CHAPTER 10
CONCLUSION AND
RECOMMENDATIONS
CHAPTER 10
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

About the Chapter

This chapter 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 any religious destination and in Shakti Peeths particular. On the backdrop of all the investigations made, findings obtained and perceptions drawn from analysis of findings, the researcher is now equipped with the knowledge to make recommendations which, if in acted, will help to develop the best tourism in Himachal Pradesh. In this chapter it is proposed to summarise the discussion made in various chapters discussed earlier. This chapter is divided into three parts first part deals with the conclusion of the study; second part suggests the suitable measures for the development of religious tourism in Himachal Pradesh with special reference to Shakti Peeth areas. Third part of this chapter deals with the areas for the further researches.

10.1 CONCLUSIONS

This study has analysed the Shakti Peeths in terms of important pilgrimage tourism issues, including demand, which is shown to be high in correspondence with the sizeable Hindu pilgrims and religious travellers. Participants occupy the religious pole of the sacred-secular spectrum, countering ideas about a conflation, and secular tourists are excluded. Unlike much travel attributed to religion in which there is an element of volition, participation at least once is mandated by Hindu teaching and is a core tenet of the faith. Another notable feature of the occasion is that officials are spared the conflicts frequently seen at religious attractions between the behaviour of visitors who come as supplicants and those for whom the appeal is more secular. Nevertheless, while individuals are united by their religion, they exhibit a diversity that has ramifications for organizers. Exceeding these constraints could mean irreversible damage and the marring of pilgrim satisfaction, both material and spiritual. Destinations are already under considerable strain, with a high rate of
resource consumption, albeit concentrated during the pilgrimage season. Concerns about sustainability extend beyond the physical environment, infrastructure and public services to matters of religious and cultural traditions and their settings, which are threatened by further development and commercialization. Modernization and new construction may overwhelm the reminders of the past and repositories of heritage, which give meaning to the present and are of critical importance to future generations. Authorities thus have to strive to balance respect for and maintenance of traditional practices and places with the demands of a modern pilgrimage industry and an ever-expanding mass market of pilgrims in an increasingly globalized world.

On the backdrop of all the investigations made, findings obtained and perceptions drawn from analysis of findings, the researcher is now equipped with the knowledge to make recommendations which, if in acted, will help to develop the best tourism in Himachal Pradesh. Present study was conducted in Himachal. In the present study an effort has been made to analyse the heritage tourism in Himachal Pradesh. Religious tourism is considered to cover all forms of culturally motivated tourism. As already indicated, Religious, as a concept, is problematic. Dictionary definitions such as ‘that which has been or may be inherited’, offer only the most general of guidelines. This religious tourism indicates culture choice; its focus is on preservation and the fact that some people will adopt a conservationist view of religion. In many ways this was the traditional role of religious places. Historic sites, usually unmodified ruins, were visited by relatively few people: only by those who had a genuine sense of the past and sufficient education to understand their significance. Such religious sites were often relatively inaccessible and those who came expected no facilities. As religious places have become part of the range of visitor attractions, much has changed and the basic conflict between preservation and access has emerged as the dominant issue. It is fairly clear that access is winning. The costs of maintaining religious sites are considerable and public access offers one of the few ways of raining revenue. This fact has had to be faced even by government agencies charged primarily with the role of preservation.

Religious tourism covers visits to all types of religious attractions, including discrete attractions such as temples, pilgrimage sites, sites associated with some legends and monument. Religious tourism has in recent years seen a shift away from ‘hard’ religious
resources such as built attractions towards ‘soft’ resources such as performances at religious places. Religious tourism is largely concerned with the cultural legacy of the past, or the ‘hard’ cultural resources usually contained in old buildings, museums, monuments and landscapes or represented and interpreted in specialized ‘religious centres’. This tourism is ‘centred on what we have inherited, which can mean anything from religious legends to religious works, to charismatic places related with some legendary persons from past or from stories.

10.2 RELIGIOUS TOURISM RESOURCES OF HIMACHAL

Himachal Pradesh, which is having a history much older than the Indus valley civilisation, is having several and very different Religious tourism product. Shimla the capital city is famous for its British architecture, Kullu and Manali – famous for its unique culture, Malana- famous for being the oldest democracy in the world, Tribal circuit- famous for its Buddhist monasteries, Kangra- Famous for its temples as well as for being the home of Dalai Lama, all make Himachal Pradesh a unique destination. Tourism as an Industry began to develop in Himachal Pradesh only in the 19th century, when the British started founding hill station for the rest and peace. Himachal gained International name when British declare it summer capital in 1864. With the reorganization of the states in 1966, tremendously rich tourist potential areas like those of Kullu, Manali, Kangra, Dharamshala, Shimla, Chail and Dalhousie came over to Himachal Pradesh. The development of tourism in Himachal Pradesh began with the starting of the Second Five-Year plan. Now Himachal Pradesh government has appreciated the importance of tourism as an important economic activity and declared its new tourism policy in 2000. Himachal Pradesh is a delightful state for visitors particularly during the hot season when people flock to its hill stations to escape the scorching heat of the planes.

In terms of tourism the State has an immense resource of natural/scenic, and cultural wealth to offer. The snow peaked mountains, glistening rivers, serene environments, ideal climate and a peaceful lifestyle, all combines to make Himachal a magnetic attraction. The state is rich in Tribal Culture, Languages, Folklore, and Dress forms, special Himachal cuisine other than off course the rich bounty of natural beauty. The State has all elements to attract various segments of tourist population. But what we still need is better accessibility and tapping of the right potential markets. To maintain the tourism growth graph, a new
Tourism Policy has been released recently by the state govt. The policy is aimed at promoting sustainable tourism, encouraging private investment, employment creation and promoting new concepts on tourism in the State. It plans to break the seasonality factor in Himachal, disperse tourism to other lesser-known tribal and national park areas and develop pilgrimage tourism. NRI investment too is aimed at to be encouraged.

10.3 CONCLUSION OF THE PRIMARY SURVEY

Some of the pinpointed conclusions of primary survey are as follows

1. In case of Shakti Peeth area, religious tourism has been responsible for the growth of whole region and area.

2. In general it can be concluded that the main tourist traffic to religious places is from Indian only hence the foreign exchange at these place is not so much, but tourism phenomenon in state will increase the same.

3. Respondents believe that due to flow of pilgrims and tourists to the area has lead to the development of several new occupational avenues for the local community. Many shops, hotels, guesthouses, cabs and even parking places have been setup by local people in the area.

4. Tourist inflows create awareness among local youth, which lead them towards urbanizations. Generally all of these temples are located in rural area but with the increased inflow of tourists and pilgrims these places got developed and most of new technologies have reached these places. Some of local youth have also started very new concepts in their business like development of resorts, restaurants with best possible cuisines, cyber café, internet telephony, ayurvedic centres etc. All these have increased flow of income in the area and local people are enjoying the comforts of new technologies, which were earlier limited to urban areas only.

5. Tourist inflows provide the guidelines for modernization in infrastructural facilities. Further this can be concluded that the tourist inflows provide the guidelines for the modernisation in infrastructural facilities, which is depicted by setup of musical fountain at Jwalaji, Bombay Picnic spot near Chamunda, development of conference facilities, development of tourist resorts, ropeway at Naina Devi and development of very informative websites on these religious places.
6. Somewhere tourism or inflow of tourists/pilgrims is responsible for the increase in the educational opportunities to the children of the area. Several educational institutes like colleges have been setup at these places by the shrine trust and finance to run these institutes are met out from the donations received in the temples.

7. When tourists visit any place then it create a sense of pride among the local community.

8. When people as tourist/pilgrim visit any place, which is other than their usual place of residence, and their interaction with local community lead to some new learning.

9. Increased tourist inflows change the life style of local people. This is the result of guest and host relationship. Sometimes these interactions give birth to negative changes and some times it is taken as positive changes in the society and even in social values.

10. Tourism has been seen as an important economic indicator and this economic advancement lead to change in lifestyle of local population and increase the standard of living.

11. Tourism gives the concept of social interaction which further boosts the natural integration among the tourists and hosts. This concept leads to some productive works undertaken by tourists for the benefit of community. Sometime several tourists/pilgrims indulge themselves in some social works.

12. Tourism industry is a result of movement of people from one place to other and when people move from one place to other interaction with local community taken place and this result in changes in local culture. The effects of tourist inflow on culture are depicted by change in food habits, living style and dressing sense of local community.

13. Respondents feel that the increased inflow of tourists has created a problem of overcrowding, congestion and other environmental problems in all of the Shakti Peeth places. That why good planning is needed.

14. Tourism creates demand for capital and consumer goods resulting increase of GDP. Every year lacs of religious tourists visit these Shakti Peeth places and create demand for several capital and consumer goods and to cater this demand the supply ultimately resulting in increase in Gross Domestic Product.
15. Tourism process has lead to the development of many employment opportunities ranges from small shops to big resorts to workshops are result of inflow of tourists.

16. Most of the respondents feel that we require a proper planning process, which must be aimed at future development. For a better tourism a good planning is prerequisite. In the Shakti Peeth places people visit in large number during festival time, so a separate planning is required to cater this huge inflow of religious tourists during this time.

