Development of a Tourism Convenience Index for the Major Tourism Destinations in the State of Assam
(with limited data collection)

6.352

KAZIRANGA

6.200

Tezpur

5.910

SIVASAGAR

May, 2020
Revised in July, 2021

By
The Department of Business Administration,
Tezpur University

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DRAFT**:** *May 15, 2020*

Revised in July, 2021

By

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Project Team

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May, 2020
Revised in July, 2021

Preface

It was quite a challenge when we were assigned the job of developing a Tourism Convenience Index for major tourist destinations of Assam. It was challenging because we were aware that the particular index was not been in the scholastic domain, and if we were to take up we needed to develop it from the scratch. Measuring *tourist* convenience would not have been that tough, as it would have been a part of the consumer convenience index, which is fairly well researched. The term *tourism* encompasses the whole gamut of the tourism sector, and hence we cannot just remain confined within the realm of the consumer of the product (tourist), but must also take up the convenience of the suppliers as well. As tourism itself is a complex sector comprising of so many related service providers, including the state of affairs with respect to the ground level like hygiene, sustainability etc., the new index should be able to capture these aspects as well. We have decided to go for a 2 digit (with 3 decimal places) index with a maximum value of 10, and a minimum of 1. The rationale behind using 2 digits is that we needed to measure tourist's perceptions as a major source of measurement, and 10-point scales are widely used for such purposes. Moreover, a 10-point index is easy to understand than a 7-point or 5-point index.

We generated insights from the available indices dealing with consumer satisfaction and tourism competitiveness in general. We got lucky that many studies indirectly dealt with the tourist convenience. We extrapolated innovative ideas from the tourism competitiveness index been generated by the World Economic Forum in order to measure the supply side convenience. We have decided to conduct a tourist survey; a series of in-depth interviews with supply side experts, Government officials and knowledgeable person; and make field visits to see for ourselves the state of affairs related to the variables we intended to measure. This is our first work where we have delved into triangulating *quantitative* data, as there is no second opinion that an index must be expressed in terms of a number. Thus, we had to be innovative in generating quantitative measurement from qualitative variable. For example, we needed to seek the on-the-spot feedback on availability of public toilets in the vicinity of tourist attractions. We decided to measure in in two ways- *one*, availability and *two*, the current status of the toilets, if available. Availability is a qualitative term, but we knew that we needed a number. So, we have converted the binary data (*yes* or *no*) into a 10-point digit by a simple proportion of availability of toilet *to* the total number of attractions in a destination. For the status of the toilet (*if available*) we invoked the standards of *Mahatma Gandhi Swachhta Mission*, and thus generated a 2 digit, 3 decimal places number to match with the overall scheme of affairs. Each such measurement is described in the Methodology Chapter in detail.

Another challenge was to assign relative weights to the measured variables. We decided to conduct Principal Component Analysis as the exploratory factor analysis with an aim to generate valid factor loading squares to be used as weight for the variables. In order to validate

the results, we conducted Confirmatory Factor Analysis. Thus, we arrived at Squared Factor Loading, which can comfortably be used as weight. We then took the weighted average. The triangulations are anchored against the tourist survey variables and hence we could measure the weighted average of the triangulated variables also. Some variables were not weighted as they were not triangulated, mostly from observations and in-depth interviews. We calculated the comprehensive score for such variables by taking simple average. In order to avoid biasness, we used trimmed mean, wherever possible. The entire methodology is generated with innovative ideas, of course with theoretical grounding. We leave it to the readers to critically appraise the way we worked. Finally, we arrived at the index to our satisfaction.

This has been our first experience of working with Government of Assam directly. And there is no hesitation to declare that our experience has been outstanding till now. We have not faced any problem, whatsoever, and the Directorate is more than co-operative, and helped us by complying with our every request. The field level officials are also readily available, and helpful in every respect. It is now our turn to satisfy them by providing what they looked for.

The photographs used in this report are taken by Ms Monisha Chetia herself, and we acknowledge the same.

We also thank the main sponsors of the project- Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, Govt. of India; and the persons working very hard behind the SSS scheme, who kept on supporting us invisibly. There are many other personalities and institutes, specifically the 600 tourist interviewees, 85 in-depth interviewees, and innumerable persons who helped us selflessly during our and Ms Chetia's visits to the destinations.

Knowing fully well that their kindness cannot be repaid by anything, we acknowledge that we remain indebted to all of them.
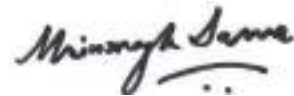
At last, but not the least we thank our respective families for bearing with us, even when we were thoroughly busy in preparing the final report during the unprecedented lockdown period (due to Covid 19).

If our hard works could bring in even the slightest of change to our beloved motherland, our efforts would be repaid many times.

(Kakali Mahanta)   **(Mrinmoy K Sarma)**
Co-investigator   *Principal Investigator*
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First draft dated, Tezpur, the 15th of May, 2020

Special Acknowledgement
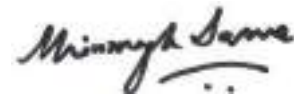
The researchers are indebted to the expert committee members, the Directorate of Tourism, Assam and officials of Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Assam for their very thorough and critical analysis of the draft report. It is really heartening to see the dedication and sincerity with which they have come up with suggestions for improvement. We have tried to incorporate as many suggestions as feasible in the revised report.

We are sure all of our collective efforts will bridge the much-needed gap in tourism convenience data.

(Kakali Mahanta)   **(Mrinmoy K Sarma)**
Co-investigator   *Principal Investigator*

Development of a Tourism Convenience Index for the Major Tourism Destinations in the State of Assam *(with limited data collection)*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A *Tourism* Convenience Index should be able to capture the convenience *not only* of the tourists, who are the consumer of the tourism product, but that of the suppliers of the products as well. Hence the emphasis while developing the Index is given on both demand side and supply side of the tourism sector in Assam.

The major objective of the work is to develop an Index to capture the level of convenience of tourism in Assam. The index thus developed is a 2-digit with 3 decimal places number. The index is proposed to be within 01.000 to 10.000. The maximum possible score by a destination is 10.000, and the score of 01.000 is treated as the bottom of the index.

We have taken up 10 major and 2 very new but growing destinations of the state of Assam. The 10 destinations are selected on the basis of their popularity among the visitors. We have relied on the data generated by the government agencies for deciding on the destinations. The 2 smaller destinations were taken up on recommendation of the State Implementation Committee during the project presentation stage. The selected major destinations are Guwahati, Kaziranga, Majuli, Sivasagar, Dibrugarh, Tezpur, Manas National Park, Goalpara, Sualkuchi, and Haflong. The new destinations are Panimur and Umrangso.

The concept of Tourism Convenience Index is novel, and as such there is no published material found during our extensive search except for a mention of such an index that is followed in China. The methodology, however, was absent from the one page English write-up. Because of this we have to develop the entire index from scratch and cultivate our own methodology. As mentioned above, we have taken the two pronged strategy for measuring demand side and supply side variables in order to arrive at a balanced index.

A set of 37 demand side variables are generated from literature survey, and refined with 2 Pilot Surveys. These variables are measured through tourist survey to basically determine the tourist's perception of convenience in a particular destination. The responses are collected in a 10-point scale for these 37 variables. Apart from these major dimensions, responses are

collected on 17 other variables as well. These 17 are basically demographic, psychographic and classification variables. A total of 600 tourists are interviewed with a questionnaire on site by trained surveyors. The sample is divided for the destinations on the basis of popularity in terms of tourists' footfalls. Highest sample of 100 each taken from Guwahati and Kaziranga, while 50 samples each are collected from Sivasagar, Majuli, Dibrugarh, Tezpur, Manas and Haflong. 40 interviews are conducted in Goalpara and Sualkuchi. The smaller destinations are represented with 10 samples each.

For the supply side study, a set of 27 variables are taken for measurement, which are basically adopted from the World Economic Forum's Travel and Tourism Framework. These 27 variables are measured through 85 in-depth interviews conducted on site with tourism entrepreneurs, tour operators, tour guides, Government tourism and forest officials, local activists, and local knowledgeable persons. Response against each variable is *translated* and put in a 10-point scale. These interviews are conducted in 10 major destinations.

Apart from the in-depth interviews field observations are also carried out in order to assess the ground level situations. The study measures 6 broad dimensions containing related variables. Trained persons including the Principal and Co-Investigators made these observations.

Some of the variables are cross checked with one (and sometimes two) other source with the aim to triangulate to neutralise any bias information.

The data generated from the tourist's survey on 36 major variables (one variable is kept aside due to low response rate as it is a *branching question* targeted to foreign tourists) are analysed through Principal Component Analysis as a part of exploratory factor analysis. The PCA generated 8 factors. These 8 factors are later validated with the Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), with satisfactory results. The factors are named based on the undelaying variables. Basic aim of this analysis is to validate the instrument as well as to generate the much needed weight for the raw variables. The squared factor loading from the CFA are taken as the weight for each of the variables.

The average score for each of the variables, for each of the destinations is then triangulated. A total of 21 tourist variables, 16 variables measured through in-depth interviews, and 9 observation variables are triangulated to arrive at 21 variables with new scores. These 21 variables are anchored to the tourist survey in order to allot the weights *(along with the other 16 variables)* already determined through CFA.

Next task is to allot the triangulated and un-triangulated tourist variables to the respective factors with individual weights. The weighted average for each of the factors are calculated using the *Equation 1*, which is reproduced below. Thus, we arrive at the comprehensive factor scores.

f

$$\textbf{\textit{Comprehensive Score for Factor j}} = \frac{\sum(\bar{x}_{v_{ij}} \times L_{v_{ij}})}{\sum L_{v_{ij}}} \qquad --Equation\ 1$$

Where,

$\bar{x}_{v_{ij}}$ = *Triangulated score of variable i for factor j*

$L_{v_{ij}}$ = *Squared Factor Loading of variable i of factor j*

j= Number of Factors arrived at after CFA

i= Number of variables within Factor j

Then all 8 comprehensive factor scores are merged into one with the following equation.

$$\textbf{\textit{Final Comprehensive Factor Score (FCFS)}} = \frac{\sum_{j=1}^{8} CFS_j \times TL_j}{\sum_{j=1}^{8} TL_j} \qquad --- Equation\ 2$$

Where,

CFS_j= *Comprehensive Factor Score for Factor j*

TL_j= *Total of squared factor loading within factor j*

There are some 14 variables that are not triangulated, or remain unweighted. These include *1 tourist variable, 11 in-depth interview variables* and *2 observation variables*. The tourist variable is not weighted, but triangulated; while the other 13 variables are neither triangulated nor assigned weight. As such simple average of the resultant scores (triangulated for the tourist variable, and raw scores for other variables) is calculated for each of the destinations.

Finally, the Tourism Convenience Index is arrived at by taking the average of the FCFS and the score arrived at from the above 14 variables.

The following table shows the final Tourism Convenience Index (TCI) for each of the destinations studied.

Tourism Convenience Index		
#	DESTINATION	Final Tourism Convenience Index
1	DIBRUGARH	5.821
2	SUALKUCHI	6.641
3	TEZPUR	6.200
4	SIVASAGAR	5.910
5	GOALPARA	5.719
6	GUWAHATI	6.603
7	HAFLONG	5.510
8	KAZIRANGA	6.352
9	MAJULI	5.784
10	MANAS	5.648
11	PANIMUR*	7.600
12	UMRANGSO*	7.330
* Panimur and Umrangso data are based on weighted tourist data only, and are not triangulated		

This table is shown in graphical form below.

The methodology generated during the study is robust enough to be followed for recalculating TCI in these destinations at different points of time. This method can also be used for determining the TCI in different destinations under different geographical settings as well.

It will be unwise to point out the limitations of the present study. Convenience is basically a qualitative feeling. However, in order to generate an index quantification is necessary. Thus, the study is not free from the inherent limitations that often props up when qualitative phenomenon is measured through numbers. However, proper precautions have been taken throughout the study to limit the damage, if any. During the In-depth interview we had to rely only on references to decide on who to interview. Likewise, during the tourist survey we selected samples based on their willingness to take part. The study has to be completed in one year due to administrative reasons; and hence we got only one tourist season to gather the necessary data. It is felt that the tourist survey data could have been validated by another small survey in another season. The index is developed with limited foreign travellers as the state receives relatively marginal proportion of foreign tourists. If we take a large proportion of foreign travelers it will get biased towards their convenience, which will not reflect the proper scenario, and if lesser number is taken as sample, we lose in international perspective. A balance is strike with 10% of the sample. Even then we are apprehensive that the data may not have a proper representation on the international outlook. In this study even if utmost care has been taken to have a neutral view on the level of convenience, tourists' perceptions had to be given more importance as the level of convenience is just a game of perception. During the peak survey period we faced political turmoil in the study area, which jeopardised the data collection process hugely. We could make up, but then tourist inflow got battered heavily, and we had to

rely on the limited number of tourists those were still visiting. More importantly as this report is being written and submitted the Covid 19 pandemic is creating havoc around the world including in the study area. The tourism scenario is expected to change Post-Covid situation. Some of the variables being measured now might have to be replaced by some other *then-relevant* ones. At this moment, it is not possible to predict the future priorities of the tourists. The same is expected to be more or less clear in the next few years only after the Covid 19 problem subsides.

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Chapter-1

INTRODUCTION

Indices have been used heavily in popular domain, almost in all spheres of the knowledge society. One of the important attributes of the index number is that it is easily understood even by a common man. Therefore, the popularity of indices has been growing as people started to compare different aspects, or components, or geographical regions on certain variables. Unlike other statistical tools, indices are used in the popular mass communication media like the newspapers, magazines, television channels, websites etc. Take for example, the BSE Sensex or the Nasdaq, which are pretty widely used not only by financial planners or wealth managers but also by the general public to gauge the performance of the stock market; and sometimes even to understand the general mood prevailing in the economy. Sovereign governments and international bodies use indices to compare performance of key sectors across states or countries, and these indicators are taken very seriously by the respective public bodies (like Governments), as well as by the public in general. Financial indicators expressed through indices are seen to have direct bearing on investors' attitude.

1.1 Usage of Index Number in Business:

Though index number has universal applications, indices are used in economic analysis heavily. In this section a very brief discussion is offered on varied usage of index number in day-to-day economic discussions.

Index number is used in stock exchange widely. As mentioned already besides Nasdaq and BSE Sensex, some other prominent global stock market indices are S&P 500 (for US) S&P Global 100, S&P Global 1200, Dow Jones Global Titan 50, Russell Indexes (Banton, 2019, Wallstreetmojo, n.d.). It is needless to say that these indices play vital roles in determining the health of the stock market in the relevant areas, and investor sentiments are mostly guided by these numbers. That is, it will not be wrong to say that these indices influence billions of dollars of investments per day.

Other specialized usage: Indexes in business have been used over time by the large corporate decision-makers to observe trends. Business Ethics Index, Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index, Medical Tourism Index are some the indices developed in the lines of business and industry. BEI helps in the establishment of a relationship between ethical behaviour and level of business activity (Tsalikis & Seanton, 2006).

Based on the measurements of consumer sentiments, namely ICS (Index of Consumer Sentiment) and CBCCI (Conference Board Consumer Citation Index), the Business Ethics Index (BEI) is developed to measure consumers' sentiments towards business ethical practices

(Tsalikis &Seanton, 2006). The University of Michigan Consumer Sentiment Index published monthly by the University of Michigan, is an indicator of the measures of consumer sentiments. This index had been useful in providing guidance for regulatory actions on the part of industries for conduct and practice of ethical behaviour.

One of the well-established measures for market-based performance for firms, industries and economies is the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI). The ACSI system helps in the measurement of customer experience towards quality of goods or services consumed by them (Fornell et al., 1996). The measurement of ACSI has been put into certain categories- the firm specific ACSI represents customer experiences with regard to the specific firm, while an industry specific ACSI measures the overall market offering; a sector specific ACSI shows the performance of the sector and a nationwide ACSI reflects the nation's total consumption experience. ACSI has also been used as a way to evaluate the economy of a nation. This index has been launched in India jointly by American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) and Hexagon Consulting under the copyrighted brand- Indian Customer Satisfaction Index (ICSI). The indexing is based on the information gathered through surveys regarding customer experiences with regard to an industry. The ICSI is thus a benchmark for understanding which organizations offer greater customer satisfaction.

Developed by The Conference Board, Consumer Confidence Index (CCI) measures the health of the U.S. economy from the perspective of consumers. Based on the consumers' perspective on the current business and employment conditions, this index has been one of the earliest indicators of the U.S. economy (The Conference Board, 2011). The CCI is a measurement of the degree of optimism that people of a nation are expressing regarding its economy through their savings and spending activities. Consumer Confidence in India is referred as Current Situation Index (CSI). CSI is a part of the Consumer Confidence Survey published by the Reserve Bank of India. Covering 6 cities- Bangalore, Chennai, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Mumbai and Delhi, the CSI is a survey on the perception of people regarding the state of the economy.

Business Confidence Index (BCI) is another index formulated to provide information about future developments. It can be used to monitor output growth and to anticipate turning points in economic activity (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2020). A number above 100 indicates possible increase in confidence in near business performance while the vice-versa is for numbers below 100. The National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER) has been using the BCI of India to monitor the health of Indian Economy.

Developed in the context of the World Economic Forum's Industry Programme for Aviation, Travel and Tourism, the Tourism and Travel Competitiveness Index (TTCI) measures the Travel and Tourism competitiveness of 140 economies. It is a measure of the factors that

lead to the sustainable development of travel and tourism sector (World Economic Forum [WEF], 2019). Parameters like Business Environment, Safety & Security, Health & Hygiene, Human Resources and Labour market, Price Competitiveness and other 8 pillars are taken into consideration. In the Index published in 2019, India had ranked 34th, which makes it special in the sense that it has turned out to be the only lower-middle income country to be in the list of top 35.

Off late, the South East Asian countries have seen unprecedented growth in medical tourism (Aziz et al., 2015). Developed in the recent times, the Medical Tourism Index (MTI) is a country-based performance measure that deals with the attractiveness of a particular country as a medical tourist destination. The MTI index indicates the attractiveness of a country as a medical tourist destination, how it is positioned or should be positioned to increase the propensity of visiting the country for medical reasons. MTI measures the perception of consumers regarding medical tourism of the leading destinations. The Medical Tourism Index considers three factors as the drivers - destination environment, medical tourism industry and quality of facilities and services. India ranks among the top 5 attractive destinations for medical tourism.

Coastal Vulnerability Index (CVI) is a predictive approach to coastal classification which is developed to facilitate coastal management. The potential damage caused as a result of rise in the sea level in the coastal regions needs greater awareness and CVI helps to do the same (Hamid et al., 2019). This index also helps in the formulation of policies for regions in the coastal.

The present times of competition in the lines of trade and commerce have put the manufacturing industries to adopt techniques so as to make the best use of the non-renewable resources. These techniques, however, need to be sustainable in their forms so as to assure minimal damage to the environment. Sustainability Index of manufacturing plant is one such index developed to determine the sustainability of all kinds of manufacturing industries (Latif et al., 2017). Latif et al. have considered sustainability index as a 'function of energy efficiency (E), waste management (W) and worker's safety and health environment (H).'

1.2 Consumer Convenience:

Let us now have a brief discussion on consumer convenience.

Discussion on *convenience* appeared in marketing literature as early as 1923 in the form of a Melvin T Copeland article "*Relation of consumers' buying habits to marketing methods*" in the very first issue of the Harvard Business Review. After Copeland, the term has been used by marketing researchers like Buckline, Murphy & Enis widely. In early marketing usage the word

"convenience" seemed to have denoted the convenience of "time" and "effort" in order to purchase a product.

Convenience is thus directly related to consumers. Consumers are the central part of any business. In fact, it will not be a sin to treat the consumers as the eyeballs of an economy, as their demand would determine the health of the economy. While consuming a product (goods or services), a consumer considers his/her convenience in accessing, purchasing, and consuming the product. In a free economy, where there are no apparent entry or exit barriers for customer, convenience plays an important role in customer decision making. It is natural for a customer to fall for a product which is more convenient than the competitors. Consumer convenience thus plays a vital role in maximizing a customer's satisfaction and thereby ensuring customer loyalty or otherwise.

1.2.1 Service Convenience:

There are a number of factors that determine consumer convenience. In service sector, service convenience, as conceptualized by Berry et al. (2002), is defined as the *"consumers' time and effort perceptions related to buying or using a service".* The components of perceived time and effort needed to consume the service in question may be viewed as the "benefits of convenience", which might lead to saving in these two scarce resources or otherwise. Thus consumer service convenience may be used as a means of adding value to consumers, where the consumer intends on reducing the amount of perceived time and effort spent on the service, as both deter the customer from participating in other activities (Bivens & Volker, 1986).There are five well established dimensions of service convenience (as proposed by Berry *et al.*) that reflect the potential for convenience at each stage of the consumer buying process. These five dimensions are presented in the Figure 1 .1.
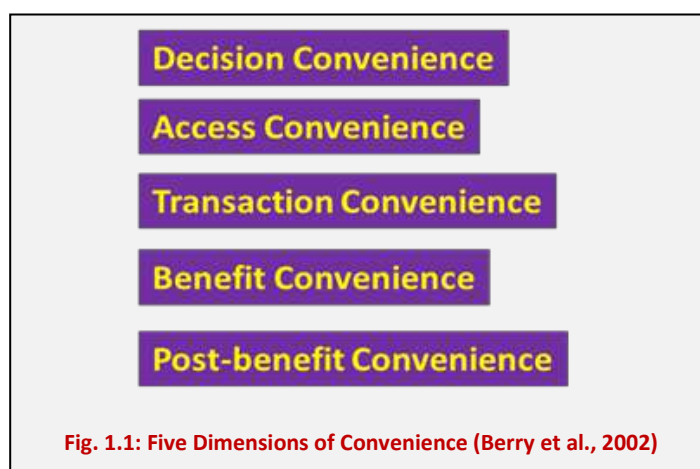
Fig. 1.1: Five Dimensions of Convenience (Berry et al., 2002)

a. Decision Convenience:

As the name suggests, it deals with the convenience of the customer in making the purchase decision with respect to perceived time and effort. Decision convenience is related to consumer's need and decision to avail the service.

b. Access Convenience:

According to Berry et al. (2002) this involves consumers' perceived expenditures of time and effort to initiate service delivery. Access convenience is, however, related to consumer's expenditure in the form of personal or technological access to initiate purchasing of that service. The consumer may also use service provider's facilities (offline and online) to make the purchase. This seems to be one of the important dimensions in present day as the disruptions made by ICT have created new vistas for the providers in making the access easy, hassle free, fun and more importantly, without any space and time barrier.

c. Transaction Convenience:

It is also important to see that the customer can affect the transaction for the service without much ado or inconveniences. We all have experienced delay in receiving the bill in a car service station or in a hospital. It has the inherent potential for negative customer perception related to the service. Aptly, it is recognized that "transaction convenience involves consumers' perceived expenditures of time and effort to effect a transaction".

This dimension also takes care of the fact that the consumer needs adequate security before initiating, and then finalising the transaction that the agreed upon service with the same attributes as promised be delivered to him/her on completion.

d. Benefit Convenience:

Convenience to product benefit is one of the core dimensions of consumer convenience, which indicates the consumer's perceived expenditure related to time and effort to experience the service's core benefit. At no point of time the consumer should perceive the consumption of the service as a burden, as this might negatively affect his/her perceived benefit from the service. This avoidable negative impression might be detrimental to the long term marketing prospects of the service. The service sector often talks about the consumer's journey and experience towards the benefit realization; and every firm tries to make this journey wonderful and memorable. This is one such dimension that can really uplift one service from the rest, and thus help in creating the distinguishable attributes.

e. Post-benefit Convenience:

There may always be some post experience contacts/ relationship between the service providers and the consumer. Post-benefit convenience recognises the consumer's perceived cost on time and effort when "reinitiating contact with a firm after the benefit stage of the service".

Service convenience dimensions as proposed by Berry et al. (2002) are also used by Colwell et al. (2008), Agja *et al.* (2011), Kaura (2013) and Kaura (2015). They have used these five dimensions in order to measure customer convenience in different service products.

Dealing with convenience the consumers seek while consuming goods and services, Yale and Venkatesh (1986) have identified another five dimensions - spatial, psychological, sociological, philosophical, and situational (Figure1.2). The following section tries to briefly discuss each of the factors that might define consumer convenience.

a. Spatial: This dimension refers to the fact that proximity in location and / or in time generates required push for the customer to consume the service, as consuming the service with best special convenience would be most efficient.

b. Psychological: This dimension emphasizes that the values, personality, opinions, attitudes, abilities, and preferences will also influence one's choice of convenience. For example, the two persons may not put same preference on the same variable that determines locational or time convenience.

c. Sociological: Individual preferences are sometimes liable to be shaped by the social dynamics the person is exposed to. For example, reference groups such as family, peer etc. might determine what is convenient for one's consumption and what is not. Social class and community also determine if certain service is convenient for the consumer.

d. Philosophical: One's cultural norms as well as the life's philosophy might also determine the concept of convenience while buying and consuming a service. As a general example, if a person is concerned about the world environment, he/she might avoid any service that might have anything against his philosophy even if it is apparently convenient to him/her.

e. Situational: As every purchase decision is liable to be influenced by the current situation, the concept of convenience to some extent varies over situation. As such convenience includes a temporal phenomenon, and this becomes more prominent or acute when the consumer is severely time constrained. Additionally, the incidents of impulse purchase and consumption to some extent can also be attributed to this situational factor.

Spatial

Psychological

Sociological

Philosophical

Situational

Fig. 1.2: Dimensions of Convenience (Yale & Venkatesh,1986)

Working on these insights Weissman in 2012 developed another model incorporating actual convenience, flow and packaging with other services needed by the customer, perception, control (and engagement) (Figure1.3). According to Weissman actual convenience lies in no or minimum physical and cognitive barriers in accessing the service by the consumer. Thus it

Actual Convenience *The physical and cognitive barriers like time and efforts*

Flow *Where related services are placed in the context of others*

Perception *Perception of convenience and generation of enthusiasm towards consumption*

Control *Giving customers the ability to manage their own experiences - customisation*

Fig. 1.3: Strategies for Service Convenience (Weissman, 2012)

includes the basic variables of convenience of time and efforts (physical and cognitive). Another important factor as proposed by Weissman is the packaging of the intended service with other related offerings, so that the consumer is induced to buy the other(s) as well without any additional cost of time and effort. Moreover, the consumers needed to be made aware of the convenience of the product, may be in terms of time consumed or efforts needed. This may be created through generation of positive vibes among the prospects, or may be by generating the enthusiasm for taking up the essential effort with fun and spending the time (till the actual consumption of the desired service) with a purpose. In fact, this is a sincere endeavour of most of the customer oriented service firms, and they invest lot of thinking and resources in making waiting fun. Finally, the sense of control of the events during consumption is another form of convenience. Every consumer wants to have her/his experience memorable, less strenuous and enjoyable in their own way. Ability to offer this customized experience by a service firm is treated as another important dimension of service convenience.

Consumers love to compare the level of convenience associated with the products in their active choice set before making a final decision on purchase.

1.3 Convenience Index:

Even though convenience plays a very important role in purchase and consumption of products, the understanding mostly remains qualitative. In fact, academic studies on convenience index are scarce, if not unavailable. The concept of convenience is expressed in a binary point of view -convenient or inconvenient.

There is no denying the fact that the concept of convenience index is customer driven and hence corporates measure satisfaction rather than convenience. There are many established customer satisfaction indices – Swedish National Customer Satisfaction Barometer (SCSB), which is operating since 1989 (Fornell, 1992); The American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) since 1994 (Fornell et al., 1996); The Norwegian Customer Satisfaction Barometer (in place since 1996) etc. Austria, Korea, New Zealand, Taiwan have also started to use customer satisfaction index, which are expected to provide a strong measure of performance by the corporates in addition to traditional financial and output measurements (Fornell, 1992). But the measurement of customer satisfaction is a huge exercise and a very large number of samples as well as industries are included in the process.

It seems that satisfaction index measurement is the nearest comparable customer side measurement of products' and corporates' performances. Therefore, this report tries to draw many insights from satisfaction index measurement, which will be taken up in detail in the Methodology Chapter later.

However, consumer convenience for a product will be meaningful only when the market enjoys perfect or near perfect competition. Imperfect competition or in oligopoly as well as in monopoly market customer convenience may not be considered important as the customers are supposed not to compare (*no comparison* for monopoly) the products on such subjective and qualitative parameter. However, when customers have almost equal choices (same price, product, promotional campaign, and distribution) such nuances like the time and efforts needed for consumption of the product play a very important role in creating the distinguishable attribute vis-à-vis its competitors. In such situations, the level of convenience from the point of view of the consumer becomes very important for the product managers to understand (and to enhance) in order to sustain the current market share and gain on it.

1.4 Need for a Convenience Index:

As the above theoretical discussions on consumer convenience suggest that determining convenience of a product for a group of consumers may be a complex task and many not be measured very easily. Also, it is almost like a surreal concept, and hence if some quantification cannot be made the marketers shall find it very difficult to understand and relate the level of convenience of their products with respect to the competitors. And hence a comprehensive quantification is necessary that can capture (almost) every nuances of the complex phenomenon of convenience.

1.4.1 Tourism Convenience Index:

Tourism is also a service. However, due to inherent combination of many services tourism as a service becomes more complex than any other service product. As evident that the tourism as a product is carefully orchestrated combination of many sub products like transportation, accommodation, sightseeing, entertainment, food and beverages etc. Therefore, the concept of consumer (here tourist) convenience is little difficult to conceive as the tourist is exposed to many services at the same time. In fact, since in majority cases the tourists are not repeat visitors to the same destination, they would not be able to define, and determine the components that provide required convenience to them. This makes quantification of level of convenience more challenging, if not impossible. One needs to depend on the most common criteria that might determine the level of convenience of the tourists. *(We have offered detail discussion on these components in the relevant section in the Methodology Chapter.)* However, there is no denying the fact that like any other product the tourists also would like to compare the level of convenience of visiting destination before making any final decision for the visit. This is more important from the view point of the tourists as they have to sacrifice tremendous amount of time and effort (apart from other resources like money) in order to consume the service (i.e., making the visit). The time (often long period) that is spent in a place which is unknown to the tourists, and that too among strangers make the concept of convenience more important (compared to other services where the consumer is supposed to sacrifice the comfort of their usual environment only for a very short period).

Unfortunately, in contemporary tourism literature measurement of tourist convenience is absent. Probably this particular concept got lost in the clamour for host of other discussions related to tourists and tourism.

1.4.2 Need for Tourism Convenience Index:

All destinations and attractions are not similar and the facilities available there are also not equal in all senses. Some destinations may have a number of options for the tourists to choose from (say, accommodation) while some may have only limited choices (in extreme cases, there may be no choice at all). Tourists' convenience may, thus, be related to the facilities and satisfaction sought by the tourists. It might also include ease of travelling, feasibility of information and execution of his/her plan. A detail discussion on these components is offered in the Methodology Chapter. Existence of this index would help the tourists, service providers and destination mangers alike in understanding the limitations as well as the strong points of the concerned destination. This index should, therefore, be a combined score on the tourists'

perception regarding the presence of the most desirable basic facilities (or dimensions), and *actual presence* of these in the destination. Thus, the index should typically merge *demand side* and *supply side* of the required basic services in the destination.

Such index shall also throw light on what the tourists want, and what is actually offered. Sometimes over-jealousy of the destination managers and service providers in the face of competition leads to creation of certain under-demanded services. The index might take note of such mismatch and encourage the destination managers and service providers in offering the basic amenities and services the tourists want.

A properly formulated tourism convenience index is liable to help reshaping the services according to customer's desire, which would ultimately offer a better experience to the tourists around the destination. This should boost up the tourism market around the destination and the industry as a whole.

Having discussed the need for a tourism convenience index, now let us very briefly throw light on tourism of Assam, the state for which the index is being proposed.

1.5 Tourism in Assam:

A destination may contain number of attractions, activities, amenities, accommodation units and varied accessibility. Attractions, however, reside in a destination because of which people are triggered to visit that destination. In a general term, a tourist attraction is a place of interest that tourists visit, typically for its inherent or exhibited values; they may be of historical, cultural, natural or any artificial beauty. Some examples include historical monument, zoo, museum, theme park, buildings and structures, national park and wildlife sanctuary, ethnic community, cultural event etc.

Assam, being the central part of North-east India has been a chosen destination for many travellers (domestic, foreign) for its rich wildlife, culture and history. As per data released by Directorate of Tourism, arrival of domestic tourists has increased from 39,98,706 in 2009 to **59,34,791** in 2018. Again, foreign tourist arrival has increased from 14,533 in 2009 to **31,739** in 2018 (ATDC, *n.d.*). These figures have shown a steady growth in the interest towards the "*tea state*"- Assam.

Figures 1.4 and 1.5 depict the trends in domestic and foreign tourist arrival in Assam over a period of 15 years, respectively. Even we find some other regions of India with much sharp trends, the steady upward growth in the popularity of Assam as a multipurpose tourist destination depicts a rather healthy sign. This probably has been possible for many reasons. But two or three major contributors to the trend can be well guessed as-**(1)** Government's increased involvement in the tourism sector. More specifically in recent years the government machinery has been totally transformed into the role of destination managers from the conventional governance as far as tourism is concerned. **(2)** Increased participation of private sector in the

Figure 1.4: Assam-Domestic Tourist Arrivals Over Time

59,34,791

22,86,630

Figure 1.5: Assam-Foreign Tourist Arrival Over Time

31,739

7,285
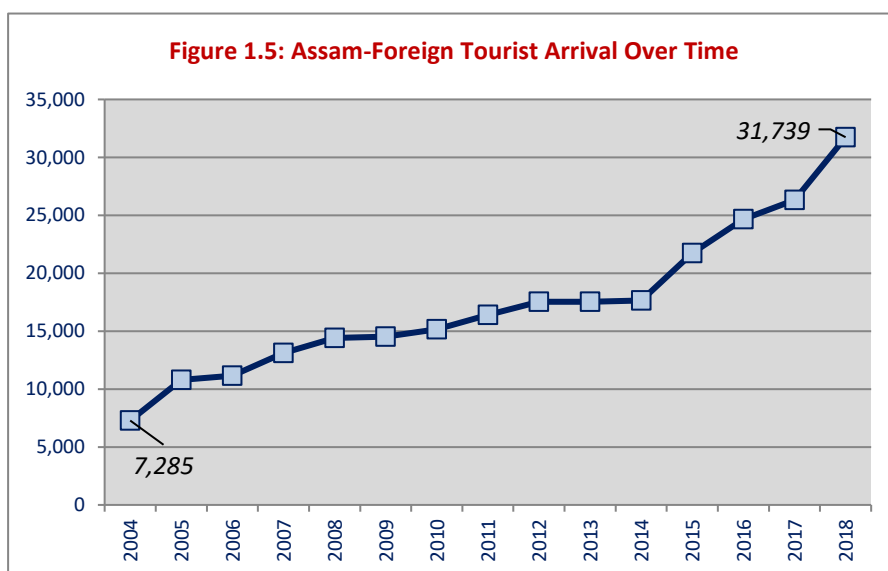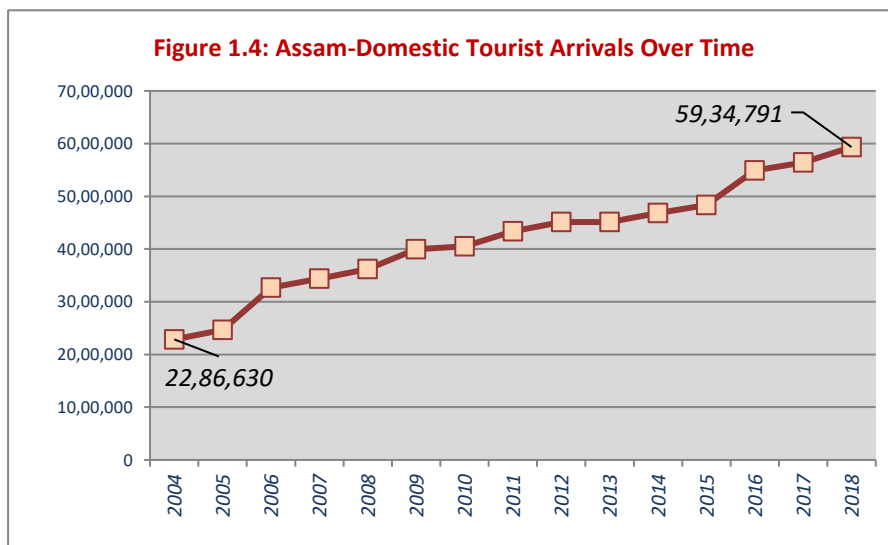
tourism activities, specially managing the service sectors like accommodation, food and beverage, and more importantly in allied services like local transportation and sight-seeing, tours guidance, operation etc. This may also be result of contributions made directly or indirectly through the encouragements from various Government (state and central) initiatives. **(3)** The third major contributor is obviously the improved ICT scenario in the country over the

last decade and half. Specially the internet has taken the proportion of a revolution in the country (same as the global scenario) in terms of development of user generated contents (UGC) in the Web 2.0 sites like the social media, YouTube, Google maps etc. This has been instrumental in generating tremendous amount of interest among the prospective travellers not only for Assam as such, but for the entire small and big tourist destinations all over the world. Assam has also been a beneficiary of such interest and probably because of that also the footfall has been increasing steadily. There are other sundry contributors also, like the relative peaceful political situation, increase in networking among tour operators and travel agents, supply of well-trained manpower, more people in general taking holidays, increase in business activities (thus leading to presence of business travellers) etc.

