India is a land of contrast of most ancient cultural heritage and more than 1 Billion (1,627,015,247 -16% of the world total) people diverse in many ways inhabit over 3,287,263 square Kms.

One cannot believe that such a wonderful country on the world map has a great diversity and uniqueness in everything either it is religion, language, food, culture, environment and ecology, geography or economy etc. And all these constitute tourism product, and simply greater the variety larger the customer base (tourists). Yes one can not believe that in one part of this country there is scorching heat and temperature goes beyond 45°C while other parts have shivering cold. Some parts get rain for whole of the year while some parts are dry at the same time. One can find desert and lush green areas too. After every 50 km one can note dramatically change in the language of the people, their foods and food habits. Every state here has its own culture and social customs. People of many religions, faiths & sects are living together peacefully though their rituals, way of prayer, customs are entirely different from each other, Some parts of India has unparalleled exotic beaches like Lakshadweep & Goa. Snow capped Himalayan peaks are another attraction. Fauna and flora of India are very rich and different as one move from one direction to another or from downward to upward. Still one can find tribal and Maharajas. This country is also famous for Nawabs and Kebabs i.e. royal ness and its food. India too has world-class opportunities for water sports. Its myriad cultures and spiritualism has always captured the imagination of many foreign celebrities too. They want to feel the color and vibrancy of this great country aand looking forward to visit with great enthusiasm

One can find everything in India -from skyscrapers of metropolitan cities to mud houses of a remote village. Still India has preserved the footprints of its civilization from ancient to modern in forms of various monuments and ruins. Monument of love and king of the entire Heritage sites -The Tajmahal lies in India. Similarly monument of hatred-Cellular jail is also in India. Every part of this country has its own history. India is one of the famous tourist spot for the Health Tourism. People of the world are now coming to India to find serenity, to seek tranquility, to
explore a destination within. In this aspect Kerala is on the top and next come hilly regions. Many cities of India are very old and contemporary to other ancient civilizations. For example Banaras (Varanasi) is one of the oldest living cities contemporary to Jerusalem. It is famous for its historical old lanes, music, Yoga, Astrology, Ayurveda and is also a famous learning center of Hindu culture. This diversity is an attraction for the tourists and thus a source of tourism but there is a need of careful planning for the tourism development, one can say that to see the whole of India one should take rebirth. Thus in short India is like a magic box, which is very small, but one can get spellbound when one sees that the things coming out of the box are bigger than the box itself.

Earlier travel was limited to few rich affluent and adventurous people. With the rise in the standard of living of people and technological advancement world over, concomitant development of transportation and aviation industry also took place. This development leads to introduction of lower airfare schemes. As a result middle and working classes are able to enjoy the overseas holidays. Thus tourism today is sold like other normal consumer product and due to this technological advancement tourism has now developed into mass tourism.

Hilly regions have great physical diversities due to physical and climatic variations. The fauna and flora, and the life economy of the people of hilly regions also exhibits varied patterns elevation and climate also influence tourists, climate is a significant determinate which affects the flow of the tourists, that's why the summer season attracts a large number of tourists for holidaying at hill resorts and health resorts at hill stations. Spring at hills is very pleasant when the tourist can enjoy the greenery of hills thus the suitability of climate for recreation is a major factor influencing the growth of tourism. Water bodies such as lakes, springs and streams also attract a large number of tourists. Hilly regions have enjoyed a continuity of traditions of tourism. Adventures, pilgrims and trekkers have sought the hills and shrines in their quest for peace and tranquility.

Tourists, taking the benefits of tourism to the villages where local craftsmen live and work. In many parts of hills of India like Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Uttrakhand tourism has transformed many obscure and backward villages into thriving tourist centers. Being labor-intensive industry tourism has numerous job opportunities for young Indians and which is the necessity of the time.
In simple words, Tourism is the movement of the people from a well known place to a strange place in search of pleasure to satisfy their urge either related to sex, money, religion, health, learning or spirituality or related to fun just the way they enjoy. The money they earned at the domiciled place spent on these strange places they visit thus strengthen the economy of that place. Thus tourism is like blood in the world economy because it has direct as well as indirect effects on almost every sector of the society of a nation (Social, cultural, educational, economic, ecological etc.) No other industry has such multidimensional impacts and when one talk about the tourism impacts on ecology it is necessary to maintain the ecological balance, which is of prime concern in this fast growing modern world and thus need to promote ecotourism developed automatically.