10.4 RELIGIOUS TOURISM AND COMMUNITY’S OVERALL LIFE SATISFACTION

   Religious tourism development need to consider the strength of this relationship, and focus on maintaining the residents’ overall life satisfaction derived from tourism impacts. This finding also suggests that tourism developers and marketers should know how residents perceive religious tourism and how it affects their life satisfaction according to tourism development stages. The results of this study revealed that residents strongly perceive the positive economic impact of tourism, and they are more satisfied with the material well-being of community. So, tourism developers should plan a strategy that has residents start to perceive positive impact of tourism in the beginning stage of the development in order to fully recognize the economic impact of tourism in the growth stage.

   Cultural Impact of Tourism and Emotional Well-being

   Findings of this study also showed that relationships between the impact of tourism and emotional well-being and between the environmental impact of tourism and health and safety well-being were strongest meaning that residents perceive a strong positive cultural impact of tourism feel more satisfaction in emotional well-being. Thus religious tourism developers should try to rejuvenate the tourism destination before that community completely reaches a maximum carrying capacity.

   Support from the Community

   This finding suggests there is need to inform residents of the social benefits they receive from tourism may be helpful in gaining the residents’ support for the development, successful operation and sustainability of tourism. Promotion of the positive social and economic benefits of tourism may serve to sway the opinion of residents who perceive that they have little to gain economically from the tourism industry. Further, the dissemination of
information concerning secondary economic benefits received by community members whose household income is not directly tied to the tourism industry may lead to support from otherwise neutral residents. The application of conservation and preservation programs for the community may serve to ease the concerns of residents who are skeptical to the environmental impact of tourism. The residents in the community perceive religious tourism impact and how they receive this impact regarding their satisfaction with what the industry is doing in terms of enhancing the quality of life of the residents in the community. Also the data generated by periodically administering the survey to residents, tourism developers and managers can be examined and compared with the mean score of the perceptions of tourism impact and life satisfaction.

Tourist’s Awareness

Like in many places in the rest of the world tourists are encouraged to follow some basic and practical safety tips such as to remain with a group or meet new people in public places, not to accept items from persons whom they have befriended recently, be wary of unexpected, unknown persons coming to their hotel room, never open the door to unsolicited room service or maintenance people etc.

Community Participation

The present study suggests that it is impossible to sustain religious tourism in Himachal Pradesh if that is not supported by the local community. Therefore, the policy makers need to get them involved in making decisions and understand their aspirations when planning tourism projects. They need to identify a diverse group of people in the community and informing them about the project, benefits of the project to the community and related issues. From the information that they are given, they should be allowed to make the recommendations that they believe to be the most appropriate for their community. Hence, future tourism endeavors need to consider this requirement more critically or else the decisions taken by planners and officers could be competing with local community aspirations and interests. Such an effective participation can avoid conflicts between stakeholders such as the local community, hotels and the governments on tourism development projects.
CHAPTER 10  

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Effective communication

Community participation allows officials to get input for their decisions and communicate the correct picture to community as well. Unless the officials do not make a good effort to communicate the important details about the projects such as the benefits & possible consequences of the projects and the precautionary actions taken, the community might be misled by wrong perceptions about such projects. In some cases, certain groups deliberately spread wrong messages for political and economic gains. Therefore, a proper & effective communication is essential for successful implementation of tourism projects especially in remote destinations.

Tangible benefits

It is obvious that local residents’ support is essential for the success of any tourism project. When evaluating projects, the local community pays a notable attention to the benefits they can receive from the projects under consideration. If they perceive themselves to have benefited from tourism exchanges they should have positive perceptions, but tend to have negative perceptions if they perceive tourism to be associated with negative impacts. Therefore, tourism development projects have to benefit the local residents to match their expectations. These benefits should be tangible and substantial for the local community to recognize that they are really benefited by the project.

Infrastructure Development

All Shakti Peeths and other religious destinations don’t have have the quality of road network. Ways and means have to be developed to identify suitable lands in important tourist destinations which could be given on a reasonable cost. Himachal Pradesh should bring new colors in the tourism industry so that it can emerge as one of the most sought after tourism destinations on the world map. The State Government should chalk out a three pronged strategy to harness the tourist potential to the maximum. The government should focus upon development of various religious circuits, strengthening the infrastructure and long term planning whereas on other hand launching schemes to cater to tourists of all classes and categories. Employment generation and income to the state exchequer has been given special impetus under the strategy.
Education of Tourists and Community

In light of the insight of this research and its conclusions, the first crucial element to emerge is the need to educate both tourists and local people about all aspects of religious tourism and in so doing, to pre-empt any negative encounters between tourists and local people. This can be achieved by devising and presenting a code of behaviour (including a dress code) for tourists even before they leave their home countries. Equally essential is the educating of the local people about tourists themselves, such as the cultural/attitudinal differences which can sometimes cause misunderstanding to occur in the interaction between tourist and local. This education could be delivered through formal and informal channels such as newspapers, magazines, leaflets, TV, etc. It is also recommended that lectures be arranged for those who have direct contact with tourists such as airport officers, tourist guides, hoteliers, and others who work in ancillary tourism services. It might be useful to include as part of the education process for both tourists and locals examples of bad experiences in the past in order to avoid similar occurrences in the future. An incentive for local people to retain their native culture even though participating in tourist activities might be to encourage them to wear traditional dress and to disown the ‘phoney’ culture which has arisen out of the adoption of ‘non-native’ manners. This would increase the locals’ pride in their own national identity while also providing the tourist with a genuine experience of the location.

Stricter Regulations

It is highly recommended that stricter regulations be introduced to control the employment of young people in tourism and that methods be considered to encourage children to remain in education rather than dropping out of school at an early age. Improvements cannot be achieved without acknowledgement of a proper reward for provision of a satisfactory tourism service. Efforts should be made therefore, to increase the payment to those who work in tourism services which would also enhance their social welfare. It would also be helpful to institute an alternative payment system to even out the fluctuations in income received in the ‘high’ and ‘low’ seasons of the typical tourism year. Development of the site infrastructure could include measures to avoid traffic congestion, for example, by constructing alternative routes within the site and allowing tourists to wander around freely on foot, but also adding unobtrusive controls to cover health and safety issues.
Specific recommendations directly related to this point should include the following:

1. More investment in specific projects such as the promotion of cultural tourism and encouragement of more women to enter employment in tourism.
2. A policy to support concentration on high yield tourism.
3. More development of tourism initiatives to reduce the level of unemployment of local people.
4. Addressing of issues at government and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) level such as preservation of cultural heritage and limitation of environmental damage, which could be enhanced through careful tourism development.

**Concerns of Sustainable Development**

The most important challenge for sustainable tourism development concerns the perspective and expectations that all stakeholders, particularly government policy-makers, have about tourism's contribution at the local, regional and national levels.

1. Many developing countries view tourism as a vehicle for economic development, given its potential to earn foreign exchange, create employment, reduce income and employment disparities, strengthen linkages among economic sectors and help to alleviate poverty. The challenge facing policy-makers is to have a broader perspective and better understanding that there can be both positive and negative effects from tourism development.

2. Moreover, a broader perspective challenges all stakeholders involved with tourism from the community level to the national level to find the means to work together in more proactive ways that will increase the positive effects and minimize the possible negative effects of tourism development. Sustainable tourism development provides the opportunity to take proactive approaches based on broad participation by stakeholders, which would contribute to more effective policies and plans.

3. This would increase the opportunities to realize the full social and economic potential of the tourism industry. Sustainable tourism development creates the opportunity for governments and all stakeholders in the tourism sector to aim at ensuring long-term prosperity and quality of life for future generations. Sustainable tourism development also creates opportunities to preserve natural and cultural heritages for tourists and local people in ways that address development problems and reduce risks to the environment and ways of life.
CHAPTER 10  CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Community Role

From these premises it is possible to set forth a number of principles for sustainable tourism development. The main principles include the following:

1. Residents must maintain control over tourism development and planning requires broad-based community input.
2. Quality employment must be provided for the community along with education and training programmes.
3. Distribution of the benefits must be broad-based and cooperation among local stakeholders is essential.
4. Inter-generational equity must be provided and tourism businesses and other tourism agencies must adopt long-term planning horizons.
5. Tourism strategies and plans must be linked to broader initiatives reflected in economic development plans of the community, region or nation and move away from the traditional growth-oriented model.
6. Harmony is required between the needs of the visitor, the place and the community in order to promote appropriate uses and activities.
7. The scale and type of tourism facilities must reflect limits of acceptable use, and this means guidelines are needed for tourism operations and impact assessments must be required.
8. The community heritage and natural resources must be maintained and enhanced using internationally acceptable criteria and standards.
9. Marketing for sustainable tourism must provide for a high quality tourist experience.

The practice of sustainable tourism development is based on management of capacities and sites. Simply put, carrying capacity measures the level of use that is sustainable. However, there are a number of issues to be addressed, which means that carrying capacity becomes quite complex in the management of tourism development. Every environment serves multiple purposes and sensitivity to different use levels depends on the values of all users. A range of valued products and services must come from the same environment and different types of use have different impacts.
**Costs and Benefits of Religious Tourism In Himachal Pradesh**

Findings of this study are of importance to government for development of tourism in all corners of the state.

