Preface

Tourism has been a major social phenomenon of societies all over the world. It is driven by the natural urge of every human being for new experiences, and the desire to be both educated and entertained. The motivations for tourism also include religious and business interests; the spread of education has fostered a desire to know more about different parts of the globe. The basic human thirst for new experience and knowledge has become stronger, as communication barriers are getting overcome by technological advances. Progress in air transport and development of tourist facilities has encouraged people to venture beyond the boundaries. The importance of Tourism, as an instrument of economic development and employment generation, particularly in remote and backward areas, has been well recognized the world over. It is a large service industry globally in terms of gross revenue as well as foreign exchange earnings. Tourism can play an important and effective role in achieving the growth with equity – an objective which we have set for ourselves. Tourism has the potential to grow at a high rate and ensure consequential development of the infrastructure of the destinations. It has the capacity to capitalize on the country’s success in the services sector and provide sustainable models of growth.

Tourism sector stimulates other economic sectors like agriculture, horticulture, poultry, handicrafts, transport, construction, etc. through its backward and forward linkages and cross-sectoral synergies. Expenditure on tourism induces a chain of transactions requiring supply of goods and services from the related sectors. The consumption demand, emanating from tourist expenditure also induces more employment and generates a multiplier effect on the economy. India’s performance in tourism sector has been quite impressive. The creation of niche tourism products like heliport tourism, medical tourism, wellness tourism, adventure tourism, cruise tourism and caravan tourism has served to widen the net of this sector. A major step has been the issuing of guidelines to State Governments/Union Territory administrations for development of tourism infrastructure that is world class.

Tourism is traveling for predominantly recreational or leisure purposes with a view to enhancing the knowledge and widening the wisdom of an individual. The World Tourism Organization defines tourists as “people who travel to and stay in places outside their usual environment for more than twenty four hours and not more than one consecutive year for
leisure, business and other purposes not related to the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the place visited.” Tourism has become a popular global leisure activity. Busy schedules and competition for quality life have made travel imperative for relaxation and rejuvenation. Travel has contributed immensely for the enrichment of humanity and caused cultural exchange between different civilizations. Dissemination of ideas, crops, technology, cuisines, etc. resulted due to travel of our ancestors in an urge to explore unknown places. Even today, the best practices are learnt by virtue of tourism, thus changing the configuration of human life. Sangam Poet Kaniyan Poonkundranar exhorted,

“World is our domain; all are our kith and kin”.

Tourism in India was seen as a mere service sector for a long time. It has now been recognized as an export industry due to its multiple advantages. Though Tourism gained importance belatedly, it has grown at a rapid pace and enhanced its share in international tourist arrivals as well as in foreign exchange earnings. Tourism industry has the unique advantage of generating employment for skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled persons. It ensures inclusive development for the locals. India has got enormous potential to be tapped.

Himachal Pradesh has multifarious tourist attractions - religious centers, spiritual retreats, hill stations, waterfalls, wildlife, art, culture, architecture, crafts, heritage, monuments, etc. which enchant tourists. This study gives emphasis upon the tourism impacts the various trends of tourism in general and Himachal Pradesh with special emphasis upon the three districts. The in depth focus is given upon the three districts namely Lahaul-Spiti, Kullu and Una districts of Himachal Pradesh which lie in the three different geographical zones of Himachal Pradesh and is also the study area. Views of local community and stakeholders have been studied and need of sustainability has been emphasized with the community participation.

Chapter-I discusses conceptual basis of tourism impacts and tries to find that why the impacts of tourism to a community are not widely understood, even where tourism is growing dramatically and should be of the greatest interest or concern. The chapter also discusses various issues and trends of travel and tourism industry at international and national level and also tries to study statistical outlines of different travel and related organizations. Chapter 2 tries to find out the opinion and an extract of various researchers in the field of tourism impacts at international, national and at domestic level. The aim of
this literature review is to studies that have explored a given topic in the past. This chapter defines the current level of knowledge about the theoretical and conceptual research on tourism impact derived from different sources. Chapter 3 tries to explain the complete research process. It explains the research need, objectives, scope, limitations, methodology, and sources of primary and secondary data.

Chapter 4 discusses the brief historical, topographical and other features of Himachal Pradesh. Himachal Pradesh .It also studies the various trends of tourism in Himachal Pradesh with special emphasis upon the three districts namely Lahaul-Spiti, Kullu and Una districts of Himachal Pradesh which lie in the three different geographical zones of Himachal Pradesh and is also the study area. Chapter 5 studies the local community perception about various tourism impacts in Lahaul-Spiti, Kullu and Una district of Himachal Pradesh. The responses various attitudinal statements related with various tourism impacts are divided into various sections that correspond to social, economic, environmental, and overall impacts of tourism. The relationship between different independent variable as age, gender, education, income reliance, district of local community and various statements is also identified. Chapter 6 studies the relationship between various impacts statements and different independent variables as gender, age, district, income and education.

Chapter 7 studies the need of control and development of tourism in socially and environmentally beneficial ways in Himachal Pradesh. It also studies the perception of various stakeholders for sustainable tourism impacts in the three districts Lahaul-Spiti, Kullu and Una district of Himachal Pradesh. Chapter 8 studies various issues of community development from tourism by considering the stakeholders perspective. The inclusion and involvement of local communities in tourism as local residents are seen as a key resource in sustaining the product Community participation in tourism ensures that there is sustainability, better opportunities for local people to gain benefits from tourism taking place in their locality, positive local attitudes and the conservation of local resources. Chapter 9 tries to study tourist perception about the tourism products and services in Lahaul-Spiti, Kullu and Una districts of Himachal Pradesh. The comparison helps to identify the shortcomings of the destinations and may be helpful in taking remedial measures. Chapter 10 conducts the SWOT analysis of Himachal tourism. Based upon some primary and secondary observation it further conducts the SWOT analysis of Lahaul-Spiti, Kullu and
Una districts. This chapter identifies some common issues in all the districts as well with Himachal as a whole. **Chapter 11** gives some practical suggestions and recommendations based upon findings primary and secondary data as well as upon personal observations. These suggestions and recommendations will be of importance to tourism developers in the tourism community finally concludes with the need of the awareness of the local people and direct involvement of representatives of the local community in development decisions affecting their locality. Local people to retain their native culture even though participating in tourist activities at the same time various stakeholders should make tourism impacts more sustainable that can increase the pride of Himachal tourism in its own identity while also providing the tourist with a genuine experience of the state.