides in developing tourism, with emphasis on ecotourism, wildlife tourism, cultural tourism and adventure tourism, whereas, the other states have commenced their efforts during the last decade only. Hence, the tourism development of NEI needs to be targeted via a regional approach rather than an individual state approach. The development of a tourism industry largely depends upon the cooperation of the people in the region since tourists are interested not only in exploring the beauty and culture of the region but also to interact with the local people. The people in general are not aware of their own role to play for the development of tourism in the region. The policymakers in the governments have not yet realised the economic importance of tourism as an industry and its positive impact as a source of foreign exchange and employment.

The basic needs for the development of tourism in Northeast India are effective infrastructure, better connectivity between the states and with rest of India and change of perception about peace in the entire region. The entry permit formality required for a few states for both domestic and international tourists appeared to be a serious deterrent to the region's tourism attractiveness. In fact, the tourism industry in the region suffers from many other problems, but the root cause for all such problems is inadequate marketing orientation on the part of state governments and other marketers in many parts of the region.

Therefore, it is in this context, the present study is taken up to identify the marketing practices followed by different marketers in the tourism sector in two select states of Northeast India, i.e. Meghalaya and Mizoram.

1.10 Objectives of the study

The present study has the following objectives:

1. To assess the existing tourism marketing environment in terms of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) in the states of Meghalaya and Mizoram.
2. To study the buying behaviour of the tourists visiting the two select states in terms of their attitudes, perceptions and satisfactions.
3. To study the seven elements of marketing strategy (product, price, place, promotion, people, process and physical evidence) being followed by the tourism marketers, viz., the government, tour operators and hoteliers in the select states.

1.11 Hypotheses of the study

The following hypotheses have been formulated and tested in the study:

1. There is no significant association between monthly family income of the respondents and their select demographic profile.
2. There is no significant association between nature of travel companions of the respondents and their select demographic profile.
3. There is no significant association between number of companions of the respondents and their select demographic profile.
4. There is no significant association between frequency of tours of the respondents and their select demographic profile.
5. There is no significant association between length of stay of the respondents and their select demographic profile.
6. There is no significant difference between levels of satisfaction of the respondents of two select states regarding select attributes of accommodation.
7. There is no significant difference between levels of satisfaction of the respondents of two select states regarding select attributes of tourism attractions.
8. There is no significant difference between levels of satisfaction of the respondents of two select states regarding select attributes of tourism services.

9. There is no significant difference between levels of satisfaction of the respondents of two select states regarding select attributes of tourism pricing.
10. There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of two select states regarding their perception of respective state as tourism destination vis-à-vis other states they have visited so far based on select attributes.
11. There is no significant association between the revisit intention of the respondents and their select demographic profile.
12. There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of two select states regarding overall experience of the trip against expectation.

1.12 Research methodology

The present study is exploratory in nature and is expected to identify and evaluate the marketing practices adopted for promoting various tourism products in the two states of Northeast India, i.e. Meghalaya and Mizoram. The study is conducted based on primary and secondary sources of information.

1.12.1 Scope of the study

The present study is conducted in the form of exploratory study where different aspects of tourism marketing practices followed in Meghalaya and Mizoram are critically analysed and discussed. In view of multidisciplinary nature of the study covering many disciplines such as geography, management, economics, and behavioural sciences, the discussion touches up on the literatures pertaining to all these disciplines to understand the research problem and to arrive at meaningful conclusions. The present study is expected to contribute towards understanding the tourism industry in Northeast India in respect of prospects and problems of tourism industry in the region in general and in the select states in particular. It is attempted to provide useful information to tourism stakeholders in understanding the buying behaviour of the tourists visiting the select states. The satisfaction level of the tourists regarding the beauty of tourism attractions and pricing

levels, and the factors that influence their decision-making process have been covered in the study.

Although NEI boasts of abundance of tourism resources, studies on marketing of tourism industry in the region are very few. Hence, the present study is expected to provide insights for the policy makers while formulating appropriate marketing strategies for the tourism industry in NEI in general and in the select states in particular.

1.12.2 Sources of data

a. Primary data: Primary data were collected by administering a structured questionnaire (refer Appendix) meant for the tourists visiting the select states. The questionnaire was drafted by reviewing various doctoral theses on tourism marketing including the works of Bhattacharjee (2001), Bizan (2009), Kuchay (2011) and Yadav (2012). The questionnaire consisted of three parts, first part relating to the demographic profile of the respondents (tourists); the second part relating to the tour profile of the respondents such as nature of companions, length of stay, purpose of visit, etc; and the third part relating to the perception of the respondents on different product attributes of accommodation, tourism attractions and services, their revisit intentions, etc. This tourist survey was conducted during January-February, 2015 in Meghalaya and March-June, 2015 in Mizoram.

The tourist survey was carried out by the researcher himself in both the select states. However, in case of Meghalaya, two research assistants were engaged who possess adequate knowledge of local conditions for administering the questionnaire. The tourist survey in Meghalaya was conducted in two destinations, which commonly found to attract large number of tourists in the states. They were: Shillong and Cherrapunjee.

In case of Mizoram, besides being the capital city, Aizawl is considered as the stoppage for all the tourism visits in Mizoram as it provides the tourists the convenience of good connectivity, shopping and convenient lodging. Hence, Aizawl was aptly chosen for conducting the tourist survey. The respondents were contacted in hotels and tourist lodges. At times, the staff of front offices of some hotels/lodges were involved in distributing and collection of questionnaires.

For the present study, a sample size of 100 tourists from each of the select states has been selected. As noted, the tourists were contacted at prominent destinations in the two select states irrespective of their origin. Therefore, no specific proportion was made in the sample to accommodate the domestic and foreign tourists. The respondents (tourists) were selected by using purposive sampling method.

In the context of the present study, tourists are basically categorized into two - domestic tourists and foreign tourists. A *domestic tourist* is a visitor taking a trip to the select states, i.e. Meghalaya and Mizoram whose place of residence is in India but does not belong to the state concerned. A *foreign tourist* is a visitor taking a trip to the select states whose place of residence is outside India.

b. Secondary data: Extensive review of literature was undertaken on different studies carried out both internationally and nationally concerning marketing of tourism, perceptions of tourists, and so on to identify the research problem and to evolve appropriate methodology. Secondary data were also obtained from periodicals, newspapers, journals and booklets and unpublished theses. In addition, data were also collected from various websites pertaining to tourism such as UNWTO, Ministry of Tourism of Government of India, *Incredible India*, *Paradise Unexplored* and official tourism websites of select states.

1.12.3 Tools for analysis

The primary data collected were tabulated with the help of statistical package SPSS (Version 16) to make it easier and suitable for statistical treatment. For testing of hypotheses, statistical techniques namely chi-square tests and t-test were used. Statistical tools like weighted averages and mean were used for ranking of certain tourism attributes.

1.13 Limitations of the study

The present study has some limitations which are given as below:

1. While conducting tourist survey, at times, the researcher found some reluctance on the part of the respondents to reveal their income and hence, in case of some respondents their incomes may be lesser than the actual ones.
2. The secondary data used in the study is based on different sources, and hence certain information provided in the study may lack consistency, though the researcher tried to use the reliable and authentic sources.

1.14 Conclusions

Tourism industry has emerged as an important instrument in the economic development of Indian economy. Tourism in India has vast potential for generating employment and earning large sums of foreign exchange. Due to its strong backward and forward linkages, the industry is expected to generate employment in different regions. India as a tourism product is unparalleled in its beauty, uniqueness, rich culture and diversity. With the concrete efforts like *Incredible India* and *Atithi Devo Bhava* campaigns, the National Tourism Policy, 2002, mega tourism projects involving both the central and state governments with the ministry of railways, civil aviation, road and transport and urban development, the tourism industry in India is thriving ever than before.

The concept of tourism in Northeast India is relatively of recent phenomenon. The tourism industry in the region is developing but not as expected. Though the Government of India is providing some special care for the region by providing funds and programmes for the promotion of tourism, the region still remains the least visited. In spite of having very high tourism potential, economic benefits from tourism sector are yet to be realised in the region even today.

Against this backdrop, the present study is intended to evaluate the marketing strategies adopted in tourism sector in Northeast India selecting two predominantly tribal states of Meghalaya and Mizoram. The study is expected to provide insights of the current state of affairs and offer suggestions while formulating appropriate marketing strategies for the tourism industry in NEI in general and in the select states in particular.

CHAPTER 2

TOURISM IN INDIA: A FOCUS ON THE NORTHEAST

“India is one country that is endowed with an imperishable interest for alien prince and alien peasant, for the lettered and the ignorant, the wise and the fool, the rich and the poor, the bonded and the free - one land that all men desire to see and once seen, by even a glimpse, would not give the glimpse for all the shows of all the rest of the globe combined.” – Mark Twain (National Tourism Policy, 2002)

This chapter attempts to present an overview of tourism in India with special reference to its northeastern part. Firstly, the chapter discusses the growth and development of tourism in India, major tourism thrusts during the five year plans and the different organisations working for the development of tourism in India. It highlights the facts and figures relating to tourist arrivals, foreign exchange earnings from tourism and India’s inter-relationship with world tourism. Secondly, the chapter flashes light on all the eight states of Northeast India with regard to prospects of tourism industry. It also highlights the important tourism attractions and the policy implications of all the eight states of Northeast India.

2.1 Introduction

Tourism has its origin in the growth of human civilization and now it has covered a long distance in its path of development. Today, tourism is the most important segment of service industry of an economy. It is one of the world’s fastest growing industries and helps in accelerating the economic development of a country. It has generated a number of social and economic benefits, promotes national integration and international understanding. It has been seen as an agent for peace, and agent of social disruption, a means for transferring money from richer to poor nations, a form of neo-colonialism, and a mechanism to fund conservation (Kuchay, 2011). It is the driving force for poverty reduction, job creation and social harmony.

Tourism as an industry helps in earning huge foreign exchange reserves and creates direct and indirect employment opportunities to a very large section of the society. It not only contributes directly to the nation’s economy but it also has significant

linkages with several other sectors like agriculture, animal husbandry, handicrafts, construction, transportation, entertainment etc (Archer and Fletcher, 1990). In India, the travel and tourism industry offers solution to employment, revenue and equitable growth of the rural population. It provides incentives to foster the quality of environment, generates more employment opportunities and also develops necessary infrastructure facilities like roads, telecom and medical services particularly in remote and backward areas.

2.2 Tourism in India: A historical perspective

It is a natural desire of human beings to see the unseen and to know the unknown. Man of ancient times had an urge to explore new and peculiar places, to find out changes to environment and to enjoy new experiences. It is the wish of mankind to move from one place to another for a purpose - natural, social, political, cultural, religious or commercial. India is one of the cradles of civilization with a long history dating back more than 9,000 years. Its history begins with the birth of the Indus Valley Civilization and the coming of the Aryans. Therefore, the phenomenon and activity of tourism in India is as old as its civilization and culture.

Much of the travel in earliest days was largely self motivated and rather a simple affair. No travel formalities existed. Travel in the distant past was not a thing of pleasure as is at present. Throughout history, traders and merchants have travelled to far off lands in order to trade with other nations and tribes (Bhatia, 1996). A traveller of the olden days was a merchant or a pilgrim, a scholar in search of ancient text and even a curious way looking forward to new and exciting experiences. This is why we have seen from the pages of history that foreign travellers namely Megasthenes, Fahein, Hiuen Tsang etc. made their extensive tour in India. In fact, pilgrimage has also played an important role in moulding the lives of the people in ancient India.

The history of Indian tourism in ancient and medieval period was closely connected with trade and religion although political embassy and goodwill missions also played some significant role. India was and has been rich in natural beauties, architectural relics, religious and spiritual knowledge and its commercial centres. India

was known as a 'golden bird' to the outside world, so attracted not only a series of invaders starting with Alexander of Macedonia, the Afghans, but also great travelers like Vasco-de-Gama. Many foreigners, Arabs and Europeans came to India for trade. Thus, India throughout those years had a great fascination for foreign travellers (Mittal, 2013).

In earlier days, efforts were made to promote trade, and top priority was given to the task of making roads for transportation of merchandise from one centre to another. The *Arthashastra* too reflects the importance of the travel infrastructure, classification of routes and types of vehicles. It indicated that there was a well developed mode of travel in India for the military, the commercial travelers and the civilians. History also shows that there existed amicable foreign relations in the sub-continent that encouraged the very much influx of foreign travelers into the country.

As noted by Mittal (2013), the history of the development of travel and tourism in India may be divided into three periods - ancient period, medieval period, and modern period. He identified three motivating forces in the ancient period for the movement of people: trade and commerce, religious merit and political. During the medieval period, much importance was given to pilgrimage and a large number of pilgrims travelled to notable shrines around the world. Tourism during eighteenth and nineteenth centuries had four motivating forces: education, religion, adventure and health. However, the phenomenal rise of tourism in India took place in the second half of the nineteenth century. This rise was due to the development of railways and ships.

The nineteenth century witnessed a new era and a new dimension was given in the field of Indian tourism. There were frequent movements of people between India and Europe like never before. India, owing to its rich socio-cultural heritage and beautiful natural endowments, started attracting the Europeans to visit the country. According to Singhal et al, (2006), the beginning of modern tourism in undivided India can be said to have been made by railways with the publications of the first *Handbook of India* in 1931. It gave short descriptions of places and attractions on the railway routes, the travel related information regarding the accommodations units for tourists.

2.3 Development of tourism in India

Tourism development in India has passed through many phases. In India, tourism as a subject has not been included in the constitution. If we look back at the first conscious and organized effort to promote tourism in India, it was only made in 1945 when a committee was set up by the Government of India (GoI) under the chairmanship of Sir John Sergeant, educational adviser to the GoI (Krishna, 1993). The main objective of the Sergeant Committee was to survey the potentiality of developing tourist traffic in India. The Sergeant Committee recommended for encouraging and promoting tourism in India by all possible means (Bhattacharjee, 2001). Consequently, a tourist traffic branch was created in the Ministry of Transport in 1949 consisting of representatives of the concerned ministries and of transport and hotel industries. Soon after that, four regional tourist offices were opened at Delhi, Calcutta, Bombay and Madras in 1950-51. From 1952 onwards overseas offices at New York, San Francisco, London, Paris and Colombo were opened. Since then considerable attention has been given to development of tourism in India (Negi, 1998). Thereafter, the development of tourism was taken up in a planned manner in 1956 coinciding with the second five year plan. It was in March 1958 that a separate tourism department was created in the Ministry of Transport and Communication to deal with all matters concerning tourism (Sarkar and Dhar, 1998).

The early 1980s marked a new era when tourism activities gained momentum and tourism began to be considered a major instrument for social integration and economic development. The central government took several significant steps to develop the tourism sector. A new national policy on tourism was presented for the first time in both Houses of Parliament on November 3, 1982 (George, 2003). The policy accorded its high priority to the development of international tourism and increasing attention to foster regional tourism. Due emphasis was given to development of cultural tourism and attention was also given to develop backward areas having ancient monuments, natural scenery, festivals and local arts etc. Later on in 1988, the national committee on tourism formulated a comprehensive plan for achieving sustainable growth in tourism. In 1992, a national action plan was prepared with the aim to improve tourism infrastructure,

increase employment opportunities, preserve national heritage and environment, and diversify various tourism products. However, the action plan did not specify the infrastructural requirements and the investment needed to come up to the targets and the sources of funding the targets. In 1997, the central government came up with a new tourism policy recognizing the roles of central and state governments, public sector undertakings and the private sector in the creation of tourism facilities. On the basis of the policy, the year 1999 was observed as “*Visit India Year*”, but due to lack of budgetary support it could not come up to the expectation of the plan outlay.

By the beginning of the new millennium, the Government of India has decided that domestic tourism would be a state government issue and the central government would take care of international tourism. In the Chief Ministers Conference held on October 30, 2001, the Prime Minister of India, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee emphasized the importance of tourism development. He had stated:

“Tourism is a major engine of economic growth in most of the parts of world. Several countries had transferred their economies using the tourism potential the fullest... Tourism has great capacity to create large scale employment of diverse kind - from the most specialized to the unskilled and all of us know that generation of massive productive employment opportunities India needed the most.”

The government came up with a new National Tourism Policy (NTP) in 2002, which sought to highlight tourism’s contribution to national development and its role as a development tool. This policy document seeks to enhance employment potential within the tourism sector as well as to foster economic integration through developing linkages with other sectors. Broadly, the policy paper attempts to:-

- position tourism as a major engine of economic growth;
- harness the direct and multiplier effects of tourism for employment generation, economic development and providing impetus to rural tourism;
- focus on domestic tourism as a major driver of tourism growth;
- position India a global brand to take advantage of the bargaining global travel trade and the vast untapped potential of India as a destination;

- acknowledge the critical role of private sector with government working as a proactive facilitator and catalyst;
- create and develop integrated tourism circuits based on India's unique civilization, heritage and culture in partnership with states, private sector and other agencies;
- ensure that the tourist to India gets physically invigorated, mentally rejuvenated, culturally enriched, spiritually elevated and "feel India from within".

The policy has taken into consideration seven key areas that would provide the thrust to tourism development. These are *Swagat* (Welcome), *Soochna* (Information), *Suvidha* (Facilitation), *Suraksha* (Safety), *Sahyog* (Cooperation), *Samrachna* (Infrastructure Development), and *Safai* (Cleanliness). To achieve these development goals, the Government of India embarked upon a strategy that involved a radical departure from past policies, and institutional arrangements in order to optimize and release the potential of its natural, human, financial and technical resources. It was further stated that sustainability should serve as a guiding star for the new policy. The development and management strategies should be so worked as to ensure that tourism largely acts as a smokeless industry and its ecological footprints remain as soft as possible. In this way the policy allowed the various stakeholders to fully develop the potential of tourism in India and to harness this to national development priorities (NTP, 2002). In order to achieve the Government of India's vision for the development of the tourism sector five key strategic objectives have been visualized to be achieved. They are:

- Positioning and maintaining tourism development as a national priority activity;
- Enhancing and maintaining the competitiveness of India as a tourist destination;
- Improving India's existing tourism products and expanding these to meet new market requirements;
- Creation of world class infrastructure; and
- Developing sustained and effective marketing plans and programmes.

In 2002, the Ministry of Tourism in India has come up with its own brand – *Incredible India!* It has undertaken many projects to showcase India as a perfect tourist

destination to the global audiences and create a visitor-friendly image of the country. A major tourism campaign *Atithi Devo Bhavah* was also undertaken by the government in 2009 to give a widespread message of ‘Honour your Guest as he is always equivalent to God’. The main aim of such kind of tourism promotional campaigns is to promote balanced socio-economic development, promote and preserve the rich heritage and culture of India and also create employment opportunities.

2.4 Major tourism thrusts during Five Year Plans

To have a better understanding of the various development phases of tourism in India, Table 2.1 is presented to provide an overview of the major thrust of GoI during the successive Five Year Plans.

Table 2.1
Major thrust of the Five Year Plans for tourism development in India
(Rs. In Crores)

| Plan | Major Thrust | Total Plan Outlay | Tourism Outlay | % of Plan Outlay |
|-------------------------|---|--------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| First Plan (1951-56) | No special thrust area was mentioned. | 1960 | Nil | --- |
| Second Plan (1956-1961) | (i) Scheme for the development of facilities at a limited number of places visited largely by foreign tourists; and (ii) Schemes intended primarily to provide facilities for home tourists of low and middle income groups at a number of places of regional and local importance. | 4600 | 3.36 | 0.07 |
| Third Plan (1961-1966) | Concentration was largely on the provisions of facilities for accommodation and transport. The plan made an important distinction between central and state schemes. Central Schemes were considered important from the point of view of attracting foreign tourists, the state schemes were intended mainly for catering the needs of domestic tourists. | 7500 | 8.00 | 0.11 |
| Fourth Plan (1969-1974) | Recognized tourism as an important sector towards employment generation and foreign exchange earnings and focused mainly on the development of | 15902 | 36.00 | 0.23 |
| Fifth Plan (1974-1979) | | 39304 | 73.95 | 0.19 |

| | | | | |
|-----------------------------|---|---------|--------|------|
| Sixth Plan (1980-1985) | tourism infrastructure. The special thrust on tourism infrastructure was continued. | 97500 | 187.46 | 0.19 |
| Seventh Plan (1985-1990) | The emphasis was sought to be shifted from the erstwhile focus on foreign exchange earning to the wider issues of economic development. The plan document also stressed the need for proper co-ordination among the activities of the Center, the States and the private sector in the arena of tourism promotion. Accorded 'industry' status to tourism and identified some areas for quick development of tourism. These areas were: | 180000 | 326.16 | 0.19 |
| Eighth Plan (1992-1997) | a) development of tourist circuits; b) diversification of tourism products and expanding the base from cultural tourism to newer forms of tourism. | 434100 | 773.62 | 0.60 |
| Ninth Plan (1998-2002) | c) development of non-traditional areas like trekking, winter sports, wild life tourism, beach tourism, etc. d) launching of National Image building and Market plan. Emphasized the need for self-sustained growth of the tourism sector and also stressed on the essentiality of private sectors involvement in the development of tourism in India. | 859200 | 485.75 | 0.06 |
| Tenth Plan (2002-07) | Two main areas have been given emphasis: i) first on the development of infrastructure for domestic tourism; and ii) secondly on co-ordination among different agencies both under Central Government and different State governments. | 1525639 | 2900 | 0.19 |
| Eleventh Plan (2007-12) | Main emphasis was laid on: i) positioning and maintaining tourism development as a national priority activity by enhancing and maintaining the competitiveness of India as a tourist destination and | 3644718 | 5156 | 0.14 |

| | | | | |
|---------------------------|---|---------|-------|------|
| Twelfth Plan (2012-17) | <p>improving existing tourism products; and</p> <p>ii) effective market plans to develop rural and small segment tourism</p> <p>Ministry of Tourism proposed to continue to supporting creation of world class infrastructure in the country so that existing tourism products can be further improved and expanded to meet new market requirements and enhance the competitiveness of India as a tourist destination.</p> <p>This plan emphasizes the need to adopt a ‘pro-poor tourism’ approach to ensure that tourism growth contributes to poverty reduction. It also focuses on developing tourism clusters or circuits around attractive destinations in collaboration with various agencies at local level.</p> | 7669807 | 22800 | 0.30 |
|---------------------------|---|---------|-------|------|

Sources: Bhattacharjee (2001) & Mittal (2013)

2.5 Organisations for tourism development

Some of the organisations involved in the development of tourism in India are:

2.5.1 Ministry of Tourism

The Ministry of Tourism (MoT) is responsible for promotion of India as a tourism destination, development of tourism infrastructure in the country, and performing regulatory functions in the field of tourism. It has five Regional offices located at Kolkata (east), Mumbai (west), Delhi (north), Chennai (south) and Guwahati (north-east), which are headed by an officer of the level of Deputy Director General designated as Regional Director. Each Regional Officer (called RD Office) has sub regional officers in their jurisdiction, totaling 15 in number. Tourist offices are also located at various places abroad.

2.5.2 Overseas organizations

In order to position India as a preferred destination in the global market, 18 offices have been established in USA, American countries, Canada and other Gulf countries. These offices function under the supervision of a Regional Directorate office

in New York, USA. A separate Directorate of Tourism office is established in Geneva to look after and monitor the functioning of tourist offices in London, Paris, Frankfurt, and Brussels. Most of the overseas promotional programs are organized with Air India and these are termed as operation schemes. For the first time in 1968 a scheme named “*Operation Europe*” was launched to promote Indian tourism in Europe. It was launched in partnership with Air India, which has extended financial support to its offices across Europe. In due course of time, several such schemes were launched due to the success achieved in these schemes, to give the much needed push to Indian tourism.

2.5.3 India Tourism Development Corporation

The India Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC) came into existence in October 1966 and has been the prime mover in the progressive development, promotion and expansion of tourism in the country. Broadly, the main objectives of the corporation are:

- To construct, take over and manage existing hotels and market hotels, beach resorts, travelers’ lodges/restaurants;
- To provide transport, entertainment, shopping and conventional services;
- To produce, distribute, tourist publicity material;
- To render consultancy-cum-managerial services in India and abroad;
- To carry on the business as Full-Fledged Money Changers, restricted money changers etc;
- To provide innovative, dependable and value for money solutions to the needs of tourism development and engineering industry including providing consultancy and project implementation.

The ITDC is running hotels, restaurants at various places for tourists, besides providing transport facilities. In addition, the corporation is engaged in production, distribution and sale of tourist publicity literature and providing entertainment and duty free shopping facilities to the tourists. Presently, ITDC has a network of eight Ashok Group of Hotels, six joint venture hotels, two restaurants (including one airport restaurant), 12 transport units, one tourist service station, 37 duty free shops at

international as well as domestic customs airports, one tax free outlet and two sound and light shows.

2.5.4 National Council for Hotel Management and Catering Technology

The National Council for Hotel Management and Catering Technology (NCHMCT) was set up in the year 1982 as an autonomous body for coordinated growth and development of hospitality management education in the country. Initially, the council was set up in the name of National Board of Studies in Food Management, Catering & Nutrition under the administrative control of Ministry of Agriculture (Department of Food) and subsequently it was transferred to Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India in the year 1984 with renaming as National Council for Hotel Management and Catering Technology.

The NCHMCT regulates academics in the field of hospitality education and training that is imparted at 21 central government sponsored Institutes of Hotel Management (IHM), 19 state government sponsored IHMs offering degree level program; three state government sponsored IHMs offering Diploma/Craft Certificate level programs, one PSU owned institute, 13 private institutes and nine Food Craft Institutes that function in different parts of the country. Through the NCHMCT, these institutes offer 11 different professional programs leading to award of certificate, diploma, post graduate diploma, bachelor and master degree.

2.5.5 Indian Institute of Tourism and Travel Management

Indian Institute of Tourism and Travel Management (IITTM), set up in 1983 with registered office at New Delhi, is an autonomous body under Ministry of Tourism, Government of India and is one of the premier institutes in the country offering education, training, research and consultancy in sustainable management of tourism, travel and other allied sectors. It is devoted to the pursuit of higher knowledge in tourism and its dissemination to a diverse audience.

Over the years, the IITTM has established a distinguished identity of its own and reached at a commanding position among sectoral B-Schools in the country. With its focus in meeting the changing needs of the tourism industry, it has played a pioneering

role in the propagation and professionalization of tourism education. The efforts of the IITTM have been instrumental in evolving the fundamental framework for tourism education and training in the country as it exists today. The Ministry of Tourism, Government of India has also entrusted the institute to conduct regional level guide training programmes for all the regions of the country. Today, IITTM is a multi campus institute. To fulfill its objective of expanding tourism education in the country, it established its campuses in central, eastern, northern, western and southern parts of the country. Its main campus and headquarters was set up at Gwalior in 1992 and in due course of time other campuses were added. IITTM, Bhubaneswar, was added in 1996 and IITTM Nellore in 2011. The National Institute of Water Sports, Goa was brought under the aegis of IITTM in 2004.

2.5.6 National Institute of Water Sports

The National Institute of Water Sports (NIWS) is an autonomous body constituted under the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India for training, education, consultancy and research to usher in an era of leisure-water sporting segment in the country. It is the first institute of its kind in South Asia covering the entire range of water sport disciplines such as life saving, boat handling, sailing, windsurfing, water skiing, scuba diving, river rafting and kayaking. Since its inception, 20 courses have been developed for water sport professionals, managers and the tourists, particularly those visiting Goa.

The NIWS is envisaged to function as a model for similar initiatives/entrepreneurs with regard to faculty and staff, training infrastructure, water sport equipment and specialized repair and berthing facilities. Plans are being conceived to expand the activities to encompass other adventure sporting items so as to transform it into an ‘Institute of Adventure Sports’.

2.5.7 Tourism Finance Corporation of India Ltd.

Tourism Finance Corporation of India Ltd. (TFCI) has been set-up as an All India Financial Institution, pursuant to the recommendations of “National Committee on Tourism” set-up under the aegis of Planning Commission in 1988. The main object of

setting up the specialized financial institution was to expedite the growth of tourism infrastructure in the country by providing dedicated line of credit on long term basis to tourism related projects in the country. TFCI has successfully played the role of investment catalyst for the tourism sector and has cumulatively sanctioned assistance aggregating Rs.7815 crore up to 30th September, 2015 to 773 projects mainly in tourism and other related sectors. TFCI provides financial assistance by way of rupee loan, subscription to equity/debentures and corporate loans mainly to hotel projects, amusement parks, ropeways, multiplexes, restaurants etc. With a view to diversify in other related areas, TFCI has expanded the scope of its activities by including financing of infrastructure projects, real estate projects and manufacturing projects to a limited extent, within the scope of its activities.

TFCI, as a specialized financing institution, has contributed significantly in terms of creation of tourism infrastructure throughout the country and thereby generating direct employment opportunities. The assistance sanctioned so far has helped in creating over 46,000 rooms in approved category of hotels which represents approximately 1/3rd of the total rooms' capacity in the country. The assistance sanctioned by TFCI has helped in catalyzing investment to the tune of Rs. 26,425 crore in tourism sector till 30th September, 2015 over a period of time.

2.6 Tourism scenario in India

India is a country of great history with a diverse culture and beautiful historical places. The scenic resorts, cultural sites, adventure tours, religious places and historical locations attract all types of tourists. A travel through Indian cities brings to light, the cultural and the geographical richness of the country. However, India has started taking interest in modern concept of tourism quite late. But, with the materialization and marketing of the richness of Indian tourism in the recent years, the tourism industry has emerged as one of the key industries in the economy.

The present scenario of the Indian tourism industry has been studied under various dimensions as illustrated below:

2.6.1 India in world's share

The data pertaining to international tourist arrivals (ITAs) in the world and India's share and rank in it pertaining to the year 2000-2017 have been presented in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2
India's share of international tourist arrivals in world

| Year | World | India | | |
|------|----------------------|----------------------|------------------|------------------|
| | Number (in millions) | Number (in millions) | % Share of India | Rank of India |
| 2000 | 683.3 | 2.65 | 0.39 | 50 th |
| 2001 | 683.4 | 2.54 | 0.37 | 51 st |
| 2002 | 703.2 | 2.38 | 0.34 | 54 th |
| 2003 | 691.0 | 2.73 | 0.39 | 51 st |
| 2004 | 762.0 | 3.46 | 0.45 | 44 th |
| 2005 | 803.4 | 3.92 | 0.49 | 43 rd |
| 2006 | 846.0 | 4.45 | 0.53 | 44 th |
| 2007 | 894.0 | 5.08 | 0.57 | 41 st |
| 2008 | 917.0 | 5.28 | 0.58 | 41 st |
| 2009 | 883.0 | 5.17 | 0.59 | 41 st |
| 2010 | 948.0 | 5.78 | 0.61 | 42 nd |
| 2011 | 994.0 | 6.31 | 0.63 | 38 th |
| 2012 | 1039.0 | 6.58 | 0.63 | 41 st |
| 2013 | 1087.0 | 6.97 | 0.64 | 41 st |
| 2014 | 1137 | 13.11 | 1.15 | 24 th |
| 2015 | 1195 | 13.28 | 1.11 | 24 th |
| 2016 | 1239 | 14.57 | 1.18 | 26 th |
| 2017 | 1323 | 15.54 | 1.17 | 26 th |

Source: Annual Reports of Ministry of Tourism, GoI
(Official Website of Ministry of Tourism)

India's rank in ITA was 50th in 2000 and improved to 41st in 2007 and remained constant till 2009. This ranking has improved to 24th in 2015 and as recently as in 2017 it was 26th. The table also reveals that India's share of ITAs in the world was increased from 0.39% in 2000 to 1.17% in 2017. During the period, the number of ITAs in India has increased from 2.65 million in 2000 to 15.54 million in 2017 which is almost six-fold increase.

The international tourism receipts (ITR) worldwide and India's share in it during the period 2000-2017 are presented in Table 2.3.

Table 2.3
India's share of international tourism receipts in world

| Year | World Tourism Receipts | | % Share of India | Rank of India |
|------|--------------------------|------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| | Receipts (US\$ billions) | FEE in India (US\$ billions) | | |
| 2000 | 475.3 | 3.460 | 0.73 | 36 th |
| 2001 | 463.8 | 3.198 | 0.69 | 36 th |
| 2002 | 481.9 | 3.103 | 0.64 | 37 th |
| 2003 | 529.3 | 4.463 | 0.84 | 37 th |
| 2004 | 633.2 | 6.170 | 0.97 | 26 th |
| 2005 | 679.6 | 7.493 | 1.10 | 22 nd |
| 2006 | 744.0 | 8.634 | 1.16 | 22 nd |
| 2007 | 857.0 | 10.729 | 1.25 | 22 nd |
| 2008 | 939.0 | 11.832 | 1.26 | 22 nd |
| 2009 | 853.0 | 11.136 | 1.31 | 20 th |
| 2010 | 931.0 | 14.490 | 1.56 | 17 th |
| 2011 | 1042.0 | 17.707 | 1.70 | 18 th |
| 2012 | 1117.0 | 17.971 | 1.61 | 16 th |
| 2013 | 1198.0 | 18.397 | 1.54 | 16 th |
| 2014 | 1252.0 | 19.700 | 1.57 | 15 th |
| 2015 | 1217.0 | 21.013 | 1.73 | 14 th |
| 2016 | 1239.0 | 22.923 | 1.85 | 13 th |
| 2017 | 1332.0 | 27.310 | 2.05 | 13 th |

Source: Annual Reports of Ministry of Tourism, GoI
(Official Website of Ministry of Tourism)

The share of India in the world tourism receipts had increased from 0.73% in 2000 to 2.05% in 2017. The table also shows that India's rank in the international tourism receipts had improved from 36th to 13th during this period. The international tourist receipts in India have augmented from just US\$ 3.46 bn in 2000 to US\$ 27.31 bn in 2017, which is almost eight times higher growth.

2.6.2 Foreign tourist arrivals

Data regarding the number of foreign tourist arrivals (FTAs) and related aspects have been compiled for the period of 1981 to 2018 and are presented in Table 2.4. The FTAs in India continued to grow from 1.27 million in 1981, to 1.68 million in 1991, 2.54 million in 2001, to reach 10 million in 2017. During the span of 37 years, India witnessed an increase of over 8.73 million FTAs which is over 680%.

Table 2.4
Foreign tourist arrivals in India

| Year | FTAs in India | Annual Growth (%) | Year | FTAs in India | Annual Growth (%) |
|------|---------------|-------------------|------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| 1981 | 1279210 | 2.0 | 2000 | 2649378 | 6.7 |
| 1982 | 1288162 | 0.7 | 2001 | 2537282 | -4.2 |
| 1983 | 1304976 | 1.3 | 2002 | 2384364 | -6.0 |
| 1984 | 1193752 | -8.5 | 2003 | 2726214 | 14.3 |
| 1985 | 1259384 | 5.5 | 2004 | 3457477 | 26.8 |
| 1986 | 1451076 | 15.2 | 2005 | 3918610 | 13.3 |
| 1987 | 1484290 | 2.3 | 2006 | 4447167 | 13.5 |
| 1988 | 1590661 | 7.2 | 2007 | 5081504 | 14.3 |
| 1989 | 1736093 | 9.1 | 2008 | 5282603 | 4.0 |
| 1990 | 1707158 | -1.7 | 2009 | 5167699 | -2.2 |
| 1991 | 1677508 | -1.7 | 2010 | 5775692 | 11.8 |
| 1992 | 1867651 | 11.3 | 2011 | 6309222 | 9.2 |
| 1993 | 1764830 | -5.5 | 2012 | 6577745 | 4.3 |
| 1994 | 1886433 | 6.9 | 2013 | 6967601 | 5.9 |
| 1995 | 2123683 | 12.6 | 2014 | 7679099 | 10.2 |
| 1996 | 2287860 | 7.7 | 2015 | 8027133 | 4.5 |
| 1997 | 2374094 | 3.8 | 2016 | 8804411 | 9.7 |
| 1998 | 2358629 | -0.7 | 2017 | 10035803 | 14.0 |
| 1999 | 2481928 | 5.2 | 2018 | 5163343 (Jan-June) | 7.9 @ |

@: Growth Rate over January-June of previous year
Source: Annual Reports of Ministry of Tourism, GoI
(Official Website of Ministry of Tourism)

The growth in FTAs in India during the eighties & nineties did not follow any consistent pattern. During the period, the year 2004 recorded the maximum growth (26.8%) while the year 1984 was the worst (-8.5%). The growth rate of the years 1986, 1992, 1995, 2003 to 2007, 2010, 2014 and 2017 saw double-digit figures, where negative growth rate was recorded in the years 1984, 1990, 1991, 1993, 1998, 2001, 2002 and 2009.

The region-wise details of FTAs in India during 2015 to 2018 are given in Table 2.5. As per the proportion of total FTAs (region-wise) in India is concerned, the proportion of South Asia (24.25%) was maximum during 2015, followed by Western Europe (23.42%), North America (18.62%), South East Asia (8.72%), East Asia (6.92%), West Asia (5.20%), Eastern Europe (4.12%), Australasia (3.89%), Africa (3.66%) and Central & South America (0.85%). The FTAs which were not classified

elsewhere accounted for 0.33%, 0.40% and 0.31% in 2013, 2014 and 2015 respectively. Hence, it is imperative to make all possible efforts to attract tourists from other European and Southeast Asian countries and from the Middle East.

Table 2.5
Foreign tourist arrivals in India from different regions of the world

| Region/ country | No. of FTAs | | | Proportion to the Total | | | % change | |
|--------------------------|-------------|---------|---------|-------------------------|--------|--------|----------|---------|
| | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2014/13 | 2015/14 |
| South Asia | 1215035 | 1694857 | 1946207 | 17.44 | 22.07 | 24.25 | 39.5 | 14.8 |
| Western Europe | 1855866 | 1860580 | 1880203 | 26.64 | 24.23 | 23.42 | 0.3 | 1.1 |
| North America | 1340531 | 1387468 | 1494930 | 19.24 | 18.07 | 18.62 | 3.5 | 7.7 |
| Southeast Asia | 630054 | 685805 | 700298 | 9.04 | 8.93 | 8.72 | 8.8 | 2.1 |
| East Asia | 547305 | 546792 | 555770 | 7.85 | 7.12 | 6.92 | -0.1 | 1.6 |
| West Asia | 343113 | 413678 | 417616 | 4.92 | 5.39 | 5.20 | 20.6 | 1.0 |
| Eastern Europe | 405083 | 422278 | 331051 | 5.81 | 5.50 | 4.12 | 4.2 | -21.6 |
| Australasia | 263574 | 286294 | 312101 | 3.78 | 3.73 | 3.89 | 8.6 | 9.0 |
| Africa | 275271 | 280754 | 293569 | 3.95 | 3.66 | 3.66 | 2.0 | 4.6 |
| Central & South America | 68436 | 69926 | 70831 | 0.98 | 0.91 | 0.85 | 2.2 | 1.3 |
| Not Classified Elsewhere | 23333 | 30667 | 24557 | 0.33 | 0.40 | 0.31 | 31.4 | -19.9 |
| Total FTAs in India | 6967601 | 7679099 | 8027133 | 100.00 | 100.00 | 100.00 | 10.2 | 4.5 |

Source: Annual Reports of Ministry of Tourism, GoI
(Official Website of Ministry of Tourism)

The list of top 10 contributing countries for foreign tourist arrivals (FTAs) in India for the period 2015 to 2017 is presented in Table 2.6. During 2016 and 2017, Bangladesh (15.68% in 2016 and 21.49% in 2017) was the topper in contributing maximum FTAs to India, followed by United States (14.73% in 2016 and 13.72% in 2017) and United Kingdom (10.73% in 2016 and 9.83% in 2017). In 2015, the United States was the leader in providing maximum FTAs to India, followed by Bangladesh and United Kingdom at the second and third place respectively.

Table 2.6
Top 10 contributing countries for foreign tourist arrivals in India

| Rank | 2015 | | | 2016 | | | 2017 | | |
|------|------------------|-----------|---------|------------------|-----------|---------|--------------------|-----------|---------|
| | Country | FTAs | % Share | Country | FTAs | % Share | Country | FTAs | % Share |
| 1 | U.S. | 12,13,624 | 15.12 | Bangladesh | 13,80,409 | 15.68 | Bangladesh | 21,56,557 | 21.49 |
| 2 | Bangladesh | 11,33,879 | 14.13 | U.S. | 12,96,939 | 14.73 | U.S. | 1376919 | 13.72 |
| 3 | U.K. | 8,67,601 | 10.81 | U.K. | 9,41,883 | 10.70 | U.K. | 986296 | 9.83 |
| 4 | Sri Lanka | 2,99,513 | 3.73 | Canada | 3,17,239 | 3.60 | Canada | 335439 | 3.34 |
| 5 | Canada | 2,81,306 | 3.50 | Malaysia | 3,01,961 | 3.43 | Australia | 324243 | 3.23 |
| 6 | Malaysia | 2,72,941 | 3.40 | Sri Lanka | 2,97,418 | 3.38 | Malaysia | 322126 | 3.21 |
| 7 | Australia | 2,63,101 | 3.28 | Australia | 2,93,625 | 3.33 | Sri Lanka | 303590 | 3.03 |
| 8 | Germany | 2,48,314 | 3.09 | Germany | 2,65,928 | 3.02 | Russian Federation | 278904 | 2.78 |
| 9 | France | 2,30,854 | 2.88 | China | 2,51,313 | 2.85 | Germany | 269380 | 2.68 |
| 10 | Japan | 2,07,415 | 2.58 | France | 2,38,707 | 2.71 | France | 249620 | 2.49 |
| | Top 10 countries | 50,18,548 | 62.52 | Top 10 countries | 55,85,422 | 63.44 | Top 10 countries | 6603074 | 65.80 |
| | Other countries | 30,08,585 | 37.48 | Other countries | 32,18,989 | 36.56 | Other countries | 3432729 | 34.20 |
| | Grand total | 80,27,133 | 100 | Grand total | 88,04,411 | 100 | Grand total | 10035803 | 100 |

Source: Annual Reports of Ministry of Tourism, GoI
(Official Website of Ministry of Tourism)

The top 10 contributing countries for FTAs in India during 2017 were Bangladesh, United States, United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Russia, Germany and France. They contributed a total of 66,03,074 FTAs to India which constitute a whopping 65.80% of all the FTAs during the year. The table shows an increasing trend of FTAs in India during the period, totaling 8.02 million in 2014 to 10.03 millions in 2017.

2.6.3 Foreign and domestic tourists visits

Table 2.7 highlights the statistics on domestic and foreign tourist visits to various states and UTs of India during the years 2000 to 2017. It is evident from the table that there have been positive annual growth rates in foreign tourist visits (FTVs) except few years which show a negative growth. A total of 5.89 million foreign tourists visited India in 2000, the number went up to 26.89 million in 2017 showing an increase of over 456% in 17 years. During the period, the year 2003 had the highest annual growth rate over the previous year at 30.1%, while the year 2001 received the worst annual growth rate of - 7.8%. Barring 2001, 2002, 2009 and 2012, all other years had positive growth rates of FTVs to all states/UTs of India during the period.

Table 2.7
Number of foreign and domestic tourist visits to all states/UTs of India

| Year | Foreign | | Domestic | |
|------|---------------------------------|---------------|---------------------------------|---------------|
| | Tourists visit (in Millions) | Annual growth | Tourists visit (in Millions) | Annual growth |
| 2000 | 5.89 | 1.1 | 220.11 | 15.4 |
| 2001 | 5.44 | -7.8 | 236.47 | 7.4 |
| 2002 | 5.16 | -5.1 | 269.60 | 14.0 |
| 2003 | 6.71 | 30.1 | 309.04 | 14.6 |
| 2004 | 8.36 | 24.6 | 366.27 | 18.5 |
| 2005 | 9.95 | 19.0 | 392.04 | 7.0 |
| 2006 | 11.75 | 18.1 | 462.44 | 18.0 |
| 2007 | 13.27 | 12.9 | 526.70 | 13.9 |
| 2008 | 14.38 | 8.4 | 563.03 | 6.9 |
| 2009 | 14.37 | -0.1 | 668.80 | 18.8 |
| 2010 | 17.91 | 24.6 | 747.70 | 11.8 |
| 2011 | 19.50 | 8.9 | 864.53 | 15.6 |
| 2012 | 18.26 | -6.3 | 1,045.05 | 20.9 |
| 2013 | 19.95 | 9.2 | 1,142.53 | 9.3 |
| 2014 | 22.33 | 11.9 | 1,282.80 | 12.3 |
| 2015 | 23.33 | 4.4 | 1,431.97 | 11.6 |
| 2016 | 24.71 | 5.92 | 1,615.39 | 12.8 |
| 2017 | 26.89 | 8.8 | 1,652.49 | 2.3 |

Source: Annual Reports of Ministry of Tourism, GoI
(Official Website of Ministry of Tourism)

From the above table, it is apparent that numbers of domestic tourist visits to States/UTs of India during the period of 2000-2017 have been registering an increasing trend. The figure of 220.11 million domestic tourists in 2000 have increased to 1652.49 million in 2017 showing a record increase of 750% during the period. Among the total of 18 years during the period a total of 13 years have registered an annual growth rate of two-digit figures.

It may be emphasized here that domestic tourism is no less pronounced than the foreign tourism. In fact, domestic tourists far outnumbered foreign tourists. In fact, it is domestic tourism which fosters a sense of unity in the otherwise diverse environment of India and contributes to national integration. Even if 10 per cent of the population travels outside the native state, it involves a massive movement of over 13 crore people who develop the feeling that they are travelling within their own country.

Table 2.8
Share of Top 10 States/UTs of India in number of foreign tourist visits

| Rank | 2013 | | 2014 | | 2015 | | 2016 | | 2017 | | |
|------------------------|-------------|-------------|---------------|---------|-------------|---------------|-------------|-------------|---------------|---------|-------------|
| | State/UT | % Share | State/UT | % Share | State/UT | % Share | State/UT | % Share | State/UT | % Share | |
| 1 | Maharashtra | 20.80 | Tamil Nadu | 20.6 | Tamil Nadu | 20.1 | Tamil Nadu | 19.1 | Maharashtra | 18.9 | |
| 2 | Tamil Nadu | 20.00 | Maharashtra | 19.4 | Maharashtra | 18.9 | Maharashtra | 18.9 | Tamil Nadu | 18.1 | |
| 3 | Delhi | 11.5 | U.P. | 12.9 | U.P. | 13.3 | U.P. | 13.3 | U.P. | 13.2 | |
| 4 | U.P. | 10.3 | Delhi | 10.3 | Delhi | 10.2 | Delhi | 10.2 | Delhi | 10.2 | |
| 5 | Rajasthan | 7.2 | Rajasthan | 6.8 | West Bengal | 6.4 | West Bengal | 6.4 | Rajasthan | 6.0 | |
| 6 | West Bengal | 6.2 | West Bengal | 6.1 | Rajasthan | 6.3 | Rajasthan | 6.3 | West Bengal | 5.9 | |
| 7 | Kerala | 4.3 | Kerala | 4.1 | Kerala | 4.2 | Kerala | 4.2 | Punjab | 4.1 | |
| 8 | Bihar | 3.8 | Bihar | 3.7 | Bihar | 4.0 | Bihar | 4.1 | Kerala | 4.1 | |
| 9 | Karnataka | 3.2 | Karnataka | 2.5 | Karnataka | 2.7 | Goa | 2.7 | Bihar | 4.0 | |
| 10 | Goa | 2.5 | Haryana | 2.4 | Goa | 2.3 | Punjab | 2.3 | Goa | 3.1 | |
| Top 10 | | 89.9 | Top 10 | | 88.8 | Top 10 | | 88.4 | Top 10 | | 87.0 |
| Northeast India | | 0.4 | NEI | | 0.5 | NEI | | 0.5 | NEI | | 0.6 |
| Total | | 100 | Total | | 100 | Total | | 100 | Total | | 100 |

Table 2.9
Share of Top 10 States/UTs of India in number of domestic tourist visits

| Rank | 2013 | | 2014 | | 2015 | | 2016 | | 2017 | | |
|---------------|--------------|-------------|---------------|---------|-------------|---------------|-------------|-------------|---------------|---------|-------------|
| | State/UT | % Share | State/UT | % Share | State/UT | % Share | State/UT | % Share | State/UT | % Share | |
| 1 | Tamil Nadu | 21.3 | Tamil Nadu | 25.4 | Tamil Nadu | 23.3 | Tamil Nadu | 21.3 | Tamil Nadu | 20.9 | |
| 2 | U.P. | 19.8 | U.P. | 14.2 | U.P. | 14.3 | U.P. | 13.1 | U.P. | 14.2 | |
| 3 | A.P. | 13.3 | Karnataka | 9.2 | A.P. | 8.5 | A.P. | 9.5 | Karnataka | 10.9 | |
| 4 | Karnataka | 8.6 | Maharashtra | 7.3 | Karnataka | 8.4 | M.P. | 9.3 | A.P. | 10.0 | |
| 5 | Maharashtra | 7.2 | A.P. | 7.2 | Maharashtra | 7.2 | Karnataka | 8.0 | Maharashtra | 7.2 | |
| 6 | West Bengal | 5.5 | Telangana | 5.6 | Telangana | 6.6 | Maharashtra | 7.2 | Telangana | 5.2 | |
| 7 | Rajasthan | 2.6 | M.P. | 4.9 | M.P. | 5.4 | Telangana | 5.9 | West Bengal | 4.8 | |
| 8 | Gujarat | 2.4 | West Bengal | 3.8 | West Bengal | 4.9 | West Bengal | 4.6 | M.P. | 4.7 | |
| 9 | West Bengal | 2.2 | Jharkhand | 2.6 | Gujarat | 2.5 | Gujarat | 2.6 | Gujarat | 2.9 | |
| 10 | Chhattisgarh | 2.0 | Rajasthan | 2.6 | Rajasthan | 2.5 | Rajasthan | 2.6 | Rajasthan | 2.8 | |
| Top 10 | | 84.9 | Top 10 | | 82.8 | Top 10 | | 83.6 | Top 10 | | 84.2 |
| NEI | | 0.6 | NEI | | 0.5 | NEI | | 0.5 | NEI | | 0.5 |
| Total | | 100 | Total | | 100 | Total | | 100 | Total | | 100 |

Source: Annual Reports of Ministry of Tourism, GoI
(Official Website of Ministry of Tourism)

2.6.4 Top 10 sharing states

Table 2.8 provides the list of the top 10 states/UTs of India which received the maximum number of foreign tourist visits (FTVs) during 2012-2017. The table shows that the top 10 states/UTs received a massive 87.6% of all India share in 2017 and 87% in 2016. These figures imply the adoption of imbalanced marketing strategies by the state governments in promoting its own tourist destinations and a sign of regional disparity in the development of Indian tourism sector.

It is observed that since 2014, Tamil Nadu has been the frontrunner in terms of FTVs followed by Maharashtra at second. Most of the rankings of the top 10 states are more or less the same states with slight changes during the period. As per as the share of Northeast India is concerned, it is quite negligible as it could not cross even 1% mark.

Among the top 10 states/UTs where the maximum number of visits made by domestic tourists during 2012 to 2017 (see Table 2.9), Tamil Nadu got the highest share of more than 20% in each year, followed by Andhra Pradesh. In 2017, the top ten states/UTs constitute 83.6% of all India share whereas other remaining states constitute only 16.7% of all India share.

2.7 Economic impact of tourism in India

Tourism is a major engine of economic growth and an important source of foreign exchange earnings (FEEs) in many countries including India. Tourism is an important component of demand in the services sector which has shown considerable dynamism in recent years and is poised for even more rapid growth. It is difficult to estimate the full contribution of tourism to the economy since much of it shows up indirectly in sectors such as hotels and restaurants, transport, handicrafts, etc. but there is a general agreement that the sector has great potential and needs to be well encouraged. Cultural, business, leisure, spiritual, religious, ecological, adventure, and medical trips all come under tourism (Gayathri, 2011).

Table 2.10 shows the trend of foreign exchange earnings (FEEs) from tourism India since the year 2000. The FEEs have been presented both in US \$ (million) and in Indian Rupee (crore). As per as FFEs in US \$ is concerned, the figure had increased

from 3,460 million in 2000 to 27,310 million in 2017, which is almost eight-fold increase during the period. The years 2003 and 2004 experienced the biggest growth during the period in terms of FEEs (US \$) over previous years with 43.8% and 38.2% respectively. Barring the years 2001, 2002 and 2009, all the years have had positive growth in FEEs (US \$) which is quite encouraging for income and employment generation to the Indian economy.

In terms of FEEs (Indian Rupee), the Indian tourism industry has seen an enormous growth of over 11 times during the period 2000 to 2017. The figure of the FEEs (Indian Rupee) has grown from a mere 15,626 million in 2000 to 1,77,874 million in 2016. During the period, except 2001 and 2002, all the years have had positive growth rates. Barring 2001, 2002 and 2009 all the years received double-digit growth figure.

Table 2.10
Foreign Exchange Earnings from tourism in India

| Year | In US \$ (Million) | | In Indian Rupee (Crore) | |
|--------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| | FEEs from Tourism in India | % change over previous year | FEEs from Tourism in India | % change over previous year |
| 2000 | 3460 | 15.0 | 15,626 | 20.7 |
| 2001 | 3198 | -7.6 | 15,083 | -3.5 |
| 2002 | 3103 | -3.0 | 15,064 | -0.1 |
| 2003 | 4463 | 43.8 | 20,729 | 37.6 |
| 2004 | 6170 | 38.2 | 27,944 | 34.8 |
| 2005 | 7493 | 21.4 | 33,123 | 18.5 |
| 2006 | 8634 | 15.2 | 39,025 | 17.8 |
| 2007 | 10729 | 24.3 | 44,362 | 13.7 |
| 2008 | 11832 | 10.3 | 51,294 | 15.6 |
| 2009 | 11136 | -5.9 | 53,754 | 4.8 |
| 2010 | 14190 | 30.1 | 66,172 | 23.1 |
| 2011 | 17707 | 22.2 | 83,036 | 25.5 |
| 2012 | 17971 | 1.5 | 95,607 | 15.1 |
| 2013 | 18397 | 2.4 | 1,07,563 | 12.5 |
| 2014 | 19700 | 7.1 | 1,20,367 | 11.9 |
| 2015 | 21013 | 6.7 | 1,34,844 | 12.0 |
| 2016 | 22923 | 9.1 | 1,54,146 | 14.3 |
| 2017 | 27310 | 19.1 | 1,77,874 | 15.4 |
| 2018 (Jan-June) | 14625 | 12.9@ | 95,713 | 12@ |

@ Growth Rate over Jan-June, 2017

Source: Official Website of Ministry of Tourism, GoI

Tourism has become an important segment of Indian economy contributing substantially to its Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Table 2.11 highlights the total as well as direct contribution of tourism industry to the India's GDP. Before analysing it is pertinent to know the difference between the tourism's 'direct contribution' and 'total contribution' to GDP. Direct contribution means the GDP generated by industries that deal directly with tourists, including hotels, travel agents, airlines and other passenger transport services, as well as the activities of restaurants and leisure industries that deal directly with tourists. On the other hand, total contribution to GDP is the GDP generated directly by the travel and tourism industry plus its indirect and induced impacts.

Table 2.11
Tourism contribution to GDP

| Year | Total contribution to GDP (US\$ Billions) | Total growth (%) | Direct contribution to GDP (US\$ Billions) | Direct growth (%) |
|------|---|------------------|--|-------------------|
| 2000 | 74.33 | - | 21.83 | - |
| 2001 | 61.12 | 17.77 | 17.92 | -17.91 |
| 2002 | 72.44 | 18.52 | 21.45 | 19.70 |
| 2003 | 81.70 | 12.78 | 24.27 | 13.15 |
| 2004 | 87.15 | 6.67 | 25.33 | 4.37 |
| 2005 | 72.27 | -17.07 | 22.35 | -11.76 |
| 2006 | 73.01 | 1.02 | 25.17 | 12.62 |
| 2007 | 100.74 | 37.98 | 27.73 | 10.17 |
| 2008 | 68.17 | -32.33 | 29.15 | 5.73 |
| 2009 | 67.29 | -1.29 | 29.32 | 0.69 |
| 2010 | 73.31 | 8.95 | 31.28 | 6.68 |
| 2011 | 79.70 | 8.72 | 34.01 | 8.73 |

Source: Bureau of Immigration, Govt. of India, 2010
Quoted By: Kaur and Sharma (2012)

The table shows that during the period there were many ups and downs in the growth of total contribution of tourism to GDP. It is observed that there were only 3 out of 12 years where the total contribution of tourism to GDP recorded negative growth. The growth rate was highest in the year 2007 (37.98%) with the total contribution of US\$ 100.74 billion. Contribution of tourism industry to GDP had increased from US\$74.33 billion in 2000 to US\$79.697 billion in 2011.

As far as direct contribution of tourism to the India's GDP is concerned, there has been consistent growth during the period 2000-2011, excepting 2 years, i.e. 2001 and 2005 which registered a negative growth. The years 2002, 2003, 2006 and 2007

have resulted in two digit growth over their previous years. The travel and tourism industry has directly contributed US \$ 21.83 billion to the Indian economy in 2000, which have been further raised to US \$ 34.01 billion in 2011.

Tourism sector also plays an important role in creating job opportunities both in direct and indirect ways. Table 2.12 presents the total and direct contribution of travel and tourism industry to the employment. Direct contribution to employment means the number of direct jobs within the travel and tourism industry. Total contribution to employment means the number of jobs generated directly in the travel and tourism industry plus the indirect and induced contributions.

Table 2.12
Tourism contribution to employment

| Year | Total job opportunities ('000) | Total growth (%) | Direct job opportunities ('000) | Direct growth (%) |
|-------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| 2000 | 48235.2 | - | 23621.5 | - |
| 2001 | 40227.7 | -16.6 | 20038.3 | -15.1 |
| 2002 | 45184.9 | 12.3 | 22071.1 | 10.1 |
| 2003 | 48059.9 | 6.4 | 23271.1 | 5.4 |
| 2004 | 48739.3 | 1.4 | 23463.1 | 0.8 |
| 2005 | 41803.5 | -14.2 | 22086.9 | -5.8 |
| 2006 | 42027.1 | 0.5 | 24396.2 | 10.4 |
| 2007 | 47955.4 | 14.1 | 23569.8 | -3.3 |
| 2008 | 38713.8 | -19.3 | 25458.8 | 8.0 |
| 2009 | 36740.9 | -5.1 | 24590.3 | -3.4 |
| 2010 | 36783.2 | 0.1 | 24335.1 | -1.0 |
| 2011 | 37654.7 | 2.4 | 24931.3 | 2.4 |

Source: World Travel and Tourism Council Statistics, 2011
(Quoted By: Kaur and Sharma)

The table shows that the contribution of travel and tourism industry to employment has recorded over 37,654 thousand total job opportunities in 2011. The direct employment opportunities created by the tourism industry was accounted for over 24,931 thousand. During the study period, the year 2004 recorded the highest number of total job opportunities provided by the tourism industry, whereas in terms of direct employment the year 2008 registered the highest volume with over 25,458 thousand.

Thus, the expansion and development of the tourism sector can lead to large scale employment generation and poverty alleviation in the country. The economic benefits that flow into the economy through growth of tourism in the shape of increased

national and state revenues, business receipts, employment, wages and salary, buoyancy in central, state and local tax receipts can contribute towards overall socio-economic improvement and accelerated growth in the economy. In fact, the tourism industry provides a number of economic benefits to a country. Some of them are described as below:

- (a) *Increase in Foreign Exchange Earnings:* Tourism is an important source of foreign exchange earnings in India. This has favourable impact on the balance of payment of the country. In fact, the tourism industry in India generated about US \$ 3460 million in 2000 and increased to US\$ 22923 million in 2016 which is over six-fold increase during the period.
- (b) *Contribution to GDP:* The tourism and travel industry in India contributes substantial amount to the national GDP. In fact, the direct contribution of tourism and travel industry to GDP in 2011 was US \$ 34.01 bn with the total contribution of nearly US \$ 80 bn.
- (c) *Generation of employment opportunities:* Tourism in India has emerged as an instrument of income and employment generation, poverty alleviation and sustainable human development.
- (d) *Leads to balanced regional development:* The underdeveloped regions of the county can greatly benefit from tourism development. Many of the economically backward regions contain areas of high scenic beauty and of cultural attractions. Tourism development in these regions may become a significant factor in redressing regional imbalances in employment and income.
- (e) *Increase the standard of living:* Due to numerous economic benefits of tourism and its potential growth it helps in the increase of standard of living of the people by offering new and better jobs, which in turns helps them to improve the quality of life and their families
- (f) *Facilitates infrastructural development:* Tourism tends to encourage the development of multiple-use infrastructure that benefits the host community, including various means of transports, health care facilities, and sports centers, in

addition to the hotels and high-end restaurants that cater to foreign visitors. The development of infrastructure has in turn induced the development of other directly productive activities.

- (g) *Promotes a hub by economic activities:* More tourism means more business to travel agents, tour operators, hoteliers, restaurants, resorts, cruise operators, flight-charterers, airline companies, ayurvedic centres, beauty shops, laundry services, amusement parks, soft drink dealers, photographic goods businesses, Rent-a-car dealers and courier services firms.
- (h) *Helpful in Reduction of Poverty:* Tourism activities can reduce the poverty through the increase in national income, employment generation; foreign currency earnings, regional development, promotion of local handicrafts and many more.
- (i) *Promote allied industries:* With its development tourism also promotes allied industries such as handicrafts, spices, coir, textiles, gems and jewellery and furnishing goods. At the same time, with the active involvement of private entrepreneurs new and other tourism related business projects will come up.
- (j) *Increase in Tax Earnings:* Tourism activities increase the tax-revenue of the centre and the state governments. Many types of taxes are included in tourist-related goods and services. All tourist earnings increase many economic activities in the countries and these economic activities are a big source of taxable earnings for the governments.
- (k) *Promote Peace and Stability:* Tourism industry can also help promote peace and stability in developing countries like India by providing jobs, generating income, diversifying the economy, protecting the environment, and promoting cross-cultural awareness.
- (l) *Improvement in Health and Family Welfare:* Tourism helps in the improvement of health and family welfare by adopting the direction of the advance countries in this direction. Health conference, convention, seminars, exchange of views of the leading experts help in this regard.

(m) *Enhance Educational Facilities:* Tourism development helps in expansion of education and literacy in a big way. It helps people to broaden their mental attitude by interacting with various people regarding their languages and cultures. Tourism leads to establishment of institutes for hotel management, food craft, fashion design, colleges and university departments.

(n) *Increases in Investment Opportunities:* As per the studies of the UNWTO and other related studies, tourism is one of the fastest growing industries in the world with various multiple activities. Tourism helps in increasing investment opportunities to the prospective investors in its different allied sectors (Zaei and Zaei, 2013).

2.8 Tourism in Northeast India

Northeast India (NEI) refers to the easternmost region of India consisting of the contiguous ‘seven sisters’ states of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura and the ‘small brother’ Himalayan state of Sikkim. The total area of the region is 25.5 million kms² which covers 7.8% of the total landmass of the country. The region is connected to the rest of India via a narrow strip in West Bengal called Siliguri Corridor or Chicken’s Neck. Northeast India shares an international border of over 2,000 kms with Bhutan, Bangladesh, China, Nepal and Myanmar.

Table 2.13
Constituents of Northeast India

| State | Historic name | Capital(s) | Statehood |
|-------------------|---|------------------------------|-----------|
| Arunachal Pradesh | North-East Frontier Agency | Itanagar | 1987 |
| Assam | Pragjyotisha, Kamarupa | Shillong (till 1969), Dispur | 1947 |
| Manipur | Kangleipak | Imphal | 1972 |
| Meghalaya | Khasi hills, Jaintia hills and Garo hills | Shillong | 1972 |
| Mizoram | Lushai hills | Aizawl | 1987 |
| Nagaland | Naga hills | Kohima | 1963 |
| Sikkim | Sukhim | Gangtok | 1975 |
| Tripura | Tipperah | Agartala | 1972 |

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Northeast_India#Seven_Sister_States

2.8.1 Tourism prospects in NEI

The Northeast India (NEI) is a land of blue mountains, green valleys and white rivers. Nestled in the eastern Himalayas, the region is exquisite in natural beauty. A blend of wild life, flora and fauna, tribal and non-tribal populations with unique cultural identity, colourful festivals and arts and crafts makes Northeast India among the most beautiful and attractive regions of India. The region stands out for its unique ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious diversity not to be found in any other region of the country.

The NEI is considered to be one of the regions that have potentials to develop into a potent force through tourism industry. The main attractions render by the NEI are the mighty Himalayas, the hilly terrains, picturesque destinations, wildlife, cultural diversity, and unique customs and colourful lives. The region portrays a landscape of vibrant anthropological, cultural, heritage and spiritual mysticism. The NEI is almost another world. It is a land of Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity, Islamism and so on (Barman, 2013). The region is a melting pot of variegated cultural mosaic of people and races, an ethnic tapestry of many hues and shades. The primitive culture of at least the Neolithic age now co-exists with the modern and post-modern lifestyle (Kumar and Ram, 2013). The region reflects its numerous dispositions, such as art, national identity elements, cultural extravaganza; and the diversity certainly mesmerizes one and to all who once visited the region.

The NEI is a place of magical beauty and bewildering diversity. A land nestled in myth and mysteries, lore and legends and in many tender dreams. A land where the summer rains drench the hills meeting the misty plains, where exotic wildlife haunts the jungles and where the trains whistle into dark tunnels only to open out to breathtaking landscapes. Among the states in NEI, Assam is the most accessible one, with tranquil tea gardens, tantric temples and national parks full of rumbling rhinos, while Meghalaya boasts thundering waterfalls and dramatic views, and Tripura offers a window onto pre-partition Bengal. The four permit states – Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Mizoram and Manipur – are something else again, an edgy frontier where villages of bamboo houses

melt seamlessly into the jungle. All these factors could play an important role in attracting mass inflow of domestic as well as international tourists.

NEI is well blessed by nature and it lies at the centre of one of the world's richest bio-geographic areas. The region is ranked 6th among the 25 biodiversity regions in the world. It is the most distinctive part of the Indo-Burma hotspot and the primary one between the two hotspots identified in Indian sub-continent. There are about 13,500 plant species, 1,170 avian fauna species, 329 diverse species of mammals, 484 and 202 species of reptiles and amphibians respectively in the region. It also has a great potential for developing rural as well as ecotourism in the region (Singh and Sudhakar, 2015).

The NEI can also be called as the “Wild East of India”, where a string of *Adivasis* (tribals) societies have had their way of life protected by impregnable jungles, densely forested hills and the curtain wall of the Himalaya. With 200 odd ethnic communities and tribes of Indo-Mongoloid origin, the region is home of 45 million (2011 census) people, the region is ethnically quite distinct from the rest of India and has strong ethnic and cultural ties with East Asia and Southeast Asia (Joshi, 2011). It has a rich cultural and ethnic heritage that can easily make it a tourism hotspot. All the eight contiguous states of Northeast India are well bestowed with unique character and beauties with them. This makes them a centre of attraction for tourists and one of the major tourism destinations in India (Rizal and Asokan, 2013). The importance of the strategic location of the region is further explained in the efforts of GoI's Act East Policy (erstwhile Look East Policy) and the '*Incredible India*' campaign that are very important for boosting rural tourism in the region which ensures a mutually stimulating experience between the tourist and the host and also help to uplift the social conditions of the region (Tariang, 2013).

2.8.2 Tourism status in NEI

Tourism as a recognized industry in India is relatively recent and in Northeast India it is in its stage of infancy. However, in the last few years, NEI has witnessed some developments in the tourism sector with the increasing number of domestic as well as foreign tourists which are presented in Table 2.14.

Table 2.14
Number of foreign tourist visits to all states of Northeast India

| States | Years | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 |
| Arunachal Pradesh | 2212 (5.15) | 3020 (6.35) | 3945 (8.28) | 3395 (6.67) | 4753 (8.07) | 5135 (7.73) | 10846 (12.79) | 5204 (4.39) | 5705 (4.81) | 6598 (4.79) |
| Assam | 12899 (30.02) | 14426 (30.34) | 14942 (31.35) | 15157 (29.75) | 16400 (27.83) | 17543 (26.44) | 17638 (20.79) | 21537 (18.16) | 24720 (20.84) | 12685 (9.20) |
| Manipur | 396 (0.92) | 354 (0.74) | 337 (0.71) | 389 (0.76) | 578 (0.98) | 794 (1.20) | 1908 (2.25) | 2769 (2.34) | 3260 (2.75) | 3064 (2.22) |
| Meghalaya | 5267 (12.25) | 4919 (10.34) | 4522 (9.49) | 4177 (8.20) | 4803 (8.15) | 5313 (8.07) | 6773 (7.98) | 8664 (7.30) | 8027 (6.76) | 8476 (6.15) |
| Mizoram | 669 (1.55) | 902 (1.90) | 513 (1.08) | 731 (1.43) | 658 (1.12) | 744 (1.19) | 800 (0.94) | 863 (0.73) | 798 (0.67) | 942 (0.68) |
| Nagaland | 936 (2.17) | 1209 (2.54) | 1423 (2.98) | 1132 (2.22) | 2080 (3.53) | 2489 (3.75) | 3304 (3.89) | 3679 (3.10) | 2769 (2.34) | 3260 (2.37) |
| Sikkim | 17498 (40.72) | 19154 (40.27) | 17730 (37.20) | 20757 (40.74) | 23602 (40.06) | 26489 (39.92) | 31698 (37.38) | 49175 (41.47) | 38479 (32.43) | 66012 (47.90) |
| Tripura | 3181 (7.40) | 3577 (7.52) | 4246 (8.91) | 5212 (10.23) | 6046 (10.26) | 7840 (11.81) | 11853 (13.98) | 26688 (22.51) | 34886 (29.40) | 36780 (26.69) |
| Northeast India | 42968 (100) | 47561 (100) | 47658 (100) | 50950 (100) | 58920 (100) | 66347 (100) | 84820 (100) | 118579 (100) | 118644 (100) | 137817 (100) |

Figures in the parenthesis indicate proportion of total numbers of Northeast
Source: Ministry of Tourism, GoI

The table shows that out of the 8 states of NEI, Sikkim (though smallest in terms of area and population) was the leader in receiving the largest share of foreign tourists visits (FTVs) in all the years during the period. It is also revealed that for the period 2007-2013, Assam was ranked second in FTVs, while Tripura, the second smallest state overtook the former to become second in FTVs during the period 2014-2016. The table also reveals that the three states of Manipur, Mizoram and Nagaland were far behind from the rest as their combined figures were hardly accounted for 5% of the total FTVs of the region each year of the period. This may be mainly due to the implication of Restricted Area Permit (RAP) required for foreign tourists visiting these three states.

Table 2.15 presents the number of domestic tourist visits (DTV) to all states of Northeast India. The table shows that there is a wide variation in the total number of DTVs among the states of NEI. It is revealed that among the states of NEI, the total number of DTVs in Assam was much higher than others in all the years during the period, as it has emerged as the central hub for almost all kinds of transactions, business, and facilities and so on in the region. Meghalaya has been the second best state in receiving more DTVs. Meanwhile, Mizoram and Nagaland have been found as the least visited states by the domestic tourists.

Table 2.15
Number of domestic tourist visits to all states of Northeast India

| States | Years | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 |
| Arunachal Pradesh | 91100 (1.93) | 149292 (2.90) | 195147 (3.38) | 227857 (3.69) | 233227 (3.66) | 317243 (4.76) | 300968 (4.39) | 335974 (4.77) | 352067 (4.43) | 385875 (4.96) |
| Assam | 3436833 (72.72) | 3617306 (70.31) | 3850521 (66.71) | 4050924 (65.69) | 4339485 (68.08) | 4511407 (67.70) | 4684527 (68.36) | 4826702 (68.51) | 5491845 (69.16) | 5160599 (66.40) |
| Manipur | 101484 (2.18) | 112151 (2.18) | 124229 (2.15) | 114062 (1.85) | 134505 (2.11) | 134541 (2.02) | 140673 (2.05) | 115499 (1.64) | 146169 (1.84) | 150638 (1.94) |
| Meghalaya | 457685 (9.68) | 549936 (10.69) | 591398 (10.24) | 652756 (10.58) | 667504 (10.47) | 680254 (10.21) | 691296 (10.09) | 716469 (10.17) | 751165 (9.46) | 830887 (10.69) |
| Mizoram | 43161 (0.91) | 55924 (1.09) | 56651 (0.98) | 57292 (0.93) | 62174 (0.97) | 64294 (0.96) | 63377 (0.92) | 68203 (0.97) | 66605 (0.84) | 67238 (0.86) |
| Nagaland | 22085 (0.47) | 46513 (0.90) | 20953 (0.36) | 21094 (0.34) | 25391 (0.40) | 35915 (0.54) | 35638 (0.52) | 58413 (0.83) | 64616 (0.81) | 58178 (0.75) |
| Sikkim | 329075 (6.96) | 368451 (7.16) | 615628 (10.66) | 700011 (11.35) | 552453 (8.67) | 558538 (8.38) | 576749 (8.42) | 562418 (7.98) | 705023 (8.88) | 747343 (9.62) |
| Tripura | 244795 (5.18) | 245438 (4.77) | 317541 (5.50) | 342273 (5.55) | 359515 (5.64) | 361786 (5.43) | 359586 (5.25) | 361247 (5.13) | 363172 (4.57) | 370618 (4.77) |
| Northeast India | 4726218 (100) | 5145011 (100) | 5772068 (100) | 6166269 (100) | 6374254 (100) | 6663978 (100) | 6852814 (100) | 7044925 (100) | 7940662 (100) | 7771376 (100) |

Figures in the parenthesis indicate proportion of total numbers of Northeast
Source: Ministry of Tourism, GoI

2.9 A Microview of tourism in Northeast India

The 'Seven Sister States' commonly refers to the contiguous states of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura. The sobriquet "*Land of the Seven Sisters*" was coined to coincide with the inauguration of the new states in January 1972 by Jyoti Prasad Saikia in the course of a radio talk show. These states are officially recognized under the North Eastern Council (NEC), constituted in 1971 as the acting agency for the development of the region. Long after the induction of the council, Sikkim became the latest state to be included in the NEC in 2002, due to its close proximity with the 'Seven Sisters' in various parameters. Hence, the northeastern part of India is popularly known as the '*Land of Seven Sisters and a Little Brother*'.