1. Tourism in the Himachal Pradesh should be developed not simply on the analysis of costs and benefits in the short-term, but also from a long-term perspective of residents' quality of life and sustainable tourism.

2. As the local community perception of the impact of tourism increases, their life satisfaction with various life conditions increases, and that this effect finally influences to their overall life satisfaction. For example, as residents' perception of the economic impact of tourism increases, they are more likely to be satisfied with their lives based on material possessions.

3. In addition, as residents' perception of the cultural impact of tourism increases, they are more likely to be satisfied with their lives based on emotional wellbeing such as satisfaction of leisure life and spiritual life. Then, the satisfaction with these specific life domains affects the overall quality of life of residents in the community.

**Tourism and Community development**

The findings of the study indicate that the tourism can play effective role in the community development. Residents of a community must maintain control of tourism development by being involved in setting a community tourism vision, identifying the resources to be maintained and enhanced, and developing goals and strategies for tourism development and management. Residents must participate in the implementation of strategies and the operation of the tourism infrastructure, services and facilities. Tourism can generate many economic and other types of benefits to local people.

**Environmental Issues**

Tourism has widely affected natural environment and natural resource base in an adverse manner in Himachal Pradesh. If tourism is to be sustainable, it must improve the lives of local people, protect their environment and health, and offer them a better future. In this case the stakeholder can work together to protect the environment by awareness and education. Sustainable tourism can create positive opportunities for community development in remote areas. Tourism development should provide the quality employment local people and as much as possible, the tourism infrastructure is developed and managed by local
people. There is need of education and training for local residents and access to financing for local businesses and entrepreneurs.

**Synchronization of Communities With other Stakeholders**

The tourism development in Himachal still lacks the community participation in tourism development and awareness among the communities not up to the mark. There is need of involvement of govt. and non-govt. agencies, local bodies for involving local people in region. Tourism development can be sustainable only if all the stakeholders are working in a coordinated manner. The effective coordination and trust key individuals liaised between the local people and other stakeholders whether scientists, conservationist, or government officials. Stakeholder’s participation can lead for effective conservation and ecotourism development. Tourism can provide variety of benefits not only to the local community but also to different stakeholders. Tourism has stimulated local economic development and requires diversification and complementing the economic base in region.

**Tourists’ Satisfaction**

The tourist satisfaction about various products and services at a destination leads to the positive impact of image building of the destination. The complete satisfaction of destination is the combination of various services from a destination. Tourist satisfaction leads to revisit and disseminate positive-word-of-mouth by the tourists. It is important to deliver what was promised to them. If tourists are satisfied with their travel experience, they are more willing to revisit a destination and spread positive word-of-mouth. The satisfaction from services is not satisfactory enough in the Shakti Peeths of Himachal Pradesh.

**PROBLEMS IN RELIGIOUS TOURISM PROMOTION**

In spite of the rapid development of religious tourism attractions in recent years, there are still a number of barriers to the successful exploitation of these markets. After the study researcher has come to know the various problems in the promotion of religious tourism in Himachal are as follows:

**Mutual Lack of Knowledge**

There is a mutual lack of knowledge for the promotion of religious tourism, from the supply side as well as from the demand side. Even the responses from the tourists side shows that they are not fully aware about the various religious tourism products of the state, which is having a verity of such type of products. Till date in Himachal Pradesh religious tourism has
CHAPTER 10

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

not been developed professionally. While from the supply side, we could not able to properly market our tourism product. In the tourism phenomenon communication is pre-requisite. There is mutual lack of knowledge about the cultural and religious tourism.

**Lack of Formal Linkages**

This can be seen as there is no defined role for the promotion of religious tourism, and in addition to this there is a lack of formal linkages among the various suppliers of tourism product. For example Govt. is promoting cultural tourism and fairs and festivals of the state, whereas the travel agents and the tour operators are selling the adventure and holiday tourism in the state. Hence we can say that a formal linkage is needed for the promotion of tourism.

1. **Lack of Knowledge of Economic Impact/ Profit Sharing:** To whom we are going to provide the benefits from tourism. It is the big hotel chains or big tour operators, certainly not. First of all we have to assess the economic impacts of tourism. How and who are going to be benefited from the tourism activity? Then we have to plan for the tourism otherwise it is going to create a conflict between various profit sharers.

2. **Lack of Religious tourism Products:** Definitely we can say that there is a lack of religious tourism products. We have the resources but we could not able to change these resources into the products. These states are blessed with the immense tourism resources but we have to change these resources into tourism products. For that we have to plan and think about the tourism development. In Himachal Pradesh there are several and ancient temples, needed to develop proper accessibility to these destinations and improvement of various tourist facilities at these destinations.

3. **Lack of Expertise:** Yes this also accounts for the low growth of tourism. The persons from the top till the bottom in the hierarchy of tourism needs to be experts, but we till the present time we are not having this. From the planners to the administrators to the practitioners should be experts in this service industry. The people who are in tourism are known as the ambassadors of the country as they are the person who represents their country in front of guests. And the impressions made by these people are the impression of country. Hence these people are needed to be expertise. There is a need of the planning for the human resource development for the tourism.
4. **Distance/ Access:** Accessibly of the tourist destinations accounts for the promotion of tourism. In India what is famous is the Golden Triangle and that is due to its accessibility. Need is to develop the accessibility of the destinations. Once we have made the accessibility the destinations automatically develop.

5. **Lack of Ready Product:** The readiness of tourist product to receive the tourists is needed for the development. We have examples of the destinations, which are destroyed due to their non-readiness. The hill stations of India, which receive a number of tourists but they are not having the adequate facilities to accommodate that number of tourists. Religious places have one exception in this case; people will travel to these destinations as they are very much attached with the emotions of people. These are resources but need is to make them some ready product well acquainted with the facilities.

6. **Minimal Marketing:** Extensive marketing is needed for the promotion of tourist product. Just publish some brochures and books, developing a website and a few advertisements in the print and electronic media do not solve the full purpose for the marketing of a destination. The concept of marketing starts from the word *Market Research.* We have to switch over to modern concept of marketing, which starts from the customers (tourists). We have to know what, why, where and when a tourist wants. So that we may develop such kind of tourism and facilities. We have to identify our markets.

7. **Absence of National Leadership, Strategy and Coordination:** There is problem with the absence of national leadership, strategy and coordination for the development of tourism. Every time a government changes it give rise to change in the team for the development of tourism as well as change in the policy for the tourism development.

   A lack of knowledge about the potential for cooperation and the benefits of religious tourism therefore seem to be the biggest barriers to development. These barriers can also be identified in many other developed countries. These problems may be magnified in developing countries, where lack of resources and planning often stands in the way of religious tourism development. As in the case of India, although the country abounds in cultural and religious resources, these have ‘carelessly been harnessed for tourism promotion with little or no research base and in many cases without sufficient planning and development policies.’
10.5 ECONOMICS OF RELIGIOUS TOURISM

Tourism based on religion or spirituality is of immense importance in many parts of the world. This great conference attests to the recognition of religious tourism and its social and economic importance to the global community. Religious travel is a vital part of the heritage tourism phenomenon and is usually noted as the earliest forerunner to modern day tourism and among the most widespread forms of heritage tourism today, reaching back thousands of years. Tens of millions of people travel each year throughout the world in search of encounters with deity or for personal spiritual enlightenment by visiting places that are venerated as holy and divine. In fact, the largest tourist gatherings in the world are religious in nature—the Hajj in Saudi Arabia, which attracts some two million people each year, and the Kumbha Mela, which involves approximately 20 million people every few years, are two examples. Millions more people travel each year in devotion to Buddha, Jesus Christ, or nature gods and goddesses.

Religious leaders and organizations have traditionally shunned the notion of tourism, or the idea that pilgrims can be considered tourists. This has been so primarily for hedonic and economic reasons; tourists are seen as sinful, lustful, promiscuous, and lacking in common sense, and tourism is seen as a force that promotes idolatry, laziness, immorality, and drunkenness. By the same token religious organizations have eschewed tourism because it is seen to commodity religion, to put holy places into the spotlight for mass consumption, and to make holy things unholy. Pilgrims on the other hand are viewed as pious travellers who travel only to be spiritually uplifted.

From a tourism perspective, pilgrims are in fact tourists and pilgrimage a form of tourism. Tourism is not defined by motivation or behaviour; rather it is defined as people travelling away from home and all the services that cater to their needs. Pilgrims, from the industry’s perspective, then, are religious tourists—devout faithful who also need to eat, sleep, travel, and purchase mementos of their journeys. In addition to these dutiful faithful, other tourists who do not adhere to the faiths being presented, also visit sacred sites out of sheer curiosity or because they are seeking some greater meaning from the universe in their lives.
CHAPTER 10 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Today, although many people/groups still refuse to see pilgrims as tourists, many religious site managers and their sponsoring churches or faiths have realized that these pious visitors can be capitalized upon to meet economic needs.