Indian Government realized the importance of tourism very late in seventies when a separate ministry of tourism and civil aviation was formed. Though tourism today has got the status of Industry, It is an invisible export but getting very less incentives and concessions as given to other export industries.

The allocation of funds for tourism promotion in budget is less than 1%. Consequently, though tourism is developing but in unplanned manner resulting in to the creation of many problems especially in the ecologically fragile hilly regions which are great source of rich biodiversity. The present study therefore undertakes comparative growth of tourism in various hilly regions of India and Himachal Pradesh in particular, study of the problems caused my the mass tourism in the state and perception of the hoteliers, domestic tourists, foreign tourists and locals about tourism and its contribution.

Biodiversity and cool breeze and peacefulness of the hills are very much helpful in the spiritual upliftment. Music of natural treasures and greenery produce hypnosis and soothes the eyes. From a long time different rulers and common people have different perception about these hilly regions. For a long time hilly regions of India have been neglected though these have enormous tourism potential for tourism even today few of these hilly regions are not given much attention from the tourism point of view. Thus causing a state of unequilibrium in tourist arrivals, few hilly regions though having enormous tourism potential, are unable to attract the sufficient number of tourists while few of them are victims of mass tourism. Mass tourism in these hilly regions poses a threat on the
ecosystem. In Himachal Pradesh few places like Shimla, Kullu, Kangra and Manali are worst affected. Tourists throng to these areas and thus causing various problems—pollution, lack of civic amenities etc. It does not mean that tourism should be stopped in these areas, one should also remember that economies of these areas are solely depend on the tourism development but when this development create some negative impact on the ecosystem of the area one must be cautious because disturbance in ecosystem is directly related to the life of the human being of that area. Although Government of Himachal Pradesh already announced the ecotourism policy of the state but most of the people are not aware of the ecotourism. Ecosystem of the hill area is fragile and delicate and little change in it causes irreversible damage. Thus researcher is of the view that mass ecotourism should be recognized in these areas specially the hard ecotourism which is based on the enhancing sustainability approach in which tourists are encouraged to participate in various activities like tree plantation, interaction with the local people, understanding of their culture and needs and behave accordingly causing minimum impact on the environment.

Present study is mostly statistical in nature and gives an account of trends in the tourist arrivals in India and projections for the future; and also concerned with the sustainable tourism development. Hence it was felt necessary to make an empirical study on the topic entitled “Growth of mass tourism in hilly regions of India: A case study of Himachal Pradesh.

Objectives of the Study
The main objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To review the concept of tourism to present day mass tourism.
2. To review the growth of tourism through five years plans.
3. To review the foreign tourist arrivals and foreign exchange earning through tourism from the year 1993 to 2004.
4. To review the ecological features of the hilly regions.
5. To review the flow of tourists in various district of Himachal Pradesh.
6. To review the growth pattern of tourist flow in Himachal Pradesh.
7. To identify the problems created by mass tourism in Himachal Pradesh and suggestive measures to overcome the problems.
Keeping in mind the objectives of the study, following hypotheses are developed.

i. That most of the people except foreign tourists are not aware about the ecotourism campaign run by the Himachal Pradesh Government.

ii. That most of the people are aware about the prosperity (economical aspect of tourism) that tourism brings.

iii. That Pollution and water scarcity are the major problems arising from the mass tourism during the tourist season.

iv. That Air pollution and over construction are the major components of environmental degradation arising from the mass tourism.

v. That most of the people are of the view that hotel development should takes place in an environment friendly way.

vi. That most of the people are in support of introduction of tourism education from the school level that makes the future generation to behave in a responsible way.

vii. That most of the people are not satisfied with the sanitary condition of the area they reside/stay.

viii. That locals and domestic tourists are responsible for the environmental degradation.

ix. That promotion of the nature friendly tourism and creating awareness at mass level are the best measures to be taken by the Himachal Pradesh Government to protect the natural environment from Mass tourism in Himachal Pradesh.