Irrespective of the reasons of the growth, one would agree that this is the ripe time to seek and offer guidance from and to the tourists on availability of convenience they look for in a destination.

Assam being a culturally, naturally rich centre of north-eastern states is a real gem of Indian subcontinent. The state is considered as the largest state within the north-eastern states with the land area of 78,438 sq. kilometres. It is noteworthy to mention here that the land area of the state holds 2.4 per cent of the India's total land mass. While sharing its national border with West Bengal, Meghalaya and Bangladesh to the West, Arunachal Pradesh to the East, Bhutan to the North, and Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Meghalaya & Tripura to the South directions, geographically, Assam is located at longitude $88/25^0$E to $96/00^0$E and latitude $24/5^0$N to $28/0^0$N. For better functioning of the administrative blocks, the state has been divided into three geographical units. They are as, the Brahmaputra Valley, the Barak Valley and the Hilly Region. The northern part of the state covered mostly by the Brahmaputra Valley is drained by the mighty Brahmaputra River at a stretch of 720 km. The Barak valley, as the name indicates is drained by the Barak River that flows from Borail Mountain in the South. The Hilly Region is consisted of East & West Karbi Anglong and Dima Hasao districts. These hill districts fall in-between the two valleys and separate them from each other. There are 33 districts in the state and they are further divided into 80 Sub-divisions and 184 Revenue circles. If we compare the resource potentiality of the state, the status is very high compared to the other north-eastern states.

The state of Assam is blessed with many natural and related attributes. With tourist attractions like natural greenery, ethnic tribes with their cultural diversities, and various floral and faunal species, Assam, as a tourist destination has an amazing possibility to grow further. Such richness over the tourism resources in the state gifts Assam with relative advantage over other regions in the nation. Still, there are numerous reasons because of which the potentiality of these tourism resources has not been utilized till date. Therefore, the need of the hour is to

give a robust intervention for the promotion of tourism and to design dauntless, newer directions for the growth of the same (Khound, 2017).

Tourism was declared an industry by the government of Assam vide notification no. TMS/50-83/Pt/48, dated 6.11.87 to encourage private investment particularly in creating required infrastructural facilities. However, rules for the policy were framed in the year, 1992 only. As per the policy special provisions were initiated by the Government of Assam for the private investors (Khanka & Bhuyan, 2007).

An important aspect of tourism in Assam needs keen attention. The geographical factors like seasonal variation in climatic condition impact accessibility to the destinations to a great extent. Most of the tourist coming to the state prefers to visit the areas that are rich in wildlife, some important sacred places and archaeological sites in the dry and winter months only (October to April). While exposing the resources to the tourists, especially to those who come from abroad, necessary care need to be taken to indicate the most convenient period for visiting a destination.

The opening up of trade of South East Asian countries as visualized in the India's Act East Policy could certainly add some dynamism to the land locked and lean economy of north eastern region including Assam. Given the geo-political situation of the region, cross-border markets are likely to be most cost effective.

As the Tourism Department of the Government of Assam celebrates its long existence, the department has witnessed lots of success in the field of infrastructural development and other related facilities to boost the sector. With the increase of fund allocation all these years by the state and central government of the country, it has become feasible for the department to meet the demands. As reported, the annual plan allocation for the year 2018-19 was Rs.81 crores (Sarma, 2018) for the department. Over the years, prime focus has been given to infrastructure development of destinations and tourist circuits through optimisation of available tourism resources. As a part of promotional activity, the govt. of Assam has been introducing new tourism circuits to bring out the uniqueness of the destinations. The circuits cover various forms of tourism including natural, heritage, ethnic, social significance of popular tourist destinations of the state.

Popular Tourist Circuits of Assam (that include some destinations from neighbouring states also) are-

    i.   Guwahati-Kaziranga-Nameri-Dirang-Tawang-Bomdila-Tezpur-Guwahati
    ii. Guwahati-Cherrapunjee-Shillong-Mawlynnong-Guwahati
    iii. Jorhat-Kaziranga National Park-Majuli-Sivasagar-Jorhat
    iv. Dibru-Saikhowa National park-Dehing Patkai-Dibrugarh
    v.   Guwahati-Hajo-Sualkuchi-Borduwa-Sivasagar-Majuli-Jorhat

vi.   Guwahati-Hajo-Sualkuchi-Barpeta-Dhubri-Guwahati

Apart from the above mentioned ones, some other tourist circuits like, 'Tezpur-Majuli-Sivasagar heritage site' has come up under the 'Swadesh Darshan' Scheme. Similarly, another circuit Manas- Nameri- Kaziranga- Pani Dihing- Pobitora- Dibru have also been introduced under the same scheme (Ministry of Tourism, n.d.)

Assam is blessed with many types of attractions. There are many upcoming destinations in the state that have their own environmental attributes and resources. Each one of those is different from others as well. The following note is on some of the forms.

1.5.1 Nature Tourism:

Assam and its national parks, wildlife sanctuaries are the backbone of natural form of tourism in the region. Eastern Himalayan biodiversity hot spot and Assam plain are endowed with various endangered plants and animal species. As per Department of Forest & Environment, Govt. of Assam, there are 5 National Parks and 11 wildlife sanctuaries in the state. Two National Parks -Kaziranga and Manas are tagged with the UNESCO world heritage site. Fragile ecology, uneven topography, flora and fauna, snow-clad Himalayan Mountain, rivers and tributaries with majestic waterfalls, along with reptiles, avian species, mammals, exotic fishes, butterfly offer tremendous opportunities for development of nature tourism in the area. Both domestic and foreign tourists enjoy this form tourism venture to the fullest in seasons.

1.5.2 Wildlife Tourism:

Assam's forest diversity is gifted with different types of endangered wildlife. Being a guardian of world famous one-horned rhinoceros, the state is the habitat of other endangered species like, Capped langur, the Golden langur, Hollock gibbon, the Stamp tailed macaque, the Pigmy hog, the Clouded leopard, the Golden cat, the White winged duck, Golden Mahseer etc. The wild of the state is also home to certain species which are endemic to the region only. All together, the state can be termed as a perfect wildlife destination for interested ones. Apart from the 5 National Parks the, the state is blessed 11 Wildlife and Bird Sanctuaries. These reserved forests are playing vital roles in protecting and preserving the wildlife richness of the state. The Five National Parks commutatively hold a land area of 1561.14 sq. km. On the other hand, the eleven wildlife sanctuaries and the two bird sanctuaries have total land area of 492.97 sq. km respectively (Planning Commission, 2002a).

1.5.3 Tea Tourism:

Tea is considered as one of the main agricultural produces in the state of Assam. Assam tea is reputed all over the world for its aromatic quality because of high humidity and soil

characteristics. The introduction of the Assam tea bush to Europe is related to Robert Bruce, a Scottish adventurer, who apparently encountered it in the year 1823. The idea of tea plantation was borrowed from Singphou community of upper Assam as they are believed to be in practice of using tea as a part of their tradition. Being a focal sector, the tea industry has been contributing handsomely to the state economy. Another important fact about the tea industry is that, the state produces more than 50% of the country's total tea production. The lush green tea gardens of the state are bountiful with natural beauty too. Adding to this is the colourful tea tribe – with their culture, captivating dance and music. Other specialties of the tea gardens include the exquisite heritage bungalows, polo fields and golf courses. Big tea companies have been maintaining their own air strips and helipads, which add more features towards accessibility of the nearby destinations. The total number of such airstrips/helipads is said to be 30 in the state (Planning Commission, 2002b). These facilities can be expanded to make an attractive travel package for promoting the tourism industry in the state. For example, airstrip in Behora Tea Estate can be used to ferry tourists to Kaziranga National Park (*the most popular leisure destination of the state*), which is just 20 minutes' drive from there. In fact, there are sevaral golf courses in Assam with airstrips within a comfortable distance (Directorate of Tourism, Govt. of Assam, n.d.). The travel convenience to the most tea gardens is fairly developed, and bungalows with modern amenities are generally kept in a ready state for visitors and guests who wish to experience the stay amid the lush dark green shades of the estates.

1.5.4 Ecotourism:

Ecotourism is a fairly new concept in Assam tourism. The term ecotourism is believed to be coined by Hector Ceballos Lauscurain in the year 1983 and was initially described nature based travel to relatively undisturbed areas (National parks/wildlife sanctuaries/Reserved forest etc.) with an emphasis of education. A kind of pleasure activity, it allows one to admire the beauty of nature from a close proximity. This is further materialized by the presence of eco-friendly accommodations in ecotourism sites. Ecotourism provides livelihood to the host community as well as conserving the environment and tourism resources in a locality.

Ecotourism ventures in Assam have good potentials. Because of its pristine natural beauty and splendid greenery, such ventures could easily attract alternative tourists' imaginations and might as well benefit the entrepreneurs. The state's biodiversity, enchanting hills, enthralling rivers may add new dimensions to the already growing ecotourism sector. Ecotourism activities such as natural trail, river rafting, bird watching, regulated angling, biodiversity study, water sport, local cuisine, eco-friendly stay have already been developed in many areas.

1.5.5 Cultural Tourism:

Various communities with different ethnic and cultural heritage have been residing in Assam. The hill districts of the state - Karbi Anglong East, Karbi Anglong West and Dima Hasao house 14 hill tribes where the plain districts have 9 Scheduled Tribes (Census of India, 2001 as cited by Singha, 2018). The tribal communities account for 12.42% of the total state's population. Their languages, religious beliefs, culture and traditions, food habits, various art forms, etc. make them unique (Chutia, 2015). Traditional songs and dances, exhibit of colourful dresses, ethnic cuisines make such uniqueness more prominent. This might promote Assam as one of the edifying cultural tourism destinations in the country.

Occasionally the state's Tourism department also organizes Tea Tourism Festival, Barak Valley Festival, Bohag/Rongali Festival, Dihing Patkai Festival, Elephant Festival at Kaziranga etc. as promotional campaigns to attract more tourists to the state. This sort of initiative helps in promoting Assam as one of the edifying cultural tourism destinations in the country.

1.5.6 Pilgrim Tourism:

Ancient Assam was rich with temples and shrines build by kings and rulers from different dynasties. Sacred places like Kamakhya temple at Guwahati, Mahabhairab temple at Tezpur, Siva Doul Devi Doul, Fakua Doul, Gorokhia Doul and Ajan Peer Dargah at Sivasagar, Malini Than at Likabali, Umananda at Guwahati, Hayagriva Madhava and PowaMecca at Hajo still stand gleaming in the identity of the past. Among the religious shrines one of the most venerated in the country is the Kamakhya temple. 'Ambubachi Mela' an annual festival held in the temple every year during the month of June attracts very large number of pilgrims from different parts of India and abroad. In 2017 during the *mela* more than 35 lakh persons visited the shrine (Karmakar, 2017). Situated at the top of Nilachal hill on the bank of Brahmaputra, Kamakhya is also very beautiful. There are other famous religious places in the state like Barpeta sattra, famous for a Vaishnavite culture; Batadrawa, birth place of Sri Sri Sankardeva, the neo-Vaishnava reformer, saint and a great literary figure; Madan Kamdev temple where vast archaeological ruins of fine erotic sculpture can be experienced. Majuli, which has the accolade of being the largest river island in the world, is the epitome of Vaishnavite culture. The island is home to as many as 25 sattras where traditional Assamese dance (*Satriya* dance), drama, music, musk making have been in practice for ages. Wetlands in the region are favourable habitat for various migratory birds as well. The Sri Sri Surya Pahar in Goalpara district is another hot spot for the pilgrims from Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism. The hill in its vicinity has large number of statues of Hindu Gods and Goddesses like Devi Durga, Ganesha, Surya, Chandra; and that of Buddha indicating religious richness of the spot. But, due to lack of publicity and required infrastructure the pilgrimage tourism is yet to develop in sound manner.

1.5.7 Golf Tourism:

Golf tourism was started in Assam during colonial era by the British's planters club. Later on, it has become a part of sporting activity among the elite class of the society. According to the Directorate of Tourism, Assam's estimate the total number of golf courses in the state is 21. All are located mostly within the proximity of tea gardens. With these golf courses, Assam has another opportunity to develop a unique form of tourism as golf tourism. Duliajan, which is known as the 'Oil Town' of the state, has a very good golf course maintained by Oil India Limited. In recent times domestic and foreign tourists have been visiting the state to play golf also. Most of them use the air-strips and helipads owned by the big tea gardens. The three forms of tourism- Ecotourism, Tea tourism and Golf tourism can be integrated with each other because the activities are mostly related with greenery and conservation of the environment. The 20 golf courses of Assam are listed below.

#	Name of the Golf Course	Location
	Table 1.1: Golf Courses in Assam	
1	**Bishnauth Gymkhana Club**	Bishwanath
2	**East Boroi Club**	Bishwanath
3	**Borsola Golf Club**	Sonitpur
4	**Thakurbari Club**	Sonitpur
5	**Mangaldai Polo & Golf Club**	Darrang
6	**North Lakhimpur Planters Club**	Lakhimpur
7	**Seleng District Club**	Sivasagar
8	Sonari Gymkhana Club	Sivasagar
9	**Tingri Golf Club**	Tinsukia
10	**Samdang Golf Club**	Tinsukia
11	**Digboi Golf Club**	Tinsukia
12	**Margherita Golf Club**	Tinsukia
13	**Dibrugarh & District Planters Club**	Dibrugarh
14	Naharkatia Golf Club	Dibrugarh
15	**Moran Golf Club**	Dibrugarh
16	**Zoloni Golf Club**	Dibrugarh
17	Dhunseri Polo Club	Golaghat
18	**Narengi Golf Club**	Kamrup
19	**Misa Planters Club**	Nagaon
20	**Jorhat Gymkhana Club**	Jorhat
	Source: Assam Tourism (n.d.)	

1.5.8 Adventure Tourism:

The state of Assam is endowed with complex geographic units like hill, valleys and plains. The rugged terrain, pristine forested tract, fast flowing Himalayan tributaries and existence of game fishes there offer varied opportunities for adventure tourism activities.

Adventure tourism activities such as trekking and hiking, river rafting, angling, rock climbing can be developed in and around many attractions offering many more choices to the tourists. Some such activities are being promoted by the Government agencies like ATDC (Assam Tourism Development Corporation). Assam has a number of ideal places for trekking and hiking like the Nilachal hills, Rani-Garbhanga Reserve Forest, Basistha hills (*all are around Guwahati*), hills around Kaziranga-Karbi Anglong, Umrangso etc.

1.5.9 Business and Shopping:

Besides, the state has been doing well in other areas including business tourism too. Guwahati is one of the fastest growing metropolitan cities in the country that is well connected by transportation modes like roadways, railways and airways with the rest of the world, and is regarded as the 'the gateway to the northeast India'. The Lokopriya Gopinath Bordoloi International Airport has started connecting some foreign cities like Bangkok is offering business tourism a new lease of hope. Sualkuchi, the village famous for the 'golden threads' muga, and other hand woven textiles using natural silks like *eri,* mulberry, and *tasar* is just nearby. Sualkuchi has fast been turning into a favourite shopping hub for the tourists visiting Assam. Apart from Sualkuchi there are many other prominent places where the tourist can make a visit in order to understand the raring, harvesting, threading and weaving of these natural silks abundantly available in Assam.

The government of Assam, in order to keep up the promises of the tourism sector has adopted a new tourism policy in the year 2017. A brief discussion is offered on the Tourism Policy of Assam, 2017.

1.5.10 Tourism Policy of Assam, 2017:

The state of Assam is fast becoming a key tourist destination both nationally and internationally, due to its unique attributes of wildlife, bio-diversity and culture that promise the experience of an unexploited wonderland. The sector generates a good amount of revenue as well as employment opportunity for the host region.

In spite of being a strong tourism potential state, Assam has not been able to properly market itself. A comprehensive marketing strategy will not fulfil the demand of professional agencies, as it seems. To create the charm of the state, a brand name '*Awesome Assam'* has been developed after Assam's natural beauty and its unique values. The brand name has been also translated to all regional languages including the national language of India i.e. Hindi. Translation has also been made to other international languages. A renowned celebrity of Indian (and American) film industry, Ms Priyanka Chopra was also promoting the brand being the Brand Ambassador of *Awesome Assam* during the years 2017 and 2019.

This campaign has been launched as a part of Assam Tourism Policy, 2017. This five-year Policy offers many incentives for the private entrepreneurs, and investors in this sector.

For example, a new tourism unit which starts its commercial operation with a minimum investment of Rs.100 lakh in a location with tourism potential shall be entitled to reimbursement of 50% of net SGST paid for a period of 10 years from the date of such commercial operation subject to maximum of 100% of fixed capital investment. But, the period of its operation should be during the validity of this Policy i.e., from 1-1-2018 to 31-12-2022. Another advantage will be for accommodation units like hotels, tourist lodges, resorts, houseboats and floating restaurants. These have been allowed a capital investment subsidy at the rate of 30 per cent of the total capital invested. This shall be subject to a capital investment ceiling of Rs.1 crore. They should be also operated in tourism potential locations as well.

According to the policy, 75 per cent of the cost of construction of approach road to the premises of eligible units shall be reimbursed. It will be in the form of a subsidy subject to a ceiling of Rs.10 lakhs. Again, there is an additional 10 per cent capital grants for investment in potential tourist destinations which are located at the remote regions of Assam. The maximum limit has been fixed at Rs.25 lakhs. To benefit the private properties in tourism sector, a 25 per cent of investment on renewable sources of energy will be reimbursed subject to maximum of Rs.10 lakhs. This will be applicable to both existing and new units.

a) Assam Tourism- Its Prospects for Investment:

Many tourism projects of large, medium and minor sizes are identified and executed by the State and Central Governments. In these projects, emphasis has been given for infrastructure development, marketing and promotion of Assam Tourism. Such projects are believed to have influenced the tourism promotion in Assam in a major way. Some of the projects which are related to the development of infrastructure are as follows,

a) Development of tourism circuits, tourism complex
b) Yatri Niwas
c) Tourist reception centres
d) Up-gradation and expansion of tourist facilities
e) Development of pilgrim centres
f) Water sports etc.

The progress in most of the projects has been significant so far. It can be assumed that once completed, these infrastructural projects will have long term bearing on Assam tourism as large investment on infrastructure development are necessary for sustainable growth of tourism sector. Active participation from private sector would be crucial step in this regard.

b) Public - Private Partnership in Tourism Sectors:

Tourism sector needs collaboration of both governmental and private sectors to grow to its true potential. Mostly, private initiatives play an important role in creation of investment and promotion in the field. The State Govt. through its Tourism Policy has endeavoured to intensify private sector investments. Substantial assistance has been offered to the private entities which are already set up for participating in the management and development of the existing projects, and also for starting off and executing new projects. Keeping these objectives on the list, at present there are 45 various projects / units run by ATDC in association with some private participations.

Some major projects with private participation are:

a)   Luxury Cruise Vessel between Kaziranga and Guwahati

b)   Amusement Park at Guwahati

c)   Ropeway project at Kamakhya

d)   Luxury resorts, wayside amenities.

c) Specified Projects for Investment & Setting up Joint Ventures:

As the tourism sector is combination of different sectors, there are needs for another round of investments in some major projects. The policy prepares a tentative list with such projects as reproduced below.

a)   Star Hotels, Resorts and Convention Centres in Guwahati and other places.

b)   Floating Hotel & Restaurant on River Brahmaputra: The mighty river Brahmaputra can be utilized for introducing and promoting river tourism. As a part of the project, investment can be made in 'Floating Hotel & Restaurant/Marriage Hall' with all modern facilities and amenities.

c)   The National Waterway, connecting Guwahati and Dibrugarh can be utilized through intervention of cruising with Luxury Cruise Vessel, which will run under the supervision of Inland Waterways Authority of India. Such projects will target the high-end customers from domestic and overseas travel market.

d)   A chain of budget hotels can be set up in district towns that have scope for budget travellers.

e)   Within the major towns of North-eastern regions, operation of short distance flights can play a vital role in the state.

f)   Setting up of Ayurveda and Healthcare resorts can be termed as another potential investment in the state as the region is blessed with vast open spaces with natural beauty and clean air quality.

g) River Brahmaputra in the state can be a potential area for investing more tourist activities related to leisure and amusement.

h) Investment in water sports like, introducing Hover Craft/Speed Boat etc. These activities can be linked up to some major tourist spots by river ways as well.

i) Investment in activities like, Hot Air Ballooning in Kaziranga National Park, Manas, Pobitora, Dibru-Saikhowa National Park may be commercially viable.

Assam is the only state with as many as 21 golf courses within a compact area. These golf courses have many airstrips nearby that can be upgraded and standardized. Accommodation units with modernized and upgraded facilities might be set up at some selected locations around the Golf Circuits. Promotional agendas of golf courses and heritage tea gardens can target the overseas golf lovers.

Proposals for investments in large revenue generating projects that have the possibility of ensuring techno-economic feasibility report are welcomed by the state government as a part of the new policy.

The technical expertise is also proposed to be provided to the prospective investors for carrying out techno-economic studies for such tourism projects in certain specific areas. According to the policy, if the project/units under tourism sector are provided with fiscal incentives by the Govt. of India just as in case of other industries, in the near future, it will make a long-term impact on sustainable growth of tourism sector in the entire north-eastern region of the country.

Assam Tourism, with active financial support from the State Government and the Central Government has initiated many projects in the field of infrastructure as well as in other relevant facilities. Developmental frameworks in Tourism Circuits, Destinations and Wayside Amenities have been given adequate emphasis for the transformation of the state tourism sector. This is expected to be achieved by public and private partnerships.

The Assam Tourism Policy 2008 had elevated the status of tourism sector on a top priority for its undeniable role in financial and economic growth in the state. The old policy had put emphasis on utilizing tourism potentials and enhancing the quality of tourism products, advertising infrastructure of international standard. The policy of 2008 also motivated the Public-Private Collaboration in the overall development of tourism. Famous entrepreneurs were provided with a new platform for investing. It had encouraged successful and reputed companies like Indian Hotels Company Limited (Taj Group) for investing with a 5-star category hotel in Guwahati City. The Lokopriya Gopinath Bordoloi International Airport had also seen good transformation during that period only. The new policy aims to create a synergy with the earlier achievements with pump priming the sector with more investment.

Tourism sector in the state of Assam has good potential for creation of revenue and employment. But, due to some major challenges in the fields of infrastructure, communication, and geographical location the sector has not been able to do well with time. Situations like uncertainty in governance, increasing rebellious activities, deficiency of fund from the Central Government, faulty socio-economic and governmental set up, lack of proper travel and tourism development policy of the State Government, lack of proper investment-friendly and tourist-friendly environment are some of the constraints that the tourism sector has been facing for a long time in the state of Assam. The efforts made by the Government are steps towards removing these bottlenecks in order to offer a new lease of life to the tourism sector.

To conclude, the development and growth of the state's tourism industry is supposed to be reliant on the development of un-conventional and stakeholder friendly policies. Thus in order to ensure overall and fast growth, all-round co-operation among all stakeholders in the industry is essential. With this positive note we conclude this Chapter.

We offer objectives of the work, scope and perceived limitations in the next chapter (Chapter 2).

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Chapter 2
OBJECTIVE, SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

In continuation of the discussion in chapter one, it may be noted that a study on development of tourism convenience index would provide meaningful insight to tourist facilities, satisfaction and majorly on ease of visiting, availability of easy information, and being able to do what he or she desires to do. Thus, an index which is supposed to express tourist convenience in different destinations of Assam should be able to measure the tourist convenience and destination competitiveness.

2.1 Objective:

The primary purpose of the study is to develop a standard Tourism Convenience Index (TCI) for major destinations of the state of Assam.

We shall specifically attempt to develop a 10-point *(2 digits with 3 decimal places)* index that can express explicitly the level of convenience in the selected destinations.

2.2 Scope:

In order to achieve the above-mentioned objectives, we have to ascertain the information need. We need to generate adequate dimensions and variables to capture the convenience of the destination. A detailed discussion on the study methodology is presented in chapter 3. However, a very important decision to be taken here is to make a choice of the destinations to be undertaken for the study.

To select the major tourist destinations of Assam, we have adopted two approaches. First approach is to refer to the available studies related to Assam tourism and second one is to identify the major destinations from the rating/ranking of destinations from major tourism agency/ directory and government sources.

a) *Major destinations in literature related to Assam tourism*:

Beejata et al. (2013), in their studies related to Problems and Prospects of Cultural Tourism, mentioned about the rich archaeological ruins in the form of temples and monuments in the state. They are: the *Sukreshwara Temple*, *Kamakhya* and *Bhubaneswar* Temple, *Navagraha* Temple, *Umananda* Temple*, Powa Mecca*, *Satras* of Majuli, etc. Baruah, N. (2016) mentioned the various *Satra* institutions in Assam in her studies related to cultural tourism in Assam. Borah. et.al (2014) and Barman (2012), in their attempt towards mapping of tourism resources, considered Sivasagar and Dibrugarh district of Assam respectively. A wide list of monuments and places of attractions in both the places are highlighted in their studies. Nath (2016) adopted Kamrup district for his study.

b) *Major destinations as per major tourism agency/ directory and government sources*:

Assam is not a very highly visited place. Hardly 26,000 foreign tourists and around 48 lakh domestic tourists visited the state of Assam in 2019(Department of Tourism, Government of Assam). The data made available by Directorate of Assam Tourism for the year 2018-19 suggest that Guwahati receives the highest footfalls with 25% of total tourist arrivals in Assam followed by Kaziranga (10%), Sivasagar (7.04%), Majuli (3.35%), Tezpur (1.16%), Dibrugarh (0.38%), Manas National Park (0.06%) and Haflong (0.0002%). Panimur and Umrangsu are two naïve destinations (with abundant potential) recently being promoted by the tourism authority, are yet to generate considerable footfalls. Goalpara and Sualkuchi, however, already are very famous among tourists, and are being able to attract considerable interests among the target tourist groups. The Department of Tourism, Government of Assam has enlisted the tourism destinations with two dimensions. Interest of the tourist is one dimension and listed out total ten interest areas under this dimension. The second dimension is tourism circuits. 6 circuits are identified along with 36 different tourist destinations in the state. Details of all such destinations have been presented in the following table (Table 2.1).

Table2.1: Tourist Destinations in Assam as per Department of Tourism, Government of Assam			
Interest wise list of Destinations		**Circuit wise list of Destinations**	
Areas	**Destinations**	**Circuit**	**Destinations**
Wild life	Kaziranga	1 (8N/9D)	Guwahati
	Manas		Kaziranga
	Pobitora		Nameri
Tea & Golf	Tocklai Tea Research Centre, Jorhat		Dirang
	Digboi Golf Course		Tawang
	Kaziranga Golf Resort, Jorhat		Bomdila
Rural Charm	Mayong		Tezpur
	Sualkuchi		Guwahati
	Hajo	2 (5N/6D)	Guwahati
	Sasoni Merbil, Dibrugarh		Cherrapunjee
Adventure	Karbi Anglong (Mountaineering)		Shillong
	Garbhanga Reserve Forest, Guwahati (Trekking)		Mawlynong
	Dibrugarh (Horse Riding Tours)		Guwahati
	Dalibari in North Guwahati (Parasailing)	3 (4N/5D)	Jorhat
	Dibru Saikhowa (Parasailing)		Kaziranga
	Guwahati (Boat racing)		Majuli
	Hajo (Boat racing)		Sivasagar
	Sualkuchi (Boat racing)		Jorhat
	Barpeta (Boat racing)	4 (4N/5D)	Dibru Saikhowa
	Charanbeel, Morigaon (Kayaking and Canoeing)		Dehing Patkai
	Nameri (River Rafting, Angling, Camping)		Dibrugarh
Historical Monuments	Rang Ghar, Talatal Ghar, Kareng Ghar, Moidams in Sivasagar	5 (5N/6D)	Guwahati
	Da Parbatiya, Tezpur		Sualkuchi
	Madan Kamdev		Bordowa
	Agnigarh, Tezpur		Sivasagar
	Deoparvat, Golaghat		Majuli
	Sri Surya Pahar, Goalpara		Jorhat
Temples & Pilgrimages	Ambari excavations, Guwahati	6 (6N/7D)	Guwahati
	Kamakhya, Ambobachi Mela, Navagraha Basisthasram		Hajo

Table2.1: Tourist Destinations in Assam as per Department of Tourism, Government of Assam			
Interest wise list of Destinations		**Circuit wise list of Destinations**	
Areas	**Destinations**	**Circuit**	**Destinations**
Satras of Assam	Auniati, Samaguri, Dakhinpat, Benegenaati, Garmur, Kamalabari Satra (Majuli)		Sualkuchi
Buddhism in Assam	Hajo		Manas
	Tinsukia		Dhubri
	Dibrugarh		Guwahati
River Cruises	Mahabahu River Cruise, Brahmaputra River Cruise Pvt Ltd. , Alfresco Grand, River Queen (IWT), Kamakazi (Guwahati)		
Monsoon Magic	Dibru Saikhowa National Park		

A scrutiny through the major tourism directory/agency reveals the wide variety of tourist destinations in Assam (Table 2.2). *MapsofIndia.com*, one of the largest online repositories of vivid information about India, has listed out a total of 9 major tourist destinations in Assam. They are Kamakhya, Haflong, Umrangso, Sivasagar, Majuli, Manas, Kaziranga, Hajo and Agnigarh. Likewise, Lonely Planet mentioned 10 major destinations in Assam(Kaziranga, Talatal Ghar, Rang Ghar, Kamakhya, Manas, Nameri, Charaideo, Ahom temples, Pobitora and Kaziranga Orchid Park).Outlook Traveler and Incredible India identified a total of 4 best destinations (Guwahati, Manas, Kaziranga, Dibrugarh) in Assam, TripAdvisor mentioned 8(Guwahati, Kaziranga, Dibrugarh, Jorhat, Tezpur, Silchar, Tinsukia, Majuli) and Tripoto mentioned 6 (Guwahati,Dibrugarh,Tezpur,Majuli, Digboi and Kaziranga) destinations respectively. A total of 10 destinations i.e., Guwahati, Tezpur, Jorhat, Majuli, Tinsukia, Golaghat, Silchar, Sivasagar, Dibrugarh and Digboi have been identified by Trip Planner: Travel India App.

Table2.2: Best Tourist Destinations in Assam as per Online Travel Agency/Repository		
#	**Agency/Directory**	**Best Destinations**
1	**Maps of India**	a) Kamakhya b) Haflong c) Umrangso d) Sivasagar e) Majuli f) Manas g) Kaziranga h) Hajo i) Agnigarh
2	**Lonely Planet**	a) Kaziranga b) Talatal Ghar c) Rang Ghar d) Kamakhya e) Manas f) Nameri g) Charaideo h) Ahom temples i) Pobitora j) Kaziranga Orchid Park
3	**Outlook Traveler**	a) Guwahati b) Manas

Table2.2: Best Tourist Destinations in Assam as per Online Travel Agency/Repository		
#	Agency/Directory	Best Destinations
		c) Kaziranga d) Dibrugarh
4	TripAdvisor.com	a) Guwahati b) Kaziranga c) Dibrugarh d) Jorhat e) Tezpur f) Silchar g) Tinsukia h) Majuli
5	Tripoto	a) Guwahati b) Dibrugarh c) Tezpur d) Majuli e) Digboi f) Kaziranga
6	Incredible India	a) Guwahati b) Jorhat c) Kaziranga d) Tezpur
7	Trip Planner: Travel India App	a) Guwahati b) Tezpur c) Jorhat d) Majuli e) Tinsukia f) Golaghat g) Silchar h) Sivasagar i) Dibrugarh j) Digboi

However, from quantitative and qualitative data available, and as mentioned in the aforesaid section, we have decided the following destinations to be treated as "major" tourist destinations of Assam.

(1) Guwahati, **(2)** Kaziranga, **(3)** Barpeta Road (Manas National Park), **(4)** Halflong, **(5)** Majuli, **(6)** Tezpur (including Nameri National Park), **(7)** Sivasagar, **(8)** Dibrugarh (Dibru Saikhowa National Park and Tea gardens), **(9)** Goalpara (Surjya Pahar), **(10)** Sualkuchi,

We have added 2 new but upcoming destinations namely, **(11)** Panimur and **(12)** Umrangso.

A brief discussion on the major destinations selected for the study is presented below.

2.2.1 Guwahati:

Often regarded as the gateway to the north eastern part of India, Guwahati has acclaimed the tag of tourist destination for its huge resources of temples, ancient ruins, museums, natural habitat, leisure parks etc. Basically, Guwahati is known for its holy sites, which are famous among pilgrims. Due to easy accessibility to the other parts of the world

Guwahati has turned out to be the hub of visitors to and from 7 North-eastern states of the country and almost all visitors to these states need to pass through this beautiful city. Few important attractions for leisure travellers and pilgrims in Guwahati are presented below.

a) *Dighalipukhuri Park***:**

Plate 2.1: Dighalipukhuri Park

The Dighalipukhuri Park has been recently renamed as 'Prashanti Udyan'. The Park is notable with its large rectangular shaped lake. This lake was once connected by a channel to the Brahmaputra and was used as a naval harbour by the Ahoms (Lonely Planet, n.d.). In modern times a leisure park has been built surrounding the lake. The attractive Dighalipukhuri Park has

boating facilities around it. There is an open-air War Memorial at the park's north east with a different entrance.

b) *Ugratara Devalaya***:**

Ugratara Devalaya is dedicated to Sati Devi, believed to be the 1st partner of famous Hindu Lord Shiva. It is one of the Shakti Peeths of the Devi (Nath, 2016). The

Plate 2.2: Ugratara Devalay

site of the temple consists of a pond which is always adorned by a flock of swans and ducks, creating extra attractiveness to the temple. The temple also observes 'Ugratara Mela' every year during the festive times of Durga Puja and in the months of February and July.