An attempt is made to provide a bird's eye view of all the states of Northeast India with reference to prospects, policy initiatives and statistics related to tourism industry.

2.9.1 Arunachal Pradesh

Arunachal Pradesh is known as "*the land of rising sun*" in reference to its position as the easternmost state of India. This is the first Indian soil to greet the morning sun. It lies between 26⁰30' north and 29⁰30' north Latitude and 91⁰30' east and 97⁰30' east Longitude. The state borders the states of Assam and Nagaland to the south, and shares international boundaries with Myanmar (Burma) in the east, Bhutan in the west and the People's Republic of China in the north. It became a union territory of India in 1972 and later on to statehood on 20th February, 1987. It is the largest state in Northeast India with an area of 83,743 km². Itanagar is the capital city of Arunachal Pradesh.

2.9.1.1 Tourism prospects in Arunachal Pradesh

Arunachal Pradesh is a treasure house of cultural diversity in Northeast India. The state is one of the linguistically richest and most diverse regions in all of Asia, being home to around twenty-five identifiable tribes, at least thirty and possibly as many as fifty distinct languages in addition to innumerable dialects (Joshi, 2011). Each of these tribes is distinct and different from other having own culture, tradition, code of conduct,

faith and belief, deity, festival and lifestyle; yet there is a unifying force within them. 'Linguistically diversified but socially unified' is what that makes these tribes so affectionate. The state is an abode to many monuments and archaeological sites which for long have been acting as sources of inspiration for many historians. The living heritage of the state expressed through dance, art craft have strong pull factor to attract tourist from different corners of the globe (Thakuria, 2017)

Arunachal Pradesh is one of Asia's most biologically diverse and intact forest eco-system. With nearly 94% of its area covered under forests, the forest eco-system of Arunachal Pradesh is linked to the forests of neighbouring countries like Bhutan, Tibet and Myanmar (Yes Bank, 2014). The blooming of orchids, the snow clad mountains, the stubborn plains, the pristine valleys, and the murmuring sound of the green leaves in the forests, the habitat of wild savages, the thick woodlands, and the flora and fauna are the signature prospects of ecotourism in the state. With immense beauty in the form of delightful expression of natural and cultural landscape, numerous turbulent streams, roaring rivers, deep gorges, abundant flora and fauna, everlasting disparity of scenic beauty and colourful indigenous tribes that can take one through magical journey never experienced before (Lonchung, 2017).

Due to the topographical and climatic suitability, the pristine forests of the state offer a natural habitat for varieties of animals which the tourists can experience through wildlife tourism. The state has a number of wild life sanctuaries, national parks and biosphere reserves with lush green tropical forests teeming with wildlife. These resources provide an ocean of opportunities for nature lovers and adventurers. The adventurers may opt white-water rafting on the Siang River or a trek through the environs of Namdhapa National Park or join up for angling tours, parasailing and hand gliding sessions as well. The mighty Brahmaputra that comes down from Tibet enters this state first, where the tourists can have fun of kayaking and other water sports.

2.9.1.2 Key tourism attractions in Arunachal Pradesh

The major key attractions of Arunachal Pradesh Tourism are presented in Table 2.16.

Table 2.16
Key attractions of Arunachal Pradesh Tourism

| Spots/Events | Distance from Itanagar (in Km) | Description |
|------------------------|---|--|
| Tawang | 182 | Located 10,000 feet above sea level, Tawang has beautiful lakes around it and is extremely rich in scenic beauty. The Tawang Monastery known as the ' <i>Golden Namgyal Lhatse</i> ' bears to have given birth of the 6th Dalai Lama. |
| Ita Fort | - | Ita Fort, literal meaning as “fort of bricks” situated at the heart of Itanagar. It is a historical fort dating back to 14 th -15 th century, said to be built by Ahom rulers. The name Itanagar is believed to be derived from the name of this fort. |
| Bhalukpong | 96 | A mesmerizing place for wildlife enthusiasts, nature lovers and adventurers. The town borders the Pakhui Wildlife Sanctuary. |
| Akashiganga | 200 | An important Hindu pilgrimage, believed to be associated with the legend of Sati (the consort of Lord Shankar) recited in the 8 th century <i>Kalika Purana</i> . |
| Bomdila | 120 | Famous pilgrimage of the Lamaistic faith of Mahayana Buddhism. A mini paradise endowed with apple orchards, Buddhist <i>gomphas</i> and a magnificent view of the Kameng Valley. |
| Namdhapa National Park | 410 | The largest protected area in the Eastern Himalaya biodiversity hotspot and is the third largest national park in India in terms of area. It has diverse stock of flora and fauna that are typical of this area. |
| Ziro | 58 | A mesmerizing town surrounded by beautiful pine-clad low hills on all sides. It is also known as the Apatani Plateau. It is shortlisted for inclusion in the UNESCO World Heritage Site. |

| | | |
|-------------------|-----|---|
| Bhismaknagar Fort | 380 | The oldest archaeological and mythological site in Arunachal Pradesh with a rich and ancient history. The ruins of the Fort made up of burnt bricks dates back to 12 th century. |
| Pasighat | 264 | Rich in natural beauty, it is the oldest town of the state and is fondly known as “the gateway of Arunachal Pradesh”. |
| Ganga Lake | 6 | Locally known as <i>Geykar Sinyik</i> (confined water) surrounded by landmass of hard rock. A beautiful spot for outings, boating and picnics. |
| Parshuram Kund | 389 | The Kund is a famous place on the Lohit River within Kamlang Reserve Forest. According to the legend, Hindu sage Parshuram washed away his sin of matricide in these waters. Thousand of devotees and <i>sadhus</i> take a holy dip in its water each year. |

Sources: Researcher’s own compilation from various sources

2.9.1.3 Tourism policy initiatives in Arunachal Pradesh

Considering the rapid increasing trend of tourists coming to the state, the Arunachal Pradesh government felt necessary to formulate an ecotourism policy for the state which will enhance livelihoods for the local communities while ensuring conservation of rich natural and cultural heritage of the state. The policy will help to promote, guide and regulate tourism in a manner that benefits the local communities without compromising the ecological well being of the state. Following are the objectives of the Third Draft of Arunachal Pradesh Ecotourism Policy, 2013:

- i. Identify and promote ecotourism sites within and outside protected areas by diversification of a range of ecotourism activities.
- ii. Develop standards and norms Ecotourism Certification specific for the state.
- iii. Ensure active involvement of the local and indigenous communities in ecotourism planning, development and implementation.

- iv. Guide the development of permissible and ecologically sound ecotourism infrastructure.
- v. Ensure conservation of the existing biodiversity, ecosystems and religious monuments/sacred grooves of the state as well as people's culture and tradition.
- vi. Generate awareness among local communities to increase their pride and appreciation for local natural and cultural values.
- vii. Enunciate a mechanism to establish partnerships between all stakeholders to develop and promote ecotourism.
- viii. Build capacity of all stakeholders in natural and cultural heritage interpretation, hospitality, business and communication skills to successfully and sustainably manage ecotourism.
- ix. Enable the development of a sustained and effective marketing strategy and plan.

With the ultimate goal of:

- a. Conserving the natural and cultural diversity of the state.
- b. Promoting Arunachal Pradesh as the premier ecotourism destination.
- c. Securing economic and social benefits for the local communities without adversely affecting their cultural ethos or ecological security.

2.9.1.4 Tourist arrivals in Arunachal Pradesh

The statistics related to tourist arrivals in Arunachal Pradesh are presented in Table 2.17.

Table 2.17
Tourist arrivals in Arunachal Pradesh

| Year | Tourist arrival | | % Variation | |
|-----------------------|-----------------|---------|-------------|---------|
| | Domestic | Foreign | Domestic | Foreign |
| 2010 | 227857 | 3395 | - | - |
| 2011 | 233227 | 4753 | 2.36 | 40.00 |
| 2012 | 317243 | 5135 | 36.02 | 8.04 |
| 2013 | 300968 | 10846 | -5.13 | 111.28 |
| 2014 | 335974 | 5204 | 11.63 | -108.42 |
| 2015 | 352067 | 5705 | 4.79 | 9.68 |
| 2016 | 385875 | 6598 | 9.60 | 15.65 |
| Average annual growth | | | 9.89 | 12.70 |

Source: Statistical Reports of Ministry of Tourism, GoI

It is observed that during the period there has been a consistent growth of DTAs in the state except the year 2013. The average annual growth was recorded at 9.89% during the period. With regards to the FTAs in the state, the period recorded an average annual growth of 12.70%. The number of FTAs was doubled from 3,395 in 2010 to 6,598 in 2016, signifying an encouraging sign for the state tourism.

2.9.2 Assam

Assam is considered to be the “*Gateway of Northeast India*” and is the second largest state of the region with an area of 78,438 km². The state is bordered by Bhutan and the state of Arunachal Pradesh to the north; Nagaland and Manipur to the east; Meghalaya, Tripura, Mizoram and Bangladesh to the south; and West Bengal to the west via the Siliguri Corridor. Assam’s history goes back to the ancient times. The base of its history can be found in Vedic, Tantric and Buddhist literatures and in Assamese folklores too. Known as ‘Kamarupa’ or ‘Pragjyotishpur’ in the period of the Epics, Assam is inhabited by human civilization since about 2000 BC. Assam became part of India after the British occupied the region following the First Anglo-Burmese War of 1824-1826 (Joshi, 2011). In the post independence period of India, Assam witnessed several separations of territories in the form of Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Meghalaya and Mizoram as new states.

2.9.2.1 Tourism prospects in Assam

Assam is bestowed with numerous rivers, green hills, lush tea gardens and various communities with distinctive cultures and rich social heritage. It offers unique and unmatched virgin destinations for tourists because of its vivid diversity in terrain, environment, wildlife sanctuaries and national parks with unique flora and fauna. An attractive feature of the Assam’s forests is its colorful wildlife. Some of the species are exclusive to the state. The land is famous for its one-horned rhinoceros. The state is well-known for its two major riverine systems - the mighty Brahmaputra in the north and Barak in the south. These are not just rivers but lifelines of Assam. These rivers and its tributaries provide ample scope for river expeditions, cruising, boating, angling,

parasailing and white-water rafting, etc. For those who love to drive, there is Dhola-Sadiya Bridge, India's longest, at the easternmost part of Assam waiting for.

Assam is a land of mystic blue hills, wild terrain and serene countryside of green valleys. It is a land where nature herself has painted the vibrant landscape, hillocks, woods, brooks and streams, flora and fauna and above all the affectionate people. Assam has fascinated thousands of travelers from the days of Hieu-en Tsang, the Chinese traveler who visited this region, with her aura of myth and mystery. It is a legendary state in terms of traditions and civilization. A perfect fusion of the culture and heritage of Assam's numerous races, tribes and sub-tribes gave birth to Assamese culture which is aptly stated as a rich tapestry woven with the multi-coloured yarns of distinct heritages, traditions, lifestyles, faiths and beliefs (Deka, 2011). It bears a testimony of rich cultural heritage through its temples, monuments and shrines at Kamakhya and Majuli, the world's largest riverine island in the lap of Brahmaputra.

Assam is endowed with plentiful natural and cultural resources which can form the basis for a very lucrative tourism industry, creating employment and generating income not only in the urban centers but also in the rural areas (TPA, 2017). The state can deliver a huge economic growth if available tourism resources are properly marketed or utilized. It can also play a proactive role to develop a wide view of tourism promotion in Northeast India through coordination among the states of the region in creating zonal and regional circuits.

2.9.2.2 Key tourism attractions in Assam

Some of the major tourist spots/events of Assam that have the potential in drawing mass inflow of tourists into the state are presented in Table 2.18

Table 2.18
Key attractions of Assam Tourism

| Spots/Events | Distance from Guwahati (in Km) | Description |
|--------------|--------------------------------|---|
| Bihu | - | Most important festival of Assam. The three Bihus coincide with a distinctive phase in the farming calendar. They are Bohaag Bihu, Maagh Bihu and Kaati Bihu. |

| | | |
|-------------------------|-----|---|
| Majuli | 498 | Recognized as world’s largest riverine island. It became the first island to be made a district in India in 2016. It carries a rich heritage of Assamese Neo-Vaishnavites culture through the tribal communities. |
| Kamakhya | - | Quite popular site for pilgrims due to its amazing Tantric adoration. It is dedicated to the tantric goddesses. |
| Kaziranga National Park | 217 | Internationally famous national park and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It serves as one of the last remaining habitat of the Great Indian one-horned rhinos. |
| Jatinga | 364 | Known as “the valley of death for birds”. This village is famous for mysterious suicides of the birds on the night of new moon. |
| Navagraha Temple | - | Known as “temple of nine planets’. An ancient seat of astrology and astronomy. |
| Deepar Beel | 13 | A riverine wetland ecosystem serves as a habitat of good population of endangered mega-fauna and aquatic vegetation. |
| Digboi | 538 | Asia’s first oil refinery and second in world. The hundred year old oil refinery still retains the British ambience with clubs and golf courses nearby. |
| Haflong | 355 | A hill station famous for its scenic beauty comprising of azure blue hills, emerald green rivers, unique orchids and rare species of birds. |
| Hajo | 28 | Sacred place of Hindus, Muslims and Buddhists. A symbol of communal harmony for the country. |
| Chandubi | 64 | A natural lagoon surrounded by raw jungles, |

| | | |
|------------|-----|--|
| | | tea gardens and the unique cultural heritage of the villagers. |
| Tezpur | 199 | Cultural hub of Assam because of its theatres, traditional dances and cultural events. |
| Charaiadeo | 391 | Capital city of <i>Ahoms</i> for about 600 years. Remains of old palaces, burial vaults similar to Egypt's pyramids are found. |

Sources: Researcher's own compilations from various sources

2.9.2.3 Tourism policy initiatives in Assam

In Assam, the government's initiative of tourism could be noticed for the first time in 1958 when the state government set up the Directorate of Tourism. Later, the Assam Tourism Development Corporation came into existence on 8th June, 1988 (Bhattacharjee, 2001). Meanwhile, with the introduction of the first tourism policy of the state in 2008 underlining the importance of Public Private Partnership considerable increase of the tourist arrivals have taken place (TPA, 2017). Considering the growing trends of tourist arrivals into the state and its importance, the state government has released its latest tourism policy in 2017. The major objectives of Tourism Policy of Assam, 2017 are:

- To make Assam a tourist hub for Northeast India.
- To market Assam as a hot destination for the tourists from East & South East Asian Countries.
- To leverage innovative forms of Tourism such as Cruises, Ethnic Tourism, Tea & Golf, leisure Tourism, Transit Tourism, Adventure Tourism and Monsoon Tourism.
- To develop positive, Tourist friendly and reciprocative culture among local tour operators, guides and hospitality providers.
- To upgrade skill, quality and professionalism of all service providers connected with tourism.
- To develop tourism packages to cater to various types of tourists and market them through global and local tour operators.

- Popularizing local and community hosts to promote Bed and Breakfast, cottages on stilts accommodation all across the Tourist spots/destinations.
- Developing Assam into an all season tourist destination.
- To focus on benefits for the Community from tourism.
- To create enabling environment for investment.

2.9.2.4 Tourist arrivals in Assam

The statistics related to domestic and foreign tourist arrivals of Assam during 2010-2016 are presented in Table 2.19. The table shows that there has been an increasing trend in the tourism inflow in the state except the year 2016. The Domestic Tourist Arrivals (DTAs) has grown from 4.05 million in 2010 to 5.16 million in 2016 with an average annual growth rate of 4.28%.

Table 2.19
Tourist arrivals in Assam

| Year | Tourist arrival | | % Variation | |
|-----------------------|-----------------|---------|-------------|---------|
| | Domestic | Foreign | Domestic | Foreign |
| 2010 | 4050924 | 15157 | - | - |
| 2011 | 4339485 | 16400 | 7.12 | 8.20 |
| 2012 | 4511407 | 17543 | 3.96 | 6.97 |
| 2013 | 4684527 | 17638 | 3.84 | 0.54 |
| 2014 | 4826702 | 21537 | 3.03 | 22.10 |
| 2015 | 5491845 | 24720 | 13.78 | 14.78 |
| 2016 | 5160599 | 12685 | -6.03 | -48.68 |
| Average annual growth | | | 4.28 | 0.65 |

Source: Statistical Reports of Ministry of Tourism, GoI

The Foreign Tourist Arrivals (FTAs) registered two-digit growth rate in 2014 and 2015. However, there was a huge decline of -48.68% taken place in 2016 over the previous year. The average annual growth rate for FTAs during the period was a mere 0.65% only.

2.9.3 Manipur

Manipur is coined as the “*Land of Jewels*” by none other than the first Prime Minister of India, Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru due to god gifted beauties of the state (Ahmed and Hussain, 2015). With Imphal as its capital, Manipur is bounded by Nagaland to the north, Mizoram to the south and Assam to the west; it also borders Myanmar to the east.

It covers an area of 22,327 km² and is the 23rd largest state of India. It was given the status of a full-fledged state in 1972. Manipur is comprised of as many as nine hill ranges with a small and beautiful oval-shaped valley at the centre. The valley comprises of 1,843 km² and the remaining hills cover around 20,484 km². The indigenous name of Manipur had been known throughout ages as Kangleipak or Meiteilepak.

2.9.3.1 Tourism prospects in Manipur

Manipur is described as ‘the sleeping lion of tourism’ by tourism experts due to its lush greenery landscape, splendid plateaus, hill ranges and beautiful valleys that are full of flowers. This state is famous for its lakes and swamps that are an important part of the geography of the state. The Loktak Lake - the largest fresh water lake of Northeast India has an important place in the state tourism industry for its uniqueness in the form of a miniature sea. The state is blessed with abundance of natural beauties in the form of deep virgin forests, sprawling water bodies, cascading rivers in the hills which flow lazily across the plains, naturally formed limestone caves, exotic flora and fauna complimented by rich arts and culture, folklores, myths and legends, indigenous games and artistic handlooms and handicrafts. The only floating national park in the world, Keibul Lamjao National Park is located in the state. The variety of flora and fauna is worth watching and tourists can find many endangered as well as local species of animals such as ‘*Sangai*’ – the dancing deer here.

Manipur is one of the loveliest places in the country with her charming physical features, tradition and history. It is one of the leading states in the fields of arts and culture as well as in games and sports. The *Raas-Leela* and the classical dance of Manipur hold a very significant position in the cultural map of India. The wonder of tribal dances, local handlooms and handicrafts are some of the precious treasures any tourist will find appealing. The exotic cuisines, the unique tribal cultures and the soothing native music can be an enchanting discovery for various tourists visiting the state. The state has given birth to the modern-day polo and some traditional forms of martial arts like Mukna (wrestling), Thangkairol (sword dance), Khosarol (spear dance) to the rest of the world. It is considered that weaving is a time-honoured occupation in

the state. Therefore, the intricately designed handlooms and handicrafts items are sought-after souvenirs for any tourist visiting the state. There is a saying also goes by that every woman of Manipur is a born weaver. All these tourism resources make Manipur a little paradise on earth and an enticing destination for a tourist to explore.

2.9.3.2 Key tourism attractions in Manipur

The state is well blessed by nature and it is considered one of the richest bio-geographic areas of the world. From scenic hill ranges to exquisite valleys to enchanting caves, Manipur has a lot to offer to the tourists visiting this state. Some of the key attractions in Manipur which are worth to visit are presented in Table 2.20:

Table 2.20
Key attractions of Manipur Tourism

| Spots/Events | Distance from Imphal (in Km) | Description |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|--|
| Loktak Lake & Sendra Island | 48 | Loktak Lake is like a miniature sea. It is the largest fresh water lake in Northeast India. |
| Khwairamband Bazaar - | | The unique feature of the market is that every one of the 3000 odd shopkeepers are women only – Asia’s largest market of its kind. |
| Moreh | 110 | Border town between India and Myanmar where international trade is flourished. |
| Tharon Cave | 30 | Archaeological excavation shows affinities with Hobinian culture of North Vietnam. |
| Moirang | 45 | Ancient temple of pre-Hindu deity Lord <i>Thang-ing</i> is situated here. This is also the historical place where the flag of Indian National Army was hosted for the first time in Indian soil on April 14, 1944. |
| Keibul Lamjao National Park | 53 | The only floating National Park in the world, on the Loktak Lake is the last natural habitat of ‘ <i>Sangai</i> ’ – the dancing deer. |
| Bishnupur | 27 | Bishnupur has remained as the capital of Bishnupriya Manipuris. Renowned for its 15 th |

| | | |
|---------------------------|-----|---|
| | | century single-celled, conical roofed Vishnu temple reflecting the influence of the Chinese traditions. |
| Kangkhui Cave | 100 | According to legend, the big hall in the cave is the durbar hall of the Devil King living deep inside while the northern hall is the royal bedroom. During World War II, the villagers took shelter in this cave. |
| Shirui Kashung Peak | 97 | It is known for a unique species of land-lily, the Shirui Lily (state flower) which grows at a height of about 8,500 ft above sea level. |
| Lokpa Ching (Red Hill) | 16 | A hillock where British and Japanese soldiers had fought a fierce battle during World War-II. A monument “India Peace Memorial” was constructed in memory of Japanese soldiers who died in the battle. |

Sources: Researcher’s own compilations from various sources

2.9.3.3 Tourism policy initiatives in Manipur

The beginning of Government initiative towards promotion of tourism in Manipur started with the setting up of Directorate of Tourism in the year 1972. It was only in 1987 that the Government of Manipur declared tourism as an industry. Since then there have been many up and downs in the development of tourism industry in the state due to varied reasons. Recently, with the introduction of Manipur Tourism policy, 2014 the state government is trying foster rapid tourism development in the state. The said tourism policy states that, *“to promote tourism as an important industry efforts of the State government would have to be synergized to improve the law and order situation in the State as well as propagate the message to the people, both within India and abroad, that Manipur, despite internal conflicts and insurgency, is a safe place for the tourists. Unless we propagate this message to the intending tourists, the apprehensions in their mind about safety would not be addressed effectively which in turn create negative publicity and be detrimental to our efforts in promoting Manipur Tourism.”*

The Mission of the ‘Policy’ is to promote sustainable tourism as a means of economic growth, social integration and to promote the image of Manipur as a State with a glorious past, a vibrant present and a bright future.

The broad objectives of Manipur Tourism Policy, 2014 are:

- i. Foster understanding between people.
- ii. Create employment opportunities.
- iii. Bringing socio-economic benefits to the people of Manipur.
- iv. Strive towards balanced and sustainable development; and
- v. Preserve, enrich and promote State’s cultural and natural heritage.

One of the major objectives is the preservation of natural resources and environment to achieve sustainable development. The new tourism policy also seeks to expand and facilitate domestic as well as foreign tourists in a manner that is sustainable by ensuring cultural preservation and minimizing any possible degradation of environment.

The Manipur Tourism Policy, 2014 also aims at making the stay of tourists in the state, a memorable and pleasant one with reliable services at predictable costs, so that they are encouraged to undertake repeated visits to Manipur State, as friends. This would be in tune with Manipur’s traditional philosophy of giving the highest honour to a guest.

The Manipur government is also keen to take advantage of “Act East Policy”, and therefore seeks to create a unique brand to market Manipur Tourism as the “Gateway to South-East Asia” in conformity with its modernity, relevance, competitiveness, strategic location and commercial aspects.

2.9.3.4 Tourist arrivals in Manipur

Table 2.21 highlights the number of tourist arrivals, both domestic and foreign tourists into Manipur during the period of 2010-2016. The result shows that despite enormous tourism prospect in the state, the state has failed to attract foreign tourist arrivals (FTAs) as compared to domestic tourist arrivals (DTAs). However, an

encouraging sign can be noticed as the average annual growth rate of FTAs during the period of 2010-2016 is very high at 47.18%.

Table 2.21
Tourist arrivals in Manipur

| Year | Tourist arrival | | % Variation | |
|-----------------------|-----------------|---------|-------------|---------|
| | Domestic | Foreign | Domestic | Foreign |
| 2010 | 114062 | 389 | - | - |
| 2011 | 134505 | 578 | 17.92 | 48.59 |
| 2012 | 134541 | 794 | 0.03 | 37.37 |
| 2013 | 140673 | 1908 | 4.56 | 140.30 |
| 2014 | 115499 | 2769 | -17.89 | 45.12 |
| 2015 | 146169 | 3260 | 26.55 | 17.73 |
| 2016 | 150638 | 3064 | 3.06 | -6.01 |
| Average annual growth | | | 5.70 | 47.18 |

Sources: Statistical Reports of Ministry of Tourism, GoI

As per as DTAs is concerned, all the years have shown positive growth rate except the year 2014 which had a negative growth of over 17%. The years 2011 and 2015 resulted in exceptional growth rate of 17.92% and 26.55% respectively over the figures of previous years. During the period, the Manipur tourism had received the average annual growth rate of DTAs at over 5%.

2.9.4 Meghalaya

Meghalaya, “*the abode of clouds*” is the third largest state of Northeast India having a geographical area of 22,429 km². The state is a hilly strip in the eastern part of the country and about 300 km long from east to west and 100 km wide with a length to breadth ratio of about 3:1. It is surrounded in the east and north by the state of Assam and in the west and south by Bangladesh. The state was originally a part of Assam till 1972, when the districts of United Khasi and Jaintia Hills and the Garo Hills became the new state of Meghalaya. Prior to attaining statehood, Meghalaya was given semi-autonomous status in 1970. Shillong is the capital of Meghalaya, which is also known as “*the Scotland of the East*” for its rugged and rolling hills, dense pine forests and lush green valleys and highlands.

2.9.4.1 Tourism prospects in Meghalaya

Meghalaya is a land of immense natural beauty with deep forests, sprawling water bodies, cascading rivers in the hills, the lofty mountain ranges with interplay of lush green valley form an ideal habitat for flora and fauna. The state is recorded as the wettest region of India, with an average of over 1200 cm of rains a year. The forests in the state are considered to be among the richest botanical habitats of Asia which are notable for their biodiversity of mammals, birds, and plants. Meghalaya has some of the thickest surviving forests in the country that have been preserved by the local communities for hundreds of years due to religious and cultural beliefs. The biodiversity of the state can only be matched by the ethnological diversity. It is a paradise for nature lovers, scientists and ethnologists.

Meghalaya resonates with fairs and festivals which are celebrated throughout the year. Music remains an integral part of every festival and ceremony of the state. Because of her natural assets, ethnic diversity and the societal ethos, tourism holds high potential in the state (Nayak and Mishra, 2013). With this unique ethnic diversity and distinctive socio-cultural heritage with colourful festivals and dances, indigenous architecture, ethno medicine and skilled craftsmanship of the tribal communities have great appeal before the discerning tourists (TDPM, 2010). Unlike many Indian states, Meghalaya has historically followed a matrilineal system where the lineage and inheritance are traced through women; the youngest daughter inherits all wealth and she also takes care of her parents.

The state of Meghalaya is blessed with numerous nature endowments. There are several national parks, wildlife sanctuaries and majestic waterfalls which enhance the beauty of this beautiful state of India. The state also offers many adventure tourism prospects such as rock climbing, mountaineering, hiking, water sports etc. It provides the best nature trek through rain forests to the river front at the bottom of the valley, to living root bridges which are exclusive to Meghalaya in the entire world.

2.9.4.2 Key tourism attractions in Meghalaya

Meghalaya serves as an ideal getaway for people in search of tranquility and beauty. The foggy hills, terraced slopes, serpentine rivers, cascading waterfalls and the panoramic landscapes calm the minds of weary travelers. The refreshing mountain air, the whispering pines, the exotic flora and fauna, the caves – all stretch out the tourists a tremendous taste of beauty. The major key attractions of Meghalaya have been presented in Table 2.22:

Table 2.22
Key attractions of Meghalaya Tourism

| Spots/Events | Distance from Shillong (in Km) | Description |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|--|
| Mawsynram | 56 | Mawsynram records an average annual rainfall of 11,872 mm, making it the rainiest place in the world. According to the Guinness Book of World Records, Mawsynram received 26,000 mm (1,000 in) of rainfall in 1985. |
| Mawsmi Cave | 57 | The cave is about 150 meters long and is one of most accessible caves in Meghalaya. The limestone formations inside the cave are fascinating. It is well lit which allows tourists to see the magnificent natural handiwork of years of natural abrasion and underground water. |
| Mawlynnong Village | 90 | The village has earned the distinction of being the cleanest village in India by <i>Discover India</i> magazine. The village offers picturesque natural beauty, a trek to the living-root bridge, and a sight of strange phenomena of a natural boulder balancing on another rock. |
| Jakrem Hot Spring | 64 | Famous for its hot water springs of sulphur water which is believed to have curative medicinal properties. It is also a favourite picnic spot during winter. |
| Mawphlang Grove | 25 | Mawphlang Sacred Grove is one of the Sacred largest sacred groves (in area) existing in the |

contemporary world. The sacred grove has an amazing life form of plants, flowering trees, orchids and butterflies. An ideal destination for nature lovers.

Dawki 79

Dawki is a place where one can find peace and get through the thoughts of beauty. Major attraction of the place is the crystal clear Umngot River. The water in the river is so clean that you can see the bed of the river. One is mesmerized by the water and pelagic fishes visible from the boat.

Umiam Lake 15

Also known as *Barapani*, this lake was created by damming the Umiam River in the early 1960s. The lake is dotted with small islands; and a great treat for water sports facilities such as kayaking, water cycling, scooting and boating, etc.

Nohkalikai Falls 54

At 335 meters it is the highest plunge waterfall in India and the 4th highest in the world. From the edge of the cliff the waterfall looked like a white rope in a sea of green forests. The captivating waterfall cascades down from the top of the gorge to the mystic deep green pool below.

Sohra (Cherrapunjee) 50

Sohra, previously known as Cherrapunjee is set upon a plateau on the southern slopes of the state. Sohra is dotted with waterfalls cascading over deep gorges. One can find out the first police station of Northeast India here.

Nokrek Biosphere Reserve 307

Nokrek is the highest peak in Garo Hills and home to rare species of flora and fauna. It is also believed to be the home of *Mande Burung* (jungle man or ape man) and reported cases of sightings abound in and around the villages of Nokrek.

It is the longest natural cave in India. Its current length of about 25 kilometers till exploration made, and it will likely be increased as nearby caves continue to be connected.

Sources: researcher's own compilations from various sources

2.9.4.3 Tourism policy initiatives in Meghalaya

The initiative of the Government of Meghalaya towards tourism promotion was started with the establishment of the Directorate of Tourism in the year 1972. The Meghalaya Tourism Development Corporation Ltd. was subsequently set up in January, 1977. Meghalaya was the first state in Northeast India and also one of the pioneer states in India to launch a tourism development corporation (Bhattacharjee, 2001).

With the evolving role of the tourism sector as a major engine of economic growth, it was felt necessary to revamp the first tourism policy and the state government came up with a new policy in 2011 with the vision - *To position Meghalaya as a preferred tourist destination by taking advantage of its rich cultural heritage and natural beauty*. Further, the policy has taken up the following broad objectives, in order to help create the basic infrastructure for tourism development along with private sector providing quality products and offering active support services:

- (a) To establish a holistic growth of the industry with the cooperation of the private sector/community and other stakeholders.
- (b) To develop an effective marketing strategy linked with regional and national initiatives through a collaborative mechanism to project a positive identity for Meghalaya in the national and international tourism markets as a unique and preferred destination.
- (c) To strengthen the quality and attractiveness of tourism experience in Meghalaya including improvements to be brought about in the conservation of the environment.
- (d) To identify and promote new opportunities for the future development of tourism in Meghalaya on a sustainable basis.

- (e) To strengthen the cultural aspects of the tourism product in Meghalaya and to actively promote local participation, including community-based tourism.
- (f) To develop a tourism plan in concurrence with the objectives of the policy.
- (g) To ensure greater emphasis on capacity building/training to local youth and tourism stakeholders in the State.
- (h) To ensure acceptable service levels, training and human resource development will be provided on an ongoing basis.
- (i) To take full advantage of the various institutes in the state to develop courses and implement training in various categories of service providers.
- (j) To make the tourism industry in Meghalaya a leader in responsible environmental practices.
- (k) To establish a set of best practices in the tourism sector.

2.9.4.4 Tourist arrivals in Meghalaya

Table 2.23 presents the status of tourist arrivals in Meghalaya since 2010.

Table 2.23
Tourist arrivals in Meghalaya

| Year | Tourist arrival | | % Variation | |
|-----------------------|-----------------|---------|-------------|---------|
| | Domestic | Foreign | Domestic | Foreign |
| 2010 | 652756 | 4177 | - | - |
| 2011 | 667504 | 4803 | 2.26 | 14.99 |
| 2012 | 680254 | 5313 | 1.91 | 10.62 |
| 2013 | 691269 | 6773 | 1.62 | 27.48 |
| 2014 | 716469 | 8664 | 3.64 | 27.92 |
| 2015 | 751165 | 8027 | 4.84 | -7.35 |
| 2016 | 830887 | 8476 | 10.61 | 5.59 |
| Average annual growth | | | 4.15 | 13.21 |

Source: Statistical Reports of Ministry of Tourism, GoI

The table shows that there is a positive trend of domestic tourist arrivals (DTAs) in the state. The year 2016 saw a growth rate of 10.61% over the previous year, followed by 2015 at 4.84% and 2014 at 3.64%. The actual number of DTAs has grown from 6,52,756 in 2010 to 8,30,887 in 2016 with an average annual growth of 4.15% during the period.

Compared to DTAs, the foreign tourist arrivals (FTAs) recorded a remarkable growth during the period. The FTA figure was doubled within a span of six years, i.e. 4,177 in 2010 and 8,476 in 2016. The average annual growth for FTAs recorded at 13.21% during the period. Almost all the years received double-digit growth rate except 2015 and 2016, where the former recorded a negative growth of -7.35%

2.9.5 Mizoram

Mizoram, “*Land of the Hill People*”, is one of the eight states of Northeast India has an area of 21,087 kms². The state shares its borders with the states of Assam and Manipur in the north and Tripura in the west, while the state has an international border with Myanmar (404 kms) on the east and Bangladesh (318 kms) on the west. Mizoram is considered as one of the most sparsely-populated states in India with a population of 10,91,014 (2011 Census). The state has the highest concentration of tribal people among all states of India, and they are currently protected under Indian constitution as Scheduled Tribes. Like several other northeastern states of India, Mizoram was previously part of Assam until 1972, when it was carved out as a Union Territory. It became the 23rd state of India on 20 February 1987. The capital of Mizoram is Aizawl.

2.9.5.1 Tourism prospects in Mizoram

Mizoram is considered by many as a beautiful place due to its dramatic landscape and pleasant climate. With a wide array of festivals, dances, handicrafts, flora and fauna, natural scenic beauty and pleasant climate, Mizoram has much to offer its visitors. It is a mountainous state teeming with vibrant wildlife dotted with unique landmarks of myriad folklores and picturesque villages of houses built on stilts, a land of dramatic seas of morning mists that enfold islands of hills and peaks. The hilly terrain of Mizoram with excellent flora and fauna makes a unique destination among the tourists.

Mizoram is blanketed with breathtaking valleys, green forests, unique cultures and beautiful tribes. The meandering river with a graceful gait and shimmering waterfalls makes up the exorbitant atmosphere of the state. Mizoram is a formidable place for adventurers. Its landscape, the mountains, the valleys, the gorges are best suited for adventure expeditions. While trekking in the region one will encounter tribes

and tribal culture and lifestyle, heavy forests, wild orchids, extraordinary flora and fauna, enchanting views. Though still considered remote and isolated and hence, an unfrequented destination, the location of Mizoram itself helps maintain its quaint appeal.

Mizoram is a serene heaven in NEI which is still far away from the glitz and glamour of the modern world. The state's cultural splendor and simple living can be seen in various festivals celebrated throughout the year. This northeastern state of India delights tourists with its vast cultural and traditional charms which are unmatched and unseen. Mizoram is famous for its handicrafts and handloom articles such as shawls, textiles, bags and bamboo/cane articles. Mizoram also has her own unique identities reflected through selfless social culture, hospitable and jovial people, very high literacy rate, interesting and indigenous architecture, class / caste less society and beggar free urban areas. The unique geographical location with the tropic of cancer passing through the heart of Mizoram offers another feature to get pleasure from by the discerning tourists.

2.9.5.2 Key tourism attractions in Mizoram

Mizoram has ample scope to promote in various fields of tourism such as rural tourism, cultural tourism, adventure tourism, wildlife tourism and particularly ecotourism. Some of the major key attractions of Mizoram Tourism have been presented in Table 2.24:

Table 2.24
Key attractions of Mizoram Tourism

| Spots/Events | Distance from Aizawl (in Km) | Description |
|--------------|------------------------------|--|
| Reiek | 29 | Reiek is a mountain and tourist spot which rests at an elevation of 1548 metres overlooking Aizawl and offers a view of the surrounding valleys and hills. It meanders up through thick forest, enchanted with the songs of birds. Reiek has a typical Mizo village consisting of the distinctive traditional huts of the different Mizo sub-tribes, Mizo chieftain's house, a bachelor's dormitory and that of a widow. |

| | | |
|-----------------|-----|---|
| Vantawng Falls | 130 | Named after Vantawnga (a legendary swimmer), Vantawng Waterfalls is the highest waterfalls in Mizoram with an altitude of 750 mts. It is believed that Vantawnga could hover in the cascading water as fishes do, but unfortunately during one of such performances, a drifting log fell from above and killed him. |
| Champhai Valley | 194 | Champhai, a commercial town located near the Myanmar border. The town overlooks the largest plain area in the state and commands a good view of the adjoining hill ranges of Myanmar from which the forefathers of the Mizos immigrated ages ago. |
| Hmuifang Tlang | 50 | With an elevation of 1619 mts, the Hmuifang Tlang is still covered with virgin forests reserved since the days of the Mizo chiefs. It has beautiful cliffs and offers great views of the surrounding hills abounded with fascinating flora including rare orchids and avifauna. |
| Tam Lake | 64 | This lake is set amidst astonishing natural beauty, one can smell the freshness in the air. A great place for fishing and boating; this lake is rich with sea life and is surrounded by evergreen tropical forests. |
| Baktawng | 70 | Baktawng is known for housing the “ <i>world's largest existing family</i> ” of Pu Ziona. He survives with 39 wives, 94 children, 14 daughters-in-laws and 33 grandchildren, 180 in total and counting. |
| Vangchhia | 245 | Vangchhia village became the Mizoram’s first protected archaeological site in 2012. The heritage site holds numerous <i>menhirs</i> and unearthed items include ancient iron artefacts and old pots, stone blocks, structure water pavilions, ancient graves which shed lights on a lost civilization. |

| | | |
|------------------------------|-----|---|
| Pukzing Cave | 175 | Literally “A Cave of Shouting Stone”, the cave was carved out of the hills by a very strong man called Mualzavata by using only his hair pin. In olden days, it is also believed that villagers used to hear evil spirits shouting inside the cave. |
| Mualcheng | 220 | There is an engraved image of Buddha with dancing lasses on each side. According to believe the frequent visits of the Buddhists from the hills did the Buddha engraving. |
| Phawngpui (Blue Mountain) | 340 | Also called the Blue Mountain, it is the highest peak in Mizoram (2,157 mts). It is rich in exotic fauna, many fragrant herbs and rare species of orchids and rhododendrons. It is an ideal destination for nature lovers and trekkers. |
| Palak Lake | 390 | It is the largest natural lake in Mizoram surrounded by lush virgin forest rich in flora and fauna. A great variety of wildlife is found in the surrounding forests of the lake and a home to varieties of wetland and hill birds. |

Sources: Researcher’s own compilations from various sources

2.9.5.3 Tourism policy initiatives in Mizoram

The tourism promotion activities in Mizoram were actually started following its emergence as the 23rd state of the Indian Union in 1987. In that year the Government of Mizoram set up the Directorate of Tourism by bifurcating it from the Department of Information and Public Relations. Its main function has been development of tourism and its allied activities and building basic infrastructure for tourists. The Department with its limited allocation of fund has performed to the best of its ability in promoting tourism. It has been working in making Mizoram as the next destination of the new millennium.

To sum up with the mission of the Department of Tourism, in 2017 the Department of Environment, Forests & Climate Change has come up with a new policy

called Mizoram Ecotourism Policy, 2017. The said policy was framed with a vision to preserve and protect the natural heritage, both flora and fauna of Mizoram and attract tourists and visitors from outside and inside the State through low impact community based ecotourism; and in the bargain provide opportunities to enhance livelihood of the local people. The mission of the policy is *“to provide recreation and promote understanding about heritage sites and its values, nature and wildlife conservation with income generation and employment opportunity to local people while according priority to bio-diversity conservation, ecosystem functioning and socio-economic development”*.

To achieve the above mission, the Policy seeks to pursue the following objectives:

- (i) Identify and promote/develop ecotourism potential sites in Mizoram.
- (ii) Create and promote awareness and understanding about sustainable and responsible ecotourism among the stakeholders such as the general public, local communities, voluntary organizations and Government officials.
- (iii) Promote coordination among partner Departments to further the cause of ecotourism and establish mechanism for partnership between all stakeholders to develop and promote sustainable community based ecotourism.
- (iv) Identify and develop standards and norms for permissible and ecologically sound ecotourism activities in tandem with the principles of community based ecotourism with the benefits accruing to the local community in terms of income as well as employment generation.
- (v) Build capacity of stakeholders towards natural and cultural heritage interpretation, hospitality, management of tourist traffic.
- (vi) Conserve the existing biodiversity, ecosystems, sites of heritage value, cultural and traditional heritage of the local community and generate incentives to local communities for nature conservation.

2.9.5.4 Tourist arrivals in Mizoram

The statistics related to tourist arrivals in Mizoram for the period of 2010-2016 are presented in Table 2.25.

Table 2.25
Tourist arrivals in Mizoram

| Year | Tourist arrival | | % Variation | |
|-----------------------|-----------------|---------|-------------|---------|
| | Domestic | Foreign | Domestic | Foreign |
| 2010 | 57,292 | 731 | - | - |
| 2011 | 62,174 | 658 | 8.52 | -9.99 |
| 2012 | 64,294 | 744 | 3.36 | 13.07 |
| 2013 | 63,377 | 800 | -1.43 | 7.53 |
| 2014 | 68,203 | 863 | 7.61 | 7.87 |
| 2015 | 66,605 | 798 | -2.34 | -7.53 |
| 2016 | 67,238 | 942 | 0.95 | 18.04 |
| Average annual growth | | | 2.78 | 4.83 |

Source: Statistical Reports of Ministry of Tourism, GoI

It is observed from the table that all the years except 2013 and 2015 have a positive growth in domestic tourist arrivals (DTAs). The DTAs had increased from 57,292 in 2010 to 67,238 in 2016, a mere 10,000 mark which shows the snail's pace tourism development in the state. During the period the average annual growth was recorded at 2.78% only.

As per as the foreign tourist arrivals (FTAs) in the state is concerned, the ensuing period recorded an average annual growth of 4.83%. The annual growth of FTAs was recorded a two-digit figure in the year 2012 and 2016. However, the year 2011 and 2015 recorded a negative growth with -9.99% and -7.53% respectively. This implies that the state government should work hard to chalk out proper marketing strategies to maximize both domestic and tourist arrivals.

2.9.6 Nagaland

Nagaland is a state located in the far north-eastern part of India. The state of Nagaland was formally inaugurated on December 1st, 1963, as the 16th state of the Indian Union. The state borders Assam to the west, Arunachal Pradesh and part of Assam to the north, Myanmar (Burma) to the east and Manipur to the south. It has a total area of 16,579 km², thus making it one of the smallest states of India. The state capital is Kohima while the largest city is Dimapur.

2.9.6.1 Tourism prospects in Nagaland

Nagaland, the ‘Land of Tribals’ is a place of magical beauty and bewildering diversity. A land nestled in myths and mysterious, lore and legends and in many tender dreams. It is a land of clouds, mountains and serpentine rivers, valleys strewn with flowers and colourful people. The exquisitely picturesque landscape, the vibrantly colourful sunrise and sunset, lush and verdant flare; this is a land that represents aberrant beauty, moulded perfectly for a breath-taking experience (Ngullie, 2016). Nagaland’s blue-eyed mountains and emerald expanses comprise an intriguing world of ancient rituals and a proud people. Three great mountain ranges, running parallel to each other in a jagged line from north to south, comprise the backbone of Nagaland; these are the Patkai, Barail and Naga ranges from which numerous cascading rivers flow down. The forests of Nagaland are very rich in bio-diversity, both flora and fauna. Even today some pockets of forests are covered with gigantic trees, where even sun rays cannot penetrate (Joshi, 2011). In these forests, one can encounter the Great Hornbill – the most revered bird of Nagaland, and after which every year the Hornbill Festival is celebrated with great feat and enthusiasm. For the adventurous and the daring people, Nagaland is an ideal place for trekking, rock climbing, jungle camping, and offers limitless exploration possibilities in its lush and verdant sub-tropical rain forests which are also a treasure trove of a plethora of medicinal plants.

Nagaland is a land of sociable and hospitable people with mesmerizing landscape and a pleasant climate throughout the year. The state is a traditional homeland of 16 tribes having their own distinctive culture, custom and traditions preserved till today (Kinny and Lanusosang, 2016). It is a land of folklore passed down the generations through word-of-mouth. Music is an integral part of life; folk songs eulogizing the ancestors, brave deeds of warriors and traditional heroes; poetic love songs immortalizing ancient tragic love stories. Each community celebrates its myriad festivals revolving around the agrarian calendar that makes Nagaland by default, a land of festivals. Naga society is a well-knit and cohesive unit living by ancient tenets that play an important role in contemporary life. One of its interesting features is the tradition of

the *Morung*, a dormitory exclusively for men, which is the focal point of the village. Nagaland is a cultural mosaic of diverse multi-ethnicity sprung up by the several tribes that inhabit the State. Weaving is also one of the most colourful and dynamic traditions of the Nagas. Its finest renditions are in the beautiful hand-woven shawls of the various tribes (Dey, 2007).

Nagaland's tourism resources are immense. Its history, culture and the mysticism associated the customs and ways of its hill tribes has been the source of great curiosity to not only Indians but people all over the world. It is a land of charm, diverse in landscape, culture and offers opportunities for whole range of tourism activities, which to date has not been fully tapped (*Nagaland Tourism Policy, 2001*).

2.9.6.2 Key tourism attractions in Nagaland

By virtue of her natural beauty, the whole of Nagaland is a tourism hotspot and it is one such place which can offer a variety of options for tourism activities. Some of the major places/events of Nagaland which are identified as tourism hotspots are presented in table 2.26:

Table 2.26
Key attractions of Nagaland Tourism

| Spots/Events | Distance from Kohima (in Km) | Description |
|---|---------------------------------|---|
| Hornbill Festival | - | It is held in the first week of December. Showcase of Naga culture, cuisines and handicrafts. |
| War Cemetery | - | A symbolic memorial erected as citation for the supreme sacrifices made by the officers and men during the World War II. |
| Khonoma (<i>The Green Village</i>) | 20 | A virgin territory for birdwatchers, animal watchers and botanists who have the entire area to explore and discover. It is one of the cleanest villages in the Indian subcontinent. |
| Dzukou Valley (<i>Valley of Eternal Charm</i>) | 30 | The valley is tucked away at 2438 meters above sea level covered with a carpet of wild flowers. It is surrounded by hills, natural caves and rocks ideal for camping. |

| | | |
|--------------------------|-----|--|
| Shiloi Lake (Meluri) | 300 | A beautiful natural lake. According to legend, a Queen reign over this lake and therefore no one has drowned in this lake till date. |
| Lohwo (The Twin Lake) | 55 | Known as the “Ancestral village of the Nagas”. Legend says that this twin lake (husband & wife) was co-joined from below the small hillock that separates them from outside. |
| Japfu Peak | 15 | As recorded by Guinness Book of World Records, the largest and the tallest Rhododendron tree was discovered in 1993, in this peak standing at the height of 108 ft and is still growing. |
| Touphema Tourist Village | 41 | The village offers exquisite traditional Naga life in the lap of nature. |

Sources: Researcher’s own compilation from various sources

2.9.6.3 Tourism policy initiatives in Nagaland

As far as tourism is concerned in Nagaland, it was started in 1981 when the Department of Tourism was bifurcated from the Department of Information and Public Relations. Since then various activities of tourism development in the state have been looked after by the Department of Tourism. The beginning two decades have not witnessed much development as the number of tourists coming to Nagaland is quite negligible.

Given the abundant tourism resources in the state and countering the pathetic tourism development trends, the Government of Nagaland has come out with its own tourism policy in 2001, i.e. Nagaland Tourism Policy, 2001 with the following prime objectives:

- i. To provide a planned development of tourism based on promotion of domestic and international tourism.
- ii. Identification of tourist potential areas and development of these resources and strengthening of the existing and viable infrastructures on a selective and intensive basis for maximum benefit to the state economy.

- iii. To prepare and implement a master plan for integrated development and marketing of identified circuits.
- iv. To create and provide necessary infrastructural facilities such as power, water, roads transportation accommodations etc. for development of tourism in the state.
- v. To improve, diversify and expand the marketing of tourism products in the state.
- vi. To promote private entrepreneurship and gradually shift towards selective privatization of the Govt. infrastructure by way of leasing to private individuals/groups or firms and business houses etc. Creation of tourism infrastructure so as to preserve the distinctive handicrafts, folk arts and culture of the state and thereby attract more tourists.
- vii. To take up more Rural Tourism Projects and create job opportunities and earning capacities to the local community.
- viii. Promote conservation and enhancement of natural resources as regards to flora and fauna, natural beauty, forest and unique features of the state through regulated development.
- ix. To promote Eco-Tourism and Adventure Tourism as the state is ideal for such tourism activities.
- x. Promotion of rural ethnic, cultural, eco and adventure tourism.
- xi. To create awareness about the potential of tourism and thereby, generates the growth of a tourist friendly culture.
- xii. To recognize the Department of tourism for a more effective functioning.
- xiii. Development of human resource in tourism related activities.

2.9.6.4 Tourist arrivals in Nagaland

The tourism industry of Nagaland is still in its infancy stage as compared to other touristically advanced states of India. Table 2.27 highlights the statistics of tourist arrivals in Nagaland during the period 2010-2016. The table shows that the total number of tourist arrivals in the state is quite low and could not even cross the 1,00,000 mark in each year during the period.

As highlighted in Table 2.27, the domestic tourist arrivals (DTAs) had increased to 58,178 in 2016 from 21,094 in 2010, which is almost a three-fold increase over the period.

Table 2.27
Tourist arrivals in Nagaland

| Year | Tourist arrival | | % Variation | |
|-----------------------|-----------------|---------|-------------|---------|
| | Domestic | Foreign | Domestic | Foreign |
| 2010 | 21094 | 1132 | - | - |
| 2011 | 25391 | 2080 | 20.37 | 83.74 |
| 2012 | 35915 | 2489 | 41.45 | 19.66 |
| 2013 | 35638 | 3304 | -0.77 | 32.74 |
| 2014 | 58413 | 3679 | 63.91 | 11.35 |
| 2015 | 64616 | 2769 | 10.62 | -24.73 |
| 2016 | 58178 | 3260 | -9.96 | 17.73 |
| Average annual growth | | | 20.94 | 23.41 |

Source: Statistical Reports of Ministry of Tourism, GoI

The foreign tourist arrivals (FTAs) too witnessed the same trend as the DTAs as the number goes to 3,260 in 2016 from a meagre 1,132 in 2010. The average annual growth rates of DTAs and FTAs of the period are almost parallel to each other; both of them experienced more than 20% growth. This is nothing but a good sign for the Nagaland Tourism in the coming days.

2.9.7 Sikkim

Sikkim, an erstwhile Himalayan Kingdom, became a protectorate of India in 1950 and an Indian state in 1975. It is the second smallest state in India covering a total geographical area of 7,096 km². This thumb-shaped state has a unique distinction of being bounded by three sovereign nations - Nepal in the west, Bhutan in the east, the Tibet Autonomous Region of People's Republic of China's in the north and the Darjeeling District of West Bengal borders to its south. As per 2011 census, Sikkim is the least populated state in India with a population of 607,688. In 2002, it joined the North Eastern Council (NEC) to become its eighth and the youngest member. Gangtok is the capital city of the state.

2.9.7.1 Tourism prospects in Sikkim

Sikkim - the home of Mighty Khanchendzonga, has been bestowed with unique beauty manifested by the snow clad mountains, splendour with its lush green forests, landscape dotted with perennial streams and waterfalls, glaciers, lakes, snow capped mountains, cold deserts, picturesque villages, natives in traditional dresses and indigenous architecture, exotic cultures and rich traditions. It is a land of abundance beauty and adventure, whether passion is long treks or short walks in ever-changing landscape; white-water rafting or mountaineering amongst the world's highest peaks; photographing nature's diversity; or just hanging out, meeting people of other cultures and enjoying festivals (Lahiri, 2001).

Sikkim's wealth of biodiversity includes the products of offering bird and butterfly watching, botanical and zoological excursions, nature walks around protected areas. The stupendous mountains, gorges and valleys, glaciers, snows, lakes and rivers offer tremendous excitement to the serious nature lovers. From the pleasure of yak riding at the vicinity of some of the most beautiful lakes, to river rafting and kayaking, through the currents of turbulent of Teesta River will add an awesome experience for the tourists. For those who love watching and admiring birds and animals in their natural environs, Sikkim is an ideal place as the state is rich in flora and fauna (Joshi, 2011).

Sikkim with its plethora of ethnic communities has tremendous potential for offering tourists a multidimensional cultural experience. Tourists can have a glimpse into the village lifestyles and cultures, the traditions and hospitality of the local people in the form of homestays that are spread across the state. Ethnic cuisine and food products, organic produce, ethnic songs and dances, traditional dresses, handicrafts, vernacular architecture, festivals, traditional medicines, folktales, are some of the items on offer in the cultural basket (STP, 2016). The pristine, peaceful and unpolluted environment and its green policies such as organic farming and easy accessibility are the added advantage of ecotourism development in the state. With regards to pilgrimage tourism, new opportunities are there as the Kailash Mansarover pilgrimage through Nathula Pass,

which was flagged off in 2015. The great ancient monasteries of Buddhism has flourished and influenced the heritage all over this tiny state since times.

2.9.7.3 Key tourism attractions in Sikkim

The profusion of lofty peaks, holy lakes, ancient monasteries, orchid nurseries, heli-tours and stunning trekking routes – making Sikkim a multi dimensional holiday destination for visitors from both home and abroad. Some of the major tourist attractions of Sikkim are presented in Table 2.28:

Table 2.28
Key attractions of Sikkim Tourism

| Spots/Events | Distance from Gangtok (in Km) | Description |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|---|
| Mt. Khanchendzonga | 138 | The third highest peak of the world, worshipped as the guardian deity of the state. Khanchendzonga National Park is located here, rich in rare flora and fauna. |
| Khecheopalri Lake | 137 | Sacred lake of both Buddhists and Hindus, believed to be a wish fulfilling lake. The lake shelters various Trans-Himalayan migratory birds that do not permit even single leaf to float on the lake's surface. |
| Nathula | 56 | A mountain pass that connects Sikkim with China's Tibet autonomous region, forms a part of ancient <i>Silk Route</i> . World's highest ATM is located here at an altitude of 14450 ft. |
| Yumthang | 148 | Known as <i>Valley of Flowers</i> , it is a paradise for nature lovers with a fascinating blend of flora and fauna and breathtaking scenic beauty. Wild flowers such as primulas and rhododendrons bathe the landscape in rich colours. |
| Borong and Ralong Hot Springs | 70-80 | They are located 7 kms apart from each other. These natural spas are said to have medicinal values and curative powers. |

| | | |
|--------------------------------|-----|---|
| Gurudongmar Lake | 190 | Revered by both Buddhists and Hindus as sacred lake. Blessed by <i>Guru Rinpoche</i> in 8 th century, and the water of the lake is believed to have the miraculous power of granting children to issueless couples. |
| Tsomgo Lake | 35 | Tsomgo, means source of the lake, derives its water from the melting snows of the mountains surrounding the lake. It is believed that in olden days, Buddhist monks would study the colour of the water of the lake to forecast the future. |
| Rumtek Monastery | 24 | Rumtek is the seat of <i>Karmapa Lama</i> who heads the Kagyupa sect of Buddhism. It is a reservoir of the relics of the 16 th Karmapa and houses <i>Shedra</i> (monastic college), nunnery and stupas. |
| Fambong Lho Wildlife Sanctuary | 20 | With an area of about 5200 hectares the sanctuary is the home of Himalayan Black Bear, Red Panda, Civet cat and many varieties of birds and butterflies. |

Sources: Sources: Researcher's own compilation from various sources

2.9.7.3 Tourism policy initiatives in Sikkim

Tourism as an industry was declared by the Government of Sikkim in the 10th Five Year plan, and it has been looked after by the Department of Tourism and Civil Aviation Department.

The growth of tourism in Sikkim prior to its merger with India was negligible. Even after merger, the growth was slow till the 1980s as large areas remained inaccessible or restricted to tourists. It was only in the last decade of the century, that tourism growth picked up considerably as more areas came under relaxation of the permit regime. In order to consolidate all existing missions and plans for tourism development, the state government considered the need to develop a new policy for the state tourism. Then, a new tourism policy in 2016, i.e. Sikkim Tourism Policy, 2016 was released. The new policy has the guiding principles of environmental sustainability, cultural integrity, equity and Inclusiveness, and *Atithi Devo Bhava*. Alongside the

principles, following objectives have also been framed in the Sikkim Tourism Policy, 2016:

- i. Establish and strengthen institutional structures to promote, manage and implement responsible tourism in Sikkim.
- ii. Promote standards and certification for the hospitality and service industries.
- iii. Ensure that Sikkim has the highest level of skills and capacity for responsible tourism through consistent human resource development.
- iv. Develop and manage tourism sites, quality tourism infrastructure and transport for tourism that is safe and sustainable.
- v. Ensure strategic and sustained marketing and publicity.
- vi. Promote enabling environment for tourism stakeholders.
- vii. Facilitate inter-sectoral convergence and coordination.

2.9.7.4 Tourist arrivals in Sikkim

Today, tourism is considered as one of the most important drivers of Sikkim's economy as it has come up in a big way with the number of tourists continuously increasing. Table 2.29 presents the data relating to domestic tourist arrivals (DTAs) and foreign tourist arrivals (FTAs) in Sikkim during the period 2010-2016.

Table 2.29
Tourist arrivals in Sikkim

| Year | Tourist arrival | | % Variation | |
|-----------------------|-----------------|---------|-------------|---------|
| | Domestic | Foreign | Domestic | Foreign |
| 2010 | 700011 | 20757 | - | - |
| 2011 | 552453 | 23602 | -21.08 | 13.71 |
| 2012 | 558538 | 26489 | 1.10 | 12.23 |
| 2013 | 576749 | 31698 | 3.26 | 19.66 |
| 2014 | 562418 | 49175 | -2.48 | 55.13 |
| 2015 | 705023 | 38479 | 25.35 | -21.75 |
| 2016 | 747343 | 66012 | 6.00 | 71.55 |
| Average annual growth | | | 2.02 | 25.09 |

Source: Statistical Reports of Ministry of Tourism, GoI

The table shows that majority of the visitors are composed of domestic tourists. It shows that there is an increasing trend in the number of DTAs. Since 2011, all the succeeding years have received positive growth rates in DTAs with an

overwhelming growth of over 25% in 2015. The average annual growth rate of DTAs was recorded at 2.02% during the period.

On the other hand, the period received an average annual growth rate of 25.09% in terms of FTAs. All the years have recorded double-digit growth rates except 2015 which had a negative growth. The increase in the number of FTAs from 20,757 to 66,012 during this short period of time is quite exceptional.

2.9.8 Tripura

Tripura is one of the eight states of Northeast India, and is the third smallest state of India with an area of 10,491 km². The state is bordered by Bangladesh to the north, south, and west, and the Indian states of Assam and Mizoram to the east. Tripura was formerly an independent Tripuri Kingdom ruled by the Maharajas of the Manikya dynasty. The princely state was merged with independent India on 15 October 1949 by the Tripura Merger Agreement. It attained its Union Territory status in 1956 and then upgraded to statehood on 21 January, 1972.

According to one belief, the origin of the word Tripura is attributed to the legendary tyrant king of Tripura, *Tripur*. According to legend, *Tripur* was the 39th descendant of Druhya, who was a descendant of Yayati, one of the lunar race kings. He was so powerful that he ordered his subjects to worship him as the sole god. In addition to this it is also maintained that primarily the land was called “Twipra” which connotes “a land adjoins the water” in Kokborok language (Joshi, 2011).

2.9.8.1 Tourism prospects in Tripura

Tripura is an abode of rich floral and faunal biodiversity, treasure of plants, shrubs and herbs of medicinal value, unique ecosystems, wet lands, picturesque rural hinterland and lush hillscape. There are many species of rare, endemic and endangered plants and animals in the region. The greenery of the state’s rural landscape dotted with paddy fields, natural lakes and serpentine rivers beckon any newcomer to the state. The verdure expanse of undulating landscapes intermittently adorned with water bodies and rivers accommodates unique amalgamation of cultures of 19 tribes. The state has over 68% is under protected areas in the form of four wildlife sanctuaries. Seven parallel hill

ranges clothed with forests of varying density and nine major rivers occupying the valleys between two adjacent hill ranges dotted with tribal hamlets provide a perfect landscape for tourists with different preferences and tastes for the kind of recreation and enjoyment. Innumerable treks exist through the forests and traditionally and culturally rich hamlets, which have potential to provide a deep insight into the cultural and ecological diversity of the state (TEP, 2004).

In the words of Rane (2003), Tripura is a land of low, lush green hills gently merging into the flat fertile river basins under paddy cultivation. The land is also dotted with scenic water bodies all over the countryside, even within the urban areas. Its people exude simplicity, honesty, hospitality and cordiality. Music is an integral part of its tribal people. The secular approach in public life and the harmonious living together of different communities is commendable. It is the land of cultural synthesis. In Tripura, tourists can have the opportunity to view here the quaintness hilly serenity, pilgrimage spots, and architectural sculptures with their historical importance, beautiful lakes and palaces constructed by the Maharajas and hill stations with abandoned natural beauties (Bhattacharjee, 2015). Tripura is a state of several diverse ethno-linguistic groups which had given rise to a composite culture. The state is rich cultural heritage of music, fine arts, handicrafts and dances and sight of Tripura’s rich tradition of handlooms and handicrafts. Indeed, Tripura is a land endowed with splendid natural beauty!

2.9.8.2 Key tourism attractions in Tripura

The major tourist spots as identified by the Department of Tourism, Tripura are presented in Table 2.30:

Table 2.30
Key attractions of Tripura Tourism

| Spots/Events | Distance from Agartala (in Km) | Description |
|---|--------------------------------|---|
| Neermahal Palace <i>(The Water Palace)</i> | 55 | Water palace built by Manikya king in the middle of the Rudrasagar Lake. One of the finest pieces of Hindu and Mughal architecture. |

| | | |
|--|-----|---|
| Ujjayanta Palace | - | Royal house of Manikya king embellished with lush gardens, pools and fountains. |
| Deotamura (<i>Peak of Gods</i>) | 67 | Remarkable for the rock cut reliquary antediluvian idols of Shiva, Ganesh, Vishnu and other gods and goddesses. |
| Tripura Sundari Temple | 55 | The temple is more than 500 years old Hindu pilgrimage site. |
| Unakoti | 178 | Stone and rock-cut images of seventh to ninth centuries. |
| Pilak | 100 | Archaeological remains of Hindu and Buddhist sculptures dates back to 8 th and 9 th centuries. |
| Jampui Hills | 225 | Famous for its orange cultivation. A summer holiday resort perfectly described as permanent abode of springs. |
| Sepahijala Wildlife | 30 | Wildlife varieties of residential birds and migratory birds. |
| Dumboor Lake | 110 | Derived its name from its look as the ' <i>dumboor</i> ' (tabour -shaped small drum) of Lord Shiva. The lake is the confluence of Raima and Sarma rivers. Various species of migratory birds are visible in winter. |
| Khumlwng Eco Park | 25 | Khumlwng means "valley of flowers". The park has a very beautiful spacious garden along with a natural water body with boating facilities. |
| Border Parade (<i>Akhaura Road</i>) | 7 | Wagah replica of 'lowering of flags' or Border Retreat ceremony being held everyday at the India-Bangladesh border. |

Sources: Researcher's own compilation from various sources

2.9.8.3 Tourism policy initiatives in Tripura

In Tripura, the process of tourism development in the state was accelerated since 1987, when tourism was given the status of industry. Meanwhile, the development of tourism in the state saw a snail's pace growth due to various reasons such as poor infrastructure and communication facilities, etc. The state government then established Tripura Tourism Development Corporation Limited in June 2009 (Meena and Das, 2012).

Since the state lies in the ecologically sensitive region of the Northeast India, the Government of Tripura has given the priority consideration for tourism development in environmental, ecological and heritage conservation.

Sensing the time has come to take initiatives for tourism development in the state which will not only generate employment but will also uplift the socio-economic status of the people in general and tribal people in particular, the state government had released its ecotourism policy in 2004. The major objectives of the Tripura Ecotourism Policy, 2004 are highlighted as under:

- Promote sustainable use and management of the natural forests and wildlife resources of the state.
- Create self-employment opportunities for local people in eco-tourism for optimum economic benefits to them.
- Help generate substantial revenue to the state.
- Maintenance and protection of the natural biodiversity resources of the state.
- Encourage nature and adventure loving tourists to visit the state.
- Provide opportunities for the local youths to participate in activities related to nature and adventure tourism (trekking, biking, etc.).
- Encourage traditional artisans and artists by providing them opportunities to exhibit their culture and art to the outside tourists.
- Preserve and enrich their rich cultural heritage.
- Create suitable infrastructure including communication and transportation links that would not only help the tourists, but also encourage the businessmen and

industrialists to make investments for development of infrastructural facilities in the state.

- Promote and provide special facilities to the nature, religion and culture based tourism in the state.
- Ensure quality, time bound and environmentally friendly services to all domestic and international tourists and stakeholders.

2.9.8.4 Tourist arrivals in Tripura

In the recent years, Tripura has experienced a tremendous amplification of tourist arrivals in the state due to its concerted efforts towards the development of its tourism industry. Table 2.31 shows the trend of tourist arrivals in Tripura since 2010.

Table 2.31 shows that there has been a very slow growth in the number of domestic tourist arrivals (DTAs) during the period. The annual growth rate of DTAs was recorded at 1.35% only. But, looking at the figures it is quite satisfactory as the period had received more than 3 lakh DTAs every year, whereas some of its counterparts could not.

Table 2.31
Tourist arrivals in Tripura

| Year | Tourist arrival | | % Variation | |
|-----------------------|-----------------|---------|-------------|---------|
| | Domestic | Foreign | Domestic | Foreign |
| 2010 | 342273 | 5212 | - | - |
| 2011 | 359515 | 6046 | 5.04 | 16.00 |
| 2012 | 361786 | 7840 | 0.63 | 29.67 |
| 2013 | 359586 | 11853 | -0.61 | 51.19 |
| 2014 | 361247 | 26688 | 0.46 | 125.16 |
| 2015 | 363172 | 34886 | 0.53 | 30.72 |
| 2016 | 370618 | 36780 | 2.05 | 5.43 |
| Average annual growth | | | 1.35 | 43.03 |

Sources: Source: Statistical Reports of Ministry of Tourism, GoI, 2010-2016

In terms of foreign tourist arrivals (FTAs), it is quite encouraging as the annual growth rate was recorded very high at 43.03%. The statistical trend for FTAs witnessed two-digit growth rate in all the years except in 2016 that too recorded over 5% growth. This positive sign is the feedback towards the state government for its tireless efforts in marketing tourism as an industry; and it should be carried forward for the coming years to realize the full potential of the various tourism resources of the state.

2.10 Conclusions

Tourism development is certainly essential in the economic development of a country as it employs a large number of people, both skilled and unskilled. Tourism promotes national integration and generates foreign exchange. It promotes socio-cultural activities. It is vital to the well being of developing countries like India because of the income generated by the consumption of goods and services by tourists, the taxes levied on businesses in the tourism industry. Today, Indian tourism is growing with leaps and bounds and has a great potential to be developed as a world class tourist destination. India has a big opportunity in tourism to make it better position to use and consider new strategy in marketing to close with domestic as well as global tourists. India needs to change its traditional marketing approach to a more competitive and modern approach. There is a need to develop a unique market position and the brand positioning will be the essence of the country's tourism products to the potential customer. The success of the tourism industry depends on the effectiveness of the marketing strategies adopted for tourist products. An effective marketing strategy in tourism industry cannot be formulated without having an in-depth knowledge about the nature of tourists, their preference on tourist products, their priority during visit and their opinion on the promotional measures on tourism. Tourism awareness programs and workshops may be organized to enhance sensitisation towards tourists and tourism destinations and for sustainable development and maintenance of tourism sites in the country. Key tourism circuits across the country may be identified on the basis of discussions with key stakeholders such as state governments, local travel trade partners etc.

Tourism in India should be developed in such a way that it accommodates and entertains visitors in a way that is minimally intrusive or destructive to the environment. Security has been a major problem for our growth in tourism for a number of years. Terrorist attacks or political unrest in different parts of the country have adversely affected sentiments of foreign tourists. However, the government needs to take a proactive approach in addressing these issues and in averting the potential impact on the industry.

Marketing of Northeast India as a tourist destination is fairly at a low key with low promotional visibility. Although the whole north eastern region, i.e. Northeast India has tremendous tourism potential as described in this chapter, the tourism industry in the area is still miles to go to exploit its full potentialities. The tourism development of the Northeast region needs to be targeted as a regional approach rather than individual state approach. Concerted and sincere efforts are required from the Central Government to unify these eight states for the infrastructure development and the achievement of peace in the region.

CHAPTER 3

TOURISM RESOURCES IN SELECT STATES - SWOT ANALYSIS

“Northeast India is a rainbow country... extraordinarily diverse and colourful, mysterious when seen through parted clouds” -Northeast Vision 2020

The chapter is an attempt to highlight the growth of tourism industry in Meghalaya and Mizoram and the organisational structure of tourism authorities in select states. Analyses on tourism infrastructures and various tourism resources of the select states have been covered. At the end, a SWOT analysis is also conducted to know the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of tourism industries in the select states.

3.1 Introduction

The tourism and hospitality industry is currently one of the most important industries worldwide. Today, tourism is a global phenomenon that for its success depends on the physical environment and a wide range of natural resources, including water, wildlife, food, and landscapes. Considered as one of the world’s most diverse regions, the bio-diversity of Northeast India is quite amazing. The land is a blend of wild life, flora and fauna, tribal and non-tribal populations with unique cultural identity, colourful festivals and arts and crafts. In fact, the region is a kaleidoscope of cultural extravaganza with enormous natural delights.

Though still considered remote and isolated as compared to other parts of the country, tourism holds high potential in Meghalaya and Mizoram because of their natural assets, ethnic diversity and the societal ethos. Tourism has one of the greatest potentials for generating income and employment opportunities as these states are exceptionally rich in bio-diversity too. Tourist attractions in the select states are abundant and quite exciting. These states are endowed with beautiful treks, charming caves, wildlife sanctuaries, scenic lakes, waterfalls, picturesque villages and so much more. The breathtaking valleys, green forests and the meandering river with a graceful gait and shimmering waterfalls make up the exorbitant atmosphere of the state. The turbulent rivers, mountains, hills and cliffs of higher altitude offer thrilling adventure sports of trekking, mountaineering, river rafting, rock climbing, cave exploring, etc. The

unique cultures of the beautiful tribes through their festivals with folk songs, dances, food and crafts, etc reflect the cultural richness of these states.

One may wonder by seeing the abundance of tourism resources in these states which are still to be explored. However, unlike other parts of mainland India, these potentials have to be tapped first and then maintain it in a systematic way. In the subsequent paragraphs, we shall analyse highlight these potentials for future reference.

3.2 Emergence of tourism in select states

The history of tourism industry in Northeast India (NEI) including the select states, i.e. Meghalaya and Mizoram is quite new. However, with the introduction of tourism as an industry, it has emerged as one of the prospective sectors recently. The economic development of the region has been greatly influenced by the tourism industry. The subsequent paragraphs study the emergence of tourism industry in the select states.

The initiative of the Government of Meghalaya towards tourism promotion was started with the establishment of the Directorate of Tourism in the year 1972. The objectives of the Directorate of Tourism are firstly to promote tourism in the state of Meghalaya, and also take steps for creation of proper infrastructure for tourism development in the state. The Meghalaya Tourism Development Corporation Ltd. was subsequently set up in January, 1977. Meghalaya was the first state in Northeast India and also one of the pioneer states in India to launch a tourism development corporation (Bhattacharjee, 2001). Before the establishment of Tourism Department in the state, Tourist Information Centres were already established at New Delhi and Kolkata, in the year 1970. Other Tourist Information Centres at Tura, Guwahati, Baghmara and Jowai were established during 1975, 1978 and 2001 respectively.