Several economic realities have become obvious in the realm of religious tourism:

- Funding is increasingly in short supply for maintenance, preservation and staffing.
- Many parts of the world are experiencing rapid growth in religious adherence and conversion while others are experiencing decline. This has significant implications for funding through growing or declining donations.
- Religious sites are often given tax breaks owing to their dual function as heritage properties and religious places. Income at these places is therefore typically tax protected.
- Pilgrims, or devout religious tourists, must spend money when they travel. They eat, sleep, travel, and undertake recreational and sightseeing activities.
- The lines between mass tourists and religious tourists are becoming increasingly blurred. In many cases, we are now seeing a rapid growth in mass religious tourism.
- Religious tourists are becoming more sophisticated in their demands for travel and are willing to pay more for their experiences and modern conveniences.
- Nearly all communities throughout the world desire to grow tourism as an economic boom. Communities around sacred sites are no less in need of jobs, tax revenue, and public services, and they, too, desire to benefit from the tourism industry.
- Religious organizations and their associated shrines or holy spaces can not operation in seclusion from each other. Communities need the money generated by religious tourism, and religious organizations need the support of the community.

These and other economic realities have led religious organizations, site managers, and community members to begin offering services to meet the needs of tourists, both religious and otherwise. Funding sources specifically for religious attractions now include, among others, retailing, food services, admission fees, interpretive media, guiding services, and accommodations. These will be examined briefly here.

**Retailing/souvenirs**

Many churches and other religious attractions have found success in offering souvenirs and religious icons for sale to tourists. It is common in Europe, for example, to
find books, candles, postcards, and some basic religious memorabilia for sale in cathedrals and at various shrines. While these typically do not result in large-scale financial returns, the earnings do help in building maintenance and restoration. Of more significant economic importance are souvenir shops adjacent to religious places. In some instances these are owned by the religious organization in charge, although more often they are owned and operated by community residents. These are very significant for the entire community as they provide employment for local residents and if owned by the church, can help meet the needs of the organization. At Christian sites the most common items include crosses, statues, books, pictures, postcards, holy water, T-shirts and hats, and handicrafts. Religious symbolisms are the most effective souvenirs, particularly if they represent events and people associated specifically with the site.

For example, in Israel near the traditional places associated with the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, tourists can purchase crowns of thorns or statues of Christ. In places associated with Elijah, the Old Testament prophet, visitors can purchase emblems associated with him and his story.

**Food services**

Drinks, refreshments, and food are not uncommon at religious heritage sites, and in fact, many of them offer restaurants and coffee shops. In the Vatican City, visitors can eat full meals in a cafeteria and purchase refreshments in a few different places. Coffee shops abound at the Finnish Orthodox Valamo Monastery. These are an important part of the economic livelihood at most religious places. The support of the community is important in this regard. Businesses that cater to the eating and drinking needs of visitors near the holy sanctuaries should be encouraged among community members.

**Admission fees**

Most religious site managers abhor the idea of charging admission fees to visit God’s abode or the places associated with the lives of deity and prophets. At least two compromises have seen considerable success in various places. The first is to install donation bins. While these are not, strictly speaking, admission fees, people are invited to contribute a sum of money into a bottle or box to assist in caring for the property. This is typically done at the discretion of each individual, or an amount may be suggested. The second compromise is to charge admission to an ancillary attraction, such as museum,
garden, or other interpretive center. This works rather well, too, because most people having traveled some distance and having a clear interest in the place would also be interested in visiting a support service that provides more scientific or historical perspectives.

**Interpretive media and services**

Many places have found success in renting out audio tours, by selling brochures and booklets, and by hiring out guiding services. Residents of Mecca, Saudi Arabia, and the Muslim organizations in the region earn huge sums of money each year, as many modern-day Muslim pilgrims hire guides to drive and walk them through the rituals associated the hajj. Many Christian and Jewish sites in Israel have found success in renting out earphones and records that allow tourists to walk themselves through religiously importance heritage locations. Community members may also be involved in this endeavor, particularly if they adhere to the same religion. Religious adherents who live in the larger community make excellent guides and should be encourage to participate in this way if possible.

**Accommodations/lodging**

Just like all tourists, religious devotees must also have places to sleep. These typically range from tents, to small guest houses, or pilgrim houses, to large-scale luxury resorts. Hajj pilgrims in Mecca and Medina can rent space in a tent, although many of the more affluent pilgrims are now staying in luxury hotels with spas and golf courses. Christian pilgrims at places such as Medjugorje; Lourdes; Guadalupe, Mexico; Jerusalem, etc, typically have a wide selection of accommodations choices. Many of these are provided onsite by the churches and religious organizations that oversee the holy places. It is common to find inns, pilgrims rests, or dormitories right on the premises of shrines and monasteries.

**Community benefits**

It has to be pointed out here that only a fraction of the economic importance of religious tourism is directly associated with the religions themselves. Rather, the majority of benefits should accrue to the community in which the sacred place is located. It will address this issue in more depth tomorrow. However, It is wished that now to present three cases of communities that have benefited a great deal from religious tourism.

**10.6 IMPORTANCE OF RELIGIOUS TOURISM**

Indian domestic tourism is mostly dominated by religious tourism. As a developing economy contribution of leisure tourism is not much as in developed countries. Being the
CHAPTER 10 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

centre and hub of four religions of the world, Indian contribution to the world religious tourism is also vital. There are important points that we have to consider while analysing the importance of religious tourism.

1. Religious tourism is key part of Indian domestic tourism.
2. It helps in economic development of the country by way of movement of people.
3. Religious tourism helps in National and International integration and cooperation among different ethnic group.
4. Religious tourism helps in preservation of culture and our built heritage.
5. Religious tourism helps to earn foreign exchange by way of visit by NRI’s and foreigners to religious centres.
6. Religious tourism helps people to seek peace, sanctity, salvation, contentment, among them and built a model character by following ideal thoughts groups.

Religion as earlier discussed is a way of life, approach, spiritual power to support in wreaked hours. So people through out prefer to be more religious with open minded approach. We expect 21st century human being to be more open with his approach and have international understanding as preached by the different sects. There are most beautiful and world famous circuits in India. Indian tourism should promote these religious circuits, like Buddhist circuit, Char dham, temples of south India, Monasteries in Himalayas, Dargahs or Shrines of Sufi Saints in more innovative way. Side by side more important is infrastructural development at religious places and around of famous Shrines, Temples, Mosque, Monasteries, Churches, so that during the peak seasons they feel as ease with basic amenities, as of Navratras for Hindus, Ramjan for Muslims, X-mas for Christians, Kalchakra for Buddhist.

PROBLEMS IN HANDLING THE RELIGIOUS TOURISM

The major point of concern in religious tourism is the mass gathering. Generally religious gathering can be termed as events and must be treated like proper event management. Some of the problems occur during any religious gathering are

1. Stampede and causalities in religious centres due to excess crowd during special occasion.
2. Hygiene and sewerage problem in the religious centres.
3. Threats from anti social elements
4. Seasonal tourism activity

5. Infrastructural problems like, boarding, lodging of pilgrims

Religious centres like Varanasi, Rishikesh, shrine of Muin-ud-din-chisti at Ajmer, Golden temple, are centre of cosmopolitan approach and of international understanding among different ethnics. Religious tourism with regard to pilgrims and pilgrimages by the followers of different religion, no doubt is important part of tourism industry especially in India, where every person is follower of one or another religion and have different way of worship even within one religion. There are supposed to be 33 million Gods and Goddesses in Hindu religion alone, which is a major portion of Indian population. Hindu religion has thousands of pilgrimage centres and sacred places scattered throughout the country. India being a home of major centre for Buddhists, Jains, Sikhs, Muslims, Christians, Jews and Hindus, for this government can offer and project religious tourism as its ‘USP’ (Unique Selling Preposition) for domestic and international market of tourism industry. Thus it can be concluded that tourism is a complex phenomenon. It is an amalgamation of phenomenon and relationships, which arise from the movement of people to various destinations and their stay in these destinations.

There are numerous destinations in Himachal, which attract several pilgrims every year. Not only pilgrims but tourists also visit such places. These places can attracts lot of people if the basic facilities are provided in such places. Fpr example Sri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine every year attracts about 50-60 lacs of pilgrims/tourists. One of the major factors is the management of the shrine. It is known as one of the best-managed shrine in the country. Himachal may adopt the model of such type of management. For example while in some temples of Himachal if one person is going to visit shrine, there is no place where to keep his/her shoes, one has to purchase flower or other items from the local shops so they will keep their shoes, this is ridiculous.

While, in principle, religious tourism in India has immense potential to evolve as a niche segment, there are hurdles to be overcome. The first hurdle is the poor tourism infrastructure in general, and perhaps the even poorer infrastructure of religious centres. Adequate facilities for lodging, boarding and travel will have to be created. What needs to be done is to create nodes near religious centers, where there is already a basic infrastructure present and plan day trips from there. For example, Chennai in South India can be a node for
excursions to Madurai, Thanjavur, Trichnapalli and Pondicherry. Madurai is the home of the exquisite Meenakshi Temple, which is regarded as the holiest temple in India by many people. The second aspect that will need to be taken care of will be to provide the tourists with a holistic religious experience. Tourists may not find it worthwhile to come all the way just for a pilgrimage.

