7. Implications and further research.

7.1 Implications.

The central aspect of this thesis has been the attraction development process and the deviations from established theory that have been observed through the case studies both in Goa and Portugal. The observations through the case studies lead us to conclude that there are certain aspects that are peculiar to man-made attractions especially in the peripheral areas and those that are in the realm of small and medium enterprises. The observations relating to the theories of attractions development and the case studies revealed that some aspects of the theory become more critical in the case of small and medium enterprises in the peripheral areas of a destination. These observations have certain implications, both, for Goa and Portugal.

One of the major implications is associated with planning the destination development. As the entrepreneurs, due to their passion for their work, become blind to commercial realities, a proper framework of support has to be identified for them to enable them to generate the commercial viability that is essential for the survival of the organization. This gives rise to the role of the government as well as the public and private enterprises in the tourism business to support the attraction development
activity in a destination. The decision of how much of planned activity of support will lead to emergence of attractions through opportunity identification by the entrepreneurs is an issue that can be researched further. An intervening organizational supportive framework such as the one developed by TURIHAB in Portugal can be a starting point for attraction development in Goa. One of the most important implications would be the relevance of a well thought out approach to attraction planning to optimize the resource utilization at the destination.

Another implication of this research is in the area of stages of the attraction development. The mechanical reproduction stage of an attraction development is the one that has the greatest potential to draw visitors to the attraction. The intervening organization can take up this work to create and promote the mechanical reproduction of attractions it represents. Theoretically, an attraction in the peripheral areas which is managed / owned by a small or medium entrepreneur cannot handle the mechanical reproduction on a large scale. The involvement of the public or any other organization will provide a larger canvas for the entrepreneur to promote his/her attraction. Any intervention approach either through a co-operative like the TURIHAB in Portugal or a public organization such as the local government can undertake the exercise to help promote the mechanical reproduction.
A third implication from a planning point of view is that peripheral attractions being away from the honey-pot areas of tourism, have a built-in disadvantage which can be overcome by proper planning of attractions. Due care has to be given to the development of attractions in order to ensure that there is increased visitation to the region. A planned approach to attraction development in the peripheral areas will reduce the risk faced by the entrepreneurs.

A fourth implication is that effective “markers” might have to be developed using the region’s resource to enable people to relate to it and visit the attraction. For example, Dona Paula is a very strong marker to tourists who visit Goa though it does not have a high attraction value. The marker is in a position to draw visitors to the water scooter attraction, which gets a higher visitation though it is a tertiary attraction according to Leiper (1990). Similarly the experience of “peace and quiet” in Portugal has led to the development of attractions such as the Solares de Portugal in the areas of agro-tourism as well as rural tourism. Rural tourism incidentally has become the main reason for visiting the Solares de Portugal and as such has moved from a tertiary attraction to a Primary attraction. The geographic distance between the honey-pot area of beach tourism in the Algarve region of Portugal and rural tourism in North
Portugal also has facilitated a clear-cut distinction between the markets for both these products. This however is not the case in Goa where geographic distances are not large between the beach attraction and the hinterland/peripheral attractions. However the cost of access becomes a barrier to attraction visitation in the peripheral areas of Goa. This would mean a better transport network in the peripheral areas, better networking with the tour operators and better management of attractions.

In destinations that have the dominance of a single attraction type such as a beach destination, it becomes difficult to entice visitors away from it. In such a situation the creation of attractions becomes a paramount concern. In the absence of newer attractions the destination starts losing its clientele. The slow rate of change in the visitor preferences masks the need for attraction development. This leads to a sluggish growth of the attractions industry without the presence of a catalyst. A catalytic organization is needed for the healthy growth and development of the attractions industry, more so in the peripheral areas.

Flagship attractions in the peripheral areas have the potential to draw smaller attractions around them to create an "attraction zone". The implication of helping create an attraction zone would be in terms of
development of flagship attractions in peripheral areas. This could be either done through efforts of the industry or through the government or through some joint venture by both the private and public enterprises.

7.2 Further Research.

The thesis basically tries to identify the developmental process of small and medium attractions in the peripheral areas of a destination. One of the market drawbacks that have been observed in this research is the lack of any kind of meaningful alliance/cooperative effort/mutually beneficial agreement between the attraction owners/entrepreneurs and the travel and accommodation sector of the tourism industry. This is observed even though the need of having such kind of alliances would be meaningful given the disadvantageous situation for the attractions in peripheral areas. From a strategic angle also it seems logical that a cooperative effort would help overcome the consequences of size-deficiencies that are commonly seen in the small and medium enterprises. One area where further research can be undertaken would be the presence/absence of mutually beneficial alliances in the attraction industry, especially in the peripheral areas.

The thesis shows that the process of attraction development in Goa indicates ad-hoc decisions leading to the “emergent” nature of the attraction development. This is in contrast to the planned approach
taken by the cooperative TURIHAB in developing the attractions branded "Solares de Portugal". Further research can be conducted on the kind of model that is suited for peripheral area development using tourism as a vehicle.