For Mizoram, the Tourism Department had a subordinate status prior to 1987 when it was a part of the Department of Information and Public Relations. The tourism promotion activities in Mizoram were actually started following its emergence as the 23rd state of Indian Union in 1987, when the state government set up the Directorate of Tourism. The Directorate is having its head office at Aizawl but has no district office in

the State. In addition, the state government has five Liaison Houses situated outside the state. These five offices are at New Delhi, Calcutta, Guwahati, Shillong and Silchar. These offices, apart from the issuance of inner-line permits (a permit needed while visiting the state) to domestic tourists provide necessary information about the state.

3.3 Tourism setup in select states

3.3.1 Meghalaya tourism

The Department of Tourism, Meghalaya is the administrative department responsible to oversee and co-ordinate the function of the Directorate of Tourism and the Meghalaya Tourism Development Corporation Ltd., (MTDC) so as to ensure uniform implementation of governmental procedures. The department is a part of the Secretariat that normally confines itself to general policies - direction, legislation, assembly business, inter-departmental matters and review assessment of execution of policy and scheme.

At present, the Directorate of Tourism is headquartered in Shillong and its main aim is to provide tourist amenities like accommodation, transport, etc. and place Meghalaya on the world tourist map. The initiative of the directorate is to provide adequate services and infrastructural facilities for enhancing tourist traffic and generate revenue for the state. It is taking steps to upgrade the tourist infrastructure, identify new tourist spots and improve the existing ones. The directorate promotes tourism in the state and implements various schemes for the benefit of the visiting tourists. With this in view, a technical cell has been created recently to monitor various tourism projects. Promotional activities are being organised in the form of festivals, participation in fairs, exhibitions, marts, holding of awareness programs and publicity campaigns through advertisements in the print and electronic media.

The MTDC was established in 1977 under the patronage of the Government of Meghalaya. The main objective was to promote tourism in the state and to expand the infrastructure facilities for the tourists. The corporation started its activities from 1st July, 1984. The aims and objectives of the corporation as spelt out in its Memorandum of Association are briefly described as follows:

- (i) Manage existing hotels, Restaurant, Cafes and transport in efficient manner.
- (ii) Produce, distribute, design, print and publish publicity materials for providing publicity.
- (iii) Provide entertainment by way of cultural shows, dances, music concerts etc.
- (iv) Provide shopping facilities to tourists.
- (v) Promote tourism by all ways and means and to adopt such methods and devices desirable and necessary to attract tourists

The management of the corporation is vested in the Board of Directors appointed by the state government, which includes a Chairman and Vice Chairman. The Managing Director is the Chief Executive of the corporation and is assisted by officers both at the head office in different divisions as well as managers of units. At the corporate office, the distribution of responsibilities is divided into the different divisions.

3.3.2 Mizoram tourism

The Department of Tourism, Mizoram was established by bifurcating from the Department of Information and Public Relations in the year 1987. The Tourism Department functions under the overall direction and control of the Secretary Tourism, Government of Mizoram. The primary objective of the Tourism Department is to develop and promote tourism in the state by creating various kinds of tourist infrastructures to provide basic amenities to the tourists visiting the State. It also endeavors to create public awareness to turn the very asset of tourism into revenue earning instrument for the general public and the government exchequer. Besides the aims and objectives, following are identified as the main functions of the Tourism Department of Mizoram:

- (i) To create tourist infrastructures to provide basic amenities to the tourist in terms of accommodation, wayside amenities (catering) and recreation.
- (ii) To develop and create facilities to promote Adventure Tourism in terms of water sports, air and land adventure tourism.
- (iii) To sponsor training of educated youths to enhance skills in man power development relating to tourism subjects.

- (iv) Organising workshop, seminar and function to create public awareness on tourism promotion.
- (v) To explore potentials of tourism in the state.
- (vi) Publication of tourist information folders, booklets, tourist guide map to provide basic information on Mizoram.
- (vii) Encourage and support in celebration of important festivals like Chapchar Kut, Thalfavang Kut, etc. as a part of tourism promotion.
- (viii) Managing and running of completed tourist facilities.
- (ix) Promotion of Tourism by marketing through tourist festivals, fair, etc. in various states and abroad.
- (x) Organising and conducting educational tour in the country and abroad.
- (xi) Generating revenue to the state exchequer.
- (xii) Assisting and guiding tourists whenever required for their visit to Mizoram

The department has a Directorate but has no district office in the State. The Directorate, headed by a Director, is the implementing agency of the Department of Tourism. Its main function has been the development of tourism and its allied activities and building basic infrastructure for tourists. Other than the Tourism Department, two agencies namely Mizoram Tourism Development Authority (MTDA) and Mizoram Tourism Development Board (MTDB) were also created for smooth functioning of tourism developmental activities in the state.

The MTDA is a society formed in the year 2008 is chaired by the Minister of Tourism, Government of Mizoram with members drawn from officers of Tourism Department, Government of Mizoram and representatives of tourism service providers in the State. The main aim and objective of the society is to assist the efforts of the Central Government and the State Government in respect of development of tourism in the State. MTDA has been the main agency for implementing projects and other developmental works assigned to it by the Tourism Department. It consists of the following members:

- (i) *Chairman:* Minister of Tourism, Govt. of Mizoram

- (ii) *Sr. Vice Chairman:* Parliamentary Secretary, Tourism Department.
- (iii) *Vice Chairman:* Secretary, Tourism Department, Govt. of Mizoram
- (iv) *Secretary:* Director, Tourism Department, Govt. of Mizoram
- (v) *Finance Secretary:* Jt. Director, Tourism Department, Govt. of Mizoram
- (vi) *Treasurer:* DDO, Tourism Department, Govt. of Mizoram.
- (vii) *2 Members:* Hotel & Restaurant Association of Mizoram
- (viii) *2 Members:* Travel Agents/ Tour Operators

The Mizoram Tourism Development Board (MTDB) under the chairmanship of the Hon'ble Chief Minister, Government of Mizoram was created on 8th June, 2010 by the Government of Mizoram for promotion and development of Tourism in Mizoram. The chief function of the MTDB is to identify and recommend strategies/ policies for development of tourism industry in Mizoram. The members of the MTDB are:

- (i) *Chairman:* Chief Minister, Govt. of Mizoram
- (ii) *Vice chairman:* Minister of Tourism, Govt. of Mizoram
- (iii) *Member:* Secretary, Tourism Department, Govt. of Mizoram
- (iv) *Member Secretary:* Director, Tourism Department, Govt. of Mizoram
- (v) *3 Non-official Members:* Persons who have wide experience in the field of tourism.

3.4 Tourism infrastructure analysis

Tourism provides direct benefits to the local community and businesses. The infrastructure required by tourism - transport, communications, water supply and health services (*Yes Bank, 2014*). The status of the basic tourism infrastructure in NEI is much below the minimum standards. Over the years attempts have been made by various tourism organizations for improving tourism infrastructure in the region in the areas of transport, communication, power, water supply, etc. but quantum is quite limited. Besides, such infrastructural improvement generally polarized in pockets of the region which were explored and campaigned under conventional “circuit specific strategy” of tourism planning adopted by govt. of India and subsequently by the concerned states of the region (Bhattacharya, 2008).

The process of infrastructure development has been rather slow in the region for many reasons. Amongst them, the rugged topography of hilly and mountainous terrains (about 70%) of NEI covering most of the states including Meghalaya and Mizoram is one that hampers the rapid growth of infrastructure development. To develop tourism sector in the select states it will heavily depend upon the immediate improvement of infrastructure within the next few years. However, this will require a total revolutionary thinking. Interstate connectivity must be planned on a priority basis and upgradation of road transportation, railways and existing airports should be done at regular intervals.

3.4.1 Connectivity

Connectivity acts as a bridge between places of tourist origin and destinations. Tourism becomes more attractive if a country has all possible types of alternative connectivity facilities like transportation and communication, and accessibility to different tourism destinations. A tourist requires not just an access to a tourism destination but also an easy access in terms of cost, time and level of comforts.

Today, NEI is virtually a landlocked region in India having a distinct identity of its own. The region has been isolated by the partition of Indian Union in 1947 leaving only a narrow strip of land of 22-37 km wide, called the Siluguri Corridor, or the Chicken's Neck that connects Northeast India with the rest of India. This partition has been the reason for severe connectivity infrastructure constraints in the region till date. Hence, there is a need to open up this region to the rest of the country by developing efficient transportation and connectivity networks.

3.4.1.1 Connectivity of Meghalaya

- (i) *Roads:* Meghalaya is well connected by a net work of roads with all important cities in the neighbouring states of NEI. Two major National Highways (NH) pass through Shillong, the state capital. One is NH-40 that connects to Guwahati and the other is NH-44 that connects the state with Tripura and Mizoram. Private bus operators as well as state transport buses from other states ply to and from Shillong daily. Maxi cabs and taxi services are also available to various

destinations like Guwahati, Agartala, Dimapur and other important towns and cities of NEI.

- (ii) *Airways:* Meghalaya is connected to the rest of India by airways too. The state has a civilian airport located at Umroi, a small township 30 km away from Shillong. Guwahati is the nearest international airport from where Shillong can be reached by bus or car. Pawan Hans Helicopters Ltd., under the aegis of the Government of Meghalaya, has commenced regular helicopter flights connecting Shillong and Tura to Guwahati.
- (iii) *Railways:* The state does not have any railway service. The nearest railhead of Meghalaya is at Guwahati (Assam), which is well connected to major cities in India via an extensive rail network. Taxis, maxi cabs, bus services are available for travel between Shillong and Guwahati at regular intervals.
- (iv) *Waterways:* The Parliamentary Standing Committee declared four rivers of Meghalaya - Jinjiram, Kynshi, Simsang, Umngot (Dawki) as national waterways on August 12, 2015 to enhance trade and commerce with Bangladesh. The matter came into prominence during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Bangladesh where India and Bangladesh inked the agreement on Coastal Shipping for two-way trade through ports. According to the MoU, two Bangladesh ports, i.e. Chittagong and Mongla Ports can be used by India to ship goods to landlocked states in the Northeast which includes to Agartala (Tripura), Dawki (Meghalaya) and Sutarkandi (Assam).

3.4.1.2 Connectivity of Mizoram

- (i) *Roads:* Mizoram is connected to the Indian network through NH-54. Another highway, NH-150 connects the state with Selling (Mizoram) to Imphal (Manipur) and NH-40A links the state with Tripura. A road between Champhai (Mizoram) and Tiddim (Myanmar) has been proposed but the Myanmar authorities are unwilling to complete the link. Aizawl, the capital city is connected from Shillong and Guwahati by buses and maxi cabs through Silchar through NH-54.

- (ii) *Airways:* Mizoram has an airport at Lengpui, a small town about 32 kms from Aizawl city. It is thoroughly connected by flights from major cities like Kolkata, Guwahati and Imphal. Mizoram can also be reached from Kolkata via Silchar Airport, which is about 180 km (about 6 hour by road) from Aizawl. However, many times due to inclement weather conditions certain times flights get delayed or even cancelled.
- (iii) *Railways:* In Mizoram, there is a rail link at Bairabi station but it is primarily for goods, that also still in a non-functional state. Hence, the nearest practical railway station for Mizoram is at Silchar in Assam, which is some 180 kms from Aizawl.
- (iv) *Waterways:* Mizoram is in the process of developing waterways with the port of Akyab, Sittwe in Myanmar along Chhimtuipui River. India is investing \$ 103 million to develop the Sittwe port on Myanmar's northern coast, about 160 km from Mizoram. The Myanmar government has committed \$10 million for the venture, which is part of the Kaladan Multi-Model Project (Joshi, 2011). This joint venture has been the focal point of the popular "Act East Policy" of Government of India. Mizoram has a potential of developing waterways with Bangladesh too, as Bangladesh can be approached by a ferry through the river Khawthlangtuipui near Tlabung.

3.4.2 Tourism circuits

Tourism circuit has become a very popular concept in the tourism sector today. Developing tourism circuits make tours and travel more economical for both tourists and tourism departments. As noted earlier, both Meghalaya and Mizoram are rich in varied tourism attractions, some of which are unmatched in terms of attractiveness and pull factor. However, due to lack of proper tourism circuits in NEI, these tourism products do not get well marketed. Thus, it is important to develop tourism circuits, so that these tourism destinations get good tourist visitation and developed.

3.4.2.1 Tourism circuits in Meghalaya

(i) *Inter-state travel circuit:* Barring Sikkim and Assam, tourism circuits of Meghalaya are relatively advanced than other states of Northeast India. Shillong, the state's capital forms an integral part of the most visited tourism circuits (other than Sikkim circuit) of NEI, some of them being:

Guwahati- Shillong- Kaziranga with different variations like

- Guwahati- Shillong- Kaziranga- Tawang
- Guwahati- Shillong- Kaziranga- Majuli
- Guwahati- Shillong- Tezpur- Bhalukpong- Tawang- Kaziranga - Majuli- Sibsagar- Kohima and others.

The circuits recommended by Meghalaya tourism are:

- Kaziranga-Guwahati-Shillong-Cherrapunjee-Shillong
- Shillong-Mawphlang-Weiloi-Mawsynram-Shillong
- Shillong-Smit-Nartiang-Thadlaskein-Jowai-Thlu Umwi-Shillong
- Guwahati-Dudanai-Bajaengdoba-Angore-Tura-Barergapara-Baghmara-Siju-Balpakram-Shillong

(ii) *Intra-state tourism circuit:* As available with the Tourism Department of Meghalaya, the existing intra-state tourism circuits are:

- Shillong (Day Trip)
- Shillong-Barapani-Shillong (Day Trip)
- Shillong-Sohra-Shillong (Day Trip)
- Shillong-Sohra-Laitkynsew-Shillong (Day Trip)
- Shillong-Mawphlang-Mawsynram-Shillong (Day Trip)
- Shillong-Smit-Thadlaskein-Nartiang-Shillong (Day Trip)
- Jowai-Nartiang-Syndai-Jowai (Day Trip)
- Tura-Babadam-Nokrek-Tura (Day Trip or a 3 day trek)
- Tura-Siju-Balpakram-Baghmara-Tura (Approximately a week)

3.4.2.2 Tourism circuits in Mizoram

There are no specific Inter/Intra-State Tourism Circuits identified in the context of Mizoram state. Intra-state circuits may also not be so required considering the fact that this is a small state in terms of spread. However there is potential to have key inter-state circuits, which could be worked out with careful planning and support system, even at the present situation. Meanwhile, the state's Tourism Department provides the tourists the itinerary to some intra-state tourism circuits, such as:

(i) *Exploring Indo-Myanmar*

Duration: 6 Nights & 7 Days

Highlights: Nature exploration, Border Trade Centre, Soft Trekking

Destination: Aizawl, Champhai, Zokhawthar and Rih Dil (Lake)

Operated by: Evergreen Tours & Travels

(ii) *Mystic Mountains*

Duration: 3 Nights & 4 Days

Highlights: Trekking, Nature exploration, experience Mizo rural life.

Destination: Aizawl, Hmuifang, and Reiek Mountain.

Operated by: Evergreen Tours & Travels

(iii) *Blue Mountain Treks (Highest Peak in Mizoram)*

Duration: 6 Nights & 7 Days

Highlights: Trekking & Camping, Nature exploration, Bird watching, Rock climbing.

Destination: Highest Peak in Mizoram

Operated by: Evergreen Tours & Travels

(iv) *A Glimpse of History*

Duration: 8 days & 7 nights

Highlights: Visits to historical places

Destinations: Aizawl, Kawlkulh, Chawngtlai, Zokhawthar, Rih Dil, Tam Dil, Reiek.

Operated by: Omega Tours & Travels

(v) *Panoramic Reiek Peak*

Duration: 4 days & 3 nights

Highlights: Nature exploration, experience Mizo rural life

Destinations: Aizawl, Reiek

Operated by: Omega Tours & Travels

(vi) *Mizoram Delight*

Duration: 5 days & 4 nights

Highlights: Local sightseeing, music/culture, visits to traditional villages and jhums, hiking, bird watching, etc.

Destinations: In and around Aizawl, Falkawn, Hmuifang

Operated by: Chawngvawr Ecotours

3.4.3 Tour operators/travel agencies

Tour operators and travel agencies are such organisations which play crucial roles in the entire process of developing and promoting tourism of a region. They are the ones who package and process all the various attractions of a region and present them to the tourists. In the context of Meghalaya and Mizoram, there is a dire need to encourage more tour operators/travel agencies by the respective governments to sell the different tourism products available in these states. In the present study, following tour operators/travel agencies have been identified operating their businesses in the select states. They are specified state-wise as below:

3.4.3.1 Tour operators/ travel agencies in Meghalaya

Here are some of the important tour operators and travel agents authorized by Tourism Department, Meghalaya.

(i) *Tour Operators*

(For Conducted Tours & Local Sightseeing)

- *Tourist Information Centre, Meghalaya Tourism Development Corporation, Police Bazar, Shillong*
- *Van Rap Tours & Travels, Police Bazar, Shillong*
- *Cultural Pursuits Adventures, Hotel Alpine Continental, Thana Road, Shillong*

- *Meghalaya Adventure Tours* (Cave Tourism), Shillong
- *Natural Ways- Adventure Tour Garo Hills*, Hawakhana, Tura
- *Nakliar Tourist Info Centre & Travels* (Mawlynnong Circuit), Police Bazar, Shillong
- *Tower Tours & Travels*, TSS Road, Shillong
- *Meghalaya Road Runner Tours*, Shillong
- *Walk With Nine Lives*, Laitumkhrah, Shillong
- *Quest Holidays* (Specialize in Domestic & International Tour Packages), Laitumkhrah, Shillong
- *New Horizon Travel & Tours*, Police Bazar, Shillong
- *Pioneer Adventure Tours*, Lower Lachauchiere, Hopkinson Road, Shillong.
- *Campfireshillong*, G. S. Road, Shillong

(ii) *Travel Agency*

- *Van Rap Tours & Travels*, Police Bazar, Shillong.
- *Sheba Travels*, Police Bazar, Shillong
- *Jais Travels*, Rap's Mansion, Shillong
- *Global Tours & Travels*, Laitumkhrah, Shillong
- *Indrani Tours & Travels*, MUDA Complex, Shillong
- *Just Trippin'*, Thana Road, Shillong
- *Nongbri Travels*, G. S. Road, Shillong
- *Sophia Tours & Travels*, Hotel Assembly, Shillong
- *Travel City*, Quinton Road, Shillong
- *Natasha Travels*, Police Bazar, Shillong
- *Towers Tours & Travels*, TSS Road, Shillong
- *Nakliar Tours*, G. S. Road, Police Bazar, Shillong
- *Golden Arrow*, Police Bazar, Shillong
- *Tour 'N' Style Pvt. Ltd.*, Wahthapbru, Motphran, Shillong
- *Aripile Travels*, Howell Road, Laban, Shillong

3.4.3.2 Tour operators/ travel agencies in Mizoram

The tour operators and travel agents in Mizoram have been identified under two categories, viz. government and private/others. Some of the important ones are:

(i) *Government*

- *Ever Green Tours & Travels, Khatla, Aizawl*
- *Omega Travels, Temple Square, Tuikual South, Aizawl*
- *Zoram Tours, Mission Veng, Sikulpuikawn, Aizawl*
- *CMS Holidays, Sikulpuikawn, Republic Road, Aizawl*

(ii) *Others*

- *City Car Bazar & Rentals, Upper Republic, Aizawl*
- *Quality Tour & Travels, Treasury Square, Aizawl*
- *Skyline, Opposite Circuit House, Khatla, Aizawl*
- *Aizawl City Bus Owner Association (ACBOA), Ngaizel, Aizawl*
- *Vandygo, Near Lianchhungi Book Store, Dawrpui, Aizawl*
- *Blue Bell Tour and Travels, Zarkawt, Aizawl*
- *Paradise Tours and Travels, Tuikual, Aizawl*
- *Alpha Travels, Bara Bazar, Aizawl*
- *TBC Car Rental, Chanmari-Ramhlun Road, Aizawl*

3.4.4 Accommodation/ hotels

Accommodation or lodging is, by a long way, the largest and most ubiquitous sub-sector within the tourism economy (Cooper et al., 2008). In other words, accommodation is a matrix of tourism, and therefore, appropriate choice of accommodation is required in order to expand and develop the tourism industry (Saxena, 2008.) Therefore, it is logical that development of accommodation should be a fundamental element of the overall planning process of a tourism destination.

3.4.4.1 Accommodation/hotels in Meghalaya

The important and popular accommodation facilities recognized by the Tourism Department, Meghalaya is presented in Table 3.1:

Table 3.1
List of hotels and guest houses (govt. and private) recognized by DoT, Meghalaya

| Sl. No. | Hotels | Sl. No. | Guest Houses |
|---------|--------------------------------------|----------------|--|
| | Location: <i>Shillong</i> | | Location: <i>Shillong</i> |
| 1 | Hotel Pinewood | 1 | Summit Guest House |
| 2 | Hotel Orchid | 2 | Bonnie Guest House |
| 3 | Royal Heritage-Tripura Castle | 3 | Hilltop Chateau |
| 4 | Hotel Centre Point | 4 | Highwinds |
| 5 | Hotel Polo Towers | 5 | Pine Brook Guest House |
| 6 | Shillong Club | 6 | Apsara Guest House |
| 7 | Hotel Poinisuk | 7 | Best Holiday Inn |
| 8 | M crown Hotel | 8 | Aesthetics Guest House |
| 9 | Blueberry Inn | 9 | White Orchid – The Guesthouse |
| 10 | Hotel Heiga | 10 | Aerodene Cottage |
| 11 | Hotel Gateway | 11 | Na-I-Mei Guest House |
| 12 | Hotel Orchid Annex | 12 | Rosaville Guest House |
| 13 | Hotel Alpine Continental | 13 | Dew Drop In |
| 14 | Hotel Pegasus Crown | 14 | Eldorado Guest House |
| 15 | The Majestic Hotel | 15 | Tranquil Inn |
| 16 | The Eee Cee Hotel | 16 | Sunrise Guest House |
| 17 | Ashutosh Inn | 17 | Meghalaya Housing Co-operative Guest House |
| 18 | Hotel Yalana | 18 | Aibans Guest House |
| 19 | Hotel J. K. International | 19 | Lachumiere House |
| 20 | Hotel Boulevard | 20 | Stay-Inn Guest House |
| 21 | Hotel Micasa | 21 | Nalgre Guest House |
| 22 | Hotel Broadway | 22 | Woodland Hill Stay |
| 23 | Eden Residency | 23 | Winnie’s Lodge |
| 24 | Hotel Rainbow | 24 | Shillong Hills Guest House |
| 25 | Hotel Lake View Inn | 25 | Ha Sharing Guest House |
| 26 | Hotel Knight Inn | | Location: <i>Sohra</i> |
| 27 | Ladybird Hotel | 26 | Sa-I-Mika |
| 28 | The Habitat Shillong | 27 | Eco – Park Guest House |
| 29 | Hotel Embassy | 28 | Nalgre Restaurant & Guest House |
| 30 | Hotel Pine Borough | | Location: <i>Mawphlang</i> |
| 31 | Hotel Blue Mount NX-1 | 29 | Keanean Guest House |
| | Location: <i>Sohra</i> | | Location: <i>Ri Bhoi</i> |
| 32 | Cherrapunjee Holiday Resort | 30 | RI Kanaan Guest House |
| 33 | Coniferous Resort | 31 | Da-Wan-Ki Farm Homestay |
| 34 | Sohra Plaza | 32 | Erbatemon Homestay |
| | Location: <i>Ri Bhoi</i> | | State Government Guest Houses |
| 35 | Orchid Lake Resort | | <i>Shillong</i> |
| 36 | Ri Kynjai Resort | (i) | Meghalaya Government Circuit House |
| 37 | Breeze-Dale Tourist Resort | (ii) | Meghalaya Housing Co-operative Guest House |
| 38 | Star Valley Tourist Resort | (iii) | Assam House |
| 39 | Sanctuary Song Resort | (iv) | Nagaland House |
| 40 | Sunshine Farms and Resort | (v) | Arunachal Pradesh Bhavan |
| | Location: <i>Jowai</i> | (vi) | Mizoram House |
| 41 | Orchid Inn | Sl. No. | Bed & Breakfast (<i>Shillong</i>) |
| | Location: <i>Tura</i> | 1 | Café Shillong Bed & Breakfast |
| 42 | Orchid Lodge | 2 | Travellers Bed & Breakfast |
| 43 | Hotel Rikman Continental | 3 | Pine Hill Homestay |
| 44 | Hotel Sundare | 4 | Traveler’s Nest |
| | Location: <i>Williamnagar</i> | 5 | Sanctum B & B |
| 45 | Williamnagar Tourist Lodge | 6 | Kaizun (Bed & Breakfast) |
| | Location: <i>Baghmara</i> | 7 | Golf View Bed & Breakfast |
| 46 | Baghmara Tourist Lodge | 8 | Pine Air Bed & Breakfast |
| 47 | Siju Tourist Lodge | 9 | The Pear Tree Bed & Breakfast |

Source: Department of Tourism, Meghalaya

Meghalaya has many great budget hotels and ‘*Bed and Breakfast*’ places that offer good service and amenities to the prospective tourists. Widely known as the rock capital of India, Shillong is a bustling city with a wide range of accommodation options. One can opt for accommodation ranging from economy to deluxe status.

3.4.4.2 Accommodation/hotels in Mizoram

The tourism department of Mizoram has been running various accommodation facilities like tourist lodges and highway restaurants in the state, meeting the demands of the government as well as the general public and the tourists visiting the state. Although the status of most of the facilities is satisfactory but they definitely need upgradation and enhancement on regular basis. Table 3.2 presents some accommodation facilities provided and managed by the Department of Tourism, Mizoram.

Table 3.2
Number of tourist facilities (hotels, lodges, resorts, restaurants, etc.) managed by DoT, Mizoram

| Sl. No. | Tourist Facility | Sl. No. | Tourist Facility |
|----------------|--------------------------------|----------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 | Berawtlang Tourist Complex | 26 | New Laly Tourist Lodge |
| 2 | Bualpui NG Tourist Lodge | 27 | Ngopa Tourist Lodge |
| 3 | Chakheitla Tourist Lodge | 28 | Niawhtlang Tourist Lodge |
| 4 | Chaltlang Tourist Lodge | 29 | Pangzawl Tourist Lodge |
| 5 | Champhai Tourist Lodge | 30 | Phura Tourist Lodge |
| 6 | Changsil Tourist Lodge | 31 | Reiek Tourist Resort |
| 7 | Chawngte Tourist Lodge | 32 | S. Vanlaiphai Tourist Lodge |
| 8 | Chhiahtlang Highway Restaurant | 33 | Saichho Tourist Lodge |
| 9 | Darlawn Tourist Lodge | 34 | Siaha Tourist Lodge |
| 10 | Darzo Tourist Lodge | 35 | Saipum Tourist Lodge |
| 11 | E. Lungdar Tourist Lodge | 36 | Saitual Tourist Lodge |
| 12 | Farkawn Tourist Lodge | 37 | Sangau Tourist Lodge |
| 13 | Hmuifang Tourist Lodge | 38 | Serchhip Tourist Lodge |
| 14 | Hnahlan Tourist Lodge | 39 | Serkawr Tourist Lodge |
| 15 | Hnahthial Highway Restaurant | 40 | Serlui Tourist Lodge |
| 16 | Hrangchalkawn Tourist Lodge | 41 | Tamdil Picnic Spot |
| 17 | Kanhmun Tourist Lodge | 42 | Tawipui 'S' Highway Restaurant |
| 18 | Kawlkulh Tourist Lodge | 43 | Thenzawl Tourist Lodge |
| 19 | Kolasib Tourist Lodge | 44 | Tlabung Tourist Lodge |
| 20 | Lawngtlai Tourist Lodge | 45 | Tlangnuam Viewing Gallery |
| 21 | Lengpui Tourist Resort | 46 | Vawmbuk Tourist Lodge |
| 22 | Lunglei Tourist Lodge | 47 | W. Phaileng Tourist Lodge |
| 23 | Mamit Tourist Lodge | 48 | Zawngling Tourist Lodge |
| 24 | N. Maubawk Tourist Lodge | 49 | Zokhawthar Tourist Lodge |
| 25 | N. Vanlaiphai Tourist Lodge | | |

Source: Department of Tourism, Mizoram

Beside these government-run accommodations, a number of private hotels/ accommodation facilities have been mushrooming in Aizawl, the capital city. Among them, important ones are Hotel Regency, Hotel Floria, Hotel Arini, David's Clover Hotel and many others.

3.5 Tourism resources analysis

Both Meghalaya and Mizoram have tremendous and unique tourism potential. The natural richness of the select states is almost identical to each other except in few segments. The climate of both states varies with the altitudes. The weathers are uniquely pleasant and caressing in the places of higher altitudes. It is neither too warm in summer nor too cold in winter.. Both the select states are treasure troves of nature, with their rich variation of dense endemic natural flora and fauna. The geographical location and the rugged topography have blessed both states with unique natural environment.

The two select states are situated in the transitional region of tropical and temperate environment, bestowed with hills having steep slopes, deep valleys, rivers, natural lakes, and plains etc., thus creating varied ecosystems in a relatively small region. This advantageous natural richness could be exploited through the concept of eco-tourism, nature and wildlife tourism, adventure tourism and leisure tourism, cultural and heritage tourism and the strategic locations of these two states can boost international border tourism too. The numerous tourism resources of the select states are categorically analyzed state-wise in the subsequent paragraphs.

3.5.1 Tourism resources in Meghalaya

Meghalaya, the abode of clouds is an embodiment of eternal bliss and tranquility wrapped in utter climatic and natural beauty. The state acquires its charm from the picturesque locales, bountiful nature, fresh and sedating surroundings. The exposition of exuberant emerald hills and glens often bathing in frequent drizzles resuscitates the spirits of the tourists. It is an ideal place for adventure, sightseeing, resurrection or simply to relax and enjoy a pleasant holidaying. A holiday trip to Meghalaya promises a rendezvous with the exclusive flora and fauna, the amicable tribal folks and their cultural heritage.

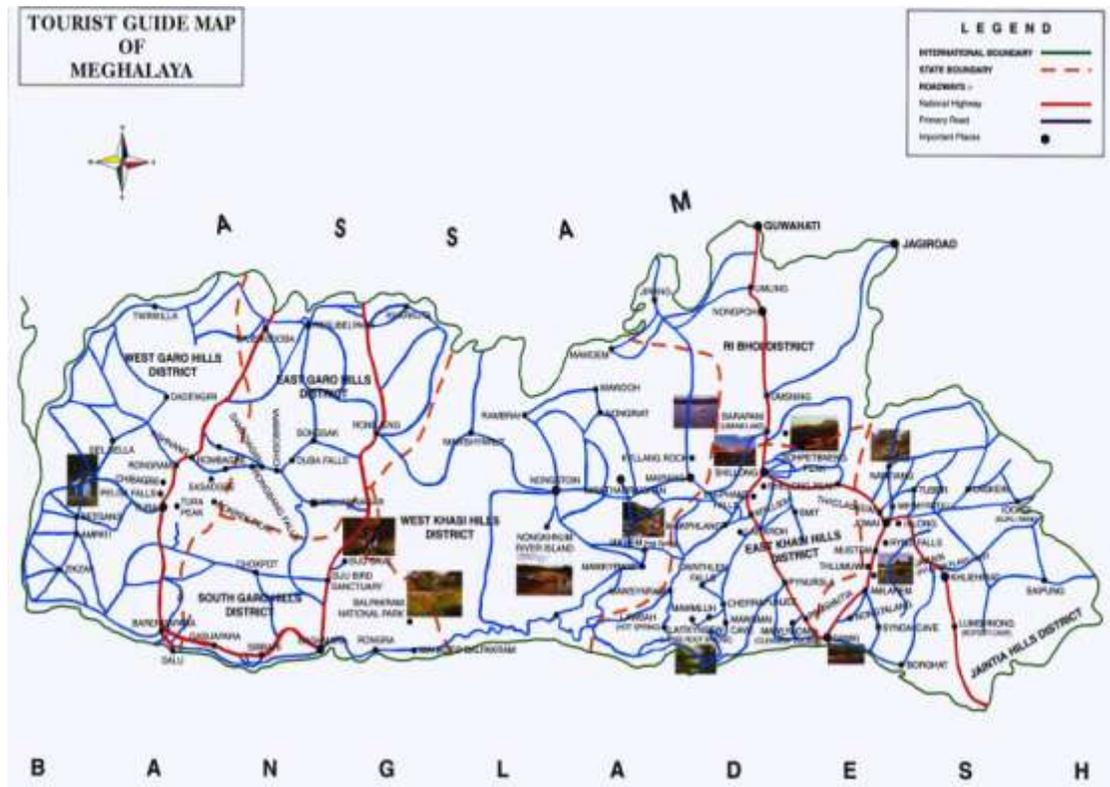


Fig: 3.1 Tourism Map of Meghalaya
 Source: Official website of Meghalaya Tourism

3.5.1.1 Cultural Tourism

Meghalaya constitutes mainly of the tribal population who are said to have inhabited the region from time immemorial. So, this place is replete with numerous ceremonies and traditional fiestas. These festivals provide a glimpse of Meghalaya’s lively collection of woven, decorative, dyed and colourful silk and cotton, their elaborate jewellery etc. No celebration in Meghalaya is complete without the involvement of dance and music. The dance forms in the state are dedicated to various events such as social, religious, agricultural, funeral and recreational. The land comes alive with wonderful dance performances and great songs accompanied by the sound of traditional instruments.

Some of the important festivals and dance forms of Meghalaya are:

Festivals and dances in Khasi Hills

- (i) *Nongkrem Dance Festival*: Nongkrem is a religious festival in thanksgiving to God Almighty for good harvest, peace and prosperity of the community. It is held annually during October-November, at Smit, the capital of the Khryrim Syiemship near Shillong.
- (ii) *Shad Suk Mynsiem*: This is a colourful thanksgiving festival celebrated during the spring season all over Khasi Hills. Virgins and men folk dressed in traditional and colourful costumes participate in the dance, which is accompanied by drums and pipes called *tangmuri*, the queen of musical instruments.

Festivals and dances in Jaintia Hills

- (i) *Behdienkhlam*: Behdienkhlam dance festival is celebrated annually in the monsoon season in the month of July after the sowing period. It is the most important dance festival of the Jaintias. The festival is primarily to invoke the blessings of the Creator for a good harvest and to drive away disease and plague.
- (ii) *Lahoo Dance*: The Lahoo dance is performed by both male and female for entertainment. Attired in their best costumes usually two young men on either side of a woman, holding arms together dance in step.

Festivals and dances in Garo Hills

- (i) *Wangala*: Wangala is the major festival of the Garos, celebrated during autumn, after the harvesting season. The festival includes propitiation ceremonies to the deity *Patigipa Rarongipa*, held in every village. It is followed by other rituals for four days and nights, accompanied by dancing and merriment.
- (ii) *Doregata Dance*: Doregata dance festival is a kind of dance in which, while dancing the women try to knock off the turbans of their male partners. If the women succeed; it is followed by peals of laughter.

Other festivals

- (i) *Autumn Festival*: This festival is generally organized by the Meghalaya Tourism and other organisations in the month of October-November to thrill and entertain both tourists and locals. Interspersed with fashion shows where local designers

showcase their products using indigenous fabrics woven in the state and beauty pageants, are food and wine festivals, flower shows, kite flying competitions, music and rock festivals, golf tournaments, fishing competitions and a host of other activities.

(ii) *Strawberry Festival*: Meghalaya's Strawberry Fest is emerging as a big tourist attraction and a business promotion event for growers and investors from across the country. Meghalaya hosted the country's first Strawberry Festival on Valentine's Day. People of all ages throng the place to try out fresh and juicy strawberries, as well as buy packets of the fruit, and other strawberry-based products as gifts. The event has grown bigger with each passing year with more growers opting for strawberry cultivation and diversification of its products such as strawberry wine, ice cream, cakes and jam, besides the fruit.

3.5.1.2 Water Tourism

Meghalaya is one of the greenest and natural places and also one of the few states of India which are largely under forest cover. So, when there is an abundance of rich and dense forests, it is natural for water-bodies to be present in the vicinity. Thus, Meghalaya is home to several stunning and spectacular water-bodies, in the forms of lakes and rivers. Tourists and local residents enjoy boating and rafting in these waters. The tourists can refresh their minds by engaging in water skiing and kayaking.

Lakes

Some of the prominent lakes of Meghalaya which are popular destinations for water-sports lovers and picnic goers are:

(i) *Umiam Lake*: Umiam Lake or Barapani is located about 15 km north of Shillong. Characteristically, it is a man made or artificial lake and a reservoir created by damming the River Umiam. This lake is also recognized as the first hydel power project in Northeast India. This majestic man-made lake with its surrounding sylvan hills clothed in the beauty of the myriad emerald green Khasi-pines and the azure blue skies reflected on its clear water, have a hypnotizing effect not only on

casual visitors but upon all who find them in its idyllic setting. This lake allows kayaking, water cycling, scooting and boating.

(ii) *Ward's Lake*: Ward's Lake is one of the most popular attractions of Shillong. The lake is also known as Pollock's Lake, is encircled by an extensive lush garden and lies in the middle of the city. Beautiful botanical gardens surround the lake and all around one will be able to view a wide spectrum of orchids in full bloom. It is equally popular amidst locals, family vacationers and honeymooning couples, as a picnic spot.

(iii) *Thadlaskein Lake*: The historical Thadlaskein Lake is located 56 km from Shillong and 8 km from Jowai off NH-44. Legend has it that the lake was dug with the bow tips of the followers of Sajar Nangli, one of Jaintia's foremost war leaders. This captivatingly placid lake is a beautiful spot for outing, boating and picnics.

(iv) *Umhang Lake*: Situated in the village of Batow in the Hills of Jaintia district of Meghalaya, the yellow plains of Bangladesh which give a golden appearance is overlooked due to this stunning lake. The Umhang Lake has its resemblance like a gem in a perfect setting of a sylvan. The banks are surrounded by a green dense forest which adds to the beauty of Umhang Lake.

Rivers

Meghalaya has many rivers, making them an intrinsic component of the state. The majority of these rivers are rain fed, thus making them seasonal. These rivers create deep canyons and numerous glistening waterfalls in the state.

The important rivers of Meghalaya that shape the northern region and course from west to east are the Ajagar, Chagua, Kalu, Didram, Dudnai, Krishnai and Ringgi and the important rivers that shape the southern region are Daring, Bhogai, Sanda, Dareng, Simsang, Bandra, Nitai and Bhupai. Similarly, the important rivers of the central and eastern regions of Meghalaya that course towards the north are Umkhri, Umiam and Digaru and some main rivers of the eastern regions that course towards

south are Barapani, Kynchiang, Mawpa, Myngot and Myntdu. Some other important rivers of Meghalaya are:

- (i) *Someswari*: It is the biggest and second largest river in Meghalaya. Known by its local name 'Simsang', it originates from the hills of Nokrek and progresses east towards through the towns of Williamnagar, Baghmara and Rewak.
- (ii) *Jinjiram*: The river originates from Urapad Beel Lake and streams towards the east through the Goalpara district in Assam. It is the largest river from the two Garo Hills districts.
- (iii) *Kalu*: Known by its local name 'Ganol', the river originates from Tura peak in Meghalaya and flows west towards Goalpara district in the state of Assam.
- (iv) *Myntdu*: The river originates at Mihmyntdu, near Jowai. The River streams across Jowai to Leshka to Borghat village and finally enters into Bangladesh.

3.5.1.3 Adventure Tourism

Meghalaya has immense potential for adventure related activities including adventure sports like rock climbing, paragliding, zip lining, mountain cycling, canoeing, water skiing, etc. Some of the popular adventure activities being promoted in the state are hard and soft treks, rock climbing, boat race and indigenous sports of the Khasis, Jaintias and Garos. Caving at present is the most vibrant and visible tourism activity in the state, followed by nature walks and treks on the numerous living root bridges (*Meghalaya Tourism Policy, 2011*). Meghalaya, in its turn, has been successful in attracting cavers all over the world. There are around one thousand caves in the whole of Meghalaya.

Caves

As of March 2015, 1,580 caves and cave locations have been identified in Meghalaya, of which 980 caves have been fully or partially explored, for a total length of 427 kilometres caves explored (Daly, 2015). Of the ten longest and deepest caves in India, the first nine are in Meghalaya, while the tenth is in Mizoram (Wikipedia). Some of the prominent caves of Meghalaya are:

- (i) *Krem Liat Prah*: It is the longest natural cave in India. Liat Prah is one of approximately 150 known caves in the Shnongrim Ridge of the Jaintia Hills district in the state of Meghalaya, northeast India. Explored and surveyed as part of the ongoing *Abode of the Clouds Expedition* project, its current length of about 25 kilometers will likely be increased as nearby caves continue to be connected. Liat Prah's dominant feature is its enormous trunk passage, the Aircraft Hangar.
- (ii) *Siju Cave*: Located at 132 kms from Tura, Siju is famous for *Dobakkol* or the bat cave with impressive stalagmites and stalactites. It is one of the longest caves in the Indian sub-continent and contains some of the finest river passages to be found anywhere in the world. There are magnificent limestone rock formations inside, especially named princes; Di's chamber by the excavators will fill any visitor with awe.
- (iii) *Mawsmi Cave*: Mawsmi Cave is the most popular cave in Khasi hills. Narrow vertical opening of the cave makes the start more adventurous. The very first thing that tourists notice while exploring this cave is myriads of stalagmites and stalactites. Endless galleys that connect halls of different size and shape are not less than any treasure hunt.
- (iv) *Krem Dam*: The impressive entrance of Krem Dam, measuring some 30 m across, lies at the foot of a large blind valley approximately 1 km to the east of Mawsynram village. A sizeable stream running down the valley enters the cave. The cave is formed in a coarse grained faces of limestone which almost looks like sandstone. The cave consists mainly of one very large river passage ending in a roof collapse where daylight can be seen.

The list of top ten longest caves in Meghalaya is presented in Table 3.3:

Table 3.3
Top 10 longest caves in Meghalaya

| System | Length | Location | Remarks |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|---|
| Krem Liat Prah | 30,957 m (101,600 ft) | Jaintia Hills | In the Shnongrim Ridge. Huge trunk passage called the Aircraft Hangar. Longest cave in the Indian Subcontinent. |
| Krem Kotsati Kotsati | 21,530 m (70,640 ft) | Lumshnong village, Jaintia | 24 entrances, both horizontal and vertical. Needs to swim to enter the caves. |

| | | | |
|---|----------------------|--|---|
| Umlawan Cave System | | Hills | |
| Krem Tyngheng Diengjem | 21,250 m (69,720 ft) | Jaintia Hills | Near Sammasi village. Many side passages and very impressive. |
| Krem Umthloo-Synrang Labbit Synrang-Pamiang | 18,181 m (59,650 ft) | Chiehruphi village, on NH 44, Jaintia Hills | Dendritic pattern of stream cave passage. Many entrances. "Titanic Hall" chamber with coloured formations in orange, red, black, grey, blue, green and white. |
| Krem Chympe Piel Khlieng Pouk | 12,434 m (40,790 ft) | From village Khaddum to Sielkan, Jaintia Hills | A river cave. 50 natural dams, 6-8 metres (20-26 ft) high. Large colony of bats. |
| Krem Shrieh Tangnub | 8,862 m (29,070 ft) | Tangnub village, Jaintia Hills | Also known as Very large vertical entrance shaft of 97 metres (318 ft) depth leads to fine stream passage and plethora of high fossil passages. |
| Krem Tyngheng | 8,671 m (28,450 ft) | Jaintia Hills | |
| Krem Mawkhyrdop Krem Mawmluh | 7,194 m (23,600 ft) | Khasi Hills | Filled with water needs wading, ceiling is 2.5 feet (0.76 m), formations of stalactite, stalagmite, and rock fossils. Large no. of bats. |
| Krem Lymput Nongjri | 6,641 m (21,790 ft) | Nongjri village, Khasi Hills | Attraction is from a small entrance leads to 1 km (0.62 mi) passage called "Way to Heaven," and further to a Mughal Room (more than 25 metres (82 ft) wide, 25 metres (82 ft) high, and 75 metres (246 ft) long). |
| Krem Rongdangngai Mondil Kol | 5,831 m (19,130 ft) | Jaintia Hills | |

Sources: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caves_of_Meghalaya

Waterfalls

The state of Meghalaya possesses a number of waterfalls with mesmerizing surroundings. It exhibits falls, which are worth visiting and are the ideal places to make the holidays most satisfying. Some of the amazing waterfalls of Meghalaya are:

- (i) *Nohkalikai Falls*: Located at a distance of 7 kms from Cherrapunjee, Nohkalikai Falls, the tallest plunge waterfall of India cascades down from a lofty height and falls forcefully, forming a deep plunge pool, where the water remains green in summer months and turns blue in winter. The cascading waterfall has been compared favourably with the well-known Jog Falls in South India

- (ii) *Langshiang Falls*: Located near the village of Sangriang, the Langshiang Falls with a height of 1106 feet is considered to be the third highest waterfalls in India. This falls is created by the river Kynshi and it offers a scenic view of the green hills surrounding the area and also the nearby village of Mawpon.
- (iii) *Seven Sisters Falls*: The Seven Sisters Falls is popularly known as Nohngithiang Falls or Mawsmmai Falls located near the Mawsmmai village in East Khasi Hills. The seven-segmented waterfall has height of 1033 feet that makes it one of the tallest waterfalls in India. The falls are situated in a south westerly position and the waters get illuminated by the sunlight falling on it, undoubtedly, one of the most beautiful sights our eyes could see.
- (iv) *Sweet Falls*: Situated at a distance of 8 kms from Shillong, this waterfall resembles a straight pencil of water emerging from a large size water pipe, as it drops vertically over a distance exceeding two hundred feet. As the area is surrounded by beautiful pine trees and rich vegetation, the place has become a weekend destination for offbeat travellers. Contrary to its name, Sweet falls is also considered as the haunted fall. Several incidents of death occurring in and around the region have also been noted. As per legend, it is believed that people going in odd numbers to Sweet Falls always return in even numbers.
- (v) *Mawphlang Falls*: Mawphlang Falls is one of the most spectacular waterfalls in Meghalaya. It rolls down through multiple tiers from a great height; it is calm and serene fall, located inside Mawphlang Sacred Forests. The water falls into a small plunge pool which is the perfect place to relax, rejuvenate and spend some time amidst the tranquil nature.
- (vi) *Elephant Falls*: The Elephant Falls is certainly one of the most visited waterfalls of Meghalaya which is located just 12 kms on the outskirts of Shillong/ it is a three-step waterfall - which is divided into three sections with each part equally popular, attractive and beautiful. The elephant Falls have been named so because it had a stone whose face resembled that of an elephant's. The surroundings are covered with vegetation which adds to the beauty of the place.

Trekking, Hiking and Climbing

Meghalaya offers many adventure tourism opportunities in the form of mountaineering, rock climbing, trekking, hiking etc. The state provides the best nature trek through rain forests to the river front at the bottom of the valley, to living root bridges which are exclusive to Meghalaya in the entire world. The dry months from November to February throw open abundant trekking, camping and caving opportunities for the adventurous. The trekking opportunity in Meghalaya is outstanding for the fact that, the terrain is very challenging.

Some of the best Trekking Routes of Meghalaya are David Scott's Trail, Living Root Bridges, Kyllang Rock and Sohpet-bneng. Among the trekking trails of Meghalaya the most popular one is David Scott's Trail. This trail is traditionally used by people to travel from Mawphlang to present day Bangladesh. This entire picturesque route extends to a five days trek or can be divided into shorter treks, the most common being from Mawphlang to Lad Mawphlang, a one day trek (16 km). This four hour walk takes you past clear streams, by waterfalls over rushing rivers, through meadows, jungles, and valleys and also through a Khasi village on a hilltop.

Another interesting trek is from Cherrapunjee to Pynursula or Krang to Pynursula. This trek is hard as one has to walk deep into the valleys before climbing up to Pynursula. There are many living-root bridges on this trek and the experience of life in the deep valleys, with no access to modern amenities is unforgettable.

Another popular destination for trekking and rock climbing is the Kyllang rock at Mairang. It is a massive dome shape of single rock of granite, rising to an elevation of about 5400 ft above sea level measuring 1,000 fts across in diameter. According to geologists, this rock is about several million years old and believed that the rock possesses a sort of magnetic field, so no one will fall from the slope. The rock features dense forests in the northern side which is thickly populated with age-old red Rhododendron trees and oaks along with white Rhododendron trees, which are not found elsewhere.

The Jaintia Hills are another well known trekking trail of the state. It offers a trek from Nartiang (Summer Capital of the erstwhile Jaintia Kings), to the plains of Bangladesh. This is a historical trek relating to the history of the Jaintia Kingdom.

Trekking from Tura to the Nokrek peak is an arduous task but worth the effort if one has the stamina. This trek involves crossing through some virgin tropical forests and wading through mountain streams. While trekking in Garo Hills there is always a likelihood of seeing or hearing wild elephants. Another attractive spots in Garo hills is Siju. Making a base here one can trek towards the Balpakram National Park, which offers a wide variety of treks particularly ideal for wildlife treks. A trek through this tropical forest is an unforgettable experience encountering abundance of rich flora and fauna.

Canyoning

River canyoning in Meghalaya is an adventure activity which is more demanding than treks. It involves following the river course. The state has different sections of river canyoning of varied challenge levels. One needs to be physically fit to clamber up huge rocks, hop from boulder to boulder, jump across rapids, swim and scramble down steep slopes. There are swim free stretches also. Ideal time for river canyoning in Meghalaya is from November to February.

Biking and Camping

The treks of Meghalaya are perfect for biking and camping expeditions. The adventurers enjoy riding through the roads in the hills and spending a night out in the camp. Vast stretches of valleys and plateaus infused with the scenic beauty of lush forests, time-honoured caves and splendid waterfalls give a fascination experience for the campers in Meghalaya. Overnight camping at Dawki Shnongpdeng River is an amazing and adventurous experience. Besides, enjoying the lush green forests of Mawphlang is a mesmerizing one. One can visit traditional Khasi villages, interact with the locals and try unique ethnic dishes. Biking and camping in Meghalaya can uncover some of the most fascinating treks and trails in the entire region of Northeast India.

3.5.1.4 Ecotourism and Wildlife

Meghalaya is considered as the wettest region in the world and so is very rich in exotic flora and fauna. The forests of the state are a refuge of varieties of birds, mammals, reptiles and insects. The state is also known for her sacred groves. These have been preserved and protected by the communities for religious and cultural beliefs since the ancient days. The prospect of ecotourism in Meghalaya is enormous due to its richness in natural parks and sanctuaries which are exclusive to the region. The ecotourism resources of the state have been categorized into parks and sanctuaries and other ecotourism destinations as discussed hereunder.

Parks and Sanctuaries

The deep forests, sprawling water bodies, cascading rivers in the hills, the lofty mountain ranges with interplay of lush green valley form an ideal habitat for flora and fauna. Of the 17,000 species of orchids in the world, about 1250 exist in India of which nearly 300 are found in Meghalaya (Nayak and Mishra, 2013). With a large area of 8,514 km² of the total land area of Meghalaya being under the cover of forests, the state has diverse wildlife. Some of the protected areas of the state government are:

- (i) *Nokrek National Park*: The first Biosphere Reserve in Northeast India, Nokrek National Park and Biosphere Reserve is home to different species of wild animals including elephants and hoolock gibbons, rare varieties of birds and pheasants, beside rare orchids. The national park is located at 45 kms from Tura and houses the highest peak in Garo Hills. The park is also home to a very rare species of citrus-indica endemic to this place which the locals call *memang narang* ('orange of the spirits'). Nokrek is also believed to be the home of Mande Burung (jungle man or ape man) and reported cases of sightings abound in and around the villages of Nokrek.
- (ii) *Selbagre Hoolock Gibbon Reserve*: This small area protected by the community is home to the hoolock gibbons, the only ape species found in India. The sacred grove in the reserve is the pride of the village and the community. The Garos never

kill or hunt the hoolock gibbon as it is a traditional belief among them that if a hoolock gibbon is killed, a famine or a curse would befall the entire village.

- (iii) *Balpakram National Park*: It is a national wild life park, about 167 kms from Tura. It is home to one of the rarest animals in the world - the Lesser Panda or the Red Panda as it is commonly known. Balpakram (a place of perpetual winds) covering an area of about 220 sq km with a variety of wildlife including tigers, elephants, bison, black bear, leopards, sambar deer, situated near Baghmara in south Garo Hills district of Meghalaya. The western part of the park adjoins with Siju bird sanctuary along the banks of Simsang River.
- (iv) *Baghmara Reserve Forest*: At a distance of about 4 kilometers from the main town of Baghmara, this thick forest is inhabited by langurs, birds of different species, elephants, etc. Many tourists have reported sighting herds of elephants as they travel from Baghmara to Balpakram National Park via Baghmara Reserve Forest.
- (v) *Siju Bird Sanctuary*: Close by on the other side of Simsang River is the Siju bird sanctuary, a home for many rare and protected birds and other wildlife. The Siberian ducks also migrated here during the winter months. The lesser or Grey Hornbill is also seen around Siju. One interesting and rare bird is the Peacock Pheasant seen in Siju. During winters, some migrating birds have been visiting this place. The area is a heaven for ornithologists.
- (vi) *Nongkhyllem Wildlife Sanctuary*: The Nongkhyllem Sanctuary near Nongpoh is also a good place for bird watching. The best time for bird watching is March/April during the nesting season.

Ecotourism Destinations

Meghalaya has some of the thickest surviving forests in the country and therefore constitutes one of the most important ecotourism circuits in the country today. Some of the important ecotourism destinations are:

- (i) *Mawphlang Sacred Forest*: Mawphlang sacred forest is one of the most remarkable features of the Khasi Hills. Also known as Law Lyngdoh in local language, it is preserved by the natives since ancient times as a part of their

religious beliefs, in which forests are considered as a sacred entity. This forest has a rich flora that consists of several plants, trees and rare flower species, including orchids. Verdant grasslands are present around this guarded woodland, forming a striking contrast with the vegetation. These sacred groves also have luxuriant foliage of ferns, pipers and aroids. Over the centuries, the forest ground has got a thick cover of humus that supports growth of unique plant life.

(ii) *Nongkhnum Island*: Nongkhnum Island is the biggest river island in Meghalaya and the second biggest river island in Asia, after Majuli Island in Assam. The island is located around 15 km from Nongstoin, the headquarters of the West Khasi Hills. The Island is formed by the bifurcation of Kynshi River into the Phanliang River and the Namliang River. The area surrounded by these two rivers forms the Nongkhnum Island. The island is spread over 20-25 sq km with trees and patches of grassland all around. Within the Island, there are big trees and areas of grassland and natural playground suitable for playing football and golf and even for landing a helicopter. There are plenty of fishing pools, especially near the sandy shore, called Wei-Phanliang. Angling is the only way to enjoy as well as protect the fishes.

(iii) *Jakrem Hot Spring*: Jakrem located about 64 km from Shillong on the Shillong-Mawkyrwat road, is famous for its hot water springs of sulphur water which is believed to have curative medicinal properties. Jakrem has now developed as a potential health resort. People from all parts of the region come here to take a dip in this hot spring. Bathing compartments are available around the spring for the use of the public. It is also a favourite picnic spot during winter.

3.5.1.5 Heritage and Pilgrimage Tourism

People visit places to see and experience the old-aged histories related to famous personalities, monuments and places. In Meghalaya, particularly Shillong there are a number of important buildings, monuments and religious places associated with well known personalities and events from the past. The tourism department has been taking

steps to promote these places and monuments to promote Meghalaya as a destination for heritage and pilgrimage tourism.

Heritage

- (i) *Meghalaya State Museum:* The Meghalaya State Museum, also known as Capt. Williamson Sangma Museum was established in 1975. The Museum is divided into two galleries which are a tribute to the indigenous Meghalaya tribes. The first gallery focuses on the Khasi and Jaintia tribes and there are wooden toys, crafts, beaded and feathered tribal dresses, traditional weapons, ornaments, and pottery and musical instruments on display. The second gallery focuses on the Garo tribes and has components of the lives of the mountain tribes like their hunting and fishing equipment, transport systems, agricultural tools, utensils, tobacco boxes and baskets are displayed. The museum is considered as one of the centers for studies into the history and culture of the three dominant tribes of the state. The main activities of the State Museum are in the field of acquisition, exhibition, conservation, publication and education.
- (ii) *Nartiang Monoliths:* Monoliths exist throughout the length and breadth of the Khasi and Jaintia Hills. However, the biggest collection of monoliths or Megalithic stones in one single area is to be found north of the Nartiang market, Jaintia Hills. The cluster of monoliths has been erected to mark the reigns of the erstwhile Jaintia Kings, holding a significant event in the history of Meghalaya. There are many folktales justifying the presence of monoliths and each of these is amusing. These monoliths cover a wide complex of about 100 metres in diameter. The monoliths consist of menhirs (upright stones) or 'Ki Moo Shynrang,' represents male and the flat table stone represents female and is known as 'Ki Moo Kynthai'. The tallest and biggest monolith is about eight meters in height, two meters in breadth and half a meter in thickness and is believed that the tallest Menhir erected by U Mar Phalyngki a trusted lieutenant of the Jaintia King to commemorate his victory in a battle.
- (iii) *Smit (Cultural Village):* Smit is an old rustic town and the cultural centre of the East Khasi hills. It is the traditional seat of Khasi culture. The head of the clan or

'Siam' lives in the same premises. Smit is very popular for the Nongkrem festival which is held in November each year. This festival is highlighted by performance of rich traditional dance and songs directed towards goddess Ka Blei Synshar as a prayer for rich harvest. Though Meghalaya is a Christian state many people still practice their traditional religion and this festival is one important way of preserving their old traditions and beliefs. The Nongkrem dance is performed in front of the traditional wooden house built without any metal nails. The house is visited throughout the year and it exemplifies the traditional Khasi architecture.

- (iv) *Kiang Nongbah Monument*: Kiang Nongbah Monument was built in the honour of a Jaintia patriot by the name of U Kiang Nongbah who died as a martyr in the struggle to free the Jaintia land from the British rulers. This historical monument was built in the centre of a vast field known as Madiah Kmai Blai, which is on the banks of Syntu Ksiar, alongside river Myntdu. This field also has its own historical significance, as it is the place where U Kiang Nongbah had taken his oath to fight and drive the British out of their land without fearing any consequences. Tourists from all across the world come here to pay tribute to this local hero who had sacrificed his life for the freedom of his people and his land.

Pilgrimage

Some of the important pilgrimage places of Meghalaya are discussed below:

- (i) *Cathedral Catholic Church*: Also known as Cathedral of Mary Help of Christians, the Cathedral Catholic Church is arguably the most beautiful church of Shillong. The Cathedral is the principal place of worship of the over 300,000 strong Catholics of the Shillong Archdiocese which covers Ri Bhoi and East Khasi Hills district of Meghalaya. The Church has been made earthquake resistant by filling the rock trenches with sand, thus making the foundation, strong. This cathedral was made a shrine in the year 1980 on completion of the Catholic Church's 100 years in North East India. It has high arches and stained glass windows which add to its grandeur. Its high location and alluring design has made the church a prominent landmark of Shillong. This Cathedral of Mary Help is quite popular

amongst people of other religions too as they come here to pray and seek divine interventions for their personal problems and hardships.

- (ii) *Lady of Good Health Shrine*: It is a magnificent three-storey building shaped like an octagon. Outwardly it appears to be a triple storied structure, but internally it consists of a big hall with the altar at the centre. It can accommodate about one thousand persons. Atop the dome of the shrine and over the alter, there is an imposing statue of Our Lady of Good Health, made of shimmering white marble standing upon a globe. The style of architecture of the shrine is Roman. The entire shrine is a close replica of the Shrine of Our lady of Good Health at Turin, Italy. The shrine was completed in January 1989.
- (iii) *Nartiang Durga Temple*: Considered as one of the oldest Durga temples in the region, Nartiang Durga Temple is about 500 years old. The temple is considered to be one of the 51 *Shaktipeeths* of Hindu mythology. According to legend, during the immolation of Sati, when Lord Shiva took the corpse of Sati and performed *Tandava* dance, Lord Vishnu then cut the body into 51 pieces. In the process, Goddess Durga's left thigh fell in Nartiang and due to this in Jaintia hills the goddess is known here as Jainteshwari. The temple is a revered shrine for devotees of the Shakti cult of Hinduism. In the temple premises, rites are performed with a mix of Hindu and Khasi tradition. The temple is said to have been constructed by a local ruler; however, the exact history related to the temple is still unknown.
- (iv) *Kamakhya Temple*: Even though it is not as popular as Kamakhya Temple in Guwahati, it certainly deserves to be explored on account of its peaceful surroundings and godly atmosphere. The temple is revered equally to renowned Kamakhya temple of Guwahati. The temple is a seed of religious diversity. People from all communities irrespective of their religion visits the temple and seek blessings from Goddess Kamakhya. The temple is located in the Garo Hills of Meghalaya at a distance of about 45 km from Tura and is an emerging tourism destination in the state.

4.4.1.6 Other unique attractions

Meghalaya, the abode of clouds is considered as the wettest region on earth. The state is 70% forested and notable for its rich biodiversity of flora and fauna, waterfalls, caves and one of the popular tourism destinations in Northeast India. Meghalaya is known for having its own uniqueness in attracting tourists into the state. Some of the unique selling propositions (USPs) of Meghalaya tourism are discussed below:

- (i) *World's Rainiest Place – Mawsynram*: Mawsynram, a village in the East Khasi Hills district of Meghalaya is known for having the highest recorded rainfall in the world and lives up to its repute by surprising one with quick showers at the most unexpected instances. According to the Guinness Book of World Records, Mawsynram received 26,000 mm (1,000 in) of rainfall in 1985. Reportedly the wettest place on Earth, Mawsynram receives an average annual rainfall of 11,872 mm (about 39 feet). Mawsynram is a place where nature-loving people frequently visit wherein they take pleasure in the steep, sliding slopes, the fresh air, the rolling green mountains and the deafening but beautiful waterfalls.
- (ii) *Asia's Cleanest Village – Mawlynnong*: Mawlynnong Village in Meghalaya has earned the distinction of being the cleanest village in Asia and in India, declared by 'Discover India Magazine' in 2003 and in 2005 respectively. This picture-perfect village has over 80 houses and a wonderful place to have an insight into the life of Khasi people. The villagers voluntarily performed civic duties like sweeping the roads, watering the plants in public areas and cleaning the drains along with their daily schedule of farming and cultivating broomsticks. The scenic village promotes itself as "God's Own Garden".

Mawlynnong is situated 90 kms from Shillong and besides the picturesque village, offers many interesting sights such as the living-root bridge and another strange natural phenomenon of a boulder balancing on another rock. The beautiful flowerbed all along, paved pathways, living-root bridges, acacia plantation, hilly rivulets and exotic view of plains of Bangladesh make this village as a destination worth visiting.

- (iii) *Double-decker Root Bridges*: Meghalaya has the unique distinction of having ‘Double-decker Root Bridges’. Known as living-root bridges, famous for its astonishing man-made natural wonders are found in the vicinity of Cherrapunjee (Sohra) and Mawlynnong. Over hundreds of years the people in the area have developed techniques for growing roots of some ancient rubber trees into large bridges. The root bridges provide a stable alternative to wooden bridges, which decay and get destroyed during the lengthy monsoon seasons. The process takes 10-15 years for a new root bridge to become strong enough to bear the weight of people crossing it. However, it will continue to grow and strengthen even more over time. Their tangled webs of roots are almost eerie in nature and wouldn’t look out of place in a fantasy world. Some of the bridges are believed to be hundreds of years old, although no one knows their exact age.
- (iv) *Scotland of the East – Shillong*: Shillong, the capital city of Meghalaya is a wonderland for holidaying popularly known as “*Scotland of the East*” because of the characteristics of its rugged and rolling hills, dense pine forests and lush green valleys and highlands. The capital city still retains influences of the British in its architecture, lifestyle and language, and the astonishing landscape around the town reminded the British people of Scotland. Hence this beautiful place was given the title of “*Scotland of the East*”. The city is also associated with the tag ‘*Rock Capital*’ of India, having hosted an array of international concerts and being home to musicians and music lovers of all ages.

3.5.2 *Tourism resources in Mizoram*

With its moderate and pleasant climate throughout the year, Mizoram is an idyllic land of great nature blessed with rich variety of flora and fauna. This landlocked state is a land of scenic beauty with a variety of landscape from the breathtaking mountains, verdant valleys, and wooded forests to cascading waterfalls and placid lakes, which offer unmatched tranquility and serenity. Mizoram is a dazzling treasure trove for the discerning travellers with its amazing array of cultures, festivals, dances, handicrafts,

etc. diverse with tribal villages and urban centers with modern culture and lifestyle unlike elsewhere in India.



Fig: 3.2 Tourism Map of Mizoram
Source: Official Website of Mizoram Tourism

3.5.2.1 Cultural Tourism

People of Mizoram have still kept their traditional heritage alive. The conventional customs remain intact till date. It is remarkable that the state has its own unique cultural legacy. “Social, affectionate and amicable” is what people of Mizoram

are. They are a perfect, friendly and cordial host for the tourists who wish to experience the glimpse of Mizoram. The Mizos established a unique code of ethics called *Tlawmngaihna*, which stands basically for selfless service for the others. It is a compelling moral force that requires a man to be hospitable, kind, unselfish, courageous and helpful to the others. *Tlawmngaihna* is the core of their philosophy of life. The spirit of *Hnahtlang* combined with *Tlawmngaihna* makes it mandatory for the Mizos to render all possible help on occasions of marriage, public feast, accident and death. An extraordinary tribal flavor accompanies the celebration of fairs and festivals in Mizoram.

The state's cultural splendor and simple living can be seen in various festivals celebrated throughout the year. This state of NEI delights tourists with its vast cultural and traditional charms which are unmatched and unseen.

Festivals

The festivals specific to Mizoram are a manifestation of the typical heritage during the farming season and cycle of sowing and harvesting. Since the main profession of the local people is farming, the festivals also have affinity with farming activities. However, since Christianity forms the major part of the population, the New Year and Christmas have become the most celebrated festivals in the state. Some of the major festivals of Mizoram which are celebrated throughout the state during the year are:

- (i) *Chapchar Kut*: Chapchar Kut is considerably the oldest festival in Mizoram. It is celebrated with much joy and fanfare throughout the state every year first week of March. The festival is celebrated as the winter starts receding; farmers cut bamboo forests to prepare the land for seasonal farming. This is the season where the farmers wait for the bamboo heaps to dry or get burnt. Several forms of dances are performed on this occasion. Exhibition and sale of indigenous handlooms and handicrafts and other tourist attractions like flower show, food festival, musical competition and different traditional games are also organized during this festival.

- (ii) *Mim Kut*: The festival of Mim Kut is celebrated in the months of August-September, just after the successful completion of maize harvest. More than just a festival it is a vibrant and colourful cultural fiesta that is celebrated with great anticipation and extravagance, fun is a small factor compared to all the dancing and singing that continues for four to five days. During the time of this festival it is believed that the dead ancestors visit the houses of their children and relatives, special offerings are made for them. These offerings include fresh vegetables, maize, bread and often clothes and ornaments.
- (iii) *Pawl Kut*: These festivals are celebrated in the last week of November or the first week of December to celebrate the completion of the harvesting season. This festival is considered to be a thanksgiving festival as it is celebrated three months after the Mim Kut. Rice beer is primarily consumed during this festival with a great deal of merriment amongst the people. Traditional folk dances, songs and games are performed during the festival.
- (iv) *Thalfavang Kut*: Mizoram celebrates the festival of Thalfavang Kut every year in the first half of December. Most recently, the festival has been renamed as Winter Festival. Along with some modern youth games, the festival also depicts the cultural heritage and the traditional games of the Mizos. Today, Winter Festival is celebrated with a plethora of activities, games, music etc. Other activities include exhibition of handlooms and handicrafts, traditional dances and music, performances by well-known artistes and bands, carnivals, local cuisines, etc to name a few. The main highlights of the festival is hot air ballooning and powered hang glider not found anywhere in the northeast except Mizoram.
- (v) *Anthurium Festival*: Anthurium festival is today one of the most popular festivals celebrated in the state. It is organized during the peak season of the beautiful and exotic anthurium blossom. It is a three day extravaganza of culture, music, dance, games, fashion show, handloom and handicrafts exhibition and traditional cuisines. It is set against the majestic lush green backdrop of Reiek Mountain in a kaleidoscope of colourful anthurium flowers.

- (vi) *Bizu Festival*: The festival is celebrated by the Chakma community who mostly dwell in the western belt of the state. The festival *Bizu* is synonymous to *Bihu* of Assamese and it is celebrated for three days marking the end of current year and beginning of the New Year with great joys and funs. The last day of this three-day festival earmarked by people merrymaking with traditional dances and songs overriding with traditional wine called *Dawchoni*.
- (vii) *Christmas*: Since majority of the state's population is Christian, Christmas is one of the most important events of the Mizos. In the days or even weeks before Christmas Day many people decorate their homes with lights and Christmas trees. It is now the tradition of almost all localities to decorate their respective streets, lighting up the entire city. It is joyful and thrilling to watch the city decorations as it brings warmth in the hearts of the people.

Dances

The distinct art forms and festivals of Mizoram as the essential part of its rich culture and tradition exhibit the state to the World. Like other highlanders, people of Mizoram are very fond of dancing and so every event, festival, ritual or ceremony is incomplete without dance. The music and dance forms of Mizoram are usually performed in groups. Some of the important traditional dance forms of Mizoram are highlighted below:

- (i) *Cheraw*: One of the most lively and ostentatious dances of the Mizos. Cheraw is performed with bamboo poles. Dressed in brightly-coloured traditional costume, young women do the dancing, deftly stepping in and out between bamboo-poles rhythmically tapped, opened and closed by young men or sometimes even women squatting on the ground. This form of dance is generally called as Bamboo Dance. Mizoram takes the pride of breaking the world records in the Guinness Book for the largest Bamboo Dance gathering.
- (ii) *Khuallam*: Khuallam is a dance being performed in groups. Several dancers dressed in colourful costumes dance to the melodious tunes of drums and gongs. Initially, this dance was performed by the honoured invitees who entered this

region. Dances were performed followed by a feast. A community feast was then conducted where guests were invited from the nearby villages. Khuallam can thus be called the *dance of the guests*.

- (iii) *Chheihlam*: Chheihlam is a dance performed to recite the heroic deeds of the past and praise the honored guests. This is done through compositions that are composed on-the-spot. Spontaneous lyrics in triplets are made. During the evening, the dance is conducted around a round of rice beer.
- (iv) *Solakia*: Solakia is one the popular dance forms of Mara community who basically inhabit in southern Mizoram. A group of young men and women perform the dance while the hero, dressed in full warrior's attire and brandishing a sword and a shield, dance in the centre to the beat of gongs. A variation of Solakia is also practiced by the Lai community and is called Sarlamkai, the main difference being the dress and the tempo.
- (v) *Chawnglaizawn*: Chawnglaizawn is a popular dance of the Lai community. It is a lively dance performed by young men and women in a large group to the beat of drums. Traditional shawls are slung over the shoulders which are held with both hands and waved rhythmically thus adding colour to the dance.

3.5.2.2 Water Tourism

Mizoram is a land of rolling hills, valleys, rivers and lakes. As many as 21 major hills ranges or peaks of different heights run through the length and breadth of the state. The hill ranges are separated by deep rivers and magnificent valleys. Trekking along the river banks, camping beside the lakes and water rafting are some water tourism activities in Mizoram. The wonderful natural and man-made lakes in Mizoram are the centers of a lot of tourist activities. Activities like boating; fishing and swimming are seen on these lakes. The state government has plans of promoting different water sports in several of the rivers and lakes of the state.

Lakes

In Mizoram, a lake is basically called *dil* in local language. So, one will find the suffix *dil* in the name of any lake in Mizoram. Following are the important lakes in Mizoram that have potential to attract a good number of tourists are:

- (i) *Palakdil*: It is the largest natural lake in Mizoram surrounded by lush virgin forest rich in flora and fauna. The lake is situated in an inaccessible land in the southern district of Siaha. It is an oval lake, 200 m long and 150 m wide, occupying an area of 30 ha. It is said that, the lake came into existence as a result of an earthquake or a flood. The local people believe a village which was submerged still remains intact deep under the waters of the lake. A great variety of wildlife is found in the surrounding forests of the lake and a home to varieties of wetland and hill birds.
- (ii) *Tamdil*: The Tamdil lake is a natural lake situated about 110 km south-east of Aizawl town and 7 km from Saitual village. This lake is an ideal destination surrounded by the tropical evergreen forests for the tourists seeking solace. It is rich in flora and fauna like fish, prawns with many untamed animals like bear, deer and wild pig in the surrounding forests. Folklore is linked up with this lake which holds that a big mustard plant was in the place where the present lake is situated. Whenever the plant was chopped, water came gushing from that place resulting in formation of the lake.
- (iii) *Rungdil*: Rungdil Lake is situated 14 km from Suangpuilawn village in Aizawl district. It has an area of 2.5 ha. The word literally means “*Lake of Partridges*” because it was once an abode of hordes of partridges. It comprises of two lakes, more or less similar, separated by a narrow strip of land. It is said that if a pumpkin is cut into two halves and one is put in one lake, it will surface in the other lake. The two lakes are believed to have a subterranean connection. Like other lakes, this lake is also rich in flora and fauna.
- (iv) *Rengdil*: The fact that separates this lake from others is its base. It is a man-made lake whereas unlike others in Mizoram. Situated at a distance of around 8 km from

Zamuang village, the lake is a beautiful place to spend quality time with your inner self.