A packaged trip that offers the different hues of religious tourism will have to be prepared. This would require blending the ritualistic part of the religious tours with informative, cultural and philosophical inputs. Information on the mythological significance of the places of pilgrimage will need to be provided in advance so that tourists are better prepared. Traditional dances, music and theatre related to the religious shrine will have to be built into the itinerary. Discourses on the essence of the religious beliefs, workshops on yoga and Ayurvedic practices can add immense value to religious tourism. Religious tourism in India can provide an experience that cannot be had anywhere in the world. But for it to fructify, the seeds will have to be sown and the saplings will have to be nurtured.

Tourism as a service industry acts as a social and cultural linkage by providing a number of amenities whose range extends from hotels, motels and best transport network. All those activities, which cater to the demands of tourists with available resources, can be termed as tourism system. In order to understand tourism activity, an analytical system has been devised to provide a broad basis for understanding the phenomena. Tourism is different from other service industries in the sense that in this case visitors may have to fly to places to avail the services.

In a developing economy like India, which is suffering from the problem of resources crunch particularly foreign exchange, it is the need of the hour that every opportunity should be grabbed at the right time. Tourism has provided an opportunity to the developing countries to earn foreign exchange by attracting foreign tourists by applying the marketing strategies. The present work is an attempt to show the academic world how tourism can work as a tool of socio-economic growth if the efforts are geared in the right direction.

Tourism generally refers to a temporary movement of people from one place to another. It may be domestic tourism or international tourism. It is defined thus, "Tourism is the temporary movement of the people to destination 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 need”.

Tourism has, today, emerged as one of the fastest growing industries in the world and shows its importance in developing social and cultural linkages at the national and international level. In order to understand tourism activity, an analytical system has been devised to provide a broad basis for understanding the phenomena. It generally refers to a temporary movement of people from one place to another. Tourism can be thus defined as the temporary movement of the people to the destinations outside their place of work and residence for religion, health, study, sports and finally to have a look at ancient archaeological places, wildlife and natural beauty, etc. basic concept of tourism reveals that it is of two types, one is domestic tourism in which movement of people within the country is referred while second one is international tourism in which movement of people across the country is referred.

Future Directions in Religious Tourism

As the new millennium dawns, there are signs of a more future-oriented approach to heritage. The nostalgia for the past that was largely responsible for the European heritage boom of the 1980s has been replaced by a more pragmatic vision of the need to utilize the legacy of the past to consumption. This is being marked by an increasing emphasis on the ‘arts’ and ‘creativity’ within cultural policy as a whole, and in cultural tourism in particular.

In spite of the foreseeable growth of heritage tourism, however, it seems that these segments are likely to become more integrated into tourism in general in the future.

If we are to manage religious tourism at the destination in a way that satisfies the goals of each or all of the interests involved, then we need an understanding of some of the relationships, an establishment of goals and priorities, an array of instruments of intervention, whether for land-use and development control or local economic and fiscal management and the organizational structure capable of performing these tasks in each of these sectors. The pessimistic position is that none of these currently exist: the optimistic vision is that they could relatively easily be created.

It is evident from the above analysis and interpretation that culture and religious is the uniqueness of Himachal Pradesh, and we should promote more and more this kind of tourism. While asking about the religious places / monuments of the state the respondents
replied that they feel educated by visiting such religious places/monuments, but there is lack of adequate facilities, guides, and publicity material. Hence the government should take measures for this, whereas the maintenance of such monuments should be given to the private companies on the pattern of Taj Mahal. Religious tourism is a major growth area that it can be used to boost local culture, and that it can aid the seasonal and geographic spread of tourism.

The term tourism may be a new concept, but to tour and travel is as old as human being on this planet. Wanderlust to move from one place to other place is all conceived with human being. In the very beginning man started to move for food and shelter. Slowly time has changed he used to visit new destinations for change, enjoy, visit VFR, holidays. Discovery of continents was also daring effort of those miraculous souls who spend there whole life to visit new destinations. Moreover modern world is dominated by western society and civilisation. Most of the all modern times discoveries and inventions are credited to these people, but once there was a time when “Bharatvarsha” Indian subcontinent was at its zenith. Indian philosophy, culture, Civilisation living standard law and order were acclaimed by the world. Indus Valley civilisation to Vedic age, Indian subcontinent was centre of attraction. Scholars from all over the world used to visit our country for advance learning.

Our rich civilization has given special importance to journey in the life of human being. Our sagas and saints have pronounced learning by visiting new destination; give new ideas and concept for betterment of human life. Saints in past prefer to go away from social life for piece and solitude in the mountains. Natural environment give them peace of mind and will to concentrate. To admire and praise nature is all taught by our civilisation. In the tourism same concept is now emerging “eco tourism”. Urge of human being to visit shrines, religious centre, were supposed necessary once in a life. new concept of religious tourism help people to satisfy their spiritual urge. Religious tourism is a big industry when we talk about India tourism data will not give clear picture about exact proportion of religious tourism in the domestic tourism industry, but it is major contribute in the three hundred million of domestic tourism industry.

When we talk about Himachal Pradesh, it gives a clear picture of beautiful hill state, where lots of hill station, meadows, and temples shrines monasteries engulf the whole area.
Himachal Pradesh is bounded with small hills to steep mountains peaks. There are beautiful passes, ridges, to admire. After the independence government has given main focus to infrastructural development. Republic of India comes with new ideas and visionary thought. Our old concept of development of hill states as model state was coined with the installation of small and major hydroelectricity projects, but with the passage of time policymaker have realised that fragile ecosystem of Himachal Pradesh is not conducive for such projects. Tourism industry is opted as alternate of economic development. Environmental degradation from ecological imbalance leads to floods, cloud burst, drought, and many more consequences. Tourism is a sole industry to increase state revenue and development. Himachal Pradesh has ample scope in adventure, eco tourism and religious tourism. Rich culture and heritage attract lots of people especially domestic tourist.

Himachal Pradesh occupies special seat as a religious centre. There are beautiful temples, shrines and Monasteries all over the state. Among these religious centres Shakti-Peeths have their own importance. There are such five Shakti peeths which are situated in Himachal Pradesh, these are namely Chamunda devi near Palampur in Kangra district, Vajreshwarii temple in the heart of Kangra, Jawaa Ji temple at jawalamukhi, Chintpurni in the Una district, and Naina Devi in Bilaspur district.

The shakti- peethas have importance among the devotees of different regions. Otherwise each hamlet of Himachal Pradesh have its own deity to worship, that is the reason why worship style of mountains is considered different from plains. In plains there are common Gods and Goddesses like Tirupati Ji maharaja, Meenakshi temple, Konark sun temple, Jagannath. Where as in hilly area Shakti peethas have their own importance. Shakti Peethas of Himachal Pradesh are centre of worship more for the people of these states. Navratras and the fairs are special occasion when these shrines are full of devotees. Religious centres are key for tourism industry for the promotion of religious tourism. Generally religious tourism includes visit to any religious site to seek blessing, worship, pay homage, seek peace of mind, salvation, self purification, contentment. Religious tourism in the state is big source of revenue. It becomes necessary to evaluate and understand the concept of religious tourism in Himachal Pradesh with respect to local community participation.

All over the world tourism industry has been growing rapidly. Tourism industry was earlier considered environment friendly, it was after 1980s that researchers pay attention
towards negative impact of tourism on the environment, in the same time how tourism affect the culture, Local community, behaviour of people, social pattern was studied very late .whether it is mass tourism or religious tourism to some extent it affect local community. Tourism has great potential to help in the development of people, especially tourism does help in the development of local community, and there are many concept of tourism as a catalyst for development. Religious tourism in the Shakti-peethas is helpful in the development of local community as other form of tourism do. People living in the periphery of these shrines have been benefited by different way .religious centres also affect negatively but our motive here is to assess mainly positive aspects of religious tourism on local community. religious tourism offer lots of employment opportunities like to offer service in banking , accommodation ,catering , restaurant , tour and travel facilities, transportation services .On the other hand local community is disgraced with congestion , pollution , social disorder , water shortage . These are the general preview of religious tourism on the local community. So when we are analysing the different aspects of religious tourism it becomes necessary that we should assess how exactly religious tourism is already affecting. Every action plan before execution need to put in front of local community. They have the first right to accept or reject the policy, but unfortunately throughout the world less attention has been paid towards such issues. In India there are such hundreds of religious centres where lacks of people visit every year. To what extent religious tourism help local community no body knows. there are few questions like , how to involve local community in policy making , how they can help government to promote tourism , whether they are happy with the tourism promotion or not, how influx of tourism act upon the society and behaviour of these people. Community development is not necessary because they are the host but because sustainable religious tourism development is not possible with out community participation. Shakti – Peethas in Himachal Pradesh are hub of religious tourism activities. Even though we have very beautiful temples in our state like Masrur Rock cut temple, Shive temple of Bajaura, Laxmi Narayan temple Chamba, Shiva temple of Baijnath .they are visited by very few people as compare to shakti peethas. Religious devotees from all over India come to Himachal Pradesh to seek the blessing of goddesses. Local community is supposed to be partner in handling the tourism flow. If tourism flow is not helpful to the development local community then what the purpose of such tourism is, and how we can
expect cooperation from them. When we talk about development of local community it means upliftment in every sphere of life. Local area should be enriched with world class road network and connectivity, quality accommodation, transportation system, banking service, insurance, health, education, tour and travel arrangement, above all employment opportunity. Present status of religious tourism in the development of local community is so far at par.