Plate 2.3: Sukreswar Devalaya

c) *Sukreswar Devalaya***:**

The 'Sukreswar Devalaya' is situated on the banks of the mighty river Brahmaputra. This temple is dedicated to Lord Shiva. Another temple, named Sukreswar temple is situated on the hillock named Hastiparvat (as mentioned in Kalika Puran and Jugini Tantra) or Dakiniparvat. Presently, its location is at Panbazar, Guwahati. It was believed that, Ahom king Siva Singha built the Sukreswar temple in 1780A.D. He had extended royal patronage to the temple by granting both land and men. (Nath, 2016). Sitting arrangements are there for the visitors to observe the eye-catching scenic beauty of Brahmaputra River.

d) *Kamakhya Temple***:**

Kamakhya Temple is one of the iconic images of Assam Tourism. It is a hotspot for pilgrims of the entire nation. The temple is dedicated to Mother Goddess Kamakhya, a deity of one of the 51 Shakti Peethas. The Koch king Naranarayana (Malladeva) and his brother Chilarai's (Sukhladhvaj) names are inscribed in the main temple entrance, as the rulers who built the temple in 1565 A.D. (Nath, 2016).The famous '*Ambubachi Mela'* is an annual

Plate 2.4: Kamakhya Temple

majestic celebration at Kamakhya temple held in the month of June. Thousands of pilgrims and tourists congregate to observe the festival and get a glimpse of the iconic gatherings every year.

Plate 2.5: Navagraha Temple

e) *Navagraha Temple***:**

The Navagraha Temple has its history related to astrology and astronomy. The temple is believed to be in existence from the time of the Puranas. It is also known as the temple of nine planets. The temple is located at the eastern part of Guwahati. The present structure was built by king Rajeswara Singha in 1752 AD (Nath, 2016).

f) *Srimanta Sankardeva Kalakshetra***:**

Srimanta Sarkardeva Kalakshetra is basically a cultural museum encompassing the communities of Assam. This cultural centre is popular with units like Sahitya and Sangeet Natak building, Cultural Museum (Purbajyoti Museum), Library, Dr. Bhupen Hazarika Museum, Srimanta Sankaradeva

Plate 2.6: Srimanta Sankardeva Kalakshetra

Study Centre, Sound & Light Show, Open Air Theatre, International Convention Centre (300 & 1250 capacity auditoriums) and many other significant installations. While visiting Guwahati, 'Srimanta Sarkardeva Kalakshetra' remains in the list of

Plate 2.7: Assam State Zoo

every tourist from different origins. (Srimanta Sankardev Kalakshetra Society, n.d.).

g) *State Zoo-cum-Botanical Garden***:**

The State Zoo-cum-Botanical Garden is the only zoo in Assam. It is popular among the visitors. The site is often regarded as 'green lung' of the ever-busy Guwahati city. The Zoo has an impressive collection of some 84 species of animals that include many rare, endangered and endemic ones, specific to North East India only. The floral collection of the zoo covers 345 species of plants as well. There are 154 species of birds, 105 species of butterflies (Principal Chief Conservator of Forest & Head of Forest Force, n.d.)

h) *Shraddhanjali Kanan:*

Shraddhanjali Kanan is the newly added park located at just the opposite of the State Zoo. It is a recreational park mostly popular among city dwellers but visited by outside travellers as well. The Park hosts different kinds of programs including awareness camps, cultural programs, youth festivals, etc. The Park is rich

Plate 2.8: Shraddhanjali Park

with attraction units like laser and musical fountains, games and amusement facilities for children, amphitheatre etc.

Plate 2.9: Northbrook Gate

i) *Northbrook Gate:*

The historic Northbrook Gate is a great reminder to the colonial history in Assam. The gate was constructed in the year 1874 near Sukreswar temple, for welcoming the then Governor General of India, Lord Northbrook. Its design is on the lines of the famous 'King's College Chapel Arches' of England. The rectangular shaped gate has twelve arches, 5 arches each along the length and one each along the breath. (Nath, 2016). The Sukreswar Ghat Park alongside this heritage monument has made the place perfect for leisure time.

Plate 2.10: Basistha Ashram

j) *Basistha Ashram:*

The attraction is situated at the outskirts of the city and nearer to Garbhanga Reserve Forest which is populated by elephants and is also a proposed butterfly reserve. The construction of the temple dates back to the era of Ahom Swargadeo Rajeswar Singha (1751-

69). The temple is a protected archaeological monument under the Archaeological Survey of India. The place is also a popular picnic spot for its beautiful surroundings, besides being a popular pilgrimage centre. As per popular legends the great sage Bashistha came to worship Goddess Kamakhya, but the demon king Naraka did not allow him to do so. Thereupon, sage Bashistha cursed the latter that he would be killed by Lord Vishnu himself. Bashistha then chose to meditate in Sandhyachala towards the east of Nilachal. (Nath, 2016).

Plate 2.11: Science Museum

k) *Science Museum, Khanapara (The Regional Science Centre):*

The Science Museum is located in eastern side of the city, Khanapara. The attraction has been popular among the tourists who are interested in technology and are in scientific pursuits. The site is a full package of information with many units like Prehistoric Park, 3D science movies; science shows at the outside, the indoor and outdoor expositions like the mirror magic, fun science, Children's corner, Butterfly corner, large aquarium, and many more. (Regional Science Centre [Guwahati], n.d.)

l) *Purva Tirupati Shri Balaji Temple*:

Beside the National Highway 27, there stands the beautiful 'Purva Tirupati Sri Balaji Temple'. Replica of the Tirupati Venkateshwara Temple of Tirumalla, Andhra Pradesh. The complex consists of three temples – a Ganesh temple, the main temple of Lord Balaji and the third being that of Goddess Durga. The temple of Lord Balaji has a Rajagopuram of 70 ft. in height. It excellently resembles the South Indian architecture

Plate 2.12: Balaji Temple

(Nath, 2016). The white coloured temples are known for their South Indian–style architecture, imposing stone idols & park like grounds. During the recent Puskar Mela in Guwahati, the temple attracted a huge number of pilgrims as well as other tourists for its eye-catching beauty over the designs.

Plate 2.13: Assam State Museum

m) *Assam State Museum*: Situated at the heart of Guwahati City, the Assam State Museum has a clear colonial touch due to its pre-independence connection. The construction of the museum dates back to 1940 when it was established by Kamrup Anusandhan Samiti. It is one of the richest museums of the region with a great collection of art exhibits. The museum is a treasure trove that can boast of over 14,000 artefacts. However, only about 5000 artefacts have been kept on display (Nath, 2016). The museum is home to authentic prehistoric ivory paintings, sculptures, metal/ woodwork, costumes and many more. The replicas of the tribal hut from the major tribes of Assam are also found here that provide a remote but practical exposure to the visitors.

n) *Dr. Bhupen Hazarika Samadhi Kshetra*:

Standing just beside the National Highway 27 and at the entrance Gauhati University, this museum is a tribute to the legendary lyricist, musician, singer, poet and film-maker of Assam, Bharat Ratna Dr. Bhupen Hazarika. There is a tomb surrounding the memorial of this legendary persona. A museum constructed in the

Plate 2.14: Dr Bhupen Hazarika Samadhi Kshetra

memorial houses all personal artefacts and photographs of the music maestro. The two storied structure houses a library. The library treasures unique pictures of the doyen. It also has an audio-visual room (Nath, 2016).

o) *Planetarium*:

The popular 'Planetarium' stands at the mid of Guwahati City, being the centre of the modern-day scientific developments of the region. Guwahati Planetarium offers beautiful shows on planetary movements and celestial happenings; hence it has been a premier attraction site for the people, especially for the school kids.

Plate 2.15: Planetarium

p) *Doul Govinda Temple*:

The temple is located at the northern bank of Brahmaputra River

Plate 2.17: Kanai Boroxi Buwa Rock

Plate 2.16: Doul Govinda Temple

at a semi township. The holy shrine of Lord Doul Gobinda adorns this township at the eastern part historically well-known as Rajaduar. The

temple is dedicated to Lord Krishna. The followers of the temple are mostly Hindus and Vaishnavites (Nath, 2016).

q) *Kanai-boroxi Buwa Rock***:**

The attraction site comprises of three plates which are protected through State Archaeological Department of Assam. These ancient plates date back to 1206 CE and 17th century CE, depicting bravery and military victory of the region over invaders. The site lies on a low hillock on the bank of Brahmaputra with scattered pieces of boulders and a large rock surrounded by the smaller blocks. (Department of Cultural Affairs, Govt. of Assam, n.d.) There is a temple nearby which was constructed recently to worship Lord Ganesha.

r) *Dirgheswari Devalaya***:**

Another pilgrim site which comes under Assam State Archaeological Department is the Dirgheswari Devalaya. The temple was constructed during the reign of Ahom king, Swargadeo Shiva Singha (1714-1744). Situated on the top of Sitachal hills, this ancient temple is dedicated

Plate 2.18: Dirgheswari Devalaya

Plate 2.19: Auniaati Satra

to Goddess Durga. It is also considered as a 'Shakti Peetha' (Nath, 2016). The hill is an extended range that abounds with a natural setting. Its rock-base emerges at a point to the river Brahmaputra which gives the site a panoramic beauty at the riverfront. A small hilly stream flows by the temple throughout the year. This adds serene charm and natural beauty to the site.

s) *Auniati Satra***:**

The Auniati Satra which is situated on the Northern bank of Brahmaputra is not so popular with the visitors. It is the oldest branch of famous Sri Sri Auniati Satra in Majuli. The North Guwahati branch was built in the year of 1915 A.D. by His Holiness Sri Sri Kamal Dev Goswami. The Satra worships Lord Krishna in the name of 'Govinda' (Sri Sri Auniati Satra, n.d.).

Plate 2.20: Ashwaklanta Temple

t) *Ashwaklanta Temple***:**

The Shiva Temple dates back to the Ahom era of 1720 A.D. and it was constructed by

Swargadeo Shiva Singha. It can be reached by a stairway of 28 steps of old stone temple relics laid in west. Another pathway to the temple lies to the eastern face of the site. The figures of idols in the temple are unique and boast of the rare artistic expression of very high merit. The temple campus is bounded by a brick wall. One can find a few sculptural works and cravings in the compound, belonging to the early medieval period of 11th – 12th century AD. (Nath, 2016). The temple observes two major yearly festivals, Janmashtami and Ashokashtami with great enthusiasm. One can look at the beauty of Guwahati city and the Holy Brahmaputra River from the temple campus.

u) *Deepor Beel***:**

Deepor beel is the first bird sanctuary in Assam. It is a wetland under the 'Ramsar Convention' which has listed the lake in November 2002, as a Ramsar Site for undertaking conservation measures on the basis of its biological and environmental significance. The wetland is a natural habitat of around 219 bird species. Ornithologists reported that more than 70 migratory species flock the beel, truly making it a bird

Plate 2.21: Deepor Beel

watchers paradise. The largest congregation of aquatic birds can be witnessed here, particularly in winter. During this time a reported record count of 19000 water birds in a day has been made (Nath, 2016). The site is located at the South-east of the city. At the bank of the lake, there are almost fourteen indigenous villages.

v) *Chandubi Lake***:**

An emerging attraction situated at the outskirts of Guwahati City, is the lake Chandubi. It is almost 64 km away from the city and falls under 'Rabha Hasong Automous Council'. A natural lake surrounded by pristine

Plate 2.22: Chandubi Lake

Plate 2.23: Kaziranga National Park

beauty of hills, Chandubi has been receiving large number of tourists who want to spend some of their time amidst silence and nature. The most fascinating thing is that, the eco camps which reside at the other part do not allow all kinds of tourists to stay over. They are conscious about the untouched beauty of the location and only cater service to those who literally want to escape the reality in the lap of nature and culture. More than 250 species of birds, both local and migratory, more than 70 species of fish, 8 species

of amphibians, 4 species of turtles and 12 species of serpents have been recorded so far (Kalita, 2017).

2.2.2 Kaziranga:

a) *Kaziranga National Park*:

Often known as 'brand image' of Assam, the Kaziranga National Park has been the "eyeball" of Assam Tourism. The world famous one-horned rhinoceros' habitat has been the largest home for this species. The land area of this world heritage site is spread across 3 districts; i.e. Golaghat, Karbi Anglong and Nagaon. It receives large number of domestic as well as foreign visitors. The National Park is the habitat of more than 70% of One-horned rhinoceros in the world along with other mammals and 25 globally threatened and 21 near threatened species of birds as well. (Principal Chief Conservator of Forest & Head of Forest Force, n.d.).

b) *Kaziranga Orchid and Bio-Diversity Park*:

Along with the national park, the Kaziranga Orchid Park acts as another man-made attraction for the tourists for its richness in vegetation and preservation of many endemic plants, rice grains and orchids. The Orchid Park hosts traditional cultural shows depicting different communities of Assam in the evening hours. Functioning

Plate 2.24: Kaziranga Orchid Park

with active participation from local bodies, the park has received wide publicity and popularity. The traditional food items of the park are also very popular among the guests.

Plate 2.25: Manas National Park Panbari Range

2.2.3 Manas National Park (*Neaerst town Barpeta Road)*: Manas National Park and Tiger Reserve, which is situated in Baksa Distrct of norher lower Assam is famous for the presence of the 'Royal Bengal Tiger'. This UNESCO World Heritage site was in news headings for its community participation in reducing poaching in the area. Sharing its international boundary with Bhutan, the other part of Manas National Park is known as Royal Manas National Park there. Home to a great variety of wildlife, including many

endangered species, such as the tiger, pygmy hog, Indian rhinoceros and Indian elephant, Manas National Park has been another attraction for the tourists to visit. (World Heritage Convention, n.d.).

2.2.4 Haflong:

The only hill station of Assam amidst the clouds, Haflong is the capital of newly formed Dima Hasao District (formerly North Cachar District). In local Dimasa language, Haflong means 'ant hill', an obvious reference to numerous termite mounds around the town. The region is connected through a heritage railway track that was constructed during the colonial time. The train track which has now been converted into broad gauge, passes through many tunnels before reaching Badarpur in Barak valley, making the journey even more beautiful. (Assam Travel Guide, 2018). The weather

Plate 2.26: A view of Borail Mountain Range

prevailing in the region is much appreciated by the tourists; hence a number of visitors preferred the destination for their vacations.

a) *Jatinga*:

A heavenly abode for migratory birds, Jatinga has continued to be so since many years. The migratory birds visit the place during the month of August till November. Thus it becomes the ornithologist's most preferred attraction. From the elevated watch tower one can see the presence of many bird species in that region (Balasubramanian, 2017). The region is mostly known for suicidal attempts of the birds but, later it was proved that, the poachers used to hunt the species by creating light illusion at night. To the North-East, South-West direction of the place, there lie the lofty Borail Hills that stand with head held high.

Plate 2.27: Themed cottage of different tribes

Plate 2.28: Gallery Point Watch Tower

b) *Jatinga Ethnic Village*:

Jatinga ethnic village is a model village depicting different cultural attributes of the hilly region. This village is being maintained by the Department of Forestry and is constructed under Rashtriya Sama Vikash Yojana. One can find the traditional dorms and houses

Plate 2.29: Botanical Garden

belonging to different tribal groups of the district. It is a perfect place for the visitors to witness day to day lifestyle of the people living here and the traditions they follow.

c) *Gallery Point***:**

To get a bird's eye view of Haflong town and the Borail Hills, Gallery View-point is the perfect place for the visitors. One can get the views of New Haflong Station, Muolhoi village and many more.

d) *Botanical Garden***:**

At the mid of the town, the Haflong Botanical Garden is situated. Various species of orchids, parrots, rabbits are preserved here. This small garden is situated beside the Haflong Lake and is near to Office of Dima Hasao Autonomous Council.

Plate 2.30: Old Haflong Station

e) *Old Haflong Station***:**

The Old Haflong Station is famous for the Badarpur-Lumding section, which was part of the Assam Bengal Railway formed in 1892 to primarily transport tea, coal and timber produced in Upper Assam region through a zig-zag meter-gauge track that had 37 tunnels. Breaching the difficult Borail mountains, the railway track also consists of 586 bridges, including the amazing Doyang Bridge. Such a 111-year-old hill station has been a place of attraction for many visitors because of its British architectural intelligence (The Indian Express, 2014). Presently, being a heritage attraction, the station receives many enthusiasts, though the condition of the same is not so good.

Plate 2.31: A Dimasa Household

f) *Samparidisa Ecotourism Village***:**

Samparidisa Ecotourism village has been a promising attraction for Haflong since the year 2016. The village has started its tourism activities in the form of 'adventure trekking'. The Bendao Baiglai Waterfall which is approximately 3km away from Samparidisa village has become an upcoming tourist attraction of Dima Hasao District. There is an Ecotourism Village Committee who runs the tourism activity in the region with active support from 'Spectrum', an NGO, Tourism department of Dima Hasao and Assam Rifles.

Plate 2.32: Maibang Stone House

g) _Maibang Stone House_**:**

Maibang, once, was the capital of Dimasa Kingdom. The Maibang Stone House temple, which is marvellously cut through a single stone, is situated beside the NH 27, on the bank of Mahur River. According to local folklore, a house was supposed to be hewn out of a single stone, cut within a night and the work was to be finished before the cock crowed. That stone house remained unfinished as a cock crowed at midnight on that particular night. The inscriptions on the temple wall dated back to the 17ᵗʰ century. This temple is said to be dedicated to the goddess 'Ranachandi', the goddess signifying the war aspect of Gauri, is a tutelary deity of Cachari kings. The roof of the temple has curvilinear eaves showing Bengal's architectural influence. There are four false doors on the walls of the temple (Archaeological Survey of India, Guwahati Circle, n.d.).

2.2.5 Majuli:

Known as the cultural centre of Assam, this river island is famous for _Neo-Vaishavaite_ culture and handicraft items. The region is home to several satra institutions, some dating back to the 16ᵗʰ century (Assam Travel Guide, 2018). Blessed with natural beauty and enriched with _Mishing_ and _Neo-Vaishnavaite_ culture, Majuli is also known for crafts like pottery making in

Plate 2.33: A Mishing Village

Salmora, mask making in Samaguri Satra and boat making practices in Kamalabari Ghat. Birding in Chakoli Beel is also a prominent attraction here. A cluster of such attractions has made the region a perfect destination for people seeking cultural and natural significance.

a) _Dhapak Gaon (A Mishing Village)_**:**

Majuli is not known for its _Vaishnavaite_ culture only, but the Mishing community in the region has also been an attraction among

Plate 2.35: Dakhinpat Satra

tourists for their way of life and handicrafts. One of such attraction is Dhapak Gaon which resides at the south of Kamalabari region. Due to their hospitality,

Plate 2.34: Handmade Artifacts

tourists tend to spend their day among these lovable souls.

b) *Salmora Pottery Village***:**

The Salmora Pottery Village is famous for its unique pottery making technique. Unlike others, the artisans here do not use wheels for making those. The practitioners use their own hands to shape the potteries. This unique technique has been attracting a number of visitors to sight the process on their own. However, it was told that, the village has been facing challenges since the few past years as the district administration has restricted excavation of the soil that the pottery industry requires.

c) *Dakhinpat Satra***:**

The Dakhinpat Satra happens to be the oldest Satra institution of the region which was established in the year 1652 AD (Majuli Cultural Landscape Management Authority, n.d.). The Dakhinpat Satra is a marked preserver of relics and various rare manuscripts on *Sanchi-pat* made from *Sanchi -tree bark;* Sattriya dance, music, art and culture such as Borgeet, Jhumura, Apsara-nas, Bhaona, ankia-nat and other performing arts. *Rasleela* is the main celebrated occasion of the Satra and thousands of devotees from different places come to observe the holy festival of the Satra every year.

d) *Samaguri Satra***:**

The Samaguri Satra is popular for the traditional art of Mask-making. For many years, the satra has been diligently carrying

Plate 2.36: Samaguri Satra

Plate 2.37: Bengena-ati- Satra

out the tradition of mask-making and providing masks to almost all the Assamese theatrical performances. In addition to that, they organize many workshops and seminars on this traditional art at various places, inside as well as outside the state, to demonstrate the importance and technique of this exceptional art. Mr. Hemchanda Goswami, the institution leader has been a light bearer of this tradition.

e) *Bengena-ati Satra***:**

Nearer to Samaguri Satra, is the Bengena-ati Satra. The institution is famous for its museum that contains numerous ancient artefacts related to Ahom era. The museum has a wide collection of antiques like the royal dressing robe of King Swargadeo Gadadhar Singha, other gold embellished (embroidery) gowns, including a rare umbrella of gold work etc. (Tourism Department of Assam, n.d.)

f) *Uttar Kamalabari Satra*:

The Uttar Kamalabari Satra has been a significant place for preserving the cultural attributes of Assam since many years. The institution has been playing a vital role in promoting the *Neo-Vaishnavaite* culture through Satriya art in several places of India and abroad. (Tourism Department of Assam, n.d.). Visitor can see the cane, wood and bamboo products

Plate 2.38: Uttar Kamalabari Satra

nearer to Uttar Kamalabari Satra.

Plate 2.39: Garmur Satra Entrance

g) *Garmur Satra*:

Garmur Satra has been another important attraction of the region. The Satra is famous for the canons that are displayed for the visitors. An important form of dance called *Raasleela* is performed here with great enthusiasm. It is a depiction of the mischievous sport played by Lord Krishna with his Gopis, on the banks of the river Yamuna, in the historic town of Vrindavan (Baruah, 2016).

h) *Natun Kamalabari Satra*:

Natun Kamalabari Satra is the branch of Kamalabari Satra along with Uttar Kamalabari Satra. The attraction is located near the Kamalabari Ghat. The institution is famous for its boat making practices. The finest boats on the island are made here. (Tourism Department of Assam, n.d.). This Satra has been trying to preserve the Sattriya assets with utmost care. It maintains the satrriya dance as well as other cultural activities in its original form.

Plate 2.40: Natun Kamalabari Satra

Plate 2.41: Auniaati Satra

i) *Auniaati Satra*:

The Auniaati Satra is regarded as the largest satra institution in Majuli. The Satra is famous for "Paalnaam" and

Plate 2.42: Chakoli Beel

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Apsara dances. The institution has got an extensive collection of ancient artefacts, old Assamese utensils, jewellery and handicrafts. (Tourism Department of Assam, n.d.). It is said that, the Satra institution was established in the 1653 AD. (Majuli Cultural Landscape Management Authority, n.d.).

j) *Chakoli Beel***:**

Majuli is also known for its birding hotspots as river Brahmaputra flows around it. One of such hotspots is the Chakoli Beel. The site is just near to Auniaati Satra. The wetland is famous for the sighting of 'Whiskered tern' which is said to be found only in Jammu and Kashmir other than Majuli. Apart from residential birds like Asian open bill, lesser adjutant stork, black stork and white-necked stork, 'Chakoli beel' also receives migratory species like grey lags, pintail, gulls, eagles, falcons, grey-headed lapwings, wagtails, plovers, sand-pipers, spot-billed and Dalmatian pelicans, etc. (Majuli Cultural Landscape Management Authority, n.d.).

2.2.6 Tezpur (including Nameri National Park):

The Sanskrit words 'Teza' means 'Blood' and 'Pura' means 'City'. A mythological war, "hari hara yuddha" was fought here, between the armies of Lord Krishna and Lord Siva that had witnessed a blood bath (Nath,2019) and thus the city was named Tezpur. The city is also known for its ancient relics that have the touch of Gupta architectural beauty. Some of the monuments can be traced back to 6th century AD as well (Archaeological Survey of India, Guwahati Circle, n.d.). Apart from ruins, temples, monuments and parks the destination is closer to Nameri National Park as well. Nameri National Park is well-known for its adventurous river-rafting in the Jiya Bhorali River where birding has also been a point of attraction for the visitors.

Plate 2.43: Agnigarh

a) *Agnigarh***:**

The literal meaning of 'Agnigarh' is 'fort surrounded by fire'. Located beside the Brahmaputra, the site reveals the legendary romance of princess Usha (the only daughter of king Bana) and Aniruddha (the grandson of Lord Krishna). Usha was confined on this hillock which was surrounded by fire, hence the name, 'Agnigarh'. The Tourism Corporation of Assam has built a park in the hillock that contains several sculptures which depict the story as per Hindu scriptures/Puranas (Directorate of Census Operations Assam, 2011). One can get a panoramic view of the surrounding which is definitely very attractive and alluring to eyes. From the hillock, the view to the part of Tezpur City and the mighty Brahmaputra is quite eye-catching.

b) *Maa Bhairabi Mandir***:**

Bhairabi temple is locally known as 'Maithan' or 'Bhairabi Devalaya'. It is said that Usha, the daughter of King Bana was an ardent devotee of Goddess Bhairabi (another form of Durga). She used to

Plate 2.44: Maa Bhairabi Temple

Plate 2.45: Sculpture at Bamuni Hill

offer puja regularly to the deity. Today, no remains of the old temple can be seen and the temple that stands now is the newly built one. It is believed that various natural calamities led to the destruction of the old temple (Directorate of Census Operations Assam, 2011). Ruins of the old temple are lying scattered around the site. The site is situated on the bank of Brahmaputra.

c) *Bamuni Hill***:**

Bamuni hill is a low hillock situated on the northern bank of Brahmaputra River. The hillock displays a number of stone carvings and statues of bygone era. The Archaeological Survey of India who is in charge of the site has fixed the date of these ruins between the 9th to 10th century A.D. However, the style of the excavated art matches those of Gupta period (Archaeological Survey of India, Guwahati Circle (n.d.). According to another mythological story the place was destroyed during the war between Lord Bishnu and Lord Shiva over the love-story of Usha and Aniruddha.

d) *Chitralekha Park* (Cole Park):

Chitralekha Park is the famous Children's Park near the ASTC Bus Station of Tezpur. The Park was built in 1906 by a commissioner of Assam named Mr. Cole. (Directorate of Census Operations

Plate 2.46: Chitralekha Park

Plate 2.47: Da-Parbatiya Doorframe

Assam, 2011). The breathtaking scenic beauty around the park has made it popular among the visitors. The Park is well-equipped with a serene lake where boating facility is available. Moreover, some of the ancient relics

from nearby areas have been relocated to the park in order to facilitate public viewing.

e) *Da-Parbatiya Doorframe***:**

The site of Da-Parbatiya is a witness of two temples of early civilization. According to experts, one of the temples was built during 6th century. The art tradition of Gupta period is reflected in the style. It is a perfect place for architecture and ancient art lovers. The beautifully carved statues of 'Ganga' and 'Yamuna' attract number of experts and historians to this place (Archeological Survey of India, Guwahati Circle, n.d.).

Plate 2.48: Kanaklata Memorial Garden

f) *Ouguri Hill***:**

Ouguri Hill is popularly known as Kanaklata Memorial Rock Garden. Being situated in a hillock, the park has eye-catching view of entire Tezpur Town and Brahmaputra River. The Park was constructed in

Plate 2.49: District Museum

memory of the freedom fighter 'Kanaklata Borua'. The Park gives a great insight of history, which is evident in the huge rocks spread over the area. Tezpur University GPS Observatory is also situated just amidst the park.

g) *District Museum/Dak Bungalow*

The District Museum of Tezpur is beside the ASTC Bus Station in the heart of the town. It is associated with Dr. Bhupen Hazarika Kalabhumi site. The multipurpose collections there include textiles, paintings, wooden objects, sculpture, manuscripts, copper plate inscriptions etc. Also, cannons, and stone sculptures from both pre-Ahom and Ahom period are displayed at the entrance of the museum. Rich craft work from the Satra institutions are also displayed in the museum signifying the neo-Vaishnavite impact on the socio-cultural setup of the place.

h) *Poki/Jyoti Bharati***:**

Poki, which is presently known as 'Jyoti Bharati' was the ancestral home of 'Rupkonwar' Jyoti Prasad Agarwala. The government had taken over the

Plate 2.50: Jyoti Bharati

Plate 2.51: Mahabhairab Temple

site in the year 1977. Currently, 'Jyoti Bharati' is under the Directorate of Cultural Affairs. It also has

a memorial museum of Jyoti Prasad Agarwala (Directorate of Census Operations Assam, 2011). One can get insights of cultural, social, political and daily life events of this great personality here.

i) *Mahabhairab Mandir***:**

Mahabhairab Mandir is said to be built by King 'Bana'. According to another scripture, the temple is said to have been built by Tungkhungiya King of Ahom dynasty where he had donated a large part of land for the temple and the priests. The temple hosts an annual Shivratri fair which lasts for a week and is famous all over Assam. Currently, the temple is maintained by the Government with the help of a managing committee which is headed by the District Deputy Commissioner (Directorate of Census Operations Assam, 2011).

Plate 2.52: Padum Pukhuri

j) *Padum Pukhuri***:**

The literal meaning of 'Padum Pukhuri' is lotus pond. It is a famous lake with an island, which has been converted into a park. The Park has a musical fountain inside it. There is an iron bridge to take one to the island. The Park has boating facility also.

k) *Nameri National Park***:**

Plate 2.53: Park Entry Point

Nameri National Park stays protected in the foothills of the Eastern Himalayas and situated in Sonitpur district. The total land area of the park has been extended up to 212 sq.km. Nameri houses a diverse range of flora and fauna. The most famous white-winged-wood-duck (Deo Hanh) is found here. Besides these, other animals found here are black bear, many types of deers, butterflies, fishes, elephants etc. River Jiya Bharali flows down through the Nameri National Park where river rafting is famous during the winter months. The National Park is also known for the Golden Mahseer and many bird varieties (Directorate of Census Operations Assam, 2011).

l) *Bhalukpong***:**

Bhalukpong has been a hotspot for people seeking natural beauty. The flow of river Kameng (*aka* Jia Bhoroli) provides the region a rare opportunity for adventure tourism and a beautiful picnic spot. Angling and river rafting are principal tourist activities in Bhalukpong. Bhalukpong serves as the gateway to

Plate 2.54: Bhalukpong Picnic Spot

popular destinations like Tawang and Bomdila (Incredible India, n.d.).

2.2.7 Sivasagar:

Plate 2.55: Shiva Doul

The destination, Sivasagar has been holding the prestigious history of Assam for many centuries. As a guardian of the ancient monuments, temples, ruins, manuscripts and other artefacts, the attractions of Sivasagar provide a vast knowledge as well as information from the point of view of Ahom Dynasty that lasted for almost 600 years (1228 – 1826), before British took over (Borah & Ahmed, 2014).

a) _Shiva Doul, Bisnu Doul and Devi Doul on the bank of Sivasagar Tank_**:**

Shiva Doul, situated on the bank of 'Sivasagar Tank' is known as 'the second tallest shiva temple in the entire country with a height of 132 feet 9 inches (Office of the Deputy Director of Economics and Statistics, Sivasagar, 2015). The walls are sculptured with statues of Hindu Gods and Goddesses. The nearby temples like Vishnu Doul and Devi Doul are dedicated to Lord Vishnu and Goddess Durga respectively. On the occasion of Maha Shivaratri 'International Shiva Festival' has been observed in the temple from 2018(Assam Tribune, 2018). The construction period of the monuments dates back to 1734 AD (Borah & Ahmed, 2014).

Plate 2.56: Bisnu Doul

Plate 2.57: Devi Doul

Plate 2.58: Uttaran Museum

b) _Uttaran Museum_**:**

Uttaran Museum is a private endeavour by Mr. Durlov Bora, creator cum curator and a retired engineer of Lakwa Thermal Plant. The museum reflects the picture of day-to-day life in Assam in a true sense. It is a multipurpose museum, which showcases different types of living and non-living objects as well as objects used both by man and nature. Nearly, 7000 artefacts are there to enrich his collection.

Plate 2.59: Gola Ghor

c) _Gola Ghar_**:**

Gola Ghar, an Ahom monument was a place for storing gun powders and explosives during the reign of the dynasty. The

structure was erected during the Ahom period of Swargadeo Rudra Singha (1696-1714 AD) (Office of the Deputy Director of Economics and Statistics, Sivasagar, 2015). The site is now listed under Protected Monuments of Archaeological Survey of India (Department of Cultural Affairs, Govt. of Assam, n.d.).

Plate 2.60: Talatal/ Kareng Ghar

d) *Talatal Ghar/Kareng Ghar***:**

Talatal Ghar, a multi-storeyed palace is another witness of Ahom architectural beauty. The palace dates back to 1765 AD. It had two secret underground tunnels inside it. One connected to the Dikhow Riverand, the other led to Garhgaon Palace (Kareng Ghar). These two tunnels were used as an 'escape route' in case of an enemy attack (Office of the Deputy Director of Economics and Statistics, Sivasagar, 2015). But for many years the tunnels have been out of bound for the visitors.

Plate 2.61: Tai Museum

e) *Tai Museum***:**

The Tai Museum is situated near the Tourist Information Office of Sivasagar, on the bank of Sivasagar Tank. It showcases various antique collections on 600 years of Ahom Dynasty. Collections like rare books, garments, ornaments, war materials etc. are on exhibit for the visitors. The museum also promotes research works on Tai language and literature.

Plate 2.63: Devi Doul, Joysagar

f) *Joysagar Tank and Joy Doul, Devi Doul***:**

The Joysagar Tank and the beautiful Joy Doul that is situated on the bank of the tank dates back to the 600 years old Ahom Dynasty. The tank was excavated by Swargadeo Rudra Singha (1696-1714) in the memory of his

Plate 2.62: Joy Doul, Joysagar

Plate 2.64: Ghanashyam Temple

Plate 2.65: Rang Ghar

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mother, a heroic figure of Assam 'Mohiyokhi Joymoti'. On the bank of it, the Swargadeo built a temple and dedicated to Lord Bishnu. In the present times some beautification initiatives have been undertaken by the Archaeological Survey of India. The temple has a very beautiful plantation around it. Another temple, Devi Doul was also built by the Swargadeo to offer prayers to Goddess Durga.

g) *Ghanashyam Mandir***:**

The Ghanashyam Mandir is in the name of Ghanashyam Khanikar who was the popular architect behind the historic buildings, temples and other structures at Joysagar locality. It is a very beautiful small brick-built house. The walls of the house are decorated with innumerable terracotta plaques depicting Ramayana scenes. This site is also situated on the bank of Joysagar Tank.

h) *Rang Ghar***:**

Constructed during reign of Swargadeo Rajeswar Singha, 1751-1769 AD, Rang Ghar is said to be the most beautiful architecture from the Ahom Dynasty. It is often compared to Rome's Colosseum. During the ancient time, the two-storied building was used as a royal sports pavilion. Swargadeos with their Kunworis used to watch various forms of sports and dances from the building during the festivals like Bhogali Bihu and Rongali Bihu (Office of the Deputy Director of Economics and Statistics, Sivasagar, 2015). Presently, Mukoli Bihu is organized at the courtyard of Rang Ghar (Rang Ghar Bakori) on the occasion of Rongali Bihu.

i)*Gaurisagar Tank and the Douls (Shiva Doul, Devi Doul, Bishnu Doul)***:**

Gauri Sagar is about 13km southwest of Sivasagar on the main road towards Jorhat. Gaurisagar Tank and three douls are situated here. The tank and the douls were built by Phuleswari Kunwori who ruled Assam on behalf of her husband Swargadeo Shiva Singha during his reign from 1714-1744 AD. The Shiva temple is dedicated to Lord Shiva, Bishnu temple is dedicated to Lord Bishnu and Devi temple is dedicated to Goddess Durga.