Rivers

There are a number of rivers which flow through the state. Nearly all of the river-systems in Mizoram are perpetual in nature. However, only a few of them are navigable. These rivers are assisted by heavy rainfalls during monsoon seasons and intermittent rainfall during the year. Among the 13 major rivers identified by the state government the important ones which are partly or wholly navigable are in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4
Major rivers of Mizoram with their lengths

| Sl. No. | Name of the river | Length in km |
|---------|-------------------------------|--------------|
| 1 | Tlawng (Dhaleswari) | 185.15 |
| 2 | Tiau | 159.39 |
| 3 | Chhimtuipui (Kolodyne) | 130.46 |
| 4 | Khawthlangtuipui (Karnaphuli) | 128.08 |
| 5 | Tuichang | 120.75 |
| 6 | Tuirial (Sonai) | 117.53 |
| 7 | Tuichawng | 107.87 |
| 8 | Mat | 90.16 |
| 9 | Tuipui (Khawchhak) | 86.94 |
| 10 | Tuivawl | 72.45 |
| 11 | Teirei | 70.84 |
| 12 | Tuirini | 59.57 |
| 13 | Serlui | 56.35 |

Note: 'Tui' in Mizo language means water

Source: Department of Tourism, Government of Mizoram

- (i) *Tiau River*: Tiau River flows through the Champhai district and forms a boundary between India and Myanmar. It is a main place for crossing the borders. This river valley is now developed into a commercial centre where one can find all sorts of imported goods.
- (ii) *Tlawng River*: Tlawng River is considered as the longest river in Mizoram. It is also known as *Dhaleswari* or *Katakha*. It originates in Lunglei district and passes through Aizawl and Kolasib districts and even enters Cachar district of Assam. The river is navigable by small boat up to Sairang, a small town near Aizawl.
- (iii) *Chhimtuipui River*: The biggest river in Mizoram is Chhimtuipui, also known as Kaladan. It originates in Chin State in Myanmar and forms an international border

between India and Myanmar. The river is joined by other rivers on its way to Mizoram, finally passing through the southern districts of Mizoram to Myanmar's Rakhine state.

(iv) *Khawthlangtuipui*: The Khawthlangtuipui River is also known as *Borgang* (in Chakma language, meaning large river) or *Karnaphuli* (in Bangladesh). The river is said to represent the drainage system of the whole south-western part of Mizoram. Originating from the Saitah village of Mamit district, it flows through the western belt of Mizoram having its confluence with Tuichawng River, Phairuang River and Kawrpui River (Thega) before it enters into Bangladesh.

Other rivers and tributaries which flow through the state of Mizoram include Ngengpui River, Chawngte River, Tuiphal River and Kawrthingdeng River, etc.

3.5.2.3 Adventure Tourism

Mizoram is a formidable place for adventurers. Its landscape, the mountains, the valleys, the gorges are best suited for adventure expeditions. While adventuring in the state one will encounter the local tribal people, their cultures and lifestyles; heavy forests, wild orchids, extraordinary flora and fauna with captivating views through the enchanting hills and mountains. The state offers ample opportunities for adventure sports like mountaineering, boating, angling, camping, trekking and caving. It offers unlimited opportunities for adventure as well as outdoor activities.

Caves

The caves of Mizoram are marvelous in terms of structure and moreover, being great repositories of the legends that related to the glorious life of the people who resided here earlier, these caves tell the stories of those people. The important caves which attract large numbers of adventure lovers include the following:

(i) *Pukzing Cave*: This cave is located at Pukzing village near Marpara in the western hills of Mamit district. Pukzing cave, which goes 25 m inside is the biggest cave in Mizoram. The legend says that the cave was carved out of the hills by a very strong man called Mualzavata, which means a person who could clear hundred ranges of forest in a day.

- (ii) *Milu Puk*: Milu Puk (cave of skulls) is a big cave situated near Mamte village in Lunglei district, about 130 Km from Lunglei town in Mizoram. One will find a big heap of human skeletons in this cave. The skeletons seem to be of people who were taller than the Mizos and might have belonged to some other race, domesticating the area before the Mizos came. It is believed that, these people belonged to a tribe called 'Tlau'.
- (iii) *Kungawrhi Puk*: This is a big cave set on a hill between Farkawn and Vaphai villages in the south-eastern part of Aizawl district. The folktale related with this cave speaks of a beautiful young girl by the name Kungawrhi, who was nobbled and prisoned in the desolated cave by some evil spirits when she was on her way to her husband's village. She was later on rescued by her brave husband from the cave from the confinement of the spirits.
- (iv) *Lamsial Puk*: The cave Lamsial Puk is located close to the village Farkawn in the south-eastern part of Aizawl district. This cave features a gruesome witness of a fight between two neighbouring villages in which many warriors were killed. The bodies of the warriors of the Lamsial village were kept in this cave. The village no longer exists. But there are many skeletons in the Lamsial puk which recall the horrible incident.
- (v) *Khuangchera Puk*: This is the longest cave in Mizoram which is around 162 metres in length. Located around 30 kms from Aizawl in Ailawng village near Reiek, it is believed that a legendary Mizo warrior, Khuangchera lived in this cave during the late 19th century. The vertical height of the cave goes up to 10 meters deep. The cave has become a place of exploration for adventurers as it provides some really amusing cave experiences such as darkness, peculiar sports acoustics, tactile interactions, etc.

Waterfalls

Mizoram is blessed with torrential rainfall throughout the year, unique landscape and dramatic cloudy climate that make it the home to some splendid waterfalls. As the state is home to 21 mountain ranges, during monsoon tourists can enjoy the beauty of

the nature through the cascading waterfalls pouring down from these mountains. However, there are several other natural waterfalls that attract the tourists most. Among them the followings are important ones:

- (i) *Vantawng Falls*: Vantawng Falls, the highest waterfall in Mizoram and the 13th highest in India, is located in the Vanva River near Thenzawl. The waterfall which is located 137 km away from the capital city of Aizawl is a gem in its own right. The waterfall has a picturesque surrounding dotted with bamboo grooves. Tucked in between the verdant valleys with thick greenery, the waterfall creates an amazing seven-story cliff through which the water cascades like a pour of white milk from distance. For nature lovers, it serves as a heavenly location. Water falling from such a huge height not only offers breathtaking views but also sprays the droplets on the face of the visitors. The Vantawng Falls is nothing but a testament to the amazing natural beauty that is hidden within Northeast India.
- (ii) *Tuirihiau Falls*: The Tuirihiau Falls is one the most spectacular of all the waterfalls and cascades in the fast flowing rivers of Mizoram. It is located at Aizawl to Lunglei road near Buangpui village which is just 7 km from Thenzawl. The uniqueness of this waterfall is that you see from behind as it caves in behind the fall like an arc.
- (iii) *Khawhpawp Falls*: The Khawhpawp Falls is a beautiful and magnificent one which remains almost untouched and less visited by tourists due to low promotion of it. The waterfall is located at Lawipu Veng Road in Aizawl at its western outskirts. It is called 'khawh pawp', meaning 'hole in the cliff' in local language. It is said that the strong current of the water creates a hole in the cliff, through which the entire amount of water cascades down, making this waterfalls a unique and exclusive one.

Trekking

Mizoram has a number of trekking opportunities to offer for the discerning trekkers. Being a place enhanced by lush green forests and hills and mountains, trekkers from all over the country can experience the exotic locales of the state. The town of

Champhai and Lunglei are amongst the popular towns where trekking is majorly done. The famous Phawngpui Peak, located in the Phawngpui National Park lies 7,100 feet above the sea level and serves as the perfect place for trekking. Besides, trekking along the forests of Reiek, Murlen, Thorangtlang, Tawi, along the rivers of the state and lakes like Rungdil and Palak is of a completely different experience.

Hiking and Mountaineering

Mountaineering is another activity gaining popularity amongst the people in Mizoram. With its exciting mountain ranges, sky touching peaks and lush green hills, mountaineering in Mizoram can be simply irresistible. With altitudes ranging from 1179 meters to 2157 meters, Mizoram has 21 mountain peaks. These peaks offer excellent opportunities for rock climbing and mountaineering. Some of the well known climbing areas here are Thalazaung Khamm, Mount Kahrie and Mount Mawma. Day hikes are a regular to the Durtlang Hills which are high ridges located in the capital city of Mizoram. The best time which can be considered for mountaineering in Mizoram is from September to October when the climate is moderate and temperature remains pleasant as well.

Camping

The virgin forests of Mizoram offer great opportunities for camping for the adventurers and the wanderers. Also known as the Blue Mountain, Phawngpui Peak is a perfect setting for camping. Set amidst the lush green forests, Tamdil Lake in Aizawl district is another good camping place. Bonfires beside the camps, delicious meals and then dancing beneath the clouds, nothing else could sound better than this for a wonderful getaway into the woods.

3.5.2.4 Ecotourism and Wildlife

According to India State of Forest Report, 2015, an area of 18,748 Sq km which is 88.93% of the total geographical area of Mizoram, i.e. 21,081 sq km is under forest area. This signifies that Mizoram is a 'forest state' hemmed with blue mountain ranges, green valleys and turbulent rivers gorging in between the enchanting hills making a way

for the golden sunrises. The forest-clad mountains/hills of the state are very rich in flora and fauna in its lush green environment, which are extreme delights for wildlife adventurers and ecotourists.

Wildlife

With increasing population, biotic pressure and increasing developmental activities, the unique habitat has become fragmented and vulnerable to disturbance. For protecting, propagating or developing wild life and its environment, the state government has notified 10 protected areas which include 2 national parks, 7 wildlife sanctuaries and a tiger reserve. The protected area covers about 8% of the total geographical area of the state. They are homes to large family of birds and animals, rare species of orchids. Among the wildlife protected areas important ones are elucidated hereunder:

- (i) *Phawngpui National Park*: Phawngpui is the highest mountain peak in Mizoram, rising about 2157 metres high near the Myanmar border in Lawngtlai District. It is rich in exotic fauna and many fragrant herbs. The peak is also famous for its rare species of orchids and rhododendrons. The Phawngpui National Park is made up of the surrounding areas of this peak. The park is home for tigers, sambar deers, hoolock gibbons, barking deers, bears and variety of birds. It is also an ideal destination for nature lovers and trekkers.
- (ii) *Dampa Tiger Reserve*: Dampa Tiger Reserve is the largest wildlife sanctuary in Mizoram, was notified in 1985 and declared a tiger reserve in 1994. It is situated in the western part of Mizoram state, on the international border with Bangladesh about 127 km from Aizawl. It covers an area of approximately 500 km². The tropical forests of Dampa are home to rich flora and fauna. It consists of forest interpolated with steep precipitous hills, deep valleys, jungle streams, ripping rivulets, natural salts licks, with an altitudinal zone of 200 m to 800 m. The Dampa Tiger Reserve is a part of Project Tiger funded by the Government of India.
- (iii) *Murlen National Park*: Murlen National Park is a national park located in the Champhai district with an area of 100 km². The park is situated about 245 km east

of Aizawl, and is close to the Chin Hills. The tropical, semi evergreen and sub-montane forests of Murlen are home to a rich variety of flora and fauna where about 15 species of mammals, 150 species of birds, 35 species of Medicinal plants, 2 species of bamboos & 4 species of orchids so far have been recorded in this Park.

- (iv) *Ngengpui Wildlife Sanctuary*: Ngengpui Wildlife Sanctuary is located in Lawngtlai district. It is spread over an area of about 110 square kilometers. This sanctuary serves as a home to virgin sub-tropical evergreen forests, semi-evergreen forests, tiger, clouded leopard, elephant, gaur, barking deer, sambar, wild boar, flowerpecker, pen-pheasant, etc.
- (v) *Thorangtlang Wildlife Sanctuary*: Thorangtlang Wildlife Sanctuary is situated at Thorangtlang near the Indo-Bangladesh border in Lunglei district. This sanctuary is spread over an area of about 50 square kilometers. Some of the occupants of the sanctuary are leopard, elephant, gaur, wild dog, sambar, barking deer, sloth bear, hoolock gibbon, leaf monkey, common langur, etc.
- (vi) *Khawnglung Wildlife Sanctuary*: Khawnglung Wildlife Sanctuary is located in Lunglei at an elevation of about 1300 m above sea level. It is spread over an area of a little over 35 square kilometers. Some of the occupants of the sanctuary are sambhar, hoolock gibbon, Himalayan serrow, wild boar, barking deer and leopard.
- (vii) *Lengteng Wildlife Sanctuary*: Lengteng Wildlife Sanctuary is located in Champhai district, adjacent to Murlen National Park in eastern Mizoram. It is spread over an area of about 60 square kilometers. The inmates of this sanctuary are evergreen and semi-evergreen trees, tiger, leopard, sambar deer, barking deer, goral, serrow, etc.

Some of the other wildlife sanctuaries of Mizoram are Tawi Wildlife Sanctuary, Tokalo Wildlife Sanctuary and Pualreng Wildlife Sanctuary. All the officially protected areas of Mizoram are presented in Table 3.5.

Table 3.5
Important national parks and wildlife sanctuaries in Mizoram

| Sl. No. | Sanctuary/ park | District | Area | Year of notification | Important species found |
|---------|---------------------------------|-----------|-----------------------|----------------------|--|
| 1 | Dampa Tiger Reserve | Mamit | 500 Km ² | 1994 | Tiger, elephant, sambar, barking deer, hoolock gibbon and variety of birds. |
| 2 | Murlen National Park | Champhai | 100 Km ² | 2003 | Hume's bartailed pheasant, tiger, hoolock gibbon, serrow, ghoral, leopard, Himalayan black bear and variety of birds. |
| 3 | Phawngpui National Park | Lawngtlai | 50 Km ² | 1997 | Serrow, ghoral, leopard, tragopan, sambar and variety of birds. |
| 4 | Ngengpui Wildlife Sanctuary | Lawngtlai | 110 Km ² | 1997 | Tiger, leopard, elephant, sambar, hoolock gibbon and variety of birds. |
| 5 | Khawnglung Wildlife Sanctuary | Lunglei | 35.75 Km ² | 2000 | Sambar, tiger, hoolock gibbon, serrow, barking deer and variety of birds. |
| 6 | Tawi Wildlife Sanctuary | Aizawl | 35 Km ² | 2001 | Tigers, leopard, elephant, sambar, Hoolock gibbon and variety of Birds. |
| 7 | Lengteng Wildlife Sanctuary | Champhai | 60 Km ² | 2002 | Hume's bartailed pheasant, tiger, hoolock gibbon, serrow, ghoral, leopard, Himalayan black bear and variety of birds. |
| 8 | Thorangtlang Wildlife Sanctuary | Lunglei | 50 km ² | 2002 | Leopard, sambar, barking ear, hoolock gibbon, sloth bear and variety of birds. |
| 9 | Pualreng Wildlife Sanctuary | Kolasib | 50 | 2004 | Hoolock gibbon, langur, Himalayan black bear, leopard, sambar, barking deer, pangolin, great Indian hornbill, Red jungle fowl and variety of birds |
| 10 | Tokalo Wildlife Sanctuary | Siaha | 250 | 2007 | Leopard, golden cat, wild dog, barking deer, wild boar, serow, hoolock gibbon and different types of hornbills and other birds. |

Sources: 1. Department of Environment, Forests & Climate Change, Mizoram
2. Department of Tourism, Mizoram

Ecotourism Destinations

It is needless to mention that Mizoram has several ecotourism resources. The geographical location and the rugged topography have blessed Mizoram with unique natural environment. The state situated in the transitional region of tropical and

temperate environment is also bestowed with hills having steep slopes, deep valleys, rivers, natural lakes, and plains etc. thus creating varied ecosystems in a relatively small region.

Following are two among must-visit ecotourism destinations in Mizoram to experience the nature at its best and fill the hearts with memories that can be cherished for lifetime:

- (i) *Reiek Tlang*: 35 kms to the west of Aizawl sprawls a prominent mountain called Reiek Tlang. The mountain itself, though appearing to be a gentle slopes on its eastern side, has ended bluntly into a sharp cliff in the western side as if someone had chopped off the head. The road leading to Reiek Mountain is a trekkers' delight. It meanders up through thick forest, enchanted with the songs of birds. There is the green forest on one side and the steep rocky cliff with yellow grasses on the other. The thick forests surrounding the peak are few of the virgin forests that have remained from the time of the Sailo chiefs. They are considered sacred.
- (ii) *Hmuifang Tlang*: Located at a distance of 50 kms to the south of Aizawl, Hmuifang Mountain with an elevation of 1619 metres is still covered with virgin forests reserved since the days of the Mizo chiefs. The mountain also has beautiful cliffs and offers great views of the surrounding hills. To the nature lovers, the surrounding forests abound with fascinating varieties of flora including rare orchids and wildlife especially avifauna.

3.5.2.5 Heritage and Pilgrimage Tourism

Heritage

Like any other state of India, Mizoram is rich in historical and heritage sites. However, except some pockets these sites are still unexplored and untapped for potential tourism development. Each heritage site has its own story to tell. Some of the selected heritage sites for discussions are:

- (i) *Chhingpuii Memorial*: Built in the memory of a young woman called Chhingpuii who was exceedingly beautiful, it is situated between Baktawng and Chhingchhip

villages. The stone memorial reminds the legendary love lore of Chhingpui and Kaptluanga.

- (ii) *Lianchhiari Lunglentlang*: Lianchhiari Lunglentlang is a stunningly picturesque cliff situated at a distance of 64 km from Champhai district in Duntlang village of Mizoram. The legend goes that the daughter (Lianchhiari) of the chief of Duntlang village fell in love with a commoner, called Chawngfianga. Their love could not flourish, and the boy was forced to leave the village. Heartbroken, Lianchhiari would sit at the tip of the cliff and watch the distant village to where her lover had migrated.
- (iii) *Thasiama Se No Neihna*: Located at Vaphai village, 86 Kms from Champhai, Thasiama Seno Neihna is a plateau on a steep rugged hillock that protrudes out precariously and is not easily reachable by men. Legend tells us that Thasiama had an affair with a beautiful fairy named Chawngtinleri and that the fairy had bestowed him a gift that his *mithun* will multiply and make him prosperous. The fairy used to guide Thasiama's *mithun* to this particular hill for safe delivery of calf, considered impossible for a *mithun* to climb even today, and guard it against the onslaught of tigers that haunt the area.
- (iv) *Mura Puk*: Mura Puk is located in Zote village, about 10 kilometers from Champhai town. It consists of six caves, and though the origin or use of the caves are not known, legend has it that it was a hide out for villagers in olden days as they were preyed upon by a gigantic eagle called Mura for food.
- (v) *Sibuta Lung*: Sibuta Lung is an old remembrance stone encompassed by an odd legend. It is located at Tachhip village, 20 km of Aizawl city. It is said that Sibuta killed his adoptive father and became the chief of the village of 2,000 houses. However, his love-life was in a mess and in order to take revenge, he buried his love Darlai alive in a pit and erected a memorial for himself.
- (vi) *Lungvandawt*: Located in between Biate and Lungdar, Lungvandawt was chiseled out from stone and it is with a height of 3 meters and diameter of 75 cms. The word 'Lungvandawt' means a 'stone moving towards the heaven and about to

reach it'. Legendary stories tell that this was a stone towering up towards heaven with no hindrances coming in between.

(vii) *Phulpui Graves*: There are two graves at Phulpui village in the Aizawl district of Mizoram India. It is said that, Zawlpala, Chief of Phulpui village, married the legendary beauty, Talvungi of Thenzawl. Talvungi was subsequently married to the chief of Rothai, Punthia. But, Talvungi could not forget Zawlpala, her previous husband. After many years when Zawlpala died, grief-stricken Talvungi came to Phulpui, dug a pit by the side of Zawlpala's grave and asked an old woman to kill her and bury her in the grave.

(viii) *Monoliths and Engravings*: Mizoram is also having a number of historical sites and artifacts all across the state. Amongst them, Kawtchhuah Ropui (Great Entranceway) a natural heritage site marked with 171 carved stones. It is located at Khawbung village. The 171 menhir stones in the village became Mizoram's first protected archaeological site in 2012. Vangchhia, an archaeological site has hundreds of inexplicably carved megalithic stones. For hundreds of years villagers have been breaking apart the megalithic monuments and using them to line graves. An engraved image of Buddha found near Mualcheng village, about 50 kms from the town remains an enigma till date since no other Buddhist relics has been found elsewhere in the state. These engravings signify the rich archaeological heritage of Mizoram which might have been submerged with lost civilizations.

Pilgrimage Tourism

Mizoram is one of those states in India wherein the Christian population is highest. There are churches found in every locales of Mizoram. These churches tell a lot about the beliefs of the people. Among the various denominations, the Mizoram Presbyterian Church is the largest church of the state and attracts a lot of devotees. The Baptist Church of Mizoram is the second largest church and was founded in 1897. While a small chunk of the population of the state are Buddhists who are mainly composed of the Chakma people in the western belt. Hinduism and Islam religion also exists in

Mizoram amongst a very small percentage of population. Some of the important churches in Mizoram are:

- (i) *Mizoram Presbyterian Church*: Mizoram Presbyterian Church is the largest Christian denomination in Mizoram and it was established in the year 1897 by Rev. David Evan Jones who was a Presbyterian missionary. Mizoram Presbyterian Church was the first church in all of Mizoram and today it is one of the constituent bodies of Presbyterian Church of India. The headquarters of Mizoram Presbyterian Church is located in Shillong, Meghalaya. The administrative body of the Mizoram Presbyterian Church is called Mizoram Synod and it is headquartered at Mission Veng, Aizawl.
- (ii) *Baptist Church of Mizoram*: The Baptist Church of Mizoram which is also known as BCM is the second biggest church in all of Mizoram and is a protestant denomination of India. It was founded in the year 1897 and has its headquarters at Serkawn, near Lunglei. Since 1897, the Baptist Church has been getting more and more members and today it stands at 160,400 members.
- (iii) *Solomon's Temple*: Known as the Holy Church, the Solomon's temple is one of the major tourist spots in Mizoram. In local Mizo language the Solomon's temple is known as "Kohhran Thianghlim". Founded in the year 1984, the members of the church are known as 'the elects'. The temple is large enough to accommodate a total of two thousand people inside the church and around ten thousand people within its courtyard. The area surrounding the temple has also been renamed as Kidron Valley, after the vast plains that lie adjacent to the Old City of Jerusalem in Israel.
- (iv) *Evangelical Church of Maraland*: Evangelical Church of Maraland is a Church in Siaha district in southern Mizoram. It was founded by English missionary Rev. and Mrs. Reginald Arthur Lorrain in 1907. It is the largest Church among Mara people. It is one of the three Mizoram Churches pioneered by English Missionaries in the 19th century. Others are Mizoram Presbyterian Church and Baptist Church of Mizoram.

Some other Christian churches include the Salvation Army, Seventh-day Adventist Church, Roman Catholic, Lairam Jesus Christ Baptist Church and the Pentecostals.

3.4.2.7 Other unique attractions

- (i) *World's Largest Family*: The world's largest family is found in Baktawng village, 70 kms from Aizawl in Mizoram, headed by Pu Ziona. As recorded in the Guinness Book of world records, Ziona has the world record of heading the "world's largest existing family" with 39 wives, 94 children, 14 daughters-in-laws and 33 grandchildren, 180 in total and counting. Ziona was featured in Ripley's Believe It or Not! Top 11 strangest stories for the year 2011. Living as a religious community, called the 'Chana Pawl', the family owns jhums, orchards, and furniture workshops, manufactures aluminum utensils and is known for their self sufficiency, craftsmanship, hard work and entrepreneurship skills. All the members of the family live in a four-storied building called 'Chhuanthar Run' or Home of the New Generation. The family has its own school called Chhuanthar Students Home where students are admitted from Class V to Class X. There's a playground called Chhuanthar Stadium. The tourists can experience the everyday lives of this family by staying in its 'Khualbuk' or guesthouse which they built for the visitors.
- (ii) *No Honking City*: Aizawl, the capital city of Mizoram, has become the first Indian city to adopt a no-honking policy, that too without any official help or legislation. No honking has become a social norm in the city. A driver will wait patiently when someone is taking a u-turn in front of him/her. Everyone refrains from honking and breaking the long queue of vehicles on hilly serpentine roads, and people like to follow this rule for their own benefit. The story of Aizawl has been documented in *Tranquility*, a short film that shows people from the city coming together to make their home free of noise which was endorsed by choreographer, actor and director Prabhudeva. It's great to see a city like Aizawl taking such a big step to reduce noise pollution and is something for rest of the country to follow.

3.6 SWOT analysis

The SWOT analysis, originated by Albert S Humphrey in the 1960s, is a basic, straightforward model that assesses what an organization can and cannot do as well as its potential, opportunities and threats. It is a framework for identifying and analyzing the internal (strengths and weaknesses) and external factors (opportunities and threats) that can have an impact on the viability of a project, product, place or person. The SWOT analysis is presented in Fig 4.1:



Fig. 3.3: SWOT Analysis Framework

In short, SWOT analysis is a framework that examines four factors (elements) of an organisation: strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. *Strengths* - the factors and resources of an industry that give it an advantage over others in the industry. *Weaknesses* - the factors and resources that place an industry at a disadvantage relative to others. *Opportunities* - the factors and resources of an industry that can capitalize on or use to its advantage. *Threats* - the factors and resources that could jeopardize to an industry.

3.6.1 SWOT analysis of tourism industry in select states

The use of SWOT analysis in the study helps the researcher in understanding the status of the tourism industry in the select states, i.e. Meghalaya and Mizoram and finally place suggestions and recommendations for its development in both the states. The states of Meghalaya and Mizoram have several similarities in terms of topography, scenic landscape, and size of population and so on. Hence, the application of SWOT analysis helps us to know the comparative dimensions and various verticals of the

tourism industry in the select states; and therefore, getting in a position to understand the similarities and point of differences exist therein.

To assess the existing tourism marketing environment in terms of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in the select states, SWOT analysis is aptly adopted hereunder.

3.6.1.1 SWOT analysis of Meghalaya Tourism

Hereunder is the SWOT analysis of tourism industry of Meghalaya based on the interpretations of primary as well as secondary data:

Strengths

- (i) *Natural scenic beauty:* Meghalaya is a majestic land full with nature's own creations – pure and fresh mountain air, whispering pines, gurgling streams that turn into a waterfall, extensive flora and fauna, limpid lakes, rivers, unpolluted rushing streams breaking into waterfalls, twisting and turning, disappearing into the jungle. Its natural beauties are splendidly unmatched!
- (ii) *Pleasant climate:* The climate of Meghalaya is moderate and humid. The wet and cool pleasing climatic conditions, the astonishing landscape and hilly terrain of the state serve the tourists to enjoy the feeling of being in a delightful hill station of Europe. The low temperature in summer due to its hilly terrain acts as a perfect paradise for people trying to shy away from the scorching heat of the summers. Meghalaya experiences a moderate temperature ranging between 12°C and 30°C throughout the year.
- (iii) *Land of music lovers:* Music is an integral part of the people of Meghalaya and it accompanies every festival and ceremony. Shillong, the state's capital, is associated with the tag '*Rock Capital*' of India, having hosted an array of international concerts and being home to musicians and music lovers of all ages. Besides, the state set new world records for the largest drum ensemble (7,951 drummers) in 2006 and largest ever guitar ensemble (1,730 guitarists) in Shillong in 2007. Hence, Meghalaya has the prospects to promote itself as a delightful paradise for the music lovers across the country and world.

- (iv) *Scotland of the East*: Shillong, the capital city of Meghalaya is a wonderland for holidaying popularly known as “*Scotland of the East*” because of the characteristics of its rugged and rolling hills, dense pine forests and lush green valleys and highlands. The capital city still retains influences of the British in its architecture, lifestyle and language, and the astonishing landscape around the town reminded the British people of Scotland.
- (v) *Land of festivals*: Meghalaya is predominantly inhabited by tribal people, who celebrate several festivals which are directly and indirectly connected with religion. Meghalaya resonates with fairs and festivals which are celebrated throughout the year. These festivals also provide a glimpse of the state’s lively collection of woven, decorative, dyed and colourful silk and cotton, their elaborate jewellery etc.
- (vi) *Rich heritage*: Meghalaya is fairly rich in various aspects including that of archaeological remains. These heritage wealth reflect the rich and invaluable cultural life of its societal past. Presence of a number of important buildings, monuments, churches, etc., associated with well known personalities and events from the past have become the priceless heritage and legacy of the state. These wealth have undoubtedly thrown great attractions and curiosity to the casual viewers and scholars.
- (vii) *Rich in natural resources*: Meghalaya is very rich in natural resources abundantly blessed with flora and fauna. The state has some of thickest evergreen forests in the region which are storehouses of vast natural resources and natural beauties. The state boasts of high hills, plateaus and beautiful valleys, caves and waterfalls, which are rich in deposits of minerals that attract numbers of nature explorers.
- (viii) *Presence of wettest places on earth*: Meghalaya is considered as the wettest state in India and world as well. The world’s rainiest place, Mawsynram, recorded in Guinness Book of World Records, is located in Meghalaya. To the nature lovers who want to witness and experience the state of quick showers at the most

unexpected instances should carry out holidaying in Meghalaya at least once in lifetime.

- (ix) *Rich in wildlife:* With a large area of the state covered under forest, Meghalaya has prospects of diverse wildlife tourism. Apart from the well known Balpakram National Park, there are the Nokrek Biosphere Reserve, the Siju Wildlife Sanctuary and the Nongkhylllem Wildlife Sanctuary. With a large area of 8,514 km² of the total land area of Meghalaya being under the cover of forests, the state has diverse wildlife.
- (x) *Paradise for adventure lovers:* For every adventure lover, Meghalaya is a paradise to go for a backpacking trip. It offers many adventure opportunities in the form of mountaineering, rock climbing, and trekking, hiking, and water sports. This mountainous state has stretches of plateaus and a geographically very rich area. With abundance of peaks, waterfalls and rivers, caves and lakes, Meghalaya is indeed an ecstasy for the adventurer lovers.

Weaknesses

- (i) *Landlocked and limited Market:* As a landlocked land, the state has to depend heavily on its road network which is limited to a considerable extent. The state has good connectivity with Assam in the north and west. However, the two other sides are bordered by Bangladesh. Therefore, the flow of tourists is very much governed by the state of international relations and the physical connectivity.
- (ii) *Inadequate tourism infrastructures:* Inadequate tourism facilities, particularly in terms of quality and experiential/ interpretational, and site services in certain circuit and almost absent elsewhere. The process of infrastructure development has been rather slow in the state for many reasons. Tourist spots are spread over large distances with inadequate wayside amenities.
- (iii) *Shortage of funds for tourism:* Fund is the primary prerequisite for the development and intensification of any industry including tourism. Presently, the state is not in a position to arrange required funds for tourism marketing programmes. It has to heavily depend on central funding. Hence, shortage of

funds for tourism projects also hampering the state's efforts to penetrate its tourism market.

- (iv) *Limited tourism related research:* Research is an important element for any field of study to find out the solutions. So far, research in the field of tourism in the state is concerned, it is very few which otherwise would have contributed substantially in its development in terms of framing appropriate policy and programmes.
- (v) *Improper maintenance of tourism attractions:* Tourism in Meghalaya suffers from inadequate facilities in prospective tourism destinations like seating arrangements, good eating joints, clean rest-rooms etc. so that tourists can stay there for some time. The maintenance and upgradation of existing infrastructure is another problem of state tourism.

Opportunities

- (i) *Education:* The education sector, with the establishment of higher education and technical institutes in the state like IIM, NEIGRIMS and some universities, could become an area of priority for development. Inclusion of vocational or regular course on tourism, hospitality and management course will create job opportunities for the youth and it will act as pull factor to develop the state tourism in future.
- (ii) *Prospects of international border tourism:* The opening of international border for free trade with Bangladesh will create an opportunity for Meghalaya to promote international border tourism. Hence, it will be necessary for the government to take initiatives to promote and establish tourism infrastructure facilities in all the major border towns of the state.
- (iii) *Diversification of tourism products:* Meghalaya boasts of different kinds of tourism products. Hence, tourism authority of Meghalaya should start segmenting the tourists based on their wants and need. In this regard niche tourism could be developed. It is a means by which destinations can focus their offerings to differentiate their tourism products and compete in an increasingly competitive and cluttered tourism environment.

(iv) *Scope for private sector's investment:* As stated, Meghalaya tourism suffers from adequate funds in implementing its tourism project. Hence, there is a huge scope to sustain in the long run if the government invites private sector's investment in the process of development of tourism infrastructure and delivery of services in the state. The privatisation of various tourism facilities with different strategies will make the projects sustainable and viable.

Threats

- (i) *Insurgency:* Insurgency and other problems relating to NEI are highlighted more than the positive aspects. The threat of insurgents and veiled exaggeration of insurgent problem by the national media could discourage prospective tourists coming to Meghalaya.
- (ii) *Environmental degradation:* The lack of opportunity for gainful employment and production has led to excessive use and abuse of forest resources in the state. This problem is, thus, causing wide scale environmental degradation in the state.
- (iii) *Practice of shifting cultivation:* The practice of shifting (*jhum*) cultivation more specifically in the Garo hills districts has been causing wide scale destruction of the ecology. *Jhuming* has become the single major cause of ecological degradation in the hills. Thus, government has to take steps in controlling this practice and shift to other viable forms of agriculture to protect the rich ecology of the state.

3.6.1.2 SWOT analysis of Mizoram Tourism

The SWOT analysis of tourism industry of Mizoram has been conducted based on the interpretations of primary as well as secondary data:

Strengths

- (i) *Natural beauty:* Mizoram is a land of rolling hills, valleys, rivers and lakes. It is a mountainous state teeming with vibrant wildlife and picturesque villages of houses built on stilts and a land of dramatic seas of morning mists with its beautiful landscape. All these make Mizoram a land of splendid natural beauty which tourists can enjoy once they set foot in the state.

- (ii) *Rich culture:* The state is an abode of people who are rich in culture with its unique traditions and customs of different hues intermingle freely to constitute a homogeneous blend. The people of Mizoram are, by nature, carefree and hospitable to visitors. They have hospitality in their nerves and the visitors can experience the friendliness of the local people once they visit.
- (iii) *Advantageous topography:* Mizoram has tremendous tourism potential because of its good topography. The hilly terrain of the state is ideally suited for trekkers, mountaineers and rock climbers ideally suited for various adventure activities. The state is a beautiful and relatively unknown destination with deep gorges, rolling hills and lush green forest which is best suitable for a vibrant centre of ecotourism. The climate of Mizoram usually is monsoon and humid type. Its temperature varies from region to region with its elevation changes. Overall temperature of the state is quite pleasant and rainy throughout the year.
- (iv) *Bewildering fairs and festivals:* The distinct art forms and festivals of Mizoram are the essential part of its rich culture and tradition exhibit the state to the world. The state observes several fascinating festivals throughout the year. Mizoram takes the pride of breaking the world records in the year 2010 for the largest bamboo dance (*cheraw*) gathering with 10,736 participants in 671 numbers of groups. Proper publicity of these festivals will pull large number of tourists attending such enthralling carnivals.
- (v) *Abundance of Water bodies:* There are a number of rivers and lakes in the state that provide a unique experience of adventure as well as leisure tourism. These water bodies have immense potential for tourism development in different areas like river cruises, water sports, white water rafting and kayaking, etc.
- (vi) *Ecotourism and Wildlife:* Mizoram has rich potential for ecotourism and wildlife tourism in the state which is still intact. The state has as many as 10 protected areas in the form of national parks and sanctuaries. These protected areas are abundantly rich in flora and fauna. They are homes to large family of birds and animals, rare

species of orchids. Once, these protected forests are marketed at the highest level, these resources will be amongst the most important tourism attractions in the state.

(vii) *Rich in arts and crafts:* The art and craft forms of Mizoram occupy a very important sector in the market. Local people are quite skilled in making bamboo and cane products. The primary section of arts and crafts in the state is textiles, bamboo and cane works as well as basketry. The local people are adept artisans and their weaving is simply superb. The motifs, the patterns, the designs, the colors, the style all are precisely traditional in nature.

Weaknesses

- (i) *Bad road conditions:* The road conditions of Mizoram are bad due to hilly terrain and rugged topography. Landslides due to heavy rainfalls during monsoon create severe problems and blockades of connectivity and proper transportation.
- (ii) *Expensive travel costs:* Unlike other states of the country, the travelling costs of the state are relatively high due to the absence of adequate public and private transportation system. Mizoram can be considered one amongst the costliest states in India where the charge of travel is quite high.
- (iii) *Lack of Entrepreneurship:* Like most of the other states of Northeast India, people of Mizoram lack entrepreneurship skills, that too particularly through tourism industry. Entrepreneurship as a career is mostly chosen by chance or under some compulsion, but not by choice. The local people of Mizoram neither give income tax nor any central tax, therefore, they hardly realise the benefits of setting up enterprises. (Singha and Sahoo, 2003)
- (iv) *Entry restriction of tourists:* The entry restriction of tourists, both foreign and domestic (people from other states of India) into Mizoram is one of the major setbacks of tourism development in the state. In entering Mizoram, domestic tourists need to get a permit, called Inner Line Permit (ILP). But, this permit system makes it difficult for the independent of first time travellers to make self arrangements to travel to Mizoram.

- (v) *Geographical isolation:* The geographical location of the Mizoram is one of the factors that fail to attract tourist inflow in the state. Being isolated from rest of the country, the state suffers from connectivity constraints, which further deprive the state from overall economic development.
- (vi) *Lack of infrastructure:* The status of infrastructure in Mizoram is still at a developing stage. Without good infrastructure no industry can grow and the same is applicable in tourism industry as well. This is one of the reasons for the snail's pace development of tourism in Mizoram.
- (vii) *Lack of organised tours:* Mizoram is considered to be ideal destination for adventurers, backpackers and nature explorers. But, lack of organised tours in the state make the tourism enthusiasts miss the opportunity to pay a visit to some of the most untouched tourism destinations available in the state.

Opportunities

- (i) *Gateway to ASEAN Countries:* India is presently eyeing for speedy implementation of its Act East Policy and trying to capture the Southeast Asian market for international trade. With its strategic location, Mizoram is one of the most potential states in this regard. The border districts of Mizoram have connectivity with Myanmar which is further connected with other ASEAN countries. Hence, proper implementation of AEP, Mizoram has a vast scope in building international collaboration with ASEAN countries; thus, boosting tourism industry in the state too.
- (ii) *Higher literacy rate:* Mizoram is having of one of the best literacy rates in India. There is a huge stock of untapped manpower resources in the state. If the tourism sector is targeted to develop in a sustainable way, then the state government should exploit this resource to the fullest, thus reducing the unemployment problem of the educated youths as well.
- (iii) *Scope for private sector participation for tourism development:* The role of private sector has been crucial in promoting ecotourism and ensuring the quality of tours and travels. In true sense, tourism in Mizoram is still a vacuum in realising the

untapped tourism potential of the state. In this regard, the state government should invite the private sector units to take active participation in tourism development and suggest various measures for the improvement of state tourism.

- (iv) *International border tourism:* There are proposals to open international trade centres in some major towns bordering Myanmar in the east and Bangladesh in the west. Once these so-called Land Customs Stations (LCSs) are opened and operated on regular basis, there is an opportunity in to develop international border tourism.
- (v) *Religious Attractions:* Mizoram is one of the few states in India where Christianity forms the majority of the population. There are churches found in every locales of the state. This tells a lot about the beliefs and faiths of the people which are historically important to them. If the tourism industry in the state is promoted through the concept of religious tourism, large number foreign tourists could be attracted to visit the state, especially from European countries.
- (vi) *Untapped archaeological sites:* Though untapped, Mizoram is rich in historical and heritage sites. Each heritage site has its own story to tell. These historical sites are scattered throughout the state. Recently, archaeologists excavate mysterious megalithic structures at Vangchhia in Champhai district which is believed to be a city once existed, belonging to a greater lost civilization. Meanwhile, an engraved image of Lord Buddha has also been discovered in Mualcheng village. These signify the rich archaeological heritage of Mizoram which might have been submerged with lost civilizations.

Threats

- (i) *Environmental degradation:* Construction of resorts and amusement parks and other tourism developments grounds a higher chance of ecological damage including deforestation and pollution of natural environment.
- (ii) *Prone to natural disaster:* Mizoram is located on dangerous seismic zone which is vulnerable to natural disasters like earthquakes. Other natural disasters like cyclone and landslides cause a high intensity of devastation every year which can create fear and can reduce the arrival of tourists into the state.

(iii) *Consequence of Shifting Cultivation:* Mizoram is one of the states in India where agriculture mainly depends upon shifting (*jhum*) cultivation. The practice of this form of agriculture results in loss of hundreds acres of forested areas and may also result in large scale wildfires deteriorating the ecological balance of the nature.

(iv) *Insurgency in neighbouring states:* Mizoram is considered a peaceful state. But, the presence of insurgent problems and militant groups in the neighbouring states could deter tourist enthusiasts in coming to the state.

4.6.1.3 Tourism SWOT analysis of the select states based on observation

Strengths

Based on observation made by the researcher, following are the strengths of the select states:

- Wide variety of tourism attractions.
- Rich in natural resources
- Rich cultural heritage
- Local communities very much fit for hospitality industry.
- Rich in arts and crafts.

Weaknesses

The weaknesses that are critical to the tourism industry in select states are:

- Inaccessibility and rugged topography.
- Perception of insecurity.
- Inadequate brand positioning and marketing.
- Lack of organised tours.
- Lack of adequate information on potential tourism destinations.
- Inadequate accommodation facilities in and around tourism destinations.
- Lack of desired food for the tourists.
- Land can be held by local community, which is not encouraging for private sector to invest.
- Exposure to hospitality standards is low and a high receptive attitude is lacking.

Opportunities

Major opportunities for the select states are:

- Development of niche tourism.
- Wide number of unexplored attractions.
- Formation of regional tourism circuits.
- Prospects of international border tourism.
- Tourism beyond boundaries.
- Act East Policy and focus on growth of Northeast India.

Threats

Some of the impending threats for tourism industry in the select states are:

- Both the select elect states are located in environment sensitive zone.
- Political instability in the region affects tourism growth.
- Strong competition for the select states from other states like Assam and Sikkim.
- Practice of shifting cultivation.
- Over use of forest resources depleting the ecological balance.

3.7 Conclusions

The present status of tourism in NEI is shrouded in mystery with immense tourism potential not yet fully utilized. Its diversity, uniqueness and richness in tourism resources are yet unexplored. As discussed, the select states viz. Meghalaya and Mizoram are quite unique in terms of potentiality of various kinds of tourism. The two states are well endowed with natural beauty that can attract a mass volume of tourists. The scenic beauty and the natural landscape of these two states are almost parallel to each other. With such resources in hands, the two states can be developed into prominent destinations in India.

Needless to mention, the two states are trying hard to market its tourism products. But, the present level of promotional activities that have been undertaken is not much effective to attract tourists throughout the year to sustain the sectoral economy. Lack of proper tourism infrastructures such as absence of rail connectivity, considered as

the cheapest mode of transportation is virtually absent in these two states. Meanwhile, communication networks like internet connectivity, well connected roads, hygienic eateries and hotels, instant banking and exchange facilities, etc. are some sorts of efforts that need to be addressed at the earliest possible, if the two states are to enjoy the fruits of tourism boom.

Although the two select states have tremendous tourism potential, the tourism industry is still miles away to go to exploit its full potential. There is need of proper tourism marketing strategy for these states. Tourist information centres must be established at most of the important tourism circuits in NEI. The governments of these two states should also encourage more number of tour operators/travel agencies with a good number of trained guides. At the same time, trainings on tourism and hospitality should be imparted to all the stakeholders who are directly involved in the tourism sector of these states. Further, the marketers need to address the negative perceptions of the people in general about different tourism destinations through proper brand positioning.

CHAPTER 4
TOURIST BEHAVIOUR:
A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF MEGHALAYA AND MIZORAM

This chapter intends to study the demographic profiles, the tour profiles and perceptions of the tourists who visited the select states. The chapter focuses on highlighting the attitudes, behaviours and satisfaction levels of the tourists on various tourism attributes in the select states. Primary data were analysed by using appropriate statistical tools to find out associations of different demographic characteristics of the tourists with their behavioural factors.

4.1 Introduction

In the present study, a structured questionnaire has been used by the researcher to study the perceptions, satisfactions and behaviours from a sample of 100 tourists each who paid a visit to Meghalaya and Mizoram. The respondents were selected by purposive sampling method. The tourists were contacted at prominent destinations in the two select states irrespective of their origin – domestic or foreign. The study aimed to analyse the perceptions of the tourists about various tourists' attractions and the allied factors in the select states, Meghalaya and Mizoram to enable the policy-makers and also other personnel who are involved in the tourism affairs to take proper steps for the development of tourism in the select states.

In order to analyse the primary data, statistical package SPSS (Version 16) was used. To study the demographic profile, the collected data were analysed by using descriptive statistics like frequencies and cross tabulation. To analyse the multiple response queries related to the opinions of the respondents such as purposes of their visits, sources of information in organizing their trips, various reasons for their satisfaction or dissatisfaction, etc. Statistical tools such as cross tabulations and chi-square were also used to study the associations of the demographic characteristics of the respondents with their behavioural responses.

This chapter has been divided into three broad sections – Demographic profile of the respondents, their tour profile and their perceptions.

4.2 Demographic profile of the respondents

In order to understand the tourists' behaviour, we need to know their demographic characteristics. Some of such characteristics studied are: age, marital status, nationality, sex, religion, family size, occupation, educational qualifications and monthly family income. As cited, to analyse the collected data statistics like frequency tables and percentages were used.

4.2.1 Age

Table 4.1 shows the age-wise classification of the respondents visiting Meghalaya and Mizoram. Over 44% of the respondents belonged to the age group of 21-35 years. 28% of the respondents belonged to 35-50 years of age. In other words, over 72% of the respondents belonged to the age group of 21-50 years.

State-wise comparison shows that respondents belonged to the age group of 21-35 years occupied the largest share (41%) in Meghalaya and in Mizoram (48%). The second place was registered by the age group of 36-50 years that accounted for 32% in Meghalaya and 24% in Mizoram. The tourists whose age group was less than 20 years were only 10% in Meghalaya and 9% in Mizoram.

Table 4.1
Age of the respondents

| Age (in years) | No. of respondents | | |
|----------------|--------------------|---------|-----------|
| | Meghalaya | Mizoram | Total |
| Less than 20 | 10 | 9 | 19 (9.5) |
| 21-35 | 41 | 48 | 89 (44.5) |
| 36-50 | 32 | 24 | 56 (28.0) |
| 51-65 | 9 | 14 | 23 (11.5) |
| Above 65 | 8 | 5 | 13 (6.5) |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 200 (100) |

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate percentage
Source: Primary data

The researcher observed that in general younger people wish to travel places known for nature's beauty all over the world as in the case of present study. Even though the select states are endowed with abundant of natural beauty for a complete leisure of all people of different age groups, the reason behind the less traffic volume of old-age

people in the region may be its inaccessibility and geographical isolation from mainland India. In other words, the aged people tend to have less inclination towards travelling to remote hilly terrain due to physical strain.

4.2.2 Marital status

To study the marital status of the respondents, three categories have been identified as shown in Table 4.2. The table shows that the majority of the respondents (59%) were married while over 38% of the respondents were unmarried.

Table 4.2
Marital status of the respondents

| Marital status | No. of respondents | | |
|------------------|--------------------|---------|-----------|
| | Meghalaya | Mizoram | Total |
| Unmarried | 38 | 39 | 77 (38.5) |
| Married | 58 | 60 | 118 (59) |
| Divorced/widowed | 4 | 1 | 5 (2.5) |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 200 (100) |

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate percentage
Source: Primary data

The table reveals that there are no significant differences between the respondents of the select states in respect of marital status. The researcher observed that the reason of higher percentage of married tourists is obviously because in general people prefer to go for tourism with family members.

4.2.3 Nationality

To study the nationality of the respondents, two types of tourists were identified, viz. Indian (domestic) and foreign as shown in Table 4.3. It reveals that 93% of the respondents were Indians and only 7% were foreigners.

Table 4.3
Nationality of the respondents

| Nationality | No. of respondents | | |
|-------------|--------------------|---------|-----------|
| | Meghalaya | Mizoram | Total |
| Indian | 91 | 95 | 186 (93) |
| Foreign | 9 | 5 | 14 (7) |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 200 (100) |

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate percentage
Source: Primary data

No significant differences exist between the respondents of the two states in respect of their nationality. Although Guwahati has an international airport, both Shillong (Meghalaya) and Aizawl (Mizoram) have only domestic airport with very less number of flight services. Further, these two states are not well connected by any railway line. This shows the importance of improving the transport infrastructure in Northeast region in terms of cheap and effective railway line and road transport, in addition to having more number of domestic flights. Also, the region has to be strategically marketed and promoted in the world's tourism map so that it increases Foreign Exchange Earnings (FEE) in the select states.

The Northeast India (NEI) is a resource rich and strategically positioned region which shares an international boundary of about 5500 km with India's neighbours. The region holds great significance in terms of India's connectivity and infrastructural ventures with Southeast and East Asian nations (Sinha, 2010). The region has a great potential to emerge as a tourism hub of India but due to poor road and air connectivity in the region – both within the region and to the places outside NEI makes it difficult for outside tourists to reach out the tourism destinations in NEI. In addition to the constraints relating to the physical connectivity, the Northeast states suffer from a negative perception of people belonging to other states of India in terms of safety, difficult terrain and low quality of logistics. Therefore, the tourism marketers need to play a vital role in changing such a negative perception of people by making continuous efforts to improve their marketing performance and also through their promotional efforts.

In order to attract the foreign tourists, the government should enhance connectivity of the region with the ASEAN nations in order to open up a new world of opportunities for shared economic growth. Moreover, the region has a strong cultural and historical linkage with the ASEAN nations, which could be exploited to forge economic cooperation.

4.2.4 Gender

Table 4.4 indicates that 29.5% of the respondents were female tourists and the remaining 70.5% were males. The percentage share of males was much higher than that of females both in case of Meghalaya and Mizoram. The same gives us a hint that the select states have not been able to attract a good number of female visitors in spite of the perceived gender equality in the region.

Table 4.4
Gender of the respondents

| Gender | No. of respondents | | |
|--------|--------------------|---------|------------|
| | Meghalaya | Mizoram | Total |
| Male | 68 | 73 | 141 (70.5) |
| Female | 32 | 27 | 59 (29.5) |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 200 (100) |

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate percentage

Source: Primary data

There is a general perception that Northeast India is known for frequent strikes, bandhs and law and order problems. This may be the prime reason behind less inflow of women tourists in the region. It was also observed that most of the women feel relatively safe when they travel along with their family. The marketers, therefore, need to address this issue while marketing and promoting the tourism destinations.

4.2.5 Religion

Table 4.4 shows the classification of respondents by religion. Nearly 50% of the respondents were Hindus, 21.5% were Christians and 19.5% were Muslims. The residual 9.5% belonged to other faiths such as Buddhism and Sikhism.

Table 4.5
Religion of the respondents

| Religion | No. of respondents | | |
|----------------------|--------------------|---------|-----------|
| | Meghalaya | Mizoram | Total |
| Hindu | 48 | 51 | 99 (49.5) |
| Muslim | 18 | 21 | 39 (19.5) |
| Christian | 24 | 19 | 43 (21.5) |
| Others (pl. specify) | 10 | 9 | 19 (9.5) |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 200 (100) |

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate percentage

* Others include Buddhism and Sikhism

Source: Primary data

The table reveals that majority of the respondents were Hindus by faith in both the states. In Meghalaya, respondents belonging to Christianity comprised the second majority while Muslims comprised the third largest. However, in case of Mizoram, Muslim respondents were second majority and Christians were the third majority.

Although both the states predominantly follow Christianity, the majority of the respondents were Hindus by religion. Thus, it can be inferred that tourists like to visit the tourism destinations irrespective of their religion, and, therefore, religion has a limited role to play in selection of tourism destination in case of the select states under the study.

4.2.6 Family size

Table 4.6 shows the classification of the respondents by their family size. It shows that over 47% of the respondents belonged to the size of 5-6 members. Family size of 3-4 members composed 30% of all the respondents of the select states.

Table 4.6
Family size of the respondents

| Family size | No. of respondents | | |
|-------------|--------------------|---------|-----------|
| | Meghalaya | Mizoram | Total |
| Up to 2 | 4 | 3 | 7 (3.5) |
| 3-4 | 25 | 35 | 60 (30) |
| 5-6 | 51 | 44 | 95 (47.5) |
| Above 6 | 20 | 18 | 38 (19) |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 200 (100) |

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate percentage

Source: Primary data

Over half of the respondents in Meghalaya belonged to the family size of 5-6 members, followed by 25% to the size of 3-4 members. Family size of more than six members accounted for 20% of the respondents in Meghalaya. In case of Mizoram, majority of the respondents (44%) belonged to the family size of 5-6 members while the respondents having family size of 3-4 members accounted for 35% only.

4.2.7 Occupation

Table 4.7 shows the classification of the respondents by their occupation. Out of the total respondents, 25% were working in private firms and 17% were working in government sector. Respondents who were engaged in business accounted for 21%. 15% of the respondents were students.

Table 4.7
Occupation of the respondents

| Occupation | No. of respondents | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------|---------|-----------|
| | Meghalaya | Mizoram | Total |
| Govt. Servant | 18 | 16 | 34 (17) |
| Private Job | 29 | 21 | 50 (25) |
| Business | 17 | 25 | 42 (21) |
| Self employed | 9 | 10 | 19 (9.5) |
| Student | 14 | 16 | 30 (15) |
| Retired | 7 | 6 | 13 (6.5) |
| Others, (Pl. specify) | 6 | 6 | 12 (6) |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 200 (100) |

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate percentage
Other occupations include house makers, politicians, activists, etc.
Source: Primary data

It is observed that retired personnel composed the least share in both the states. Obviously, the two states were not able to attract retired and aged persons due to hilly terrain and absence of adequate therapeutic facilities therein.

The table unveils that out of the total respondents, majority were private jobholders (29%) in Meghalaya, while business persons (25%) made up the majority in Mizoram. Govt. jobholders gripped a strong position amongst the respondents by holding 18% in Meghalaya and 16% in Mizoram. It is to be noted that the central government employees are eligible to avail Leave Travel Concession (LTC) to visit their hometown as well as any place in India.

4.2.8 Educational qualification

In order to understand the buying behaviour of the tourists, it is important to know their educational background. Hence, they were classified into five groups – Up to Matriculation, Intermediate, Graduate, Postgraduate and Professional.

Table 4.8 discloses that more than 76% of the total respondents were either graduates or postgraduates. Overall, most of the respondents had collegiate education. In short, most of the respondents were highly educated. Only 9.5% of the respondents had their education up to matriculation.

Table 4.8
Educational qualification of the respondents

| Educational qualification | No. of respondents | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------|---------|------------|
| | Meghalaya | Mizoram | Total |
| Up to Matriculation | 11 | 8 | 19 (8.5) |
| Intermediate | 12 | 17 | 29 (14.5) |
| Graduate | 56 | 45 | 101 (50.5) |
| Postgraduate | 13 | 18 | 31 (15.5) |
| Professional | 8 | 12 | 20 (10) |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 200 (100) |

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate percentage
Source: Primary data

The analysis shows that majority of the respondents were graduates with 56% of the respondents in Meghalaya and 45% in Mizoram, followed by postgraduates who were accounted for 13% of the respondents in Meghalaya and 18% in Mizoram. The number of respondents who attained intermediate education was 8% in Meghalaya and 17% in Mizoram. It is observed that no illiterate tourist was found during the course of the field work. It may be inferred that higher education signifies the professional development of a person which is reflected in enjoying better income, higher strata of society and improved mobility due to change in lifestyle.

4.2.9 Monthly family income

All the respondents were asked to indicate their monthly family income, and the income levels were classified into seven categories as presented in Table 4.9.

It is observed that over 31% of the respondents belonged to the monthly income group of Rs. 25,001-50,000. Income group of Rs. 50,001-75,000 constituted for over 27% of all the respondents. 10.5% of the respondents earn more than a lakh a month. Out of the total respondents 2.5% have not revealed their income level.

Table 4.9
Monthly family income of the respondents

| Monthly family income | No. of respondents | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------|------------|------------------|
| | Meghalaya | Mizoram | Total |
| Up to 25,000 | 11 | 17 | 28 (14) |
| 25,001 -50,000 | 31 | 32 | 63 (31.5) |
| 50,001 -75,000 | 24 | 31 | 55 (27.5) |
| 75,001-1,00,000 | 17 | 11 | 28 (14) |
| 1,00,001-1,25,000 | 6 | 2 | 8 (4) |
| 1,25,001-1,50,000 | 4 | 3 | 7 (3.5) |
| Above 1,50,000 | 4 | 2 | 6 (3) |
| No Response(s) | 3 | 2 | 5 (2.5) |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 200 (100) |

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate percentage
Source: Primary data

The table shows that majority of the respondents belonged to the income group of Rs. 25,001-50,000 in Meghalaya, while the income group of Rs. 50,001-75,000 made up the majority in Mizoram. Overall, the researcher found some reluctance on the part of the respondents to reveal their income and hence, it is assumed the responses indicate the incomes lesser than the actual ones.

4.2.10 Cross-sectional analyses of monthly family income

In the following sub-sections, cross sectional analyses have been carried out to study the monthly family income of the respondents across their age, gender, occupation and educational qualification. In this regard, some hypotheses have been tested to find out the association between monthly family income and select demographic characteristics of the respondents by applying Chi-square test.

4.2.10.1 Monthly family income across age

Table 4.10 reveals that under the age group of less than 20 years, equal share of 26.3% of the respondents were having monthly family income of either Rs. 50,001-75,000 or Rs. 75,001-1,00,000. Among the respondents belonging to the age group of 21-35 years, 41.6% had monthly family income of Rs. 25,001-50,000 and 27% had monthly family income of Rs. 50,001-75,000.

Table 4.10
Monthly family income across age

| Monthly family income | Age of the respondents | | | | | Total | Chi-square and P-value |
|-----------------------|------------------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|--|
| | Less than 20 | 21-35 | 36-50 | 51-65 | above 65 | | |
| Up to 25,000 | 4 (21.0%) | 14 (15.7%) | 9 (16.1%) | 0 (0%) | 1 (7.7%) | 28 (14%) | <i>Chi-square value = 45.217</i> <i>p < .021</i> <i>df = 28</i> <i>Cramer's V = .238</i> |
| 25,001-50,000 | 3 (15.8%) | 37 (41.6%) | 18 (32.1%) | 5 (21.7%) | 0 (0%) | 63 (31.5%) | |
| 50,001-75,000 | 5 (26.3%) | 24 (27.0%) | 10 (17.8%) | 7 (30.4%) | 4 (30.8%) | 50 (25%) | |
| 75,001-1,00,000 | 5 (26.3%) | 7 (7.9%) | 9 (16.1%) | 3 (13%) | 4 (30.8%) | 28 (14%) | |
| 1,00,001-1,25,000 | 0 (0%) | 3 (3.4%) | 1 (1.8%) | 2 (8.7%) | 2 (15.4%) | 8 (4%) | |
| 1,25,001-1,50,000 | 1 (5.3%) | 0 (0%) | 4 (7.1%) | 2 (8.7%) | 0 (0%) | 7 (3.5%) | |
| Above 1,50,000 | 1 (5.3%) | 2 (2.2%) | 3 (5.3%) | 3 (13%) | 2 (15.4%) | 11 (5.5%) | |
| No Response | 0 (0%) | 2 (2.2%) | 2 (3.6%) | 1 (4.3%) | 0 (0%) | 5 (2.5%) | |
| Total | 19 (100%) | 89 (100%) | 56 (100%) | 23 (100%) | 13 (100%) | 200 (100%) | |

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate percentage

Source: Primary data

In the age group of 35-50 years, nearly 50% of the respondents had monthly family income between Rs. 25,000 and Rs. 75,000, while equal share of 16.1% of the respondents had either a monthly family income of up to Rs. 25,000 or Rs. 75,000-1,00,000.

Among the respondents belonging to age group of 51-65 years, over half of them were having monthly family income ranging from Rs. 25,000 to Rs. 75,000. Meanwhile, among the respondents whose ages were above 65 years, around 62% of had monthly family income of Rs. 50,000-1,00,000.

Test of association between monthly family income and age (H_{01})

To know the association between monthly family income of the respondents and their age, Chi-square test is applied with the following hypothesis:

H_{01} : *There is no significant association between monthly family income of the respondents and their age.*

Table 4.10 shows that the Pearson Chi-square value is 45.217 with an associated significance level of .021.

$$\chi^2 (28, n = 200) = 45.217, p < .021, \text{Cramer's } V = .238$$

Since significance value (.021) lesser than .05, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected. The Cramer's V value .238 indicates that the influence of age on monthly family income is low.

4.2.10.2 Monthly family income across gender

Table 4.11 reveals that 70.5% of the total respondents were males and the remaining 29.5% were females. The analysis shows that majority of the males (34%) and females (25.4%) had monthly family income of Rs. 25,001-50,000.

Table 4.11
Monthly family income across Gender

| Monthly family income | Gender of the respondents | | Total | Chi-square and P-value |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|---------------|---------------|--|
| | Male | Female | | |
| Up to 25,000 | 22 (15.6%) | 6 (10.2%) | 28 (14%) | <i>Chi-square value</i> = 8.883 <i>p</i> > .261 <i>df</i> = 7 <i>Cramer's V</i> = .211 |
| 25,001-50,000 | 48 (34%) | 15 (25.4%) | 63 (31.5%) | |
| 50,001-75,000 | 36 (25.5%) | 14 (23.7%) | 50 (25%) | |
| 75,001-1,00,000 | 18 (12.8%) | 10 (16.9%) | 28 (14%) | |
| 1,00,001-1,25,000 | 4 (2.8%) | 4 (6.8%) | 8 (4%) | |
| 1,25,001-1,50,000 | 3 (2.1%) | 4 (6.8%) | 7 (3.5%) | |
| Above 1,50,000 | 8 (5.7%) | 3 (5.1%) | 11 (5.5%) | |
| No Response | 2 (1.4%) | 3 (5.1%) | 5 (2.5%) | |
| Total | 141 (100%) | 59 (100%) | 200 (100%) | |

Source: Primary data

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate percentage

Among the male respondents, 25.5% of them had monthly family income of Rs. 50,001-75,000, followed by 15.6% having monthly family income up to Rs. 25,000. Further, 12.8% of the male respondents were found to be having monthly family income

of Rs. 75,001-1,00,000, while only 5.7% were having monthly family income of above Rs. 1,50,000.

Among the female respondents, nearly 24% had monthly family income of Rs. 25,001-50,000. Over 10% had monthly family income up to Rs. 25,000, while a crucial 16.9% had monthly family income of Rs. 75,000-1,00,000.

Test of association between monthly family income and gender (H₀₂)

To know the association between monthly family income of the respondents and their gender, Chi-square test is applied with the following hypothesis:

H₀₂: *There is no significant association between monthly family income of the respondents and their gender.*

Table 4.11 reveals that the Pearson Chi-Square value is 8.883 with an insignificance level of .211.

$$\chi^2 (7, n = 200) = 8.883, p > .261, \text{Cramer's } V = .211.$$

Since significance value (.261) is greater than .05, the null hypothesis (H₀) is accepted. The Cramer's V value is .211 indicates that the influence of gender on monthly family income of the respondents is low.

4.2.10.3 Monthly family income across occupation

Table 4.12 shows that among the respondents working in private sector, majority of the respondents (42%) had monthly family income of Rs. 25,001-50,000. They are followed by 26% who had a monthly family ranging of Rs. 50,001-1,00,000. Among the respondents whose occupation was business, over 38% of them had monthly family income of Rs. 25,001-50,000, followed by 31% with income of Rs. 50,001-75,000 and 14.3% with income up to Rs. 25,000. Among the government servants, over 37% of the respondents had monthly family income of Rs. 50,001-75,000, while over 23% had monthly family income up to Rs. 25,000. Nearly 22% of them had monthly family income of Rs. 25,001-50,000.

Table 4.12
Monthly family income across occupation

| Monthly family income | Occupation of the respondents | | | | | | | Total |
|---|-------------------------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|----------------|---------------|
| | Govt. servant | Private job | Business | Self employed | Student | Retired | Others, if any | |
| Up to 25,000 | 8 (23.5%) | 7 (14%) | 6 (14.3%) | 3 (15.8%) | 3 (10%) | 0 (0%) | 1 (8.3%) | 28 (14%) |
| 25,001-50,000 | 7 (21.9%) | 21 (42%) | 16 (38.1%) | 7 (36.8%) | 9 (30%) | 0 (0%) | 3 (25%) | 63 (31.5%) |
| 50,001-75,000 | 12 (37.5%) | 8 (16%) | 13 (31%) | 2 (10.5%) | 7 (23.3%) | 4 (30.8%) | 4 (33.3%) | 50 (25%) |
| 75,001-1,00,000 | 3 (9.4%) | 5 (10%) | 2 (4.8%) | 1 (5.3%) | 9 (30%) | 6 (46.1%) | 2 (16.7%) | 28 (14%) |
| 1,00,001-1,25,000 | 2 (6.2%) | 3 (6%) | 2 (4.8%) | 1 (5.3%) | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) | 8 (4%) |
| 1,25,001-1,50,000 | 0 (0%) | 2 (4%) | 2 (4.8%) | 1 (5.3%) | 1 (3.3%) | 0 (0%) | 1 (8.3%) | 7 (3.5%) |
| Above 1,50,000 | 2 (6.2%) | 3 (6%) | 1 (2.4%) | 0 (0%) | 1 (3.3%) | 3 (23.1%) | 1 (8.3%) | 11 (5.5%) |
| No Response | 0 (0%) | 1 (2%) | 0 (0%) | 4 (21%) | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) | 5 (2.5%) |
| Total | 34 (100%) | 50 (100%) | 42 (100%) | 19 (100%) | 30 (100%) | 13 (100%) | 12 (100%) | 200 (100%) |
| Chi-square and P-value | | | | | | | | |
| <i>Chi-square value = 83.527; p < .000; df = 42; Cramer's V = .264</i> | | | | | | | | |

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate percentage
Source: Primary data

Among the students, equal share of 30% had monthly family income of either Rs. 25,001-50,000 or Rs. 75,001-1,00,000. Over 23% of them had monthly family income of Rs. 50,001-75,000. Among the respondents who were self employed, more than half of them were having monthly family income up to Rs. 50,000. Meanwhile, over three-fourth of the respondents who were retired personnel had family income ranging between Rs. 50,000 and Rs. 1,00,000.

Test of association between monthly family income and occupation (H₀₃)

To know the association between monthly family income of the respondents and their occupation, Chi-square test is applied with the following hypothesis:

H₀₃: *There is no significant association between monthly family income of the respondents and their occupation.*

Table 4.12 reveals that the Pearson Chi-Square value is 83.527 with a significance level of .000.

$$\chi^2 (42, n = 200) = 83.527, p < .000, \text{Cramer's } V = .264$$

Since significance value (.000) is lesser than .05, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected. The Cramer's V value is .264 indicates that the influence of occupation on monthly family income of the respondents is low.

4.2.10.3 Monthly family income across educational qualification

Table 4.13 reveals that out of the graduates, majority of them (40.6%) had monthly family income of Rs. 25,001-50,000, followed by 28.7% with income of Rs. 50,001-75,000 and 13.95% with Rs. 75,0001-1,00,000.

Table 4.13
Monthly family income across educational qualification

| Monthly family income | Educational qualification of the respondents | | | | | Total | Chi-square and P-value |
|-----------------------|--|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|---|
| | Up to matriculation | Intermediate | Graduate | Post graduate | Professional | | |
| Up to 25,000 | 6 (31.6%) | 14 (48.3%) | 6 (5.9%) | 1 (3.2%) | 1 (5%) | 28 (14%) | Chi-square value = 74.470 p < .000 df = 28 Cramer's V = .305 |
| 25,001-50,000 | 3 (15.8%) | 7 (24.1%) | 41 (40.6%) | 8 (25.8%) | 4 (20%) | 63 (31.5%) | |
| 50,001-75,000 | 5 (26.3%) | 3 (10.3%) | 29 (28.7%) | 8 (25.8%) | 5 (25%) | 50 (25%) | |
| 75,001-1,00,000 | 5 (26.3%) | 2 (6.9%) | 14 (13.9%) | 5 (16.1%) | 2 (10%) | 28 (14%) | |
| 1,00,001-1,25,000 | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) | 2 (1.9%) | 4 (12.9%) | 2 (10%) | 8 (4%) | |
| 1,25,001-1,50,000 | 0 (0%) | 1 (3.4%) | 3 (2.9%) | 1 (3.2%) | 2 (10%) | 7 (3.5%) | |
| Above 1,50,000 | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) | 5 (4.9%) | 3 (9.7%) | 3 (15%) | 11 (5.5%) | |
| No Response | 0 (0%) | 2 (6.9%) | 1 (0.9%) | 1 (3.2%) | 1 (5%) | 5 (2.5%) | |
| Total | 19 (100%) | 29 (100%) | 101 (100%) | 31 (100%) | 20 (100%) | 200 (100%) | |

Source: Primary data

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate percentage

Among the postgraduates, equal share of 25.8% had monthly family income of Rs. 25,001-50,000 and Rs. 50,001-75,000. They were followed by 16.1% having monthly family income of Rs. 75,001-1,00,000, and 12.9% with Rs. 1,00,001-1,25,000.

Over 48% of the respondents who had intermediate education had monthly family income up to Rs. 25,000. Over 24% of them had the monthly family income of Rs. 25,001-50,000, while 10.3% had a monthly family income of Rs. 50,001-75,000.

Among the respondents who possessed professional qualification, 45% of them were found to be having monthly family income of Rs. 25,000-75,000. Meanwhile, among the respondents who had education up to matriculation about one-third had monthly family income up to Rs. 25,000 only.

Test of association between monthly family income and educational qualification (H₀₄)

To know the association between monthly family income of the respondents and their educational qualification, Chi-square test is applied with the following hypothesis:

H₀₄: *There is no significant association between monthly family income of the respondents and their educational qualification.*

Table 4.13 reveals that the Pearson Chi-Square value is 74.470 with a significance level of .000.

$$\chi^2 (28, n = 200) = 74.470, p < .000, \text{Cramer's } V = .305.$$

Since significance value (.000) is lesser than .05, the null hypothesis (H₀) is rejected. The Cramer's V value is .305 indicates that the influence of educational qualification on monthly family income of the respondents is medium.

Therefore, it may be concluded that there is no significant association between monthly family income of the respondents and their gender. In case of other three variables, viz. age, occupation and educational qualification, there is significant association with monthly family income of the respondents.

4.3. Tour profile of the respondents

In this section, an attempt is made to assess the tour profile of the respondents. The questionnaire contains questions relating to the number of visits they made so far, their companions, the modes of transportation used, the purposes of their visits, the length of their stay, the sources of information they tapped while visiting the select states and so on. To analyse the collected data statistical tools like frequency, weighted score and chi-square tools were used.

4.3.1 Number of visits

The researcher has classified the respondents by the number of visits they made to the select states as shown in Table 4.14.

Table 4.14
Number of visits made by the respondents

| Number of visits | No. of respondents | | |
|------------------|--------------------|---------|-----------|
| | Meghalaya | Mizoram | Total |
| First | 46 | 43 | 89 (44.5) |
| Second | 27 | 22 | 49 (24.5) |
| Third | 14 | 23 | 37 (18.5) |
| Fourth | 9 | 6 | 15 (7.5) |
| Fifth or more | 4 | 6 | 10 (5) |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 200 (100) |

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate percentage

Source: Primary data

44% of the respondents were visiting the place for the first time. Over 24% of the respondents were making their visits for the second time, and over 18% percent were visiting for the third time. Meanwhile, 12.5% of the respondents were visiting the state for the fourth times and above.

46% of the respondents in Meghalaya were first time visitors to the state. The second time visitor accounted for 27%. The third time visitors were accounted for 14% and fourth time visitors comprised of 9%. In case of Mizoram, 43% of the respondents were first time visitors. 22% of the respondents were second time visitors and 23% of the respondents were third time visitors.

A satisfied tourist is an asset to the development of tourism industry in that particular place. He or she is more likely to make repeated visits, apart from sharing a positive word-of-mouth with known people. It is a fact that both the select states under the study have tremendous tourism potential ranging from nature based tourism, adventure tourism, culture based heritage tourism, leisure tourism, to special packages for international border tourism. But, due to improper marketing of these products, the prospective tourists are left less known about the extent of attractiveness that could be offered by the select states. Hence, extensive marketing strategy should be adopted to market Northeast India as a global tourist destination so that many tourists are encouraged to visit the region again and again.

4.3.2 Nature of travel companions

The travelling nature of a tourist may not be identical; a traveller may either travel alone or with the family members or friends and relatives. Table 4.15 shows the distribution of the tourists based on different types of companions during their visits. Hence, the companions were classified as family, friends and business associates.

The table shows that 55% of the respondents have visited the select state with family members. Over 30% and 10% of the respondents were on tour with friends and business associates respectively. Only 4% of all the respondents have visited the tourism destinations alone without any company. In the course of field work, most of the respondents expressed that travelling with family members would generate enjoyment while touring the places.

Table 4.15
Nature of travel companions of the respondents

| Nature of travel companions | No. of respondents | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|---------|-----------|
| | Meghalaya | Mizoram | Total |
| Alone | 2 | 6 | 8 (4) |
| Family | 58 | 52 | 110 (55) |
| Friends | 33 | 28 | 61 (30.5) |
| Business associates | 7 | 14 | 21 (10.5) |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 200 (100) |

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate percentage
Source: Primary data

Out of the respondents in Meghalaya, 58% have visited the state with their family, 33% visited with friends and 7% have visited along with business associates. In case of Mizoram, 52% of the respondents have visited the state with family members. At the same time, 28% have visited the state with their friends, while 14% travelled to the state with business associates. Only 6% of the respondents were found to be lone travelers in Mizoram.