All five towns of Shakti-Peetha area are well developed market place. Pilgrims visit throughout year. It helps local community to earn livelihood even in the off-season, when rest of Himachal Pradesh receive very few tourists. Religious tourism has major advantage over other forms of tourism, that there is no off season. Religious faith compels to visit through out year. There are occasion of marriage ceremony, birth ceremony, Navratras, fair, woe to visit after fulfilment of wish. Sometimes supernatural phenomena of shrine attract people to pay visit. Gorakhdibbi Natural flames of Jawalaji shrine are such supernatural phenomena. Every year huge sum of amount is collected beside gold and silver. Temple trust body and priests of the shrines are always there to welcome devotees. Management of Shakti-peethas is in the hand of trust. Purpose behind formation of trust is to have proper management of shrine and best utilisation of money. Shrines are gradually transforming into centre of mass tourism. Unforeseen future, city culture, natural calamities, and uncertainty of life compel rational human being to take hostage in the lap of religion. We have the living example of religious Gurus SRI SRI Ravi Shanker, Baba Ram Dev, Satya SAI Baba. Every one from top brass of politicians, business tycoon, academician, are disciple of these guru. People now show more faith in the religion, peace of mind. We are compelled by our modern life style to rely on these phenomenons. Religion and tourism are quite interrelated with each other.

**How community respond to tourism?**

Tourism is movement of people from one place to another. We can also say that tourism is movement of people from their own destination to some other's destination. On one hand we can say it is simply movement but on the other it is intrusion. When person visit new destination for change, recreation, to admire, VFR, or for any other reason it definitely affect the community of that particular area. Movement without the permission is definitely intrusion. Which ultimately compel Host community to face the consequences of
tourism? What exactly is the impact factor of such activities leads local community to respond. Shakti-Peethas are facing such problem. Mega project throughout the world face resistance from different groups. Visit of people to the sacred places in earlier time was special occasion in one's life. Our sacred books pronounce it Tirth Yatra. With the passage of time it becomes part and parcel of life to visit sacred place on every auspicious occasion. There are many reasons behind such mass movement it may be increase in population, increase in disposable income, or as a symbol of prestige. These factors compel policy maker to think about the local community. Tourism cannot by promoted at its par without the participation of local community. All the developed tourist destinations receive participation of host community. Shakti-Peethas of Himachal Pradesh are centre of attraction for pilgrims. Festive seasons attract lacks of devotees from all over the country, which leads to conflicts between host and guest. On average such type of conflicts are common in the unplanned tourist areas. We can’t expect local people to show curtsey and hospitality, towards tourists when they are in trouble because of their influx. One of the major causes of conflict among host and guest is lack of infrastructure. When basic facilities are absent at major tourist centres.

10.7 SUGGESTIONS FOR RELIGIOUS TOURISM IN HIMACHAL PRADESH

Religious tourism is the largest tourist sector in India, more than 70% of the domestic tourist movement is for the religious purposes and 20% of the revenue in tourism industry is generated by religious tourism (Cox and Kings 2008-09). A study by the Delhi based National Council for Applied Economic Research (NCAER) shows that the largest proportion of trips are religious, accounting for 50 percent, whereas leisure tour packages account for 28 per cent.

1. There is need to create quality tourism infrastructure at pilgrimage destinations in order to enhance the environs of the destination and to strengthen its appeal
2. There is need to develop special interest tourism products such as theme parks, interpretation centers, bird watching, spa and other recreational components.
CHAPTER 10 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

3. There is need to generate employment and socio-economic benefits by development of capacity building so, tourism growth will act as a catalyst in building entrepreneurship, small business enterprises and economy diversity.

4. There is need to ensure authenticity and original character of the religious site is remained since development pressure due to the fact that unplanned visitor facilities and illegal encroachments are mushrooming in the vicinity of these sites.

REQUIREMENTS AT SHAKTI PEETHS OF HIMACHAL PRADESH

1. Well-defined spaces
   a) A well-defined and demarcated entrance plaza.
   b) Organised public conveniences and visitor amenities and well-defined vendor courts.
   c) Visitor management system at temple for visitor circulation through narrow pathways and
d) encroachments, and to address as overcrowding and unregulated visitor movement.
e) Disaster prevention plans to manage over-crowding and to avoid loss of life that has occurred at stampedes at other religious centers in India.

2. Adequate parking areas
   Segregated parking spaces for buses, four-wheelers and two-wheelers, to prevent bottlenecks, delays, noise and air pollution etc.

3. General facilities with cleanliness and hygiene
   a) Proper toilet facilities and drinking water and organized and hygienic eating places
   b) Identified recreation/ public spaces and exhibition spaces and display areas.
   c) Vendor stalls conforming to approved standards.
d) Accommodation, especially during festival and auspicious dates.

4. Proper signage system and Interpretation facilities
   a) Directional and informative Signage system to orient the visitors efficiently
   b) Knowledgeable guides.
c) Heritage interpretation centre and museum.
d) Awareness and integration of sites so that tourists visit nearby sites

5. Adequate promotional efforts
   a) Promotional efforts to create a distinct image and identity as quality destinations.
b) Drawing high spending tourists from major domestic markets.
c) Awareness and education amongst local residents regarding benefits of tourism, skilled manpower and local aspirations.

MAJOR THREATS TO SPIRITUAL TOURISM

1. Loss of authenticity due to encroachment
   a) Development pressure due to the fact that unplanned visitor facilities and illegal encroachments are mushrooming in the vicinity of these sites.
   b) Encroachment on the walkway disturbs the pedestrian movement. Further, developmental pressure can threaten the authenticity and original character of the religious site.

2. Unregulated visitor behavior
   Overcrowding and unregulated tourist behavior seriously hampers the visitor circulation at some of the temple precincts. These sites do not have a basic visitor management system in place and lack adequate manpower to regulate the mass of visitors especially on weekends and holidays.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Infrastructure Development
   a) There is need to develop basic facilities to visitors to develop all religious destinations as a domestic crowd pulling segments.
   b) Connectivity by providing internal road.
   c) Destination Utility Infrastructure by providing toilets, waiting shed/pavilion, cafeteria, clean water supply, street furniture for the comfort of tourists as well as local inhabitants.
   d) Organized Parking and vehicular movements at temple sites or nearby sites if not possible at temple sites
   e) Proper signage to orient the visitors efficiently by augmenting signage system at vantage points of the location.
   f) Single window Information and interpretation centre which will provide visitors a synoptic depiction of the area, exhibits on flora and fauna etc. It will also act as a documentation centre for spiritual researchers.
CHAPTER 10

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

g) Providing landscape spaces with flower beds, lawns, fountains, pathways, seating, lighting etc will improve the environs of the site leading to visitor enjoyment and recreation.

h) Provision of a range of accommodation units such as luxury resorts, budget hotels and camping tents catering to varied customer segments.

2. ENHANCING THE CORE APPEAL OF THE DESTINATION

Pilgrimage to religious destinations is motivated by the desire to experience the mysticism and the divinity of Gods and Goddesses. There is need to enhance this experience through Expos and pavilions which will familiarize the visitors with the history of the temples, its importance and its relevance to the present society. Science and Spirituality Pavilion will present meeting points of science and spirituality in an interactive exhibition space, to stimulate an inquiring mind about the profound philosophical subjects on India's source books of wisdom. The entire process of tourism development should revolve around this core appeal and creation of new tourism products need to complement the core attraction of the religious sites.

3. CONSERVATION OF RESOURCES

a) There is need to prepare comprehensive restoration and conservation plans of heritage sites by involving Archeology department.

b) There is need to apply solid waste treatment plant since lot of solid waste produce from various Shakti Peeths and temples of Himachal Pradesh.

4. PRIVATE SECTOR PARTICIPATION

a) The Tourism Policy of the Government should lay special emphasis on maximum participation of the private sector in making investments in tourism projects. Multi-stakeholder partnership is an important element of promoting tourism. It provides tangible livelihood options to local people such as hotel personnel, guides, porters, watchmen, maintenance workers and other service providers.

b) The local community members should be involved in managing small business enterprises like cafeteria, souvenir shops, travel and transport services, craft shops etc. There is need of private sector partnership to identify the gaps in religious infrastructure, explore new avenues, to multiply the investments in religious sector, to provide the standard compare to international standard.

351
5. SPECIAL INTEREST TOURISM PRODUCTS

Himachal Pradesh currently does not figure in the top ten states frequented by foreign tourists in India. To attract foreign tourists to religious destination, we need to propose special interest tourism products such as eco-tourism programmes and bird watching at Pong dam near Jwala Ji and adventure tourism in Govind Sagar lake near Naina devuetc. Tourist and Pilgrim both have a different purpose of visits to these religious destinations. Tourists may not find it worthwhile to come all the way just for a pilgrimage if special interest products are not there. We may create nodes near religious centres, where there is already a basic infrastructure present with such special products and plan day trips from there if it is not possible at religious destination.