Plate 2.66: Shiva Doul

Plate 2.67: Devi Doul

Plate 2.68: Bisnu Doul

Plate 2.69: Shiva Doul, Rudrasagar

j) *Rudrasagar Tank and Shiva Doul***:**

The Rudrasagar Tank and the Shiva Doul on its bank, were built by Swargadeo Laksmi Singha in memory of his father, Rudra Singha. The temple was dedicated to Lord Shiva. Presently the site is preserved by the Archaeological Survey of India. The Assam Tourism Development Corporation constructed a model village beside the site and named it 'Rudra Singha Ethnic Village and Restaurant'. The model

Plate 2.70: Kareng Ghar

village has a restaurant and accommodation facility for the visitors as well.

k) *Kareng Ghar (Gargaon):*

Situated at a distance of 15 km away from Sivasagar Town, Kareng Ghar was the palace of Ahom Royal Family. The monument dates back to 1539 AD when, Ahom Capital was shifted to the region. The city of Gargaon and the palace are surrounded by several ramparts and that is why, it is named as 'Gargaon' meaning 'City of Ramparts'. It is a seven storied building where three floors are under-ground, called as 'Talatal Ghar' and the ones above are called, 'Kareng Ghar' (Office of the Deputy Director of Economics and Statistics, Sivasagar, 2015).

l) *Charaideo Maidams***:**

At a distance of about 30 km towards the east side of Sivasagar Town, is the Charaideo Maidam. The site contains burial grounds of Ahom kings, their royal families and ministers of their kingdoms. One significance is that it resembles the Pyramids of Egypt. Many tombs

Plate 2.71: Charaideo Maidam

have been excavated till now and the ancient artefacts recovered from the site are now preserved in the Tai Museum. The two parts of Charaideo Maidams have been under surveillance of both State Archaeological Department and Archaeological Survey of India.

2.2.8 Dibrugarh (Dibru Saikhowa National Park and Tea gardens)**:**

Dibrugarh is known for its large tea gardens. Popular as 'Tea City" of Assam, the tourism scenario of the region centers around 'Tea Gardens' and 'Heritage Bungalows'. However, the city is also a transit point for the people visiting Arunachal Pradesh. At a distance of around 54 km is the 'Dibru Saikhowa National Park' which adds as another attraction to the destination. Apart from the National Park, some other attractions in nearby regions like Digboi, Margherita, Duliajan, Naharkatiya, Namrup can be visited by the tourists within a day while staying in Dibrugarh.

a) *Jokai Botanical Garden***:**

At the outskirts of Dibrugarh town, in a remote area the Jokai Botanical Garden is situated. Popularly known as Jokai Rain Forest, the place is rich for its amazing biodiversity. The site is 15km away from Dibrugarh town. The botanical garden is also known for its Germplasm Centre (Barman, 2012). Being a home to many medicinal plants and rich vegetation with many animal species, Jokai has been a place

Plate 2.72: Jokai Botanical Garden

of attraction for the researchers, botany experts and students. One ecotourism project has also been initiated in 2018 (Northeast Now, 2018).

b) *Mahatma Gandhi Khanikar Park***:**

Plate 2.73: Khanikar Park

Mahatma Gandhi Khanikar Park is the most popular attraction of Dibrugarh town. The attraction is situated at a distance of around 6 km from Dibrugarh town. Basically, designed as Children's Park, the attraction is often crowded with people from all age groups. The under-construction Dibrugarh bypass road goes next to Khanikar Park. Many amusement activities are available to the visitors there, which provide a good recreation to the people.

c) *Jagannath Mandir***:**

At a distance of just 450 meters from Khanikar Park is the Jagannath Mandir. People visiting Khanikar Park often pay their visit to this site as it is considered to be a replica of the temple in Puri, Odisa dedicated to Lord Jagannath. The Temple is touted to be the second largest after Puri in terms of its magnitude and size.

Plate 2.74: Jagannath Temple

Sri Sri Jagannath Cultural Trust acts as the official guardian of the establishment (Assam tribune, 2014).

d) *Jalan Nagar Radha Krishna Mandir***:** Located near Assam Medical College, it is a very beautifully built temple dedicated to Lord Krishna and Radha. The attraction site is less crowded and suitable for

Plate 2.75: Radha Krishna Temple

Plate 2.76: DTP Dyke

visitors to experience the serene and peaceful environment for devotion and worship. Employees around the temple campus work whole heartedly to keep the temple premises clean

and green. One can also stroll around the green premises of the temple and sit or relax in the huts built inside the temple premise.

e) *DTP Dyke*:

DTP Dyke is an embankment made to the river Brahmaputra drawing the boundary to Dibrugarh town. The entire embankment now has a walkway over it. The walkway itself has been considered as a leisure spot for many travellers seeking recreational time in the town.

Plate 2.78: Bogibeel

f) *Oakland's Ghat*:

Plate 2.77: Oakland's Ghat

Oakland's Ghat is one of the emerging sites around Dibrugarh region. The site is known for its boating facility. One of the most amazing facts related to the site is that the water level in the area never dries out. Hence it is possible to organize boating even in dry seasons. Purvi Discovery, a famous travel agency of Upper Assam often organizes boat rides in this place for their guests residing in their Chang Bungalows. The site is located at Oakland Tea Estate of Dikom region. One can also observe the boat-making practices here.

g) *Bogibeel*:

The Bogibeel spot is popular for picnic parties. The site falls under the newly opened Bogibeel Bridge connecting Dibrugarh and Dhemaji over river Brahmaputra. The place is filled with glittering sand all along. A number of families or friends' groups coming from both sides of the bridge are attracted to the place for organizing picnics.

Plate 2.79: Tilinga Temple

h) *Tilinga Mandir*:

Situated just beside the main road connecting Dibrugarh and Tinsukia, the Tilinga Mandir (Bell Temple) is the centre of attraction for pilgrims all around. From Dibrugarh it would be around 48 km while from Tinsukia it is just 16 km away. The temple worships Lord Shiva where hundreds and thousands of bells are being tied. Earlier bells of all sizes in bronze, brass, copper and aluminium were tied to a big 'Peepal tree' and its branches. But when the tree started decaying due to excessive weight, bells were removed and tied on the walls instead (Tinsukia District Administration, n.d.).

i) *Digboi Oil Museum***:**

The place is related to the history of extraction of crude oil. Digboi oil refinery is said to be the first refinery in Asia. Digboi is the very place where the 'East India Company' found traces of crude

Plate 2.81: Digboi war Cemetery

Plate 2.80: Digboi Oil Museum

oil in the region. The Digboi Oil Museum has been preserving the activities of those early days in the form of photographs, statues and models. The machineries from the power stations, refinery and oil fields are kept in the museum. The museum has a huge photo gallery with exclusive photographs of the long journey of the evolution and development of oil refinery (Tinsukia District Administration, n.d.).

j) *Digboi War Cemetery***:**

Digboi War Cemetery dates back to the time of Second World War. During the war, Digboi served as an army camp since it is near to the border with Myanmar (then Burma). According to Common War Graves Commission (CWGC), The Digboi War Cemetery was started for burials from the hospital and by the end of the war it contained 70 burials. Later on, after bringing burials from different places, the cemetery now contains 197 Commonwealth and 3 non-Commonwealth (1 Italian, 1 American and 1 Belgian) burials of the Second World War (Commonwealth War Graves Commission, n.d.). The site lies at a distance of some 1.5 km from the main town. The site attracts many foreign tourists.

k) *Margherita Coal Museum***:**

The Margherita Coal Museum is a Heritage Museum. The museum exhibits the rich coal history of the state which was started in 1884 during the British era. The 120 years long history of black diamond in this part of the world has been preserved in the forms of tools, machines, vehicles, camera projectors, and all these antiques

Plate 2.82: Margherita Coal Museum

including important documents, photographs, etc. (Directorate of Census Operations Assam, 2011).

l) *Ketetong Singpho Village***:**

Ketetong Singpho Village is another popular attraction at Margherita. Singphos, an ethnic tribe are scattered in a few locations of Assam. Travellers tend

Plate 2.83: Buddhist Monastery at Ketetong Village

to visit the location for its lush green tea plantations and to experience the ethnic way of Sigpho living. Singpho Heritage Tea, 'Phalap' is the prime reason for travellers to visit the region. 'The Singpho Eco Lodge' situated at the village provides a traditional experience of their tribe to the visitors.

Plate 2.84: Namphake Buddhist Monastery

m) _Namphake Village_**:** Tai Phake is another tribal community of Assam, whose members are now very few in numbers. Immigration history of the community to Assam from Thailand dates back to the latter half of 18th century. The Namphake Village is the largest village of this community in the entire state. The most significant fact about the region is that, the community still speaks a dialect similar to the language in Thailand and follows the traditional dress code and customs of the great Tai race (Barman, 2012). The Namphake Monastery has been an attraction for the researchers and other enthusiasts who want to learn more about the community.

Plate 2.85: Tipamphake Buddhist Monastery

n) _Tipamphake Village_**:**

Tipamphake village is another Tai Phakial village which is situated at a distance of around 7.5 km from Namphake. The village also has a Buddhist Monastery and the residents follow their traditional customs linked to Tai race of Thailand like in Namphake. However, compared to Namphake, the Tipampahke village is small, both in terms of population and land area. But people visiting Namphake also take this village as their next attraction.

o) _Jeypore Rain Forest_**:**

Jeypore Rain Forest is a part of Dehing Patkai Wildlife Sanctuary located in Dibrugarh and Tinsukia districts of Assam. This rich bio-diversity falls in a humid zone, which is characterised by high precipitation. Over 281 species of birds, 276 species of butterflies, 102 species of orchids, 70 species of fishes and 46 species of mammals have been identified and recorded in the reserve forest. Seven of the eight species of cats, viz. tiger, leopard, clouded leopard, Asiatic golden cat, marbled cat, leopard cat and jungle cat are found here (Barman, 2012). The Jeypore Rain Forest Festival has been

Plate 2.86: Jeypore Rain Forest

another attraction for the visitors in the month of December.

p) *Merbil Ecotourism Project***:**

Plate 2.87: Natural Beauty of Merbil

Merbil Ecotourism Project was started in 2010. From then onwards, the site has been receiving tremendous flow of students and travellers because of its richness in flora and fauna. The region is the habitat of about 250 species of plants, 200 species of birds, both local and migratory, and many rare species of animals, reptiles and insects (Bailung, n.d.). The Merbil Ecotourism Project is coming up at the initiatives of Assam Tourism and Oil India limited.

q) *Dibru-Saikhowa National Park***:**

The Dibru Saikhowa National Park is said to be the only National Park in Assam that is open throughout the year. The terrain of the park is flat and is situated in the floodplains of the Brahmaputra and the Lohit Rivers. The vegetation of the national park is ruled by 'Salix Swamp' forests and deciduous forests. The sanctuary is a home to some rare and endangered

Plate 2.88: Entry Point to the Park

animals like hoolock gibbon, capped langoor, slow loris, water buffalo, tiger, elephant, Indo-Gangetic River dolphin and others, apart from a large population of both local and migratory birds and a sizeable population of feral horses. While the other national parks in the state remain closed during the monsoons, Dibru-Saikhowa being an island, offers the pleasure of a boat safari through the tributary that passes through the park (Mahanta, 2014).

Plate 2.89: Maguri Beel

r) *Maguri Beel***:**

Maguri Beel is a large wetland located 3.8 km away from Guijan Ghat, gateway of the Dibru-Saikhowa National Park and Biosphere Reserve. The wetland has been regarded as one of the hotspots for birding in Upper Assam. Almost all sorts of birds are found in the water-bodies here and it is quite popular among birdwatchers and ornithologists all across the world. A total of 440 species were recorded, which include 24 threatened, 16 near-threatened and two restricted-range species. There are 218 resident and 173 migrant birds (156 were winter migrants) in this location. (Choudhury, 2006).

2.2.9 Goalpara (Surjya Pahar):

Goalpara is the region that offers some time away from the regular monotony of life with its natural wilderness. The National Highway 17, connecting Goalpara and Guwahati holds the most beautiful and attractive roadway in the entire state. The region is blessed with many pilgrim centres and archaeological sites.

Plate 2.90: Sri Surya Pahar

a) *Sri Surya Pahar***:**

Sri Surya Pahar, a very significant archaeological site in Assam is situated in the region. The hill (pahar) is the centre point of every visitor to Goalpara as it showcases the remains of cultural heritage of Buddhism, Jainism and Hinduism. The attraction site is located at 12 km south-west of Goalpara town. The hilly terrain of the site with several Shivalingas, votive stupas and the deities of Hindu, Buddhist and Jain Gods are scattered in an area of about one square km (Goalpara District Administration, n.d.).

Plate 2.91: Jain Temple

b) *Jain Mandir at Sri Surya Pahar***:**

At the site of Sri Surya Pahar, there is a Jain Mandir which was constructed for the pilgrims coming from all over the world. The three idols in the temple there represent richness of Jain heritage in that location. The Jain antiquities, inscriptions recovered from the Sri Surya Pahar compound dates back to the 9th century (Archaeological Survey of India, Guwahati Circle, n.d.).

Plate 2.92: Museum at Surya Pahar

c) *Museum at Sri Surya Pahar***:**

The museum at Surya Pahar preserves the artefacts found during the excavations. The museum was constructed and maintained by the Guwahati Circle of Archaeological Survey of India. Antiquities are mostly recovered from brick and stone temple complexes and they are displayed in four 'galleries'. All the artefacts have been preserved in a very systematic way with the descriptions related to the items. (Archaeological Survey of India, Guwahati Circle, 2015).

Plate 2.93: Church at the village

Plate 2.94: Turkeswari Temple

d) *Rangchapara Village***:**

The Rangchapara Village has been awarded as the cleanest village of Assam for the year in the year 2016-17 by the state government

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(Times of India, 2017). The village has been able to attract a number of visitors for its maintenance in natural beauty. Every Garo household in the village has their own nurseries and dustbins made of bamboo or tin. Use of plastic is banned within the village.

Plate 2.95: Entrance to Dadan Than

e) *Turkeswari Mandir***:**

The Temple is situated by the side of National Highways 37 at Tukura. It is believed that (in lines with the same mythology as Goddess Kamakhya) a portion of Goddess Sati fell on this site also. There are two temples situated at the top of the hillock; one is the Shiva temple and the other is known as Joya-Bijoya Temple. During the festive season of Durga Puja, the site becomes heavily crowded (Goalpara District Administration, n.d.).

f) *Dadan Than***:**

The 'Dadan Than' is related to a mythological character from Sonitpur- 'Dadan', which was one of the generals of King Bana of Sonitpur. It was said that Dadan constructed a Shiva Temple at the top of the hillock. Thousands of people especially from the tribal Rabha community gather on the above mentioned spot to worship Lord Shiva, once a year especially in the month of February. The area is thickly forested with rivers and waterfalls inhabited by people of the Rabha community. Besides the religious aspect, the entire area is rich in scenic beauty (Goalpara District Administration, n.d.).

Plate 2.96: Nandeswar Peeth

g) *Nandesware Peeth***:**

The attraction site is basically a Shiva temple situated at the top of Nandeswar hill. It is often regarded as the oldest devalayas in the region which is believed to be established in the 10th or 11th century AD. Situated by the side of river Dudhnoi; the hillock also adds natural beauty to the location. Festivals like Shivaratri, Durga Puja, Dol jatra are celebrated here with great interest (Goalpara District Administration, n.d.)

Plate 2.97: View from the hill

Plate 2.98: Urpad beel

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h) *Hulukanda Pahar***:**

Hulukanda Pahar is popularly known for its natural beauty. The hillock is located at the bank of river Brahmaputra and provides panoramic view of the Goalpara town and Pancharatna Bridge. The monkeys, which are known as 'Hulu' there, can be found in abundance. The mesmerising view of sun-set amidst this natural setting is the prime attraction for the travellers.

i) *Urpad Beel***:**

Urpad Beel is a popular natural lake in this region. The site is also famous as a birding hotspot during the months of November and December. Located in Agia, the region is just 9km away from Goalpara town. As recorded by Mousum Nath, bird species like Little Egret, Common Kingfisher, White-throated Kingfisher, Lineated Barbet, Maroon Oriole can be found in this wetland. (Nath, 2018).

j) *Pancharatna Shiva Than***:**

This archaeological site is situated just beside the Pancharatna Bridge over Brahmaputra. The site falls under Protected Archaeological Site and Monuments. One can find the archaeological ruins of different cultural periods here. The rock-cut stupa is stylistically datable to

Plate 2.99: Entrance to the Than

Plate 2.100: Peer Majhar Sarif

the pre-Christian era. The architectural components of a stone temple scattered at this site can also be stylistically dated to 10th -11th CE (Department of Cultural Affairs, Govt. of Assam, n.d.).

k) *Peer Majhar Sarif***:**

The "Majhar" (tomb) of Hazarat Sayed Abul Kasem Kharasani, situated at the heart of Goalpara town, is a place much revered by the people from all religious faiths. It is the practice of both Muslims and Hindus of Goalpara to offer money and candle, pray for fulfilment of desires and

Plate 2.101: Maa Shyama Kali Temple

seek blessing from the Pir Saheb. It is said that the Pir lived a long life of about 150 years and died at Goalpara in the year 1896 AD (Goalpara District Administration, n.d.).

l) *Maa Shyama Kali Mandir***:**

This Kali Mandir is also known as Solmari Kali Mandir. The site is located just beside the road connecting Agia and Goalpara town. The attraction site has been receiving huge number of

devotees for the past many years. Pilgrims coming from states like West Bengal, Meghalaya are mostly seen at this place.

m) *Shyamarai Satra***:**

To embark the significance of Vaishnavaite culture, at the heart of Goalpara town, the Shyamarai Satra was established a long time ago. It is said that the Satra institution is about 366 years old. One of the very important aspects of the Satra is that the Satra authority has preserved the "asthi" (a piece of bone) of Srimanta Sankardeva which is exhibited in the Satra campus during Sankar Jayanti period

Plate 2.102: Shyamarai Satra

i.e., in the month of Sukla Dashami (during September-October) (Goalpara District Administration, n.d.).

n) *Boguwan Satra***:**

Plate 2.103: Boguwan Satra

The Boguwan Satra is located around 25 km away from Goalpara Town. The Satra institution is not so popular with outsiders but Srimanta Sarkardeva is believed to have established this institution before he started his journey to Koch Bihar. Hence, the establishment of the Satra was believed to be in 1568 AD (Parjatan Barta, n.d.).

2.2.10 Sualkuchi:

Often termed as the 'Manchester of Assam', Sualkuchi is home to Golden Silk which is not produced anywhere in the world. It is known to be the largest weaving village in the world where the entire population weaves equisetic Silk fabrics. Situated at the North bank of River Brahmaputra, Sualkuchi is about 35 km from Guwahati.

At a distance of just 12kms away from Sualkuchi, another popular destination of Assam, 'Hajo' is situated. As both the regions are nearer to each other, we have decided to cluster them both into one destination as 'Sualkuchi' only.

Hajo: Known for the famous pilgrim centre of Islam religion, 'Powa Mecca', Hajo has many religious places for Hindus and Buddhists as well. Being rich in cottage industries, it is popular among the people for its different 'brass metal' works. People visiting Guwahati often take a tour in these two regions; 'Hajo', 'Sualkuchi'.

Plate 2.104: Handloom at Sualkuchi

In the following sections we offer a brief idea about the

famous attractions in and around the destinations. Our study deals with these attractions extensively.

a) *Silk Industry*:

Known as the producer of prestigious 'Golden Silk', Sualkuchi is a large village where weaving has been regarded as a 'dominant profession'. The origin of weaving culture can be traced to 11th century during 'Pala Dynasty'. Since then, the legacy has been continuing in the region creating a dominant place in producing 'Muga' which is endemic to the state of Assam only. The hand-woven silk fabric of Sualkuchi Muga and Mulberry (Pat) occupies a distinct place when talking of the heritage and culture of Assam. Its uniqueness made it earn accolades in the world map as well. The village is also popular as the largest silk weaving village. Almost every household in the village have at least one loom where some people employ a huge section of villagers to create their own source of income. It is a centre of *Vaishnavite* art and culture that had been preached by the great *Vaishnavite* saint Srimanta Sankardeva. The place has many shrines as well (Nath, 2016).

b) *Sidhesware Devalaya*:

To draw the historic significance of Sualkuchi region, 'Sidhesware Devalaya' is the temple which is situated silently amidst natural settings. It is a brick built Siva temple rebuilt in the late medieval period. In the early medieval period, it was a stone temple built by Ahom king Siva Sinha in 1722 AD. (Nath, 2016). As being witnessed, the Devalaya has 143 steps to be taken before reaching the main temple.

Plate 2.105: Sidhesware Devalaya

c) *Hayagriva Madhava Mandir*:

A religious place for Hindus and Buddhists, Hayagriva Madhava Mandir, situated at the heart of Hajo township is one of the prime attractions for pilgrims around the nation. The present temple, built by the Koch King Raghudeva Narayan in 1583, enshrines an image of Hayagriva (Vishnu in headed form). Some particularly those from Bhutan, Tibet of China, Buddha sacred place is situated

Plate 2.106: Hayagriva Madhava Temple

Vishnu as his horse-Buddhists, parts of believe that this is where the attained '*parinirvana'*. The at the top of Manikut hill (Nath,

Plate 2.107: Kedar temple

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2016). Festivals like Holi, Janmastami, Durga Puja are celebrated every year in the temple.

d) *Kedar Mandir***:**

Another attraction which is situated nearer to Hayagriva Madhava Mandir is the Kedar Temple where Lord Shiva is worshipped by the devotees. Construction period of the temple dates back to Ahom Dynasty during King Swargadeo Rajeshware Singha's rule (1753 AD). The hill at the top on which the temple is situated is known as 'Madanchalla'. There are some carvings present around the temple which resembles architectural beauty of 'Ahom era' (Nath, 2016).

e) *Bhimor Charia (Bowl of Bhima):*

The attraction falls on the right side of the way to 'Kedar Mandir'. A mythological belief is associated with 'Bhimor Charia'. It is a basin cut out of stone in which the second

Plate 2.108: Bhima's Bowl

Plate 2.109: Powa Mecca

Pandava Bhima is believed to have taken fermented rice. While there are other religious expositions as well that relates it to lord Shiva, and some others with Buddhists (Nath, 2016). Most importantly, the attraction remarkably adds to historical importance of the region.

f) *Powa Mecca***:**

Powa Mecca means one fourth of original Mecca (1/4 is known as *Powa* in Assamese). A holy place for Muslims, Powa Mecca is the most visited place of Hajo. On the top of the 'Garurachal hill' is where the mosque has been built. An inscription on the mosque's wall states that it had been constructed during 1657. That was during the reign of Mughal Emperor Shahjahan. However, it was believed that an Iraqi Prince, Pir Giasuddin Aulia established the mosque in the 12th century, while visiting the place to spread the word of the Prophet (Nath, 2016). Though a Muslim shrine, this place is equally revered by the Hindus also, and as a custom pilgrim visiting Hayagriva Madhava temple pay a visit to this shrine as well.

2.2.11 Panimur:

Panimur is an emerging attraction for tourists, mostly for picnic seekers. The Kopili River turns into a gushy milky-white

Plate 2.110: Waterfall at Panimur

waterfall after being obstructed by the large parts of stones. This beautiful scenery has been

Plate 2.111: Amur Falcon Birding Site

luring every traveller to spend their time at the site. The waterfall can be sighted from both sides of the River Koka (West Karbi Anglong) and Panimur (Dima Hasao).

2.2.12 Umrangso:

Popularly known for the Kopili Hydro Electric Project and the Cement Factories, Umrangso also witnesses heavy number of tourists in the month of November. The 'Amur Falcon Festival' is held during the month in the golf field of Umrangso. A large section of the bird species 'Amur Falcon' comes there at that time. Though previously the place was known for the hot-springs, they no more flow now. Presence of golf course around the Umrangso Lake has made the destination even more attractive to visit.

2.3 Limitations:

This study, like any other study is not infallible. As such we have certain weaknesses, which are briefly described in this section.

(a) Quantification: Convenience basically is a qualitative feeling. But in order to develop an index we have to measure this in quantitative form. This brings in inherent challenges. Even if proper measures are taken right from instrument development to conducting the interviews, some errors are liable to be present undetected. We have converted the phenomena of convenience into some measurable variables based on extant literature and pilot surveys to ward off any such problems. It is clearly discussed in detail, for example, how the hygiene factor is quantified by invoking hygienic norms from different reputable sources. We have also assigned number against the in-depth interview variables after due diligence and a proper write up on the method is annexed with this Report. Tourist respondents are made at home by explaining the variables is a language they understand better (even if they know English) in order to ward off any error in measurement. However, undetected errors might still be there in the data.

(b) International outlook: The tourist survey was conducted in 12 destinations of Assam. Due to limited footfall of foreign tourists in many destinations of Assam, as we have already mentioned in the previous section, the study could accommodate 10% of the sample to the

foreign tourists. The rationale of doing so is discussed in the Methodology Chapter. However, this may result in slight under representation of the international outlook of the study.

(c) *Absence of sampling frame*: Due to the absence of a proper sampling frame, which is natural in such kind of studies, we are unable to adopt any probabilistic sampling procedure. However, we have taken utmost care in choosing the proper representation across different categories of tourists.

Precautions were taken to select the respondents for both the supply side and demand side surveys. To maintain the quality of information collected from various destinations, it was very strictly monitored by both Principal Investigator and Co-PI. The interviews were conducted by trained surveyors recruited for this specific purpose. They were under direct supervision of one Research Associate.

(d) *One season only:* We could collect data in one season only, that is, during the winter of 2019 and January of 2020. It was found that many destinations were still building infrastructures (e.g., Manas National Park). As such, we could not allot scores for relevant criteria. Had there been more time, we could have been revisit such destinations and revise the scores.

(e) *Panimur and Umrangso*: We were advised by the sponsors to include these two lesser-known potential destinations within the scope of our work. While doing so we have tried to generate enough data to measure the level of convenience. However, since these two places are unknown in the domestic and international circuits, we could not conduct any interview with international tourists, and could manage only one interview with outside-the-region in Umrangso. We also could not conduct in-depth interviews with the experts due to lack of such personalities in these two destinations. However, we have conducted extensive observations to measure other variables. As such we fail to conduct triangulation analysis to verify the tourist data, as the "triangulable" data are not exhaustive. Naturally, we have to keep these two destinations from the cluster of major destination while generating the final index.

(f) *Sualkuchi*: Though Sualkuchi is taken as a major destination, it occurred during the survey, that this destination is mostly preferred by day time shoppers, and tourists who love to witness the handlooms visit it as day tourists (excursionists) and return. This is because Sualkuchi is in close proximity of Guwahati, and tourists often visit the place keeping Guwahati as the hub. Thus, we faced some limitations in generating proper data related to longer stay (*for example, internet connectivity, toilet, mobile connectivity, arrangements of cash etc.*) in Sualkuchi because tourists' responses are *not* based on actual consumption of these services for reasonable length of time. We have written a detailed note on Sualkuchi as a destination, and its possibility of merger with Guwahati in Chapter 6 (section 6.5.2)

(g) Prominence to tourists' data: We intentionally have given more prominence to the variables measured mostly through tourists' survey due to the fact that convenience is a "game of perception". Even if the ground level situation is not up to a particular mark, if the users think that this is "OK" or "better than OK", actually it helps in bettering the index. So while triangulating, we have not diluted the raw scores generated from tourist survey, but duly merged the data from the other two sources into the tourist data. In doing so, even though the scores "melted down" or "melted up", prominence of tourists' perceptions remained present to a particular extent.

(h) Political and global calamities during the study period: Apart from these technical problems we faced two major calamities during our study period. We faced political turmoil in the second part of December (2019) and January (2020) which drastically reduced our movement for tourist survey as well as field visits. Tourists were also cancelling the visits and hence we could not complete the surveys in the most ideal conditions. This led us to extend out study by another two months.

Then came the Covid 19 pandemic. As we write this report we are still under the country-wide lockdown, and many crucial infrastructures, including the sophisticated software for analysis, while preparing the report were not accessible. The Research Associate had to be allowed to go for long leave, before actually her tenure was supposed to be over. This has created unimaginable disturbances in report preparation, and we are also not sure if we could print it in a decent way before submitting. If we fail to do so, our sincere apologies for that.

(i) New challenges: More importantly, tourism might not be going to be the same again. It is suspected that the perceptual scores, and the variables measured here may change considerably in the neo-tourism formats. If that happens we need to rebuild the index, which is not possible at the present situation. But then, more or less all the variables could capture the tourist's mood even after the new form of tourism emerges. However, we have to be cautious in replicating this study in future.

(j) Supply side convenience measurement: We have measured supply side convenience and tried to quantify them with the help of the methodology described in detail in the next Chapter. We have mostly considered common amenities which are available to *public* in general *within the close vicinity* of attractions. Hence in many cases the public amenities like availability of reasonably good quality toilets available for public in the petrol pumps, private or semi private amenities available in guest houses, resorts and hotels including other accommodations available in the destinations could not be considered for *quantification* and thus they are *not reflected in the index of the destination.* This is an informed and considered decision in order to

maintain unbiased measuring yardstick for all destinations, as accommodation has been considered as another important variables. If we consider amenities available in accommodation units as public amenities the index would measure amenities in accommodations twice, which will lead to biasness.

<div align="center">***</div>

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Chapter 3
METHODOLOGY

In this Chapter a discussion is offered on the methodology followed for development of the index in question. It is a well-known fact that such an exercise needs rigour of methodology, so that a robust index is generated that can be used at different points of time. With this aim in view, we have developed and followed the methodology as discussed in the following sections.

3.1 Naïve Concept:

As discussed in the Introduction chapter, we have not encountered any scholastic article that discusses the nuances of development of a tourism convenience index. In fact, the very definition of tourism convenience index is not yet academically established. Travel Convenience Index (TCI) generated from the China Tourism Convenience Degree Index Report, which is also known as Chinese Tourism Consumption Index ("Tourism consumer", 2019) is the concept developed so far that is nearest to our quest of a Tourism Convenience Index. We have, however, come across a few methodologies that are developed to determine "Consumer Satisfaction Index" in different countries of the world (e.g, Honk Kong Consumer Satisfaction Index, HKSCI; Swedish Consumer Satisfaction Barometer, SCSB; and the American Consumer Satisfaction Index, ACSI). As tourists are also consumers of the touristic products, the methods of development of these indices might throw some lights on the process that needs to be followed. However, our objective is not only to develop a "tourist convenience index" but a "*tourism*" convenience index. In the hindsight it looks the same, but here our endeavour should embed the supply side perspectives from the industry point of view along with the tourists' (consumers') perspective.

Figure 3.1: Two sides of the Convenience Coin

However, before going into the detail of the supply side (Provider's convenience) let us first determine the way forward for measuring the demand side (Tourists Convenience) of the index with the help of available literature.

3.2 Tourist Convenience:

Though we could not retrieve a direct definition of tourist convenience from the literature, we hope to generate some idea about it from the concept of consumer convenience. The concept of consumer convenience is discussed in detail in the Introduction chapter as well. The time and effort taken to decide about a destination (that is suitable for the would-be tourist) should determine the degree of **Decision Convenience** for the tourists. Thus, if the decision to visit a destination can be taken quickly and with least effort, then such destination is supposed to have high decision convenience. The concept of **Access Convenience** indicates the distance from origin (indirectly indicating the time spent in travelling), type and choice of transportation available to reach the destination etc. It seems, lesser is the time spent in travelling to reach the destination higher is the tourist convenience. Likewise, availability of more choices of transportation will indicate higher convenience.

Tourist's perceived time and effort to effect a transaction is reflected through **Transaction Convenience**. Transaction Convenience will be higher if the tourist can complete the transactions quickly. Higher the level of security provided at time of initiating and finalising the transactions, higher will be level of convenience for the tourist. Likewise **Benefit Convenience** aims at explaining the amount of time and effort required for experiencing the core benefits of a service. Benefit convenience will be higher when the journey of the tourist to a particular destination is enjoyable and memorable. Higher level of benefit convenience can also be identified through lesser anxiety during tourists' stay and travel in a particular destination.

Another very important dimension to measure convenience is **Post Benefit Convenience**. It basically aims at understanding the experience of a tourist after the service is availed. The higher the amount of incentive received from a purchase of a service, higher will be the post benefit convenience for a destination.

Table 3.1: Variables /Scales Used for Determining Consumer Convenience		
#	**Variables/Scales**	**Authors**
1	**Service Convenience dimension** *(Decision Convenience, Access Convenience, Transaction Convenience, Benefit Convenience, Post Benefit Convenience)*	Berry et.al(2002); Colwell et.al(2008); Agja et.al(2011); Kaura(2013); Kaura (2015)

Table 3.1: Variables /Scales Used for Determining Consumer Convenience		
#	Variables/Scales	Authors
2	**SERVCON: Service convenience Scale** *(Decision Convenience, Access Convenience, Transaction Convenience, Benefit Convenience, Post Benefit Convenience, Satisfaction, Shopping Convenience, Product Category Involvement, Behavioural Intentions***)**	Seiders et.al(2007); Aagja et.al(2011);
3	**Spatial ,Psychological, Sociological, Philosophical, and Situational**	Yale & Venkatesh (1986)
4	**Strategies For Service Convenience: Actual,Flow, Perception, Control**	Weissman (2012)

Along with these five scales mentioned in the aforesaid paragraph, Sider et al. (2007) added another set of four dimensions to measure service convenience. They are Satisfaction, Shopping Convenience, Product Category Involvement, and Behavioural Intentions. **Satisfaction** in terms of service can be defined as the overall service experience of a customer. For a tourist, it can be understood as the overall experience of a tourist in a particular destination; and happier the tourist, higher will be his satisfaction. Accordingly, **Shopping** refers to the time and effort invested with respect to overall shopping process. The lower the time and effort for purchase of service by the tourist higher will be his shopping enjoyment. Another dimension of the service convenience scale is **Product category involvement.** It refers to the cognitive involvement of the consumer while purchasing a service. Higher the product category involvement, higher will be the chance of taking a right decision. **Behavioural Intentions** are indication of the future behaviour of a consumer. In case of a highly satisfied tourist, it is likely that he will recommend the place to other, and may revisit the destination again.

For defining consumer convenience, Yale and Venkatesh (1986) have identified another set of five dimensions - spatial, psychological, sociological, philosophical, and situational. A detail discussion on all these dimensions, and some other dimensions have been presented in Section1.2.1 of the Introduction Chapter. In this connection, Weismann (2012) developed strategies for service convenience. His model for determining service convenience includes actual convenience, flow, perception and control.

3.2.1 Measuring Tourist Convenience:

In order to measure tourists' convenience, we have decided to conduct a survey among visiting tourists in the destinations of focus. As mandated, we need to have a small sample size and finish the survey within the available window between October 2019 and February, 2020.

The window is short because Assam has a highly seasonal tourism period, and we need to submit our report within a deadline.

To determine tourist convenience, we started with 25 variables related to 8 dimensions of consumer convenience scale as shown in Table 3.2. These variables were measured with a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 signifies lowest rating and 10 signifies highest rating.   Later on, we had added few more variables to measure tourist convenience as we gained more insights through Pilot Surveys and expert consultation. Details of the final survey questionnaire is also presented in the Section3.2.1.1(c) (iii).