4.3.3 Cross-sectional analyses of nature of travel companions

In the following sub-sections, cross sectional analyses have been carried out to study the nature of travel companions of the respondents across their age, marital status, gender and family size. In this regard, some hypotheses have been tested to find out the

association between the nature of travel companions and select demographic characteristics of the respondents by applying Chi-square test.

4.3.3.1 Nature of travel companions across age

Table 4.16 shows that under the age group of 21-35 years, majority of the respondents were travelling with friends (48.3%) and family (43.8%). In the same age group, those who were travelling alone and with business associates composed of 3.45% and 4.5% of the respondents respectively.

Under the age group of 36-50 years, majority were travelling with family (46.4%), followed by friends and business associates (23.2% each), while 7.1% were travelling alone.

Table 4.16
Nature of travel companions across age

| Nature of travel Companions | Age of the respondents (in years) | | | | | Total | Chi-square and P- value |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|--|
| | Less than 20 | 21-35 | 35-50 | 51-65 | Above 65 | | |
| Alone | 0 (0%) | 3 (3.4%) | 4 (7.1%) | 1 (4.3%) | 0 (0%) | 8 (4%) | <i>Chi-square value = 49.785</i> <i>p < .000</i> <i>df = 12</i> <i>Cramer's V = .288</i> |
| Family | 15 (79%) | 39 (43.8%) | 26 (46.4%) | 17 (74%) | 13 (100%) | 110 (55%) | |
| Friends | 4 (21%) | 43 (48.3%) | 13 (23.2%) | 1 (4.3%) | 0 (0%) | 61 (30.5%) | |
| Business associates | 0 (0%) | 4 (4.5%) | 13 (23.2%) | 4 (17.4%) | 0 (0%) | 21 (10.5%) | |
| Total | 19 (100%) | 89 (100%) | 56 (100%) | 23 (100%) | 13 (100%) | 200 (100%) | |

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate percentage

Source: Primary data

In the category of 51-65 years, 74% of the respondents were travelling with family, while 17.4% were travelling with business associates. The table also reveals that all the respondents who were less than 20 years of age were travelling with family (79%) and friends (21%) only, whereas all the respondents who were above the age of 65 years were travelling with family members only.

Test of association between nature of travel companions and age (H_{05})

To know the association between nature of travel companions and age of the respondents, Chi-square test is applied with the following hypothesis:

H₀₅: *There is no significant association between nature of travel companions and age of the respondents*

Table 4.16 reveals that the Pearson Chi-Square value is 49.785 with a significance level of .000.

$$\chi^2 (12, n = 200) = 49.785, p < .000, \text{Cramer's } V = .288$$

Since significance value (.000) is lesser than .05, the null hypothesis (H₀) is rejected. The Cramer's V value is .288 indicates that the influence of age on travel companions is medium.

4.3.3.2 Nature of travel companions across marital status

Table 4.17 shows that 59% of the total respondents were married while over 38% were unmarried. The remaining respondents (2.5%) were found to be either divorced or widowed.

Table 4.17
Nature of travel companions across marital status

| Nature of travel companions | Marital status of the respondents | | | Total | Chi-square and P- value |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|------------------|---------------|--|
| | Unmarried | Married | Divorced/widowed | | |
| Alone | 3 (3.9%) | 5 (4.2%) | 0 (0%) | 8 (4%) | Chi-square value = 40.230 p < .000 df = 6 Cramer's V = .317 |
| Family | 28 (36.4%) | 80 (67.8%) | 2 (40%) | 110 (55%) | |
| Friends | 42 (54.5%) | 16 (13.6%) | 3 (60%) | 61 (30.5%) | |
| Business associates | 4 (5.2%) | 17 (14.4%) | 0 (0%) | 21 (10.5%) | |
| Total | 77 (100%) | 118 (100%) | 5 (100%) | 200 (100%) | |

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate percentage

Source: Primary data

The results of cross tabulation (Table 4.17) reveal that among the married respondents, 67.8% were travelling with family, 14.4% with business associates, 13.6% with friends, while 4.2% were travelling alone. It was found that majority of the unmarried respondents were travelling with friends (54.5%) and family members (36.4%). A negligible share among the unmarried respondents was also found to be travelling with business associates.

It is inferred from the analysis that married travellers mostly go for tours with family members while the unmarried travellers prefer to travel with friends.

Test of association between nature of travel companions and marital status (H₀₆)

To know the association between nature of travel companions and marital status of the respondents, Chi-square test is applied with the following hypothesis:

H₀₆: *There is no significant association between nature of travel and marital status companions of the respondents*

Table 4.17 reveals that the Pearson Chi-Square value is 40.238 with a significance level of .000.

$$\chi^2 (6, n = 200) = 40.238, p < .000, \text{Cramer's } V = .317$$

Since significance value (.000) is lesser than .05, the null hypothesis (H₀) is rejected. The Cramer's V value is .317 indicates that the influence of marital status on travel companion is medium.

4.3.3.3 Nature of travel companions across gender

Table 4.18 shows that 70.5% of the total respondents were male and the remaining 29.5% were female.

Table 4.18
Nature of travel companions across gender

| Nature of travel companions | Gender of the respondents | | Total | Chi-square and P- value |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|---------------|---------------|--|
| | Male | Female | | |
| Alone | 8 (5.7%) | 0 (0%) | 8 (4%) | Chi-square value = 16.199 p < .001 df = 3 Cramer's V = .285 |
| Family | 68 (48.2%) | 42 (71.2%) | 110 (55%) | |
| Friends | 44 (31.2%) | 17 (28.8%) | 61 (30.5%) | |
| Business associates | 21 (14.9%) | 0 (0%) | 21 (10.5%) | |
| Total | 141 (100%) | 59 (100%) | 200 (100%) | |

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate percentage
Source: Primary data

The table shows that over 48% of the male respondents were travelling with family members, whereas over 71% of female respondents preferred to travel with their

family. About 30% of male and female respondents preferred to travel with friends. None of the female respondents were travelling alone or with business associates.

Test of association between nature of travel companions and gender (H₀₇)

To know the association between nature of travel companions and gender of the respondents, Chi-square test is applied with the following hypothesis:

H₀₇: *There is no significant association between nature of travel companions and their gender of the respondents*

Table 4.18 reveals that the Pearson Chi-Square value is 16.199 with a significance level of .001.

$$\chi^2 (3, n = 200) = 16.199, p < .001, \text{Cramer's } V = .285$$

Since significance value (.001) is lesser than .05, the null hypothesis (H₀) is rejected. The Cramer's V value is .285 indicates that the influence of gender on travel companions is medium.

4.3.3.4 Nature of travel companions across family size

Table 4.19 reveals that under the family size of 5-6 members, half of the respondents were travelling with family, nearly 38% with friends and only 8.4% were travelling with business associates.

Table 4.19
Nature of travel companions across family size

| Nature of travel companions | Family size of the respondents (in Nos.) | | | | Total | Chi-square and P- value |
|-----------------------------|--|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|--|
| | Up to 2 | 3-4 | 5-6 | Above 6 | | |
| Alone | 1 (14.3%) | 1 (1.7%) | 3 (3.2%) | 3 (7.9%) | 8 (4%) | Chi-square value = 15.956 df = 9 Cramer's V = .163 |
| Family | 5 (71.4%) | 41 (68.3%) | 48 (50.5%) | 16 (42.1%) | 110 (55%) | |
| Friends | 1 (14.3%) | 12 (20%) | 36 (37.9%) | 12 (31.6%) | 61 (30.5%) | |
| Business associates | 0 (0%) | 6 (10%) | 8 (8.4%) | 7 (18.4%) | 21 (10.5%) | |
| Total | 7 (100%) | 60 (100%) | 95 (100%) | 38 (100%) | 200 (100%) | |

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate percentage

Source: Primary data

Under the family size of 3-4 members, over 68% of the respondents were travelling with family, while 20% were travelling with friends 10% with business associates.

Among the respondents whose family size was above 6 members, 42.1% were travelling with the family and nearly 32% were travelling with friends. Nearly 19% of the respondents were travelling with business associates.

Test of association between nature of travel companions and family size (H₀₈)

To know the association between nature of travel companions and family size of the respondents, Chi-square test is applied with the following hypothesis:

H₀₈: *There is no significant association between nature of travel companions and family size of the respondents*

Table 4.19 reveals that the Pearson Chi-Square value is 15.956 with an insignificance level of .068.

$$\chi^2 (9, n = 200) = 15.956, p > .068, \text{Cramer's } V = .163$$

Since significance value (.068) is greater than .05, the null hypothesis (H₀) is accepted. The Cramer's V value is .163 indicates that the influence of family size on travel companions is small.

Therefore, it may be concluded that there is no significant association between nature of travel companions of the respondents and their family size. In case of other three variables, viz. age, marital status and gender, there is significant association with nature of travel companions of the respondents.

4.3.4 Number of travel companions

Table 4.20 shows the classification of respondents based on the number of travel companions during their visits to the select states. The table indicates that overwhelming majority of the respondents (73%) travelled along with 2-4 persons. Respondents who were travelling with 5-7 persons registered a considerable proportion (19%), while only 4% of the respondents travelled along with 8 or more accompanying persons. This finding is quite positive considering the total number of tourists travelled along with the respondents to the destinations under study. It is obvious that the tourists normally don't

prefer to travel alone. Travelling together would mean deriving some relaxation and enjoying fun while spending their time with their loved ones – may be family members or friends. When the tourists travel along with many companions it would lead to the generation of more revenue to the tourism industry.

Table 4.20
Number of travel companions of the respondents

| No. of companions | No. of respondents | | |
|-------------------|--------------------|---------|----------|
| | Meghalaya | Mizoram | Total |
| Alone | 2 | 6 | 8 (4) |
| 2-4 | 71 | 75 | 146 (73) |
| 5-7 | 21 | 17 | 38 (19) |
| 8 and above | 6 | 2 | 8 (4) |
| Total | 98 | 94 | 192 (96) |

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate percentage
Source: Primary data

In the present study, 4% of the respondents were found to be travelling alone. The table reveals that no significant differences between the respondents of the select states in respect of number of companions. It is inferred that an overwhelming 92% of all the respondents have been accompanied by at least 2-7 persons during their trips to the select states. This may be due to the reason that, if accompanied, while travelling tourists can share their opinions, happiness, and fun.

4.3.5 Cross-sectional analyses of number of travel companions

In the following sub-sections, cross sectional analyses have been carried out to study the number of travel companions of the respondents across their age, marital status, gender and family size. In this regard, some hypotheses have been tested to find out the association between the number of travel companions and select demographic characteristics of the respondents by applying Chi-square test.

4.3.5.1 Number of travel companions across age

Table 4.21 reveals that in the age group of 21-35 years, 77.5% of the respondents were travelling with 2-4 persons while over 12% were travelling with 5-7 persons. Under the age group of 36-50 years, nearly 70% of the respondents were travelling with

2-4 persons while 30.8% were travelling with 5-7 persons. In the same age group, it was observed that over 7% respondents were travelling alone.

Table 4.21
Number of travel companions across age

| No. of travel companions | Age of the respondents (in years) | | | | | Total | Chi-square and P- value |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|---|
| | Less than 20 | 21-35 | 35-50 | 51-65 | Above 65 | | |
| Alone | 0 (0%) | 3 (3.4%) | 4 (7.1%) | 1 (4.3%) | 0 (0%) | 8 (4%) | Chi-square value = 12.722 p > .390 df = 12 Cramer's V = .146 |
| 2-4 | 14 (73.7%) | 69 (77.5%) | 39 (69.6%) | 16 (69.6%) | 8 (61.5%) | 146 (73%) | |
| 5-7 | 4 (21%) | 11 (12.4%) | 12 (30.8%) | 6 (26.1%) | 5 (38.5%) | 38 (19%) | |
| 8 and above | 1 (5.3%) | 6 (6.7%) | 1 (1.9%) | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) | 8 (4%) | |
| Total | 19 (100%) | 89 (100%) | 56 (100%) | 23 (100%) | 13 (100%) | 200 (100%) | |

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate percentage

Source: Primary data

Under the category of 51-65 years, nearly 70% of the respondents were travelling with 2-4 persons, while over 26% of the respondents were travelling with 5-7 persons. About three-fourth of the respondents whose ages were up to 20 years were found to be travelling with 2-4 persons. Over one-fifth of the respondents were travelling with 5-7 persons. Under the age group of above 65 years, all the respondents were found to be travelling only with companions.

Test of association between number of travel companions and age (H₀₉)

To know the association between number of travel companions and age of the respondents, Chi-square test is applied with the following hypothesis:

H₀₉: *There is no significant association between the number of travel companions and age of the respondents*

Table 4.21 reveals that the Pearson Chi-Square value is 12.722 with an insignificance level of .390.

$$\chi^2 (12, n = 200) = 12.722, p > .390, \text{Cramer's } V = .146$$

Since significance value (.390) is greater than .05, the null hypothesis (H₀) is accepted. The Cramer's V value is .146 indicates that the influence of age on number of companions of the respondent is small.

4.3.5.2 Number of travel companions across marital status

Table 4.22 reveals that 59% of the total respondents were married while over 38% were unmarried. The table also shows that among the married respondents, over 70.4% were travelling with 2-4 persons. Nearly 24% were travelling with 5-7 persons. Over 4% of the married respondents were travelling alone.

Table 4.22
Number of travel companions across marital status

| No. of travel companions | Marital Status of the Respondents | | | Total | Chi-square and P- value |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|------------------|---------------|---|
| | Unmarried | Married | Divorced/widowed | | |
| Alone | 3 (3.9%) | 5 (4.2%) | 0 (0%) | 8 (4%) | Chi-square value = 8.599 p>.197 df = 6 Cramer's V = .147 |
| 2-4 | 59 (76.6%) | 83 (70.4%) | 4 (80%) | 146 (73%) | |
| 5-7 | 9 (11.7%) | 28 (23.7%) | 1 (20%) | 38 (19%) | |
| 8 and above | 6 (7.8%) | 2 (1.7%) | 0 (0%) | 8 (4%) | |
| Total | 77 (100%) | 118 (100%) | 5 (100%) | 200 (100%) | |

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate percentage

Source: Primary data

More than one-fourth of the unmarried respondents were travelling with 2-4 persons, while over 11.7% were travelling with 5-7 persons. Over 7% were travelling with 8 or more members.

Test of association between number of travel companions and marital status (H_{010})

To know the association between number of travel companions and marital status of the respondents, Chi-square test is applied with the following hypothesis:

H_{010} : *There is no significant association between number of travel companions and marital status of the respondents*

Table 4.22 reveals that the Pearson Chi-Square value is 8.599 with an insignificance level of .197.

$$\chi^2 (6, n = 200) = 8.599, p > .197, \text{Cramer's } V = .147$$

Since significance value (.197) is greater than .05, the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted. The Cramer's V value is .147 indicates that the influence of marital status on number of companions of the respondents is small.

4.3.5.3 Number of travel companions across gender

Table 4.23 shows that 70.5% of the total respondents were males and the remaining 29.5% were females. Among the male respondents, over 74% were travelling with 2-4 persons. Over 16% were travelling with 5-7 persons. Only 5.7% were travelling alone.

Table 4.23
Number of travel companions across gender

| No. of travel companions | Gender of the respondents | | Total | Chi-square and P-value |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|---------------|---------------|---|
| | Male | Female | | |
| Alone | 8 (5.7%) | 0 (0%) | 8 (4%) | Chi-square value = 5.552 p> .136 df = 3 Cramer's V= .167 |
| 2-4 | 105 (74.5%) | 41 (69.5%) | 146 (73%) | |
| 5-7 | 23 (16.3%) | 15 (25.4%) | 38 (19%) | |
| 8 and Above | 5 (3.5%) | 3 (5.1%) | 8 (4%) | |
| Total | 141 (100%) | 59 (100%) | 200 (100%) | |

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate percentage
Source: Primary data

Among the female respondents, nearly 70% were found to be travelling with 2-4 persons. One-fourth was travelling with 5-7 persons. Only 5.1% were travelling with 8 or more persons. There was no lone traveller among the female respondents. This reflects that women always prefer to travel along with their family members and close friends.

Test of association between number of travel companions and gender (H_{011})

To know the association between number of travel companions and gender of the respondents, Chi-square test is applied with the following hypothesis:

H_{011} : *There is no significant association between number of travel companions and gender of the respondents*

Table 4.23 reveals that the Pearson Chi-Square value is 5.552 with an insignificance level of .136.

$$\chi^2 (3, n = 200) = 5.552, p > .136, \text{Cramer's } V = .167$$

Since significance value (.136) is greater than .05, the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted. The Cramer's V value is .167 indicates that the influence of gender on number of companions of the respondents is small.

4.3.5.4 Number of travel companions across family size

Table 4.24 shows that with regard to respondents belonging to family size of 5-6 members, over 67% were travelling with 2-4 persons. Over 24% of them were travelling with 5-7 persons while 5.3% were travelling with 8 or more persons.

Table 4.24
Number of travel companions across family size

| No. of travel companions | Family size of the respondents (in Nos.) | | | | Total | Chi-square and P- value |
|--------------------------|--|--------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|--|
| | Up to 2 | 3-4 | 5-6 | Above 6 | | |
| Alone | 1 (14.3%) | 1 (1.7%) | 3 (3.2%) | 3 (7.9%) | 8 (4%) | Chi-square value = 15.979 $p > .067$ $df = 9$ Cramer's V = .163 |
| 2-4 | 6 (85.7%) | 51 (85%) | 64 (67.3%) | 25 (65.8%) | 146 (73%) | |
| 5-7 | 0 (0%) | 5 (8.3%) | 23 (24.2%) | 10 (26.3%) | 38 (19%) | |
| 8 and above | 0 (0%) | 3 (5%) | 5 (5.3%) | 0 (0%) | 8 (4%) | |
| Total | 7 (100%) | 60 (100%) | 95 (100%) | 38 (100%) | 200 (100%) | |

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate percentage

Source: Primary data

With regard to family size of 3-4 members, 85% of the respondents were travelling with 2-4 persons. Over 8% of them were travelling with 5-7 persons and 5% with 8 or more persons.

Among the respondents belonging to family size of above 6 members, nearly 66% were travelling with 2-4 persons. Over 26% of them were travelling with 5-7 persons while around 8% were found to be travelling alone.

Test of association between number of travel companions and family size (H_{012})

To know the association between number of travel companions and family size of the respondents, Chi-square test is applied with the following hypothesis:

H_{012} : *There is no significant association between number of travel companions and family size of the respondents*

Table 4.24 reveals that the Pearson Chi-Square value is 15.979 with an insignificance level of .067.

$$\chi^2 (9, n = 200) = 15.979, p > .067, \text{Cramer's } V = .163$$

Since significance value (.067) is greater than .05, the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted. The Cramer's V value is .163 indicates that the influence of family size on number of companions of the respondents is small.

From the hypotheses testing above, it may be concluded that there is no significant association between number of travel companions and all the select demographic characteristics of the respondents, viz. age, marital status, gender and family size.

4.3.6 Frequency of tours

Table 4.25 demonstrates the frequency of tours preferred by the respondents in general. The table shows that 48.5% of the respondents preferred to go for tours once a year. Over 29% of the respondents indicated that they go for tours once in two years. For 10% of the respondents tourism has become a part of their lifestyle and they have a tendency to go for tours 2-4 time a year. However, 11% of the respondents were either not sure or don't have such routine for tours.

Table 4.25
Frequency of tours of the respondents

| Frequency of tours | No. of respondents | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------|---------|-----------|
| | Meghalaya | Mizoram | Total |
| Once a year | 50 | 47 | 97 (48.5) |
| Once in two years | 28 | 31 | 59 (29.5) |
| 2-4 times a year | 13 | 7 | 20 (10) |
| More than 4 times a year | 0 | 2 | 2 (1) |
| Any other (No routine) | 9 | 13 | 22 (11) |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 200 (100) |

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate percentage

Source: Primary data

From the table it is evident that half of the respondents of Meghalaya have the habit to go for tours at least once a year, while 28% maintained that they wish to go for

tours once in two years. In case of Mizoram, 47% of the respondents of Mizoram go for tours once a year and 31% of them go for tours only once in two years.

4.3.7 Cross-sectional analyses of frequency of tours

In the following sub-sections, cross sectional analyses have been carried out to study the frequency of tours of the respondents across their age, marital status, gender, family size and monthly family income. In this regard, some hypotheses have been tested to find out the association between the frequency of tours and select demographic characteristics of the respondents by applying Chi-square test.

4.3.7.1 Frequency of tours across age

Table 4.26 shows that among the respondents belonging to the age group of 21-35 years, 43.8% preferred to go for tours once a year. Over 37% of them preferred to go for tourism once in two years. With respect to the age group of 36-50 years, 48.2% of the respondents preferred to go for tours once a year, while 30.4% of them preferred once in two years.

Table 4.26
Frequency of tours across age

| Frequency of tours | Age of the respondents (in years) | | | | | Total | Chi-square and P- value |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|---|
| | Less than 20 | 21-35 | 36-50 | 51-65 | Above 65 | | |
| Once a year | 10 (52.6%) | 39 (43.8%) | 27 (48.2%) | 13 (56.5%) | 8 (61.5%) | 97 (48.5%) | Chi-square value = 34.815 p < .004 df = 16 Cramer's V = .209 |
| Once in two years | 3 (15.8%) | 33 (37.1%) | 17 (30.4%) | 6 (26.1%) | 0 (0%) | 59 (29.5%) | |
| 2-4 times a year | 0 (0%) | 8 (9%) | 4 (7.1%) | 3 (13%) | 5 (38.5%) | 20 (10%) | |
| More than 4 times a year | 0 (0%) | 2 (2.3%) | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) | 2 (1%) | |
| Any other (No routine) | 6 (31.6%) | 7 (7.8%) | 8 (14.3%) | 1 (4.4%) | 0 (0%) | 22 (11%) | |
| Total | 19 (100%) | 89 (100%) | 56 (100%) | 23 (100%) | 13 (100%) | 200 (100%) | |

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate percentage

Source: Primary data

Among the age group of 51-65 years, 56.5% of them preferred for tourism once a year, followed by 26.1% preferring once in two years, and 13% preferring for 2-4 times a year. Among the respondents whose ages were up to 20 years, 52.6% of them

preferred to go for tours once a year. However, over 36% of them indicated that they had no routine for making tours.

Test of association between frequency of tours and age (H₀₁₃)

To know the association between frequency of tours of the respondents and their age, Chi-square test is applied with the following hypothesis:

H₀₁₃: *There is no significant association between frequency of tours of the respondents and their age*

Table 4.26 reveals that the Pearson Chi-Square value is 34.815 with a significance level of .004.

$$\chi^2 (16, n = 200) = 34.815, p < .004, \text{Cramer's } V = .209$$

Since significance value (.004) is lesser than .05, the null hypothesis (H₀) is rejected. The Cramer's V value is .209 indicates that the influence of age on frequency of tours of the respondents is small.

4.3.7.2 Frequency of tours across marital status

Table 4.27 shows that 59% of the respondents were married while over 38% were unmarried. The remaining respondents (2.5%) were found to be either divorced or widowed.

Table 4.27
Frequency of tours across marital status

| Frequency of tours | Marital status of the respondents | | | Total | Chi-square and P- value |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|-------------------|---------------|---|
| | Unmarried | Married | Divorced/ widowed | | |
| Once a year | 37 (48%) | 58 (49.1%) | 2 (40%) | 97 (48.5%) | Chi-Square value = 9.982 p > .266 df = 8 Cramer's V = .158 |
| Once in two years | 20 (26%) | 37 (31.4%) | 2 (40%) | 59 (29.5%) | |
| 2-4 times a year | 5 (6.5%) | 14 (11.9%) | 1 (20%) | 20 (10%) | |
| More than 4 times a year | 2 (2.6%) | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) | 2 (1%) | |
| Any other (No routine) | 13 (16.9%) | 9 (7.6%) | 0 (0%) | 22 (11%) | |
| Total | 77 (100%) | 118 (100%) | 5 (100%) | 200 (100%) | |

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate percentage

Source: Primary data

The table shows that among the married respondents, over 49% preferred to go for tours once a year. Over 31% of them preferred to go for tours once in two years while nearly 12% preferred for tourism 2-4 times a year.

48% of the unmarried respondents preferred to go for tours once a year. , followed by 26% opting to tour once in two years and 6.5% 2-4 times a year. Meanwhile, nearly 17% of the unmarried respondents admitted that they do have such tour plans. It is revealed that out of the respondents who were either divorced or widowed, 80% of them go for tours either once a year or once in two years.

Test of association between frequency of tours and marital status (H₀₁₄)

To know the association between frequency of tours of the respondents and their marital status, Chi-square test is applied with the following hypothesis:

H₀₁₄: *There is no significant association between frequency of tours of the respondents and their marital status*

Table 4.27 reveals that the Pearson Chi-Square value is 9.982 with an insignificance level of .266.

$$\chi^2 (8, n = 200) = 9.982, p > .266, \text{Cramer's } V = .158$$

Since significance value (.266) is greater than .05, the null hypothesis (H₀) is accepted. The Cramer's V value is .158 indicates that the influence of marital status on frequency of tours of the respondents is small.

4.3.7.3 Frequency of tours across gender

The results of cross tabulation (Table 4.28) reveal that 70.5% of the total respondents were male and the remaining 29.5% were female.

Table 4.28 shows that among the male respondents, over 45% preferred to go for tours once a year while 27.7% preferred once in two years. Over 10% of the male respondents preferred to go for tours 2-4 times a year. However, nearly 15% of them indicated that they didn't have any such tour plan.

Among the female respondents, 56% preferred to go for tours once a year. On the other hand, 33.9% preferred for tourism once in two years.

Table 4.28
Frequency of tours across gender

| Frequency of tours | Gender of the respondents | | Total | Chi-square and P- value |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|---------------|---------------|---|
| | Male | Female | | |
| Once a year | 64 (45.4%) | 33 (56%) | 97 (48.5%) | <i>Chi-square value = 9.121</i> <i>p> .058</i> <i>df = 4</i> <i>Cramer's V=.214</i> |
| Once in two years | 39 (27.7%) | 20 (33.9%) | 59 (29.5%) | |
| 2-4 times a year | 15 (10.6%) | 5 (8.4%) | 20 (10%) | |
| More than 4 times a year | 2 (1.4%) | 0 (0%) | 2 (1%) | |
| Any other (No routine) | 21 (14.9%) | 1 (1.7%) | 22 (11%) | |
| Total | 141 (100%) | 59 (100%) | 200 (100%) | |

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate percentage

Source: Primary data

Test of association between frequency of tours and gender (H₀₁₅)

To know the association between frequency of tours of the respondents and their gender, Chi-square test is applied with the following hypothesis:

H₀₁₅: *There is no association between frequency of tours of the respondents and their gender*

Table 4.28 reveals that the Pearson Chi-Square value is 9.121 with an insignificance level of .058.

$$\chi^2 (4, n = 200) = 9.121, p > .058, \text{Cramer's } V = .214$$

Since significance value (.058) is greater than .05, the null hypothesis (H₀) is accepted. The Cramer's V value is .214 indicates that the influence of gender on frequency of tours of the respondents is small.

4.3.7.4 Frequency of tours across family size

Table 4.29 shows that under the family size of 5-6 members, over 46% of the respondents preferred to go for tours once a year and nearly 35% preferred once in two years. At the same time, 14.7% responded that they didn't have specific routine for tourism.

Under the family size of 3-4 members, over 58% of the respondents preferred to go for tours once a year while over 18% preferred to go for tours once in two years only.

Among the respondents whose family size was above 6 members, over 42% preferred for tourism at least once a year.

Table 4.29
Frequency of tours across family size

| Frequency of tours | Family size of the respondents (in Nos.) | | | | Total | Chi-square and P- value |
|--------------------------|--|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---|
| | Up to 2 | 3-4 | 5-6 | Above 6 | | |
| Once a year | 2 (28.6%) | 35 (58.3%) | 44 (46.3%) | 16 (42.1%) | 97 (48.5%) | Chi-square value = 21.769 $p < .040$ $df = 12$ Cramer's V = .190 |
| Once in two years | 4 (57.1%) | 11 (18.3%) | 33 (34.8%) | 11 (28.9%) | 59 (29.5%) | |
| 2-4 times a year | 1 (14.3%) | 8 (13.4%) | 4 (4.2%) | 7 (18.4%) | 20 (10%) | |
| More than 4 times a year | 0 (0%) | 2 (3.3%) | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) | 2 (1%) | |
| Any other (No routine) | 0 (0%) | 4 (6.7%) | 14 (14.7%) | 4 (10.5%) | 22 (11%) | |
| Once a year | 7 (100%) | 60 (100%) | 95 (100%) | 38 (0%) | 200 (100%) | |

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate percentage

Source: Primary data

Test of Association between frequency of tours and family size (H_{016})

To know the association between frequency of tours of the respondents and their family size, Chi-square test is applied with the following hypothesis:

H_{016} : *There is no significant association between frequency of tours of the respondents and their family size*

Table 4.29 reveals that the Pearson Chi-Square value is 21.769 with a significance level of .040.

$$\chi^2 (9, n = 200) = 21.769, p < .040, \text{Cramer's } V = .190$$

Since significance value (.040) is lesser than .05, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected. The Cramer's V value is .190 indicates that the influence of family size on frequency of tours of the respondents is small.

4.3.7.5 Frequency of tours across monthly family income

Table 4.30 reveals that among the income group of Rs. 25,001-50,000, 41.3% of the respondents preferred to go for tours once in two years while 34.9% of the respondents preferred to go for tours at least once in a year.

Table 4.30

Frequency of tours across monthly family income

| Frequency of tours | Monthly family income of the respondents (in Rs.) | | | | | | | | Total |
|--------------------------|---|---------------|--------------|---------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|------------|---------------|
| | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | |
| Once a year | 6 (21.4%) | 22 (34.9%) | 31 (62%) | 25 (89.3%) | 2 (25%) | 4 (57.1%) | 6 (54.5%) | 1 (20%) | 97 (48.5%) |
| Once in two years | 17 (60.7%) | 26 (41.3%) | 7 (14%) | 2 (7.1%) | 2 (25%) | 2 (28.6%) | 1 (9.1%) | 2 (40%) | 59 (29.5%) |
| 2-4 times a year | 1 (3.6%) | 6 (9.5%) | 2 (4%) | 1 (3.6%) | 4 (50%) | 0 (0%) | 4 (36.4%) | 2 (40%) | 20 (10%) |
| More than 4 times a year | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) | 2 (4%) | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) | 2 (1%) |
| Any other (No routine) | 4 (14.3%) | 9 (14.3%) | 8 (16%) | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) | 1 (14.3%) | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) | 22 (11%) |
| Total | 28 (100%) | 63 (100%) | 50 (100%) | 28 (100%) | 8 (100%) | 7 (100%) | 11 (100%) | 5 (0%) | 200 (100%) |
| Chi-Square Value | | | | P Value | | df | | Cramer's V | |
| 86.459 | | | | p< .000 | | 28 | | .329 | |

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate percentage

A = Up to 25,000 B = 25,001-50,000 C = 50,001-75,000 D = 75,001-1,00,000
 E = 1,00,001-1,25,000 F = 1,25,001-1,50,000 G = Above 1,50,000 H = No Response

Source: Primary data

Among the respondents belonging to monthly income group of Rs. 50,001-75,000, 62% preferred to go for tours once a year while 14% preferred to go for tours only once in two years. In the monthly family income group of Rs. 25,000, over 60% of the respondents indicated that they preferred to go for tours only once in two years. At the same time, over 21% of the respondents preferred for tourism at least once in a year.

Further, it can be inferred from the table that majority of the respondents across all income groups indicated that they preferred to go for tours at least once in a year. This indicates a good sign in the development of tourism as a whole; thereby increasing the revenue generation through tourism industry. Hence, the tourism marketers should adopt marketing strategies to enhance the frequency of tours of the tourists from once to more than once in a calendar year.

Test of association between frequency of tours and monthly family income (H₀₁₇)

To know the association between frequency of tours of the respondents and their monthly family income, Chi-square test is applied with the following hypothesis:

H₀₁₇: *There is no significant association between frequency of tours of the respondents and their monthly family income*

Table 4.30 reveals that the Pearson Chi-Square value is 86.459 with a significance level of .000.

$$\chi^2 (28, n = 200) = 86.459, p < .000, \text{Cramer's } V = .329$$

Since significance value (.000) is lesser than .05, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected. The Cramer's V value is .329 indicates that the influence of monthly family income on frequency of tours of the respondents is medium.

From the hypotheses tests above, it may be concluded that there is no significant association between frequency of tours of the respondents and their marital status and gender. In case of other three variables, viz. age, family size and monthly family income, there is significant association with frequency of tours of the respondents.

4.3.8 Means of travel used from place of residence to Guwahati/Kolkata

In general, the Northeast India (NEI) is considered isolated and remote from the rest of the country. Even different states of NEI are isolated from each other mainly due to hilly terrain and other geographical constraints. Both the select states do not have proper railway line. Shillong, the capital of Meghalaya is relatively well connected by the road as it is 105 km away from Guwahati (Assam). Guwahati, by virtue of its geographical location is well connected by the road and railway line. Guwahati is also having an international airport. Shillong has an airport, but, most of the people prefer to go by road due to easy accessibility from Guwahati. Though Aizawl is connected by road and airways, it would take around 20 hours to reach Aizawl from Guwahati to cover a distance of only 494 km. the airport is located in Lengpui, a small town which is 32 km away from Aizawl. Lengpui airport is connected with Kolkata and Guwahati by three daily flights. As this sector is not competitive the fares are quite high thereby making the journey quite expensive.

Hence, a query was made to know the means of travel used by the respondents for reaching Guwahati/Kolkata in the process of reaching the destinations under the present study. The respondents belonged to NEI were asked to ignore this query if they didn't travel across these two states.

Table 4.31 shows that 34% of the respondents have preferred train to travel up to Guwahati or Kolkata. 11% of the respondents used bus while 9.5% of the respondents used airways for reaching Guwahati or Kolkata. Less than 5% of the respondents used either hired car or own vehicle for reaching either of these two cities.

Table 4.31
Means of travel used from place of residence to Guwahati/Kolkata

| Means of travel | No. of respondents | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------|---------|-----------|
| | Meghalaya | Mizoram | Total |
| Air | 8 | 11 | 19 (9.5) |
| Train | 37 | 31 | 68 (34) |
| Bus | 12 | 10 | 22 (11) |
| Hired car | 3 | 4 | 7 (3.5) |
| Own vehicle | 2 | 0 | 2 (1) |
| Others, (please specify) | 0 | 0 | 0 (0) |
| No response | 38 | 44 | 82 (41) |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 200 (100) |

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate percentage

Source: Primary data

The study reveals that 37% of the respondents in Meghalaya travelled to Guwahati or Kolkata by train, 12% by bus and only 8% by airways. In case of the respondents of Mizoram, 31% of them reached Guwahati or Kolkata by train, 11% by airways and only 10% by bus. 41% of the total respondents have not responded this query; many of them didn't travel to the select destinations via Guwahati or Kolkata.

4.3.9 Means of travel used from place of residence/Guwahati/Kolkata to select states

Table 4.32 studies the means of travel used by the respondents from their place of residences directly to the select states. As noted, both the select states are not directly accessible by railways. Therefore, one has to use either road transport or airways as the only means of accessibility to reach the select states.

It is evident from the table that the bus was considered as the most preferred mode of transportation by 44.5% of the respondents. 20% of the respondents used hired car and 8% of the respondents used own vehicle to reach the select states. It is observed that only 8% of all the respondents travelled by air to reach the select states. Over 19%

of all the respondents had arrived to the select states by other means of transportation which may include mostly maxi cab (sumo) services and taxis.

Table 4.32
Means of travel used from place of residence/Guwahati/Kolkata to select states

| Means of Travel | No. of respondents | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------|---------|-----------|
| | Meghalaya | Mizoram | Total |
| Air | 5 | 11 | 16 (8) |
| Train | 0 | 0 | 0 (0) |
| Bus | 52 | 37 | 89 (44.5) |
| Hired car | 22 | 18 | 40 (20) |
| Own vehicle | 7 | 9 | 16 (8) |
| Others, (please specify) | 14 | 25 | 39 (19.5) |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 200 (100) |

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate percentage
Source: Primary data

State-wise analysis the study shows that bus services were utilized by majority of the Meghalaya tourists (52%), 22 % had used hired cars and 7% had used their own vehicles while travelling to the state. However, airway was used by the least respondents (5%). In case of Mizoram, majority of the respondents (37%) used bus services to travel to the state, while 18% used hired car and 11% had use air connectivity to travel to Mizoram.

4.3.10 Is it a package tour?

A tour package is a total tourism product as it generally consists of transport from the generating area to the destination, accommodation at the destination and possibly some other recreational or business tourist services. It can be expressed a total tourism product planned and operated for either independent travelers or for groups to one destination or multi-destinations consisting of air travel and land arrangement segments for number of days specified, with a set of features (tangible and intangible) and for a set price.

Generally, tour package is about three things, namely, attraction of the destination, accessibility to the destination and facilities or services available at the destination. Thus, for a tourist, a tour package is the experience as a whole including attitudes and expectations, from the time of leaving point of origin to the time of return.

In view of this, the respondents were asked to indicate whether their tour was packaged tour organized by any tour operator. Table 4.33 discloses that 87.5% of the respondents under the study had not used any type of tour package while travelling to the select states. The rest of the respondents utilized the services of tour operators.

Table 4.33
Is it a package tour?

| Package tour? | No. of respondents | | |
|---------------|--------------------|---------|------------|
| | Meghalaya | Mizoram | Total |
| Yes | 17 | 8 | 25 (12.5) |
| No | 83 | 92 | 175 (87.5) |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 200 (100) |

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate percentage

Source: Primary Data

State-wise analysis shows that 17% of the respondents in Meghalaya have used tour package while only 8% of the respondents in Mizoram have used it while coming to the state.

4.3.11 Main purpose of the current visit

Normally, people like to go to different places for different reasons. The reasons may include spending vacation, visiting the family or friends, attractions in the tourism destinations namely culture or festivals, historical importance, shopping, nature of people, scenic beauty and business or official purposes.

The present study attempts to identify the main purpose of the respondents for visiting the select states. The respondents were asked to assign 5 ranks in order of importance for the purpose of their visit. The purposes identified are: vacation/leisure, business, good weather, adventure/ecotourism, culture/festivals, religion, historical places, friendly people, honeymoon, fashionable destination, family visit and conference. The weighted average scores were calculated to know the overall ranking of the purpose of visit.

Table 4.34
Main purpose of the current visit to Meghalaya

| Purpose of visit | Ranking of the purpose of visit | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|----------------|------------|-------------|
| | I | II | III | IV | V | Weighted Score | Rating (%) | Rank |
| Vacation / Leisure | 38 | 18 | 10 | 8 | 11 | 319 | 21.27 | I |
| Business | 11 | 12 | 6 | 4 | 0 | 129 | 8.60 | V |
| Good weather | 5 | 8 | 12 | 10 | 8 | 121 | 8.07 | VI |
| Adventure / Ecotourism | 10 | 15 | 18 | 17 | 20 | 218 | 14.53 | III |
| Culture / festivals | 8 | 25 | 23 | 20 | 18 | 267 | 17.80 | II |
| Religion | 9 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 2 | 75 | 5.00 | VII |
| Historical places | 6 | 8 | 14 | 21 | 25 | 171 | 11.40 | IV |
| Friendly people | 0 | 2 | 6 | 10 | 8 | 54 | 3.60 | IX |
| Honeymoon | 4 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 28 | 1.87 | XI |
| Fashionable destination | 0 | 0 | 4 | 8 | 8 | 36 | 2.40 | X |
| Family visit | 4 | 6 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 57 | 3.80 | VIII |
| Conference | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 25 | 1.67 | XII |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 1500 | 100.00 | - |

Source: Primary data

From the table 4.34, the rankings reveal that beyond doubt vacation/leisure is the importance factor for which the respondents visited Meghalaya. In other words, vacation/leisure has been ranked first based on the weighted average scores, which is followed by culture/festival (17.8% of rating). Adventure/ecotourism was the third ranking (14.53% of rating) while historical places was the fourth ranking (11.40% of rating) purpose of visit in Meghalaya. On the other hand, business was the fifth ranking purpose of visit of the respondents in Meghalaya with a rating of purpose of 8.60%.

In table 4.35, as revealed by the overall ranking of the purposes of visit of the respondents in Mizoram vacation/leisure has been the highest ranking purpose (25% of rating), followed by culture/festival (17.07% of rating) and historical place (14.47% of rating). Meanwhile, significant respondents were observed to have visited Mizoram due to adventure/ecotourism (14.33% of rating) and business (10.26% of rating) purposes which were ranked fourth and fifth respectively.

Table 4.35
Main purpose of the current visit to Mizoram

| Purpose of visit | Ranking of the purpose of visit | | | | | Weighted Score | Rating (%) | Rank |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|----------------|------------|-------------|
| | I | II | III | IV | V | | | |
| Vacation / leisure | 41 | 26 | 15 | 8 | 5 | 375 | 25.00 | I |
| Business | 17 | 6 | 12 | 4 | 1 | 154 | 10.26 | V |
| Good weather | 0 | 2 | 8 | 12 | 9 | 65 | 4.33 | VII |
| Adventure / Ecotourism | 7 | 18 | 15 | 23 | 17 | 215 | 14.33 | IV |
| Culture / festivals | 12 | 21 | 13 | 22 | 29 | 256 | 17.07 | II |
| Religion | 5 | 5 | 3 | 4 | 13 | 75 | 5.00 | VI |
| Historical places | 8 | 16 | 21 | 19 | 12 | 217 | 14.47 | III |
| Friendly people | 0 | 0 | 7 | 5 | 9 | 40 | 2.67 | IX |
| Honeymoon | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 10 | 0.67 | XII |
| Fashionable destination | 1 | 0 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 24 | 1.60 | X |
| Family visit | 4 | 6 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 54 | 3.60 | VIII |
| Conference | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 15 | 1.00 | XI |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 1500 | 100.00 | - |

Source: Primary data

The above two tables (Table 5.34 and 5.35) clearly indicate that the respondents preferred to visit the select states due to vacation/leisure, followed by culture/festivals, adventure/ecotourism, and historical importance.

This finding gives us an impression that both Meghalaya and Mizoram are considered as tourism destinations due to some unique characteristics that also make them different from other places. The state governments and tourism departments of the select states should take this as their strength and accordingly appropriate measures should be developed for core competence. A strategy is also in demand to expand the opportunity for the tourists for more access of cultural diversity of these states. Furthermore, to cater the specific needs of adventurers, the state governments should equip the ecotourism/adventure spots with required support system comprising of safety, guidance, food and rest facilities, etc. An effective marketing strategy should always be in place by having in-depth knowledge about the nature of the prospective tourists, their preferences on products and the purpose of visits.

4.3.12 Length of stay

The length of stay in a tourism destination mainly depends on the connectivity in terms of transportation, popularity of the destination, the infrastructure facilities available in the place and weather conditions. Final decision on the part of the tourists become easy and less complicated if the destination has proper transport facilities, hospitality by the local community, prevalence of law and order conditions and adequate infrastructure facilities such as good lodging, restaurants and internet facility at affordable prices. It can be noted that fortune of a tourism industry not only depends on the number of tourist visits in the region, but also with the length of their stay and satisfaction derived out of their tourism experience.

In this context, the respondents were asked to indicate the length of stay during their visits to the select states.

Table 4.36
Length of stay of the respondents

| Length of stay | No. of respondents | | |
|------------------|--------------------|---------|------------|
| | Meghalaya | Mizoram | Total |
| Less than 5 days | 57 | 62 | 119 (59.5) |
| 6-10 days | 32 | 26 | 58 (29) |
| 11-15 days | 7 | 5 | 12 (6) |
| 16-30 days | 2 | 5 | 7 (3.5) |
| Over a month | 2 | 2 | 4 (2) |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 200 (100) |

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate percentage

Source: Primary data

Table 4.36 reveals that over 59% of all the respondents have stayed for less than 5 days while 29% have stayed for 6-10 days during their visit to study states.

It can be stated from the table that 57% of the Meghalaya tourists have stayed for less than 5 days while 32% of them have stayed for 6-10 days in the state. In case of Mizoram, 62% of the respondents have stayed for less than 5 days while 26% of them stayed for 6-10 days.

4.3.13 Cross-sectional analyses of length of stay

A traveler's length of stay during the trip mainly depends on the popularity of the destination, the infrastructure facilities, hospitality of the local community; prevalence of law and order conditions, etc. and finally the satisfaction derive out of the experience. It is pertinent that a satisfied tourist would play a proactive role by sharing his positive feelings to others through word-of-mouth communication. Hence, all the tourism stakeholders should address the genuine concerns of the prospective tourists to enable them make decisions to plan a long duration of their trips.

In the subsequent sub-sections, cross sectional analyses have been carried out to study the length of stay of the respondents across their age, marital status, gender, monthly family income and the nature of their companions. Further, some hypotheses have been tested to find out the association between the length of stay and select demographic characteristics of the respondents by applying Chi-square test.

4.3.13.1 Length of stay across age

Table 4.37 shows that under the age group 21-35 years, 61.8% of the respondents have stayed for less than 5 days while 22.7% have stayed for 6-10 days. Among the respondents belonging to the age group of 36-50 years, over 55.4% have stayed for less than 5 days, followed by one-third for 6-10 days and nearly 9% for 11-15 days.

Table 4.37
Length of stay across age

| Length of stay | Age of the respondents (in years) | | | | | Total | Chi-square and P- value |
|----------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|----------------|---|
| | Less than 20 | 21-35 | 35-50 | 51-65 | Above 65 | | |
| 1-5 days | 12 (63.2%) | 55 (61.8%) | 31 (55.4%) | 16 (69.6) | 5 (38.5%) | 119 (59.5%) | Chi-square value = 15.327 p>.501 df = 16 Cramer's V=.138 |
| 6-10 days | 4 (21%) | 22 (24.7%) | 19 (33.9%) | 6 (26.1) | 7 (53.8%) | 58 (29%) | |
| 11-15 days | 2 (10.5%) | 5 (5.6%) | 5 (8.9%) | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) | 12 (6%) | |
| 16-30 days | 0 (0%) | 4 (4.5%) | 1 (1.8%) | 1 (4.3%) | 1 (7.7%) | 7 (3.5%) | |
| Over a month | 1 (5.3%) | 3 (3.4%) | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) | 4 (2%) | |
| Total | 19 (100%) | 89 (100%) | 56 (100%) | 23 (100%) | 13 (100%) | 200 (100%) | |

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate percentage

Source: Primary data

The table shows that most of the respondents across all age groups comprising nearly 90% of them have preferred to stay not more than 10 days. At the same time, only 6% have preferred to stay for 10-15 days during their visits to the select states.

Further, the table shows that only 2% of the respondents have stayed for more than 30 days during their visits in the select states. Thus, it would be most appropriate for the destination marketers to apply intensive marketing approach so that tourists are encouraged for a longer length of stay in future.

Test of association between length of stay and age (H₀₁₈)

To know the association between length of stay of the respondents and their age, Chi-square test is applied with the following hypothesis:

H₀₁₈: *There is no significant association between the length of stay of the respondents and their age.*

Table 4.37 reveals that the Pearson Chi-Square value is 15.327 with an insignificance level of .501.

$$\chi^2 (6, n = 200) = 15.327, p > .501, \text{Cramer's } V = .138$$

Since significance value (.501) is greater than .05, the null hypothesis (H₀) is accepted. The Cramer's V value is .138 indicates that the influence of age on length of stay of the respondents is low.

4.3.13.2 Length of stay across marital status

Table 4.38 reveals that majority of the total respondents were married (59%) while over 38% were unmarried. The remaining respondents (2.5%) were found to be either divorced or widowed.

Table 4.38 shows that among the married respondents, over 63% have stayed for less than 5 days. 28% have stayed for 6-10 days while nearly 6% have stayed for 11-15 days. Meanwhile, no married respondents have been found to have stayed for over a month's time.

Among the unmarried respondents, over 55% of them have stayed for less than 5 days while over 28% have stayed for 6-10 days. Further, it can be noticed from the table that the respondents who have stayed for over a month's time were all unmarried.

Table 4.38
Length of stay across marital status

| Length of stay | Marital status of the respondents | | | Total | Chi-square and P- value |
|----------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|------------------|----------------|--|
| | Unmarried | Married | Divorced/widowed | | |
| 1-5 days | 43 (55.8%) | 75 (63.6%) | 1 (20%) | 119 (59.5%) | <i>Chi-Square value = 14.471</i> <i>p > 0.070</i> <i>df = 8</i> <i>Cramer's V = .190</i> |
| 6-10 days | 22 (28.6%) | 33 (28%) | 3 (60%) | 58 (29%) | |
| 11-15 days | 5 (6.5%) | 7 (5.9%) | 0 (0%) | 12 (6%) | |
| 16-30 days | 3 (3.9%) | 3 (2.5%) | 1 (20%) | 7 (3.5%) | |
| Over a month | 4 (5.2%) | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) | 4 (2%) | |
| Total | 77 (100%) | 118 (100%) | 5 (100%) | 200 (100%) | |

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate percentage
Source: Primary data

Test of association between length of stay and marital status (H₀₁₉)

To know the association between length of stay of the respondents and their marital status, Chi-square test is applied with the following hypothesis:

H₀₁₉: *There is no significant association between the length of stay of the respondents and their marital status*

Table 4.38 reveals that the Pearson Chi-Square value is 14.471 with an insignificance level of .070.

$$\chi^2 (8, n = 200) = 14.471, p > .070, \text{Cramer's } V = .190$$

Since significance value (.070) is greater than .05, the null hypothesis (H₀) is accepted. The Cramer's V value is .190 indicates that the influence of marital status on length of stay of the respondents is low.

4.3.13.3 Length of stay across gender

Table 4.39 shows that 70.5% of the total respondents were male and the remaining 29.5% were female. Among the male respondents, over 60% of them have stayed for 1-5 days during their visits to study states. Further, 28.4% of the male respondents were found to have been staying for 6-10 days. The table shows that the respondents who have stayed for over a month's time were all males.

Table 4.39
Length of stay across gender

| Length of stay | Gender of the respondents | | Total | Chi-square and P- value |
|----------------|---------------------------|---------------|----------------|--|
| | Male | Female | | |
| 1-5 days | 85 (60.3%) | 34 (57.6%) | 119 (59.5%) | <i>Chi-square value = 2.474</i> <i>p>.649</i> <i>df = 4</i> <i>Cramer's V=.111</i> |
| 6-10 days | 40 (28.4%) | 18 (30.5%) | 58 (29%) | |
| 11-15 days | 8 (5.7%) | 4 (6.8%) | 12 (6%) | |
| 16-30 days | 4 (2.8%) | 3 (5.1%) | 7 (3.5%) | |
| Over a month | 4 (2.8%) | 0 (0%) | 4 (2%) | |
| Total | 141 (100%) | 59 (100%) | 200 (100%) | |

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate percentage

Source: Primary data

With regard to female respondents, over 30% of them have stayed for 6-10 days. However, nearly 58% of them have stayed for less than 5 days while visiting the select states. Further, the table reveals that no female respondent has stayed for over a month's time.

Test of association between length of stay and gender (H₀₂₀)

To know the association between length of stay of the respondents and their gender, Chi-square test is applied with the following hypothesis:

H₀₂₀: *There is no significant association between the length of stay of the respondents and their gender*

Table 4.39 reveals that the Pearson Chi-Square value is 2.474 with an insignificance level of .649..

$$\chi^2 (4, n = 200) = 2.474, p > .649, \text{Cramer's } V = .111$$

Since significance value (.649) is greater than .05, the null hypothesis (H₀) is accepted. The Cramer's V value is .111 indicates that the influence of gender on length of stay of the respondents is low.

4.3.13.4 Length of stay across monthly family income

Table 4.40 shows that in the monthly family income group of Rs. 25,001-50,000, over half of the respondents have stayed less than 5 days. Over one-third of the

respondents have stayed for 6-10 days. Among the respondents belonging to the family income group of Rs. 50,001-75,000, all the respondents have stayed for either less than 5 days (56%) or for 6-10 days (44%).

Table 4.40
Length of stay across monthly family income

| Length of stay | Monthly family income of the respondents (in Rs.) | | | | | | | | Total |
|------------------|---|---------------|--------------|---------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|---------------|
| | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | |
| 1-5 days | 19 (67.9%) | 33 (52.4%) | 28 (56%) | 23 (82.1%) | 2 (25%) | 5 (71.4%) | 5 (45.4%) | 4 (80%) | 97 (48.5%) |
| 6-10 days | 4 (14.2%) | 22 (34.9%) | 22 (44%) | 4 (14.3%) | 4 (50%) | 0 (0%) | 2 (18.2%) | 0 (0%) | 59 (29.5%) |
| 11-15 days | 3 (10.7%) | 3 (4.8%) | 0 (0%) | 1 (3.6%) | 2 (25%) | 2 (28.6%) | 1 (9.1%) | 0 (0%) | 20 (10%) |
| 16-30 days | 1 (3.6%) | 4 (6.3%) | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) | 1 (9.1%) | 1 (20%) | 2 (1%) |
| Over a month | 1 (3.6%) | 1 (1.6%) | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) | 2 (18.2%) | 0 (0%) | 22 (11%) |
| Total | 28 (100%) | 63 (100%) | 50 (100%) | 28 (100%) | 8 (100%) | 7 (100%) | 11 (100%) | 5 (100%) | 200 (100%) |
| Chi-square Value | | | P Value | | | df | | Cramer's V | |
| 61.884 | | | p< .000 | | | 28 | | .278 | |

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate percentage

A = Up to 25,000 B = 25,001-50,000 C = 50,001-75,000 D = 75,001-1,00,000
E = 1,00,001-1,25,000 F = 1,25,001-1,50,000 G = Above 1,50,000 H = No Response

Source: Primary data

Among the respondents whose monthly family income was up to Rs. 25,000, over two-third have stayed less than 5 days. Meanwhile, under the income group of Rs. 75,001-1,00,000, over 82% of the respondents have also stayed less than 5 days only.

Overall, across all monthly family income groups, majority of the respondents have stayed in the select destinations less than 5 days only. At the same time, nearly one-third of all the respondents have also stayed for 6-10 days, while a negligible percentile of respondents were observed to have stayed for more than 10 days.

Test of association between length of stay and monthly family income (H_{021})

To know the association between length of stay of the respondents and their monthly family income, Chi-square test is applied with the following hypothesis:

H_{021} : *There is no significant association between the length of stay of the respondents and their monthly family income.*

Table 4.40 reveals that the Pearson Chi-Square value is 86.459 with a significance level of .000.

$$\chi^2 (28, n = 200) = 86.459, p < .000, \text{Cramer's } V = .329$$

Since significance value (.000) is lesser than .05, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected. The Cramer's V value is .329 indicates that the influence of monthly family income on length of stay of the respondents is medium.

4.3.13.5 Length of stay across nature of travel companion

Among the respondents who visited the select states with family members, over 59% of them have stayed less than 5 days, while one-third of them have stayed for 6-10 days. Among the respondents who were travelling with friends, over 54% of them have stayed less than 5 days, while 26% of them have stayed for 6-10 days.

Table 4.41
Length of stay across nature of travel companions

| Length of stay | Nature of travel companions of the respondents | | | | Total | Chi-square and P- value |
|----------------|--|---------------|---------------|---------------------|----------------|--|
| | Alone | Family | Friends | Business associates | | |
| 1-5 days | 5 (62.5%) | 65 (59.1%) | 33 (54.1%) | 16 (76.2%) | 119 (59.5%) | <i>Chi-square value = 22.600</i> <i>p < .031</i> <i>df = 12</i> <i>Cramer's V = .194</i> |
| 6-10 days | 2 (25%) | 37 (33.6%) | 16 (26.2%) | 3 (14.3%) | 58 (29%) | |
| 11-15 days | 0 (0%) | 7 (6.4%) | 3 (4.9%) | 2 (9.5%) | 12 (6%) | |
| 16-30 days | 1 (12.5%) | 1 (0.9%) | 5 (8.2%) | 0 (0%) | 7 (3.5%) | |
| Over a month | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) | 4 (6.6%) | 0 (0%) | 4 (2%) | |
| Total | 8 (100%) | 110 (100%) | 61 (100%) | 21 (100%) | 200 (100%) | |

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate percentage

Source: Primary data

Among the business travelers, more than three-fourth of the respondents have stayed for less than 5 days. Similarly, it was also observed that majority of the lone travelers have stayed less 5 than days only.

Test of association between length of stay and nature of companions (H_{022})

To know the association between length of stay of the respondents and nature of their travel companions, Chi-square test is applied with the following hypothesis:

H₀₂₂: *There is no significant association between the length of stay of the respondents and the nature of their travel companion.*

Table 4.41 reveals that the Pearson Chi-Square value is 22.600 with a significance level of .031.

$$\chi^2 (12, n = 200) = 22.600, p < .031, \text{Cramer's } V = .194$$

Since significance value (.031) is smaller than .05, the null hypothesis (H₀) is rejected. The Cramer's V value is .194 indicates that the influence of companion on length of stay of the respondents is low.

From the hypotheses tests above, it may be concluded that there is no significant association between length of stay of the respondents and their age, marital status and gender. In case of two other variables, viz. monthly family income and nature of travel companion, there is significant association with length of stay of the respondents.

4.3.14 Sources of information used in organizing the trip

The importance and glory of a tourist destination can be known through many sources. The respondents were asked to indicate the sources of information they used in organizing trip to the select states. They were asked to rank up to three (3) in order of importance of the various sources, viz. newspapers/magazines, travel agencies, friends/relatives, tourism websites/internet, television and previous experience(s). Weighted average scores were calculated to know the overall ranking of sources of information used in organizing trip to select states.

The analysis in Table 4.42 shows that word-of-mouth generated through *friends/relatives* have been the major source of information for majority of the respondents (31.67% of rating) in organizing trip to Meghalaya. The attribute *previous experience(s)*, that played an important role in organizing trip to Meghalaya was ranked second (19.67% of rating), while *travel agencies* (16.67% of rating) was the third most used source of information.

Table 4.42
Sources of information used to organize the trip to Meghalaya

| Sources of information | Ranking of sources of information used | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|-----|-----|----------------|------------|------|
| | I | II | III | Weighted score | Rating (%) | Rank |
| Newspapers / magazines | 6 | 9 | 17 | 53 | 8.83 | V |
| Travel agencies | 27 | 8 | 3 | 100 | 16.67 | III |
| Friends / relatives | 31 | 29 | 39 | 190 | 31.67 | I |
| Tourism dept. websites / internet | 10 | 24 | 20 | 98 | 16.33 | IV |
| Television | 3 | 12 | 8 | 41 | 6.83 | VI |
| Previous experience(s) | 23 | 18 | 13 | 118 | 19.67 | II |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 600 | 100 | |

Source: Primary data

In case of Mizoram too (as in Table 4.43), word-of-mouth generated through friend/relative circles (31.66% of rating) have been the major source of information, while *previous experience(s)* (24.16% of rating) of the respondents have been the second source of information used while organizing trip to the state. Information gathered through *tourism websites/internet* was the third important source of information used by the respondents in organizing trip to the state.

Table 4.43
Sources of information used to organize the trip to Mizoram

| Sources of information | Ranking of sources of information used | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|-----|-----|----------------|------------|------|
| | I | II | III | Weighted score | Rating (%) | Rank |
| Newspapers / magazines | 5 | 10 | 12 | 47 | 7.83 | V |
| Travel agencies | 18 | 6 | 4 | 70 | 11.66 | IV |
| Friends / relatives | 30 | 34 | 32 | 190 | 31.66 | I |
| Tourism dept. websites / internet | 10 | 27 | 38 | 122 | 20.33 | III |
| Television | 2 | 5 | 10 | 26 | 4.33 | VI |
| Previous experience(s) | 35 | 18 | 4 | 145 | 24.16 | II |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 600 | 100 | |

Source: Primary data

Sources like *television* and *newspapers/magazines*, though used by some, do not represent a reasonable proportion. The role of travel agencies Mizoram is quite below the par as compared to its counterpart. Hence, Mizoram government should take immediate initiatives to encourage this information vehicle to fill the existing gap in the near future.

In general, it can be inferred from Tables 4.42 and 4.43 that positive word-of-mouth through friends and relatives constitute a very useful source that have influenced the respondents most. Hence, this may be borne in mind by tourism marketers while designing and communicating their marketing efforts.

4.3.15 Sources of information used in visiting the tourism attractions

The Northeast India (NEI) is a land of diversity which offers an array of places to see and things to do. The diverse geographical locales of NEI can delight the prospective tourists. When it comes to tourism, fair and festivals, religion, culture and traditions, historical places, scenic beauty, etc. are on the priority among the tourists to coincide the trip to witness the amazing attractions of the region. However, the prospective tourists are constrained with the factors relating to time, purchasing power and interests.

In view of this, the respondents were asked to rank up to three (3) in order of importance of the various sources used in visiting tourism destinations of select states, viz. previous experience(s), travel agencies/guide, tourism information centres or tourism websites, hotel people, local people, friends/relatives. Weighted average scores were calculated to find out overall ranking of these sources of information.

Table 4.44 evaluates the ranking of various attributes of sources of information used in visiting tourism attractions in Meghalaya. The table shows that helps from *friends/relatives* (30% of rating) have been the major source of information used in visiting the important tourism attractions in Meghalaya. While, previous visits of the respondents (21.83% of rating) and information through travel agencies/guide (16.67% of rating) also played important roles for the respondents in visiting various tourism attractions of the state.

Table 4.44
Sources of information used in visiting tourism attractions in Meghalaya

| Sources of information | Ranking of sources of information used | | | | | |
|--|--|-----|-----|----------------|------------|------|
| | I | II | III | Weighted score | Rating (%) | Rank |
| Previous experience(s) | 29 | 19 | 6 | 131 | 21.83 | II |
| Travel agencies / guide | 27 | 8 | 3 | 100 | 16.67 | III |
| Tourism information centres / tourism websites | 4 | 16 | 41 | 85 | 14.17 | IV |
| Hotel people | 3 | 5 | 2 | 21 | 3.50 | VI |
| Local people | 15 | 13 | 12 | 83 | 13.83 | V |
| Friends / relatives | 22 | 39 | 36 | 180 | 30.00 | I |
| Others, if any | - | - | - | - | - | |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 600 | 100.00 | - |

Source: Primary data

In case of Mizoram too (Table 4.45), majority of the respondents took helps from *friends/relatives* (31.83% of rating) in visiting major tourism attractions. *Previous experience(s)* (23.50% of rating) also played a vital role in selecting important attractions of the state. Meanwhile, information and help from the *local people* (16.50% of rating) was the third most used information vehicle the respondents used in visiting tourism attractions of the state.

Table 4.45
Sources of information used in visiting tourism attractions in Mizoram

| Sources of information | Ranking of sources of information used | | | | | |
|--|--|-----|-----|----------------|------------|------|
| | I | II | III | Weighted score | Rating (%) | Rank |
| Previous experience(s) | 32 | 20 | 5 | 141 | 23.50 | II |
| Travel agencies / guide | 12 | 10 | 6 | 62 | 10.34 | V |
| Tourism information centres / tourism websites | 5 | 15 | 36 | 81 | 13.50 | IV |
| Hotel people | 4 | 4 | 6 | 26 | 4.33 | VI |
| Local people | 19 | 16 | 10 | 99 | 16.50 | III |
| Friends / relatives | 28 | 35 | 37 | 191 | 31.83 | I |
| Others, if any | - | - | - | - | - | |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 600 | 100 | - |

Source: Primary data

4.4 Perceptions of the respondents

The perceptions of tourists coming to any destination may be different depending on their demographic characteristics. Perceptions are always considered in relation to expectations and the dynamic nature of tourists' perceptions calls for regular assessment.

This is because they are the basis that tourists use to evaluate the quality of services that was delivered (Philemon, 2015). The quality of attractions, accommodation, transportation, amenities, and activities alone will not attract or satisfy tourists if the service quality is poor and tourists feel unwelcome. Hence, the service providers need to be friendly, tactful, and respectful to the tourists so that the services are perceived positively. Positive perceptions of service encourage tourists to buy the product again, whereas negative perceptions of service deter tourists from visitation and discourage repeated purchases (Reisinger and Turner, 2002)

The study of the tourists' perception plays an important role while taking decisions for strategic marketing of tourism destinations. Hence, this section intends to analyse the perceptions of the tourists with regard to various tourism attributes in the states of Meghalaya and Mizoram. As noted, information was gathered from the sample respondents of two select states. The results have been analysed by adopting statistical tools like frequency, weighted mean score, t-test and chi-square test.

4.4.1. Satisfaction on accommodation

Understanding the preferences and travel related behaviour of the tourists is vital for tourism marketing and it is also critical to develop accommodation related infrastructures to satisfy tourists' preferences. This sub-section is intended to measure tourists' satisfaction levels in two select states based on their perceptions. In the accommodation sector, nine attributes viz., physical appearance of hotel, cleanliness of hotel rooms, quality of food, availability of desired food, availability of local dishes, location of the hotel, security at hotel, efficiency of staff and overall hospitality have been identified for the study.

The satisfaction level of the respondents on selected attributes of accommodation sector has been analyzed with the help of five-point Likert scale ranging from 'highly dissatisfied' to 'highly satisfied'. The respondents were asked to tick the appropriate box (number) based on the level of their satisfaction.

4.4.1.1 Satisfaction level of the respondents of Meghalaya on accommodation

The satisfaction level of the respondents of Meghalaya on selected attributes of accommodation sector has been analyzed based on the responses on a five-point Likert scale. Simple frequency table has been used for analysis.

Table 4.46 reveals that 60% of the respondents were found to be either satisfied or highly satisfied with the *physical appearance of hotel*, while 6% were dissatisfied or highly dissatisfied. Meanwhile, 34% of the respondents had neutral opinion on this attribute.

Table 4.46
Satisfaction level of the respondents of Meghalaya on accommodation

| Attributes | Level of satisfaction | | | | | Total |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------|---------|-----------|------------------|-------|
| | Highly dissatisfied | Dissatisfied | Neutral | Satisfied | Highly satisfied | |
| Physical appearance of hotel | 2 | 4 | 34 | 52 | 8 | 100 |
| Cleanliness of hotel rooms | 1 | 2 | 21 | 57 | 19 | 100 |
| Quality of food | 4 | 6 | 23 | 50 | 17 | 100 |
| Availability of desired food | 3 | 7 | 29 | 46 | 15 | 100 |
| Availability of local dishes | 5 | 4 | 46 | 35 | 10 | 100 |
| Location of the hotel | 1 | 3 | 27 | 48 | 21 | 100 |
| Security at hotel | 0 | 3 | 23 | 44 | 30 | 100 |
| Efficiency of staff | 6 | 9 | 32 | 35 | 18 | 100 |
| Overall hospitality | 2 | 4 | 22 | 45 | 27 | 100 |

Source: Primary data

On *cleanliness of hotel rooms*, three-fourth of the respondents was either satisfied or highly satisfied. 21% of the respondents had neutral opinion. 67% of the respondents were either satisfied or highly satisfied on the *quality of food*, while 10% of the respondents showed dissatisfaction with this attribute. 23% of the respondents had neutral opinion on the *quality of food*.

On *availability of desired food*, 61% of the respondents were either satisfied or highly satisfied, while 29% were found to be neutral. Meanwhile, 10% were found to be

either dissatisfied or highly dissatisfied with this attribute. With regard to *availability of local dishes*, 46% of the respondents had neutral opinion, while 45% were found to be either satisfied or highly satisfied.

Over two-third of the respondents expressed their satisfaction on *location of the hotel*, while 27% were neutral. With regard to *security at hotel*, over two-third of the respondents expressed that this attribute was satisfactory, while 30% were found to be neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

With regard to *efficiency of the staff*, about one-third of the respondents had neutral opinion. 15% of the respondents were found to be either dissatisfied or highly dissatisfied. However, the analysis shows that more than half of the respondents were satisfied with this attribute.

With respect of *overall hospitality* in the accommodation sector, nearly three-fourth of the respondents expressed satisfaction, while 6% expressed dissatisfaction. Meanwhile, over one-fifth of the respondents were found neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the *overall hospitality*.

Finally, it can be inferred from the table that majority of the respondents were satisfied with all the attributes of accommodation sector in Meghalaya except with one attribute, viz. '*availability of local dishes*' with which majority had neutral opinion.

4.4.1.2 Satisfaction level of the respondents of Mizoram on accommodation

The satisfaction level of the respondents of Mizoram on selected attributes of accommodation sector has been analyzed with the help of five-point Likert scale. For data analysis, simple statistics like frequencies were used. Table 4.47 reveals that 54% of the respondents were satisfied with *physical appearance of hotel* in Mizoram, while 40% were found with neutral opinion. In respect of *cleanliness of hotel rooms*, two-third of the respondents expressed satisfaction, while 8% expressed dissatisfaction.

Out the total respondents, 60% were found to be either satisfied or highly satisfied with the *quality of food*. 30% were found to be having neutral opinion. 10% expressed dissatisfaction with the *quality of food*.

With the *availability of desired food*, 29% of the respondents were found to be neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. 15% of the respondents were found to be dissatisfied. However, 59% of the respondents indicated were satisfied with the attribute.

Table 4.47
Satisfaction level of the respondents of Mizoram on accommodation

| Attributes | Level of satisfaction | | | | | Total |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------|---------|-----------|------------------|-------|
| | Highly dissatisfied | Dissatisfied | Neutral | Satisfied | Highly satisfied | |
| Physical appearance of hotel | 1 | 5 | 40 | 44 | 10 | 100 |
| Cleanliness of hotel rooms | 2 | 6 | 29 | 46 | 19 | 100 |
| Quality of food | 2 | 8 | 30 | 45 | 15 | 100 |
| Availability of desired food | 1 | 14 | 26 | 46 | 13 | 100 |
| Availability of local dishes | 0 | 5 | 31 | 43 | 21 | 100 |
| Location of the hotel | 1 | 3 | 31 | 50 | 15 | 100 |
| Security at hotel | 2 | 8 | 20 | 45 | 25 | 100 |
| Efficiency of staff | 4 | 14 | 30 | 37 | 15 | 100 |
| Overall hospitality | 1 | 5 | 18 | 42 | 34 | 100 |

Source: Primary data

On *availability of local dishes*, nearly two-third of the respondents expressed satisfaction, while 31% indicated that they were having neutral opinion.

Nearly two-third of the respondents was found to be either satisfied or highly satisfied with the *location of the hotel*. Meanwhile, 31% of the respondents were neutral with this attribute. With regard to *security at hotel*, 70% of the respondents were found to be either satisfied or highly satisfied. At the same time, 10% of the respondents were found to be dissatisfied with *security at hotel*.

The analysis shows over half of the respondents expressed satisfaction on the *efficiency of staff*. However, 18% of the respondents were also found to be having dissatisfaction on this attribute. 30% of the respondents were found to be neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with this attribute. In respect of *overall hospitality*, over two-

third of the respondents were found to be happy. On the other hand 18% of the respondents were found to be having neutral opinion.

4.4.1.3 Comparative analysis of the satisfaction levels on accommodation

For a comparative study of the satisfaction level on selected attributes of accommodation sector in the select states, statistics like mean values and average of all means have been adopted. The level of satisfaction of the respondents is ranked according to the mean values computed for each attribute. Supposition is adopted by “the higher the mean score, the more satisfied are the respondents”

Table 4.48
Comparative analysis of the satisfaction levels on accommodation

| Sl. No. | Attributes | Meghalaya | | | Mizoram | | |
|---------|------------------------------|-----------------------|------|----------------------|-----------------------|------|----------------------|
| | | Mean score (out of 5) | Rank | Average of all Means | Mean score (out of 5) | Rank | Average of all means |
| 1 | Physical appearance of hotel | 3.60 | 6 | 3.72 | 3.57 | 7 | 3.70 |
| 2 | Cleanliness of hotel rooms | 3.91 | 2 | | 3.70 | 5 | |
| 3 | Quality of food | 3.70 | 4 | | 3.63 | 6 | |
| 4 | Availability of desired food | 3.63 | 5 | | 3.56 | 8 | |
| 5 | Availability of local dishes | 3.41 | 8 | | 3.80 | 3 | |
| 6 | Location of the hotel | 3.85 | 3 | | 3.75 | 4 | |
| 7 | Security at hotel | 4.01 | 1 | | 3.83 | 2 | |
| 8 | Efficiency of staff | 3.50 | 7 | | 3.45 | 9 | |
| 9 | Overall hospitality | 3.91 | 2 | | 4.02 | 1 | |

(The higher the mean score, the more satisfied are the respondents)

Source: Primary data

As per the rankings in Table 4.48, *security at hotel* (4.01 mean score) was the most satisfactory attribute in accommodation sector in Meghalaya, while the attributes, viz. *overall hospitality* (3.91) and *cleanliness of hotel rooms* (3.91) were jointly ranked second. The respondents also indicated satisfaction with the location of hotel (3.85). The

respondents were least satisfied with the *efficiency of staff* (3.50) and *availability of local dishes* (3.41) in Meghalaya.

In case of Mizoram, *overall hospitality* (4.02 mean score) was the most satisfying attribute in the accommodation sector, followed by *security at hotel* (3.83) and *availability of local dishes* (3.80). On the other hand, respondents in Mizoram were found to be least satisfied with the *availability of desired food* (3.56) and *efficiency of the staff* (3.45).