Theme Park

Most of the religious destinations presently lack an organized recreational facility for visitors. In today’s society, people, especially children, are exposed to world class entertainment through animation, multi-million dollar Hollywood productions like the Harry Potter films, internet content, and IMAX films and so on. There is also need to present Indian classical content also in a manner that matches or exceeds these standards of presentation. The theme park will engage visitors in exploring legends, myths and historical events associated with particular gods. It will also act as entertainment and recreational venue for visitors and local populace to spend quality time with family and friends. These theme parks should present and promote the culture and heritage of India in a compelling manner using state-of-the-art technology in a family edutainment format.

DESTINATION PROMOTION STRATEGY

a) There is need to create destination awareness through extensive media campaign targeting high-spending tourists both domestic and international.

b) There is need to connect temples with International Institutes worldwide to promote the destinations like connect Shakti Peeths with Iskon International Organization.

c) There is need to develop linkages of the surrounding destinations around the pilgrimage sites to draw tourists.

d) There is need to attract branded hotel groups, restaurant chains etc. to create quality facilities. Varanasi, Tirupati and Pushkar are successful examples of leveraging religious tourism in attracting premium hospitality chains such as Taj, Radisson,
CHAPTER 10 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

ITC-Fortune, Lemon Tree and Others. Ginger Hotels plan to construct 100 hotels within the next five years with a large number of properties coming up in religious destinations.

e) **Promote e-marking**: There is Promote e-marking of the destination through a dedicated website and other travel portals.

f) **Co-operative Marketing**: There is need to develop co-operative marketing partnerships with specialized tour operators and travel agents.

g) **High quality promotional material** There is need to develop high quality promotional material such as brochures, posters, booklets, guide books, CD-ROM etc.

10.8 RECOMMENDATIONS ON DEVELOPMENT OF RELIGIOUS TOURISM

> Further improvements to the existing religious products to enhance their value to the potential tourists.

> Policies, strategies, and marketing programmes that the destinations should adopt and implement so as to increase the religious tourists flows to the region.

> Policies and strategies to overcome the seasonality and congestion problems in certain destinations.

> Sustainability guidelines for the development of religious tourism in the region.

> Behavioural issues of tourists for policy makers to resolve.

> Administrative barriers to be streamlined.

> Rectification of shortcomings in destinations concerning religious tourism.

> PR and advertising campaigns to be adopted by destinations to enhance religious tourism based on market intelligence.

> Innovations of religious tourism e.g. combining it with other types of cultural tourism or other types of tourism.

> Ways in which the local communities can be involved in religious tourism.

> Creation of new intra and inter regional markets for religious purposes.

> Enhancing the potential tourists’ knowledge and understanding of religious tourism in the region.
British Tourist authority defines tourism as “a stay of one or more nights away from home for holidays, visits to friends or relatives, business conferences or any other purpose, except such things as boarding, education, or semi-permanent employment.”

People travel for many reasons nowadays. These include:

- Recreational travel
- Adventure and sports tourism
- Cultural tourism
- Health tourism
- Conference and conventions travel

Tourism has been one of the world’s fastest growing industries, and there are large societies entirely dependent upon the visitor for their sustenance. Spain with a population of about 10 million, has 40 million tourists per year, and Singapore with a population of 1.2 million has about 6 million tourists.

However, successful countries exhibit a great capacity to continuously change their product, and not get stuck in a mould. It is an eye opener that the highly acclaimed Singapore Tourism Board is re-packaging the destination for the 21st century tourist, and “re-formulating the tourism product”. In a policy statement, it emphasis:

“Evoke one’s memories of great cities and invariably, places like Paris, new York, and London come to mind. Cities like these leave deep impressions because they have one thing in common – they are world-class in many ways. From food to fashion to culture, they appeal to visitors in their own unique ways. More than a tourist attraction, these cities possess that magical sense of place, in evocative mixture of factors that spell the difference between a must-stay and stopover.

Singapore is a successful tourist destination in its own right. But it can and should be more – it should be able to reach out to visitors on an emotional level in the same way as these world-class cities, and be a place where memorable experiences are created and cherished.”

Himachal Pradesh tourism has to address this urgent need of re-formulating its own product and attendant strategy, to emerge as a serious player in the industry.

The Tenth Plan documents reveal a distinct shift in the government’s approach to tourism. While tourism is indeed a promoter of national integration (domestic tourism), it is
also a facilitator of international understanding (international tourism). At the same time, it is seen as having a large share of tertiary sector growth, with a great potential for development, especially for hill states, which are endowed with natural beauty.

The National Tourism Policy 2002 document exhibits this changed approach. It recognizes that tourism emerged as the largest global industry of the 20th century and is projected to grow even faster in the 21st century, and that India has immense possibilities of growth in the tourism sector with vast cultural and religious heritage, varied natural attractions, but a comparatively small role in the world tourism scene. It lays down its mission to promote sustainable tourism as a means of economic growth and social integration and to promote the image of India abroad as a country with a glorious past, a vibrant present and a bright future. This is based around six concepts of:

1. Welcome (swagat),
2. Information (suchana),
3. Facilitation (suvidha)
4. Safety (suraksha),
5. Cooperation (sahyog) and
6. Infrastructure Development (samrachana)

Public and Private Sector Partnership in Religious Tourism

A constructive and mutually beneficial partnership between the public and the private sectors through all feasible means is an absolute necessity for the sustained growth of tourism. It is, therefore, the policy of the government to encourage emergence of such a partnership. This will be achieved by creating a Tourism Development authority consisting of senior officials of the government and tourism experts and professionals from the private sector. Even in religious tourism State Government Department of Language, Art & Culture and shrine trusts can play an important role in the development of religious tourism in the state.

Involvement of local bodies

It will be the policy of government to encourage peoples’ participation in religious tourism development, including the involvement of Panchayati Raj Institutions, local bodies, co-operatives, non-governmental organizations and enterprising local youth to create public awareness and to achieve a wider spread of tourist facilities. However, attention will be
focused on or given for the integrated development of identified centres with well-directed public participation. Religious tourism has the best potential of involving local people in the development and this has to be given due importance.

**Linkage and Synergy in Policies**

The government will aim to achieve necessary linkages and synergies in the policies and programmes of all concerned departments/ agencies by establishing effective co-ordination mechanisms at Central, State and District levels. The focus of national policy, therefore, will also be to develop tourism as a common endeavour of all the agencies vitally concerned with it at the Central and State levels, public sector undertakings and the private sector.

**Role of the Government in the New Policy**

Tourism is a multi-sectoral activity and the industry is affected by many other sectors of the national economy. The state has, therefore, to ensure inter-governmental linkages and co-ordination. It also has to play a pivotal role in tourism management and promotion. The specific role of the government will be to:

1. Provide basic infrastructural facilities including local planning and zoning arrangements.
2. Plan tourism development as a part of the overall area development strategy.
3. Create nucleus infrastructure in the initial stages of development to demonstrate the potential of the area.
4. Provide the required support facilities and incentives to both domestic and foreign investors to encourage private investment in the tourism sector.
5. Rationalize taxation and land policies in the tourism sector in all the States and Union Territories and in respect of land owned by government agencies like the Railways.
6. Introduce regulatory measures to ensure social, cultural and environmental sustainability, as well as safety and security of tourists.
7. Ensure that the type and scale of tourism development is compatible with the environment and socio-cultural milieu of the area.
8. Ensure that the local community is fully involved and the benefits of tourism accrue to them.
9. Facilitate availability of trained manpower, particularly from amongst the local population jointly with the industry.

10. Undertake research. Prepare master plans, and facilitate formulation of marketing strategies.

11. Organize overseas promotion and marketing jointly with the industry.

12. Initiate specific measures to ensure safety and security of tourists and efficient facilitation services.

13. Facilitate the growth of a dynamic tourism sector.

Thus, the government is moving from an active investor to:

- Infrastructure provider and manager
- Planner for tourism
- Regulator for conservation and preservation
- General facilitator

As a consequence to this new role of the government, it is expected that the private sector will expand, providing new direction to the industry.

The private sector has to consider investment in tourism from a long-term perspective and create the required facilities including accommodation, time-share, restaurants, entertainment facilities, shopping complexes, etc., in areas identified for tourism development. Non-core activities at all airports, major stations and inter-state but terminuses such as cleanliness and maintenance, luggage transportation, vehicle parking facilities, etc., should be opened up to private operators to increase efficiency and profitability. The specific role of the private sector will be to:

- Build and manage the required tourist facilities at all places of tourist interest.
- Assume collective responsibility for laying down industry standards, ethics and fair practices.
- Ensure preservation and protection of tourist attractions and give the lead in green practices.
- Sponsor maintenance of monuments, museums and parks and provision of public conveniences and facilities.
- Involve the local community in tourism projects and ensure that the benefits of tourism accrue to them in right measure.
• Undertake industry training and manpower development to achieve excellence in quality of services.
• Participate in the preparation of investment guidelines and marketing strategies and assist in database creation and research.
• Facilitate safety and security of tourists.
• Endeavour to promote tourism on a sustained and long-term perspective.
• Collaborate with Government in the promotion and marketing of destinations.