The list of initial variables and corresponding dimensions is presented in Table 3.2 below.

Table 3.2: Initial Variables Considered for Demand Side Survey with Dimensions of Convenience		
#	Dimensions of Convenience	Demand side variables considered
1	CONVENIENCE OF DECISION	Ease of decision for the visit
		Image of the destination
		Longingness for the visit
		Third Party Recommendation
2	ACCESS CONVENIENCE	Distance from origin
		Air, rail, road links
		Local transportation
		Availability of data
		Mobile connectivity
3	BENEFIT CONVENIENCE	Time needed for sightseeing/Activity
		Effort needed to reach the destination
		Availability of Field Operators
		Field Operators are worthy
		Quality of Electricity Supply
4	CONVENIENCE OF TRANSACTION	Easy/Fast booking
		Easy/Fast payment
5	POST BENEFIT CONVENIENCE	Souvenirs
		Intention for repeat visit
6	ENJOYMENT	Availability of activities
		Fun
		Enjoyment
		Happiness
7	PRODUCT CATEGORY INVOLVEMENT	Effortless search
		Fast search
8	BEHAVIORAL INTENTION	Referrals

3.2.1.1 Tourist Survey:

We have adopted a three-stage methodology to conduct the tourist survey. They are- Pilot survey 1, Pilot Survey 2 and Main tourist survey.

Figure 3.2 Stages of the Tourist Survey
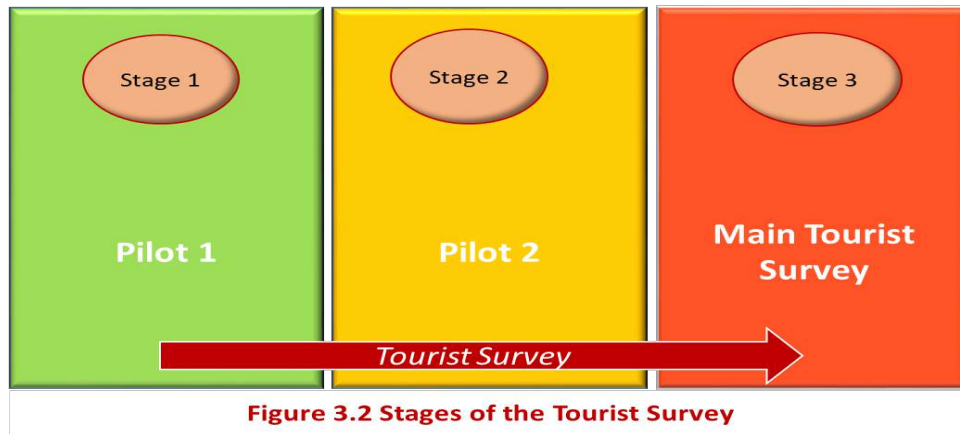
a) First Pilot Survey (Pilot 1):

In the first stage a quick Pilot Survey was conducted with a draft questionnaire among 10 tourists in Kaziranga. The Survey was conducted during April 1-18, 2019. The main aim for conducting Pilot 1 was to understand the feasibility of the study. The draft questionnaire was mostly based on the scales developed by Seiders et al. (2007). The variables generated from the literature were also tested through the Pilot Survey among tourists. This enabled us to filter and refine the initial variables. Along with the understanding of feasibility of the study we also tried to comprehend the following from the first Pilot Survey.

1. Clarity of language used in the questionnaire.

2. Difficulty level of the questions.

3. If some of the questions are embarrassing for the respondents to answer.

4. If there is any closely related question in the questionnaire

5. Also to know exact time required to fill the responses.

b) Second Pilot Survey (Pilot 2):

Pilot Survey 1 gave us the indication related to feasibility of the study and helped us in understanding the underlying dimensions for determining tourist convenience. To further refine the dimensions and the underlying variables that would be able to capture convenience of the tourist with relative importance to a particular destination, the second phase of the Pilot Survey (Pilot 2) was conducted during April 20 - May 15, 2019. We attempted to collect 140 samples from 4 locations for the second Pilot Survey. Pilot 2 was conducted in Majuli, Sivasagar, Kaziranga and Guwahati. As the tourists' season in Assam comes to an end in mid-May, we raced against time. We could not start the work well ahead in time due to processing time needed by our sponsor, and the final nod to start the work got a little delayed. In the process we fell short of our desired number of samples. Nevertheless, we were able to conduct interviews with a modified questionnaire with 129 tourists during that small window.

From the analysis of the Pilot 1 results, it was found that we missed out variables related to food, accommodation, toilets and hygiene. Moreover, respondents faced difficulty in answering few questions. It was understood that a few questions were closely related to one another. Therefore, while preparing the questionnaire for the Pilot 2, we had taken extra care to add the variables related to accommodation, food, availability of toilets and hygiene. Changes were made to make the statements easy to understand. We dropped one question, which is closely related to another. Dimensions were again filtered and refined by an expert group. After determining all the relevant variables, we developed the instrument for Pilot 2 of tourist survey. Six dimensions viz. Image, Reach, Infrastructure, Attractions, Hygiene and Involvement along with related variables are prepared which is represented in Figure 3.3 given below.

Box A	Box B	Box C	Box D
IMAGE	**REACH**	**INFRASTRUCTURE**	**ATTRACTION**
Easy Decision	Connectivity	Internet info	Courteous local people
Recommendation	Time taken to reach	Move around	Choicest of food
Fair image	Enjoyable journey	Mobile network	Affordable food
Effortless search		Internet speed	Quality of food
Long desire	**Box F**	No power-cut	Souvenir
	INVOLVEMENT	Easy booking	Activities
Box E	Come again	Field level operator	Fully safe
HYGIENE	Recommend to others	Knowledgeable operator	Enjoy
Clean public toilet	Off season also	Accommodation	Full of fun
Overall hygiene	Inflow will affect	Suitable accommodation	Made me happy

Figure 3.3: Dimension-wise Variables Measured for Pilot 2

We have decided to check the reliability of the instrument with the data generated from the Pilot Survey 2. The Chronbach's alpha for each of the above groups are shown in Table 3.3, which is reproduced below.

#	Dimension	Chronbach's Alpha
1	Image	.887
2	Reach	.727
3	Infrastructure	.906
4	Attraction	.892
5	Hygiene	.851
6	Involvement	.704

Table 3.3: Dimension-wise Reliability Statistics (Pilot 2)

As seen from the Table, dimensions measured are reliable enough as far as the questionnaire is concerned.

We have also conducted a profile analysis of the respondents for Pilot Survey 2. It is seen that out of the total 129 respondents, 8 are foreign tourists. Destination wise number of the respondents are presented in Figure 3.4.

Figure 3.4: Destination Profiling- Pilot 2 Interviews
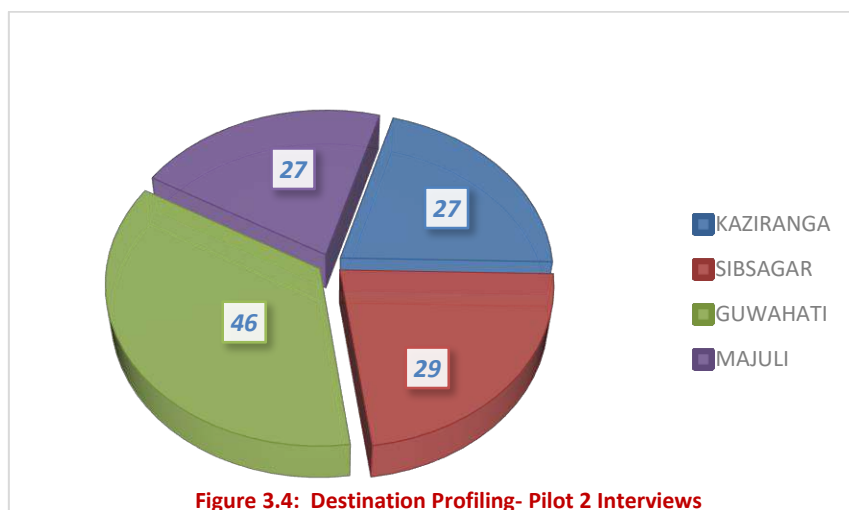
The respondents' profile for Pilot 2 is presented in Table 3.4 below.

Table 3.4: Profile of Samples (Pilot 2)	
Profiling variable	**Details** *(Excluding Non-Response)*
Age group	Maximum tourists are of **20-40** years
Marital Status	Single: **36** Married: **78**
Income Category	Most of the sample falls in the income category of **Rs. 10000- Rs. 30000**
Gender	Male: **44** Female: **24**
Planned itinerary	YES: **48** No: **34** Partially: **36**
Taking package tour	YES: **32** NO: **90**
Visitors in group	YES: **64** NO: **56**

c) Main Tourist Survey:

On the basis of the results generated from Pilot 2, we have gained enough confidence on the dimensions to be used for measuring tourist convenience. The second pilot survey gave an

indication that we missed one parameter *i.e* availability of ATM for withdrawing cash. We have added this variable to the final questionnaire. However, before proceeding to the main tourist survey, the questionnaire was vetted by an expert group. On receipt of the comment from the expert committee constituted by our sponsor, DES-GoA, we have added a few more classification variables in addition to earlier variables. Moreover, qualitative insights like travel anxiety, traffic congestion, night travels etc. were also added to the instrument as per their suggestions. A detail discussion on the questionnaire is presented in the Section 3.2.1.1.c.iii. The variables that are finally measured are presented in Table 3.5 below.

Table 3.5: Final Variables Measured through Tourist Survey		
Classification /Profiling Variables(10)	**Other Variables (7)**	**Tourist Convenience measurement (37)**
a. Place of origin **b.** Availability of planned itinerary **c.** Subscription to a package tour **d.** Types of traveller **e.** Age group **f.** Marital status **g.** Income category **h.** Travel Motive **i.** Level of Education **j.** Gender	**a.** Rating of the journey **b.** Traffic congestion **c.** Road condition **d.** Night travel **e.** Occupation **f.** Time management **g.** Reason (branch of f)	**a.** Ease of decision. **b.** Availability of Recommendations. **c.** Fair image about this destination. **d.** Effortless search for the destination. **e.** Availability of information in the internet. **f.** Desire to visit. **g.** The surface and air connectivity. **h.** Reasonable time taken to reach. **i.** Enjoyable journey. **j.** No difficulty in moving around. **k.** Mobile network connectivity. **l.** Speed of internet. **m.** Availability of Local field level operators. **n.** Knowledgeable field level operators. **o.** Helpful local people. **p.** Power supply. **q.** Convenience of booking. **r.** Smooth online payment. **s.** Availability of Food. **t.** Affordability of food and beverages. **u.** Quality of the food. **v.** Availability of accommodation. **w.** Suitability of Accommodation. **x.** Availability of Clean public toilets. **y.** Overall hygiene of the place. **z.** Shopping. **aa.** Availability of activities. **bb.** Safety. **cc.** Level of enjoyment. **dd.** Staying here is full of fun. **ee.** Level of happiness. **ff.** Intention of revisit. **gg.** Recommending the destination. **hh.** Offseason visit. **ii.** Effect of Tourists' inflow on attractiveness. **jj.** Availability of cash. **kk.** Easy Foreign currency conversion.

The tourist convenience variables in the form of statements are measured in a 10-point scale. Remaining variables are converted to questions and measured in nominal and ordinal scales.

i) Sample Selection and Design:

As mentioned in the Section that deals with Scope of the Work (Chapter 2), we have conducted the tourist survey in 12 destinations. The tourists are mostly interviewed when they

are relaxed, and not in a hurry. Thus, we have not designated any specific spot, or place where the interviews needed to be conducted. However, it turns out to be that most of the interviews are successfully done in the hotels, and then in the attraction itself. Some unusual places also returned good results – like when the tourists are waiting for transportation while exiting the destination. As such the sampling procedure can be termed as a combination of purposive and convenience sampling. Convenience because the tourist must be willing to take part in the interview, and purposive because we had to logically determine the most suitable place for approaching the tourist. The suitable place keeps on differing depending on the destination, and our surveyors thus need to be creative. Precautions are taken to ensure whether the respondents are actually qualified to be termed as a 'tourist'. To maintain the quality and distribution of the data, the origin of the respondents (if they are foreign, national or regional visitors) are frequently kept in check.

The interviews were conducted by trained surveyors recruited for this specific purpose. They were under direct supervision of one Research Associate, and the researchers.

During the entire survey period we were in constant touch with the Government officials (in the HQ and at the field level) of the Directorate of Economics and Statistics, and Directorate of Tourism, Assam.

We have decided to offer a gift to all respondents in the form of a magnet with picture of one famous attraction of Assam. We have discussed about this at the beginning of the Analysis Chapter.

We could not use any other method of sample selection since our population is dynamic and not at all approachable by any other means but seeking their cooperation on the spot. We could not generate a list, nor we have any other method of contacting them (through email, SMS, Whatapp or phone call)

We could not even use systematic sampling due to non availability of a steady flow of prospective tourists in any of the locations. We also could not identify vehicles for systematic sampling in the most probable location like Kaziranga. Even if we were successful in doing so the convenience of the tourists would not have given us the interview time since they would be either hurrying towards the Park or too tired after the visit. Moreover, systematic sampling will be true representative only when we have a confirmed list of elements of the populations, which unfortunately we did not have.

ii) **Sample Size**: Since the mandate of the work as given to us is constrained with "*Limited Data Collection*" we have decided to contain the sample within a small size. Fewer than that would hamper the overall acceptability of the data, whereas at the same time larger size would be in contrast to our mandate.

Mathematical models are available for determining the exact sample size for a desired level of accuracy. Herzog, Low & Berghold (2015) suggested that these models could be used to derive the effect size from which the sample size could be determined. However, these models are said to be effective only in case of probabilistic methods of sampling. Therefore, use of such models is not possible in the present survey. This leaves with the only choice of looking for precedence in similar studies. However, it is seen that authors are using sample sizes within a vast range.

Many tourism researchers confine the sample size around 500. However, at least one precedence is available where such research was conducted with less than 200 samples. 186 tourists were queried on their souvenir purchase behaviour by Wall and Woodley (1993) in their study *Souvenir Sales: A Case Study on the North Shore of Lake Superior*. In their study *Shopping for Souvenir Clothing,* Kincade and Woodard (2001) used 497 samples from US University students. Kim and Littrell (1999) in their study for predicting souvenir purchase intentions among American female tourists interviewed 277 tourists as samples. 490 was the sample size in a study conducted by Keown (1989) on Japanese tourists' propensity to buy in Hawaii. He interviewed Japanese tourists selected as sample through a convenience method. Kent et al. studied a sample of 604 through telephonic interviews with tourists visiting Atlanta (US) to explore their purchase patterns. It seems that all the researchers were interested in gathering "good" information rather than putting much emphasis on sample size. Since all the researches quoted here are related to tourists, they might be taken as precedence while selecting a proper sample size.

Krejcie and Morgan (1970) concluded that for a population exceeding one million, a sample size 384 is required. The total tourists' inflow to Assam for the year, 2018-19 was 60,68,211 (Directorate of Tourism, Assam, 2019) Considering this as our target population we should limit our sample within 400. However, in order to ensure a representative sample, we have decided to acquire a larger sample than those proposed by Krejcie and Morgan (1970). Manhas *et al.,* (2017) reported some similar studies with a sample size of 600 and above for studies related to tourism.

The sample size is also dictated by the analytical tools used. Tools like Structural Equation Modelling, factor analysis and ANOVA require a relatively larger sample size so that the resultant data could be manipulated wisely while performing different iterations. Even the 'humble' chi-square test offers certain restrictions regarding the number of cases dealt with (expected count must not be below 5 in each cell of the contingency table – therefore, larger the number of cells, bigger should be the sample size). We, however, propose to use principal Component Analysis, Confirmatory Factor Analysis, and other tests for checking the difference

in average among groups in our work, as we intent to determine the relative weight of each the variables measured (including the resultant dimensions).

It is a well-known fact that as the sample size increases the non-sampling errors associated with it tend to increase. However, a small sample size might create sampling error implying improper representation of the population. It is, therefore, imperative to strike a balance.

Keeping all these in view, we have consciously decided to have a sample size that is large enough, but not too large. After lot of thought, we have decided to have **600** as the final sample size across all destinations for the study.

Out of the 600 samples, the first segmentation needs to be done on the basis of origin of the tourists- foreign and domestic. Within domestic we have decided to further segregate them into national and regional. Regional being those originating from within the Northeast India.

Official data shows that only 0.67% of the total arrivals in Assam were foreign tourists during April, 2018 and March, 2019 (Directorate of Tourism, Assam, 2019). It is noteworthy to mention here that, as foreign tourists have more experience in movement for tourism purposes than the average domestic tourist, it has been decided to take a significant number of foreign tourists as sample. Merely looking at the proportion of foreign tourists' footfall in Assam will not serve the purpose of judging the level of convenience from an international perspective. Hence, though devoid of any objective reason we have decided to include **at least10%** of the proposed sample from among the foreign tourists. Thus, in the entire survey we have decided to have at least 60 (10% of 600) foreign tourists as sample.

Our study involves twelve tourist destinations of Assam - Guwahati, Kaziranga, Manas National Park (Barpeta Road), Haflong, Majuli, Tezpur (including Nameri National Park), Sivasagar, Dibrugarh, Goalpara, Sualkuchi, Panimur and Umrangso as survey areas. It is clear from data released by Directorate of Assam Tourism that the tourist footfalls in these destinations differ. According to available data for the year 2018-19 Guwahati received the highest footfalls with 25% of total tourist arrivals in Assam followed by Kaziranga (10%), Sivasagar (7.04%), Majuli (3.35%), Tezpur (1.16%), Dibrugarh (0.38%), Manas National Park (0.06%) and Haflong (0.0002%). Reliable data for Goalpara, Sualkuchi, Panimur and Umrangsoare not available separately. Panimur and Umrangso are two destinations only in introduction stage (with abundant potential) just now being promoted by the tourism authority, yet to generate considerable footfalls. Goalpara and Sualkuchi, however, already are very famous among tourists, and being able to attract considerable interests among the target tourists. In such a situation we have decided to allot nominal sample size to Panimur and Umrangso with 10 tourists each. Haflong and Sualkuchi are allotted 40 each, which is lower than the other destinations taken into consideration.

Since Guwahati and Kaziranga could generate most tourists' interest we have decided to allot a sample size of 100 each to fairly gauge the tourists' convenience in these two famous destinations of Assam. Other six destinations are allotted 50 each in order to make it large enough for a meaningful study. The consolidated division of sample across the selected destinations are shown in Table 3.6, which is produced below.

Table 3.6: Sample Distribution Across the Destinations		
#	Destination	Sample Size *(number of tourists)*
1	Guwahati	100
2	Kaziranga	100
3	Dibrugarh	50
4	Haflong	40
5	Majuli	50
6	Manas National Park	50
7	Sivasagar	50
8	Tezpur	50
9	Goalpara	50
10	Sualkuchi	40
11	Panimur	10
12	Umrangs	10
	TOTAL	600

As mentioned above, we have decided to allot 10% of the total number of sample (i.e., 60) to foreign tourists, wherever available. In order to have an unbiased idea of level of their convenience we have tried to distribute foreign samples evenly across all destinations, provided they are available during our sample survey.

iii) Research Instrument:

As it is already mentioned that to measure tourist convenience a self-administered questionnaire is used in the study. The questionnaire is prepared in simple English language. At the very outset, a request for co-operation is made. An assurance of confidentiality is duly provided. Each question in the questionnaire is followed by detailed instructions on how to answer it so that there would not have any difficulty in responding to the questions. The questionnaire contained 16 questions in all with many sub questions dealing with individual variables. The length of the questionnaire and the probable time (approximately 15-20 minutes) needed for filling up the questionnaire is mentioned in the beginning.

Specific Questions Included in the Questionnaire:

In order to categorise the respondents, some questions related to age-group, gender, marital status, educational qualification, income category, occupation are asked to respondent. In case of age group and income category, ordinal scale is used. Nominal scales have been used in the questions related to gender, marital status, and educational qualification. The variables, purpose, and respective scale used are shown Table 3.7.

	Table 3.7 : Details of Variables with Purpose and Scale Used			
#	Question Number	Variables	Purpose	Scale used
1	1	Place of origin	For categorisation	Open ended
2	2	Rating of destination (37 variables)	For measuring tourist convenience	10-point interval scale
3	3	Availability of planned itinerary	For categorisation	Nominal
4	4	Subscription to package tour	For categorisation	Nominal
5	5	Types of Traveller	For categorisation	Nominal
6	6	Age group	For categorisation	Ordinal
7	7	Marital status	For categorisation	Nominal
8	8	Income category	For categorisation	Ordinal
9	A1	Motive for visiting the destination	For categorisation	Nominal
10	A2	Level of Education	For categorisation	Nominal
11	A3	Rating of the journey	Other	Ordinal
12	A4	Traffic congestion	Other	Ordinal
13	A5	Road condition	Other	Ordinal
14	A6	Night travel	Other	Ordinal
15	A7	Occupation	Other	Open ended
16	A8	Time management in the destination	Other	Nominal
17	A8 a.	Reasons for *A8 (branching)*	Other	Open ended
18	Identification	Gender	For categorisation	Nominal

In order to identify the primary motive of travel nominal scale is used. This is going to help us to have an idea related to the type of traveller. Subscription to a package tour, availability of planned itinerary, single or group traveller and availability of enough time to visit all the attractions are nominally scaled.

Ordinal scale is used to measure responses against the overall rating of the journey, traffic congestion, road condition, night travel experience.
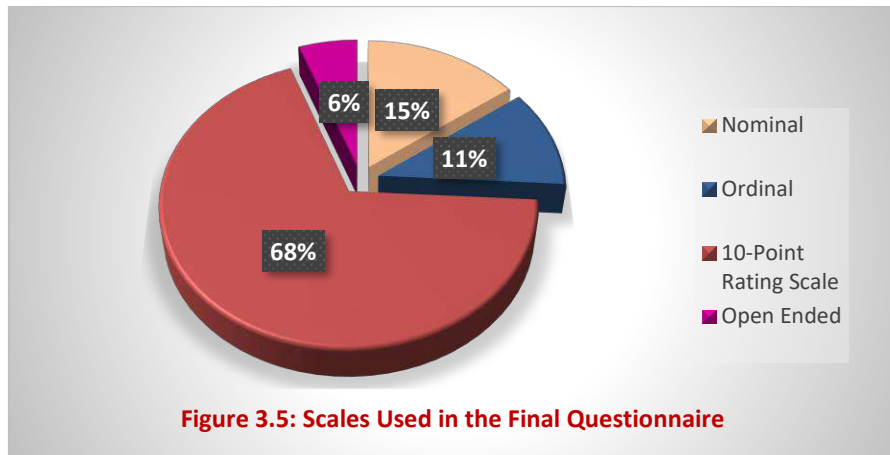
Figure 3.5: Scales Used in the Final Questionnaire

Total of 37 variables for measuring tourist convenience is added under question number 2. The variables are converted into equal number of statements and the tourists are asked for their agreement or disagreement to each of these statements. A 10- point rating scale is used here, where 1 represents least and 10 represents highest agreement to the respective statement. Respondents are urged to check the appropriate rating corresponding to importance attached to each of the statements included in the question.

In the questionnaire, there are three open ended questions, eight questions with nominal scale and six questions with ordinal scale. 37 variables under question number 2 is measured with 10-point scale. This division is shown in Figure 3.6 above.

3.3 Providers Convenience:

It is already mentioned that supply side perspectives always have bearing on determining tourism convenience. However, like tourist convenience, there is paucity of literature directly pertaining to providers' convenience. We hope to generate some idea about providers' convenience from destination competiveness. Destination competitiveness is not only the amount of footfall of tourist but also the quantum of business related to tourism. Infact, employment generation, improved standard of living, richness of destination, value addition by tourism industry in a particular place are yardsticks for destination competitiveness. In Table 3.8 a detail list of variables, models and scales used for measurement of destination competitiveness is presented.

#	Variables/Scales	Authors
	Table 3.8: Variables /Scales /Models used for Determining Destination Competitiveness	
1	**Travel and Tourism Convenience Index (14 Pillars)** (Business Environment, Safety and Security Health and Hygiene, Human Resource And Labour Market, ICT Readiness, Prioritization of Travel And Tourism, International Openness, Price Competitiveness,	World Economic Forum

Table 3.8: Variables /Scales /Models used for Determining Destination Competitiveness		
#	Variables/Scales	Authors
	Environmental Suitability, Airport Infrastructure, Ground Port Infrastructure, Tourist Service Infrastructure, Natural Resource and Cultural Resources)	
2	**Destination Competitiveness Determinates** (*Destination choice, Safety, Attractiveness, Accessibility, Country image, Competition between different service providers, standard of living, Sustainability, number of visitors, Market share, tourism expenditure, Employment generation, value added services, Well-being for its residents*)	Gooroochurn & Sugiyarto (2005); Ritchie & Crouch (2000);Heath (2003); Bahar & Kozak (2007); Hassan (2000); d'Hauteserre (2000);
3	**Destination Competitiveness Models** **CMC Model** (Substitute, entry/exit barriers, organisation design, technology); **Framework for Tourism Destination Management** (human resource, physical resource, knowledge resource, capital resource, infrastructure, historical and cultural resources); **Tourism Destination Competitiveness** model (tourism development impacts, environmental attitudes, place attachments, development preferences, support for destination competitive strategy); **Tourism Destination Preference Index** (social, cultural, psychological influence); **Price Competitiveness Index** (Price differentials, exchange rate movements, productivity levels of various components of tourism industry, qualitative factors, cost of tourism basket)	Crouch and Ritchie (1999), Chon and Mayer (1995); Crouch and Ritchie (1999); Yoon (2002); Romilly &Liu (2000); Dwyer, Forsyth & Rao (2000); Oyewole (2004); Dwyer et al. (2000)

The offer of a destination from the point of view of facilitator is also important. The human resource, Government policies, infrastructure, conducive environment etc. are equally important parameters to determine competitiveness of travel and tourism. Tsai et al. (2009) mentioned that it is necessary to give due focus on the tourist destinations to examine tourism competitiveness. In many studies, competitiveness is used rather than convenience of tourist destination.

World Economic Forum (WEF) for the last 12 years has been measuring travel and tourism competitiveness using 90 indicators. In the 2017 Travel and Tourism Framework, WEF used 4 different sub-indexes with 14 pillars. They are- Business Environment, Safety and Security, Health and Hygiene, Human Resource and Labour Market, ICT Readiness, Prioritization of Travel and Tourism, International Openness, Price Competitiveness, Environmental Suitability, Airport Infrastructure, Ground Port Infrastructure, Tourist Service Infrastructure, Natural Resource and Cultural Resources.

A business environment with respect to tourism takes into all those aspects that deal with tourism (WEF, 2017). It carries the convenience of the business to grow and sustain in

their respective areas. Safety and security also include policies for mitigating the threats or risk associated with business in a particular destination. Sanitation, drinking water, health care facilities in a destination indicate the health and hygiene of a particular destination. Availability of required quality of people, labour market conditions such as hiring practices, pay etc. by the business houses related to tourism are also important pillar to decide on competitiveness. Use and availability of advanced IT infrastructure is also indicating the competitiveness of a destination.   More supportive policies of Government for tourism and travel, international openness, more competitive the destination would be. Practices for environmental sustainability in terms of enforcement of environmental regulations, wastewater treatment are also looked for deciding on competitiveness of the destination. Quality of transport infrastructure, tourist service infrastructure like hotel rooms, and availability of ATMS are equally important to add competitive advantage of a destination. Degree of richness of a destination in terms of natural and cultural resources is also determining the degree of competitiveness of the destination.

Most of the models used for measuring destination competitiveness are developed from various orientations. As for example, the CMC model of measuring destination competitiveness include variables like substitute, entry/exit barriers, organisation design and technology (Crouch and Ritchie, 1999; Chon and Mayer, 1995). In the "Framework for Tourism Destination Management"**,** Yoon (2002) used human resource, physical resource, knowledge resource, capital resource, infrastructure, historical and cultural resources to measure destination competitiveness.

A wide variety of determinants have been identified to measure competitiveness of a destination. In many cases price becomes the measure for competitiveness of the destinations. Technology and innovation infrastructure, human capital, price, environment, openness, social development, history and culture, micro environment, macro environment, demand conditions, customer satisfaction, social, psychological factors etc. are major determinants of tourism destination competitiveness (Oyewole, 2004; Dwyer et al. ,2000).

3.3.1 Measuring Supply Side Convenience:

The index for tourism convenience is being developed with data collected from demand side and supply side surveys in 12 destinations in Assam. As mentioned in the earlier section we have taken recourse to a tourist survey as well as a supply side survey. This section deals with measuring providers' convenience.

We have taken a two-pronged strategy while conducting the supply side study in order to elicit maximum unbiased information regarding the situation in the ground level. **(1)** We have conducted in-field detailed observation on the variables that might constitute tourism convenience. **(2)** In order to understand the ground realities, a series of in-depth interviews

were conducted. The entire supply side study was undertaken during July 2019 - February, 2020

In-depth interviews are conducted with experts related to accommodation units, restaurants, government officials, entrepreneurs, Tourist Officers, Forest Officers, and local activists from NGOs dealing with tourism sectors. The interviews are carried out with the help of a Schedule (Annexure 4: Schedule A) with 27 statements. Details are discussed in a later section.

The other part of the survey is the observation. Here, tariff details of all types of accommodation units in the 12 destinations are collected. This will show the diversity of accommodation units in destinations providing choices for the tourists and thereby increasing convenience. For measuring tourism convenience index, we shall check the diversity of the tariff rates of the accommodation units available in a destination. Availability of transportation modes are also taken into consideration in this regard.

Observations are also done at the attraction sites. Amenities like availability of Restrooms, Toilets, Food stalls (both food manufacture and street food vendors), Drinking water, and Souvenir shops are taken into consideration. A rating on the scale of 10 is allotted to the state and condition to each of the amenities studied.

To rate the hygiene factor of the food manufacturers and food stalls; F.A.S.S.A.I Regulations, 2011 are taken into consideration. Certain parameters like, 'free of filthy surroundings', 'adequate space', 'availability of fly swats/flaps (to kill mosquito, flies) but no use of spray', 'proper drainage' etc. are measured to evaluate the hygienic factor for food manufacturer/processor/handler while some others like, 'away from waste water, rubbish, toilet, open drain, stray animals', 'available potable water in covered clean containers', 'clean environment', 'away from traffic jam' etc. are observed for street food vendors. In order to rate the prevailing condition of the public resting places near the attractions; importance has also been given to inputs like, 'separate room', 'wash basin with running water, looking glass', 'provision for sitting', 'fan & light', 'provision for specially-abled persons' etc. The measurement on the observations at public toilets available to visitors based upon the 'Sanitation Index Indicators' for monitoring cleanliness under the Mahatma Gandhi Swachchhata Mission where parameters like, 'provision for differently-abled persons', 'no foul odour within the toilet and surroundings', 'no stains on the toilet seats/wash basins or sanitary' etc. are counted (UDUHD, Govt. of Gujarat, 2014). Along with these, recommendations given by 'Central Public Health and Environmental Engineering Organisation (CPHEEO) of Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Govt. of India in their Report (2018), 'Advisory on Public and Community Toilets' are also taken into consideration. Some parameters taken from the report are - 'accessories & provisions like tissue dispensers, waste bins, hand-wash, soap dispensers, hand drying equipment, air

freshers & sanitizers', 'lighting facility like natural, external, internal & emergency', 'toilet internal elements like walls, roofs, floors, doors & windows' etc.

In-order to test and measure the web presence rates of the attractions in every destination website, applications like Wikipedia, Wikimapia, Maps of India, Lonely Planet, Outlook Traveller, TripAdvisor.com, Tripoto, Google Maps, Indiatravelforum.in, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, Incredible India, Trip Planner: Travel India App, Yahoo Answers and Quora are taken into consideration. These popular sites are believed to be used by the visitors when they plan their trip. Only presence or absence of the attractions on these sites are considered. The score has been given on a 10-point scale again. While evaluating we have decided to follow recommendations offered by Mich & Hull (2012) in their study *good practices for web presences strategies of tourism destinations.*

We are offering the methodology followed for the detailed observations and in-depth interviews in the following sections.

3.3.1.1 Detailed Observation:

As mentioned above we envisage to generate field level raw data for calculating (and strengthening) the tourism convenience index through structured observations wherever necessary and possible. We have taken up the following variables for observation. Even if we have tried to measure some of these variables through in-depth interviews and also in the tourist survey to understand the respective perceptions, we thought that it would be prudent for the interest of neutrality of the information generated to cross check such perception with the field level actual presence of the convenience factor(s). *(Please refer to our Triangulation Section offered later in the Chapter for a detail discussion on this.)*

#	Variable/ Sub-variables		Purpose	Observation guidelines
			Table 3.9: Variables for Observation	
1	**Accommodation**		Availability of accommodation of a tourist's choice is one of the major indicators of the convenience.	Except for in Guwahati where large number of accommodation units is available all other destinations were surveyed considering all accommodation types. For Guwahati, a representation sample of 52 hotels was collected from 'Member's Directory' released by 'Hotel & Restaurant Association of Assam' (HRAA) in 2012-13. The handbook comprises of all relevant information about the room types and relevant tariff rates of star and non-star accommodations around Guwahati.
		Types	To gauge available choices to the average tourist	
		Tariff	To check for the tariff	
2	**Attraction**s		Attractions are magnates that bring tourist to a destination. Hence determining the attractions, their number and type are important for generating necessary convenience for the tourists.	Popularity of the attractions in terms of footfalls in the last year (2018-19) is determined and the same was converted into a 10-point scale for the destination. 10 is treated as the most popular destination, and the score comes down proportionately for less popular destinations.
		Natural		
		Manmade		
		Heritage sites		
3	**Connectivity**		To check for availability of all modes of transportation	
4	**Travelling within the destination**		Availability of transportation within attractions in a destination	Availability of public, private, hired transportation and respective cost. More the variety, more convenient it is for the tourist. If Air, Railway and Road transportation available

#	Variable/ Sub-variables			Purpose	Observation guidelines
				Table 3.9: Variables for Observation	
					in acceptable frequency 10 is awarded. Available mode, but infrequent public transport, less score is awarded. For less than 3 modes, 6; for only one mode of transportation 3 is awarded.
5	**Training centre**			For supply of trained manpower in the destination	On Availability. Score 10: When there are more than 5 institutions in the destination. Score 6: When there are more than 1 institution in the destination. Score 3: When there is only 1 institution in the destination.
6	Other important observations			All are important indicators of general convenience, especially That of a visitor	Details are discussed in next sections
		Public rest room			
		Toilets			
		Food stall			
			Hygiene		
			Food diversity		
		Drinking water			
		Souvenir stall			

After the observations our aim is to assign a score between 1 and 10 with 3 decimal places in order to maintain uniformity with other analyses.

i. **Accommodation:** Here, tariff details of all type of accommodation units in the 12 destinations are collected. This gives an idea about diversity of accommodation units in destinations providing choices for the tourists and thereby increasing convenience. Accommodation units which are easily accessible from transportation hubs, nearer to attraction sites are given as top priority for collecting the tariff rates.