Comparison of the average of all means of selected attributes of accommodation in the select states reveals that the score of Meghalaya (3.72) is fractionally higher than the score of Mizoram (3.70). This signifies that there is no significant difference between the satisfaction level of the respondents in Meghalaya and Mizoram regarding accommodation sector although mean score of individual attribute may vary with each other. The average of all means of select attributes fall in between the neutral (average) and satisfactory levels, which is a good sign for the accommodation sector in the select states.

4.4.1.4 T-test results on the difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of two select states regarding selected attributes of accommodation

To know the significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of the two select states regarding selected attributes of accommodation, t-test is applied.

Usually, t-test is based on t distribution and is considered as an appropriate test for judging the significance of difference between the means of two samples. T-test is used when the researcher compares average responses of two groups on one variable.

Table 4.49
T-test result on the difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of the two select states regarding selected attributes of accommodation (H_{023} to H_{031})

| Attributes | Meghalaya | | Mizoram | | t | Df | Sig. |
|------------------------------|-----------|---------|---------|---------|--------|-----|------|
| | Mean | SD | Mean | SD | | | |
| Physical appearance of hotel | 3.60 | .77850 | 3.57 | .78180 | .272 | 182 | .786 |
| Cleanliness of hotel rooms | 3.91 | .75338 | 3.70 | .89330 | 1.797 | | .074 |
| Quality of food | 3.70 | .95874 | 3.63 | .90626 | .531 | | .596 |
| Availability of desired food | 3.63 | .92829 | 3.56 | .92463 | .534 | | .594 |
| Availability of local dishes | 3.41 | .91115 | 3.80 | .82878 | -3.166 | | .002 |
| Location of the hotel | 3.85 | .82112 | 3.75 | .78335 | .881 | | .379 |
| Security at hotel | 4.01 | .81023 | 3.83 | .96457 | 1.429 | | .155 |
| Efficiency of staff | 3.50 | 1.07778 | 3.45 | 1.03840 | .826 | | .739 |
| Overall hospitality | 3.91 | .91115 | 4.02 | .94254 | .972 | | .402 |

Source: Primary data

The results are discussed attribute-wise as hereunder:

Physical appearance of hotel

H_{023} : *There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of the two select states regarding physical appearance of hotels*

Results: The t static value is .272 and degrees of freedom (df) is 182. The 2-tailed significance value is .786. Since significance value (.786) is greater than .05, the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted.

Cleanliness of hotel rooms

H_{024} : *There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of the two select states regarding cleanliness of hotel rooms*

Results: The t static value is 1.797 and degrees of freedom (df) is 182. The 2-tailed significance value is .074. Since significance value (.074) is greater than .05, the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted.

Quality of food

H₀₂₅: There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of the two select states regarding quality of food

Results: The t static value is .531 and degrees of freedom (df) is 182. The 2-tailed significance value is .596. Since significance value (.596) is greater than .05, the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted.

Availability of desired food

H₀₂₆: There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of the two select states regarding availability of desired food

Results: The t static value is .534 and degrees of freedom (df) is 182. The 2-tailed significance value is .594. Since significance value (.594) is greater than .05, the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted.

Availability of local dishes

H₀₂₇: There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of the two select states regarding availability of local dishes

Results: The t static value is -3.166 and degrees of freedom (df) is 182. The 2-tailed significance value is .002. Since significance value (.002) is lesser than .05, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected.

Location of the Hotel

H₀₂₈: There is no significant difference between the level of satisfaction of respondents in Meghalaya and in Mizoram regarding location of the hotel

Results: The t static value is .881 and degrees of freedom (df) is 182. The 2-tailed significance value is .379. Since significance value (.379) is greater than .05, the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted.

Security at hotel

H₀₂₉: There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of the two select states regarding security at hotel

Results: The t static value is 1.429 and degrees of freedom (df) is 182. The 2-tailed significance value is .155. Since significance value (.155) is greater than .05, the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted.

Efficiency of the staff

H_{030} : *There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of the two select states regarding efficiency of the staff*

Results: The t static value is .826 and degrees of freedom (df) is 182. The 2-tailed significance value is .739. Since significance value (.739) is greater than .05, the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted.

Overall hospitality

H_{031} : *There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of the two select states regarding overall hospitality*

Results: The t static value is .972 and degrees of freedom (df) is 182. The 2-tailed significance value is .408. Since significance value (.408) is greater than .05, the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted.

4.4.2 Satisfaction on tourism attractions

Tourists' perception of a tourism attraction as a preferred choice for travel is crucial. It is quite necessary for the tourism stakeholders to maintain and upgrade the products and services being made available in the tourism attractions. This sub-section is intended to measure the tourists' satisfaction on selected attributes of tourism attractions in the select states. The attributes identified for the present study are: culture/events/festivals, historical remains/heritage, scenic nature, night life, entertainment, city tour (sightseeing), adventure/tourism sports and cleanliness of overall tourism attractions.

The satisfaction level of the respondents on selected attributes of tourism attractions in select states has been analyzed based on the responses on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 'highly dissatisfied' to 'highly satisfied'. The respondents have been asked to tick the appropriate box (number) based on the level of their satisfaction.

4.4.2.1 Satisfaction level of the respondents of Meghalaya on tourism attractions

The satisfaction level of the respondents of Meghalaya on selected attributes of tourism attractions has been analyzed based on the responses on a five-point Likert scale. Simple frequency table has been used for analysis. Table 4.50 shows that 47% of the respondents were found to be having neutral opinion with the *culture/events/festivals* in Meghalaya. Similarly, 47% of the respondents also expressed satisfaction with this attribute.

With respect to *historical remains/heritage*, 59% of the respondents were found to be either satisfied or highly satisfied. Over one-third of the respondents were found with neutral opinion with this attribute.

Table 4.50
Satisfaction level of the respondents of Meghalaya on tourism attractions

| Attributes | Level of satisfaction | | | | | Total |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------|---------|-----------|------------------|-------|
| | Highly dissatisfied | Dissatisfied | Neutral | Satisfied | Highly satisfied | |
| Culture/events/festivals | 0 | 6 | 47 | 36 | 11 | 100 |
| Historical remains/heritage | 0 | 4 | 37 | 43 | 16 | 100 |
| Scenic nature | 0 | 0 | 11 | 38 | 51 | 100 |
| Night life | 2 | 12 | 44 | 34 | 8 | 100 |
| Entertainment | 2 | 11 | 46 | 32 | 9 | 100 |
| City tour (sightseeing) | 0 | 0 | 17 | 42 | 41 | 100 |
| Adventure/tourism sports | 0 | 0 | 45 | 33 | 22 | 100 |
| Cleanliness of tourism attractions | 1 | 6 | 28 | 57 | 8 | 100 |

Source: Primary data

89% of the respondents in Meghalaya indicated that they were quite satisfied with the *scenic nature* of the state, while 11% of the respondents were neutral. With regard to *night life* in Meghalaya, 14% of the respondents indicated dissatisfaction, while 44% were neutral. Meanwhile, 42% of the respondents expressed satisfaction with *night life*.

On *entertainment*, nearly half of the respondents were found to be having neutral opinion. 13% of the respondents has shown discontentment with this attribute. With respect to *city tour (sightseeing)* facilities in Meghalaya, more than four-fifth of the respondents expressed satisfaction with it, while 17% were found to be neutral.

Majority of the respondents were observed to be satisfied with *adventure/tourism sports* in Meghalaya, while 45% were having neutral views. This shows that there is huge scope for the development of adventure activities in the state.

With respect to *cleanliness of tourism attractions* in Meghalaya, nearly two-third of the respondents was found to be either satisfied or highly satisfied. 7% of the respondents indicated dissatisfaction, while 28% of the respondents were found to be neutral.

4.4.2.2 Satisfaction level of the respondents of Mizoram on tourism attractions

The satisfaction level of the respondents of Mizoram on selected attributes of tourism attractions has been analyzed with the help of five-point Likert scale. For data analysis, simple statistics like frequencies were used.

Table 4.51 reveals that majority of the respondents (63%) were found to be either satisfied or highly satisfied with *culture/events/festivals* of the state, while one-third of the respondents found to be neutral. With regard to *historical remains/heritage*, one-third of the respondents were found to be satisfied, 12% of the respondents were found to be very satisfied, while 42% of the respondents were found to be having neutral opinion. 13% of the respondents were found to be dissatisfied with this attribute.

Table 4.51
Satisfaction level of the respondents of Mizoram on tourists attractions

| Attributes | Level of satisfaction | | | | | Total |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------|---------|-----------|------------------|-------|
| | Highly dissatisfied | Dissatisfied | Neutral | Satisfied | Highly satisfied | |
| Culture/events/festivals | 2 | 2 | 33 | 55 | 8 | 100 |
| Historical remains/heritage | 5 | 8 | 42 | 33 | 12 | 100 |
| Scenic nature | 0 | 1 | 14 | 32 | 53 | 100 |
| Night life | 8 | 23 | 37 | 27 | 5 | 100 |
| Entertainment | 6 | 20 | 41 | 30 | 3 | 100 |
| City tour (sightseeing) | 1 | 6 | 26 | 37 | 30 | 100 |
| Adventure/tourism sports | 2 | 8 | 51 | 29 | 10 | 100 |
| Cleanliness of tourism attractions | 4 | 14 | 42 | 38 | 2 | 100 |

Source: Primary data

More than 85% of the total respondents were observed to be either satisfied or highly satisfied with the *scenic nature* of the state, while 14% were found to be neutral. With respect to *night life*, only 32% of the respondents were found to be satisfied or highly satisfied, while 37% of the respondents were found to be neutral. However, almost one-third of the respondents were found to be dissatisfied the *night life* of the state.

On *entertainment*, majority of the respondents (41%) were found with neutral opinion, while 35% were found to be satisfied; and the remaining were found to be dissatisfied. Majority of the respondents (67%) were found to be either satisfied or highly satisfied with the *city tour (sightseeing)* in Mizoram, while 6% were found to be dissatisfied with this attribute.

On *adventure/tourism sports*, etc., more than half of the total respondents had neutral views while 39% indicated satisfaction with this attribute. On the *cleanliness of tourism attractions*, 42% respondents had neutral opinion, while 42% were found to be either satisfied or highly satisfied. Meanwhile 18% of the respondents had neutral views with the *cleanliness of tourism attractions* in the state.

4.4.2.3 Comparative analysis of the satisfaction levels on tourism attractions

For a comparative study of the satisfaction level on selected attributes of tourism attractions in the select states, statistics like mean values and average of all means were computed. The level of satisfaction of the respondents is ranked according to the mean values computed for each attribute. Supposition is adopted by “the higher the mean score, the more satisfied are the respondents.”

Table 4.52 reveals that out of the selected attributes of tourism attractions, *scenic nature* plays an important role in attracting tourists in both the select states. The respondents seemed to be very much satisfied with the beauty of the nature of both states. This attribute has been rated as the most satisfactory attribute in Meghalaya (4.40 mean score) as well as in Mizoram (4.37 mean score). *City tour (sightseeing)* has been ranked second in both states. However, service availability for *city tour (sightseeing)* in Meghalaya (4.24) has been rated higher than that of Mizoram (3.89).

Table 4.52
Comparative analysis of the satisfaction levels on tourism attractions

| Sl. No. | Attributes | Meghalaya | | | Mizoram | | |
|---------|------------------------------------|-----------------------|------|----------------------|-----------------------|------|----------------------|
| | | Mean value (out of 5) | Rank | Average of all Means | Mean value (out of 5) | Rank | Average of all means |
| 1 | Culture/events/festivals | 3.52 | 6 | 3.75 | 3.65 | 3 | 3.49 |
| 2 | Historical remains/ heritage | 3.71 | 4 | | 3.39 | 4 | |
| 3 | Scenic nature | 4.40 | 1 | | 4.37 | 1 | |
| 4 | Night life | 3.34 | 8 | | 2.98 | 8 | |
| 5 | Entertainment | 3.35 | 7 | | 3.04 | 7 | |
| 6 | City tour (sightseeing) | 4.24 | 2 | | 3.89 | 2 | |
| 7 | Adventure/tourism sports | 3.77 | 3 | | 3.37 | 5 | |
| 8 | Cleanliness of tourism attractions | 3.65 | 5 | | 3.20 | 6 | |

(The higher the mean score, the more satisfied are the respondents)

Source: Primary data

Meanwhile, respondents of Meghalaya rated *adventure/tourism sports*, etc. as the third most satisfactory attribute in Meghalaya, while *culture/events/festivals* has been ranked third in Mizoram. On the other hand, the respondents indicated least satisfaction with *entertainment* (3.35 in Meghalaya and 3.05 in Mizoram) and *night life* (3.34 in Meghalaya and 2.98 in Mizoram).

State-wise comparison shows that the average of all means of selected attributes of tourism attractions of Meghalaya (3.75) is higher than the score of Mizoram (3.49), thereby indicating that the tourism sector in Mizoram is still lagging behind in terms of maintaining and upgrading its tourism attractions. The analytical results indicate that both these states still have lots of homework to develop its night life activities, besides developing other attributes.

4.4.1.4 T-test results on the difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of two select states regarding selected attributes of tourism attractions

To know the significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of the two select states regarding selected attributes of tourism attractions, t-test is applied.

Table 4.53
T-test results on the difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of the two select states regarding selected attributes of tourism attractions (H_{032} to H_{039})

| Attributes | Meghalaya | | Mizoram | | T | df | Sig. |
|------------------------------------|-----------|--------|---------|---------|--------|-----|------|
| | Mean | SD | Mean | SD | | | |
| Culture/events/festivals | 3.52 | .77172 | 3.65 | .74366 | -1.213 | 182 | .227 |
| Historical remains/heritage | 3.71 | .78232 | 3.39 | .97333 | 2.563 | | .011 |
| Scenic nature | 4.40 | .68165 | 4.37 | .76085 | .294 | | .769 |
| Night life | 3.34 | .86713 | 2.98 | 1.01484 | 2.697 | | .008 |
| Entertainment | 3.35 | .86894 | 3.04 | .93117 | 2.434 | | .016 |
| City tour (sightseeing) | 4.24 | .72641 | 3.89 | .94168 | 2.943 | | .004 |
| Adventure/tourism sports | 3.77 | .78951 | 3.37 | .84871 | 3.451 | | .001 |
| Cleanliness of tourism attractions | 3.65 | .75712 | 3.20 | .85280 | 3.946 | | .000 |

Source: Primary data

The results are discussed attribute-wise as given under:

Culture/festivals

H_{032} : *There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of the two select states regarding culture/festivals*

Results: The t static value is -1.213 and degrees of freedom (df) is 182. The 2-tailed significance value is .227. Since significance value (.227) is greater than .05, the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted.

Historical remains/legends

H_{033} : *There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of the two select states regarding historical remains/legends*

Results: The t static value is 2.563 and degrees of freedom (df) is 182. The 2-tailed significance value is .011. Since significance value (.074) is lesser than .05, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected.

Scenic nature

H_{034} : *There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of the two select states regarding scenic nature*

Results: The t static value is .294 and degrees of freedom (df) is 182. The 2-tailed significance value is .769. Since significance value (.769) is greater than .05, the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted.

Night life

H₀₃₅: There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of the two select states regarding night life

Results: The t static value is 2.697 and degrees of freedom (df) is 182. The 2-tailed significance value is .008. Since significance value (.008) is lesser than .05, the null hypothesis (H₀) is rejected.

Entertainment

H₀₃₆: There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of the two select states regarding entertainment

Results: The t static value is 2.434 and degrees of freedom (df) is 182. The 2-tailed significance value is .016. Since significance value (.016) is lesser than .05, the null hypothesis (H₀) is rejected.

City tour (sightseeing)

H₀₃₇: There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of the two select states regarding city tour (sightseeing)

Results: The t static value is 2.943 and degrees of freedom (df) is 182. The 2-tailed significance value is .004. Since significance value (.004) is lesser than .05, the null hypothesis (H₀) is rejected.

Adventure/tourism sports

H₀₃₈: There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of the two select states regarding adventure/tourism sports

Results: The t static value is 3.451 and degrees of freedom (df) is 182. The 2-tailed significance value is .001. Since significance value (.001) is lesser than .05, the null hypothesis (H₀) is rejected.

Cleanliness of tourism attractions

H₀₃₉: There is no significant difference between the level of satisfaction of respondents in Meghalaya and in Mizoram regarding cleanliness of tourism attractions.

Results: The t static value is 3.946 and degrees of freedom (df) is 182. The 2-tailed significance value is .000. Since significance value (.000) is lesser than .05, the null hypothesis (H₀) is rejected.

4.4.3 Satisfaction on tourism services

Easy access and upgradation of tourism services is considered to be utmost support for overall development of tourism industry in a region. Nowadays, more and more people are looking for authentic travel experiences, personalized approach to their needs and the luxury of traveling carefree. With this point of view, this sub-section is intended to measure the satisfaction level of the tourists on the tourism services in Meghalaya and Mizoram.

In order to assess the extent to which tourists were satisfied with the tourism services in the select states, ten attributes were considered for the study. They were border services like passport issue, ILP etc., transportation services like buses, taxis etc., road conditions, telecommunication and internet services, restaurants, hospitality of local people, shopping (clothing/handicrafts), hygiene and sanitation, facilities offered at tourist centres and other services like banking (ATM), post office etc.

The satisfaction level of the respondents on selected attributes of tourism services has been analyzed with the help of five-point Likert scale ranging from ‘highly dissatisfied’ to ‘highly satisfied’. The respondents have been asked to tick the appropriate box (number) based on the level of their satisfaction. Statistics like frequencies were used to analyze the selected attributes of tourism attractions in select states.

4.4.3.1 Satisfaction level of the respondents of Meghalaya on tourism services

The satisfaction level of the respondents of Meghalaya on selected attributes of tourism services has been analyzed based on the responses on a five-point Likert scale. Simple frequency table has been used for analysis.

Table 4.54 shows that no respondents were highly dissatisfied in all the attributes of tourism services in the state. The table reveals that 40% of the respondents were found to be either satisfied or highly satisfied with *border services*, while 6% were found to be dissatisfied. Meanwhile, majority of the respondents (54%) indicated having neutral views with this attribute.

Table 4.54
Satisfaction level of the respondents of Meghalaya on tourism services

| Attributes | Level of satisfaction | | | | | Total |
|---|-----------------------|--------------|---------|-----------|------------------|-------|
| | Highly dissatisfied | Dissatisfied | Neutral | Satisfied | Highly satisfied | |
| Border services like passport issue, ILP etc. | 0 | 6 | 54 | 30 | 10 | 100 |
| Transportation services like buses, taxis etc. | 0 | 2 | 47 | 47 | 4 | 100 |
| Road conditions | 0 | 7 | 47 | 44 | 2 | 100 |
| Telecommunication & internet services | 0 | 4 | 27 | 52 | 17 | 100 |
| Restaurants | 0 | 2 | 46 | 38 | 14 | 100 |
| Hospitality of local people | 0 | 5 | 23 | 52 | 20 | 100 |
| Shopping (Clothing/handicrafts) | 0 | 2 | 35 | 39 | 24 | 100 |
| Hygiene and sanitation | 0 | 4 | 28 | 58 | 10 | 100 |
| Facilities offered at tourist centres | 0 | 11 | 42 | 37 | 10 | 100 |
| Other services like banking (ATM), post office etc. | 0 | 7 | 25 | 54 | 14 | 100 |

Source: Primary data

On *transportation services*, 47% of respondents were found to be having neutral opinion, while 51% were found to be satisfied. 44% of the respondents were found to be satisfied with *road conditions*, 47% indicated neutrality while 7% were dissatisfied. On *telecommunication and internet services*, more than half of the respondents (52%) were found to be satisfied, 17% were highly satisfied and a significant chunk of 27% were found to be having neutral views.

The analysis shows that majority of the respondents (46%) were found to be having neutral opinion on *restaurant*, while 38% and 15% were found to be satisfied and highly satisfied respectively. More than half of the total respondents (72%) were found to be satisfied with the *hospitality of local people*. Meanwhile, 23% remained neutral, while only 5% of the respondents indicated dissatisfaction with the *hospitality of local people* in Meghalaya.

It was also found that 39% respondents were satisfied and 24% were highly satisfied with *shopping*, while about one-third of the respondents had neutral opinion.

With regard to *hygiene and sanitation*, 68% of the respondents were found to be satisfied, while 28% had neutral views on this attribute.

On the *facilities offered at tourist centres*, 47% of the respondents were found to be either satisfied or highly satisfied, while 11% of the respondents were found dissatisfied. Meanwhile, 42% of the respondents indicated that *facilities offered at tourist centres* were average. Out of the total respondents, 68% were found to be satisfied with *other tourism services* like banking, postal services, etc., while 25% were having neutral views.

4.4.3.2 Satisfaction level of the respondents of Mizoram on tourism services

The satisfaction level of the respondents of Mizoram on selected attributes of tourism services has been analyzed with the help of five-point Likert scale. For data analysis, simple statistics like frequencies were used. The analysis shows that over one-third of total respondents were dissatisfied with *border services* in the state.

Table 4.55
Satisfaction level of the respondents of Mizoram on tourism services

| Attributes | Level of satisfaction | | | | | Total |
|---|-----------------------|--------------|---------|-----------|------------------|-------|
| | Highly dissatisfied | Dissatisfied | Neutral | Satisfied | Highly satisfied | |
| Border services like passport issue, ILP etc. | 10 | 27 | 41 | 19 | 3 | 100 |
| Transportation services like buses, taxis etc. | 1 | 15 | 48 | 34 | 2 | 100 |
| Road conditions | 5 | 23 | 52 | 18 | 2 | 100 |
| Telecommunication & internet services | 1 | 10 | 43 | 35 | 11 | 100 |
| Restaurants | 0 | 4 | 39 | 46 | 11 | 100 |
| Hospitality of local people | 0 | 3 | 25 | 40 | 32 | 100 |
| Shopping (Clothing/handicrafts) | 0 | 4 | 29 | 52 | 15 | 100 |
| Hygiene and sanitation | 0 | 3 | 19 | 56 | 22 | 100 |
| Facilities offered at tourist centres | 10 | 27 | 44 | 17 | 2 | 100 |
| Other services like banking (ATM), post office etc. | 0 | 9 | 38 | 44 | 9 | 100 |

Source: Primary data

Table 4.55 reveals that over one-third of the respondents were dissatisfied with *border services* in Mizoram, while only 22% were found to be satisfied with these services. On *transportation services*, majority of the respondents (48%) were found with neutral opinion, while 34% were found satisfied and 15% were found dissatisfied with the attribute.

28% of the respondents were found to be either dissatisfied or highly dissatisfied with *road conditions* of the state, while only 20% expressed satisfaction with it. Almost half of the respondents indicated that the *road conditions* were as expected. On *telecommunication and internet services*, 35% of the respondents were found to be satisfied, 11% were highly satisfied; while majority of the respondents (43%) were found to be having neutral opinion.

Majority of the respondents (57%) indicated that they were either satisfied with *restaurant services*, while 39% indicated neutral views. 40% of the respondents were found to be satisfied and 32% to be highly satisfied with the *hospitality of local people*. It is also observed that 67% of the respondents were satisfied with *shopping* in Mizoram, while 29% respondents had neutral views, and 4% were dissatisfied with shopping. With regard to *hygiene and sanitation*, more than three-fourth of the respondents was found to be satisfied, while 19% found to be having neutral views.

Majority of the respondents (78%) expressed their satisfaction on *hygiene and sanitation* in tourism areas while 19% had neutral opinions on this attribute. On the *facilities offered at tourist centres*, 37% respondents indicated that they were either dissatisfied, while only 19% respondents were found to be happy with this attribute.

Out of the total respondents, more than half of them were found to be satisfied with *other tourism services* like banking, postal services, etc. Meanwhile, 9% of the respondents were found to be dissatisfied and 38% were found having neutral views with these services.

4.4.3.3 Comparative analysis of the satisfaction levels on tourism services

For a comparative study of the satisfaction level on selected attributes of tourism services in the select states, statistics like mean values and average of all means have

been adopted. The level of satisfaction of the respondents is ranked according to the mean values computed for each attribute. Supposition is adopted by “the higher the mean score, the more satisfied are the respondents.”

Table 4.56
Comparative analysis of the satisfaction levels on tourism services

| Sl. No. | Attributes | Meghalaya | | | Mizoram | | |
|---------|---|-----------------------|------|----------------------|-----------------------|------|----------------------|
| | | Mean Value (out of 5) | Rank | Average of all means | Mean Value (out of 5) | Rank | Average of all means |
| 1 | Border services like passport issue, ILP etc. | 3.44 | 9 | 3.65 | 2.78 | 9 | 3.40 |
| 2 | Transportation services like buses, taxis etc. | 3.53 | 7 | | 3.21 | 7 | |
| 3 | Road conditions | 3.41 | 10 | | 2.89 | 8 | |
| 4 | Telecommunication & internet services | 3.82 | 3 | | 3.45 | 6 | |
| 5 | Restaurants | 3.64 | 6 | | 3.64 | 4 | |
| 6 | Hospitality of local people | 3.87 | 1 | | 4.01 | 1 | |
| 7 | Shopping (Clothing/handicrafts) | 3.85 | 2 | | 3.78 | 3 | |
| 8 | Hygiene and sanitation | 3.74 | 5 | | 3.97 | 2 | |
| 9 | Facilities offered at tourist centres | 3.46 | 8 | | 2.74 | 10 | |
| 10 | Other services like banking (ATM), post office etc. | 3.75 | 4 | | 3.53 | 5 | |

(The higher the mean score, the more satisfied are the respondents)

Source: Primary data

Table 4.56 reveals that among the selected attributes of tourism services, *hospitality of local people* (3.87 mean score) was the most satisfactory attribute in Meghalaya, followed by *shopping* (3.85) and *telecommunication and internet services* (3.82). The respondents were found to be least satisfied with *border services* (3.44) and *road conditions* (3.41) of the state. But, considering the mean scores of these two attributes (3.44 and 3.41), the picture do not look too bad as their ratings were between the neutral (average) and satisfactory level.

As in the case of Meghalaya, *hospitality of local people* (4.01 mean score) was the most satisfying attribute for the respondents in Mizoram. *Hygiene and sanitation* (3.97) has been ranked the second best attribute while *shopping* ranked at third. Meanwhile, the respondents of Mizoram were least satisfied with *road conditions* (2.89),

border services (2.78) and *facilities available at tourist centres* (2.74) of the state. These attributes were rated below the ‘neutral’ level, which signifies the appalling state of these tourism services.

The comparative analysis shows that the average of all means of select attributes of tourism services in Meghalaya (3.65) is considerably higher than that of Mizoram (3.40), which shows that tourism services provided in Meghalaya were more satisfactory than that of Mizoram. It can be inferred that road conditions, lack of good facilities at tourist centres, border services and transportation services are some issues which need special consideration from tourism perspective, especially in Mizoram.

4.4.1.4 T-test results on the difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of two select states regarding selected attributes of tourism services

To know the significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of the two select states regarding selected attributes of tourism services, t-test is applied.

Table 4.57
T-test results on the difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of two select states regarding selected attributes of tourism services (H_{040} to H_{049})

| Attributes | Meghalaya | | Mizoram | | t | df | Sig. |
|---|-----------|--------|---------|--------|--------|-----|-------|
| | Mean | SD | Mean | SD | | | |
| Border services like passport issue, ILP etc. | 3.44 | .75639 | 2.78 | .97006 | 5.365 | 182 | .000 |
| Transportation services like buses, taxis etc. | 3.53 | .61060 | 3.21 | .75605 | 3.293 | | .001 |
| Road conditions | 3.41 | .65281 | 2.89 | .82749 | 4.934 | | .000 |
| Telecommunication & internet services | 3.82 | .75719 | 3.45 | .85723 | 3.235 | | .001 |
| Restaurants | 3.64 | .74563 | 3.64 | .73195 | .000 | | 1.000 |
| Hospitality of local people | 3.87 | .78695 | 4.01 | .83479 | -1.220 | | .224 |
| Shopping (Clothing/handicrafts) | 3.85 | .80873 | 3.78 | .74644 | .636 | | .525 |
| Hygiene and sanitation | 3.74 | .69078 | 3.97 | .73106 | -2.287 | | .023 |
| Facilities offered at tourist centres | 3.46 | .82168 | 2.74 | .92791 | 5.809 | | .000 |
| Other services like banking (ATM), post office etc. | 3.75 | .78335 | 3.53 | .78438 | 1.985 | | .049 |

Source: Primary data

The results are discussed attribute-wise hereunder:

Border services

H₀₄₀: There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of two select states regarding border services

Results: The t static value is 5.365 and degrees of freedom (df) is 182. The 2-tailed significance value is .000. Since significance value (.000) is lesser than .05, the null hypothesis (H₀) is rejected.

Transportation services

H₀₄₁: There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of two select states regarding transportation services

Results: The t static value is 3.293 and degrees of freedom (df) is 182. The 2-tailed significance value is .001. Since significance value (.001) is lesser than .05, the null hypothesis (H₀) is rejected.

Road conditions

H₀₄₂: There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of two select states regarding road conditions

Results: The t static value is 4.934 and degrees of freedom (df) is 182. The 2-tailed significance value is .000. Since significance value (.000) is lesser than .05, the null hypothesis (H₀) is rejected.

Telecommunication and internet services

H₀₄₃: There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of two select states regarding telecommunication and internet services

Results: The t static value is 3.235 and degrees of freedom (df) is 182. The 2-tailed significance value is .001. Since significance value (.001) is lesser than .05, the null hypothesis (H₀) is rejected.

Restaurants

H₀₄₄: There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of two select states regarding restaurants

Results: The t static value is .000 and degrees of freedom (df) is 182. The 2-tailed significance value is 1.000. Since significance value (1.000) is greater than .05, the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted.

Hospitality of local people

H₀₄₅: *There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of two select states regarding hospitality of local people*

Results: The t static value is -1.220 and degrees of freedom (df) is 182. The 2-tailed significance value is .224. Since significance value (.224) is greater than .05, the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted.

Shopping (Clothing/handicrafts)

H₀₄₆: *There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of two select states regarding shopping*

Results: The t static value is .636 and degrees of freedom (df) is 182. The 2-tailed significance value is .525. Since significance value (.525) is greater than .05, the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted.

Hygiene and sanitation

H₀₄₇: *There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of two select states regarding hygiene and sanitation*

Results: The t static value is -2.287 and degrees of freedom (df) is 182. The 2-tailed significance value is .023. Since significance value (.023) is lesser than .05, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected.

Facilities offered at tourist centres

H₀₄₈: *There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of two select states regarding facilities offered at tourist centres*

Results: The t static value is 5.809 and degrees of freedom (df) is 182. The 2-tailed significance value is .000. Since significance value (.000) is lesser than .05, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected.

Other services like banking (ATM), post office, etc.

H_{049} : *There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of two select states regarding other tourism services like banking, post office, etc.*

Results: The t static value is 1.985 and degrees of freedom (df) is 182. The 2-tailed significance value is .049. Since significance value (.049) is lesser than .05, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected.

4.4.4 Satisfaction on tourism pricing

Pricing level of a particular product plays an important role in attracting tourists to visit a destination. If tourists are satisfied with the price and the cost effectiveness of their trips there is a tendency to generate revisit intention among them. Therefore, pricing policy of tourism products should determine various aspects such as, meeting customer's requirements and expectations of "value-for-money".

In order to assess the extent to which tourists were satisfied with pricing level, five attributes were considered for the study. The attributes are: local transport, accommodation, food and drink, shopping and overall price of the trip.

The satisfaction levels of the respondents on prices of the selected attributes were analyzed with the help of a five-point scale ranging from 'very poor value' to 'very good value'. The respondents have been asked to tick the appropriate box (number) based on the level of their satisfaction. Similarly, frequencies have been used for analysis of the satisfaction level of the respondents.

4.4.4.1 Satisfaction level of the respondents of Meghalaya on tourism pricing

The satisfaction level of the respondents of Meghalaya on prices of selected tourism attributes has been analyzed based on the responses on a five-point Likert scale. Simple frequency table has been used for analysis. Table 4.58 shows that majority of the respondents in Meghalaya marked the 'satisfactory' label for all the attributes indicating that they felt the price levels of the selected attributes were as expected and quite reasonable with the product/service.

Table 4.58
Satisfaction level of the respondents of Meghalaya on tourism pricing

| Attributes | Level of satisfaction | | | | | Total |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------|--------------|------------|-----------------|-------|
| | Very poor value | Poor Value | Satisfactory | Good value | Very good value | |
| Local transportation | 0 | 5 | 52 | 37 | 6 | 100 |
| Accommodation | 0 | 2 | 48 | 40 | 10 | 100 |
| Food & drink | 0 | 4 | 53 | 39 | 4 | 100 |
| Shopping | 0 | 6 | 57 | 33 | 4 | 100 |
| Overall price of trip | 0 | 5 | 61 | 31 | 3 | 100 |

Source: Primary data

The analysis reveals that 43% of the total respondents indicated that the prices of *local transportation* were of good value, while 52% of the respondents indicated that the prices of this attribute were as expected and reasonable. Meanwhile, 5% of the respondents indicated that the prices of *local transportation* were high.

48% of the respondents felt the prices of *accommodation* were satisfactory, while 50% felt the prices of *accommodation* were affordable. On prices of *food and drink*, more than one-third of the respondents felt that the value was worthy with the products, while 53% believed that the pricing was at par. However, a considerable share (6%) felt that the prices of food and drinks were costly.

Majority of the respondents (57%) indicated that prices of *shopping* were satisfactory, while 33% felt that the prices were good and 6% indicated that the products were overpriced. 61% of the respondents indicated that the *overall price* of the trip was at par with the expectation, while 34% of the respondents indicated that the expenditure was affordable.

4.4.4.2 Satisfaction level of the respondents of Mizoram on tourism pricing

The satisfaction level of the respondents of Mizoram on prices of selected tourism attributes has been analyzed with the help of five-point Likert scale. For data analysis, simple statistics like frequencies were used. Table 4.59 reveals that majority of the respondents (57%) were satisfied with the prices of *local transportation* while 22% of the respondents indicated the prices of *local transportation* were very reasonable and found to be highly satisfied. Meanwhile, 21% of the respondents indicated that the prices of *local transportation* were quite expensive.

Table 4.59
Satisfaction level of the respondents of Mizoram on tourism pricing

| Attributes | Level of satisfaction | | | | | Total |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------|--------------|------------|-----------------|-------|
| | Very poor value | Poor Value | Satisfactory | Good value | Very good value | |
| Local transportation | 1 | 20 | 57 | 18 | 4 | 100 |
| Accommodation | 1 | 6 | 52 | 35 | 6 | 100 |
| Food & drink | 1 | 6 | 46 | 31 | 16 | 100 |
| Shopping | 1 | 7 | 51 | 31 | 10 | 100 |
| Overall price of trip | 2 | 7 | 55 | 25 | 11 | 100 |

Source: Primary data

On prices of *accommodation*, 52% of the respondents expressed satisfaction over its prices, while more than one-third were found to be highly satisfied with the prices; and the remaining 7% felt that the prices were overrated. Almost half of the respondents (46%) indicated that the prices of *food and drink* were at par with the expectation, while 47% of the respondents indicated that the prices of *food and drink* were affordable.

51% of the respondents indicated that the prices of *shopping* were satisfactory, while 8% of the respondents felt it overpriced. Meanwhile, 41% of the respondents indicated that the prices of *shopping* were of good value and quite reasonable. On *overall price* of the trip, 55% of the respondents indicated that it was at par with expectation, while 7% considered that it expensive and 2% very expensive. However, 36% considered that the overall price of the trip was quite affordable.

4.4.4.3 Comparative analysis of satisfaction levels on tourism pricing

For a comparative study of the satisfaction level on prices of selected tourism attributes of the select states, statistics like mean values and average of all means have been adopted. The level of satisfaction of the respondents is ranked according to the mean values computed for each attribute. Supposition is adopted by “the higher the mean score, the more satisfied are the respondents.”

Table 5.60 exhibits that among the selected tourism attributes, the respondents of Meghalaya indicated that prices of *accommodation* (3.58 mean score) were the most satisfactory, followed by prices of *local transportation* (3.44), and prices of food and

drink (3.43). Meanwhile, the respondents indicated that the *overall price* of the trip to Meghalaya were a bit costlier.

Table 5.60
Comparative analysis of satisfaction levels on tourism pricing

| Sl. No. | Attributes | Meghalaya | | | Mizoram | | |
|---------|-----------------------|-----------------------|------|---------------|-----------------------|------|---------------|
| | | Mean value (out of 5) | Rank | Weighted Mean | Mean value (out of 5) | Rank | Weighted mean |
| 1 | Local transportation | 3.44 | 2 | 3.42 | 3.04 | 5 | 3.35 |
| 2 | Accommodation | 3.58 | 1 | | 3.39 | 3 | |
| 3 | Food & drink | 3.43 | 3 | | 3.55 | 1 | |
| 4 | Shopping | 3.35 | 4 | | 3.42 | 2 | |
| 5 | Overall price of trip | 3.32 | 5 | | 3.36 | 4 | |

(The higher the mean score, the more satisfied are the respondents)

Source: Primary data

In case of Mizoram, the analysis reveals that among the selected tourism attributes the prices of *food and drink* (3.55 mean score) was the most affordable one, followed by the prices of *shopping* (3.42), and prices of *accommodation* (3.39). Meanwhile, the respondents indicated that prices of the *local transportation* were expensive compared to prices of other attributes.

The comparative analysis shows that prices of selected tourism attributes in Meghalaya were more affordable than that of Mizoram as the average of all means of selected attributes in Meghalaya (3.42) is considerably higher than that of Mizoram (3.35). The reason for Mizoram being the costlier may be the geographical isolation or lack of proper transportation leading to the state. For the tourists coming from outside the NEI, Meghalaya is easily accessible than Mizoram because of close proximity of the former with Guwahati and rest of India.

4.4.4.4 T-test results on the difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of two select states regarding the prices of selected tourism attributes

To know the significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of the two select states regarding the prices of selected tourism attributes, t-test is applied.

Table 4.61
T-test results on the difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of two select states regarding the prices of selected tourism attributes (H_{050} to H_{054})

| Attributes | Meghalaya | | Mizoram | | T | df | Sig. |
|-----------------------|-----------|--------|---------|--------|--------|-----|------|
| | Mean | SD | Mean | SD | | | |
| Local transportation | 3.44 | .68638 | 3.04 | .76436 | 3.894 | 182 | .786 |
| Accommodation | 3.58 | .69892 | 3.39 | .73711 | 1.870 | | .074 |
| Food & drink | 3.43 | .63968 | 3.55 | .86894 | -1.112 | | .596 |
| Shopping | 3.35 | .65713 | 3.42 | .80629 | -.673 | | .594 |
| Overall price of trip | 3.32 | .61759 | 3.36 | .84710 | -.382 | | .002 |

Source: Primary data

The results are discussed attribute-wise as under:

Local transportation

H_{050} : *There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of two select states regarding the prices of local transportation*

Results: The t static value is 3.894 and degrees of freedom (df) is 182. The 2-tailed significance value is .000. Since significance value (.000) is lesser than .05, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected.

Accommodation

H_{051} : *There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of two select states regarding the prices of accommodation*

Results: The t static value is 1.870 and degrees of freedom (df) is 182. The 2-tailed significance value is .063. Since significance value (.063) is greater than .05, the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted.

Food and drink

H_{052} : *There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of two select states regarding the prices of food and drink*

Results: The t static value is -1.112 and degrees of freedom (df) is 182. The 2-tailed significance value is .267. Since significance value (.267) is greater than .05, the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted.

Shopping

H_{053} : *There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of two select states regarding the prices of shopping*

Results: The t static value is $-.673$ and degrees of freedom (df) is 182. The 2-tailed significance value is $.502$. Since significance value ($.502$) is greater than $.05$, the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted.

Overall price of the trip

H_{054} : *There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of two select states regarding the price of the trip*

Results: The t static value is $-.382$ and degrees of freedom (df) is 182. The 2-tailed significance value is $.703$. Since significance value ($.703$) is greater than $.05$, the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted.

4.4.5 Holiday package combination with other states

The respondents were asked to indicate if they had any plan to visit other states during their present holiday package (trip).

Table 4.62
Holiday package combination of the respondents

| Holiday package combination | No. of respondents | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|---------|------------|
| | Meghalaya | Mizoram | Total |
| Yes | 53 | 62 | 115 (57.5) |
| No | 47 | 38 | 85 (42.5) |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 200 (100) |

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate percentage
Source: Primary data

Table 4.62 shows that out of the total respondents 57.5% had combined their holiday package with other states of India, while 42.5% had no plan to visit other states.

The table further reveals that 53% of the respondents in Meghalaya had planned to visit other states along with the present trip to the state, while 47% of the respondents had no plan to visit other states. In case of Mizoram, 62% of the respondents had holiday package combination with other states, while 38% of the respondents planned only to visit Mizoram.

4.4.6 Satisfaction level on the select states as tourism destination vis-à-vis other states

Tourism industry is a competitive industry like any other industry. The tourism marketers need to study how tourists perceived about the region as a tourism destination

compared to other tourism-regions they visited so far. Hence, the tourists' perceptions of a state or a region play an important role in formulating strategies to market it.

This sub-section is aimed to study the tourists' perception of the select states as tourism destinations vis-à-vis other states of India (competitors) they have visited so far based on selected tourism attributes. In this context, five tourism attributes (elements) have been considered for the study. They are: infrastructure, accommodation, availability of facilities at tourist spots, maintenance of tourist spots and the overall rating of the select states.

The perceptions based on the levels of satisfactions were determined by using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 'highly dissatisfied' to 'highly satisfied'. Frequency tables have been used to analyze the level of satisfaction of the respondents.

4.4.6.1 Satisfaction level of the respondents of Meghalaya regarding their perception of the state as a tourism destination vis-a-vis other states

The satisfaction level of the respondents of Meghalaya regarding their perception of the state as a tourism destination vis-a-vis other states has been analyzed with the help of five-point Likert scale ranging from 'highly dissatisfied' to 'highly satisfied'. Simple frequency table has been used for analysis.

Table 4.63
Satisfaction level of the respondents of Meghalaya regarding their perception of the state as a tourism destination vis-a-vis other states

| Attributes | Level of satisfaction | | | | | Total |
|---|-----------------------|--------------|---------|-----------|------------------|-------|
| | Highly dissatisfied | Dissatisfied | Neutral | Satisfied | Highly satisfied | |
| Infrastructure | 0 | 8 | 59 | 23 | 10 | 100 |
| Accommodation | 0 | 2 | 52 | 42 | 4 | 100 |
| Availability of facilities such as rest rooms, restaurants etc., at tourist spots | 5 | 15 | 49 | 24 | 7 | 100 |
| Maintenance of tourist spots | 1 | 9 | 48 | 37 | 5 | 100 |
| Overall rating of Meghalaya vis-a-vis other states | 0 | 0 | 36 | 44 | 20 | 100 |

Sources: Primary data

Table 4.63 reveals that 33% of the respondents were found to be either satisfied or highly satisfied with tourism *infrastructure* of Meghalaya vis-à-vis other states, while 8% were found to be dissatisfied. Meanwhile, 59% of the respondents indicated that the tourism *infrastructure* of Meghalaya was at par compared to that of other states they visited so far.

The table reveals that 52% of the respondents had neutral opinion on *accommodation* sector of Meghalaya compared to other states, while 46% of the respondents expressed satisfaction with it. On the *availability of facilities such as rest rooms, restaurants, etc. at tourist spots*, 31% of the respondents indicated that they were satisfied with Meghalaya's than that of other states they had visited so far, while one-fifth of the respondents were found to be dissatisfied.

It was observed that 48% of the respondents were having neutral views with the *maintenance of tourist spots* in Meghalaya compared to other states they have visited so far, while 42% of the respondents indicated satisfaction with it. Meanwhile, 10% of the respondents were found to be dissatisfied.

With the *overall rating* of Meghalaya as a tourism destination vis-à-vis other states, 36% of the respondents indicated that the state was at par, while 44% of the respondents were satisfied and 20% were highly satisfied with the state, to be considered as a tourism destination.

4.4.6.2 Satisfaction level of the respondents of Mizoram regarding their perception of the state as a tourism destination vis-a-vis other states

The satisfaction level of the respondents of Mizoram regarding their perception of the state as a tourism destination vis-a-vis other states has been analyzed based on the responses obtained on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 'highly dissatisfied' to 'highly satisfied'. Frequency tables have been used to analyse the level of satisfaction of the respondents.

Table 4.64
Satisfaction level of the respondents of Mizoram regarding their perception of the state as a tourism destination vis-a-vis other states

| Attributes | Level of satisfaction | | | | | Total |
|---|-----------------------|--------------|---------|-----------|------------------|-------|
| | Highly dissatisfied | Dissatisfied | Neutral | Satisfied | Highly satisfied | |
| Infrastructure | 4 | 15 | 65 | 14 | 2 | 100 |
| Accommodation | 2 | 10 | 40 | 46 | 2 | 100 |
| Availability of facilities such as rest rooms, restaurants etc., at tourist spots | 7 | 27 | 47 | 17 | 2 | 100 |
| Maintenance of tourist spots | 11 | 28 | 42 | 19 | 0 | 100 |
| Overall rating of Mizoram vis-a-vis other states | 0 | 0 | 43 | 46 | 11 | 100 |

Sources: Primary data

Table 4.64 shows that 65% of the total respondents were found to be neutral with the tourism *infrastructure* of Mizoram vis-à-vis other states, while 19% of the respondents were found to be dissatisfied with the *infrastructure* of the state. Meanwhile, only 16% of the respondents were found to be satisfied with the tourism *infrastructure* of Mizoram. On *accommodation* sector of Mizoram vis-à-vis other states, 12% of the respondents were found to be dissatisfied, while 40% of the respondents were having neutral opinion. 48% of the respondents were found to be satisfied with this attribute.

On the availability of *facilities such as rest rooms, restaurants, etc. at tourist spots*, 47% of the respondents in Mizoram indicated that this attribute was at par with other states, while only 19% of the respondents found to be either satisfied with it. However, over one-third of the respondents indicated their dissatisfaction with this attribute.

More than one-third of the respondents were found to be dissatisfied with the *maintenance of tourist spots* in Mizoram compared to that of other states they visited so far. 42% of the respondents were found to be having neutral views, while only 19% of the respondents were found to be satisfied with this attribute.

On *overall rating* of Mizoram as a tourism destination vis-à-vis other states, 43% of the respondents indicated that the state was at par with other states, while 57% indicated that they can rate Mizoram as a prospective tourism destination.

4.4.6.3 Comparative analysis of the satisfaction levels regarding the select states as tourism destination vis-a-vis other states

For a comparative study of the satisfaction level of the respondents regarding their perception of the select states as tourism destinations vis-a-vis other states, statistics like mean values and average of all means have been adopted. The level of satisfaction of the respondents is ranked according to the mean values computed for each attribute. Supposition is adopted by “the higher the mean score, the more satisfied are the respondents”

Table 4.65
Comparative Analysis of the Satisfaction Level
regarding the select states as tourism destination vis-a-vis other states

| Sl. No. | Attributes | Meghalaya | | | Mizoram | | |
|---------|---|-----------------------|------|---------------|-----------------------|------|---------------|
| | | Mean value (out of 5) | Rank | Weighted mean | Mean value (out of 5) | Rank | Weighted mean |
| 1 | Infrastructure | 3.35 | 4 | 3.43 | 2.95 | 3 | 3.09 |
| 2 | Accommodation | 3.48 | 2 | | 3.36 | 2 | |
| 3 | Availability of facilities such as rest rooms, restaurants etc., at tourist spots | 3.13 | 5 | | 2.80 | 4 | |
| 4 | Maintenance of tourist spots | 3.36 | 3 | | 2.69 | 5 | |
| 5 | Overall rating of the state vis-a-vis other states | 3.84 | 1 | | 3.68 | 1 | |

(The higher the mean score, the more satisfied are the respondents)

Source: Primary data

Table 4.65 shows that among the selected tourism attributes of Meghalaya, *overall rating* of Meghalaya as a tourism destination compared to other states (3.84 mean score) has been the most satisfactory attribute, followed by *accommodation* (3.48) and *maintenance of tourist spots* (3.36). The respondents were least satisfied with the *infrastructure* (3.35) and the *availability of facilities such as rest rooms, restaurants etc., at tourist spots* (3.13).

In case of Mizoram, the *overall rating* of the state as a tourism destination compared to other states (3.68% mean score) was the most satisfying attribute, followed by *accommodation* (3.36). The respondents were least satisfied with the tourism *infrastructure* (2.95), *availability of facilities such as rest rooms, restaurants etc., at tourist spots* (2.80) and *maintenance of tourist spots* (2.69).

The comparative analysis shows that the respondents' perception of Meghalaya (3.43) as a tourism destination was more positive than that of Mizoram (3.09) when compared to other states (competitors).

5.4.6.4 T-test results on the difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of two select states regarding their perception of respective state as tourism destination vis-à-vis other states they have visited so far based on select attributes

To know the significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of two select states regarding their perception of respective state as tourism destination vis-à-vis other states they have visited so far based on select attributes, t-test is applied.

Table 4.66
T-test results on the difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of two select states regarding their perception of respective state as tourism destination vis-à-vis other states they have visited so far based on select attributes (H_{055} to H_{059})

| Attributes | Meghalaya | | Mizoram | | t | df | Sig. |
|---|-----------|--------|---------|--------|-------|-----|------|
| | Mean | SD | Mean | SD | | | |
| Infrastructure | 3.35 | .77035 | 2.95 | .72995 | 3.769 | 198 | .000 |
| Accommodation | 3.48 | .61101 | 3.36 | .77225 | 1.219 | | .224 |
| Availability of facilities such as rest rooms, restaurants etc., at tourist spots | 3.13 | .92829 | 2.80 | .87617 | 2.585 | | .010 |
| Maintenance of tourist spots | 3.36 | .75905 | 2.69 | .90671 | 5.666 | | .000 |
| Overall rating of the state vis-a-vis other states | 3.84 | .73471 | 3.68 | .66485 | 1.615 | | .108 |

Source: Primary data

The results are discussed attribute-wise.

Infrastructure

H₀₅₅: There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of two select states regarding their perception of respective state as tourism destination vis-à-vis other states they have visited so far based on infrastructure

Results: The t static value is 3.769 and degrees of freedom (df) is 198. The 2-tailed significance value is .000. Since significance value (.000) is lesser than .05, the null hypothesis (H₀) is rejected.

Accommodation

H₀₅₆: There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of two select states regarding their perception of respective state as tourism destination vis-à-vis other states they have visited so far based on accommodation

Results: The t static value is 1.219 and degrees of freedom (df) is 198. The 2-tailed significance value is .224. Since significance value (.224) is greater than .05, the null hypothesis (H₀) is accepted.

Availability of facilities such as restrooms, restaurants etc, at tourist spots

H₀₅₇: There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of two select states regarding their perception of respective state as tourism destination vis-à-vis other states they have visited so far based on availability of tourism facilities such as restrooms, restaurants etc, at tourist spots

Results: The t static value is 2.585 and degrees of freedom (df) is 198. The 2-tailed significance value is .010. Since significance value (.010) is greater than .05, the null hypothesis (H₀) is rejected.

Maintenance of tourist spots

H₀₅₈: There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of two select states regarding their perception of respective state as tourism destination vis-à-vis other states they have visited so far based on maintenance of tourist spots

Results: The t static value is 5.666 and degrees of freedom (df) is 198. The 2-tailed significance value is .000. Since significance value (.000) is greater than .05, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected.

Overall rating as tourism destination

H_{059} : *There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of two select states regarding their perception of respective state as tourism destination vis-à-vis other states they have visited so far based on overall rating as tourism destination.*

Results: The t static value is 1.615 and degrees of freedom (df) is 198. The 2-tailed significance value is .108. Since significance value (.108) is greater than .05, the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted.

4.4.7 Likelihood to recommend select states as tourism destination

The respondents were asked to indicate whether they would like to recommend others about the select states as tourism destinations. Table 4.67 shows that over 93% of the respondents indicated that they will definitely recommend the select states as tourism destinations, while 6% of the respondents indicated that either it was too early for them to recommend or still undecided for recommendation.

Table 4.67
Likelihood to recommend select states as tourism destination

| Likelihood to recommend | No. of respondents | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------|---------|------------|
| | Meghalaya | Mizoram | Total |
| Yes | 97 | 90 | 187 (93.5) |
| No | 0 | 1 | 1 (0.5) |
| Can't say | 3 | 9 | 12 (6) |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 200 |

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate percentage

Source: Primary data

State-wise comparison shows that 97% of the respondents in Meghalaya and 90% of the respondents in Mizoram indicated to recommend the respective states as tourism destination. At the same time, 3% of the respondents in Meghalaya and 9% of the respondents in Mizoram didn't disclose their intention to recommend the select states as tourism destinations.

4.4.8 Revisit intention

A contented and fulfilled tourist would naturally have the intention to revisit the places he had visited so far and will also share his positive feelings to others through a word-of-mouth. Hence, revisiting intention of a tourist is considered to be an important factor for tourism industry in terms of its sustainability and growth. In this context, the respondents were asked about their revisit intentions.

Table 4.68
Revisit intention of the respondents

| Revisit intention | No. of respondents | | |
|-------------------|--------------------|---------|------------|
| | Meghalaya | Mizoram | Total |
| Near future | 30 | 35 | 65 (32.5) |
| Distant future | 54 | 51 | 105 (52.5) |
| No | 0 | 2 | 2 (1) |
| Can't say | 16 | 12 | 28 (14) |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 200 (100) |

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate percentage

Source: Primary data

Table 4.68 shows that majority of the respondents had intention to revisit the select states. Out of the total respondents, over 32% had conveyed their intention to revisit the select states in the near future, while 52% had indicated to revisit in distant future only. On the other hand, 14 % of the respondents were not sure if they would revisit the select states. No significant difference was observed between the respondents of the select states in respect of their intention to revisit the select states.

4.4.9 Cross-sectional analyses of revisit intention

In the following sub-sections, cross sectional analysis has been carried out to study the respondents' revisit intention across their age, marital status, gender and monthly family income. Further, some hypotheses have been tested to find out whether any significant interrelationship (association) exists between revisit intention and select demographic characteristics of the respondents by applying Chi-square test.

4.3.9.1 Revisit intention across age

Table 4.69 shows that under the age group 21-35 years, over 49% of the respondents had intention to revisit the select states in distant future, while over 38% had

intention to revisit in near future. Meanwhile, over 12% could not indicate their revisit intention.

Under the age group of 36-50 years, more than 91% of the total respondents had intention to revisit the select states in future, while over 8% of the respondents could not disclose their revisit intention. Among the respondents whose ages were 51-65 years, over 78% of them indicated the intention to revisit the select states in distant future, while 21% of the respondents could not indicate their revisiting intention.

Table 4.69
Revisit intention across age

| Revisit intention | Age of the respondents (in years) | | | | | Total | Chi-square and P- value |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|----------------|---|
| | Less than 20 | 21-35 | 36-50 | 51-65 | Above 65 | | |
| In the near future | 6 (31.6%) | 34 (38.2%) | 23 (41.1%) | 0 (0%) | 2 (15.4%) | 65 (32.5%) | Chi-square value = 47.366 p < .000 df = 12 Cramer's V = .281 |
| Distant future | 8 (42.1%) | 44 (49.4%) | 28 (50%) | 18 (78.3%) | 7 (53.8%) | 105 (52.5%) | |
| No | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) | 2 (15.4%) | 2 (1%) | |
| Can't say | 5 (26.3%) | 11 (12.4%) | 5 (8.9%) | 5 (21.7%) | 2 (15.4%) | 28 (14%) | |
| Total | 19 (100%) | 89 (100%) | 56 (100%) | 23 (100%) | 13 (100%) | 200 (100%) | |

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate percentage

Source: Primary data

Among the respondents whose ages were above 65 years, over 69% had intention to revisit select states either in near or distant future. Similarly, among the respondents whose ages were up to 20 years, more than 73% had the intention to revisit the select states in future.

Test of association between revisit intention and age (H_{060})

To know the association between revisit intention of the respondents and their age, Chi-square test is applied with the following hypothesis:

H_{060} : *There is no significant association between revisit intention of the respondents and their age*

Table 4.69 reveals that the Pearson Chi-Square value is 47.366 with a significance level of .000.

$$\chi^2 (12, n = 200) = 47.366, p < .000, \text{Cramer's } V = .281$$

Since significance value (.00) is lesser than .05, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected. The Cramer's V value is .281 indicates that the influence of age on the respondents' intention to revisit the select states is medium.

4.4.9.2 Revisit intention across marital status

Table 4.70 shows that among the married respondents, over 83% had intention to revisit the select states in future. Over 15% of the respondents could not indicate their revisit intention.

Table 4.70
Revisit intention across marital status

| Revisit intention | Marital status of the respondents | | | Total | Chi-square and P- value |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|------------------|----------------|--|
| | Unmarried | Married | Divorced/widowed | | |
| In the near future | 29 (37.7%) | 34 (28.8%) | 2 (40%) | 65 (32.5%) | <i>Chi-square value = 3.757</i> <i>p < .710</i> <i>df = 6</i> <i>Cramer's V = .097</i> |
| Distant future | 38 (49.3%) | 64 (54.2%) | 3 (60%) | 105 (52.5%) | |
| No | 0 (0%) | 2 (1.7%) | 0 (0%) | 2 (1%) | |
| Can't say | 10 (13%) | 18 (15.3%) | 0 (0%) | 28 (14%) | |
| Total | 77 (100%) | 118 (100%) | 5 (100%) | 200 (100%) | |

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate percentage
Source: Primary data

Among the unmarried respondents, 87% of them indicated that they will revisit the select states in future, while 13% of the respondents could not indicate their revisit intention. All the respondents who were either divorced or widowed had intention to revisit the select states in future.

Test of association between revisit intention and marital status (H_{061})

To know the association between revisit intention of the respondents and their marital status, Chi-square test is applied with the following hypothesis:

H_{061} : *There is no significant association between revisit intention of the respondents and their marital status*

Table 4.70 reveals that the Pearson Chi-Square value is 3.757 with an insignificance level of .710.

$$\chi^2 (6, n = 200) = 3.757, p > .710, \text{Cramer's } V = .097$$

Since significance value (.710) is greater than .05, the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted. The Cramer's V value is .097 indicates that the influence of marital status on the respondents' intention to revisit the select states is low.

4.4.9.3 Revisit intention across gender

Table 4.71 reveals that among the male respondents, over 86% had intention to revisit the select states in future. Over 12% of the respondents felt that it was too early to indicate their revisiting intention. In respect of female respondents, over 81% had intention to revisit the select states in future. Over 18.6% of the respondents could not indicate their revisiting intention.

Table 4.71
Revisit Intention across gender

| Revisit intention | Gender of the respondents | | Total | Chi-square and P- value |
|-------------------|---------------------------|---------------|----------------|--|
| | Male | Female | | |
| Near future | 51 (36.2%) | 14 (23.8%) | 65 (32.5%) | <i>Chi-square value = 4.526</i> <i>p < .210</i> <i>df = 3</i> <i>Cramer's V = .150</i> |
| Distant future | 71 (50.3%) | 34 (57.6%) | 105 (52.5%) | |
| No | 2 (1.4%) | 0 (0%) | 2 (1%) | |
| Can't Say | 17 (12.1%) | 11 (18.6%) | 28 (14%) | |
| Total | 141 (100%) | 59 (100%) | 200 (100%) | |

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate percentage
Source: Primary data

Test of association between revisit intention and gender (H_{062})

To know the association between revisit intention of the respondents and their gender, Chi-square test is applied with the following hypothesis:

H_{062} : *There is no significant association between revisit intention of the respondents and their gender*

Table 4.71 reveals that the Pearson Chi-Square value is 4.526 with an insignificance level of .210.

$$\chi^2 (3, n = 200) = 4.526, p > .210, \text{Cramer's } V = .150$$

Since significance value (.210) is greater than .05, the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted. The Cramer's V value is .150 indicates that the influence of gender on the respondents' intention to revisit the select states is low.

5.3.9.4 Revisit intention across monthly family income

Table 4.72 reveals that in the income group of Rs. 25,001-50,000, over 86% of the respondents had intention to revisit the select states in future, while 9.5% could not disclose their intention.

Table 4.72
Revisit intention across monthly family income

| Revisit intention | Monthly family income of the respondents (in rupees) | | | | | | | | Total |
|-------------------|--|---------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|------------------------|--------------|-------------|----------------|
| | A | B | C | D | E | F | F | H | |
| Near future | 11 (39.3%) | 23 (36.5%) | 18 (36%) | 8 (28.6%) | 0 (0%) | 1 (14.2%) | 4 (36.4%) | 0 (0%) | 65 (32.5%) |
| Distant future | 15 (53.6%) | 34 (54%) | 22 (44%) | 14 (50%) | 7 (87.5%) | 3 (42.9%) | 5 (45.4%) | 5 (100%) | 105 (52.5%) |
| No | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) | 2 (4%) | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) | 2 (1%) |
| Can't say | 2 (7.1%) | 6 (9.5%) | 8 (16%) | 6 (8.4%) | 1 (12.5%) | 3 (42.9%) | 2 (18.2%) | 0 (0.5%) | 28 (14%) |
| Total | 28 (100%) | 63 (100%) | 50 (100%) | 28 (100%) | 8 (100%) | 7 (100%) | 11 (100%) | 5 (100%) | 200 (100%) |
| Chi-Square Value | | | | P-Value | | Degree of freedom (df) | | Cramer's V | |
| 25.119 | | | | .242 | | 21 | | .205 | |

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate percentage

A = Up to 25,000 B = 25,001-50,000 C = 50,001-75,000 D = 75,001-1,00,000
E = 1,00,001-1,25,000 F = 1,25,001-1,50,000 G = Above 1,50,000 H = No Response

Source: Primary data

Under the income group of Rs. 50,001-75,000, four-fifth of the respondents had intention to revisit the select states either in future. However, 4% of the respondents indicated that they don't have intention to revisit the select states for tourism purposes. Among the respondents who had family income up to Rs. 25,000, over 92% of them had intention to revisit the select states in future, while under the income category of Rs. 75,001-1,00,000, over 78% had intention to revisit the select states.

Test of association between revisit intention and monthly family income (H_{063})

To know the association between revisit intention of the respondents and their monthly family income, Chi-square test is applied with the following hypothesis:

H₀₆₃: *There is no significant association between revisit intention of the respondents and their monthly family income*

Table 4.72 reveals that the Pearson Chi-Square value is 25.119 with an insignificance level of .242.

$$\chi^2 (21, n = 200) = 25.119, p > .242, \text{Cramer's } V = .205$$

Since significance value (.242) is greater than .05, the null hypothesis (H₀) is accepted. The Cramer's V value is .205 indicates that the influence of monthly family income on the respondents' intention to revisit the select states is low.

5.4.10 Satisfaction with the trip against expectation

Table 4.73 shows that out of the total respondents, over 61% acknowledged that they were satisfied with their trips as compared to expectation. 8% of the respondents expressed that they were highly satisfied with their trip, while 26% of the respondents felt their trip experience was as per expectation. However, 4.5% of the respondents believed that their trip experience was below par.

Table 4.73
Satisfaction with the trip against expectation

| Level of satisfaction | No. of respondents | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------|---------|------------|
| | Meghalaya | Mizoram | Total |
| Highly dissatisfied | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Dissatisfied | 1 | 8 | 9 (4.5) |
| As expected | 20 | 32 | 52 (26) |
| Satisfied | 65 | 58 | 123 (61.5) |
| Highly satisfied | 14 | 2 | 16 (8) |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 200 (100) |

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate percentage

Source: Primary data

The table reveals that, 65% of the respondents in Meghalaya were satisfied, and 14% of the respondents were highly satisfied with their trip as compared to expectation. One-fifth of the respondents expressed the trip experience was at par with expectation.

In case of Mizoram, 60% of the respondents felt the trip was quite satisfactory compared to expectation. 32% of the respondents indicated that the trip experience was

as expected. However, 8% of the respondents expressed dissatisfaction over their trips to Mizoram.

Although the select states are enormously rich in natural beauty, culture and traditions and so on, there still remains dissatisfaction among the tourists with their trip experience. The reasons for such low level of satisfaction could be improper management of these varied tourism resources and lack of basic facilities provided therein. Hence, these issues should be considered as drawbacks for tourism development in the select states and they must be addressed at the earliest possible.

To know the differences between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of two select states regarding overall experience of their trip against expectation, t test is applied with the hypothesis given below:

Table 4.74
T-test results on difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of two select states regarding overall experience of the trip against expectation (H_{064})

| Expectation | Meghalaya | | Mizoram | | t | df | Sig. |
|--------------------|-----------|--------|---------|--------|-------|-----|------|
| | Mean | SD | Mean | SD | | | |
| Satisfaction level | 3.92 | .61431 | 3.54 | .67300 | 4.170 | 198 | .000 |

Source: Primary data

H_{064} : *There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of two select states regarding overall experience of their trip against expectation.*

Results: The t static value is 4.170 and degrees of freedom (df) is 198. The 2-tailed significance value is .000. Since significance value (.000) is lesser than .05. Hence, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected.

4.4.11 Key reasons for dissatisfaction with the trip experience

A tourist visiting a place outside home may have to face many problems. It becomes easier for the policymakers to pay proper attention in overcoming the problems if they are properly identified. Thus, for the purpose of attaining more information about the respondents if they were dissatisfied with their current trip to the select states, they were asked to indicate the most important reasons from a total of 11 selected attributes

placed before them. An additional option was also given to them to specify if any of the reasons for the dissatisfaction was not mentioned.

The respondents were asked to indicate the reasons up to 5 ranks in order of the degree of their dissatisfaction. The reasons for dissatisfaction identified were: security concern, accessibility, accommodation problems, food problems, environment, sanitation problems, unfriendly people, communication, knowledgeable guide at reasonable rates, internal transport at reasonable rates and ATM and credit card facilities (digitalised banking), internet etc. The weighted average scores of each attribute were calculated to know the overall ranking of the reasons for dissatisfaction.

Table 4.75 is presented to highlight the ranking of the various reasons of dissatisfaction of the respondents during their trip to Meghalaya. The table reveals that 18% of the respondents in Meghalaya did not respond to the query asked for.

Table 4.75
Reasons for dissatisfaction with the trip to Meghalaya

| Sl. No. | Reasons for dissatisfaction | Ranking of dissatisfaction attributes | | | | | Weighted Score | Rating (%) | Rank |
|---------|---|---------------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|----------------|------------|------|
| | | I | II | III | IV | V | | | |
| 1 | Security concern | 2 | 1 | 5 | 3 | 10 | 45 | 3.00 | IX |
| 2 | Accessibility | 24 | 14 | 9 | 13 | 9 | 238 | 15.87 | I |
| 3 | Accommodation problems | 3 | 4 | 3 | 6 | 10 | 62 | 4.13 | VII |
| 4 | Food problems | 11 | 5 | 9 | 14 | 8 | 138 | 9.20 | V |
| 5 | Environment | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.00 | XII |
| 6 | Sanitation facilities | 7 | 19 | 15 | 9 | 12 | 186 | 12.40 | II |
| 7 | Unfriendly people | 0 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 11 | 0.73 | XI |
| 8 | Communication | 12 | 13 | 14 | 11 | 8 | 184 | 12.27 | III |
| 9 | Knowledgeable guides at reasonable rates | 4 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 7 | 60 | 4.00 | VIII |
| 10 | Internal transport at reasonable rates | 9 | 13 | 10 | 11 | 6 | 155 | 10.33 | IV |
| 11 | ATM & credit card facilities, internet etc. | 8 | 6 | 14 | 9 | 6 | 130 | 8.67 | VI |
| 12 | Others, if any | 2 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 5 | 21 | 1.40 | X |
| 13 | No response(s) | 18 | 18 | 18 | 18 | 18 | 270 | 18.00 | |
| Total | | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 1500 | 100.00 | - |

Source: Primary data

The overall ranking, based on weighted scores reveals that absence of proper accessibility (15.87% of rating) has been the main reason for dissatisfaction of the respondents coming to Meghalaya, followed by lack of proper sanitation facilities (12.40% of rating). A number of the respondents were also unhappy with the communication facilities (12.27%) in the state. The respondents indicated that prices of internal transportation (10.33% of rating) were quite high. The table also reveals that a number of respondents faced problems with the quality and availability of desired foods at the tourism destinations.

Table 4.76 highlights the rankings of the reasons for dissatisfaction of the respondents with their current trip to Mizoram. The table shows that 14% of the respondents in Mizoram didn't respond to this query. The top five reasons for dissatisfaction, as revealed from Table 4.76, include accessibility, communication, food problems, ATM & credit card facilities, internet etc. and rates of internal transportation.

Table 4.76
Reasons for dissatisfaction with the trip to Mizoram

| Sl. No. | Reasons for dissatisfaction | Ranking of dissatisfaction attributes | | | | | Weighted score | Rating (%) | Rank |
|---------|---|---------------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|----------------|------------|------|
| | | I | II | III | IV | V | | | |
| 1 | Security concern | 3 | 2 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 52 | 3.47 | VIII |
| 2 | Accessibility | 29 | 18 | 9 | 13 | 16 | 286 | 19.07 | I |
| 3 | Accommodation problems | 8 | 5 | 7 | 4 | 10 | 99 | 6.60 | VII |
| 4 | Food problems | 10 | 13 | 16 | 11 | 9 | 181 | 12.07 | III |
| 5 | Environment | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | XII |
| 6 | Sanitation facilities | 8 | 7 | 5 | 9 | 11 | 112 | 7.47 | VI |
| 7 | Unfriendly people | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 5 | 0.33 | XI |
| 8 | Communication | 13 | 16 | 19 | 12 | 8 | 218 | 14.53 | II |
| 9 | Knowledgeable guides at reasonable rates | 3 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 48 | 3.20 | IX |
| 10 | Internal transport at reasonable rates | 4 | 7 | 11 | 15 | 14 | 125 | 8.33 | V |
| 11 | ATM & credit card facilities, internet etc. | 7 | 12 | 10 | 13 | 9 | 148 | 9.87 | IV |
| 12 | Others, if any | 1 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 16 | 1.07 | X |
| 13 | No response(s) | 14 | 14 | 14 | 14 | 14 | 210 | 14.00 | - |
| Total | | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 1500 | 100.00 | |

Source: Primary Data

The analysis reveals that isolation and inaccessibility of the state (19.07% of rating) has been the main reason for dissatisfaction of the respondents who visited Mizoram. In other words, inaccessibility here includes long distance and tiresome travelling, difficult terrains and pathetic road conditions, complicated border pass formalities, and so on. Absence of good quality communication facilities (14.53% of rating) in the state was also one of the reasons for dissatisfaction among the respondents. Many respondents were also found unhappy with the quality and availability of desired foods at some tourism destinations of the state. It was also observed that a number of respondents faced hurdles because of unavailability of banking facilities at the tourist spots like ATM, credit card facilities and even weak signal for internet banking. The respondents also indicated that the rates of utilizing internal transportation (8.33% of rating) such as taxi fares and hiring of vehicles to visit the tourism attractions are very high.

By making comparison of the two tables (Table 4.75 and 4.76), it can be inferred that the respondents were mostly dissatisfied with the inaccessibility, lack of good communication facilities, food problems and high pricing of internal transportation. Hence, these reasons should be carefully looked into by the policymakers of the select states to take necessary steps to overcome them with the cooperation of different tourism stakeholders. In Mizoram, the complications regarding ILP and RAP formalities for domestic and foreign tourists respectively should also be relaxed to some extent to motivate the prospective tourists to come and visit the state. In addition, the governments of the select states should regulate strong pro-tourism policies at regular intervals to enhance the tourism sector in these states.

5.4.12 Suggestions to improve tourism industry in the select states

At the end of the questionnaire, an open-ended question was asked from the respondents to give their comments or suggestions on how tourism industry could be improved in the select states. It was observed that most of the respondents had placed their comments or suggestions by some broken key words, which the researcher had

moderated in an orderly manner. Some of the important suggestions placed by the respondents (tourists) were:

- (i) Improvement of road conditions and its communication networks.
- (ii) Standardisation of accommodation sector.
- (iii) Proper publicity in newspapers, travel magazines and electronic media.
- (iv) Steps by the governments to remove the sense of insecurity from the minds of prospective tourists.
- (v) Facilities offered at tourist spots should be upgraded.
- (vi) Entertainment activities and night life should be amplified.
- (vii) Installation of public sanitary facilities inside city as well as at tourist spots.
- (viii) Smooth transportation to the tourism destinations at reasonable costs.
- (ix) Endorsement of diverse range of cuisines.
- (x) Removal or relaxation of Restrict Area Permit (RAP) and Inner Line Permit (ILP) from the states where these are in force.
- (xi) Institute more travel agents/tour operators in and outside the states.
- (xii) Milestones should be erected roadside.
- (xiii) Efficiency of the hotel staff should be improved.
- (xiv) Quality of the foods should be improved.
- (xv) Payment system like Point of Sale (POS) should be installed in hotels and at tourist spots.
- (xvi) With the abundance of natural beauty, more tourist spots can be established.
- (xvii) ATM facilities nearby tourist spots
- (xviii) Overall tourism infrastructure should be upgraded.

4.5 Conclusions

The chapter was broadly divided into three sections, viz. demographic profiles, tour profiles and perceptions of the tourists. In the first section, different demographic characteristics of the respondents of the select states, i.e. Meghalaya and Mizoram were analysed by using frequency tables. The analyses revealed that majority of the respondents who visited the select states belonged to the age of 21-35 years, and most of

the respondents were married. In terms of nationality of the respondents, 93% of them were domestic while 7% were foreign nationals. Almost one-third of the respondents were male; and in terms of religion, Hindus made up of the majority respondents in both the select states. The maximum numbers of respondents were having family size of 5-6 members and majority of the visitors were engaged in private jobs. It was revealed that graduate people constituted the majority of the tourists where most of them had monthly family income of Rs. 25,001-50,000. At the end of the section, cross-sectional study of monthly family income was carried out across age, gender, marital status, etc.