Change Policy Focus to Tourist

Reading tourism policy statements and related policy documents, it becomes clear that the focus of Himachal Pradesh tourism is on Himachal Pradesh itself. Tourism is viewed as a socio-developmental necessity, in order to bring about the development of the state and its citizens. It is treated minimally in its five year plans, annual plans, and the Economic Survey – clubbed as “Tourism and Civil Aviation”, or a small part of “General Economic Services”.

This focus is not correct, and is leading to the formation of incomplete and mis-targetted policies on the tourism front.

The tourism sector has to be seen as an industry (not merely in government documents or taxation and accounting procedures), by re-orienting the entire philosophy to a marketing concept, focusing singularly on the customer, i.e., the tourist. There has to be a clear realization that the development of Himachal Pradesh will take place as a by-product of looking after the tourist customer.

Religious Destination Marketing

Himachal Pradesh has to be marketed as a macro destination, with micro points within it. Even the tourism brand name, brand ambassadors, sites and sounds – all have to be chosen after meticulous research, so that positive associations are permanently built up, and place HP as amongst first-choice destinations.

Even a random line sketch of Eiffel Tower or Status of Liberty conjures up an image of a city and a nation, and attracts tourists. Malaysia started its “Truly Asia” campaign for the country and focused on Kuala Lumpur, using the Twin Petronas Towers as the icon.
Himachal Pradesh needs to generate these internationally recognizable brand icons. There are competing mountains slopes and pine forests around the world, the Himachal Tourism logo does not promise anything different.

**Devise a Marketing Campaign**

The average budget allotment for tourism development has been in the region of Rs. 5 crore annually, and this is too meagre to sustain a cohesive destination marketing campaign. A mega input over a period of 10 years is needed to sell Himachal Pradesh in a professional manner, with inputs from trade professionals. The expectation sold must be fulfilled by actual experience on the ground, with a marketing campaign must be based on ground realities.

**Himachal Pradesh Tourism Authority**

The government should lay down tourism standards, and oversee their strict observances.

The Himachal Pradesh Tourist Board needs to grow into these roles of the Authority to oversee policy, accreditation, standardization, and certification procedures. From the non-official side, the association of all concerned will be formalized; to broad-base decision-making (hotel and restaurant owners, transporters, guides, porters etc.) the Authority will sustain itself from the membership charges paid by various constituents. It will be charged with the following responsibilities:

1. Coordination of tourism research, for information dissemination to members. Assist in development of market strategy.
2. Interaction with other government agencies to ensure availability of adequate infrastructure in power, transport, telecom and municipal services.
3. Representation in major tourist market points, and the running of information offices.
4. Organisation of and participation in trade shows.
5. Familiarization trips for key patterns from distribution channels and travel writers.
6. Arrange support for new and small business.
7. Consumer assistance and certification practices will form a major part of the Authority’s work. The authority will:
   a. Ensure that tourist developmental activities are conducted in an environment-friendly manner.
b. Classify services – hotels, restaurants, taxis, guides, porters etc., into clear categories, based upon tourist requirement.

c. Standardize services, by devising a clear service criterion. For example, it may say that every restaurant must have at least one waiter on duty, who can converse in English and at least one foreign language (depending upon visitor profile), at all times when it is open for business. Standardization will extend to both, infrastructure facilities fixed and movable, and to services.

d. After standardization, certify the services provided.

e. For certification, the Authority will authorize training and certification centres across the state. A syllabus for the various services will be prepared, and the training centres will conduct training and certification on the Authority’s behalf.

f. The Authority will ensure through checks that the training centres and their programmes are as per specifications. The training centres shall not become certification shops, where they start certification without training, to the detriment of industry.

g. Keep track of all individuals and organizations, and their certifications. Arrange certification renewal at a reasonable periodicity to refresh skills.

h. Withdraw certification upon failure to observe norms, and effectively enforce the withdrawal.

i. Bring out clear and concise certification information for the guidance of the tourist. The tourist would see certain simple certification graphics on hotels, taxis, porters etc., and know the exact service he can expect. For example, a taxi with the relevance symbol would mean that the driver can speak English, carries a rate chart, help line numbers, an identity card, and a mobile phone for emergency services.

j. For these services, the authority will change member organizations and individuals a reasonable sum to sustain its activities.

k. The hospitality industry will be encouraged to take membership by announcing suitable incentives and concessions. This will raise standards across the state.

l. Recommended the rationalization of taxation and land policies affecting the tourism industry.

m. Ensure participation of local communities, and PRIs/ULBs.
The government may grant the Himachal Pradesh Tourism Authority a one-time corpus of a reasonable amount, and then it grows on its own as a professional organization.

The Basic of the Strategy for Religious Tourism Development with Focus on Community Development

The strategy is based on the following assumptions:

Differentiation

Through market research and analysis, Himachal Pradesh will define its distinctive appeal for the foreign and domestic tourist sectors. This is based upon a realization that Himachal Pradesh is not the only place in the world with mountains, snow, and pines. Our promotion will have to be based on more than this, and attempt to carve out a different niche, which can be used as a marketing pitch. Most of the places in Himachal Pradesh are treated as seasonal in general tourism. This should be the key as religious tourism has all the better opportunities for breaking seasonality in tourism.

Focus of development

In tourism, the developmental process should be given in the hands of local community, which will reduce the negative practices and resentment among local community.

Security

The tourist dreads insecurity. Himachal Pradesh will remove this insecurity absolutely by launching door-to-door tourist packages that take care of complete logistics. More and more use of tourist police may be undertaken at religious places.

Standards

Tourists dread non-standard practices. The Himachal Pradesh Tourism Authority through a standardization and certification regime will remove this fear from the tourist experience, encouraging repeat visits, and recommendations as a preferred destination.

The Last Word

It is during this century that the religious industry has flourished and the number of people visiting religious sites has multiplied. This rapid expansion rests on a few grounds. The first is that more and more people are looking for the places at which to spend some of their leisure time in spiritual ways. The second is the fact that many of these visitors are
reasonably flexible in their choice of places; their basic needs of interest, relaxation and a change of scene can be met in a variety of locations. The third is awareness that there is a very general, if variable in terms of its attention to detail, interest in the past and the broad idea of religious. The fourth is the more general fact that as larger numbers of people achieves personal mobility and the means of travel. Tourism and travel professionals should be aware that this market might well double by the year 2020. To add to this number many faith-based travelers prefer to travel in groups rather than as individuals. Among the things to consider are types of food served, types of music played and when activities take place. As in other forms of tourism it is essential to know your market. For example, airlines that do not offer vegetarian meals may lose a portion of the faith-based market whose religion has specific food restrictions.

Himachal Pradesh is blessed with a lot of Religious sites, natural as well as cultural. There are a lot traditions and customs in Himachal Pradesh, which are unique in them, need of hour is to promote them, so that we can preserve them. Tourism is responsible for the revitalisation of some dying customs and traditions, so we have to promote it, same as the case with the Shri Mata Viashno Devi Shrine. Himachal is the home of some ancient temples and monasteries which are more than 1000 years old, for their preservation they need funds, by promoting tourism in those areas we can earn money in form of donations for them, which can be utilised for the maintenance and the preservation of those temples and monasteries and other several historical buildings and monuments as forts and temples. One major point of discussion is the authenticity related with the religious tourism. For this Governments should form a Religious Management Board, which should encourage the researches upon religious sites of the state and publish some authentic study material upon them.

A Word of Caution

Despite the potential value of introducing these types of income-earning enterprises, it is vital that site managers keep their goal of spiritual growth and religious support as their top priority. There is a real danger of becoming too commercialized or too caught up in making money that the real purpose of a spiritual place becomes overshadowed by economics.
Likewise, it is prudent for managers to remember not to sell items, design displays and buildings, and promote their product in such a way that the means used to maintain what is sacred do not cause them to become profane. Unfortunately, this has been the case at some sacred sites in Asia, North America, Europe and Latin America. In other words, a delicate balance is needed.

10.9 AREAS OF FURTHER RESEARCH
This study was an effort in the field of religious tourism. Research team has tried his level best to come up with a comprehensive study on the topic. This study tried to include maximum aspects related with this topic but still there are various areas on which further studies can be conducted. These areas are as follows

1. A study on the religious tourism of other states can be undertaken.
2. A comparative study of two states can be undertaken, giving due importance to similarity of tourism products.
3. A study of the comprehensive religious/pilgrimage tourism can be undertaken.
4. Travel intermediaries play an important role in the development of tourism in a state. A study can be conducted on their role in the promotion of tourism, problems associated with their business.
5. While planning for tourism, the market research play an important role, this can be a study topic. A study on the market research for religious tourism may be conducted.
6. A study for the development of tourism policy of the states/country may be undertaken.
7. This study shows that for Himachal Pradesh religious tourism can break the seasonality factor in tourism. Hence a sperate study of complete Himachal Pradesh may be undertaken.
8. A study on tourism shopping/local art and handicrafts industry may be undertaken.
9. A study on the religious shrine management may be undertaken with an emphasis on the conservation of religious recourses.
10. A similar study may be undertaken to validate the findings of this study.