While visiting the accommodation units, availability of different types of rooms (*right from budget rooms to luxurious ones*) are also noted. More is the availability of choices for the tourist more shall be the convenience of the tourists. We have collected the tariff rates of all accommodation units in a destination (except for Guwahati, where we have visited representative accommodation units). Room types are basically reflected in the tariff rates. Hence, we have decided to take the diversity of the tariff rates (in terms of standard deviation from mean) of a particular destination for calculating the convenience score. We have used the following formula in determining the score for each destination in a 10-point scale.

$$\text{Accommodation score for destination } x = \frac{SD \text{ of destination } x}{Maximum \ SD \ (among \ 12 \ destinations)} \times 10$$

ii. Observation is also done on available transportation modes in the destination for commuting within it offering connectivity to all popular and major attractions. It is also tried to be ascertained if all types of transportation (like public, private & and hired transport) services

are available. At the same time the connectivity of the destination with the major cities was also considered.

    iii. Amenities like availability of restrooms, toilets, food stalls (both food service providers like restaurants and street food vendors), drinking water, souvenir shops are taken into consideration. A rating on a scale of 10 was given to the state and condition of restrooms, toilets, choices of available food stalls and hygiene thereof.

    (a) To rate the hygiene factor of the food providers and street level food stalls; F.A.S.S.A.I regulations, 2011 (Food Safety and Standards Authority of India, 2011) are taken into consideration. Certain parameters like, 'free of filthy surroundings', 'adequate space', 'availability of fly swats/flaps (*to kill mosquitoes, flies*) but no spray, proper drainage' etc. are allotted to hygienic factor for food providers/processor/handler while some others like, 'away from waste water, rubbish, toilet, open drain, stray animals', 'available potable water in covered clean containers', 'clean environment', 'away from traffic jam' etc. are observed for street food vendors. The observation schedule comprising of all relevant variables to measure food diversity and hygiene for *food handlers/processors* are shown in Table 3.10a, and for *street vendors* are shown in Table 3.10b below. We used a simple binary formula to ascertain the score for each attraction in the proposed 10-point scale. The formulae are shown along with the schedule.

    Scores thus collected are assigned to the attractions observed and finally are being triangulated with the relevant dimensions of tourist survey and in-depth interviews.

Table 3.10a: Variables for Food Diversity & Hygiene						
FOOD PROVIDERS/PROCESSOR/HANDLER						
#	**HYGIENE**	**Yes/ No**	**#**	**FOOD DIVERSITY**		**Yes/ No**
1	Free of filthy surroundings		1	Chinese Dishes		
2	Adequate Space		2	Indian Dishes		
3	Clean, Lighted, Ventilated		3	Continental Food		
4	Floors, ceilings are in good condition		4	Tea, Coffee & Minimal Snacks like Samosa, Aloo Chop etc.		
5	Floors washed					
6	Nets in doors and windows			*Food Diversity Score$_{FP}$= $\frac{n}{4}$×10*		
7	Fly swats/flaps (to kill mosquito, flies) and no spray					
8	Running water (supply of potable / usable water)			*Food Hygiene Score$_{FP}$= $\frac{n}{17}$×10*		
9	Easy to clean equipment, machinery, tables etc.					
10	No metal contamination			*n= Frequency of "yes" to respective variable*		
11	Proper drainage					
12	Aprons, hand gloves, head wear					
13	Finger nails trimmed, no false nails, loose jewellery					
14	Smoking, Chewing, Spitting prohibited					
15	Foods are covered properly					
16	Fridge should be regularly cleaned					
17	Vegetarian, non-vegetarian segregated					

#	HYGIENE	Yes/No	#	FOOD DIVERSITY	Yes/No
**Table 3.10b: Variables for Food Diversity & Hygiene** **STREET FOOD VENDORS**				
1	Away from waste water, rubbish, toilet, open drain, stray animals		1	Chinese Dishes	
2	Working surface, Food serving and containing materials should be rust/corrosion resistant		2	Indian Dishes	
3	Rubbish bins with cover and at proper location		3	Continental Food	
4	Clean environment, away from traffic jam		4	Tea, Coffee & Minimal Snacks like Samosa, Aloo Chop etc.	
5	Available potable water in covered clean containers				
6	No non-food grade plastic, and contaminable, toxic metals				
7	Utensils cleaned with detergent under running tapped water				
8	Vendor is clean, finger nails trimmed, and regularly wash hands				
9	Foods kept under cover				
10	Smoking, Chewing, Spitting prohibited				
11	Adequate number of racks for storage				
12	Vegetarian, non vegetarian segregated				

$$\textit{Food Diversity Score}_{SFV}= \frac{n}{4}\times10$$

$$\textit{Food Hygiene Score}_{SFV}= \frac{n}{12}\times10$$

n= Frequency of "yes" to respective variable

iv. Another important dimension of our observation is to rate the prevailing condition of the public resting places nearer to the attractions. In order to do so we have measured the provision for 'separate room', 'wash basin with running water, looking glass', 'provision for sitting', 'fan and light', 'provision for specially-abled persons' etc. The details about the parameters are shown in Table 3.11.

#	VARIABLES	Yes/No
**Table 3.11: Variables Observed for Public Resting Place Score**	
1	Separate Room	
2	Wash Basin with Running Water, Looking Glass	
3	Attached Toilet	
4	Waste Bin	
5	Mobile Charging Point	
6	Provision for seating	
7	Fan, Light	
8	Tiled Floor	
9	Specific Cleaning Interval	
10	Presence of Attendant	
11	Air Conditioned	
12	Provision for Differently Abled Person	

$$\textit{Rest Room Score}= \frac{n}{12}\times10$$
n= Frequency of "yes" to respective variable

Additional information like if the rest rooms do have chairs, and other arrangements, if it is closed on all four sides etc. were also observed.

v. Determination of score against the public toilets near the attractions is based upon the '*Sanitation Index Indicators for monitoring cleanliness under the Mahatma Gandhi Swachchhata Mission' (Urban Development and Urban Housing Department, Govt. of Gujarat, 2014)* where parameters like, 'provision for differently-abled persons', 'no foul odour within the toilet and surroundings', 'no strains on the toilet seats/wash basins or sanitary' etc. are counted. Along with these, recommendations given by Central Public Health and Environmental Engineering Organisation (CPHEEO) of Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Govt. of India in their report **'Advisory on Public and Community Toilets'** (Central Public Health and Environmental Engineering Organisation,2018) are also taken into consideration. Some parameters taken from the report are, 'accessories & provisions like tissue dispensers, waste bins, hand-wash, soap dispensers, hand dying equipment, air fresheners & sanitizers', 'lightning facility like natural, external, internal & emergency', 'toilet's internal elements like walls, roofs, floors, doors & windows' etc. All 15 such variables are shown in Table 3.12.

#	VARIABLES	Yes/No
	Table 3.12: Variables Observed for Toilet Score	
1	Structured Toilet *(complete with four walls)*	
2	Visibility *(availability of signage)*	
3	Lighting	
4	Ventilation	
5	Toilet Accessories & Provisions *	
6	Separate Provision for Urinal and Latrine	
7	Separate Provision for Male and Female	
8	Enough Toilets against the Number of Visitors	
9	Running Water	
10	Both Western/Indian Style	
11	Sparkling Interior (with tiles etc.) **	
12	Waste Bin	
13	Sanitation Standard ***	
14	Availability of Cleaner	
15	Provision for Differently-abled Person	

* Tissue dispensers, waste bins, hand wash, soap dispensers, hand drying equipment, air fresheners & sanitizers
** Tiles, walls, roofs, floors, doors and windows
*** No stains on the toilet seats/wash basins or sanitary, No visible human faeces matter in the toilet, No garbage/litter strewn in and around the toilet, No stagnant water in and around the toilet.

$$Toilet\ Score = \frac{n}{15} \times 10$$

***n**= Frequency of "yes" to respective variable*

vi. Score on web presence was measured in a 10-point scale. In-order to measure the web presence of the attractions (within the respective destination) websites/applications like *Wikipedia, Wikimapia. Maps of India, Lonely Planet, Outlook Traveller, TripAdvisor.com, Tripoto, Google Maps, Indiatravelforum.in, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, Incredible India, Trip Planner: Travel India App, Yahoo Answers and Quora* are taken into consideration. These popular sites are used by the visitors when they plan their trip (Saxena, 2019). Presence or absence of the attractions are recorded on these web-platforms. However, certain recommendations have been followed from Mich & Hall (2012). As mentioned by Mich & Hall (2012), Social media 'room' is used as intermediate space to allow the intermediaries and destination managers to maintain a control on content and "improve their visibility and image". However, they have also recommended that Yahoo answers offers customised suggestions, and unstructured information on attractions and destinations which otherwise not available on an average website. Hence, along with Yahoo answers similar type of applications, websites and social media platforms are used for measuring the same. Any description of the attraction or any travel experience by visitors were searched through the web portals. Presence of feedbacks given by the visitors on these sites was also considered. Every presence is marked with a score of 10. To give the final score on the web presence, an average score has been calculated after considering its availabilities in these 17 (seventeen) webs portals. The parameters are given as follows (Table 3.13).

Table 3.13: Website/ Apps Observed for Web Presence Score		
#	**WEBSITE/ APP**	**PRESENCE/ ABSENCE**
1	Wikipedia.	
2	Wikimapia.	
3	Maps of India.	
4	Lonely Planet.	
5	Outlook Traveller.	
6	TripAdvisor.com	
7	Tripoto	
8	Google Maps	
9	Indiatravelforum.in	
10	Facebook.	
11	Twitter.	
12	Youtube.	
13	Instagram.	
14	Incredible India.	
15	Trip Planner: Travel India App	
16	Yahoo Answers.	
17	Quora.	
Web Presence Score= $\frac{n}{17}$×**10** *n= Frequency of "Presence" to respective variable*		

3.3.1.2 In-depth Interviews:

In-depth interviews are conducted with experts/entrepreneurs/service providers from accommodation, and food and beverage sectors, concerned government officials like Tourist Officers, Forest Officers, Health Inspectors, Local activists from NGOs and experts dealing with tourism sectors. The interviews are conducted in a structured way. A schedule (**Schedule-A,** appended in Annexure 4) with 27 variables converted into statements are used for the interactions. Interviewees are requested for comments against the statements. Our trained interviewer converted the comments/observations into a score from 1 to 10 where, 1 signifies his/her disagreement and 10 signify his/her agreement to the statements. The score, however, is finalised after discussion with the expert. Typically, an interview lasted for about 20 minutes**.** World Economic Forum (WEF) in their Report for Travel and Tourism competiveness (2017) used 14 pillars with four sub-indices to measure travel and tourism competiveness of various countries. They are - Business Environment (*Pillar1*), Safety and Security (*Pillar2*), Health and Hygiene (*Pillar 3*), Human Resource and Labour Market (*Pillar 4*) , ICT Readiness(*Pillar 5*) , Prioritization of Travel And Tourism(*Pillar 6*) , International Openness (*Pillar 7*), Price Competitiveness (*Pillar 8*), Environmental Suitability (*Pillar 9*), Airport Infrastructure (*Pillar 10*), Ground Port Infrastructure (*Pillar 11*), Tourist Service Infrastructure (*Pillar 12*), Natural Resource (*Pillar 13*), and Cultural Resources (*Pillar 14*). For selecting the variables for in-depth interview, we have used 9 pillars out of the 14 as per the need of the study. Out of the remaining five, *Pillar 8*(price competitiveness) and *Pillar 13*(natural resources) are used for observation. Observation variables related to accommodation is prepared by using *Pillar 8*. The variables related to attraction is developed using *Pillar 13*. Since we need to conduct interviews with service providers who use to remain busy throughout, therefore, to minimize the average time required to conduct the interview, we have merged *Pillar 7, 10, and 11* with *Pillar 6* and we have developed a new variable i.e. *government support* (Statement 10, interview schedule).

Variables for the study along with the pillars are presented in Table 3.14 below.

Table 3.14: Variables Considered for In-depth Interviews		
#	**Supply side variables considered**	**WEF Competitiveness Pillars**
1	Safety of business	Pillar 2
2	Safety of tourists	
3	Effects of Bandhs and strikes on the tourism business	Pillar 1
4	Availability of Knowledgeable tour guides	Pillar 4
5	Availability of Travel agents	
6	Availability of Skilled manpower	
7	Availability of unskilled manpower	
8	Wide representation in the Internet	Pillar 5
9	Online reviews by past tourists (positive or negative)	

Table 3.14: Variables Considered for In-depth Interviews		
#	Supply side variables considered	WEF Competitiveness Pillars
10	Government support to entrepreneurs	Pillar 6
11	Support by Local authorities	
12	Availability of Food joints	Pillar 12
13	Availability of accommodation for tourists *(during peak season also)*	
14	Use the infrastructure during slack season	
15	ATMs are accessible	
16	Foreign exchange facility	
17	Availability of public toilets	Pillar 3
18	General hygiene	
19	Mobile phone connectivity	Pillar 5
20	Rain water harvesting	Pillar 9
21	No stinking smell from waste products	
22	No use of plastic materials	
23	Use of reusable utensils throughout	
24	Tourists can enjoy fulfilling activities	Pillar 12
25	Nightlife is available	
26	Regular screening of documentaries	Pillar 14
27	Performance by local artists for tourists	

Selected variables are thought to be crucial in indicating the level of convenience in a destination/ attraction either from the point of view of tourist or from the perspective of the service providers. As we are dealing with supplier convenience also, we have cared to ask few questions related to their level of convenience in doing the tourism related business. It is of no dispute that if the supply is good enough to meet the demand only then the synergy of convenience be created. A few variables are measured here to cross check the findings from the tourist survey, and a proper mapping is done for dealing with the same. We have added some futuristic variables, at least from the point of view of Assam tourism (*which at the most is in the introduction stage of the destination life cycle*) by discussing as many as 4 variables related to sustainable goals (Pillar 9).

The interviews are initiated by asking some general questions like, **'***How are you?', 'When did you start the business?'* (in case of service provider), *'Have you faced any troubles all these years?'* and so on. The questions are asked on a random basis and follow up discussions were initiated according to reactions of the interviewee. The following ground rules are followed before asking the interviewee for his/her concurrence on the score out of 10 against each statement.

***i. Business is safe here*:**

The interviewees were asked if the location and the type of business he is taking care of is *investment friendly*. The person is also asked about *future possibilities* of starting another similar type of business in the location and how *profitable* it would be. If he is not directly related to business (like officials, expert etc.) they are asked about their perception on safety of business.

***ii. Tourists are safe here*:**

The question is asked while considering the factors like, '*attitude of local people towards tourists and tourism', 'threats to life', 'extremism in the area'* and '*any illegal activities are noticed in and around the destination'*.

iii. Bandhs and strikes do not affect the tourism business at all:

Bandhs and strikes and its degree of impact on tourism businesses like accommodation units, shops, transport modes, attraction site itself are tried to be measured here. We try to know the effect of such blockade on '*inflows of tourists', 'close down of shops', 'movements of vehicles*'.

***iv. Knowledgeable tour guides are available*:**

Whether tour guides are *certified* or not, if not then do they possess *enough knowledge* about the destination, are they *aware and knowledgeable about all attractions* in the destination and their *communication skills* with all type of tourists are taken as grounds for elaborating and then deciding about the score on the statement.

***v. Travel agents are available*:**

In this question, the interviewee is probed on the *number of travel agents available locally and near to the destination*. They are prodded to estimate a number *of local travel agents* as well.

***vi. Skilled manpower is available in the destination*:**

The grounds for awarding score against this statement, typically talks about skilled based human resources particularly for *hospitality industry*. The availability of *training centre*, availability of employable *multitasking and trained human resource* (with cross skills), availability of *certified human resources with hospitality and related courses* are asked to the stakeholders. The immediate availability of such workers is also taken into consideration.

vii. Availability of unskilled manpower:

By terming, 'unskilled', the interviewee is asked about persons with *minimal skills* who are directly or indirectly associated with hospitality sector. It is tried to ascertain if labour force like vegetable suppliers to hotel industry, gardener, construction workers, daily wage labourers etc. are locally available. The *immediate availability* of such workers is also reckoned with.

***viii. Wide representation in the Internet*:**

The interviewee is asked to give a score against the availability of enough information about the destination in the internet. This would cover tourism related *advertisement campaigns by the Government, business houses, contents generated by users (by tourists, local people and NGOs)* in social media platforms, YouTube channels or in own websites*.*

***ix. Online reviews (positive or negative) by the past tourists are available on the destination*:**

The experts are asked about the feedbacks that are given by the tourists in the internet after availing the services in the destination. Whether the tourists write their feedback on *Google reviews* or sites *like Trip Advisor etc.***,** *service provider's own social media pages* or *mentions pros and cons of all services availed by them* are taken as a ground for asking them to score against the statement.

***x. Availability of government support to entrepreneurs*:**

The interviewee is asked about government initiatives like *tourism related schemes***,** *availability of bank loans* and *some subsidies* to tourism entrepreneurs. Their opinion on smooth support is also elicited.

***xi*. Local authorities do not harass the tourism entrepreneurs:**

The interviewee is asked about the relationship between local authorities like, *police, municipality, panchayats, forest department* or *any other governing body of the area*. Whether the business around the destination has got any *disturbances* or was there any *forceful tax collections* etc. are asked to the interviewees.

***xii. Food joints/courts are available for tourists*:**

The availability of restaurants or other food outlets in the destination to cater *to all kinds of tourists* are discussed here. *Availability of budget and luxury restaurants* and the *quality of food* items are discussed in order to award a score here.

xiii. Enough accommodation for tourists *(during peak season also):*

In this question, *availability of rooms* for all kinds of tourists, even during the peak season is taken into consideration. The *overbooking of an accommodation unit* is also considered in this regard.

***xiv. Profitable use the infrastructure during slack season*:**

Normally, tourism is a seasonal business and in a state like Assam, the months from June to September are considered as slack/off season. It is important for the service supplier that they can use the infrastructure erected during these months also, so that their business remains sustainable throughout the year. Scoring for this variable is done considering this aspect.

xv. Easy accessibility to ATMs:

The availability of enough ATMs as well as absence of negative events like *dry ATMs*, *improper* or *non-functioning of systems* etc., the distance of ATM centres from accommodation units and other activity centres are taken for awarding a score here.

xvi. Foreign exchange facility in the destination:

Presence of foreign exchange facility is a good indicator of convenience for the foreign tourists. Interviewees were asked to score their awareness about presence of foreign exchange facility in the region. The facility may be in the form of *'hotels accepting international card', 'any foreign currency exchange booths', 'banks for exchanging foreign currency'* etc.

xvii. Availability of public toilets:

Availability of *enough public toilets in the area considering the population* is the prime basis for the discussion here. Along with it, the interviewee is asked to consider the prevailing *condition of the toilets* with its *hygienic factor* before giving a final score to the statement. We have cross checked the scores with our findings from the observations conducted in the field.

xviii. General hygiene:

The interviewees were asked about their perspective on the cleanliness and hygienic awareness of the local population. *Cleanliness practices* around their own premises, perception of *green environment* etc. are also discussed as well. *Garbage disposal, sanitation, clean drinking water* were the grounds on which the interviewee is asked to give a final score to the statement.

xix. Mobile phone connectivity:

The mobile connectivity factor is asked to the interviewee here. Whether the location has excellent connectivity with *4G speed and quality,* and *does it happen with all kinds of mobile operators*? The *calling quality* as well as *downloading and uploading speed of* internet are discussed under this variable.

xx. Rain water harvesting is popular among entrepreneurs:

One the emerging concepts of sustainable development, 'rain water harvesting' and the *awareness* on the part of the entrepreneurs *like hotel / restaurant* or other tourism business entities are discussed to award a score here. Mind-sets of entrepreneurs regarding these are also discussed.

xxi. Waste products do not create stinking smell anywhere:

Under this dimension the interviewee is asked to give score on his/her perspectives towards the present *waste disposal system* in the locality. Whether the municipality or local bodies *dispose their garbage without creating any stinking smell*, *use of dustbins* and *timely cleaning of the same* are also discussed before giving a final score to the statement.

xxii. Plastic materials are not used in the destination at all:

The question comes up with the concept of *'zero plastics'.* The interviewee here is asked to give a score on *'non-use of plastics in any form'*. Are products like *mineral water bottles, packaged products, plastic covers, and bags* used in the destination*?* If yes, then at what level? Whether tourists are being restricted from bringing plastic products**,** and the availability of products made from biodegradable materials are considered as well**.**

xxiii. The entrepreneurs use reusable utensils throughout:

Related to the above, another variable on sustainability was measured to determine tourism related convenience of the destination. Experts are asked to give score on multiple usages of implements being used by the service providers like utensils (which were *not* for 'one time use'). The service providers are also asked *if they use disposables which are made of paper, plastics* and if yes, then at what rate they had been using *compared to re-usable utensils made of ceramic, aluminium, brass, steel, wood, earthenware etc*.

xxiv. Tourists can enjoy fulfilling activities while staying in the destination:

Availability of enough activities with respect to tourists' field of interest is taken as a prime ground to put as a question. The interviewee is asked to give his/her perspective on *tourists' satisfaction level* after spending his time in the destination. Whether the destination offers all the possible activities, and if yes, then tourist's response to the quality of the same are considered for this variable.

xv. Some form of nightlife is available:

The interviewee is asked here to give a score to the destination against its provisions for proper night-time activities available for the tourists. Availability of *nightclubs, pubs, bars, parties, live music, concerts, cabarets, theatre, cinemas, and shows* particularly for the tourists are the matters discussed with the interviewees. If we have some affirmative answer for the same, then comparison was tried to be made with other celebrated regions like *Goa, Mumbai, Delhi, Bangalore etc.*

xvi. Screening of documentaries:

The interviewee was here asked about the available facilities for screening any documentary *related to the destination* for consumption of the tourists*.* The question involves the '*regular screening of the same'* in the destination. If screening of the same does not take place regularly then the interviewees are asked about '*how often does it take place'***.**

xvii. Performance by local artists is arranged regularly for the benefit of tourists:

In this question, the interviewee is asked about the cultural shows which are organized for tourists only. If the hotels and the activity centre in the destination regularly organize cultural programs by the local performers for the tourists or not is also a matter of discussion.

3.4 Triangulation:

In order to arrive at a balance outcome, we need to compare the data collected through different means. It is very important for the sake of the rigour of methodology that we do not rely only on one source of information when we are measuring multiple variables, and wish to assign relative weight to each of them. Triangulation is broadly defined by Denzin (1978) as "the combination of methodologies in the study of the same phenomenon".

Before proceeding further let us have a recap of our research design. We have collected data simultaneously from three different sources on certain variables we decided to measure. Some of the variables are measured through all these sources, some are through two of them in parallel, and a few are measured using only one method.

Table 3.15 shows the variables measured through multiples data sources.

Tourists Survey		In Depth Interview		Field Observation
Q. No.	**Variable**	**Q. No.**	**Variable**	**Variable**
2.b	Recommendations about the place	8	Destination is widely represented in internet.	Web Presence score
		9	Availability of Online reviews (positive or negative)	-
2.c	Fair Image about the destination	8	Destination is widely represented in internet.	-
		9	Online reviews (positive or negative) are available by past tourists	-
2.d	Search is effortless	8	Destination is widely represented in internet.	Web Presence score
2.e	Information available in Internet	8	Destination is widely represented in internet	-
		9	Online reviews (positive or negative) are available by the tourists	-
2.g	Connectivity to the destination		-	Convenience of travelling
2.j	No difficulty in moving around	2	-	Within destination transportation
2.k	Satisfactory mobile network	19	Mobile connectivity is excellent	-
2.l	Fast access to internet	19	Mobile connectivity is excellent	-
2.m	Field level operators are available	4	Knowledgeable tour guides are available	-
		5	Travel agents are available	-
		6	Skilled manpower is available	Training institute score
2.n	Field level operators are knowledgeable	4	Knowledgeable tour guides are available	-
2.s	Food of my choice is available	12	Food courts are available	Availability of food stalls
2.v	Easy to find accommodation	13	Tourists never suffer from lack of accommodation	Accommodation diversity
2w.	Suitable Accommodation		-	Accommodation diversity
2.x	Public toilets	17	Public toilets are available	Public Toilet's score
2.y	Overall Hygiene	18	Local people are hygienic	Food stalls are hygienic
		21	Waste products doesn't create stinking smell	Public toilets' score
2z	Souvenir of choice is available		-	Availability of souvenir stalls
2.aa	Activities are available	24	Tourists can enjoy fulfilling activities	-
2.bb	Fully safe for travellers	2	Tourists are safe here	Within destination transportation
2.hh	Visit during off season	14	Use the infrastructure during slack season profitably	-
2.jj	No problem in arranging cash	15	ATMs are easily available	-
2.kk	Foreign currency conversion	16	Foreign exchange facility	-

Table 3.15: Variable Mapping for Triangulation

In Figure 3.7 (A, B, C and D) diagrammatic representations are shown for these mappings. We have decided to compare the scores against the mapped variables. In case there is a difference we shall take the average of the scores. In case of some variables it is seen that one variable from a source is mapped with two variables of another source. In such cases we shall take the average of the two variables of the latter source and then follow the earlier procedure. This is proposed to be done because of the fact that all the three sources are equally important, and thus given equal weight. The major function of triangulation is to confirm the finding of one source with another, and hence the differences may be dealt with only by assigning equal weight. However, we have decided to anchor the triangulated scores against the tourist survey variables as we can assign weight in these 37 variables only.

The following diagram (Figure 3.6) elaborates the concept of triangulation.
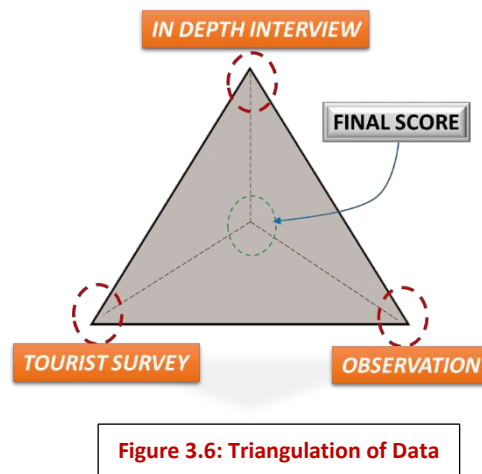
Figure 3.6: Triangulation of Data

Determination of weight for each of the variables is discussed in the next section.

Figure 3.7A: Triangulation Mapping - 1 and 2

Mapping 1

- Web presence score *(observation)*
- **2d.** Search is effortless
- **2e.** Information available in Internet
- **(8)** Wide Internet representation
- **(9)** Online review
- **2b.** Recommendation about the place
- **2c.** Fair image

Mapping 2

- Within destination transportation *(observation)*
- **(2)** Tourists are safe
- **2j.** No difficulty in moving around
- **2bb.** Fully safe for travellers
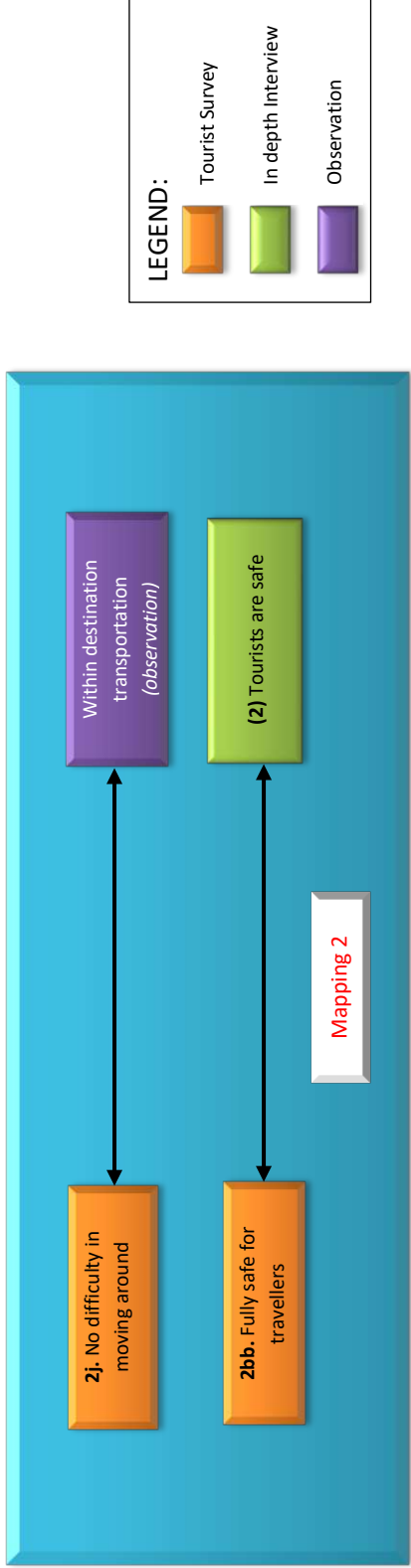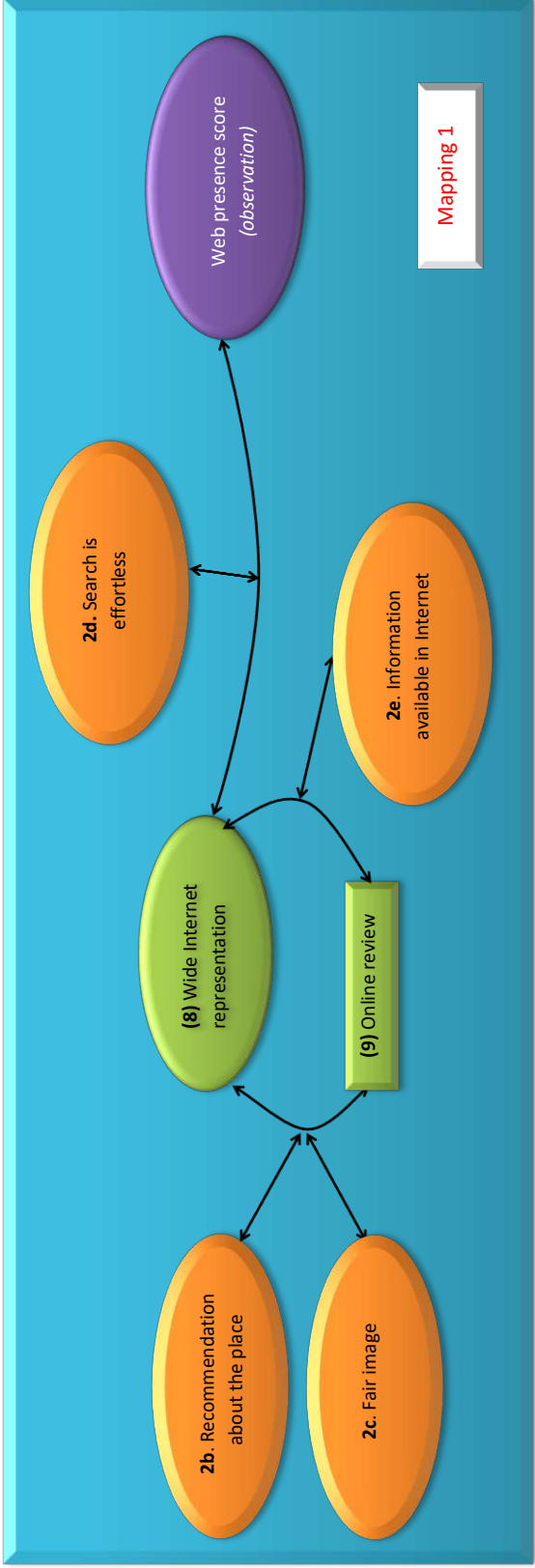
LEGEND:
- Tourist Survey
- In depth Interview
- Observation

Figure 3.7B: Triangulation Mapping - 3, 4 and 5

Mapping 4

Convenience of travelling (*observation*)

2g. Connectivity to the destination

Mapping 3

(19). Mobile Connectivity is excellent

2k. Satisfactory mobile network

2l. Fast internet access

Mapping 5

(4). Knowledgeable Guides are available

(5) Travel agents are available

(6) Skilled Manpower available

Availability of training centre

2n. Field level operators are knowledgeable

2m. Field level operators are available

LEGEND:

Tourist Survey

In depth Interview

Observation

99

Figure 3.7C: Triangulation Mapping -6, 7, 8 and 9

(24). Tourist can enjoy fulfilling activities

2aa. Activities of interest are available

Mapping 7

Availability of food stalls (observation)

(12). Food courts are available

2s. Foods of choice are available

Mapping 8

Accommodation Diversity *(observation)*

(13). Tourist never suffers from scarcity of accommodation

2v. Easy to find accommodation

2w. Suitable accommodation

Mapping 9

(15). ATMs are easily available

2jj. No problem arranging cash

Mapping 6

LEGEND:

Tourist Survey

In depth Interview

Observation

Figure 3.7D: Triangulation Mapping - 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14

Mapping 11

(14). Use of Infrastructure during slack season

2hh. off season visit

Mapping 13

Only for foreign tourist

(16). forex facility

2kk. foreign currency conversion

Mapping10

Score on Public toilets *(observation)*

(17). Public toilets' availability

2x. Public toilets

Mapping 12

Score on hygiene in food stall *(observation)*

Score on Public toilets *(observation)*

2y. Overall Hygiene

(18). Hygiene of Local people

(21). No Stinking

Mapping14

Available souvenir stalls *(observation)*

2z. Souvenir of choice

LEGEND:

Tourist Survey

In depth Interview

Observation

101

3.4.1 Triangulated Variable Scores:

As mentioned in the section above, we determine the score for each raw variable that are mapped by taking the average of all the mapped variables so that the score becomes neutralised from any bias (that might creep in any of the sources). Let us take mapping 12 as shown in the Figure 3.7D for example. In this particular mapping we have five associated variables. 2 from tourist survey, 1 from in-depth interview, and another 2 from observation. Since we are assigning weight to each of the tourist survey variables, we are trying to keep them independent (without merging with anyone, *as of now*). Therefore, whenever needed we shall take the average of the variables scores (if we are mapping more than one variable from any of the other two sources). The variable score on the other hand, is the average of the scores assigned to the individual variable by the interviewees, or by the observer, as the case may be. In this particular mapping, therefore, we start with calculating the average of the variable scores of the two variables namely, "hygiene in food stalls" and "public toilet" (*both are measured through observation*). Thereafter we take the variable scores for "hygiene of local people" and "no stinking" measured by in-depth interview and take the average of both scores. Thus, we get 3 scores – average of hygiene from observation ($say, \bar{y}_{O\_hygiene}$), average of hygiene from in-depth interviews ($say, \bar{y}_{ID\_hygiene}$) and the average of variable "overall hygiene" from tourist survey ($say, \bar{y}_{TS\_hygiene}$). Now these 3 scores are merged (by taking mean) to arrive at the final score. Thus, we get a new triangulated tourist survey variable, say $\bar{x}_{Ti}$. This signifies the average score the triangulated (*denoted by T*) tourist survey variable for question no. *i* (*i* takes valuefrom *1 to 37*). In our example the related variable is from question number 25. Thus, we denote this triangulated variable score as $\bar{x}_{T25}$.

3.4.2 Assigning Weight to the Raw Variables:

We need to determine the weight for the variables measured in order to arrive at a comprehensive score for the convenience index. Tourists may not assign same importance or preferences on each of the variables we thought important. Therefore, it will be dangerous to assign equal weight for all. We decided to use the tourist survey data to determine the respective weight for these variables.

In order to assign weight, we have decided to take up a two-pronged strategy. In the first stage an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) is conducted to reduce the items into relevant factors. EFA is considered to be the best abductive method in theory generation (Haig, 2010), and it helps in determining if the variables roughly measure the factors discussed earlier. Secondly, we go on to conduct confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) which is a family of structural equation modelling (SEM) techniques.CFA is used to determine the model fit between the data structure

and the conceptualised model (which in this case has been established using EFA) (Mueller & Hancock, 2001). The squared multiple correlations or squared factor loadings generated from the CFA can be used as weight of the raw variables in order to arrive at a comprehensive score for each of the factors. This is done in the line of recommendations made by DiStefano, Zhu, & Mîndrilã (2009) in their detail paper where they have discussed multiple options of generating factor scores, and concluded that the CFA offers the better unbiased results in this regard. Devlieger, Mayer & Rosseel (2016) also justified using factor loading as the weights for calculating factor scores citing many references.