In the second section, tour profiles of the respondents were studied where it was observed that majority of them were visiting the select states for the first time. The respondents were found to be travelling mostly with family members with a group of 2-4 companions. Most of the respondents travel at least once a year where their length of stay was 1-5 days. While travelling to the select states, they mainly used bus services and their main purpose of visit was leisure/vacation. Majority of the respondents mainly took the help of friends/relatives in both organizing their trips to the select states and visiting the tourism attractions. Hypothesis testing was carried out by using chi-square test to study the association of length of stay, type of companions, and number of companions with age, marital status, gender and monthly family income.

The third section deals with studying the perception or the satisfaction level of the respondents with regards to accommodation, tourism attractions, tourism services and tourism pricing. Ranking of satisfaction level was calculated to know if significant differences exist between the respondents' perception on Meghalaya and on Mizoram. To have a scientific observation into the mean differences of the respondents' perception, independent sample t tests were also conducted. On being asked about their revisiting intentions, majority of the respondents stated that they would like to revisit the study states in the distant future and most of them also acknowledged that they would recommend the select states as prospective tourism destinations in Northeast India. It was revealed that majority of the respondents were satisfied with their trips as compared to their expectations. Meanwhile, some reasons that disrupt the satisfaction of the

respondents during their trips were also studied so that best possible measures could be adopted for tourism development in the select states. At the end, some suggestions were sought from the respondents to improve the tourism industry of both the select states.

The natural beauty, the topography and the rugged hilly terrains are among many of the common features of both the select states, i.e. Meghalaya and Mizoram. Hence, the characteristics of tourism industry of both states are also similar to a great extent except on a few parameters. So, the marketing strategies adopted by tourism industry in both states can be expected to be identical. The only difference that is pretty visible between these two states is the close proximity of Meghalaya with the rest of India than Mizoram. Last, but not the least, Meghalaya has an upper hand over Mizoram in the tourism sector with the fact that the former has some prominent tourism attractions in Northeast India like Mawsynram, Cherrapunjee, Shillong, Mawlynnong, etc. which are well known to other parts of the world since long.

CHAPTER 5

TOURISM MARKETING PRACTICES IN MEGHALAYA AND MIZORAM

“Marketing is not about selling things. It’s about making it easy for people to buy.”

- Kristin Zhivago

This chapter strives to study the conceptual approaches of tourism marketing. Special emphasis is given on the seven elements of marketing strategy (product, price, place, promotion, people, process and physical evidence) of tourism industry, being followed by the tourism marketers in the select states.

5.1 Introduction

Today, tourism is one of the fastest growing industries in the world. The travel and tourism industry has become a major contributor to the gross national product of many nations, with marketing tourism destinations and its products becoming a widely recognized practice for both public and private sector organizations.

Tourism industry is primarily a service based industry. The principal products provided by tourism businesses are experience and hospitality. Hence, they are different from most of other products because what is being sold is consumption of an experience rather than a tangible product. The consumers (tourists) are always on the lookout for new experiences. This means that a customer often walks away from the tourism offerings with only a memory or an experience. Thus, travel and tourism needs to be marketed more vigorously than other products as it is an industry in which the customer has immense variety of choice and also varied motivations for.

5.2 Concept of marketing

Marketing is about anticipating demand, recognizing it, stimulating it and finally satisfying it. It is the function of business to produce goods and services that satisfy consumer wants and needs at a profit.

According to the American Marketing Association, marketing is “the process of planning and executing the conception, pricing, promotion, and distribution of ideas, goods, and services to create exchanges that satisfy individual and organizational objectives.” Simply stated, it is creating and promoting a product (ideas,

goods or services) that satisfies a customer's need or desire and is available at a desirable price and place.

Kotler et al (2003) defines marketing as “a social and managerial process by which individuals and groups obtain what they need and want through creating and exchanging product and value with others.” Kotler argues that the definition is built on the main concepts of wants, needs, demand, and satisfaction for both marketing and marketers because they are central to the study of marketing.

According to Mahoney et al (1987) as quoted by Muala and Qurneh (2012), modern marketing is a way of doing business, heavily based on the ‘marketing concept’ which holds that businesses and organizations should:

- (i) design their products/services to meet customer needs and wants;
- (ii) focus on those people most likely to buy their product rather than the entire mass market; and
- (iii) marketing efforts that fit into their overall business objectives.

Marketing involves much more, including product or service development, place (location and distribution), and pricing. It requires information about people, especially those interested in what you have to offer (your market), such as what they like, where they buy and how much they spend. Its role is to match the right product or service with the right market or audience.

5.3 Tourism marketing - A conceptual approach

The success of the tourism industry depends on the effectiveness of the marketing strategies adopted for the tourist products. With growing competition, organizations in tourism business have no option but to do organized and targeted marketing.

Tourism marketing can be defined as the “systematic and coordinated efforts exerted by the tourism marketers at international, national and local levels to optimize the satisfaction of tourists, groups and individuals with a view to achieve the sustained tourism growth.” Hence, tourism marketing is a process through which both tourists and marketers enter into an exchange for certain benefits (Chaudhary, 2012).

In the words of Krippendorf (1992), “tourism marketing is to be understood as the systematic and coordinated execution of business policy by tourist undertakings whether private or state owned at local, regional, national or international level to achieve the optimal satisfaction of the needs of identifiable consumer groups, and in doing so to achieve an appropriate return.”

According to Berbecaru (1975), tourism marketing is a management system, understood as a way to plan, direct and control activities through rational use of available resources, as a set of operations which provides scientific exploration of the market in order to adapt the tourism offer to tourists’ needs and motivations.

Tourism as a service is not different from any other service belonging to territory sector. Thus, tourism marketing should follow the same principles of general marketing with perhaps some application that is peculiar to tourism (Batra and Chawla, 2001).

Although, principles of marketing are the same for all products, there are certain peculiarities in tourism. Because of the peculiar characteristics of tourism, the supply of tourism industries’ products is different from others (Bhattacharjee, 2001). These peculiarities are:

- (i) The ‘product in tourism industry is a combination of products and services. No single entrepreneur can produce all these products and services and a high degree of interdependence and linkages among the different segments of the tourism industry is considered an essentiality for optimizing tourists’ satisfaction.
- (ii) The tourism product cannot be transported - a customer has to reach to make use of it.
- (iii) The demands are created at one place (i.e. of origin of the tourists) and the supply is offered at tourist destination
- (iv) The tourism products (e.g. a hotel room-hour) cannot be stored for sale at a later date. These are to be used immediately or they go waste. This means an equilibrium between the demand for and supply of tourism products has to be achieved at both the aggregate and organisational levels through proper planning of facilities and marketing efforts.

- (v) Tourism is a very sensitive industry. Situations like, disturbance in the law and order situations, economic instability or natural calamity would immediately hurt the tourism sector making the demand dwindle.

As noted, unlike many other industries, the tourism industry is a composite of several service providers. It is a service industry, consisting of transportation, accommodation and hospitality. The products are intangible and are more difficult to market than tangible ones. The intangible nature of services makes quality control difficult but crucial. It also makes it more difficult for potential customers to evaluate and compare service offerings. But, as long as the inherent sense of curiosity and adventure dwells in the hearts of human beings, the desire to travel, in order to see new sights and experience new things and to live under different environments, will always grow (Dasgupta, 2011). As it is categorized under services because of their dominance in most of the tourism offers it has to be borrowed a lot from services marketing.

5.4 Market segmentation in tourism

Markets consist of buyers who differ in one or more ways. They may differ in their wants, resources, locations, buying attitudes, and buying practices. Because buyers have unique needs and wants, each is potentially a separate market. In tourism too, consumers of tourism services are not homogenous group of individuals who seek same benefits from a destination, have similar expectations, undertake similar vacation activities and perceive the same activities as attractive. It is not possible to customize a tourism product for each tourist product for each tourist and, hence, it become all the more important to segment the tourism market as per distinct group of tourists who share common needs, and have similar expectations from a tourism activity and destination (Dasgupta, 2011).

Market segmentation means breaking down the total market into self-contained and relatively homogeneous subgroups of customers, each possessing its own special requirements and characteristics. According to Bhatia (2006), market segmentation can be defined as “the process, where by producers organize their knowledge of current and potential customer groups and select for particular attention that who’s needs and wants

they are best able to supply with their products.” Hsieh et al (1992) called market segmentation as “a management strategy based on assumptions about the behaviour of the population sub-groups.”

The strategy of market segmentation in tourism is to divide the present and the potential market on the basis of some characteristics and then concentrate marketing efforts, like pricing, supply, and promotion efforts, to the target markets (Kumar, 2010). It is the process of identifying groups of buyers of the tourism market with different desires. This enables a tourism organization to modify its output, advertising messages and promotional methods to correspond to the needs of particular segments.

Let us take an example of the tourism market in Northeast India, as enlightened by Dasgupta (2011). The tourism market can be segmented on the basis of origin into domestic (Indian) and foreign tourists. The variables identified for principal factors for the tourist destination are infrastructure and external influence. Consumers in the two segments would differ in the importance they attach to those variables and also their perception of them. Foreign tourists look for higher levels of infrastructure and external influence at a tourist destination. Since the NEI is largely underdeveloped in terms of infrastructure, there is a gap between the importance of the variable and the perception of its fulfillment. On the other hand, for Indian travelers the gap is minimal, and thus, the domestic travelers may be the candidate segment for targeting.

For segmenting a market, demographic segmentation has been one of the major used methods, which consists of dividing the market into groups based on demographic variables such, as age, gender, family life cycle, income, occupation, education, religion, race and nationality. Hence, tourists can be segmented in a number of ways: purpose of travel (business, leisure), origin (by country), buyer needs and motivations, buyer characteristics, demography (age, gender), economy (income, education), price, and so on. For the present study the following market segmentation techniques have been adopted:

- *Geographic segmentation:* Two states of Northeast India, namely Meghalaya and Mizoram have been selected to study about the marketing practices adopted for the tourism industry therein.
- *Demographic segmentations:* Demographic profile of the tourists (respondents) such as age, gender, ethnic origin, marital status, religion and so on, has been studied.
- *Socio-economic segmentation:* As far as socio-economic segmentation is concerned, family size, occupation, educational qualification and monthly family income of the respondents have been studied in the present study.
- *Psychological segmentation:* Psychological factors of the respondents like frequency of visits, nature and number of travel companions, frequency of tours have been studied.
- *Product-based segmentation:* Respondents were also classified based on purpose of visit, length of stay, mode of travel used and so on.

Market segmentation helps to identify distinct groups of tourists who might have homogeneous characteristics or needs, and hence, prefer varied genres of tour packages. It is the process through which tourists with similar needs, wants, and characteristics are grouped together or the total market is divided into smaller parts that share the common characteristics. It helps in finding those tourists who are most interested in the firm's offer. Through the process of market segmentation, business firms can focus on the parts of the market that can serve best and make great profit.

5.5 Branding a tourism destination

Branding destination is an integral part of developing and retaining a particular region's popularity. Branding is perhaps the most powerful marketing weapon available to contemporary destination marketers confronted by tourists who are increasingly seeking lifestyle fulfillment and experience rather than recognizing differentiation in the more tangible elements of the destination product such as accommodation and attractions (Morgan et al., 2007).

As noted earlier, tourism marketing is generally concerned with the selling of dreams. The images held by consumers therefore play a critical role in their decision-making. We are aware of the fact that promotional activities attract tourists to a certain destination. But, the travel decision-making of the tourist will depend upon the satisfaction level on different attributes of the destination against their expectations.

Destination branding is a subject of particular importance as tourism destinations are in constant competition in providing quality experience of travel. A destination brand manifests as an image in the mind of the consumer, which may be quite different to the self-image intended in the brand identity. As tourism services can only compete via images, it is imperative that marketers understand that perception is reality.

In the context of Northeast India, nature plays a major role in determining the lifestyle of the people living therein. The topography of the region, varied flora and fauna, the history of the people and their rich heritage of ancient traditions and lifestyles, the festivals and crafts make NEI a holiday wonderland that's begging to be discovered afresh. The NEI also happens to be the region where the sun rises first in the country. Relatively a small area, the region is an unexplored world of adventure, bordering with five sovereign countries, viz. Bangladesh, China, Myanmar, Nepal, Bhutan and close proximity to Southeast Asia makes it a truly potential economic goldmine and a treasure house for tourism development. All these factors could play an important role in branding NEI a distinct and unique tourism destination. However, the geographical setting and isolation from mainland India the inflow of domestic as well as foreign tourists of the region is marginal. Despite abundance of natural beauty, snow peaked mountains and white-water rivers, not enough measures have been taken to promote tourism in the region. While the potential for tourism is huge in the region, there are many restricted access on the way for the region to actually become a tourist hotspot. The people of the region and the respective state governments are yet to brighten up to this potential and take further adequate steps in this direction. Owing to these reasons, the Ministry of Tourism has started to promote the tourism potentials of the region with

the catch line “Paradise Unexplored” by giving great importance to the development of tourist infrastructure.

5.6 Tourism marketing mix

Marketing mix is about putting the right product or a combination thereof in the right place, at the right time, and at the right price. It refers to the set of actions, or tactics, that a company uses to promote its brand or product in the market. In other words, it is a marketing tool that combines a number of components in order to strengthen and solidify a product’s brand and to help sell the product or service.

According to Middleton (2001), the marketing mix may be defined as “the mixture of controllable marketing variables that the firm uses to pursue the sought level of sales in the target market”. Kotler (1988) added that marketing mix could be defined as “the set of marketing tools that the firm uses to pursue its marketing objectives in the target market”.

The term “marketing mix” was coined in the 1940s, but didn’t truly take hold until 1960, when marketer Jerome McCarthy put forth four strategies, all beginning with the letter P, that describe the four avenues or strategies that a company must take in order to successfully market a product. These four Ps are product, price, promotion, and place (distribution). As this traditional four Ps’ approach to marketing only cater to just marketing of a product, need for a new approach for marketing of a service was stirred up. As services are different from products with the fact that they are intangible, perishable, inseparable, and heterogeneous, different strategies need to be considered. Therefore, in 1981 three new Ps (people, process and physical evidence) therefore, were added to the traditional marketing mix by Booms and Bitner (Panousi, 2001). The tourism marketing mix has been presented in Table 5.1.

**Table 5.1
Marketing mix**

| Elements | Definition/explanation/concept | Typical marketing decision |
|-----------------|--|---|
| Product | A product refers to an item that satisfies the consumer's needs or wants. Products may be tangible (goods) or intangible (services, ideas or experiences). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Product design – features, quality • Product assortment – product range, product mix, product lines • Branding • Packaging and labeling • Services (complementary service, after-sales service, service level) • Guarantees and warranties • Returns • Managing products through the life-cycle. |
| Price | Price refers to the amount a customer pays for a product. Price may also refer to the sacrifice consumers are prepared to make to acquire a product (e.g. time or effort). Price is the only variable that has implications for revenue. Price also includes considerations of customer perceived value. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Price strategy • Price tactics • Price-setting • Allowances – e.g. rebates for distributors • Discounts – for customers • Payment terms – credit, payment methods |
| Place | Refers to providing customer access Considers providing convenience for consumer. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategies such as intensive distribution, selective distribution, exclusive distribution • Franchising • Market coverage • Channel member selection and channel member relationships • Assortment • Location decisions • Inventory • Transport, warehousing and logistics |
| Promotion | Promotion refers to marketing communications May comprise elements such as: advertising, PR, direct marketing and sales promotion. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotional mix - appropriate balance of advertising, PR, direct marketing and sales promotion • Message strategy - what is to be communicated • Channel/ media strategy - how to reach the target audience • Message Frequency - how often to communicate |
| People | Human factors who participate in service delivery. Service personnel who represent the | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff recruitment and training • Uniforms • Scripting • Queuing systems, managing waits |

| | | |
|-------------------|---|--|
| | company's values to customers. Interactions between customers. Interactions between employees and customers. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handling complaints, service failures • Managing social interactions |
| Process | The procedures, mechanisms and flow of activities by which service is delivered. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process design • Blueprinting (i.e. flowcharting) service processes • Standardization vs customization decisions • Diagnosing fail-points, critical incidents and system failures • Monitoring and tracking service performance • Analysis of resource requirements and allocation • Creation and measurement of key performance indicators (KPIs) • Alignment with Best Practices • Preparation of operations manuals |
| Physical evidence | The environment in which service occurs. The space where customers and service personnel interact. Tangible commodities (e.g. equipment, furniture) that facilitate service performance. Artifacts that remind customers of a service performance. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilities (e.g. furniture, equipment, access) • Spatial layout (e.g. functionality, efficiency) • Signage (e.g. directional signage, symbols, other signage) • Interior design (e.g. furniture, color schemes) • Ambient conditions (e.g. noise, air, temperature) • Design of livery (e.g. stationery, brochures, menus, etc.) • Artifacts: (e.g. souvenirs, mementos, etc.) |

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marketing_mix

5.6.1 Product

A product can be an idea, a goods or a service. According to Kotler (1984), a product could be conceptualized as “anything that can be offered to a market for attention, acquisition, use, or consumption that might satisfy a want or need. It includes physical objects, services, persons, places, organizations and ideas.” Since tourism is primarily a service-based industry, the principal products provided by tourism businesses are recreational and hospitality (Dasgupta, 2011). In the words of Kumar (2010), “the tourism product can be seen as a composite product, which is the sum total

of a country's tourism attractions, transport, accommodation, and entertainment which hopefully results in consumer satisfaction.” Hence, a tourism product covers the complete experience from the time the tourist leaves home to the time he/she returns back. The basic tourism product of a country or a region would be its natural beauty, climate, history, culture, and the people.

Tourism is a composite product consisting of attractions of a destination, air transportation provided by airlines, hotel accommodation offered by hotel companies and the local transportation, sightseeing and other activities provided by the local tour operators at the destination (Khan, 2005). Thus, tourism is a composite product with components like attraction, facilities and transportation. Attractions include natural sites, places of historic interests, events and cultures. Facilities include accommodation, food and other facilities at tourism destinations. The transportation component includes the means of travel and transport related infrastructures.

5.6.1.1 Tourism Area Life Cycle (TALC)

The Tourism Area Life Cycle (TALC), similar to Product Life Cycle (PLC) concept has been developed to track the progress of the tourist region. TALC also provides a focal point for both policymakers and tourists to ask pertinent questions – such as what leads a destination to change over time, how destinations and their markets change, which stage the current destination is in and, given the knowledge of the stage, what can be expected of the destination even before researching it (Dasgupta, 2011).

The concept of PLC is applicable to discrete tourism products such as hotels, airlines, and attractions. Attraction is considered to be the main product in tourism and others are seen as augmentation. For any tourism activity to happen, attraction is created first. All attractions have a life cycle including destinations (Chaudhary, 2012).

As quoted by Dasgupta (2011), TALC model was proposed by Butler (1980) that identifies six stages as presented in Fig 5.2: exploration, involvement, development, consolidation, stagnation, and decline or rejuvenation.

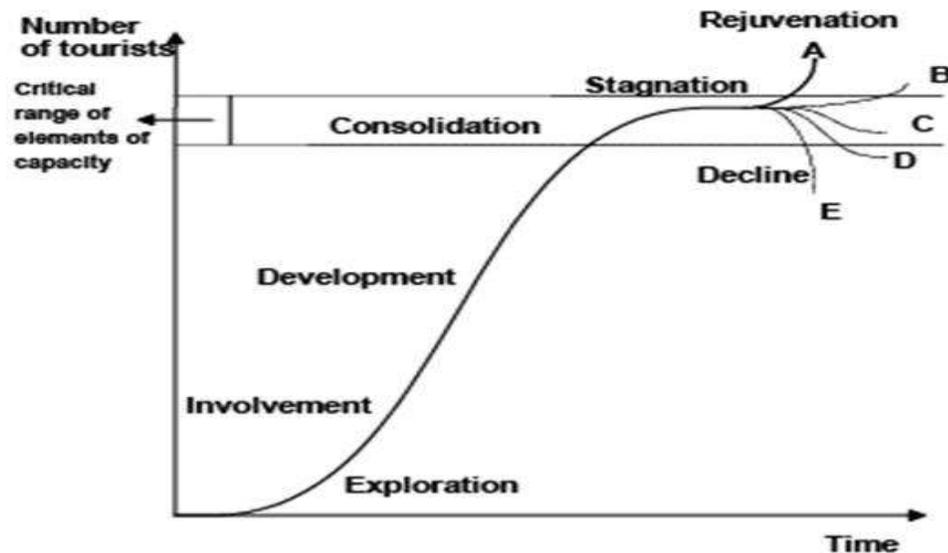


Fig. 5.1: Tourism Area Life Cycle
Source: Butler (1980)

- (i) *Exploration*: During this stage, a small number of visitors arrive seeking unspoiled destinations. Tourism facilities hardly exist, and so the tourists share facilities with locals. Consequently, contact with the locals is likely to be high, but the economic return from tourism is insignificant.
- (ii) *Involvement*: During this stage, the number of incoming tourists increases. This results in an increase in the number of professionally maintained facilities. However, it is generally observed that businesses mostly remain family based and the tourist-host relationship from the previous stage continues.
- (iii) *Development*: Heavy advertising of tourism venues takes place during this stage. In this stage, local attractions are marketed specifically. The destinations see development of amenities as more people discover them and words spread about the attractions.
- (iv) *Consolidation*: the rate of increase in number of visitors declines during this stage. The industry responds to the decline in the growth rate through wide-ranging advertising campaigns and efforts to extend the tourism season and the market area. Facilities and infrastructure start to show signs of age.

- (v) *Stagnation*: This stage starts when peak visitor numbers have been reached and capacity levels exceeded for many variables, resulting in environmental, social and economic problems. The region is well known and well established but no longer fashionable. The rise from ‘exploration’ to ‘stagnation’ often happens rapidly, as implied by the exponential nature of the growth curve.
- (vi) *Decline or Rejuvenation*: During the final stage, the area will either decline or be rejuvenated. In this stage, there will be inability to maintain market share. The venue would no longer be in the favourite lists of people. Tourism-related structures would get converted to non-tourism uses such as retirement centres, apartments or offices, since tourism destinations sometimes attract permanent residents. This requires a complete change in the attractions on which tourism region is based.

Rejuvenation can be achieved, first, by using man-made attractions such as casinos and, second, by taking advantage of previously untapped natural resources. Other special-interest groups could be catered to through activities such as cycling, mountain biking, diving, etc.

5.6.1.2 Tourism products in select states

Tourism in Meghalaya is one of the most sought-after destinations in Northeast India. Unlike Mizoram, Meghalaya does not need ILP for the tourists to make entry into the state. Meghalaya is a land of immense natural beauty and cultural heritage that provides ample scope to attract tourists. The hills, valleys, forests and biodiversity, rivers and lakes are the basic tourism products of Meghalaya. The state could provide one of the best nature treks to the adventurers, through rain forests to the river front at the bottom of the valley, to living root bridges which are exclusive to the state in the entire world. Some of the major tourism products of Meghalaya are presented in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2
Major tourism products in Meghalaya

| Segments | Tourism products |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Dances / Festivals | <i>Khasi:</i> Shad Suk Mynsiem Dance, Nongkrem Dance, <i>Garos:</i> Wangala Festival <i>Jaintia:</i> Behdeinkhlam Festival, Lahoo Dance, Chad Sukra <i>Others:</i> Autumn Festival, Strawberry Festival, Ranikor Festival |
| Nature Tourism | <i>Lakes:</i> Ward's Lake, Thadlaskein Lake, Umiam Lake, Tasek Lake <i>Park:</i> Lady Hydari Park, Ward's Lake Park <i>Waterfalls:</i> Crinoline Waterfalls, Sweet waterfalls, Bidon & Bishop Waterfalls, Elephant Falls, Nohkalikai Falls, Mawsmi Falls, Kynrem Falls, <i>Peak:</i> Shillong Peak, Symer Peak, Nokrek Peak, Imilchang Dare <i>Caves:</i> Syndai Caves, Siju Caves, Mawsmi Cave <i>Rainiest Places:</i> Mawsynram and Cherrapunjee <i>Rock:</i> Khoh Rambah, Kyllang rock <i>Hot spring:</i> Jakram Hot Spring |
| Ecotourism/ Wildlife Tourism | <i>National Park:</i> Balpakram National Park, Nokrek Biosphere Reserve <i>Ecotourism:</i> Mawphlang Sacred Forest |
| Adventure Tourism | Umiam Lake, Ranikor, Cherrapunjee |
| Business Tourism | Shillong, Jowai, William Nagar, Baghmara, Tura, Nongpho, Dawki |
| Pilgrimage Tourism | <i>Religious:</i> All Saints Cathedral, Bhaitbari <i>Nostalgia:</i> Ka Kpep Syiem, David Scott's Memorial, Mairang, Monument of U. Kiang Nonghah, Sisobibra |
| Others | Nongkhnun Island (largest river island in Meghalaya and the second largest in Asia), Smit, the Cultural Village, Root Bridges |

Source: Researcher's own compilation from various sources

Mizoram is a small but beautiful state, nestled in the blue-mountains and rolling hills. The state has the potentiality to offer great opportunities to explore the nature at its best. The exotic flora and fauna, the bamboo forests and the wildlife, and the gurgling waterfalls call all nature enthusiasts to visit Mizoram. The land is a formidable place for adventurers. Its landscape, the mountains, the valleys, the gorges are best suited for adventure expeditions. With its galaxy of festivals and dances, handicraft, flora and fauna, intense natural beauty and temperate climate, Mizoram is a kaleidoscope 'pleasure trove' for the discerning visitors. The major tourism products of Mizoram are highlighted in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3
Major tourism products in Mizoram

| Segments | Tourism products |
|------------------------------|--|
| Dances / Festivals | <i>Dances:</i> Cheraw, Khuallam, Chheihlam, Solakia, Chawnglaizawn <i>Festivals:</i> Chapchar Kut, Winter Festival, Anthurium Festival |
| Nature Tourism | <i>Lakes:</i> Tam Lake, Palak Lake, Rengdil Lake, Rihdil (inside Myanmar) <i>Waterfalls:</i> Vantawng Falls, Khawhpawp Falls <i>Peak:</i> Sialsuk Peak, Hmuifang Peak, Reiek Peak, Durtlang Peak <i>Caves:</i> Pukzing Cave, Kungawrhi Puk, Milu Puk, Khuangchera Puk <i>Rivers:</i> Tlawng, Chhimtuipui, Khawthlangtuipui <i>Trekking:</i> Champhai, Phawngpui, Lunglei, Reiek |
| Ecotourism/ Wildlife Tourism | <i>National Parks:</i> Murlen National Park, Phawngpui National Park <i>Sanctuaries:</i> Dampa Tiger Reserve, Ngengpui Wildlife Sanctuary, Tawi Wildlife Sanctuary, Lengteng Wildlife Sanctuary, Khawnglung Wildlife Sanctuary, Thorangtlang Wildlife Sanctuary |
| Adventure Tourism | Tlawng River, Tuirial, Reiek Tlang |
| Business Tourism | Aizawl, Lunglei, Saiha, Champhai, Tlabung (Demagiri) |
| Pilgrimage Tourism | <i>Religious:</i> Solomon Temple (Aizawl), Baptist Church of Mizoram (Lunglei) <i>Memorial Stones/ Folklores:</i> Sibuta Lung, Phulpui Grave, Memorial of Chhingpui, Mangkahia Lung, Thasiama Se No Neihna |
| Others | World's largest family (Baktawng), Typical Mizo village (Falkawn) |

Source: Researcher's own compilation from various sources

In order to attract more domestic and international tourists, which would lead to the economic development and generation of ample employment opportunities in the select states tourism departments should focus on developing tourism infrastructures and provide other facilities at major tourism destinations.

It is in this connection, the Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi once said at an event that "India will develop only if north-east develops". Hence, the central government is putting in significant efforts to build infrastructure in the north-east (*Free Press Journal*, 2015). He also added that work is in progress in connecting the state capitals of the northeast with the railways. Further, he stated that the region is blessed with nature's bounty, and so, it has the potential of becoming the organic capital of India.

5.6.2 Price

Pricing is the art of translating the qualitative offerings into quantitative terms. It is the value of a unit of service, to customers at a point of time. It is the exchange value

of a product or a service which is always expressed in monetary terms (Kumar, 2010). Pricing is one of the most important marketing decisions to take, since price fixes the terms of the voluntary exchange transaction between consumers willing to buy and producers wishing to sell (Middleton, 2001).

The price of the product is basically the amount that a customer pays for to enjoy it. Pricing determines the firm's profit and survival. Adjusting the price of the product has a big impact on the entire marketing strategy as well as greatly affecting the sales and demand of the product. A tourism product should be seen as representing good value for money. However, this does not necessarily mean that it should be the cheapest available. One of the main tenets of the marketing concept is that customers are usually happy to pay a little more for something that works really well for them. There are several factors to be considered in determining the price.

5.6.2.1 Policies for pricing

Prices affect plans for the future direction of the business. Pricing policy has to achieve a number of important roles. Firstly, an organization's activities should meet its customer's requirement and secondly, an organization should ensure that the costs of production, service and distribution are recovered. Thirdly, organizations should have enough profits to achieve their economic, social and environmental objectives. If a consumer accepts that the quality of a product is good, then he/she will be willing to make greater sacrifices in order to purchase that product. The point to be understood here is that the pricing policy ultimately helps to determine the success or failure of a product in the market place (Bizan, 2004). At times, travel companies have to lower the prices than normal to attract new customers for a new product or for an old product where sales are sagging

To determine the different pricing strategies for a particular product, Dasgupta (2011) addressed, the following key approaches to be adopted:

- *Cost plus pricing*: Involves a fixed percentage markup on fixed and variable costs.

- *Marginal price:* The high fixed cost and low variable cost of operating airlines, hotels and visitor's attractions often serve as a rationale for the adoption of marginal-pricing technique and yield-management strategies.
- *Differential pricing based on demand:* Different market segments will pay different prices for a similar bundle of core benefits.
- *Price skimming:* When market innovators are being targeted, price skimming is frequently adopted as a strategic imperative. Price skimming is setting a high price when the market is price insensitive.
- *Penetration pricing:* A frequent strategy when limitation is a key objective. In the absence of unique product features, a low initial price can be used to encourage people who show little brand loyalty to switch service supplies.
- *Price bundling:* A typical approach adopted in tour operations sector wherein a holiday package includes a bundle of products, and a consolidated price is charged to the customer.
- *Tactical pricing:* It includes a multitude of techniques such as periodic price reductions, early booking discounts and group discounts to secure high volume and loyalty packages.
- *Business-to-business pricing:* Here, tour operators purchase blocks of seats on aircraft and blocks of rooms in hotels in advance.

5.6.2.2 Pricing in tourism industry

Tourism has been identified as an engine for employment, income generation and Foreign Exchange Earnings (FEEs), and at the same time, it has a multiplier effect on the economy. The expenditure of the tourists circulates at all the three levels of the economy – national, regional and local. This means that if the tourist expenditure circulates locally and the leakages are low, a significant improvement can be made in the income and living standard of the people of the region or locality. However, a developed region can often divert the benefits towards itself at the cost of the underdeveloped neighbouring regions. Such situations have been experienced in international as well as domestic regions (Dasgupta, 2011).

As quoted by Bizan (2009), price is a critical variable in the tourism marketing mix. The right price must satisfy tourists and meet the profit objectives of tourism companies. Generally, price plays an important role as a primary signal of quality and accessibility for customers. When compared with similar purchases, their relative prices act as an indicator of what to expect from each product. For example, a good location of a hotel clearly increases the value of the lodging product to the customer. Thus, managers should charge a relatively constant premium room rate over competitors whose other attributes and qualities are but in an inferior location (Bull, 1994).

As one of the most important elements in the tourism marketing mix strategy is to decide on the right price approach that will satisfy both tourists and meet the objectives the tourist organizations in the same time. Pricing should be viewed as an integral part of the marketing-mix strategy and the inter-relationship with the other elements in the mix must be taken into consideration (Median, 1989). To ensure consumers purchase your product and distributors promote it, the price must be consistent, accurate and competitive. Whether you are selling your product in the domestic or international market, it is important to precisely determine and understand the individual elements that make up the total price, and their impact on your product.

5.6.2.3 Pricing of tourism products in select states

It is observed that the select states in Northeast India are costlier compared to tourism destinations of other parts of India. However, it is found that the tourism industry in NEI has a competitive advantage of its natural beauty and exquisiteness and the services could be offered to the tourists at a very competitive price. Mainland India offers tourism services at a lower price because of its accessibility and connectivity. The costs incurred for tourism in NEI is quite less compared to other parts of India. The negative image of the region such as insurgency, infrastructural deficiency, culinary problems and most importantly lack of proper promotion of the region in national as well as international markets obstruct mass inflow of tourists into the region.

As noted in Chapter 4, majority of the tourists of the select states were not satisfied with the cost effectiveness of transportation. The costs for internal

transportation to the promising tourism destinations were high. Absence of adequate number of state-owned vehicles for moving the tourists to the tourism destinations is another impediment for its cost effectiveness. Some tourists even complain the non-availability of well maintained guest houses near to the tourism spots, be it at a higher rates. However, the costs for accommodation in both the select states are fairly rated at par and even cheaper with those of mainland India. The majority of the tourists have responded that they were satisfied with the pricing level of their tour packages. Meanwhile, the respondents felt the price of local transport in Mizoram a bit costlier than that of Meghalaya. In terms of the pricing level of accommodation, the respondents felt that costs are quite reasonable. Respondents have also experienced the prices related to foods and drinks and also shopping in both the select states are moderate and fair. The respondents felt that the costs of their trips were rational. Once, the problems of basic amenities and infrastructure for tourism development such as road networks, hygienic hotels and restaurants, sanitation, power backups, communication networks and other public utility services are sorted out the NEI will see a new era of thriving tourism.

It is also to be noted that, if tourism is to play an important role in poverty reduction and employment creation in the select states, people's participation in planning and benefit sharing should be evolved. In this case, the concept of 'responsible tourism' is indispensable, whereby all stakeholders have the responsibility to reduce the ugly side and enhance the good side (Hussain, 2012). The principles of sustainability should mean ensuring the tourists in feeling that they have received value for money, rather than leaving them with the idea that they have been exploited (Batra, 2006). Hence, the two state governments should come up with tourism policies to not only solve the issue of these high costs but also encourage various tourism stakeholders in the proper implementation of the tourism policies.

5.6.3 Place (distribution)

Place in the marketing mix refers to the channel, or the route, through which goods move from the source to the final user. Place could be the intermediaries, distributors, wholesalers and retailers. It is the mechanism (distribution channel) through

which goods and/or services are moved from the manufacturer or service provider to the user or consumer. The right place means greater chances of sales over a longer period of time. This translates into greater market share, more profits and better ability to track the changes in the marketplace in thinking, styles, fashion and needs.

In service sector, 'place' refers to the contact between the service provider and the one who gets the benefits of the service, i.e. the consumer. It is referred to all the channels available between the firm and the target market that increase the probability of getting the customer to the product. Simply, the means by which products and services go from the producer to the consumer, to somewhat they can be accessed by the customer is called place (distribution) in marketing (Kumar, 2010).

5.6.3.1 Tourism distribution system

Tourism distribution is the transfer of tour and associated facilities from the suppliers to the tourists through the tourism distribution system. Tourism distribution system is a complex, informal global network of independent businesses which form the 'travel distribution chain'. This network allows the consumers to research, book, and pay for tourism products. It is basically concerned with two important areas:

- (i) Physical movement of tourists from their residences to the destinations.
- (ii) Selling and distributing products near tourists locations

All functions in the above areas can be performed either directly by a firm or with the help of intermediaries. The decision depends on the effectiveness and cost of choice. The whole system of managing channels and members, maintaining inventory and logistics to make benefits available at convenient locations for customers is essential backup for good tourism distribution system. A right distribution system can give an edge to the firm but at the same time a weak system can prove to be a disaster (Chaudhary, 2012).

The tourist centers should be located at suitable points. If the tourist spots are natural there is no question of selection. In a vast country like India with divergent socio-economic and cultural patterns, the promotion of domestic tourism encourages unity in diversity. Infrastructural facilities, transport and communication are important

for development of tourist centres. The site selected should have natural surroundings, increased accessibility and improved amenities. At the same time it is also important that the ecological balance is not disturbed. Since growing ecological imbalances leads to pollution, some important steps like promoting afforestation, promotion and beautification may be undertaken in countering the side effects of atmospheric pollution and maintaining ecological balance.

5.6.3.2 Channels of distribution

Channels of distribution are of basically two types- direct and indirect.

- (i) *Direct Distribution:* The organization assumes total responsibility for promoting, reserving, and providing services to customers. In case of tourism industry, direct distribution is targeting visitors directly through advertising, brochure distribution, website, social media, and client referrals and so on.
- (ii) *Indirect Distribution:* It includes the responsibility for promoting, reserving, and providing services to customers through intermediaries (one or more other organizations). For tourism industry, indirect distribution is to promote your business through a third party by using tourism distribution channels such as retail travel agents, wholesalers and inbound tour operators, etc.

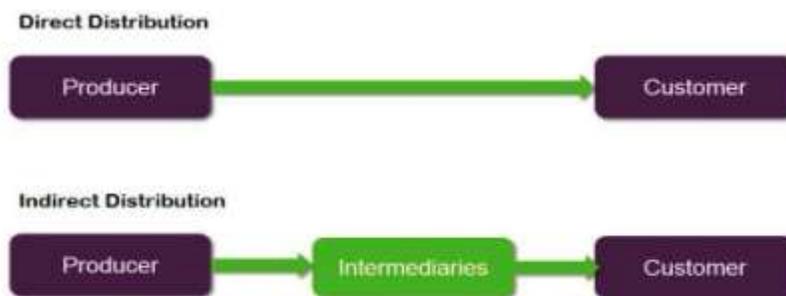


Fig. 5.2: Channels of Distribution

5.6.3.3 Tourism distribution channels

National or Regional Tourism Organizations: The National Tourism Organization is the body responsible for the formulation and implementation of national

tourist policy. It is the proper agency and instrument for the execution of the national government's responsibilities for the control, direction and promotion of tourism.

In general, most of the countries which are engaged in tourism have a national tourism organization which plays a leading role in both the formulation and the implementation of the government's tourism programme. This organization is also responsible for coordinating the different activities of all the bodies interested in tourism development. The national tourist organization may be a full- fledged ministry, a directorate general, a department, corporation or board. In India, the Ministry of Tourism acts as the national tourism organization and various state tourism corporations act as regional bodies that develop and promote tourism in the framework of the national body.

Travel agents: Travel agents represent one of the most important elements of the tourism distribution channel as they act as an interface between the tourism industry and customers (Bizan, 2009). The main role of a travel agent is to provide to the customers a convenient location for the 'purchase' of various elements of travel like transport, accommodation and several other ancillary services associated with holiday and travel. The travel agents act as booking agents for holidays and travels and disseminate information on such services. A travel agent, in order to give an advice to his potential customers on the merits of destination, must possess knowledge, expertise and up-to-date information about the destination. Besides, a travel agent has close contacts with providers of services, i.e. their principals from whom they purchase their services for the customers. The important role of the travel agent in the modern world is summarized in the principles of professional conduct and ethics of the American Society of Travel Agents. As quoted by Khan (2005), the role of travel agents is summarized as:

"We live in a world in which travel has become increasingly important and complex in its variety of modes and choice. Travelers are faced with myriad alternatives as to transportation, accommodation and other travel services. They must depend on travel agencies and others in the industry to guide them honestly and competently"

Tour operators: A tour operator is a service provider who puts together vacation destination packages that usually include all-inclusive travel, hotel, dining and recreation arrangements. Tour operators generally purchase the individual components of these travel packages in bulk and then resell them for a profit. They are wholesalers who bulk buy from principles, prepare tour packages, and give travel agents for further selling. They are manufacturers or designers of packages (Chaudhary, 2012). Tour operators must accept responsibility for all problems that arise after the sale of their travel packages. Therefore, if a customer is mistreated by the airline, hotel, restaurant or sightseeing company, the tour operator is required to help resolve the issue on behalf of her customer.

Online travel companies: An online travel company allows the customers to book holiday packages, hotel rooms, travel tickets etc. sitting at home by using a phone or a computer. These are new intermediaries in tourism distribution channels and are also known as 'cybermediaries'. Nowadays, online booking is taking over the travel market, because with internet travellers have received the possibility to access the information about prices, deals and schedules in the comfort environments of their homes and create travel packages themselves. The amount of time a traveller spends for creating a trip package online is significantly higher than the time an experienced travel agent would spend for this task. Tourism-related transactions over internet provides a means of reducing costs by removing intermediaries from the distribution chain and allowing consumers to deal directly with travel suppliers. The bypassing of traditional travel agents is also called as disintermediation.

5.6.3.4 Tourism distribution in select states

The select states, Meghalaya and Mizoram are well endowed with natural beauty that can attract a mass volume of tourists. The beauty and the natural landscape of these two states are almost parallel to each other. The richness of the tourism products of these states cannot be easily matched with others. These states have ideal places for the development of tourism activities ranging from nature, wildlife, adventure, cultural to nostalgic tourism. However, certain hindrances are observed that disrupt the fast-driving

efforts for tourism development in both the select states. There are inadequate entertainment facilities such as, exhibition centres, cultural theatres, shopping haats etc. for tourists. Lack of proper tourism infrastructures such as absence of rail connectivity, the cheapest mode of transportation, in the states and wretched and pathetic roads that connect these states with rest of India, especially the case is with Mizoram. Absence of big-size and day and night operative airports is another hurdle for mass inflow of tourists in these states. Although both these states are having an airport each, sometimes, cancellation of flights are very common due to low visibility in the skies and uncertain weather conditions. Besides many other problems, the tourist guide services are limited and almost absent in Mizoram as compared to other parts of mainland India. Therefore, tourism skill development, and entrepreneurship development programmes should be organized to educate different stakeholders who are directly or indirectly involved in tourism development.

Another important factor pertained to place element of marketing mix is the service provider, the agency that delivers the services. In Meghalaya, the Department of Tourism and MTDC are the promoters of all the programmes and are engaged in promoting and developing tourism industry in the state. Besides, there are around 12 tour operators and 15 travel agents operating the tourism activities in the state (*megtourism.org*). Tourism offices and information centres have been established in each and every districts of the state. Apart from that, tourist information centres have been installed at Meghalaya Houses in New Delhi, Kolkata and Guwahati. These information centres act as agents in disseminating tourism information about the state through printed booklets, brochures, etc. The prospective tourists can approach any of these centres if any information and help is necessitated by them while travelling in the state. In Mizoram, the tourism promotion and development activities are being carried out by the Department of Tourism and MTDA. There are only two-government recognized and nine other private tour operators operate the itinerary system of tourism in the state. In Mizoram, one can use rental cars, buses, helicopter services (Pawan Hans) and commercial maxi cabs to pay a visit at the tourism attractions in the state. The

state has its own tourist information offices at New Delhi, Kolkata, Guwahati and Silchar.

Unlike Meghalaya, Mizoram regulates an entry restriction for the tourists while coming to the state. The Inner Line Pass (ILP), considered to be one of the hurdles for the smooth tourist inflow, is required for entry into Mizoram which can be obtained from the Liaison Officer, Government of Mizoram, Mizoram Houses from the following cities - Kolkata, Silchar, Shillong, Guwahati and New Delhi. Government employees travelling for official purposes are exempted from obtaining ILP, but are required to carry a photo identification card with them at all times. Tourists arriving by air can obtain temporary passes from the Security Officer on arrival at Lengpui Airport, Aizawl.

Today, tourism circuit of Northeast India in general and Mizoram in particular lacks a proper tourism distribution set up. Publicity materials are distributed only if a tourist, tour operator or a hotelier approaches the tourism offices. Further, it is observed that almost all tourism organizations in Northeast India function on direct marketing or a one level channel system, i.e. from the local tourist department to the end user. This calls for the design of a proper channel system based on the customer needs, established channel objectives, identified channel alternatives and evaluation (TCS, 2010).

It is a known fact that tourist information offices existing in the region do provide some information on some tourist destinations. However, the information system needs to be strengthened and means diversified by giving information related to tour operators in NEI, skilled and authorized guides, places of interest etc. Since it may not be feasible for every state to have counters everywhere outside the region combined Northeast Tourism Information counters need to be set up in all major cities of India. Hence, there is need of proper tourism distribution system in Northeast India in general and in the select states in particular. Good tourist information system must be established at most of the tourism circuits in Northeast India.

5.6.4 Promotion

Promotion is concerned with informing, educating, persuading and reminding customers. It is a tool of communication used to inform the target market customers

about goods and services, to facilitate the exchange process. Thus, the primary role of promotion is to convince the potential customers of the various advantages of buying or using the products and services of an enterprise, organization or a firm. According to Chaudhary (2012), promotion can be defined as “persuasive communication of a marketer with its target market to achieve marketing objectives”.

Promotion is the mix of various communication activities which a tourism firm carries out with a view to motivate or influence those target customers on whom the sale of its products depend. The success of tourism marketing depends on the descriptions and representations of a particular destination in the market. The main job of marketing tourism product is creation of awareness of the product among the consumers. According to Kumar (2010), the imperative purposes of promotion are:

- To inform about the tourism product;
- To persuade the tourist to buy the product; and
- To influence the potential consumers, trade intermediaries, to act in a particular way to purchase the product.

5.6.4.1 Role of promotion in Tourism

The objectives of promotion depend on a number of factors such as goals of a firm, nature of market and buyers. The role played by promotion is instrumental to the growth of modern mass tourism. It helps in disseminating information about a place as a destination for tourists. Promotions are campaigns that seek to disclose to the tourists about the major tourism destinations of a region or a country.

The tourism industry is unlike any other because, instead of a product, the marketers are selling a place and all the things it has to offer. Tourism marketing demands a creative and unique approach. Marketing should constantly put forth the best possible image of the destination, while creating interest on a broad scale in as many ways as possible. Some of the key marketing roles played by promotion towards the growth of tourism industry are:

- *Increase Awareness:* Promotional efforts build awareness among the prospective tourists on a new destination which is unknown or less know to them earlier.

- *Create Interest:* Promotional activities make the customers in creating an interest on a product to purchase it. It generates an interest in the target audiences to visit a particular destination.
- *Provide Information:* Promotion helps in disseminating information, to the customers, on the advantages of various products available in the market.
- *Develop a positive word-of-mouth:* Due to heavy promotional activities by a tourism firm, customers get to know the insight details of a particular destination. Hence, a positive word-of-mouth is generated and it goes a long way in promoting brands among the prospective customers.

5.6.4.2 Components of promotion

The promotion mix mainly consists of four major elements namely: advertising, personal selling, public relations and sales promotions:

Advertising: Advertising is a paid form of non-personal method of promoting goods and services by an identified organization or individual. It may be defined as “any activity designed to spread information with a view to promoting the sales of marketable goods and services”. Khan (2005) believes that advertising operates in two ways: firstly, by spreading information among consumers, about the possibilities of the consumptions, secondly, by seeking to influence their judgment in favor of the particular goods which are the subject of the advertisement. Teare et al (1994) defined advertising as “a deliberate and pre-determined form of communication, where the company spends money to communicate with the market place in order to meet specific objectives”.

To build a long-term image for a product and stimulate quick sales of the products different mediums of advertisement are used like radio, television, internet, emails, etc.

Personal selling: Personal selling is an interpersonal process whereby the seller ascertains, activates and satisfies the needs and wants of the buyer so that both the seller and buyer benefits. It is person-to-person selling where persuasive efforts are made to convince buyers to make purchase. The selling sequence includes prospecting, overcoming objections and closing the sales. Personal selling is a process which

involves oral conversations, either by telephone or face-to-face, between sales persons and prospective customers.

Public relations: Public relation involves developing positive relationships with the organizations, media and the public. It is the art and science of planning and implementing honest, two way communication and understanding between an organization and the different groups with which it is concerned in the course of its operation. It promotes a firm and its offerings by creating a general goodwill in the market that is transferred to products and services. Verma (2010) opined that public relation in tourism is about how people who matter to a tourism organization think about and how their perceptions, attitudes and behaviour can be kept or made positive. According to Khan (2005), the main objectives of public relations in the field of tourism may be divided into two parts –

- (i) Dissemination of information on the tourism products; and
- (ii) Creation of a favourable image for the tourism products.

Sales promotion: Sales promotion is the approach other than advertising, personal selling and public relations where customers are given short-term inducement to make an immediate purchase. According to Chaudhary (2010), the main aim of sales promotion is to introduce short-term interventions that increase sales in the lean period and carry over the effect on future sales, even if these interventions are removed. Sales promotion can be direct and targeted at tourists or indirect that is targeted at intermediaries who push the sales of tourists. Sales promotion techniques can be grouped into two broad categories i.e. printed material and special offers.

1. *Printed materials:* Printed materials may include brochure, folder, direct mail, display material, etc.

(a) *Brochure:* Brochure is a document bound that contains comprehensive and detailed information about a destination including cruises, bus tours, safaris, charter vacation etc., with color photographs regarding all the destinations which a company is promoting.

- (b) *Folder*: Folder is a single piece of illustrated paper which is usually printed on a single sheet and then folded ranging from a simple centerfold to more complicated folds. It is perhaps, the most widely used sales tool by tourism enterprises.
 - (c) *Shell folders*: Shell folders are blank folders interspersed with pre-printed photographs and are provided free or at a low cost by airlines or national tourist offices to encourage tour operators/ travel agents to run their programs using their services or destinations.
 - (d) *Sales letter*: Sales letter is a direct mail material and are sent out to those people whose addresses have been selected according to the likelihood of their being potential users of the services offered.
 - (e) *Display material*: Display material includes posters, literature, cardboard stands, articles of handicrafts used in the tourism agency's office to attract the attention of a visitor. In many cases, cinema slides are also used, either fixed or on an automatic projector for display purposes.
2. *Special offers*: To uphold sales promotion to the direct consumers (attract more tourists for sales) following tools are adopted in tourism:
- (a) *Price discounts and concession*: Prices are reduced in the off season to motivate tourists to take tours. Such the cases are reduction in room rates in hotels, lessening of service charges, etc.
 - (b) *Gifts and lotteries*: Sometimes, tourists are offered assured gifts through lotteries on purchase during a particular period.
 - (c) *Price packs*: More benefits are offered on pre-packaged holidays, thus pushing the sales of the complete bundle.
 - (d) *Product enhancement*: More features are offered at the same price such as welcome drink, additional meal, free pick and drop facility, etc.

Table 5.4 presents a list of the principal promotional techniques that are of relevance to the tourism industry.

Table 5.4
Principal promotional techniques in tourism marketing

| Promotional technique | Form / coverage |
|--|---|
| 1. Media Advertising | Includes advertising in T.V., press, radio. Also includes tourist board and other travel related guides, books and brochures that are used for advertising. |
| 2. Direct mail / door to door distribution | Includes general sale literatures or print items specifically designed for the purpose. |
| 3. Public Relation (PR) | All media exposure achieved as editorial matters that are not paid for (as advertising space). |
| 4. Sponsorship | An alternative form of media for specific target groups. |
| 5. Exhibition / shows / Workshops | Important alternative forms of distribution and display for reaching retail, wholesale and consumer target groups. |
| 6. Personal Selling | Via marketing, telephone contacts, workshops, primarily aimed at distributors and intermediaries purchasing for groups of consumers. |
| 7. Sales Literature | Especially promotional brochures and other printed matters used in a servicing role. |
| 8. Sales Promotion | Short term incentives offered as inducements to purchase, including temporary product augmentation, covers sales force and distribution network as well as consumers. |
| 9. Price Discounting | A common form of sales promotion includes extra commission and bonuses for retailers. |
| 10. Point of sale displays merchandising | Posters, window dressing, displays of brochures and other materials both of a regular and temporary incentive kind. |
| 11. Familiarization and Educational trips | Ways to motivate and facilitate distributor networks through product sampling. Also used to reach and influence journalists. |
| 12. Distribution networks and commission | Organized systems or channels through which prospective customers achieve access to products, includes computerized links between principals and distributors. |

Source: Singh (2000)

5.6.4.3 Tourism promotion in select states

In Meghalaya and Mizoram, the responsibility for tourism promotion is vested mainly in the respective Directorate of Tourism. The common promotional methods used by the Directorate of Tourism of the two states are mainly the following:

- (i) Printing, publication and distribution of books, brochures, leaflets, wall pictures, and wall calendars.
- (ii) Advertisement through newspapers and magazines.

(iii) Participation in trade and tourism fairs.

(iv) Arrangement of fairs and festivals.

As mentioned above, promotion of tourism products in Meghalaya are being carried out through advertisements in travel magazines, leading publications, electronic media, publications of pamphlets and brochures, participation in international and national fairs and festivals, road shows, posting of information in the website and through state tourism offices (tourist information centres), assistance to major festivals and organizing tourism festivals within the state. The Meghalaya Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC), set up in 1977, is charged with the responsibility of the development and promotion of tourism in Meghalaya. The corporation is tasked with increasing its revenue to enable it to carry out promotional activities. It also organizes package tours to important destinations. The Government initiates implementation of online reservation of all the MTDC units. This serves as an opportunity for tourists to book accommodation online for real time confirmation.

Further, with regards to promotion of tourism in Meghalaya, the Directorate of Information, Public Relation and Printing of the Government of Meghalaya, publishes brochures/leaflets and propaganda materials on general tourism related issues. The Department of Tourism, Government of Meghalaya supported by Government of India, jointly brings out brochures and promotional collaterals in general as also highlighting fairs and festivals. The Environment and Forest Department, Govt. of Meghalaya also brings out literatures on forest and wildlife. Some initiatives have been taken by Directorate of Sports & Youth Affairs and the Directorate of Research, Govt. of Meghalaya. A number of tour operators, who have been promoting Meghalaya have also published brochures and other tourist literature highlighting places of tourist interest, tour programmes, etc. State tourism department also participates either directly or indirectly through its authorized tour operators in many travel and tourism fairs.

In Mizoram too, promotional activities for marketing Mizoram as a destination are arranged by the Directorate of Tourism. The Tourism Department has been making endless efforts over the years by utilizing the available resources, promoting rural

tourism, human resource development and organizing fairs and festivals to place Mizoram as a prominent tourist destination. The Department has been actively participating in tourism events like International Tourism Mart (ITM), an annual event organized for the Northeast states and that the Northeastern States take turns to host the event. Various tourism products of Mizoram are showcased in this event. Other than the Tourism Department, two agencies namely Mizoram Tourism Development Authority (MTDA) and Mizoram Tourism Development Board (MTDB) are also created. The main aim and objective of MTDA is to assist the efforts of the central government and the state government in respect of development of tourism in the state. It has been the main agency for implementing projects and other developmental works assigned to it by the Tourism Department. Meanwhile, the chief function of the MTDB is to identify and recommend strategies/ policies for development of tourism industry in Mizoram.

Tourism departments of Meghalaya and Mizoram use various methods of promotion depending on the principle of market segmentation. Participation in travel marts, trade shows and sales promotion are major methods of market promotion. However, there is no uniform promotion strategy; instead a combination of various promotional methods is used. The present level of promotional and publicity programmes initiated by the select states are not much effective to attract tourists in viable numbers round the year so as to sustain the sectoral economy. In other words, tourism marketing needs to be vibrant in these states. Although, the service of ICT has been utilized for market promotion, the official website of the tourism departments of the select states are not up to required level so as to give the detailed information about various tourism resources. In fact, the word-of-mouth generated through friends/relatives has been the major source of information in organizing trip to the select states (refer Tables 4.42 and 4.43). Hence, in order to make effective use of the resources for overseas publicity, the application of ICT needs to be upgraded to another level.

Tourism in Northeast India suffers due to a very low level of awareness, not only internationally but also amongst the domestic tourists. Hence, the promotion mix would be to increase the awareness of the tourist destinations in Northeast India with a specific

unique selling theme. Further, the marketers need to address the negative perceptions of the people in general about different tourism destinations through proper brand positioning. This would further need to be supported by an appropriately designed advertising campaign for international and domestic markets, spread over a number of years, with constant support of the other elements of promotion mix.

5.6.5 People

In a service oriented industry, people are crucial to the success of tourism businesses. The people element in the marketing mix refers to all of the human actors who play a part in service delivery and thus influence the buyers' perceptions. In tourism marketing mix, the 'people' element comprises of local people, travel agents, guides, staff of travel companies, sales staff, etc. The buying behaviours of tourists are greatly affected by their interaction with the numerous people involved in the industry. Therefore, the personnel who attend to the needs of the tourists must be well-trained on interpersonal skills as well as knowledge of the various available products.

Two groups of people play important roles in the delivery of quality services – the employees and customers. Service employees create satisfied customers and build customer relationships. The front-line service providers are enormously important to the success of the firm. They are responsible for understanding customer needs and for interpreting customer requirements in real time. Similarly, the appearance, behaviour and attitudes of tourism service providers (people) speak a lot about the industry. Travel guides especially, are expected to have a lot of patience, good sense of humor, tact to transform the occasional tourists into habitual ones, thorough knowledge of the places, linguistic skills etc. The sales personnel are responsible for dealing with the customer behind the counter. The airline and transportation crew interact with customers while traveling. The resort or hotel representatives cater to the needs of the tourists when they reach the destination. The appearance and attitudes of local people also play an important role in tourism business. Hence, in tourism industry it is imperative that service providers have to be at their best at all times. However, according to Chaudhary (2012), the main problem with the 'people' aspect of tourism is that tourists and sellers

understand the importance of their role, but society and indirectly involved sectors do not because tourism is not the only priority for them. As a result, instances where minor irritants, such as behaviour by airport staff or taxi drivers, spoil the whole tour experience.

5.6.5.1 People in tourism experience/encounter

Many person-to-person encounters at tourism sites are likely to be cross-cultural encounters. A tour package may take a person to a place where contact with different cultures is unavoidable, not only with the host community, but also with fellow tourists from other regions or nations. Hence, understanding tourist' preferences and their differences is potentially important in the practical world of marketing and management for the tourism industry. A tourism experience, as stated by Chaudhary (2012) is formed by the presence of seven categories of people. These are tourists, employees, group members, other tourists, residents, informal service providers, and facilitators.

- (i) *Tourists:* The level of involvement of tourists in a tour and activities depend upon intangibility, complexity and flexibility of the tourism product. If a tour activity demands high level of involvement and tourists are not prepared for it, then it will create dissatisfaction. Another important factor that affects tour experience is the tourist expectations. High expectations often lead to problems in case of non-fulfillment during encounters. Hence, tourists must understand what they want and what is possible.
- (ii) *Employees:* People employed in tourism business will determine the quality of services the tourists receive. They form the visible face and voice of the organization and come in direct contact with tourists for the delivery of services to them. They are routinely required to embody and enact what the organization espouses and to mute any misgivings they may have about the organization and their role. They are expected to enact the role professionally and not allow extraneous factors, such as personal problems, to impair their performance, etc.
- (iii) *Group Members:* Tourists usually travel in groups that may be small or large. Group members also affect a tour experience. It is imperative that the tour

managers study who are in the group and who are its dominant members that shape the group's opinion. It is also important to study the size and composition of the group and roles of different members therein for effective services. Therefore, maintaining constant communication with the influential leaders of the group is a must to have a satisfied tourism experience.

- (iv) *Other Tourists:* Tourism is experienced in an external environment where other tourists are also present. Tourists at a destination interact to share opinions and knowledge which are considered to be objective and experience-based. This interaction, sometimes, changes the frame in which tourists evaluate experience. As a result, a satisfied tourist with fulfilled promises may start feeling dissatisfied if told about a better deal by others.
- (v) *Residents:* Residents or local people also play an important role in tourism experience. They can create an ambience spanning from warm welcome to complete hostility. Friendliness creates an environment where locals allow tourists to participate in their activities for closer interaction. This gives a higher level of satisfaction to the tourists. Residents can also turn hostile and hostility ranges between indifference towards tourism to open opposition to the presence of tourists in their areas.
- (vi) *Informal Service Providers:* Informal tourism information obtained from people engaged in other service sectors, which are beyond the control of tourism marketers, plays an important role in determining the mindsets of the tourists during their tour experience. People engaged in these services may not understand the importance of tourism or the effect of their interactions on tourists. Hence, tourism related trainings should be imparted to taxi drivers, service staff in small eateries, phone booth, laundry, parking, etc. to ensure good encounters for tourists at every point to deliver a good tour experience.
- (vii) *Facilitators:* In tourism, many people provide services to tourists as facilitators. These are not controlled by marketers and can have a different set of norms and practices for dealing with customers, as handling tourists is only a small part of

their job. But for tourists, interaction with them is an essential component of a tour experience. Airport staff, police and the government are such facilitators in tourism sector.

5.6.5.2 Managing people in tourism encounters

According to Chaudhary (2012), there are basically three techniques adopted in managing people in tourism encounters. They are customer relationship management (CRM), internal marketing and capacity building.

- (i) *Customer relationship management (CRM)*: CRM is an approach to understand and influence customer behavior through meaningful communications in order to improve customer acquisition, customer retention, customer loyalty and customer profitability. It helps in profiling prospects, understanding the needs of the customers, and in building relationships with them by providing the most suitable products and enhance its services. According to Chaudhary (2012), “CRM deals with the important dimension or relations between sellers and buyers. It is the result of continuous satisfying encounters. It implies entering into building, maintaining and sustaining relations with customers”.
- (ii) *Internal marketing*: Internal marketing is the process of motivating and empowering the employees of a company to work as a team for the overall wellbeing of the customers and thereby the company itself. Employees are prepared and empowered to deliver quality service. It uses all the concepts of external marketing such as identifying employees segments based on their attitudes towards service, designing training and motivational programmes appropriate for each segment and controls. Internal marketing is essentially a sales technique used by companies that treats employees as customers to help make all components of the business function harmoniously and deliver a clear message.

Kotler et al (2010) preached that the process of internal marketing involves the following three steps:

- (i) Developing a service culture (a culture that supports the provision of quality services through prescribed policies, procedures, reward systems, etc.);

- (ii) Conveying and merging marketing concepts and principles onto Human Resource Management; and
- (iii) Disseminating all relevant marketing information to employees.
- (iv) *Capacity building*: Capacity building programmes aim to build skills and aptitude in different categories of people. Their main target is to fill the manpower requirements at lower levels through short-term courses. The unskilled staff already engaged in jobs is also imparted skills for higher productivity. It also includes awareness-building efforts for the host population, the facilitators and the informal sector (Chaudhary, 2012). It helps communities to improve their ability to participate in the tourism decision-making. It is a process aimed at strengthening the capacity of individuals and organizations to develop and sustain conditions that support all aspects of community lives (Blackwell and Colmenar, 2000). Capacity building helps individuals, organizations, and communities to find unused and underdeveloped skills and resources and to enable reconsidering its strengths and opportunities in enhancing tourism development.

5.6.5.3 People in tourism in select states

Meghalaya acquires its charm from the picturesque locales and bountiful nature. The state is significantly inhabited by three major ethnic tribes. They are the *Garos* in the western area, the *Khasis* in the central area and the *Jaintias* in the eastern area. These three ethnic groups are purely matrilineal society, which is exclusive to the region, and as such the descent of an individual is reckoned and traced through the genealogical tree of the mother only. The state is replete with numerous ceremonies and traditional fiestas. These festivals provide a glimpse of Meghalaya's lively collection of woven, decorative, dyed and colourful silk and cotton, their elaborate jewellery etc. No celebration in Meghalaya is complete without the involvement of dance and music. The dance forms in the state are dedicated to various events such as social, religious, agricultural, funeral and recreational. The local people of the state are hardworking and hospitable to visitors.

On the other hand, Mizoram also exhibits a co-existence of different communities, the majority *Mizo* clans (*Lusei, Hmar, Lai, Mara*, etc.) and the minority

Chakma and *Reang* who are having diverse traditions and cultures of their own (Joshi, 2011). The state is a dazzling amalgamation of cross-cultural vibrancy, which is strongly evident in gender equality and a vigorous pursuit of its ancient cultural traditions and social mores. As noted in Chapter 3, the people of Mizoram are by nature cheerful and hospitable to visitors. Though still considered remote and hence, an unfrequented destination, the location of Mizoram itself helps maintain its quaint appeal (Singha and Chakma, 2015). They are rich in culture with its own unique traditions and customs of different hues intermingle freely to constitute a homogeneous blend. They have hospitality in their nerves and the visitors can experience the friendliness of the local people once they visit. The Mizo code of conduct '*Tlawmngaihna*' is a compelling force, which finds expression in self-sacrifice in the service of others. It is a compelling moral force that requires a man to be hospitable, kind, unselfish, courageous and helpful to the others. Mizoram can be considered as a treasure trove for the discerning travellers because of its amazing array of cultures, festivals, dances, handicrafts, etc. diverse with tribal villages and urban centers with modern culture and lifestyle unlike elsewhere in India. This state of NEI delights tourists with its vast cultural and traditional charms.

The two select states are among the states having high literacy rates in India. Hence, with the development of tourism industry the governments of these states can exploit this resource to the fullest, to reduce unemployment problem of educated youths. However, like most of the other states of Northeast India, people of these two states lack entrepreneurship skills, especially in tourism sector. Entrepreneurship as a career is mostly chosen by chance or under some compulsion, but not by choice.

The development of a tourism industry largely depends upon the cooperation and consciousness of the people in the region since tourists are interested not only in exploring the beauty and culture of the region but also to interact with the local people. Keeping the amount of tourism potentials in hand, governments of these two states should impart trainings/workshops on tourism benefits to different levels of stakeholders to exploit these resources for employment generation. Firstly, the trainings shall be conducted for understanding the basic concepts of tourism. Secondly, the training shall

include the study for identification of potential tourism products, their market demands and the design requirements for markets.

It was observed that Meghalaya has a good number of tour guides rendering tourism services when compared to Mizoram, where tourist guide services are very limited. With regards to the hospitality and efficiency of hotel staff, majority of the respondents were found to be satisfied. Overall, tourism in Northeast India lacks the services of trained guides to conduct tourism activities; therefore, it is necessary to encourage more tour operators/travel agencies to come up with new ventures with trained and qualified guides.

Although these two states are considered peaceful, the presence of insurgent problems and militant groups in the neighbouring states may deter tourist enthusiasts in coming to the states. Further, frequent bandhs and strikes and blockade of national highways are a major threat to tourism development in these states. More often, the insurgency and other problems relating to NEI are highlighted more than the positive aspects in national media. Hence, the threat of insurgents and veiled exaggeration of insurgent problem by media could discourage prospective tourists coming to NEI.

5.6.6 Process

Process denotes the way in which a particular action is carried out. In marketing mix, it is the procedure, mechanism and routine through which a service is created and delivered to a customer. It includes the various mechanisms and procedures which help the product to finally reach its target market. Rafiq and Ahmed (1995) stated that “*process*” could be conceptualized as “the set of activities that results in delivery of the product benefits”. A process, thus, could be a sequential order of tasks that an employee undertakes as a part of their job. It can represent sequential steps taken by a number of various employees while attempting to complete a task.

Process refers to the methods and procedure of providing a service and it is hence essential to have a thorough knowledge of whether the services are helpful to the customers, if they are provided in time and if the customers are informed in hand about the services (Drushinin and Kallunki, 2012). Process deals with customer service, and a

company's ability to offer a service, handle complaints, and foresee any issues before they actually happen. These have to be clearly defined and efficient processes should garner customer confidence in the company's ability to handle any issues.

5.6.6.1 Objectives of service process

Service process involves procedures, task schedules, mechanism, activities and routines by which a product or service is delivered to a customer. It is an operating system of workflow activities and their integration. According to Chaudhary (2012), the objectives of service process are:

- (i) *Improved service availability:* One of the basic objectives of tourism process is improved service availability. Tourists want the best possible experience and they often blame travel arrangements, even for factors such as bad weather or lack of preparation at their own end. Hence, tourists may be given a package after discussing weather and other uncontrollable factors, so that they know what may be expected.
- (ii) *Simplified delivery:* Tourists normally use the option they believe is the simplest. Filling out a large number of forms and giving too much information can be confusing and cumbersome for them, which may negatively impact the tour experience. Hence, tourism marketers should maintain multiple options of service offerings because different market segments may have different perceptions of simplicity.
- (iii) *Cost effective:* Tourism process should be cost-effective because tourists want savings and prefer avoiding unnecessary expenses. Optimal product designing and changes in process of delivery lead to substantial amount of savings. For example, direct bookings of hotels and airlines without middlemen have led to significant gains to tourists.
- (iv) *Guarantee:* Faulty processes often ruin the final service or product. A minimum level of service must be guaranteed to the customers and service providers should strive to always exceed it. Lack of responses from contact numbers, wrong

information, no channels for registering or handling complaints are some instances of a service guarantee going wrong.

5.6.6.2 Building service blueprint

Process refers to the actual procedures, mechanisms and flow of activities by which the service is delivered – the service delivery and operating systems. The service process is designed and specified using the service blueprinting tool. Blueprinting is an analytical tool that is helpful in identifying the service encounters in which typical hospitality guests participate as they move through the service process. It is a tool that depicts the service process; the points of customer contact and the evidence of service from the customers' point of view (Kumar, 2010).

A service blueprint is a picture or map that accurately portrays the service system so that the different people involved in providing it can understand and deal with it objectively regardless of their roles or their individual points of view. It is a tool for simultaneously depicting the service process, the points of customer contact and the evidence of service from the customers' point of view. It provides a way to break a service down into its logical components and to depict the steps or tasks in the process, the means by which the tasks are executed and the evidence of service as the customer experiences it.

The key components of service blueprints are customer actions, front-end contact employee actions, back-end contact employee actions and support processes. The customer actions encompass the steps, choices, activities and interactions that the customer performs in the process of purchasing, consuming and evaluating the service. The front-end contact employee actions are visible to the customer whereas the back-end contact employee actions are invisible.

Following are the various steps involved in building a service blueprint (Zeithaml and Bitner, 1996):

- a) Identify the process to be blueprinted
- b) Identify the customer or customer segment
- c) Map the process from the customers' point of view

- d) Map contact employee actions, front-end and back-end and/or technology actions
- e) Link contact activities to needed support functions
- f) Add evidence of service at each customer action step

5.6.6.3 Tourism process in select states

The history of tourism industry in NEI including the select states, i.e. Meghalaya and Mizoram is quite new. As per as the visibility of tourism map of the select states is concerned it is quite blurry at national as well as at international level. Over the years attempts have been made by various tourism organizations for improving tourism infrastructure in the region in the areas of transport, communication, power, water supply, etc. but quantum is quite limited (Bhattacharya, 2008). Moreover, the rugged topography of hilly and mountainous terrains of the region including the select states hampers the growth of tourism infrastructures. Although the two states have enormous potential in tourism development, the respective governments could not be able to enhance it due to various factors ranging from lack of funds to mismanagement to lack of awareness about tourism benefits at different levels.

Upon realizing the importance of tourism sector, governments of both states have framed their respective tourism policies in the recent past. The promotions of tourism products in the select states are mostly carried out by respective Directorate of Tourism along with other subordinate offices. These offices use various methods of promotion depending on the principle of market segmentation. However, the present level of promotional and publicity programmes initiated by the select states are not much effective to attract tourists in a viable numbers which is evidenced in Table 2.11 of Chapter 2. The official websites of the tourism departments of the select states are required for upgradation at regular intervals. Further, the application of ICT needs to be promoted to another level.

Comparatively, tourism circuits of Meghalaya are relatively advanced than that of Mizoram. Shillong, the state's capital forms an integral part of the most visited tourism circuits (other than Sikkim circuit) of NEI. However, for Mizoram there are no specific inter/intra-state tourism circuits. Intra-state circuits may also not be so required

considering the fact that this is a small state in terms of spread. Although, the select states are rich in varied tourism attractions due to lack of good tourism circuits in NEI these tourism products do not get well marketed.

Tour operators and travel agencies are basically the ones who package and process all the various attractions of a region and present them to the tourists. Meghalaya has a good number of tour operators organizing package tours for tourists as compared to Mizoram, where the number is quite limited. It was observed that there are around 12 tour operators and 15 travel agents operating the tourism activities in Meghalaya. In Mizoram, only four government-recognized and nine other private tour operators organize tour itinerary, that too, within the state only. Hence, the governments of these two states should encourage more tour operators/travel agencies to sell the different tourism products available in these states. At the same time, trainings on tourism and hospitality should be imparted to all the stakeholders who are directly involved in the tourism sector of these states.

Furthermore, in entering Mizoram, domestic tourists need to get a permit, called Inner Line Permit (ILP). This entry restriction creates a psychic burden for the prospective tourists who want to visit the state. Moreover, the flow of foreign tourists is also governed by international relations of the country. Physical connectivity like road and transportation, which is considered to be the important factors in the development of any region, is quite bad particularly in Mizoram. There is short of all weather roads leading to the tourism attractions of the state. Meanwhile, unlike the travel costs in other states of mainland India, the travel costs of Mizoram are relatively high. This may be due to the absence of adequate public and private transportation. Mizoram can be considered one of the costliest states in India where the charge of travel is quite high.

5.6.7 Physical evidence

Physical evidence is the final element of tourism marketing mix which is expressed as the environment in which the service is delivered and where the firm and customer interact, and any tangible component that facilitate performance or

communication of the service. It is also called as servicescape to describe the physical facility where the service is produced and/or delivered (Bizan, 2009).