Research Methodology
To achieve the above noted objectives of the study a thorough study of all possible academic and non-academic work in the field of tourism has been done. Which can be classified under following headings.

(a) Doctoral thesis
(b) Text and reference books
(c) Dissertation and reports
(d) Articles in journals
(e) Articles in news papers
The present study makes use of both Primary as well as Secondary Data. The primary data was collected through personal interview and filling up the Questionnaire. A sample of questionnaire is attached in the end of this study, for the convenience of the respondents researcher has used the word increasing tourism instead of Mass tourism. A sample survey on tourists, hoteliers and locals were conducted during peak season to gather details of their profile and attitudes towards the environment of the destination. The survey was conducted at Shimla, Manali, Kullu and Kangra. Researcher interact with the 100 people in each category including domestic and international tourists, local residents and hoteliers at various places of natural attraction, bus stand, hotels Mall road, and other shopping areas to know their awareness to the ecotourism, economic aspects of tourism, problems faced by them in the season, forms of degradation that tourism brings, their views on hotel development, introduction of tourism education from school level, sanitary condition of the area they stay, work or reside, responsible ness for environmental degradation and their views on the measures to be taken by the Govt. to protect the natural environment from increasing tourism. So the present study is purposive in nature and relies on information from the respondents, the validity of which depend on their own powers of recall, their honesty and fundamentally their answers to the questions included in the questionnaire. It should be noted that total responses could be more than the number of respondents because of multiple responses.

The secondary data has been collected from published as well as unpublished sources. The published data includes information from various publications of Central and State Governments, books, journals and Newspapers. The unpublished data has been collected from Shimla Municipal Corporation, Directorate of Transport, Himachal Pradesh and Department of Tourism and Civil Aviation and other Non-Government Organizations.

**Limitations**

Possible precautions and efforts are made to ensure the validity of the research. However, the study is limited in its scope. The data that are available being inaccurate, ambiguous and scattered landed the researcher to faced many difficulties in collection, compilation and comparison. The present study relies on the direct information from the respondents, the validity of which depends on their powers of
recall, their honesty and, fundamentally, their answers to the questions included in a questionnaire. Due to the non-availability of funds the researcher visited only few places of Himachal Pradesh. Hence findings of this work may not hold true for the whole of the Himachal Pradesh. Though the present study has been conducted under several limitations yet the researcher is confident that the conclusions drawn would be fruitful and able to provide a useful base for the future development of the tourism in the state of Himachal Pradesh.

**Scheme of Chapterisation**

The entire study has been divided into six chapters

**The first chapter** deals with the concept of tourism and its development up to the present day. It throws light on the tourism through the history, International tourist arrivals to India and Foreign exchange earning through tourism from the year 1993 to 2004 as well as the benefits arising from this activity to the country.

**The second chapter** traces the growth of tourism in India during the planned era through five-year plans with special reference to the development of tourism in hilly regions.

**Third chapter** surveys the hilly regions, their features and tourist arrivals to the hilly States of India from 1993 to 2004.

**Chapter four** deals with the growth of tourism in Himachal Pradesh from 1993 to 2004, discusses and analyses the findings of the survey made by the Department of Economics and Statistics and presents the facts and figures emanating from the survey conducted by the researcher about the awareness for ecotourism, importance of tourism, tourism education and the problems in Himachal Pradesh.

**Chapter five** discusses the issues and concerns related to the environmental problems arising due to mass tourism in Himachal Pradesh.

**Chapter six** presents conclusion and suggestions.
Thus present study discussed and analysed the growth of mass tourism in hilly regions of India with special focus on Himachal Pradesh. The study traced out tourism through history, discussed the development of tourism through planning process with allocation of funds for its growth under India’s Five year Plans, identified the hilly regions and discussed the tourism potential of them, analysed the growth of mass tourism in Himachal Pradesh, picking out the problems and issues requiring special focus for making Himachal Pradesh a distinctive, attractive and ecotourism destination on the map of Indian tourism industry.