We shall use the following formula for calculating the destination-wise compressive score for each of the factors (arrived at through the above analysis).

$$\textbf{\textit{Comprehensive Score for Factor j}} = \frac{\sum(\bar{x}_{v_{ij}} \times L_{v_{ij}})}{\sum L_{v_{ij}}} - -\textbf{\textit{Equation 1}}$$

Where,
$\bar{x}_{v_{ij}}$ *= Triangulated score of variable i for factor j*
$L_{v_{ij}}$ *= Squared Factor Loading of variable i of factor j*
j= Number of Factors arrived at after CFA
i= Number of variables within Factor j

3.4.3 The Final Index:

As mentioned in the preceding Section the Comprehensive Score is determined for each Factor for each destination. These scores are loaded with respective weights as described above. Then average the factor scores is calculated to arrive at the destination-wise Final Comprehensive Factor Scores (FCFS). We use a simple formula for calculation of weighted average. According to the formula the factor score arrived at using Equation 1 above shall be multiplied by the total weight of that particular factor. The sum thus arrived for all the factors is divided by the overall total of the weight of all the factors. The formula is shown below.

$$\textbf{\textit{Final Comprehensive Factor Score (FCFS)}} = \frac{\sum_{j=1}^{n} CFS_j \times TL_j}{\sum_{j=1}^{n} TL_j} \quad \textbf{\textit{--- Equation 2}}$$

Where,
CFS$_j$= Comprehensive Factor Score for Factor j
TL$_j$= Total of squared factor loading within factor j

Next task is to merge the results of remaining 1 variable from tourist survey (*foreign exchange, which is triangulated but not assigned weight*) and supply side variables measured through the other two sources, in-depth Interview and observations which are *not mapped*

through triangulation. We have left with 14 variables *(1 from tourist survey, and 11 from in-depth interview, 2 from Observation)* which are not cross checked by any other source, all of which are measured through the in-depth interview. These variables are shown in Table 3.16. We shall simply find the average of these variables for each of the two sources.

#	Schedule A Statements #	Source: In-Depth Interview
		Table 3.16: Unmapped Variables
1	1	Safety of Business
2	3	Effects of Bandhs and strikes on the tourism business
3	7	Availability of unskilled manpower
4	10	Availability of government support to entrepreneurs
5	11	Support by Local authorities
6	20	Rain water harvesting
7	22	No use of plastic materials
8	23	Use of reusable utensils throughout
9	25	Nightlife is available
10	26	Regular screening of documentaries
11	27	Performance by local artists for tourists
	TSQ #	**Source: Tourists Survey**
12	37	Foreign exchange conversion (triangulated)
	Schedule B	**Source: Observation**
13		Rating on Room for Rest
14		Rating on Provision for Drinking Water

Thus, we get one more comprehensive score i.e., Final Comprehensive Score for In-depth Interview (FCSII). Since we are not going to assign any weight to these 14 variables, we need to be careful about treating the outliers. However, we will not be able to use the popular Inter Quartile Range (IQR) method for identifying the outliers as we do not have large sample size. This is because we need to conduct limited number of interviews at all the destinations. We also cannot treat all the interviews as one sample. The list of interviews conducted at different destinations is given in Table 4.14 in Chapter 4. As we see from the table that the highest number of interviews conducted in a single destination is Guwahati (19 interviews). Using other robust method for outlier detection like Mahalanobis Distance is also out of question as we are not dealing with multivariate outliers. Therefore, we have taken a very considered decision to use trimmed mean wherever possible. Due to small samples, we can use 10% trimmed mean. In doing so we shall be able to use only those destinations where at least 10 interviews are conducted. Under the circumstance trimmed mean will help us in minimising the undue biased generated by over enthusiastic or over pessimist interviewees. After calculating the trimmed

means (wherever needed) we merge the scores for all the 14 variables (as per the Table 3.16) for a destination using the Equation 3 as given below.

$$\text{Final Comprehensive Score for Unmapped Variables (FCUmV)} = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{14} \bar{x}_{UmV_i}}{14} - Equation\ 3$$

Where,

$\bar{x}_{UmV_i}$ = *Average of Unmapped Variables from 1 to 14 (as per Table 3.16)*

Finally, we arrive at the destination specific Tourism Convenience Index with the following calculation:

$$\textbf{\textit{Tourism Convenince Index}} = \frac{FCFS + FCUmV}{2} - -Equation\ 4$$

Where,

FCFS = *Final Comprehensive Factor Score*
FCUmV=*Final Comprehensive Score for In-depth Interview*

This simple equation (equation 4) gives us the Tourism Convenience Index for each of the 12 destinations.

We believe that armed with the methodology as discussed above we shall be able to generate a good and robust tourism convenience index.

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Chapter 4
DETERMINING SUPPLY SIDE CONVENIENCE

As a part of the work, field level observations and in-depth interviews with entrepreneurs, experts and activists are conducted to measure various variables. We have discussed the detail of such field level data collection in the Methodology Chapter. We collected such data from all 12 destinations. The details of the selected attractions are discussed in the section dealing with scope of the study in Chapter 2.

4.1 Observations in the Destinations:

We now present the detailed analysis of the data gathered through observations. The observations were carried out in the destinations at different points of time during the second half of 2019 and January, 2020. The destination wise observation period is shown in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1: Destination Wise Observation Period		
#	Destinations	Time Period
1	Sivasagar	08.07.19 **to** 11.07.19
2	Guwahati	19.08.19 **&** 21.08.19 **to** 02.09.19
3	Dibrugarh	03.09.19 **to**12.09.19
4	Tezpur	15.07.19 **to** 22.07.19
5	Majuli	30.09.19 **to** 04.10.19
6	Manas	31.10.19 **to** 03.11.19
7	Goalpara	04.11.19 **to** 09.11.19
8	Kaziranga	26.11.19 **to** 29.11.19
9	Haflong	07.01.20, 08.01.20 **&** 11.01.20 **to** 13.01.20
10	Sualkuchi	20.08.19
11	Umrangso	09.01.20
12	Panimur	10.01.20

Findings related to each of the destinations and its attractions are presented in the following sections. The observation scores derived as per the procedure described in Section 3.3.1.1 in the Methodology are shown in tables related to respective destinations, which are shown in the next section. The scores are derived for the individual attractions and later they are merged to have a comprehensive score for the entire destination on different variables.

We want to reiterate here that these scores are derived on the variables which are commonly available in a tourist destination, and add to the amenities available to the tourists. Detail discussion on this is offered in Chapter 3 (Methodology). The importance of some of the variables is not uniform across all destinations. For example, web presence is not important for

a very well known destination like Kaziranga (at least for regional tourists) but for others it plays a very important role in creating the level of convenience desired by the prospective tourists. Moreover, after triangulation with the weight generated by the tourists perceptions would take care of any unwanted attention give to a destination by way of such observations.

4.1.1 Sivasagar:

a) _Shiva Doul, BisnuDoul and Devi Doul on the Bank of Sivasagar Tank_**:** The site does not have any separate restrooms. It has only benches, chairs and umbrella sittings for the visitors. Drinking water facility is available but hygiene seems to be doubtful. There are no toilet facilities for the tourists. The food stalls near the temple offers tea, coffee, snacks, Indian and Chinese dishes. Souvenir shop could not be located in the vicinity of Shiva doul, Devi doul or Bisnu doul. However, nearby tourist information centre offers certain memento for sale, which is within walkable distance. Public transportation, private vehicles, hired vehicles are available with ease.

b) _Uttaran Museum_**:** The museum is built at the residence of Mr. Durlav Bora and it does not have any separate restroom for the visitors. One can take a seat at their guest room only. Visitors may use toilet service of owner's house. Food stalls that are available on the location offers Indian dishes with tea and snacks. Drinking water facility is available for the guests. The attraction is accessible through all modes of transportation without difficulty.

c) _Gola Ghar:_ We could not locate any sitting provision or toilet facilities for the visitors at the site. There is no provision for drinking water also. People who visit Talatal Ghar can have their food near Gola Ghar as both reside next to each other. Some souvenir items, handcrafted from wood and bamboo are there for sale as well. All transportation modes are available to the site.

d) _Talatal Ghar_**:** Chairs are available for rest in Talatal Ghar. There is, however, no separate room for the visitors to take rest. The toilets are constructed by the ASI (Archaeological Survey of India) and are somehow in usable condition. There is no provision for drinking water inside the Talatal Ghar campus. There are food stalls outside the monument. Only Indian dishes and tea, coffee and snacks are available in those stalls. However, souvenir items made of wood, bamboo are stored for sale. The items are imported from Guwahati and other places as per information gathered from local vendors. Public transportations, private and hired vehicles, all ply to the site.

e) _Tai Museum:_ The two storied museum does not have separate rest room for the visitors. The toilet facility was found to be in a poor condition. There is a food stall near the museum where Indian and Chinese dishes, tea and coffee are served. No souvenir shop could be located nearby. Tai Museum is not situated in a comfortable location though transportation

modes like e-rickshaws and tempo can carry the visitors to the museum. Public transportation is available from a little distance from the site.

f) *JoysagarTank, JoyDoul and, Devi Doul*: The Joy Doul is equipped with sitting arrangements. There are chairs at places for the visitors. The toilet facility around Joy Doul is in good condition. There is also drinking water facility.

But Devi Doul does not have the basic facilities like resting arrangements, and toilets. On the bank of Joysagar Tank, there is a popular food court named 'ZoonsKaya' where, all kinds of dishes including Continental dishes can be found. However, no souvenir shops were found during the survey period. The attractions are accessible through all kinds of transportation modes from the centre of the town, but private vehicles and hired tempos can reach the site comfortably than the public mode.

g) *Ghanashyam Mandir*: The attraction presently does not have even the bare minimum facilities for the tourists, be it restrooms, toilets, drinking water, or souvenir shops. However, certain steps have been initiated by ASI to create basis amenities around the attraction. The 'Zoonskaya' is the only food court nearby. Ghanashyam Mandir is accessible by private vehicles and hired tempos, e-rickshaws etc.

h) *Rang Ghar*: At present, only sitting arrangements in the form of chairs are available at the site. Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has been taking initiatives to upgrade the existing toilet facility. The present toilet has separate provisions for male and female. There is a renowned food stall named as, 'Maar Akhol' situated near to the monument, where ethnic Assamese food items are available for the visitors. Tourists mostly use to visit the ethnic restaurant to have a taste of Assamese cuisine. Apart from it, restaurants offering Chinese and Indian dishes, tea and coffee are also there for the visitors. The attraction does not have provision of drinking water. No souvenir shops were encountered as well. Rang Ghar has comfortable accessibility.

i) *Gaurisagar Tank and the douls (Shiva doul, Devi doul, Bishnudoul):* Among the three douls; only Bishnu Doul is in a good condition and has some basic amenities for the tourists. At the site of BisnuDoul, there are toilet facilities for the visitors with separate provision for male and female.

The other two douls do not have sitting arrangements or any toilets for the tourists. There are small shops who offer tea, coffee and Indian dishes to the visitors. There were no drinking water facilities noticed in any of the sites during the visit. Souvenir shops were also absent there. From the viewpoint of accessibility, the area and the individual attractions are well connected through different transportation modes. But, garbage with stinks was located in the surrounding areas.

j) *Rudrasagar Tank and Shiva Doul***:** The Shiva Doul of Rudrasagar is maintained well in recent years. Sitting provision for the visitors was seen during our visit. No separate rooms are there for the people to take rest. However, there is toilet facility for the visitors with separate provisions for male and female. Drinking water facilities were found to be absent there, so was souvenir shop. 'Rudra Singa Ethnic Village and Restaurant' is the only decent eating joint standing next to the attraction. The restaurant offers all dishes except for continental dishes. The attractions are easily accessible by all kinds of transportation modes.

k) *Kareng Ghar (Gargaon)***:** Like the others, KarengGhar also has (only) sitting arrangements for the visitors. There is toilet facility (with separate provision for both the genders) but found to be not in a good condition. The site does not have any drinking water facility. There are some books available for sale on KarengGhar and on Ahom Dynasty in some nearby shops. The location of KarengGhar is a little away from the main road. One can get off the public transport and hire a tempo to reach KarengGhar. There are no food stalls nearby.

l) *Charaideo Maidams***:** At the site, resting arrangements for visitors are not so good. The section which is operated by State Directorate of Archaeology, Assam has sitting provisions in the form of chairs. The attraction does not have toilet or drinking water facilities for the visitors.

But, the other section, maintained by ASI has a large hall as the resting place without any sitting provisions or electricity connection inside the hall. Apart from it, the site does have some chairs along the road for the visitors to sit and take rest for some time. The protected site does have toilet facility with provisions for male and female visitors. The area is with some small food stalls where one can find tea, Indian and some Chinese dishes. No souvenir shops were seen during the survey. All kinds of transportation modes are available to the attraction. One can get public transport, private as well as hired vehicle for reaching the attraction.

4.1.2 Guwahati:

a) *Dighalipukhuri Park:* The Dighalipukhuri Park has a 'Prashanti Restaurant' in a two storied building. The ground floor is used as the ticket counter-cum-resting place for boating. The restaurant is well maintained with offerings like tea, coffee, snacks, Indian and Chinese dishes. Some other cafés are also available nearby. But, the toilet facility at the site is not good. Drinking water facility was not found. Stall selling any souvenir was also not seen in the vicinity. Residing among the hustles of city life, Dighalipukhuri Park is accessible by all modes of transport.

b) *Ugratara Devalaya***:** The site is a popular attraction for pilgrims. One can take rest in the hall which is well-equipped with chairs, lights and fans. The toilet facility of the site is also good and has separate provision for male and female. The place also has a water purifying machine ('Aqua Guard') and thus provides good drinking water facility. There is no souvenir

shop for the visitors in the vicinity. The nearby restaurants offer varieties of dishes. Apart from the amenities, the transportation facility leading to the attraction is consisted of all modes. It is situated at a walkable distance from the designated dropping point of city bus service.

c) *Sukresware Devalaya:* The courtyard of Sukresware Devalaya has a 'Yatri Niwas' for the devotees resting. There are chairs for the visitors as well. One can take rest and enjoy the beauty of Brahmaputra. During the survey, no drinking water facility was noticed but there was provision for washing hands. There is a public toilet nearby where the service is available on pay-and-use basis. It has separate provision for male and female users. The surroundings do have good number of food outlets where variety of dishes is available. The attraction is well connected.

d) *Kamakhya Temple:* The campus possesses well maintained rest rooms (also for the specially-abled persons). Management of garbage, and conditions of roads were found to be good. The toilet facility is also good, clean and adequate considering the number of visitors with separate provisions for male and female. There are arrangements of drinking water also. Nearby restaurants offer good choice of Indian and Chinese dishes. One can get tea, coffee and snacks over there also. But, the hygienic condition of the food courts was doubtful. Many shops were found outside the temple where wooden craftworks on Kamakhya Temple, Rhinoceros etc. are sold to the visitors. The site is connected through all modes but, one has to take a taxi from the dropping point of public bus transport.

e) *Navagraha Temple:* Interestingly, this temple has a 'Water ATM' where drinking water is available on payment of 'RupeeOne'. There was no separate restroom for the visitors but some sitting arrangements with structures like umbrella sitting / benches were noticed. The toilet facility at the attraction is horrible; where there was no running water facility and without any artificial lighting. But it has separate provision for male and female users. As the temple is situated at the top of a hill, there is no food court available. One has to move downhill to have something. No souvenir shops were noticed too. The road condition to this attraction is good and all transport modes are available. The temple is situated little away from the public bus stoppage.

f) *Srimanta Sankardeva Kalakshetra:* There is no designated 'restroom' for the visitors but, people can take rest as some arrangements like chairs, umbrella sittings are available at different locations. There is a children's park also. About the toilet facilities, renovations were going on in two locations during the survey. Eateries are available within the campus with Indian and Chinese dishes apart from provisions for like tea, coffee and snacks. Souvenir shops too are available within the campus. The site is at a comfortable location from the point of view of transportation, being within the heart of Guwahati city. The campus also possesses good parking place.

g) _State Zoo cum Botanical Garden_: The location of the State Zoo is at the heart of the city and thus all transportation modes are available. The zoo does not have a separate rest room but, there are chairs and umbrella sittings for the visitors. A hall was spotted just outside the boundary where visitors can take rest. There are some toilets (with separate provision for male and female) on pay-and-use basis. Drinking water facility was noticed during the survey. There is a souvenir shop '_Banashristi_' outside the zoo with handcrafted items available for sale.

Table 4.2 Overall Observation Ratings for SIVASAGAR

#	Attraction Type	Name	Provision for Rest Room			Provision for Public Toilet			Food			Drinking water	Souvenir Stalls	Transportation	Web Presence
			Yes/No	Rate	Overall Rate	Yes/No	Rate	Overall Rate	Availability	Hygiene	Diversity				
1	Monument	Shiva Doul	YES	3.3	3.3	NO	-	0	YES	4.1	7.5	YES	NO	10	10.000
2	Monument	Devi Doul	YES	3.3	3.3	NO	-	0	YES	4.1	7.5	YES	NO	10	8.235
3	Monument	Bisnu Doul	YES	3.3	3.3	NO	-	0	YES	4.1	7.5	YES	NO	10	8.824
4	Museum	Uttaran Museum	YES	5.8	5.8	YES	5.3	5.3	YES	2.9	5	YES	NO	10	5.294
5	Monument	Gola Ghar	NO	-	0	NO	-	0	YES	2.9	5	NO	YES	10	5.882
6	Monument	Talatal Ghar	YES	3.3	3.3	YES	6.7	6.7	YES	2.9	5	NO	YES	10	5.882
7	Museum	Tai Museum	NO	-	0	YES	4.7	4.7	YES	5.9	7.5	NO	NO	10	7.647
8	Monument	Joy Doul/ Bisnu Doul, Joysagar	YES	3.3	3.3	YES	6.7	6.7	YES	7.6	10	YES	NO	6	6.471
9	Monument	Devi Doul,Joysagar	NO	-	0	NO	-	0	YES	7.6	10	NO	NO	6	5.294
10	Monument	Ghanashyam Mandir	NO	-	0	NO	-	0	NO	-	-	NO	NO	6	9.412
11	Monument	Rang Ghar	YES	3.3	3.3	YES	6	6	YES	7.6	5	YES	NO	10	6.471
12	Monument	Bisnu Doul, Gaurisagar	YES	3.3	3.3	LOCKED	-	0	YES	2.9	5	NO	NO	10	7.059
13	Monument	Devi Doul, Gaurisagar	NO	-	0	NO	-	0	YES	2.9	5	NO	NO	10	7.647
14	Monument	Shiva Doul, Gaurisagar	NO	-	0	NO	-	0	YES	2.9	5	NO	NO	10	9.412
15	Monument	Shiva Doul, Rudrasagar	YES	3.3	3.3	NO	-	0	YES	7.6	7.5	NO	NO	10	8.235
16	Monument	Kareng Ghar, Gargaon	YES	3.3	3.3	YES	6	6	NO	-	-	NO	YES	10	7.059
17	Monument	Charaideo Maidam	YES	4.2	4.2	YES	6.7	6.7	YES	2.9	5	NO	NO	10	9.412
		Overall Destination Rating	6.471	3.609	2.335	4.118	6.014	2.476	8.824	4.593	6.500	3.529	1.765	9.294	7.543

h) *Shraddhanjali Kanan:* The site of *Shraddhanjali Kanan* does not have any separate provision for resting but, people can use the open space for taking rest. There are chairs as well for the visitors. Inside the park, there is an eatery where Indian and Chinese dishes apart from normal tea, coffee, and ice creams are served. The toilet facility (separate provision for male and female) inside the campus is well maintained. They were clean and looked hygienic during the survey. But the drinking water facility was not noticed. As the park is at the opposite side of the state zoo, one can buy souvenirs from the souvenir center, '*Banashristi*' which is just across the road. All modes of transportation are available as well.

i) *Northbrook Gate:* The gate is situated on the bank of mighty Brahmaputra River. All kinds of transportation modes are available from this location. The site has a restaurant inside, serving usual Indian, Chinese dishes beside tea, coffee and snacks. Also it is nearer to '*Jolpari*', a river cruise where sun set ride is arranged every afternoon. The Northbrook Gate does not have any drinking water facility or souvenir shop. It does have toilet facility with separate provisions for male and female, which is not in a very good condition. While considering the surroundings of the attraction, it has been maintained well so far. The site is clean as well.

j) *Basistha Ashram:* The entire environment around Basistha Ashram looked dirty and seemed to be unhygienic. The site is devoid of toilets but seen with drinking water facility at the entrance. There is a hall where people can take rest, but it seems that it is not enough for the number of pilgrims and visitors. There are some food stalls offering the usual items just outside the temple campus. Pilgrims can buy 'religious things', (which are imported) from the shops situated outside the campus. This attraction is well-connected through all modes of transportations.

k) *Science Museum, Khanapara (The Regional Science Centre):* The Regional Science Centre seemed to be well maintained. E-toilets are available in the campus. All toilets are clean and properly maintained. The indoor toilets have provision for specially-abled persons also beside separate facilities for male and female. Though there are no separate room for the visitors as 'Rest Room', sitting arrangements are noticed. There is a cafeteria inside the campus serving items like Indian and Chinese dishes, and some snacks. From transportation point of view, it is in a comfortable location. It is in a walkable distance from the city bus stop.

Table 4.3: Overall Observation Ratings for GUWAHATI

#	Attraction Type	Name	Provision for Rest Room			Provision for Public Toilet				Food		Drinking water	Souvenir Stalls	Transportation	Web Presence
			Yes/No	Rate	Overall Rate	Yes/No	Rate	Overall Rate	Availability	Hygiene	Diversity				
1	Artificial Park	Dighalipukhuri Park	YES	6.7	6.7	YES	6	6	YES	5.7	10	YES	NO	10	7.059
2	Religious	Ugratara Devalaya	YES	6.7	6.7	YES	6.7	6.7	YES	8.8	10	NO	NO	6	7.059
3	Religious	Shukresware Devalaya	YES	3.3	3.3	YES	4.7	4.7	NO	5.9	7.5	NO	NO	10	6.471
4	Religious	Kamakhya Mandir	YES	6.7	6.7	YES	8	8	YES	7.1	7.5	YES	YES	6	10.000
5	Religious	Navagraha Mandir	YES	1.7	1.7	YES	2.7	2.7	NO	-	-	YES	NO	6	7.647
6	Cultural	Srimanta Sankardeva Kalashetra	YES	3.3	3.3	UNDER CONSTRUCTION	-	0	YES	7.1	7.5	YES	YES	10	7.059
7	Zoo	State Zoo Cum Botanical Garden	YES	4.2	4.2	YES	5.3	5.3	YES	4.7	7.5	YES	YES	10	8.824
8	Artificial Park	Shraddhanjali Kanan	YES	3.3	3.3	YES	7.3	7.3	YES	8.2	7.5	NO	YES	10	5.882
9	Historical	Northbrook Gate	YES	3.3	3.3	YES	4	4	YES	5.9	7.5	NO	NO	10	5.882
10	Religious	Basistha Ashram	YES	0.8	0.8	NO	-	0	YES	3.1	7.5	YES	YES	10	8.824
11	Artificial Park	Science Museum, Khanapara	YES	3.3	3.3	YES	8	8	YES	4.7	5	YES	YES	10	8.235
12	Religious	Balaji Mandir	YES	3.3	3.3	YES	5.3	5.3	YES	4.2	5	YES	NO	10	7.647
13	Museum	Assam State Museum	YES	5	5	YES	4.7	4.7	YES	6.2	10	NO	NO	10	10.000
14	Memorial	Samadhi Kshetra	NO	-	0	YES	7.3	7.3	YES	5.3	7.5	YES	NO	10	6.471
15	Museum	Planetarium	NO	-	0	YES	6	6	YES	7.6	10	NO	YES	10	8.235
16	Religious	Doul Govinda	YES	3.3	3.3	YES	6	6	YES	1.8	5	YES	YES	6	7.059
17	Historical	Kanai Boroxi-Bua Rock	NO	-	0	NO	-	0	NO	-	-	YES	NO	6	4.706
18	Religious	Dirgheswari Devalaya	YES	1.7	1.7	YES	2.7	2.7	YES	2.4	7.5	NO	NO	6	5.294
13	Religious	Auniati Satra	NO	-	0	PRIVATELY HOLD	-	0	NO	-	-	YES	NO	6	4.118
20	Religious	Ashwaklanta Devalaya	YES	0.8	0.8	LOCKED	-	0	NO	-	-	YES	NO	6	6.471
21	Natural	Deepor Beel Bird Sanctuary	YES	4.2	4.2	YES	5.3	5.3	YES	3.5	5	YES	YES	6	8.824
22	Natural	Chandubi Lake	YES	7.5	7.5	YES	6.7	6.7	YES	5.9	5	NO	YES	3	8.824
		Overall Destination Rating	8.182	3.839	**3.141**	7.727	5.688	**4.395**	7.727	5.158	7.361	6.364	4.545	8.045	**7.299**

l) *PurvaTirupati Shri Balaji Temple:* Sitting arrangements are available in the temple complex. The site is well maintained with lighting facilities for evening hours. There are toilet facilities which were felt not up to the mark. Separate provisions for male and female are available. There are provisions for drinking water as well. The complex was seen to be clean and hygienic during our visit. Outside the complex there are some street food vendors offering Chinese dishes and some other options. However, no souvenir shops were seen to be present in and around the temple.

m) *Assam State Museum:* Outside the museum, the campus has a resting place for the visitors with sitting provision. Near to the resting place, there is a small shop that offers tea and snacks. There are many other food stalls including multi-cuisine restaurants just outside the campus. The toilet facility inside the museum is not so good but has separate provisions for male and female users. During the observation period, stinking smell was found; stains and broken particles noticed as well. Souvenirs are available in the Government run stall '*Purbanchal*', which is within a walking distance.

n) *Dr. Bhupen Hazarika Samadhi Kshetra:*

Within the campus no sitting arrangements were noticed but people can sit in the available clean open spaces. The toilet facility inside the campus is up to the mark and is accessible to specially-abled persons also. Toilets have separate provisions for male and female users. The entire environment is clean and seems to be hygienic. However, the bus stop nearby generate constant noise and fumes. Drinking water facility was also noticed. Food stall are available outside the campus in abundance. The location is full of traffic and it looks like the food stalls have compromised the hygiene factor. No souvenir shops were noticed in the vicinity. Transportation is very convenient.

o) *Planetarium:* The attraction receives so many visitors in a day for its shows that one has to be in queue to collect the tickets. However, there was no separate resting place for the visitors. Drinking water facility was also not seen during the observation. Visitors can use the toilet facility there, which is quite alright to use. Food and conveyance are very comfortable as the attraction falls in the heart of Guwahati city. No souvenir shop was seen.

p) *Doul Govinda Temple*: The environment of the temple was clean and hygienic during our visit, where frequent cleaning activities were observed too. At the entrance of the temple, there are some chairs for the outsiders to take rest in the shade of trees. The toilet facilities inside the campus is up to the mark and easily accessible for the visitors with separate provision for male and female. However, it does not have facility for the specially-abled persons. Drinking water facility was noticed during the survey. The food stalls outside the temple campus is not so good in-terms of quality and the available choices. In terms of accessibility, the attraction is

connected through all modes as it is situated by the side of the main road. If interested, one can purchase information brochures which are available at the ticket counter of the temple.

q) _Kanai-boroxi Buwa Rock_: The attraction site is located at a remote place. The site is deprived of any toilet facilities or resting room. However, provision for drinking water facility could be seen during our visit. No food stalls and souvenir shops were seen nearby. The site is not accessible by public transport. Only private and hired vehicles can reach it.

r) _Dirgheswari Devalaya_: For the visitors, the campus of the temple does not have any separate enclosure like rest room, but there are some sitting arrangements so that visitors can take rest for some time. However, there is toilet facility (with separate provision for both the sexes) for the visitors though not in a good condition. Availability of toilet facilities compared to the number of visitors is good. No drinking water facility was encountered but some arrangements for washing hands were noticed (improvised wash basins). The food outlets which are situated nearby (beside the hill) offers Indian, and Chinese dishes with limited options. No souvenir shop was seen nearby. From the viewpoint of accessibility, it is accessible through private and hired vehicles only. Public transportation services are not available to the attraction.

s) _Auniati Satra_: The surrounding of the site is not up to the mark. The toilets are not open for public in general. However, there are accommodation facilities for the devotees who want to stay there and experience the 'Satra Culture'. Drinking water facility is available at the site. Neither souvenir shops nor food outlets were encountered nearby. The location of the attraction is not accessible through public mode of transportation. Only hired vehicles and private vehicles can reach to the site.

t) _Ashwaklanta Temple_: The attraction site has only sitting arrangements for the visitors. It does not have any separate resting room for them. There were no food outlets seen next to the attraction and no shops for the tourists to collect souvenirs. The toilets were locked up and the doors were seen blocked by parked two wheelers. It shows that probably the toilets are never used. There were arrangements for drinking water near the temple but it did not seem to be hygienic. The site is near the river port of Ashwaklanta Ghat where ferries are available from the other side of Brahmaputra River connecting main Guwahati city. Private vehicles and hired vehicles can also reach the attraction.

u) _Deepor Beel_: Visitors can take rest at the resting place situated at the forest office. The toilet facility in the campus is good but not suitable to cater all kinds of tourists. The facility does have different provisions for male and female users. The number of toilets might not be enough to cater to the rush of the visitors during peak winter time. A souvenir shop '_Banashristi_' is available. The site has food outlets alongside the road. One can get Indian, Chinese and other options like tea and coffee in those outlets. However, during rush period the eateries may not be

enough to cater to the demand. To reach Deepor Beel, one has to take private or hired vehicle as public transportation is not available to the exact location.

v) *Chandubi Lake*: People visiting Chandubi can take rest in the Tourist Lodge maintained by Assam Tourism Developmental Corporation. Toilets at the eco camps are open to the visitors and possess clean but moderately good facilities. Drinking water facility was seen during our visit, but reliability of the same is doubtful. Even though we did not see any separate eatery the eco camps offer options like traditional dishes and some snacks to the guests. The accommodation management is capable of arranging suitable souvenir for the tourists. From the viewpoint of accessibility, the Lake can be reached only through hired vehicles as it is situated in a remote location.

We have assigned objective scores to each of the above attractions in Guwahati as per the procedure discussed in the Methodology Chapter. The attraction wise scores are converted into destination score under each of the measured variables. We have reproduced these scores in Table 4.3 above.

4.1.3 Dibrugarh:

a) *Jokai Botanical Garden:* Sitting arrangements for visitors are available but there is no separate enclosure as rest room. The toilet facility is available with separate provisions for male and female. The facility seemed to be in a good condition but could not verify as it was locked during our visit. It was also noticed that drinking water facility lacked proper filters and thus did not seem to be hygienic. There are no food stalls, but one NGO offers food on pre-order basis with limited options like traditional dishes. The same Self-Help Group sells different types of hand-woven products near the park. Public transportation is not available; only hired and private vehicles have access to this remote location.

b) *Mahatma Gandhi Khanikar Park*: Though a large number of people visit the site it does not have separate restroom for the visitors. There are only sitting provisions in terms of chairs. A food stall with Indian and Chinese dishes (limited options) is available. Apart from these two dishes, some snacks, tea, coffee and other cold beverages could be found. The toilet facility was felt to be inadequate to meet the demand of the visitors. Upkeep of the facility was also not so good. However, separate provisions for male and female are available. At most of the toilets stains were noticed though other basic features like lighting, running water etc. were available. The cleanliness around the toilets was also an issue that needed to be addressed. In the campus, there is drinking water facility. No souvenir shop was seen during the visit. Public transport facility is absent. One needs to walk for almost one kilometre to '*Thakurthan*' point and catch shared tempo running from Dibrugarh town and back.

c) *Jagannath Mandir*: It does not have any separate enclosure marked as rest room for the visitors. There is an office section just near to the entrance where people can take rest for a while in the chairs arranged there. Clean drinking water facility was there but, it seemed that the filtering machine needed replacement. Clean toilets are available with basic facilities like running water etc. It has separate provisions for male and female. One need to walk down to '*Thakurthan* point' to encounter food courts serving both Indian and Chinese dishes along with snacks and other beverages. Since this is a place of pilgrimage, nearby shops sell religious provisions only. Jagannath Mandir is accessible through hired and private vehicles only.

d) *Jalan Nagar Radha Krishna Mandir:* For the visitors there are no separate rooms like restroom. One can sit down for a while as there are a few sitting provisions. During the observation period, no toilets inside the campus were noticed. As the attraction is nearer to Assam Medical College, visitors can locate food stalls around the college that serve mostly Indian dishes. A limited menu of Chinese dishes and snacks with beverages like tea, coffee and soft drinks also can be found in those food stalls. But, the hygiene factor around those stalls was found to be a hiccup during our visit. No drinking water facility as well as souvenir shops were seen during the survey. The site is accessible through all modes of transportation.

e) *DTP Dyke:* The embankment is beautifully designed by the district administration. There are street lights beside the walkway and provision for sitting. No separate restrooms were seen to be present there. As the site is nearer to slum areas, stinking smells were felt. The walkway does not have any toilet. Drinking water facilities or any souvenir shops were also not seen. The food stalls around it offers only Indian food items and some snacks with beverages like tea, coffee and soft drinks. The hygiene factor of these food outlets were not beyond doubt. One has to walk towards the central market place to have clean, professional food services with variety. As the site is nearer to AT road all kinds of transportation modes are available.

f) *Oakland's Ghat:* Though boating rides are being organized by travel agents more often, the location is yet to develop. The road that leads to the location is also not in good condition. We could not locate any provision for rest for the visitors, no toilets too. There was neither any food stall nearby nor any souvenir shop. Drinking water facility was also not seen. As the attraction is at a remote place, public transportation is not available.

g) *Bogibeel:* Bogibeel does not have any specific infrastructural development as an attraction. Restroom or toilets were not noticed during our visit. Within walking distance some small food stalls were seen offering Indian dishes. There was no drinking water facility, and souvenir shops were also not seen in the vicinity. However, all modes of transportation are available to the spot.

h) *Tilinga Mandir***:** The infrastructure around the temple is good but may not be adequate considering the number of footfalls. No sitting arrangement was noticed for the

pilgrims. Toilet facilities were also not encountered. Drinking water and wash basins were available. Around the temple, there are some shops selling products related to rituals. Some stalls are also seen offering minimal food items like tea and snacks. All kinds of transportation modes are available to the temple. There is a small parking area. The campus looked clean, hygienic and devoid of any noticeable waste products.

i) *Digboi Oil Museum***:** Considering the facilities for visitors, it does not have any sitting arrangements for visitors. The toilets are inside the campus and are in good condition with separate provisions for male and female. Surfaces within the toilets are clean and seemed to be hygienic. The site does not have any food stalls nor drinking water facilities. As the site falls on an area where no public transportation has access, one has to get down and hire an auto to reach there. The parking area is big enough for four wheelers as well. The management has kept entire environment under organized supervision. The site falls within the most visited places by the tourists in Upper Assam.

j) *Digboi War Cemetery:* No separate rest room was seen during our visit apart from some cemented chairs where visitors may take rest for a while. There was neither drinking water facility nor any toilet in the vicinity. However, *Digboi Oil Museum which is* situated almost half an hour distance from the *Cemetery has* provision of toilets*.* The site is situated far from the town area and there was no food stall, or souvenir shop as well. The caretaker was available to help the visitors with the history of the cemetery, but there was no information desk or kiosks around the cemetery. Public transportation is not available to the attraction.

k) *Margherita Coal Museum:* The museum has been properly maintained by the 'North East Coal Fields'. For visitor's comfort, there is a park just beside the museum and benches were erected for the visitors to take rest. However, it does not have any rest room. Drinking water facility was not seen during our visit. Souvenir shops are also not available. The toilets around the campus were good and had separate provisions for male and female users. The food stalls nearby seemed to be unhygienic with dust and fumes. The food options were also limited to Indian dishes and tea, snacks only. As the railway station is nearby, public and other modes of transportation is available to the site.

l) *Ketetong Singpho Village*: The village has not yet developed to cater to the basic convenience for the tourists. There were no toilets encountered, nor any souvenir shops or drinking water facilities were noticed. As for food stalls, only 'Sinpho Eco Lodge' is there, which provides traditional Singpho meals to the visitors on prior order. As the village is at a remote place, only private and hired vehicles are available.

m) *Namphake Village:* Namphake village has bagged many awards for its cleanliness. Assam Tourism also acknowledges the village as the site for 'Best Rural Tourism' in the year 2016. Bamboo dustbins are seen all around the village signifying the villagers' passion for

cleanliness. Visitors can take rest at the Buddhist monastery. Toilets were seen to be there but were locked. Drinking water facility was also seen. Souvenir shops exhibiting traditional tools, cloths of Tai Phakials were seen during our survey. The only food stall situated at the locality offers Tai ethnic foods. However, it is not possible to reach the place by public transport. Only small private, hired vehicles can reach there.

n) *Tipamphake Village:* The visitors can take rest at the Tipamphake Monastery as there are no other such arrangments around the village. During our visit, no public toilets were encountered. There were no drinking water facilities too. The village does not have a food stall but different food stalls (albeit with limited options) are available in the nearby Jeypore town area. There were no souvenir shops seen in the vicinity. Regarding the transportation options, only small hired, private vehicles can access the village.

o) *Jeypore Rain Forest***:** There was no restroom for visitors in the area. One could take rest at the Forest Range Office which is situated at the entrance. No toilets were seen there for the visitors. There was no drinking water facility as well. Souvenir shops were also not available. However, there were some food stalls offering Indian and Chinese dishes beside tea and snacks to the visitors. It is felt that the attraction deserves better convenience for the tourists. All transportation modes are available to this location.

p) *Merbil Eco-Tourism Project:* Presently, the entire project is under-construction. Starting from restrooms to toilet facilities, the construction works were continuing in full speed during our visit. The project also plans to have accommodation facilities for visitors. However, as the site is situated in a remote place, only private, hired vehicles are available.

q) *Dibru-Saikhowa National Park***:** Our visit to the national park was through the entrance at Guijan Ghat. There is a Forest Beat Office where rest rooms were seen to be there but found to be locked. However, no toilets were seen. The entire region is heavily damaged by the last year's flood and hence no eateries were also encountered. The House Boat Service and Eco Camps were observed. People visiting the park can have souvenirs from the nearby villages, which are situated at the interior part of the park. As the park is situated at a remote location only hired, private vehicle has access to it. One has to get down at the centre and take vehicles like tempos to reach the entrance.

r) *Maguri Beel:* No basic amenities were observed at the site during our visit. There was an eco-camp, but was not functional at all due to the damage done by the last year's flood. Otherwise no drinking water, toilets, food stalls, souvenir shops were seen nearby. The wetland is situated at a very remote place, which can be reached only through hired or private vehicles.