In tourism, products are intangible as before purchasing any service, people can't touch, feel and see those destinations. They perceive the image of services and products in their minds before traveling to any destinations before travelling. They perceive regarding their accommodations, hotels, restaurants, appearance of vehicles and its people. Before purchasing any service normally people are not sure about whether they will like particular destination or not. Physical evidence is the environment or facilities and services which they experience upon reaching the destinations.

Physical evidence is the environment in which normally sales take place and where product is consumed by customers. Physical evidence is related to important factors like physical environment around the product/service, ambience, spatial layout and corporate branding. Physical environment is the environment surrounded where services are consumed by people (Kaur, 2014). Booms and Bitner (1981) define physical evidence as “the environment in which the service is delivered and where the firm and customer interact, and any tangible component that facilitate performance or communication of the service”.

Physical evidence includes the servicescape, a term used to describe the physical facility where the service is produced and/or delivered. The main function of physical evidence is to support the organization's marketing program by making it possible to manage the tangible clues to the best advantage of the customer and the employees. Physical evidence comprises of the elements which are incorporated into a service to make it tangible and somewhat measurable. At the same time, it also helps in the positioning of the brand and for targeting the right kind of customers. Physical evidence is the element of the service mix which allows the consumer again to make judgments on the organization.

5.6.7.1 Types of physical evidences

Physical evidence performs a vital role in service differentiation, service packaging, and facilitation in the service creation and delivery, and customer and staff socialization. Physical evidence can be categorized into two:

- (i) *Essential physical evidence*: This includes all the basic requirements that are essential to render the service. A well equipped building with all the necessary tools and information, good furniture, necessary transportation facilities to reach the area where service is provided, etc. are all essential if effective service is to be provided.
- (ii) *Peripheral physical evidence*: Peripheral physical evidences have little value of its own. This signifies that the peripheral physical evidence tries to bring an aspect of tangibility to the product but it actually represents a right to experience the service at a later point of time.

5.6.7.2 Techniques in building physical evidences

Since services are intangibles, management of physical evidence is highly difficult. The following are some general techniques for an effective physical evidence strategy:

- (i) *Recognize the strategic impact of physical evidence*: Physical evidence affects service quality expectations and perceptions. An effective planning is needed for physical evidence. The planning strategy should define the basic service concept, identify the target markets and know the firm's vision.
- (ii) *Blueprint the physical evidence of service*: A service blueprint virtually displays the service system by simultaneously depicting the process of service delivery, the points of customer contact, the roles of customers and the visible elements of the service. This helps in managing each evident explicitly.
- (iii) *Clarify the roles of servicescape*: Servicescape plays the roles of package, facilitator, socialiser and differentiator. A good servicescape fosters a smooth relationship between the employees and customers. Proper design of the physical facility can differentiate a firm from its competitors.

- (iv) *Identify physical evidence opportunities:* Blueprinting may also bring out areas where no evidences are used at present but an opportunity exists to create new one. New opportunities such as easy parking, cleanliness, quick service etc., which can satisfy the customers.
- (v) *Update and modernize the evidence:* Physical evidences once created cannot be expected to remain constant forever. With the passage of time, they may require periodic updating and modernizing, even if the goals and objectives of the organization do not change.

5.6.7.3 Physical evidences of tourism in select states

Nature has bestowed the two select states with abundance of tourism resources which are yet to be fully tapped. As noted, the two select states hold immense tourism potential due to their natural scenic beauty and rich bio-diversity. These states are endowed with beautiful treks, charming caves, wildlife sanctuaries, scenic lakes, waterfalls, picturesque villages and so much more. The breathtaking valleys, green forests and the meandering river with a graceful gait and shimmering waterfalls make up the exorbitant atmosphere of these states. Hence, these states have ample scope to promote various fields of tourism such as adventure tourism, wildlife tourism and particularly ecotourism. In fact, majority of the respondents (4.40 average mean score in Meghalaya and 4.37 in Mizoram) indicated that they were highly satisfied with the scenic nature of the select sates.

The partition of Indian Union in 1947 left the northeastern part of India isolated from mainland India. The region is connected through a narrow strip called the Siluguri Corridor in northern Bengal. This partition has created severe connectivity as well as infrastructure constraints in the region till date. The status of the basic tourism infrastructure in NEI is much below the minimum standards. Lack of proper infrastructure facilities are the major impediment of tourism sector in the select states. Railways connectivity to these states is virtually absent. The two select states have one airport each, however with less air traffic. Due to rugged terrain, airports were also built comparatively in smaller size with other airports of mainland India. Due to which, on

certain occasion, it becomes difficult for big flights like Air India to make landing during inclement weather conditions. Hence, in the absence of better air connectivity, tourists are forced to travel long distances by roads, which is more laborious and tiresome. Due to its hilly and mountainous nature, roads which are now the main form of connectivity between states and destinations are also pathetic, particularly in Mizoram and are found in varying grades. Further, landslides due to heavy rainfalls during monsoon create severe problems and blockades of connectivity and proper transportation. There is short of interconnected roads within the select states itself, particularly in Mizoram which could reach the remote areas where abundant of eco lives are found. As a result of these development of rural tourism could not take place in a healthy way.

It was observed that there is no dearth of accommodation for tourists in the select states, particularly in Shillong and Aizawl. However, physical appearance of the hotel and its cleanliness, quality of food, services and ambience provided, efficiency of the staff are a matter of concern in the accommodation sector of these states. Besides, tourists often face difficulty in finding out standards lodges/hotels near the vicinity of tourism destination, especially if they are far from capital-region areas. Hence, the governments should allow and encourage private sectors to come up with high standard hotels in the vicinity of the major towns as well as in the tourism destinations. At the same time, communication networks like internet connectivity, well connected roads, hygienic eateries and hotels, instant banking and exchange facilities, etc. should be upgraded with national standards.

Findings from chapter 4 indicate that city tour (sightseeing) facilities available in the select states are quite satisfactory. The respondents were also found to be happy with the hygiene and sanitation facilities available in tourism services, especially in Mizoram. They were also found to be satisfied with the shopping/clothing, as the select states are rich in handicrafts and handloom articles such as shawls, textiles, bags and bamboo/cane articles. However, the respondents had bad experience with the entertainment facilities and night life particularly in Mizoram. Telecommunication and internet services in

Mizoram are also comparatively worse than that of Meghalaya, and in certain tourism destinations it is not uncommon to experience weak network signal. There is inadequacy of basic tourism amenities at tourist spots in Mizoram, like restrooms, cafeterias, etc.

5.7 Conclusions

Northeast India is not less than any paradise from different points of view. Incredible nature of the people and other natural resources made this region a different from other parts of the country. Its rich cultural heritage, topography and biodiversity make the region a must on the travel list of adventure, cultural and nature travelers. The region is a geographical landlocked piece of land severely suffering from different problems including lack of ethnic integration. Constraints like geographical challenges to develop basic infrastructures like communication, lack of proper planning and lack of efficient use of human resources are the stimulators in growing problems for developing tourism industry in this region.

The state governments of Meghalaya and Mizoram have adopted many marketing strategies to promote tourism in these states. In recent times, the governments of the select states have brought in a number of new tourism products in its fold, like ecotourism, rural tourism, wildlife tourism, adventure tourism, etc. and initiated many new policies for tourism development. However, due to absence of proper tourism circuit involving these two states, particularly Mizoram, these tourism products cannot be marketed to the level it should be. It was found that there are so many destinations in select states, particularly in Mizoram which are not given serious attention for development and remain neglected. If these destinations are properly developed and supported by requisite infrastructure, the select states have considerable potential to be promoted as among the most sought after tourism destinations in India.

As noted, the select states have lots of potential to attract large number of tourists due to its varied tourism resources. Development and expansion of tourism industry has large scope in these state by utilizing these tourism resources and its untapped market potentials. This can be achieved by creating a strong infrastructure like transportation and communication links at various important tourism destinations. The state

governments need to co-ordinate the efforts of its various departments and focus on infrastructural development, and provide special incentives to the private sector to set up excellent tourism facilities. More than the tourism departments of these two states, the other agencies which provide basic amenities like electricity, water supply, health care etc. also need to play a significant role. Besides, important roles have to be played by the entrepreneurs such as hoteliers, tour operators, travel agencies and others who provide services in the tourism sector.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMMARY OF FINDINGS AND SUGGESTIONS

This chapter aims to highlight the important findings drawn from the previous chapters and to provide suggestions for different stakeholders based on the findings. This chapter also brought out the areas for further research for the prospective researchers in the field of tourism studies in India in general and Northeast India in particular.

6.1 Major findings

The major findings of the study are described hereunder:

Objective - 1

To assess the existing tourism marketing environment in terms of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) in states of Meghalaya and Mizoram

1. Tourism has great potential for generating income and employment opportunities in Meghalaya and Mizoram as these states are endowed with abundance of tourism resources which are still to be explored. The history of tourism in Northeast India including Meghalaya and Mizoram is quite new. The initiative of the Government of Meghalaya towards tourism promotion was started with the establishment of the Directorate of Tourism in the year 1972 while the tourism promotion activities in Mizoram started following its attainment of statehood in 1987.
2. As per as road transportation is concerned in the select states, it is quite bad and it is a humongous task on the part of the state governments to maintain at good standard due to the rugged topography and hilly terrain of these states, particularly during monsoon. However, Meghalaya has a good network of roadways against its counterpart and is comparatively at an advantageous position because of its proximity with Guwahati. Railways, considered as the cheapest mode of transportation, is almost absent in these two states. In Mizoram there is a rail link at Bairabi station but it is primarily for goods, that also still in a non-functional state. Both Shillong (Meghalaya) and Aizawl (Mizoram) have only domestic airport with very less number of flight services. With respect to waterways, both the states have

enormous scope to develop this as these state have some perennial navigable rivers connecting with Bangladesh, which requires furthering of international trade with the latter.

3. SWOT analysis of Meghalaya Tourism

Strengths: Meghalaya is a majestic land full with nature's own creations. Its natural beauties are splendidly unmatched. The state has some of thickest evergreen forests in the region which are storehouses of vast natural resources that can attract numbers of nature explorers. Meghalaya experiences a moderate temperature ranging between 12°C and 30°C throughout the year. The wet and cool pleasing climatic conditions, the astonishing landscape and hilly terrain of the state serve the tourists to enjoy the feeling of being in a delightful hill station of Europe. Music is an integral part of the people of Meghalaya and it accompanies every festival and ceremony. The state has the prospects to promote itself as a delightful paradise for the music lovers across the country and world. Meghalaya also resonates with fairs and festivals which are celebrated throughout the year. These festivals also provide a glimpse of the state's lively collection of woven, decorative, dyed and colourful silk and cotton, their elaborate jewellery etc. Meghalaya is considered as the wettest state in India and world as well. It offers many adventure opportunities in the form of mountaineering, rock climbing, and trekking, hiking, and water sports.

Weaknesses: The state has to depend heavily on its road network which is limited to a considerable extent. Tourism in Meghalaya suffers from inadequate facilities in prospective tourism destinations like seating arrangements, good eating joints, clean rest-rooms etc. so that tourists can stay there for some time. The maintenance and upgradation of existing infrastructure is another problem of state tourism. The process of infrastructure development has been rather slow in the state for many reasons. Presently, the state suffers from inadequate funds for tourism marketing programmes. It has to heavily depend on central funding.

Opportunities: Meghalaya boasts of different kinds of tourism products. Hence, there is an opportunity to promote niche tourism by segmentation the tourists based

on their wants and need. As stated, Meghalaya tourism suffers from adequate funds in implementing its tourism project there is a huge scope for private sector's investment in tourism industry in the state. Privatisation of various tourism facilities with different strategies will make the projects sustainable and viable. The opening of international border for free trade with Bangladesh is an opportunity for Meghalaya to promote international border tourism.

Threats: The threat of insurgents and veiled exaggeration of insurgent problem by the national media which discourages prospective tourists coming to Meghalaya. Excessive use and abuse of forest resources is one reason causing a wide scale environmental degradation in the state. Further, the practice of shifting (*jhum*) cultivation has been one of the factors for the destruction of the ecology in the state. The government should look for alternatives to shift this practice to other viable forms of agriculture to protect the rich ecology of the state.

4. SWOT Analysis of Mizoram Tourism

Strengths: Mizoram is a land of rolling hills, valleys, rivers and lakes. It is a mountainous state teeming with vibrant wildlife and picturesque villages of houses built on stilts and a land of dramatic seas of morning mists with its beautiful landscape. The hilly terrain of the state is ideally suited for trekkers, mountaineers and rock climbers ideally suited for various adventure activities. The climate of Mizoram usually is monsoon and humid type which is quite pleasant and rainy throughout the year. The state has rich potential for ecotourism and wildlife tourism in the state which is still intact. The forests in the state are abundantly rich in flora and fauna. The state boasts a number of rivers and lakes in the state that provide a unique experience of adventure as well as leisure tourism. The people of Mizoram are, by nature, carefree and hospitable to visitors. The people are rich in culture with its unique traditions and customs. They are quite skilled in making bamboo and cane products and are adept artisans and their weaving is simply superb. The distinct art forms and festivals of Mizoram as the essential part of its rich culture and tradition exhibit the state to the world.

Weaknesses: Due to hilly terrain and rugged topography the road conditions of Mizoram are very bad. Landslides due to heavy rainfalls during monsoon create severe problems and blockades of connectivity and proper transportation. Unlike other states of the country, the travelling costs of the state are relatively high due to the absence of adequate public and private transportation system. Further, the entry restriction of tourists, both foreign and domestic (people from other states of India) into Mizoram is one of the major setbacks of tourism development in the state. Meanwhile, lack of organised tours in the state make the tourism enthusiasts miss the opportunity to pay a visit to some of the most untouched tourism destinations available in Mizoram. The status of infrastructure in Mizoram is still at a developing stage. This is one of the reasons for the snail's pace development of tourism in Mizoram. The state also suffers from connectivity constraints due to geographical isolation, which further deprive the state from overall economic development.

Opportunities: With its strategic location, Mizoram is one of the most potential states to capture the Southeast Asian market for international tourism. Proper implementation of Act East Policy shall enable Mizoram in building international collaboration with ASEAN countries in developing tourism industry. Tourism in Mizoram is still a vacuum in realising the untapped tourism potential of the state. Hence, there is a scope for private sector units to participate in tourism development in the states and their roles would be crucial in promoting ecotourism and ensuring the quality of tours and travels. Mizoram is also rich in historical and heritage sites which are scattered throughout the state and it is one of the few states in India where Christianity forms the majority of the population. There are churches found in every locales of the state. If the tourism industry in the state is promoted through the concept of religious tourism, large number foreign tourists could be attracted to visit the state, especially from European countries.

Threats: Environmental degradation: Mizoram is located on dangerous seismic zone which is vulnerable to natural disasters like earthquakes. It is one of the states in India where agriculture mainly depends upon shifting (*jhum*) cultivation. The practice of this form of agriculture may results in deteriorating the ecological balance of the nature. In

addition to this, the presence of insurgent problems and militant groups in the neighbouring states could deter tourist enthusiasts in coming to the state, though Mizoram is considered a peaceful state.

Objective - 2

To study the buying behaviour of the tourists visiting the two select states in terms of their attitudes, perceptions and satisfactions

1. In Meghalaya, 41% of the respondents belonged to 21-35 years of age and 32% of the respondents belonged to 36-50 years of age. Only 9% of the respondents belonged to above 65 years of age. In Mizoram, almost half of the respondents belonged to the age group of 21-35 years, 24% belonged to the age group of 36-50 years, while only 5% of the respondents were above 65 years.
2. In Meghalaya, 58% of the respondents were married, while 38% of the respondents were unmarried. 4% of the respondents were found to be either divorced or widowed. In Mizoram, 60% of the respondents were married, while 39% of the respondents were unmarried.
3. 91% of the respondents in Meghalaya were of Indian origin while the remaining were foreigners. In Mizoram, 95% of the respondents were of Indian origin.
4. In Meghalaya, 68% of the respondents were males while remaining were females. 73% of the respondents in Mizoram were males while remaining were females.
5. 48% of the respondents in Meghalaya were Hindus and 24% of the respondents were Christians. 18% of the respondents were Muslims and the remaining 10% of the respondents belonged to other religions such as Buddhist, Sikhs etc. In Mizoram, 51% of the respondents were Hindus, 21% of the respondents were Muslims, while 19% of the respondents were Christians. 9% of the respondents were belonged to other religions such as Buddhists, Sikhs, etc.
6. In Meghalaya, over half of the respondents had family size of 5-6 members. One-fourth of the respondents had family size of 3-4 members. Meanwhile, one-fifth of the respondents had family size of over six persons.

7. In Mizoram, 44% of the respondents had family size of 5-6 members, while over one-third of the respondents had a family size of 3-4 members. 18% of the respondents had family size of over six persons.
8. Out of the total respondents in Meghalaya, 29% were private jobholders, 18% were government servant, 17% were business persons and 14% were students. While, 9% and 7% of the respondents were self employed and retired persons respectively. In Mizoram, 25% of the respondents were business persons, 21% of the respondents were working under private firms. 16% of the respondents were government servants and 6% were retired persons. Students were accounted for 16% of the total respondents.
9. In Meghalaya, most of the respondents had collegiate education. Only 23% of the respondents had their education up to intermediate level. In Mizoram, majority of the respondents had education above graduation level. 17% of the respondents had intermediate education, while only 8% of the respondents had education up to matriculation. No illiterate respondents were observed in both states.
10. Majority of the respondents in Meghalaya were having monthly family income of Rs. 25,001-50,000. 14% of the respondents were having monthly family income of Rs.1,00,000 and above. In Mizoram, 32% of the respondents were having monthly family income of Rs. 25,001-50,000 and 31% of the respondents were having monthly family income of Rs. 50,001-75,000.
11. 46% of the respondents in Meghalaya were first time visitors to the state. The second time visitors accounted for 27%, while third time visitors accounted for 14%. In Mizoram, 43% of the respondents were first time visitors. 22% of the respondents were second time visitors and 23% of the respondents were third time visitors.
12. Among the respondents in Meghalaya, 58% had visited the state with their family, 33% visited with friends, 7% along with business associates, while 2% travelled alone. In Mizoram, 52% of the respondents visited the state with family members, 28% with friends, and 14% with business associates, while 6% were lone travellers.

13. 71% of the respondents in Meghalaya travelled with 2-4 persons, 21% travelled with 5-7 persons, while 6% travelled with 8 or more. Three-fourth of the respondents in Mizoram travelled with 2-4 persons, 17% travelled with 5-7 persons, while only 2% travelled with 8 or more persons.
14. Half of the respondents in Meghalaya preferred for tours at least once a year, 28% preferred for tours once in two years, while 13% preferred for tours 2-4 times a year. 47% of the respondents in Mizoram preferred for tourism once a year, while 31% preferred once in two years. 7% of the respondents in Mizoram preferred for tours 2-4 times a year. The respondents who had no definite opinion on frequency of tours composed of 9% in Meghalaya and 13% in Mizoram.
15. While visiting Meghalaya, Over half of the respondents utilized bus as the mode of travel, 25% used hired car, 7% used own car, 5% used airways, while 14% used some other means. 37% of the respondents in Mizoram used bus, 18% used hired car, 11% used airways, 9% used own vehicle, while 25% used some other means.
16. While visiting Meghalaya, 17% of the respondents have used tour package while others hadn't. In Mizoram, only 8% of the respondents in Mizoram have used tour package while visiting the state.
17. In Meghalaya, *vacation/leisure* was the main purpose of visit of the respondents, followed by *culture/festival* as the second purpose, *adventure/ecotourism* the third, *historical places* and *business* as the fourth and fifth purpose. In Mizoram, *vacation/leisure* was the main purpose of visit of the respondents, followed by *culture/festival*, *historical places*, *adventure/ecotourism* and *business*.
18. 89% of the respondents in Meghalaya stayed in the state less than 10 days, while only 11% stayed over 10 days. In Mizoram, over three-fourth of the respondents stayed in the state less than 10, while others stayed over 10 days.
19. In both select states, *friends/relatives* were the major source of information used by the respondents in organising the trip followed by *previous experience(s)* of the respondents.

20. State-wise comparison there was no significant difference exists between the satisfaction levels of respondents with respect to selected attributes of accommodation in both states as the average of all means of Meghalaya (3.72) is fractionally higher than average mean of Mizoram (3.49).
21. State-wise comparison showed that the respondents were more satisfied with the attributes of tourism attractions in Meghalaya than that of Mizoram as the average of all means of Meghalaya (3.75) is higher than the score of Mizoram (3.49).
22. State-wise comparison showed that the respondents were more satisfied with the attributes of tourism services in Meghalaya (3.65) than that of Mizoram (3.40). The comparative analysis revealed that pricing on tourism product/services in Meghalaya (3.42) was more affordable than that of Mizoram (3.35).
23. 53% of the respondents in Meghalaya had planned to visit other states along with the present trip to the state, while 47% of the respondents had no plan to visit other states. In Mizoram, 62% of the respondents had holiday package combination with other states, while 38% of the respondents planned only to visit Mizoram.
24. 97% of the respondents in Meghalaya and 90% in Mizoram indicated that they will recommend others about the select states as tourism destinations. 3% of the respondents in Meghalaya and 9% in Mizoram didn't have definite opinion on this.
25. In Meghalaya, 54% of the respondents had revisit intentions in distance future, 30% in near future, while 16% didn't disclose their revisit intention. In Mizoram, 51% of the respondents had revisit intention in distant future, 35% in near future, while 12% didn't disclose their intention. 2% of the respondents in Mizoram indicated no revisit intention.
26. 65% of the respondents in Meghalaya were satisfied and 14% of the respondents were highly satisfied with their trip as compared to expectation. One-fifth of the respondents expressed the trip experience was at par with expectation. In Mizoram, 60% of the respondents felt the trip was quite satisfactory compared to expectation. 32% of the respondents indicated that the trip experience was as expected.

Meanwhile, 8% of the respondents expressed dissatisfaction over their trips to Mizoram.

27. Among the various reasons for dissatisfaction with the trip to select states, respondents in Meghalaya rated *accessibility, sanitation facilities, communication, internal transport at reasonable rates* and *food problems* first, second, third, fourth and fifth respectively. Among the respondents in Mizoram rated *accessibility, communication, food problems, ATM & credit card facilities, internet, etc.* and *internal transport at reasonable rates* as the main reasons for dissatisfaction with their trip to the state.

Objective – 3

To study the seven element elements of marketing strategy (product, price, place, promotion, people, process and physical evidence) being followed by the tourism marketers, viz., the government, tour operators and hoteliers in select states.

1. Meghalaya is a land of immense natural beauty and cultural heritage that provides ample scope to attract tourists. The hills, valleys, forests and biodiversity, rivers and lakes are the basic tourism products of Meghalaya. Mizoram has the potentiality to offer great opportunities to explore the nature at its best. The exotic flora and fauna, the bamboo forests and the wildlife, and the gurgling waterfalls call all nature enthusiasts to visit Mizoram.
2. Despite having a competitive advantage of its natural beauty and exquisiteness, tourism services in the select states were observed costlier than tourism destinations of other parts of India. It was found that mainland India offers tourism services at a lower price because of its accessibility and connectivity. Majority of the respondents in the select states were not satisfied with the cost effectiveness of transportation. The costs for internal transportation to the promising tourism destinations were high.
3. In terms of the pricing of accommodation, the respondents felt that the costs were quite reasonable. They also indicated the prices related to foods and drinks and also shopping in both the select states were moderate and fair. At the same time, majority of the respondents felt that the costs of their trips were rational. Unlike the travel

costs in other states of mainland India, the travel costs of these two states are relatively high.

4. In the select states, concerned tourism departments and tourism development corporations are the promoters of all the tourism related programmes. There are around 12 tour operators and 15 travel agents operating the tourism activities in Meghalaya. In Mizoram, there are four government-recognized and nine other private tour operators only that operate the itinerary system of tourism in the state. Besides many others, the tourist guide services are limited and almost absent in Mizoram as compared to counterparts.
5. In Meghalaya, tourism offices and information centres have been established in each and every districts of the state. Apart from that, tourist information centres have also been established at Meghalaya Houses in New Delhi, Kolkata and Guwahati. These information centres act as agents in disseminating tourism information about the state through printed booklets, brochures, etc.
6. As per as transportation is concerned, there is absence of railways in the select states and the road that connect these states with rest of India are worse, especially the case is with Mizoram. There is absence of big-size and day and night operative airport in these states. Although both these states are having an airport each, sometimes, cancellation of flights are common due to low visibility and uncertain weather conditions.
7. The present level of promotional and publicity programmes initiated by the select states are not much effective to attract tourists in a viable numbers round the year so as to sustain the sectoral economy. There is no uniform promotion strategy; instead a combination of various promotional methods is used. Although, the service of ICT has been utilized for market promotion, the official website of the tourism departments of the select states are not up to required level so as to give the detailed information of their state tourism resources. It was observed that tourism in Northeast India suffers due to a very low level of awareness, not only internationally but also amongst the domestic tourists.

8. The lives of the local people of Meghalaya replete with numerous ceremonies and traditional fiestas. These festivals provide a glimpse of the state's lively collection of woven, decorative, dyed and colourful silk and cotton, jewellery etc. The people of Mizoram are by nature cheerful and hospitable to visitors. They are rich in culture with its own unique traditions and customs of different hues intermingle freely to constitute a homogeneous blend.
9. Among the states of India, Meghalaya and Mizoram boast high literacy rates. Hence, with the development of tourism industry the governments of these states can exploit this resource to the fullest, to reduce unemployment problem of educated youths. Like most of the other states of Northeast India, people of the select states lack entrepreneurship skills, especially in tourism sector. Entrepreneurship as a career is mostly chosen by chance or under some compulsion, but not by choice.
10. Though the select states have enormous potential in tourism development, the respective governments could not able to enhance it due to various factors. The present level of promotional and publicity programmes initiated are not much effective to attract tourists in a viable numbers.
11. The select states are rich in varied tourism attractions. But, due to lack of proper tourism circuits in NEI these tourism products do not get well marketed. Only a handful tour operators/travel agent organise operating the tourism activities in these states. In entering Mizoram, domestic tourists need to get ILP. This creates a psychic burden for the prospective tourists who want to visit the state. Physical connectivity like road and transportation, which is considered to be the important factors in the development of any region, is quite bad particularly in Mizoram. There is short of all weather roads leading to the tourism attractions of the state.
12. Nature has bestowed the two select states with abundance of tourism resources which are yet to be fully tapped. The two states have ample scope to promote various fields of tourism such as adventure tourism, wildlife tourism and particularly ecotourism.

13. Railways connectivity to these states is virtually absent. The two select states have one airport each, however with less air traffic. Hence, in the absence of better air connectivity, tourists are forced to travel long distances by roads, which is laborious and tiresome.
14. There is no dearth of accommodation for tourists in the select states, particularly in Shillong and Aizawl. However, tourists often face difficulty in finding out standards lodges/hotels near the vicinity of tourism destination, especially if they are far from capital-region areas. Besides, physical appearance of the hotel and its cleanliness, quality of food, services and ambience provided, efficiency of the staff are a matter of concern in the accommodation sector of these states.
15. Telecommunication and internet services in Mizoram are also comparatively worse than that of Meghalaya, and in certain tourism destinations it is not uncommon to experience weak network signal. There is absence of certain basic tourism amenities at some tourist spots like restrooms, cafeterias, etc. Other services like communication networks like internet connectivity, well connected roads, hygienic eateries and hotels, instant banking and exchange facilities, etc. needs upgradation with national standards.

Hypothesis Testing

The following hypotheses have been formulated and studied in the study. The broad hypotheses have been split into certain specific hypotheses based on each of select demographic factors.

1. There is no significant association between monthly family income of the respondents and their select demographic profile.

H₀₁: There is no significant association between monthly family income of the respondents and their age. *(The null hypothesis (H₀) is rejected).*

H₀₂: There is no significant association between monthly family income of the respondents and their gender. *(The null hypothesis (H₀) is accepted).*

H₀₃: There is no significant association between monthly family income of the respondents and their occupation. *(The null hypothesis (H₀) is rejected).*

H₀₄: There is no significant association between monthly family income of the respondents and their educational qualification. *(The null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected).*

2. *There is no significant association between nature of travel companions of the respondents and their select demographic profile.*

H₀₅: There is no significant association between nature of travel companions and age of the respondents. *(The null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected).*

H₀₆: There is no significant association between nature of travel companions and marital status of the respondents. *(The null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected).*

H₀₇: There is no significant association between travel nature of companions and gender of the respondents. *(The null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected).*

H₀₈: There is no significant association between nature of travel companions and family size of the respondents. *(The null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted).*

3. *There is no significant association between number of companions of the respondents and their select demographic profile.*

H₀₉: There is no significant association between number of travel companions and age of the respondents. *(The null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted).*

H₀₁₀: There is no significant association between number of travel companions and marital status of the respondents. *(The null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted).*

H₀₁₁: There is no significant association between number of travel companions and gender of the respondents. *(The null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted).*

H₀₁₂: There is no significant association between number of travel companions and family size of the respondents. *(The null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted).*

4. *There is no significant association between frequency of tours of the respondents and their select demographic profile.*

H₀₁₃: There is no significant association between frequency of tours of the respondents and their age. *(The null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected).*

H₀₁₄: There is no significant association between frequency of tours of the respondents and their marital status. *(The null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted).*

H₀₁₅: There is no significant association between frequency of tours of the respondents and their gender. *(The null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted).*

H₀₁₆: There is no significant association between frequency of tours of the respondents and their family size. *(The null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected).*

H₀₁₇: There is no significant association between frequency of tours of the respondents and their monthly family income. *(The null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected).*

5. *There is no significant association between length of stay of the respondents and their select demographic profile.*

H₀₁₈: There is no significant association between length of stay of the respondents and their age. *(The null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted).*

H₀₁₉: There is no significant association between length of stay of the respondents and their marital status. *(The null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted).*

H₀₂₀: There is no significant association between length of stay of the respondents and their gender. *(The null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted).*

H₀₂₁: There is no significant association between length of stay of the respondents and their monthly family income. *(The null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected).*

H₀₂₂: There is no significant association between length of stay of the respondents and the nature of their travel companion. *(The null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected).*

6. *There is no significant difference between levels of satisfaction of the respondents of two select states regarding select attributes of accommodation.*

H₀₂₃: There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of the two select states regarding physical appearance of hotel. *(The null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted).*

H₀₂₄: There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of the two select states regarding cleanliness of hotel rooms. *(The null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted).*

H₀₂₅: There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of the two select states regarding quality of food. *(The null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted).*

- H₀₂₆: There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of the two select states regarding availability of desired food. *(The null hypothesis (H₀) is accepted).*
- H₀₂₇: There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of the two select states regarding availability of local dishes. *(The null hypothesis (H₀) is rejected).*
- H₀₂₈: There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of the two select states regarding location of the hotel. *(The null hypothesis (H₀) is accepted).*
- H₀₂₉: There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of the two select states regarding security at hotel. *(The null hypothesis (H₀) is accepted).*
- H₀₃₀: There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of the two select states regarding efficiency of the staff. *(The null hypothesis (H₀) is accepted).*
- H₀₃₁: There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of the two select states regarding overall hospitality of the staff. *(The null hypothesis (H₀) is accepted).*
7. *There is no significant difference between levels of satisfaction of the respondents of two select states regarding select attributes of tourism attractions.*
- H₀₃₂: There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of the two select states regarding culture/events/festivals. *(The null hypothesis (H₀) is accepted).*
- H₀₃₃: There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of the two select states regarding historical remains/legends. *(The null hypothesis (H₀) is rejected).*
- H₀₃₄: There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of the two select states regarding scenic nature. *(The null hypothesis (H₀) is accepted).*

- H₀₃₅: There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of the two select states regarding night life. *(The null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected).*
- H₀₃₆: There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of the two select states regarding entertainment. *(The null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected).*
- H₀₃₇: There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of the two select states regarding city tour (sightseeing). *(The null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected).*
- H₀₃₈: There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of the two select states regarding adventure/tourism sports, etc. *(The null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected).*
- H₀₃₉: There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of the two select states regarding cleanliness of tourism attractions. *(The null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected).*
8. *There is no significant difference between levels of satisfaction of the respondents of two select states regarding select attributes of tourism services.*
- H₀₄₀: There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of the two select states regarding border services. *(The null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected).*
- H₀₄₁: There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of the two select states regarding transportation services. *(The null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected).*
- H₀₄₂: There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of the two select states regarding road conditions. *(The null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected).*
- H₀₄₃: There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of the two select states regarding telecommunication and internet services. *(The null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected).*

- H₀₄₄: There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of the two select states regarding restaurants. *(The null hypothesis (H₀) is accepted).*
- H₀₄₅: There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of the two select states regarding hospitality of local people. *(The null hypothesis (H₀) is accepted).*
- H₀₄₆: There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of the two select states regarding shopping. *(The null hypothesis (H₀) is accepted).*
- H₀₄₇: There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of the two select states regarding hygiene and sanitation. *(The null hypothesis (H₀) is rejected).*
- H₀₄₈: There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of the two select states regarding facilities offered at tourist centres. *(The null hypothesis (H₀) is rejected).*
- H₀₄₉: There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of the two select states regarding other tourism services like banking, post office, etc. *(The null hypothesis (H₀) is rejected).*
9. *There is no significant difference between levels of satisfaction of the respondents of two select states regarding select attributes of tourism pricing.*
- H₀₅₀: There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of the two select states regarding prices of local transportation. *(The null hypothesis (H₀) is rejected).*
- H₀₅₁: There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of the two select states regarding prices of accommodation. *(The null hypothesis (H₀) is accepted).*
- H₀₅₂: There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of the two select states regarding prices of food and drink. *(The null hypothesis (H₀) is accepted).*

H₀₅₃: There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of the two select states regarding prices of shopping. *(The null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted).*

H₀₅₄: There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of the two select states regarding overall price of the trip. *(The null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted).*

10. *There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of two select states regarding their perception of respective state as tourism destination vis-à-vis other states they have visited so far based on select attributes.*

H₀₅₅: There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of two select states regarding their perception of respective state as tourism destination vis-à-vis other states they have visited so far based on infrastructure. *(The null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected).*

H₀₅₆: There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of two select states regarding their perception of respective state as tourism destination vis-à-vis other states they have visited so far based on accommodation. *(The null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted).*

H₀₅₇: There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of two select states regarding their perception of respective state as tourism destination vis-à-vis other states they have visited so far based on availability of tourism facilities such as restrooms, restaurants etc, at tourist spots. *(The null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected).*

H₀₅₈: There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of two select states regarding their perception of respective state as tourism destination vis-à-vis other states they have visited so far based on maintenance of tourist spots. *(The null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected).*

H₀₅₉: There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of two select states regarding their perception of respective state as

tourism destination vis-à-vis other states they have visited so far based on overall rating as tourism destination. *(The null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted).*

11. *There is no significant association between the revisit intention of the respondents and their select demographic profile.*

H₀₆₀: There is no significant association between revisit intention of the respondents and their age. *(The null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected).*

H₀₆₁: There is no significant association between revisit intention of the respondents and their marital status. *(The null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted).*

H₀₆₂: There is no significant association between revisit intention of the respondents and their gender. *(The null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted).*

H₀₆₃: There is no significant association between revisit intention of the respondents and their monthly family income. *(The null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted).*

12. *There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of two select states regarding overall experience of the trip against expectation.*

H₀₆₄: There is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of the respondents of two select states regarding overall experience of the trip against expectation. *(The null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected).*

6.2 Suggestions

The suggestions which have been sought from the respondents to improve the tourism industry in the select states of Meghalaya and Mizoram have been highlighted in Chapter 4. However, based on observations and findings of the present study, the researcher put forward some suggestions for improving and marketing the tourism sector in Northeast India in general and in the select states in particular. They are:

Place tourism as a top priority industry

India, with her rich cultural heritage, ancient monuments, world famous temples, architectural masterpieces, wild animal sanctuaries and scenic spots, holds a great attraction for the tourists. In recent years, the government of India has taken concerted efforts to develop and promote this foreign exchange earning industry in a big way. In 2017, over 10 million tourists visited India and spent over USD 27 billion, thus making

India one of the major global tourism destinations. A World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) report shows that in 2016, tourism has contributed nearly Rs. 9000 billion to the Indian GDP. The trend of tourism contribution towards Indian GDP shows a positive growth since the beginning of the millennium. The total contribution of tourism industry to employment generation, including jobs indirectly supported by the industry, was 8.7% of total employment which was a total of 3,73,15,000 jobs. In fact, the number of foreign tourist arrivals (FTAs) got increased from just 2.5 million in 2001 to 10 million in 2017.

As noted, tourism industry is one of the few industries in Northeast India that has a lot of potential to develop. With more than 200 odd ethnic groups with as many dialects makes Northeast India a culturally diverse region. It is rich in biological diversity and contains more than one-third of the country's total biodiversity. Apart from this, the region also has a large number of historical and religious sites of great significance. Its close proximity to the South-East Asian tourism hub is another added advantage.

Despite all these, the region still remains the least visited. Due to socio-political and geographical reasons, the entire NEI has remained neglected and backward from the development point of view. In spite of having very high tourism potential, economic benefits from tourism sector are yet to be realised in the region even today. The NEI doesn't get its *pro rata* share of the total India's receipts for tourism. It was observed in 2017, the top 10 states/UTs combined had received a massive 87.6% and 83.6% of all India's share of DTVs and FTVs respectively. However, in both cases, the share of NEI accounts for less than 1% of India's total. A huge chunk of tourism in the region comprise of domestic tourists only. These arrivals have seen a steady rise during the last few years. While, foreign tourist arrivals also grown, the numbers are still very small, with only 1.37 lakh of foreign tourists visiting the region in 2016. A few states viz. Assam and Sikkim, Tripura and Meghalaya have taken strides in developing tourism, and also attracted the lion's share of tourist visits in the region while states like Nagaland and Mizoram attracted less than one lakh tourists (domestic and foreign

combined). Although we may conclude that the tourism industry in NEI is developing, but it is not as per the expectation as supposed to be; and it also varies with states. Thus, the tourism development of NEI needs to be targeted via a regional approach rather than an individual state approach. Considering the abundance of untapped tourism resources, tourism should be accorded as a top priority industry by governments of all the states of NEI as this industry has the potential to create tremendous employment opportunities in the region.

Equal importance to domestic as well as international tourism

It was observed that among all the respondents combined in Meghalaya and Mizoram, only 7% of them were of foreign origins. It shows that Northeast India fails to attract foreign tourist visits (FTVs) compared to domestic tourist visits (DTV). In fact, a *Ministry of Tourism* report shows that, in 2016, there were only 1,37,817 FTVs against 77,71,376 DTVs in the region.

The NEI is a resource rich and strategically positioned region which shares an international boundary of about 5500 km with India's neighbours. The region has a great potential to emerge as a tourism hub of India but due to poor road and air connectivity in the region – both within the region and to the places outside NEI makes it difficult for outside tourists to reach out the tourism destinations in NEI.

The region holds great significance in terms of India's connectivity and infrastructural ventures with Southeast and East Asian nations. It has a strong cultural and historical linkage with the ASEAN nations, which could be exploited to forge economic cooperation. In order to attract more foreign tourists, the government should enhance connectivity of the region with the outside world, particularly with ASEAN nations in order to open up a new world of opportunities for shared economic growth. Hence, the region now needs to give equal importance to international tourism as foreign tourists are more inclined to spend more FEEs compared to domestic tourists.

Infrastructure development

The status of the basic tourism infrastructure in NEI is much below the national standards. There are many gaps in tourism infrastructure in the region. Over the years

attempts have been made by various tourism organizations for improving tourism infrastructure in the region in the areas of transport, communication, power, water supply, etc. but quantum is quite limited. The process of infrastructure development has been rather slow in the region for many reasons. Amongst them, the rugged topography of hilly and mountainous terrains (about 70%) of NEI covering most of the states including Meghalaya and Mizoram is one that hampers the rapid growth of infrastructure development. While we talk of the accessibility of the region, the partition of Indian Union in 1947 has geographically isolated the region and, hence, it has been the reason for severe connectivity constraints in the region till date.

Lack of proper tourism infrastructures are the major impediment of tourism sector in the select states. Railways connectivity to these states is virtually absent. The two select states have one airport each, however with less air traffic. Due to rugged terrain and inclement weather conditions, on certain occasion, it becomes difficult for big flights like Air India to make landing. Due to its hilly and mountainous nature, roads which are now the main form of connectivity between states and destinations are also pathetic, particularly in Mizoram and are found in varying grades. The respondents in Mizoram were observed to be quite dissatisfied with the roads' conditions of the state to which they assigned 2.89 as mean. Further, landslides due to heavy rainfalls during monsoon create severe problems and blockades of connectivity and proper transportation. This will require a total revolutionary thinking to upgrade the connectivity of the select states at regular intervals.

Barring few destinations, accommodation facilities are also a big challenge in terms of availability and quality. Besides, physical appearance of the hotel and its cleanliness, quality of food, services and ambience provided, efficiency of the staff are a matter of concern in the accommodation sector of these states. Wayside amenity centres are non-existent in many tourism circuits. This is an area which majorly needs improvement, particularly in view of the long travelling time with the states and sparse population in many of the tourism destinations. Telecommunication and internet services in Mizoram are also comparatively worse than that of Meghalaya, and in certain tourism

destinations it is not uncommon to experience weak network signal. With *facilities offered at tourist centres*, (mean = 2.74), majority of the respondents were found to be discontented in Mizoram. Hence, communication networks such as internet connectivity, well-connected roads, hygienic eateries and hotels, instant banking and money exchange facilities, etc. need to be put in place and upgraded with national standards.

Introduction of package tours by encouraging more tour operators/travel agents

Travel agents and tour operators play an important role in the promotion of destination as well as in the destination selection process. Their recommendations can strongly influence client's satisfaction and the success of tourist businesses, attractions and destinations. They represent a key interface in the tourism marketing system. In addition, they act as booking agents for holidays and travels and disseminate information on such services.

In the present study, 87.5% of the respondents indicated that they had not used any type of tour package organised by tour operators/travel agents while travelling to the select states. State-wise analysis shows that 17% of the respondents in Meghalaya have used tour package while only 8% of the respondents in Mizoram have used it. There is a dearth of trained manpower in the tourism sector in the select states to cater to needs of both the domestic and foreign tourists. It was observed that there are around 12 tour operators and 15 travel agents operating the tourism activities in Meghalaya. However, in Mizoram, only two government-recognized and nine other private tour operators organize tour itinerary, that too, within the state only. The number of tour operators and travel agents is inadequate in the state, so the efforts should be made to ensure their presence in all parts of the select states and the government must ensure that the travel agencies follow the principles of honesty, fairness and politeness in their dealings with the tourists.

Apart from few states, there is inadequacy of tourism circuits, particularly in Mizoram. It was observed that tourism circuits of Meghalaya are relatively advanced than that of Mizoram. Shillong, the state's capital forms an integral part of the most visited tourism circuits (other than Sikkim circuit) of NEI. In Mizoram, there are no

specific inter/intra-state tourism circuits. Intra-state circuits may also not be so required considering the fact that this is a small state in terms of spread. Although the select states are rich in varied tourism attractions, but due to lack of good tourism circuits in NEI these tourism products do not get well marketed. Hence, the state government should co-ordinate with the governments of other states to take advantage of package tours on reciprocal basis.

Diversification of tourism products

Findings from the tourist survey shows that the main purpose of visits of majority of the respondents was *vacation/leisure*, followed by *culture/festivals*, and *adventure/ecotourism*. In general, the select states have high scope to develop these tourism products. Hence, effective marketing strategies should be in place by having in-depth knowledge about the nature of the prospective tourists, their preferences on products and the purpose of visits.

Market segmentation is a basic principle in today's marketing strategies. In order to meet wants of different segments of tourists the select states should focus on niche segments. The two select states are situated in the transitional region of tropical and temperate environment, bestowed with hills having steep slopes, deep valleys, rivers, natural lakes, and plains etc., thus creating varied ecosystems in a relatively small region. In addition to the existing offerings which revolve around the eco-tourism theme, there is a lot to be explored in terms of new tourism offerings such as adventure tourism, cultural and heritage tourism, nature and wildlife tourism and the strategic locations of these two states can also boost international border tourism.

The festivals and various dance forms are keys to promoting the rich cultural heritage of these states. As Meghalaya and Mizoram are highly concentrated with tribal populations, the cultural tours could combine with tribal tourism as these states are ideally placed for tribal tourism with their rich tribal culture and distinct identities. The cultural resources such as folk dances, festivals, local cuisines, ethnic rituals and traditions should be promoted through involvement of community based organizations and civil societies. Attempt should be made to revive traditional handicrafts, rural

artisans and facilities should be ensured for setting up crafts bazaar to enhance rural livelihood. Rural tourism along with homestay concept should be developed as it is also a very good way of revenue mobilization among the locals and that too of remote areas. The people who are in the home stay programme should be given proper training so that they can use their resources to its maximum and in turn can earn maximum.

Further, the two states have much to offer for the active adventure segment including river rafting among others, trekking of various grades and levels, rock climbing, hang gliding etc. This can be branded as another unique selling proposition in addition to the ecotourism theme. There is a need to harness the potential for adventure tourism across the sub-regions through adequate focus in an integrated Northeast Tourism Policy.

Promote international border tourism

As stated, NEI is strategically positioned at the crossroad of ASEAN countries which can be exploited to forge economic cooperation. The region shares an international border with five sovereign nations, viz. Bhutan, Bangladesh, China, Nepal and Myanmar. The region has tremendous growth opportunities as the rich resource endowment of the region provides an ideal setting for developing a major trade hub dealing with India's neighbours especially with ASEAN countries.

The state of Meghalaya is bounded by the border of Bangladesh in the south while Mizoram has international borders with Myanmar and Bangladesh in the east and west respectively. The former has some operational and non-operational cross-border trade stations, called land custom stations (LCS) connecting with Bangladesh, while the latter has LCS with Bangladesh and Myanmar. Hence, it is suggested that the non-operational LCS should be made functional throughout the year to promote not only cross-border trade but also to open up international border tourism. Direct air connectivity should also be established with the neighbouring countries especially with Bangladesh and Myanmar as these two countries form a crucial gateway to the ASEAN countries.

Improve the quality of services to increase length of stay of the tourists

Majority of the respondents (88.5%) were observed to have stayed in the select states for less than 10 days and 6% of the respondents have stayed for 11-15 days. The reason for short duration of stay may be lack of awareness among the respondents with regard to the potential and popularity of tourism destinations in these states. The respondents were found to be dissatisfied with the border services in Mizoram, perhaps due to the issue of RAP and ILP (mean = 2.78). With respect to the night life, the respondents also indicated discontentment, particularly in Mizoram (mean = 2.98). At the same time, respondents indicated maintenance of tourist spots and the facilities provided therein were not up to the mark. Therefore, in this regard, efforts should be made to make more avenues of entertainments by organizing local level cultural festivals, art forms, etc., with a view to retain such tourists at the tourist destinations for a fairly long period of time. At the same time, beautification along with cleanliness and hygiene at tourism destinations should be ensured. Moreover, proper sanitation and drinking water facility should also be provided. The state governments must initiate efforts to improve the condition of roads, accessibility, road side amenities, safety and security to tourists, environmental protection, recreation and entertainment to tourists and so on.

It can be noted that fortune of a tourism industry not only depends on the number of tourist visits in the region, but also with the length of stay and satisfaction derived out of their tourism experience. Nowadays, tourists always look for authentic travel experiences, personalized approach to their needs and the luxury of traveling carefree. A contented and fulfilled tourist would always have the intention to revisit the place they visit and will also share his positive feelings to others through a word-of-mouth. Hence, it is quite necessary for the tourism stakeholders to maintain and upgrade the products and services being made available in the tourism attractions.

Positioning on a better image

Nature has always played a major role in determining the lifestyle of the people in NEI. The topography of the region, varied flora and fauna, the history of the people

and their rich heritage of ancient traditions and lifestyles, the festivals and crafts make NEI a holiday wonderland. Relatively a small area, the region is an unexplored world of adventure, bordering with five sovereign countries and close proximity to Southeast Asia makes it a truly potential economic goldmine and a treasure house for tourism development. All these factors could play an important role in branding NEI a distinct and unique tourism destination. However, despite the availability of these resources, the region remains the least visited compared to other parts of the country.

There is a general perception that Northeast India is known for frequent strikes, bandhs and law and order problems. This may be the prime reason behind less tourist inflow in the region, particularly female tourists. In the present study, it was observed that female respondents comprised of only 29.5% of all the respondents in Meghalaya and Mizoram. This figure gives us a hint that the select states have not been able to attract a good number of female visitors in spite of the perceived gender equality in the region. The insurgency and other problems relating to NEI are highlighted more than the positive aspects. The threat of insurgents and veiled exaggeration of insurgent problem by the national media also discourage prospective tourists coming to the region. The marketers, therefore, need to address this issue while marketing and promoting the tourism destinations.

To minimize the negative perceptions about the region the tourists should be provided information regarding the history, culture, heritage of the region. They should be made aware with the life style of the locals their traditions and system so that they can respect that and not hurt the local sentiments. Proper promotional channels have to be adopted to enlighten people that the law and order situation of NEI is as normal as in other parts of India, whereas this *paradise unexplored* is begging to be discovered afresh. Further, the tourism marketers need to address the negative perceptions of the people in general about different tourism destinations of the region through proper brand positioning. This would further need to be supported by an appropriately designed advertising campaign for international and domestic markets with constant support of the other elements of promotion mix.

Create public awareness about benefits of tourism

The local people of the select states are hospitable and friendly to the visitors. The tourist survey also reveals that *hospitality of the local people* was the most satisfactory attribute of tourism services in both states (Meghalaya, mean = 3.87; Mizoram, mean = 4.01). It is also revealed that local people played important roles in helping tourists in visiting tourism destinations in the select states. Hence, community participation in tourism shall play a vital role in bringing the growth of tourism industry as well as bringing communal harmony in these states.

The development of a tourism industry largely depends upon the cooperation and consciousness of the people in the region since tourists are interested not only in exploring the beauty and culture of the region but also to interact with the local people. A contented host community is the strongest base for a thriving tourism industry. Thus, involvement of local people should be emphasized in developing new tourism products and they need to be informed and consulted on important issues at all stages of development and included in the decision-making process of project design and implementation. This gives an opportunity to local people to become educated about the benefits of the tourism development and will help increasing their support.

Almost in all the states of NEI, local people have less interest in entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurship as a career is mostly chosen by chance or under some compulsion, but not by choice (Singha and Sahoo, 2003). Hence, people of NEI should be made aware of the importance of entrepreneurship, especially in tourism. They should be educated about the tourism potential of their land and its benefits. In this regard, governments should impart trainings/workshops on tourism benefits to local communities to exploit untapped tourism resources for employment generation. Firstly, the trainings shall be conducted for understanding the basic concepts of tourism. Secondly, the training shall include the study for identification of potential tourism products, their market demands and the design requirements for markets.

Looking for more funding avenues

Fund is the primary prerequisite for the development and intensification of any industry including tourism. The growth of tourism industry mainly depends on attractive tourist destinations, facilities at tourist places, and infrastructure facilities. This demands huge investment and managerial capability. In order to compete with the tourism oriented states in the country the two state governments of Meghalaya and Mizoram should enhance the marketing budgets.

The tourism departments of these states must tap various funding avenues in a process to make the tourism activities economically feasible and sustainable. Various government departments and organisations provide specialise funding for specific projects related to their activities and tourism sector being a versatile sector could tap these resources. The two tourism departments should make special efforts to coordinate with various departments of state or central government for specific projects, which combine the interests of both. These departments are: environment and forests, rural development, agriculture, tribal development, education, science and technology, heritage conservation, adventure sports, information technology, etc. Besides, there may be many national and international organisations which are interested in long term ecological research and appropriate development in the region.

Encourage private sector involvement in tourism projects

Realising the importance of tourism development as a support to cultural and socio-economic development of the state, the two state governments of Meghalaya and Mizoram have indentified the thrust areas for creation of basic infrastructure and amenities required for tourists. Till date, implementation of tourism related projects have been done mainly through the assistance provided by the central government.

The entire region of NEI lacks adequate funds for tourism development as this landlocked region can be considered as the least economically developed region of the country due to its badly managed economy, resulting in low GSDPs of the states and low per capita income. Hence, it has to depend heavily on the central government funding. Now, the time has come for the state governments of the region including

Meghalaya and Mizoram to change its strategy and work on principle of Public Private Partnership (PPP) at a larger scale. It is the high time to go for privatization of services. There should be more partnership between public and private sector for development of tourism infrastructure and delivery of services. The privatisation of various tourism facilities with different strategies will make the projects sustainable in the long run.

PPP refers to a long-term contractual partnership between the public and private sector agencies, specifically targeted towards financing, designing, implementing and operating infrastructure facilities and services. It is a strategy to provide affordable infrastructure that meets development needs of an area. In India's economic growth process, public-private mode of infrastructure financing has already started showing results in the states of Punjab, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka and West Bengal. However, NEI is still far behind in implementation of this mode (TCS, 2010). Therefore, involvement of private sector is an area of reform the state governments of Meghalaya and Mizoram need to urgently explore for developing, financing and management of tourism infrastructure projects. This will not only result in additional resources for the tourism sector but will also provide for better quality of infrastructure and more effective management.

Adoption of ICT in tourism services

In today's world, information and communication technology (ICT) is becoming embedded in every walk of life and tourism sector is no different. This new development has offered opportunities for improving the delivery of different services. In tourism, what is being sold is primarily information about various facilities to be used. The tourists feel most comfortable if efficient information service is available at ease. The tourism sector is a very competitive sector and could be successful only through efficiency and prompt service.

As NEI is geographically isolated from mainland India, it will be of tremendous advantage for the region to make use of these modern facilities for effective and efficient communication and service. At present, although the service of ICT has been utilized for market promotion, the official website of the tourism departments of the select states of

Meghalaya and Mizoram are not up to required level so as to give the detailed information about various tourism resources. In fact, tourist survey also reveals that only a few number of respondents have utilized the services of ICT (internet, tourism websites, televisions, etc.) while organising trips to the select states. Majority of the respondents indicated that a word-of-mouth generated through *friends/relatives* has been the main source of information in influencing their travel to select states. Hence, in order to make effective use of the resources for overseas publicity, the application of ICT needs to be upgraded to another level. The governments of the select states should make basic tourism services available online, e.g. online reservation of hotels, travel agencies and destinations, ticket bookings, regional information network, etc. Updated and extremely attractive websites with the detailed information about the overall tourism potential along with appealing photographs, video clips, interactive TVs virtual tour and marketing enhancing promotional videos should be linked judiciously.

Development of human resources for tourism growth

Tourism industry is a highly labour intensive service industry and is a valuable source of employment. It employs large number of people and provides a wide range of jobs which extend from the unskilled to the highly skilled. As tourism is a service industry where a person comes in contact with a person, the human resource development is essential as the success of the service depends largely on the behavioural and technical skills of the persons.

Tourism industry requires diverse kinds of skilled and trained personnel for both government and private establishments. In tourism sector of both states, skilled and trained personnel are very less. So, the governments of the two states should focus on to develop strong human resources. It was observed that both the select states lack adequate number of trained tour guides, particularly in Mizoram where services of tour guide are very limited. In accommodation sector of both states, majority of the respondents were found neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with *hospitality and efficiency of hotel staff*. Thus, these two states have scope to improve the quality of services provided in accommodation. Considering these aspects, institutions providing

professional education in the field of tourism should be established, particularly in Mizoram. Various short term courses should be started at the college and university levels to equip the students to involve in tourism related activities like tourist guidance, development of tourism websites, hospitality management, etc. Further, human resource development programmes need to be undertaken particularly to train and develop the tour guides, travel agents, drivers, and for people manning tourist places on a priority basis. It is necessary for governments of the two select states to encourage more tour operators/travel agencies to come up with new ventures with trained and qualified guides. At the same time, trainings on tourism and hospitality should be imparted to all the stakeholders who are directly involved in the tourism sector of these states.

Integrated Northeast tourism policy

Northeast India is an experience is the sum total of breathtaking and scenic hills and waterfalls, historical monuments and sites, religious places of worship and mythological associations, diverse flora and fauna, tea estates and cultural richness. As there are lots of tourist destinations within the region and nearby, potential of developing circuits within and with the region needs to be explored. This would help in attracting more tourists to the region and increasing their duration of stay. Development of an integrated Northeast Tourism Policy with better on-ground coordination (road maintenance, civil works and tourism infrastructure) is required for wholesome development of destinations especially in unexplored stretches of the region and more equitable distribution of tourist visits across the region (Yes Bank, 2014).

There is no organizational setup that can harmonise action for projecting tourism in NEI as a whole. Prospective tourists who wish to visit NEI find it exasperating to draw up an integrated schedule for the whole region. There is too much of dependence on the government and too little incentive for the private sector to enable them to play an effective role. If tourism in NEI has to grow, a common platform of all the states, involving the government and non-governmental agencies, should be immediately formulated. A combined vision for tourism in the region is arguably the need of the hour now. The integrated tourism policy for the entire NEI could be formulated based on the

concept of ecotourism with very wide parameters. The ecotourism should not just mean nature tourism, but also should consider environmental/heritage conservation and education as a core feature.

Developing sustainable tourism environment

The Northeast India, being at the confluence of three major bio-geographical realm of the world, is extremely rich in floral and faunal biodiversity with several endemic species (Joshi, 2011). The two select states of Meghalaya and Mizoram hold immense tourism potential, especially ecotourism due to their natural scenic beauty and rich bio-diversity. The two states have some of the thickest surviving forests in the country, constituting some important ecotourism systems in the country. However, there are certain environmental concerns being raised with the development of mass tourism in the region as it degrades the *Mother Nature* in many ways. Brohman (1996) also stressed that tourism creates pressure on natural habitats through destruction of the surrounding environment and pollution to an area. The core problems associated with tourism are loss of control over local resources, low spread of positive effects outside the tourism enclaves, socio-economic disparity, fluctuating earnings, environmental damage and rising isolation among local populations leads to crime, overcrowding, poor infrastructures and pollution.

Hence, it is suggested that environmental impact of tourism needs to be assessed from time to time and steps to check adverse effects must be implemented whenever the need arises. Such timely intervention is must for maintaining the pristine natural environment of the select states. Sustainable tourism in its purest sense is an industry which attempts to make a low impact on the environment and local culture, while helping to generate income, employment, and the conservation of local ecosystems. Overall, to foster a sustainable tourism industry in NEI including the states of Meghalaya and Mizoram, some of the impending tasks required are to:

- formulate comprehensive policies and criteria for tourism development in the cultural and heritage sites, ecologically sensitive areas, and national parks;

- improve the existing transportation system for dispersing tourism activities to a greater geographical region;
- be concerned with the safeguarding of public health and safety;
- enhance the existing level of accommodation, health and safety network, and on-site facilities;
- educate the tourists (domestic or foreign) to be sensitive and respect local customs; and
- focus on community involvement in planning and managing tourism development.

Simplify entry restrictions in Mizoram

In entering Mizoram, domestic tourists need to get a permit, called Inner Line Permit (ILP), while foreign travellers need Restricted Area Permit (RAP). This Inner Line Permit was introduced by the British rulers for the eastern frontier areas of Bengal in order to safeguard and protect the indigenous tribes of the regions (Singh, 1994). This Inner-line regulation continues in the state of Mizoram even today. However, this entry restriction creates a psychic burden for the prospective tourists who want to visit the state. It acts as a speedbreaker in the acceleration of speedy development of tourism sector in the state. In fact, majority of the respondents in Mizoram indicated that they were quite dissatisfied with the border services of the states such as like passport issue, ILP etc. (mean = 2.78). Hence, with a view to raise tourist inflow and make the state more visitor-friendly, Mizoram government should work to simplify the procedure for application and issuance of ILP. The government should also introduce online facility for ILP to solve a lot of problems of the domestic tourists.

Formulation of strong marketing strategies

Tourism departments of Meghalaya and Mizoram adopt different marketing strategies. Participation in travel marts, trade shows and sales promotion are major methods of market promotion. However, there is no uniform promotion strategy; instead a combination of various promotional methods is used. The present level of marketing strategies is not much effective to attract tourists in a viable numbers round the year so

as to sustain the sectoral economy. In other words, tourism marketing needs to be vibrant in these states.

States like Meghalaya and Mizoram, which entered the tourism market only a few years ago, there is a crucial need for marketing research, in order to capture adequate information about various tourism market segments. This helps in understanding the attitudes of actual and prospective tourists and keeping up-to-date with their personal needs, wants and desires. Feedback from the tourists in the form of online and offline questionnaires should be served. In this regard, complete data base regarding tourist arrivals, stay, services engaged and view perceptions concerning to image and status of tourism resources, services, infrastructure and their management, should be properly maintained and analyzed for policy formulation and action plan. As stated, there is inadequate number of information centers in Mizoram. Hence, efforts should be made to start new tourist information centers at various destinations, at least one in every district to provide tourists with required information.

Tourism in NEI suffers due to a very low level of awareness, not only internationally but also among the domestic tourists. Hence, the promotion mix would be to increase the awareness of the tourist destinations in Northeast India with a specific unique selling theme. Further, the marketers need to address the negative perceptions of the people in general about different tourism destinations through proper brand positioning. In order to establish competitive advantage in tourism market, the tourism departments of the select states must have strategic marketing management processes with a three pronged approaches - the consumer oriented approach, the competitor oriented approach and the trade oriented approach. The marketing strategy should be adapted as situations change and be constantly re-evaluated. All kinds of tourism organisations (tour operators, travel agents, etc) and general consensus of the local people need to be engaged in developing a well-designed marketing strategy. The marketing strategy should be integrated and coordinated with the financial plans, organisational plans, purchasing plans and other aspects of the organisation's total activity. Finally, it is suggested to appraise all the elements of tourism marketing mix

and public relations aspects of tourism authorities in the select states on a regular interval. This will enable to identify the deficiency in the performance and spells out the scope for further improvements.

6.3 Suggested areas for further research

To replicate the findings of the present study and enhance the continuous growth of the tourism sector in Northeast India, further researches on the topic are suggested as follows:

- Marketing of tourism destinations in India with reference to NEI.
- Marketing Northeast India as a tourism destination.
- A study on the development of tourism sector in NEI.
- Developing marketing strategies for tourism in NEI.
- Economic impact of tourism in NEI.
- Prospects and problems of tourism industry in NEI.
- A cost-benefit analysis of tourism development in NEI
- A comparative study of tourism marketing in Northeast India and a tourism-developed region of India.
- A study of the attitude of the local people towards tourism in NEI.

6.4 Conclusions

The tourism industry in India is one of the most profitable industries in the country and contributes substantially to foreign exchange earnings. With the concrete efforts like *Incredible India* and *Atithi Devo Bhava* campaigns, the National Tourism Policy, 2002 and other mega tourism projects the tourism industry in India is thriving ever than before. In 2017, India's rank in the world was 26th in international tourist arrivals and 13th in international tourism receipts. With the materialization and rigorous marketing of its rich tourism resources, the Indian tourism industry is expected to emerge as one of the global competitors in the near future.

Northeast India is a *paradise unexplored* that stands out for its ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious diversity not to be found in any other region in India. The region is rich in biological diversity and contains more than one-third of the country's total biodiversity. Despite having all such possible endowments to develop itself as a successful tourism destination, the region has remained a marginal entity in the national tourism scenario. NEI fails to attract even one percent of the national tourist traffic.

The present study provides useful information to all tourism stakeholders in understanding the buying behaviour of the tourists visiting the select states. The present study is intended to evaluate the marketing practices followed by tourism marketers in two select states of Meghalaya and Mizoram. The tourist survey reveals that respondents in Meghalaya were marginally more satisfied than that of the ones in Mizoram regarding selected attributes of tourism attractions and services. It indicates that Mizoram is lagging behind in terms of maintaining and upgrading its tourism attractions. Mizoram suffers from pathetic road conditions and lack of good facilities at tourist centres, border services like passport, visa and inner line permit (ILP) and transportation services. In other words, Meghalaya has been perceived a better performer than Mizoram in terms of presenting its tourism products to the tourists.

Although the two select states have adopted different marketing strategies to promote tourism in these states the actual marketing scenario has been far away from the aforesaid ideal state of affairs. In recent times, the governments of the select states have brought in a number of new tourism products in its fold, like ecotourism, rural tourism, wildlife tourism, adventure tourism, etc. and initiated many new policies for tourism development. But, in the absence of proper tourism circuit involving these two states, particularly Mizoram, the tourism products cannot be marketed to the level it should be. It was also observed that there are so many destinations in select states, particularly in Mizoram which are not given serious attention for development and remain neglected. However, if the existing destinations are properly maintained and explored the untapped destinations in a systematic way supported by requisite infrastructure, the select states

have considerable potential to be promoted as among the most sought after tourism destinations in India.

Tourism cannot be developed in a vacuum. It requires social and economic infrastructure for proper growth. More efforts are needed to promote tourism aggressively, so as to tap its potential. There is a need to develop awareness among the people by adopting wider strategies for publicity. With growing competition, the marketing organisations in tourism sector have no option, except to adopt strategic marketing. It would require the collaborative efforts of all stakeholders to realize the vision of a prosperous and dynamic Northeast India.

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2. Arunachal Ecotourism Policy, 2013
3. Tourism Policy of Assam (TPA), 2017
4. Manipur Tourism Policy, 2014
5. Meghalaya Tourism Policy, 2011
6. Mizoram Ecotourism Policy, 2017
7. Nagaland Tourism Policy, 2001
8. Sikkim Tourism Policy (STP), 2016
9. Tripura Ecotourism Policy (TEP), 2004
10. Tourism Development Policy for Meghalaya, 2010 (TDPM, 2010)
11. Tourism Development Plan for Arunachal Pradesh, 2010
12. 20 Years Perspective Tourism Plan, Market research Division, MoT.
 - Arunachal
 - Assam
 - Manipur
 - Meghalaya
 - Mizoram
 - Nagaland
 - Sikkim
 - Tripura

APPENDICES
QUESTIONNAIRE

Tourism Marketing in Northeast India:
A Comparative Study of Meghalaya and Mizoram

(A) PERSONAL PROFILE

1. Name :
2. Age (in Years) :
(a) Less than 20 (b) 21-35 (c) 35-50
(d) 51-65 (e) Above 65
3. Marital Status :
(a) Unmarried (b) Married (c) Divorced/Widowed
4. Nationality: Indian Foreign
 - In case of Indian , please mention your native State and Hometown:
State Hometown
 - In case of Foreign, please mention your nationality:
5. Sex : Male Female
6. Religion :
7. Number of members in the family:
(a) Up to 2 (b) 3-4 (c) 5-6 (d) Above 6
8. Occupation :
(a) Govt. Servant (b) Private Job (c) Business
(d) Self-Employed (e) Student (f) Retired
(g) Others, if any
9. Educational Qualification :
(a) Up to Matriculation (b) Intermediate (c) Graduate
(d) Post Graduate (e) Professional (f) Illiterate
10. Average Monthly Family Income (in Rupees) :
(a) Up to 25,000 (b) 25,001-50,000 (c) 50,001-75,000

- (d) 75,001-1,00,000 (e) 1,00,001-1,25,000 (f) 1,25,001-1,50,000
(g) Above 1,50,000

- If in other currency, please specify :

(B) TOUR PROFILE

11. Number of times visited Meghalaya so far:

- (a) First (b) Second (c) Third
(d) Fourth (e) Fifth or more

12. On this trip, you are travelling with:

- (a) Alone (b) Family (c) Friends (d) Business Partners

- If not alone, how many persons are there?

13. How often do you go on holidays/tour?

- (a) Once a year (b) Once in two years (c) 2-4 times a year
(d) More than 4 times a year (e) Any other, please specify

14. Means of travelling used from your Place of Residence to come up to Guwahati/Kolkata: (Leave the question if not applicable)

Tick the appropriate response(s)

- (a) Air (b) Train (c) Bus
(d) Hired Car/Taxi (e) Own Vehicle (f) Others, if any

15. Means of travelling used from Guwahati/Kolkata/your Place of Residence to arrive here: *Tick the appropriate response(s)*

- (a) Air (b) Train (c) Bus
(d) Hired Car/Taxi (e) Own Vehicle (f) Others, if any

16. Is it a Package Tour?

- (a) Yes (b) No

- If yes, then

(a) Name the tour operator/travel agency:

17. Main purpose of your current visit:

(Tick the appropriate response(s) and rank up to 5 in order of your importance)

- (a) Vacation/Leisure (b) Business (c) Good Weather

- (d) Adventure/Eco-tourists (e) Culture/Festivals (f) Religion
 (g) Historical Places (h) Friendly People (i) Honeymoon
 (j) Fashionable Destination (k) Family Visit (l) Conference
 (m) Others, if any

18. Planning time involved in this trip:

- (a) 1-5 days (b) 6-10 days (c) 11-15 days
 (d) 16-30 days (e) Over a month

19. Sources of information used to organize this trip:

(Please rank up to 3 in order of importance)

- (a) Newspapers/Magazines (b) Travel Agencies (c) Friends/Relative
 (d) Tourism Dept. Websites (e) Television (f) Previous Experience(s)
 (g) Others, if any

20. Sources of information that helped in visiting the tourism attractions in the state:

(Please rank up to 3 in order of importance)

- (a) Previous Experience(s) (b) Travel Agencies/Guide
 (c) Tourism Info. Centres/Tourism Websites (d) Hotel People
 (e) Local People (f) Friends/Relatives
 (g) Others, if any

(C) PERCEPTIONS OF TOURISTS

21. Please indicate how satisfied you are/were with the following aspects of your holiday in this state:

Please tick the number that describes your opinion best

| I. Accommodation | Scale | | | | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------|--------------|---------|-----------|----------------|-------------|
| | Very Dissatisfied | Dissatisfied | Neutral | Satisfied | Very Satisfied | Do Not Know |
| Physical appearance of hotel | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| Cleanliness of hotel rooms | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| Quality of food | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| Availability of desired food | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| Availability of local dishes | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|-------------------|--------------|---------|-----------|----------------|-------------|
| Location | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| Security at hotel | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| Efficiency of staff | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| Overall hospitality | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| II. Attractions | Very Dissatisfied | Dissatisfied | Neutral | Satisfied | Very Satisfied | Do Not Know |
| Culture/Events/Festivals (Local Dance & Music) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| Historical remains/legends | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| Nature | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| Night life | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| Entertainment | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| City tour (Sightseeing) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| Adventure Sports/Sports etc. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| Cleanliness of overall tourism attractions | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| III. Tourism Services | Very Dissatisfied | Dissatisfied | Neutral | Satisfied | Very Satisfied | Do Not Know |
| Border Services like Passport Issue, ILP etc. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| Transportation Services like Buses, Taxis etc. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| Road Conditions | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| Telecommunications & Internet Services | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| Restaurants | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| Hospitality of Local People | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| Shopping (Clothing/ Handicrafts) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| Hygiene & Sanitation | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| Facilities offered at Tourist Centres | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| Other Services like Banking (ATM), Post Office etc. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------|--------------|--------------|------------|-----------------|-------------|
| IV. Pricing Level | Very Poor Value | Poor Value | Satisfactory | Good Value | Very Good Value | Do Not Know |
| Local Transport | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| Accommodation | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| Food & Drink | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| Shopping | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| Overall Price of Trip | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| IV. Others | Very Dissatisfied | Dissatisfied | Neutral | Satisfied | Very Satisfied | Do Not Know |
| (Please Specify) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |

22. Did you combine any other states of India in your holiday package to the state?

(a) Yes (b) No

• If yes, please name the state(s)

23. Please indicate how satisfied you are with Meghalaya vis-à-vis other states you have visited on the following parameters?

| Parameters | Scale | | | | | |
|---|-------------------|--------------|---------|-----------|----------------|-------------|
| | Very Dissatisfied | Dissatisfied | Neutral | Satisfied | Very Satisfied | Do Not Know |
| Infrastructure | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| Accommodation | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| Availability of Facilities such as Rest Rooms, Restaurants etc., at Tourist Spots | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| Maintenance of Tourist Spots | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 |
| Overall rating of Meghalaya vis-à-vis other States | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

24. Would you recommend Meghalaya as a tourist destination to others?

(a) Yes (b) No (c) Can't Say

25. Do you intend to visit Meghalaya again?

(a) In the near future (b) Distant future (c) No (d) Can't Say

26. Has your trip in Meghalaya satisfied your expectations?

(a) Very Satisfied (b) Satisfied (c) Neutral

(d) Dissatisfied (e) Very Dissatisfied

27. If you are somewhat dissatisfied / dissatisfied with your current trip, please tick the relevant reasons.

(Please rank up to 5 in order of importance).

- | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| (a) Security Concern | <input type="checkbox"/> | (b) Accessibility | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (c) Accommodation Problems | <input type="checkbox"/> | (d) Food Problems | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (e) Environment | <input type="checkbox"/> | (f) Sanitation Facilities | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (g) Unfriendly People | <input type="checkbox"/> | (h) Communication | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (i) Knowledgeable Guides at Reasonable Rates | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |
| (j) Internal Transport at Reasonable Rates | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |
| (k) ATM & Credit Card facilities, Internet etc. | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |
| (l) Others, if any | <input type="text"/> | | |

28. Based on your experience, indicate your favourite tourist destinations in:

- | | India | | Northeast India |
|----|----------------------|----|----------------------|
| 1. | <input type="text"/> | 1. | <input type="text"/> |
| 2. | <input type="text"/> | 2. | <input type="text"/> |
| 3. | <input type="text"/> | 3. | <input type="text"/> |

29. I would appreciate any comments or suggestions to improve the tourism industry in the state. *(Please write your comments below)*

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COMPARATIVE STUDY OF MEGHALAYA AND
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