The scores for each of the attractions as well as the comprehensive score for the destinations on different variables are shown in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4: Overall Observation Ratings for DIBRUGARH

#	Attraction Type	Name	Provision for Rest Room			Provision for Public Toilet			Food			Drinking water	Souvenir Stalls	Transportation	Web presence
			Yes/No	Rate	Overall Rate	Yes/No	Rate	Overall Rate	Availability	Hygiene	Diversity				
1	Natural	Jokai Botanical Garden	YES	3.3	3.3	LOCKED	-	0	YES	4.7	5	YES	YES	6	7.647
2	Artificial	Mahatma Gandhi Khanikar Park	YES	3.3	3.3	YES	6	6	YES	5.9	7.5	YES	NO	6	5.294
3	Temple	Shree Shree Jagannath Mandir	YES	4.2	4.2	YES	6	6	YES	2.9	7.5	YES	YES	6	7.059
4	Temple	Jalan Nagar Radha Krisna Mandir	YES	4.7	4.7	NO	-	0	YES	4.7	5	NO	NO	10	7.059
5	Natural	Dtp Dyke	YES	1.7	1.7	NO	-	0	YES	3.5	5	NO	NO	6	4.118
6	Natural	Oaklands Ghat	NO	-	0	NO	-	0	NO	-	-	NO	NO	6	0.588
7	Natural	Bogibeel	NO	-	0	NO	-	0	YES	5.9	7.5	NO	NO	10	7.059
8	Temple	Tilinga Mandir	NO	-	0	NO	-	0	YES	3.5	5	YES	YES	10	6.471
9	Historical	Digboi War Cemetery	YES	2.5	2.5	NO	-	0	NO	-	-	NO	NO	6	7.647
10	Museum	Digboi Oil Musuem	NO	-	0	YES	7.3	7.3	NO	-	-	NO	YES	6	8.235
11	Museum	Margherita Coal Museum	YES	3.3	3.3	YES	6.7	6.7	YES	2.4	5	NO	NO	10	5.882
12	Tribal Village	Ketetong Singpho Village	NO	-	0	NO	-	0	YES	8.8	2.5	NO	NO	6	5.882
13	Tribal Village	Namphake	YES	5.8	5.8	LOCKED	-	0	YES	6.5	2.5	YES	YES	6	7.059
14	Tribal Village	Tipamphake	YES	5.8	5.8	NO	-	0	YES	5.3	7.5	NO	NO	6	5.882
15	Natural	Jeypore	NO	-	0	NO	-	0	YES	5.9	7.5	NO	NO	10	6.471
16	Natural	Merbil Ecotourism Project	UNDE-CONSTRUCTION	-	0	UNDER CONSTRUCTION	-	0	-	-	-	UNDE-CONSTRUCTION	UNDE-CONSTRUCTION	6	5.882
17	Natural	Dibru Saikhowa	LOCKED	-	0	NO	-	0	NO	-	-	NO	YES	6	10.000
18	Natural	Maguri Beel	NO	-	0	NO	-	0	NO	-	-	NO	NO	6	7.647
		Overall Destination Rating	5.000	3.844	1.922	2.222	6.500	1.444	6.667	5.000	5.625	2.778	3.333	7.111	6.340

4.1.4. Tezpur:

a) _Agnigarh:_ The attraction does not have any specific restroom but open spaces, benches are there for the tourists to take rest. The area also does not have any specific toilet facilities. There is a food stall inside the campus serving tea, coffee and snacks. Drinking water facility was seen. Regarding souvenir shops, items are imported from other places and are mostly flower pots, decorated items in the forms of dolls, artificial flowers etc. Public transportation is not available to the site.

b) _Maa Bhairabi Mandir_**:** The attraction neither has any specific restroom nor any chairs for the visitors. The site has toilet facilities with separate provision for male and female, but they are not in good conditions. There are some food stalls available for the visitors but only tea, and snacks are available there. Drinking water facility and souvenirs stalls with imported products and religious items are available. The area can be accessed through private and hired vehicle only.

c) _Bamuni Hill:_ The site does not have any restrooms for the visitors but some chairs are available for the visitors. The site lacks toilet facility also. Food stalls serving tea and snacks were seen in the vicinity. Souvenir-shops were also absent. The site is along the route to Maa Bhairabi temple and does have to access to public transportation.

d) _Chitralekha Udyan (Cole Park):_ The attraction has structured building for the people to take rest. The attraction is well-equipped with a restaurant inside where tea, snacks and Chinese fast-foods are available. The available toilet facility (with separate provision for both the genders) seemed to be inadequate for the visitors. Souvenir shop was not noticed. Public, private and hired vehicles have good access to the park.

e) _Da-Parbatiya Doorframe:_ It is located in a remote area, as only private (tempo, e-rickshaw) and hired vehicles ply from Tezpur town. There was no drinking water facility. But toilet facility is there, but was seen in neglected condition during our survey. Some open air chairs are there for the visitors to take rest. No souvenir shops were seen around it.

f) _Ouguri Hill:_ There is a circular resting place underneath a tree. The site has its toilet facility but not in a good condition. No separate division for male and female was seen there. There is drinking water facility for the visitors. The site does not have any food stalls or souvenir shops. Public transports do not reach the site.

g) _District Museum/Dack Bungalow_**:** The visitors can take rest at the office-room which is beside the museum. The visitors can also gather information there. Toilet facility is not attached with the Museum. Food stalls are also not available at the site. Since the museum is situated at the heart of the town, restaurants are within a walking distance. The campus does not have any drinking water facility. Souvenir shops were also not seen within the campus. All types of transportation modes are available.

Table 4.5 Overall Observation Ratings for TEZPUR

#	Attraction Type	Name	Provision for Rest Room			Provision for Public Toilet			Food			Drinking water	Souvenir Stalls	Transportation	Web Presence
			Yes/No	Rate	Overall Rate	Yes/No	Rate	Overall Rate	Availability	Hygiene	Diversity				
1	Artificial	Agnigarh	YES	3.3	3.3	NO	-	0	YES	4.7	0.25	YES	YES	6	9.412
2	Religious	MaaBhairabi Mandir	NO	-	0	YES	4.7	4.7	YES	2.4	5	YES	YES	6	7.059
3	Ancient Ruins	Bamuni Hill	YES	3.3	3.3	YES	2	2	YES	2.9	5	YES	NO	6	8.235
4	Artificial	Chitralekha Park	YES	5.8	5.8	YES	6	6	YES	4.1	7.5	YES	NO	10	8.235
5	Ancient Ruins	Da-Parbatia	YES	3.3	3.3	NO	-	0	NO	-	-	NO	NO	6	7.647
6	Artificial	Ouguri Hill	YES	3.3	3.3	YES	4	4	NO	-	-	YES	NO	6	4.706
7	Museum	District Museum	YES	5.8	5.8	NO	-	0	YES	4.7	7.5	NO	NO	10	4.118
8	Museum	Poki (Jyoti Bharoti)	YES	5.8	5.8	YES	5.3	5.3	YES	5.35	7.5	NO	NO	10	5.294
9	Religious	Mahabhairab Mandir	NO	-	0	YES	7.3	7.3	YES	4.7	7.5	YES	YES	10	7.647
10	Artificial	Padum Pukhuri	YES	3.3	3.3	YES	6	6	YES	2.9	7.5	YES	NO	10	5.882
11	Natural	Nameri	NO	-	0	NO	-	0	YES	7.6	7.5	NO	YES	6	10.000
12	Natural	Bhalukpong	YES	1.7	1.7	NO	-	0	YES	5.3	7.5	NO	YES	10	10.000
	Overall Destination Rating		7.500	3.956	**2.967**	5.833	5.043	**2.942**	8.333	4.465	6.275	5.833	4.167	8.000	7.353

h) *Poki/JyotiBharati:* At the site, people can take rest in the office room. Unisex toilet facility is available there. Since this is in the heart of the town, food and transportation are not a problem at all. However, there is no drinking water facility within the campus. Souvenir shops are available just outside.

i) *Mahabhairab Mandir:* The site does not have any separate restroom for the visitors. Toilet facilities are there for both male and female. The condition of the facilities was found to be good compared to other places. Food and transportation are no problem as this too resides in the heart of Tezpur town. Though water for washing was available, drinking water facility and souvenir shops were not noticed.

j) *Padum Pukhuri:* For the visitors, the site has the provision of garden chairs. There is no separate restroom for the people. Toilet facility with both male and female visitors is available but, it is devoid of basic amenities like electricity and running water. There are some food stalls nearby who provide Indian and Chinese dishes beside tea and snacks. Drinking water facility was seen, but souvenir shop could not be located within the vicinity. All modes of transport are available.

k) *Nameri National Park:* In general, Nameri National Park does not have any specific restrooms for the visitors. The area lacks public toilets for the visitors. Public transports are available till the main entrance of the park. The park has food stalls, restaurants inside the eco camps, lodges and home-stays. But continental dishes are really hard to find in these arrangements. Public drinking water facilities were not seen there. However, souvenir shops selling hand-woven cloths are maintained by local villagers.

l) *Bhalukpong:* As the site itself is a mini destination, public facilities for tourists are hardly available. Government run tourist lodge offers food and resting place. Food stalls are available elsewhere also. As such no public toilets are available. At some outlets, souvenirs can be purchased by the tourists as well. All modes of transport are available.

4.1.5 Majuli:

a) *Dhapak Gaon (A Mishing Village):* From the observation at the village, it is clear that for tourist's convenience, it does not have basic amenities. No restrooms, no public toilets, no drinking water facilities were seen. Even the village roads are in bad condition because of recent flood. Only souvenirs were available as every household weaves cloths as their source of livelihood. As the village is at an interior part, one has to take private or hired vehicle from Kamalabari Centre to reach the Satra.

b) *Salmora Pottery Village:* Basic amenities for the tourists could not be seen in the village. It does not have separate restrooms or sitting provisions. It does not have public toilets or drinking water facilities available for visitors. Food stalls are also not available. As the village

is situated at the riverine area, only small private, hired vehicle can reach there. Tourists can buy pottery items as souvenirs.

c) *Dakhinpat Satra:* There is a building in the campus of the Satra where people can take rest for a while. However, the building does not have any signage to suggest so. The toilets in the campus were seen to be in good condition and with different provisions for male and female. Drinking water facilities were also seen at the site. But food stalls were not noticed during our visit. The Satra is situated in a place where public mode of transportation is not available.

d) *Samaguri Satra:* From observations at the attraction site, it was noted that toilet facility and food stalls were present for the visitors. However, it was felt that the toilet facility was not in a very good condition. No separate provision for male and female was observed as well. The site has street food vendors and other food stalls offering different options. No separate restrooms were seen to be there. No drinking water facility was also noticed during our visit. People can buy masks as souvenirs from the craftsperson nearby. To reach there only private, hired vehicles are available.

e) *Bengena-ati Satra:* There is no restroom or sitting arrangements available for visitors. There is a toilet but apart from having four walls, it does not have any other amenities. Food stalls and street food vendors offering Indian dishes and snacks items could be found nearby. Drinking water facility was seen during the survey. However, no souvenir shops were seen. The site can be reached only through private and hired vehicles.

f) *Uttar Kamalabari Satra:* The attraction site has a separate accommodation unit along with comfortable resting arrangements for visitors. But, these are earmarked specially for the devotees. Toilet facility (with separate provision for male and female users) at the site was seen and was in good condition. Food stalls at the site of Uttar Kamalabari Satra are good in condition and provides only traditional cuisines. But, during the survey we did not encounter any souvenir shops there. Regarding transportation availability, one has to get down at the centre of Garmur and take private, hired vehicles to reach the location.

g) *Garmur Satra:* The Satra does not have any restroom as such, nor does it have any sitting arrangements for the visitors. The toilet facilities around the campus can be termed as good but not up to the mark. We could not notice separate provision for male and female toilets. Drinking water facility was seen there. Food stalls around the area provides food options except for continental dishes. No souvenir shops were observed during the time of visit. As the Satra is situated nearer to Garmur centre, it is accessible by all kinds of transportation means.

Table 4.6 Overall Observation Ratings for MAJULI

#	Attraction Type	Name	Provision for Rest Room			Provision for Public Toilet			Food			Drinking water	Souvenir Stalls	Transportation	Web Presence
			Yes/No	Rate	Overall Rate	Yes/No	Rate	Overall Rate	Availability	Hygiene	Diversity				
1	Mishing Village	Dhapak Gaon	NO	-	0	NO	-	0	NO	-	-	NO	YES	6	2.941
2	Craft Village	Salmora	NO	-	0	NO	-	0	NO	-	-	NO	YES	6	7.647
3	Religious	Dakhinpat Satra	YES	6.7	6.7	YES	5.3	5.3	CLOSED	-	-	YES	NO	6	8.235
4	Religious Craft	Samaguri Satra	NO	-	0	YES	1.3	1.3	YES	4.3	7.5	NO	YES	6	8.824
5	Religious	Bengena-Ati Satra	NO	-	0	YES	1.3	1.3	YES	4.3	5	YES	NO	6	8.235
6	Religious	Uttar Kamalabari Satra	YES	5.8	5.8	YES	4	4	YES	4.1	2.5	YES	NO	6	10.000
7	Religious	Garmur Satra	NO	-	0	YES	5.3	5.3	YES	5.1	7.5	YES	NO	10	8.824
8	Religious	NotunKamalabari Satra	YES	6.7	6.7	YES	4.7	4.7	YES	4.1	5	YES	YES	10	7.059
9	Religious	Auniati Satra	NO	-	0	NO	-	0	YES	4.1	7.5	YES	YES	6	8.824
10	Natural	Chakoli Beel	NO	-	0	NO	-	0	YES	4.1	7.5	YES	NO	6	1.176
	Overall Destination Rating		3.000	6.400	**1.920**	6.000	3.650	**2.190**	7.000	4.293	6.071	7.000	5.000	6.800	7.176

Table 4.7 Overall Observation Ratings for MANAS

#	Attraction Type	Name	Provision for Rest Room			Provision for Public Toilet			Food			Drinking water	Souvenir Stalls	Transportation	Web Presence
			Yes/No	Rate	Overall Rate	Yes/No	Rate	Overall Rate	Availability	Hygiene	Diversity				
1	National Park	Bansbari Range	(Under Construction)	-	0	(Under Construction)	-	0	YES	7.6	7.5	NO	YES	10	7.647
2	National Park	Bhunyapara Range	(Under Construction)	-	0	(Under Construction)	-	0	NO	-	-	NO	NO	3	4.118
3	National Park	Panbari Range	(Under Construction)	-	0	(Under Construction)	-	0	NO	-	-	NO	NO	3	5.294
	Overall Destination Rating		0	0	**0.000**	0	0	**0.000**	3.333	7.600	7.500	0.000	3.333	5.333	5.686

h) *Natun Kamalabari Satra*: Visitors can take rest in the Satra guest house, which is situated within the campus. Drinking water and toilet facilities are available within the guest house. There is a food stall situated beside the guest house offering Indian dishes and some snacks with tea and coffee. The site has a souvenir shop where visitors can get locally produced items. As the attraction site is near the Kamalabari Ghat area, all kinds of transportation modes are available to the location.

i) *Auniaati Satra***:** The site does not have any rest room as such. No public toilets for visitors were also seen there. For food stalls, they offer only traditional cuisines, Chinese dishes and snacks with tea/coffee for the visitors. Drinking water arrangements were seen. Souvenir shops by the roads are also available where local handicrafts can be purchased by the tourists. As the attraction is in an interior location, it is not easily accessible by public vehicle.

j) *Chakoli Beel:* The location is not very convenient for the tourists as there are no restrooms or sitting arrangements. No toilet facilities could be seen. The food stalls near the wetland offer only Indian and Chinese dishes with very limited options. One can find tea, coffee with snacks there as well. No souvenir shops were there. The wetland can be reached through private and hired vehicle only.

The scores assigned in 10-point scale on various parameters discussed above is shown in Table 4.6 above.

4.1.6 Manas:

a) *Bansbari Range:* The central range of the National Park is the Bansbari range. Many business units have been introduced in the area as it receives highest footfalls compared to other ranges. But separate restroom was not seen in the vicinity. However, construction works were going on for building toilets and restrooms at the time of our visit. Public drinking water facility was also not seen. There are number of food stalls around the range offering Indian and Chinese dishes apart from other snacks. There were some souvenir stalls for the tourists as well. To reach the range, all modes of transportation are available but public transport is very limited in numbers.

b) *Bhunyapara Range:* The eastern range of the National Park is the Bhunyapara range. The range has not developed yet to provide better convenience for the tourists. No rest rooms, public toilets, or eateries were seen. But, construction of restrooms and toilets were going on during our survey period. The range is not accessible through public mode of transportation. Only small private, hired vehicle can reach the location.

c) *Panbari Range:* The western range of the national park is the Panbari range. The range has been opened to tourists only recently for sightseeing. However, no amenities were observed there for tourist's service. But, construction of restroom, toilets and accommodation

units were going on near the forest gate at the time of our visit. The range is also at a remote area; and only small private, hired vehicleshave access to the site.

The detail quantification is shown in Table 4.7 above.

Even if it is seen that public toilets in the attraction for use of tourists are scarce it must be mentioned that the nearby accommodation units like resorts, guest houses and homestays have such amenities to be used by the tourists. Unfortunately, we cannot use these in the index as we only considering *public amenities* available *along with* the attractions.

4.1.7 Goalpara:

a) *Sri Surya Pahar:* The location only has sitting provision in-terms of benches, and chairs. We saw toilet facilities in the location where different provision for male and female were available. The toilets are not in a very good condition. No drinking water facility or souvenir shops were observed at the site. The food stall at the site seemed to be clean but not up to the mark. Limited options from Indian and Chinese dishes along with tea/coffee and some snacks are available in these stalls. Only private and hired vehicles can reach the site as it is located in a remote area.

b) *Jain Mandir at Sri Surya Pahar:* The temple also does not have any separate rest room for the visitors. Some sitting arrangements were noticed during our visit. The toilet facility at the campus is good in condition and has different provisions for male and female. The site does have drinking water facility but no souvenir shops for the visitors were seen. People can get food at the only food stall that serves for Sri Surya Pahar also. The site is accessible through private and hired vehicles only.

c) *Museum at Sri Surya Pahar:* No restrooms or sitting arrangements were noticed during our visit to the museum. It does have toilet facilities for the visitors with separate provisions for male and female users. There was proper drinking water facility at the site as well. The food stalls at the site offer only Indian dishes along with limited options on Chinese dishes and some snacks with tea/coffee. It does not have a souvenir shop. Only private, hired vehicles can reach the site.

d) *Rangchapara Village:* The visitors are welcome to use the community room of village headman to take rest for a while. However, the room does not have any attached toilet facilities. The village does have community toilets and it is very well maintained by the authority. Surfaces are clean and 24*7 water facility with electricity connection is available there. Both male and female have separate provisions as well. There are some food stalls where only tea with snacks could be found. It was told that Garo ethnic food items were also available on prior order basis. Drinking water facility was not seen during our visit. People visiting the village can buy handicrafts as souvenir items. Public transportation is not available to the village.

e) *Turkeswari Mandir:* The Temple is situated by the side of National Highways 37 at Tukura. During the festive season of Durga Puja, the site becomes heavily crowded.

The site does not have any resting arrangements for the visitors. The toilets situated at the site are good but it is not enough to meet the demands from a large crowd. No drinking water facilities were seen there. Souvenir shops were also not noticed in the vicinity. There are some food stalls on the spot that provide very limited options on Indian dishes and snacks with tea. The site is well connected with all kinds of transportation means i.e. public, private or any kind of hired vehicles. The site has a good parking area also.

f) _Dadan Than:_ During the survey period, no basic amenities were seen there. The site has a toilet but, it was locked during the time of survey. Apart from it no other amenities were noticed. The site is accessible by all kinds of transportation modes.

g) _Nandeswar Peeth:_ The site has a separate restroom for the visitors situated at the downhill. However, there was no further amenities attached to it. No other facilities like toilets, drinking water, souvenir shops, food stalls were observed at the site. Only hired and private vehicles can reach the attraction.

h) _Hulukanda Pahar:_ Though the location provides amazing experience to the visitors, it lacks even the basic amenities. We could not notice any resting place, toilets, drinking water or souvenir shops. As the location is away from town, it is accessible only by hired/private vehicles.

i) _Urpad Beel:_ The site does not have basic amenities for the travellers. It is devoid of restrooms, toilet facility, drinking water facility, eatery or any souvenir shop, at least during our visit. As the location is away from main road only hired, private vehicles can reach the site.

j) _Pancharatna Shiva Than:_ Even though the site is a protected monument, it lacks the basic minimum convenience for the visitors. The site is accessible only by private and hired vehicle.

k) _Peer MajharSarif:_ The attraction is situated on the main road, and thus is accessible through all modes of travel. The site does not have any resting provisions for visitors. Public toilets were not noticed during our visit. Souvenir shops and eateries were also not seen. Drinking water facility is available at the site

l) _MaaShyama Kali Mandir:_ For the visitors, there is a rest room with tiled surfaces, lights and fans. The toilet facility at the place is well maintained with running water facility and electricity. There were separate provisions for male and female users as well. Drinking water facility and souvenir shops were seen too. But, the food stalls around the site are not very hygienic and limited food options were seen to be available. People can find only Indian dishes with some snacks and tea. All kinds of transportation modes are available to reach the attraction.

m) _Shyamarai Satra:_ At the site, no amenities were encountered during the visit. There was no resting place, toilets, or drinking water facility for the visitors. As expected there was no food stall or any souvenir shop in the vicinity. Even as the attraction is situated at interior area, public transportation is also available.

n) _Boguwan Satra:_ The Satra is situated in a remote village. The site does not have any resting arrangements for the visitors. The toilet facility at the site is in un-used condition. No

drinking water facility or any kind of souvenir shops were observed as well. To reach the site, only private vehicles can be used.

The detail parameter wise scores of respective attractions and that of the destination are offered in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8 Overall Observation Ratings for GOALPARA

#	Attraction Type	Name	Provision for Rest Room			Provision for Public Toilet			Food			Drinking water	Souvenir Stalls	Transportation	Web Presence
			Yes/No	Rate	Overall Rate	Yes/No	Rate	Overall Rate	Availability	Hygiene	Diversity				
1	Ruins	Sri Surya Pahar	YES	-	0	YES	7.3	7.3	YES	2.4	7.5	YES	NO	6	9.412
2	Religious	Jain Mandir Sri Surya Pahar	YES	5.8	5.8	YES	7.3	7.3	YES	5.3	2.5	NO	YES	6	5.294
3	Museum	Museum -Sri Surya Pahar	NO	-	0	YES	5.3	5.3	YES	4.1	5	NO	NO	6	5.294
4	Village	Rangchaipara Village	YES	-	0	LOCKED	-	0	NO	-	-	NO	NO	6	7.059
5	Religious	Turkeswari Mandir	NO	2.5	2.5	NO	-	0	NO	-	-	NO	NO	10	8.235
6	Ruins + Temple	Dadan Than	NO	-	0	NO	-	0	NO	-	-	NO	NO	10	4.706
7	Temple	Nandeshware Peth	YES	-	0	NO	-	0	NO	-	-	NO	NO	10	2.941
8	Natural + History	Hulukunda Pahar	NO	-	0	NO	-	0	NO	-	-	NO	NO	6	2.353
9	Natural	Udpad Beel	NO	-	0	NO	-	0	NO	-	-	YES	NO	6	1.765
10	Temple	Pancharatna Shiva Than	NO	5	5	YES	5.3	5.3	YES	2.9	5	YES	YES	6	7.059
11	Religious	Mazar Sarif	NO	-	0	NO	-	0	NO	-	-	NO	NO	10	5.882
12	Religious	Maa Shyama Kali Mandir	YES	-	0	UN-USED	-	0	NO	-	-	NO	NO	10	4.706
13	Religious/Social	Shyamarai Satra	NO	-	0	YES	7.3	7.3	YES	2.4	7.5	YES	NO	10	4.706
14	Religious/Social	Boguan Satra	NO	5.8	5.8	YES	7.3	7.3	YES	5.3	2.5	NO	YES	3	2.353
	Overall Destination Rating		3.571	3.660	1.307	4.286	5.967	2.557	4.286	3.250	5.833	2.857	1.429	7.500	5.126

Table 4.9 Overall Observation Ratings for KAZIRANGA

#	Attraction Type	Name	Provision for Rest Room			Provision for Public Toilet			Food			Drinking water	Souvenir Stalls	Transportation	Web Presence
			Yes/No	Rate	Overall Rate	Yes/No	Rate	Overall Rate	Availability	Hygiene	Diversity				
1	National Park	Kohora	YES	3	3	YES	6	6	YES	7.6	10	NO	YES	10	10
2	National Park	Bagori	YES	3	3	YES	8	8	YES	8.8	10	YES	NO	10	10
3	National Park	Agoratoli	NO	-	0	Under Construction	-	0	YES	2.4	5	NO	NO	10	8.235
4	National Park	Burapahar	NO	-	0	Common	4	4	NO	-	-	NO	NO	10	7.647
5	Bio-Diversity Park	Orchid Park	YES	4.2	4.2	YES	8.7	8.7	YES	6.5	5	NO	YES	10	8.235
	Overall Destination Rating		6.000	3.400	2.040	6.000	6.675	5.340	8.000	6.325	7.500	2.000	4.000	10	8.823

4.1.8 Kaziranga:

a) _Kohora Range_: The central range of the national park is the Kohora range. It is the most popular location as chances of animal-sighting are much more in this range than the rest. However, this range does not have separate rest room for the tourists. At the Jeep Safari point, there are some benches where visitors can take rest and have snacks. There is a convention centre where meetings, and conferences are being organised from time to time. There is a pay-and-use toilet at the entrance to the park with separate provisions for male and female users. There is a large number restaurants and other food stalls available in Kohora offering Indian, Chinese and Continental meal plans. Public drinking water facility was not noticed. There are souvenir shops alongside roads from where tourists can buy their memoir. All kinds of vehicles are accessible to the range.

b) _Bagori Range:_ At a distance of 15kms from Kohora Main Market, the Bagori Range (Western Range) is located. This site also does not have any separate restrooms for the visitors. There are chairs for the people to take rest for a while. As a part of CSR project, Numaligarh Refinery Limited has built a pay-&-use toilet for the visitors. The toilet was in good condition at the time of our visit. It also has separate facilities for specially-abled persons. The food stalls alongside the range has a number of options for the visitors starting from traditional courses to continental courses, and they seemed to be hygienic. At the site, drinking water facility was seen. There is no souvenir shop in the vicinity. All kinds of transportation modes are available to this location.

c) _Agoratoli Range:_ The Eastern range of Kaziranga National Park is the Agoratoli range. However, the range is situated at a distance from the National Highway. No restroom was seen during our visit. Even sitting arrangements were also absent. During our visit the toilets were being constructed. Just nearer to the Forest Beat Office, the Prashanti Tourist lodge is situated, which was being renovated during our visit. At the spot, small food stalls offering Indian dishes with snacks were seen to be there only. No souvenir shops were observed as well.

d) _Kaziragna Orchid and Bio-Diversity Park:_ The site possesses a bamboo cottage with sitting arrangements. The toilets around the campus are in good condition and is adequate for the number of visitors. The Park has its own food stall that offers traditional food items only. But, one can go out and have some snacks at small tea stalls as well. For the visitors, there are rich souvenir shops exhibiting locally produced items. To reach the location, all kinds of transportation facilities are available and it does have a large parking site as well.

e) _Burapahar Range:_ The western most range of the National Park is Burapahar Range. Along with Kohora, Bagori and Agoratoli ranges Kaziranga National Park has another forest range as 'Burapahar Range' that falls under Nagaon district. The range is accessible through all mentioned transportation modes, viz. public, private and hired vehicles as the region is situated nearer to the NH 37. At a distance of 36kms from Kohora Main Market the range is located just nearby the NH37. The range is not as popular among tourists as the other three of the National

Park. The site has not flourished yet in terms of public amenities and other facilities.However, the toilets meant for the the staff can be sued by oiccasional visitors to the range. Tourists can have Jeep safari within this range also, however, one needs to pre arrange the same in contacts with the operators from the other ranges.

Elephant and Jeep safari are available for all the ranges within the National park where the tourists can have direct sightings of the animals. Elephant safari is conducted by the Assam Forest Department, while Jeep safari is oragnised by the local private operators with permission from the forst office. Jeep Safari is conducted in both the halfs of the day, but elephant safari is conducted only in the early morning.

The details of the scores for Kaziranga is shown in Table 4.9.

4.1.9 Haflong:

a) _Jatinga Watch Tower:_ There is a watch tower at the site for visitors to witness the rich stock of migratory birds. The tower has an information centre equipped with all information about Jatinga. The room is well-equipped with chairs and sofa but does not have other facilities like attached toilet or wash basins. At the bottom of the tower, there are toilet facilities with separate provision for male and female users. No food outlet was seen, but some small stalls offering Indian dishes like roti and tea & snacks were found operating. No public drinking water facility was seen. Souvenir shops were also not present. The road condition to Jatinga Watch Tower is very poor from Haflong town. People can go there by hiring tempo or any private car, butpublic transportation was not encountered.

b) _Jatinga Ethnic Village:_ The model village is not in a good condition as far as visitors' amenities are concerned. No specific restroom for the visitors were seen during the visit. There is an office room for the people to seek information. The toilet facility at the site is in poor condition even though it has separate provisions for male and female. There were neither food stalls nearby nor any drinking water facilities. During the survey, some garbage was found at the sitewith stinking smell all around. The village is far away from the Jatinga-Silchar road and at a remote location.

c) _Gallery Point_**:** The watch-tower is placed in a beautiful location but, the maintenance of the same is not up to the mark. Many beer bottles, plastic packages, glass bottles were encountered during the visit. The toilet situated beneath the tower was also locked. There is no separate restroom for the tourists or any public drinking water facility. There are, however, some sitting arrangements for the visitors. Souvenir shops were not seen. Some small food stalls were there, selling tea and snacks. The watch tower is accessible by hired three wheelers and other private vehicles only.

d) _Botanical Garden_**:** There are only sitting provisions at the site for the tourists. Toilet facility is there but not in excellent condition. The toilet does have separate provisions for male

and female users. There is an office room inside the park where one can get the information about the park and its species. As the garden is situated just beside the main road, good food courts are available near the site. Souvenir shops were not seen. Public drinking water facilities were absent. Accessibility to the site is excellent.

e) *Old Haflong Station***:** If we consider the present condition of this heritage railway station, it is slowly under the process of demolition. No move was seen to be taken to preserve the architectural beauty of the station and its legacy. Even the road that leads to this beautiful railway station is not in good condition. There are no facilities for the tourists at the site. Regarding food stalls, there are a few offering tea & snacks and Indian dishes only and are not in a good condition.

f) *Samparidisa Ecotourism Village***:** We have encountered zero plastics and garbage in that place. The village is located in a remote place which is accessible only by private vehicles and hired tempos. One can rest anywhere in the village, be it in the office room of the village committee or in any households. The local Dimasa people are hospitable and tourist-friendly. The toilet facility there is in 'ok' condition where running water is not available. But it does have separate provision for male and female users. The village does not have any food stalls. There was no drinking water facility encountered but Dimasa ethnic food is available at the site if tourists order for it beforehand.

g) *Maibang Stone House***:** We could not see any basic facility for the tourists in the site but one rest-house was being constructed for the visitors. Some stalls selling tea and snacks were seen. Toilets and public drinking water facility were not available. Souvenir shops were also absent in the region. As the site is nearer to NH 27, it is accessible by all kinds of transportation modes.

The scores assigned after the observation were shown in Table 4.10.

4.1.10 Sualkuchi:

Along with the attractions available within the Sualkuchi area we have decided to observe some nearby attractions in and around Hajo. The detail attraction- wise observation report is offered below.

a) *Silk Industry***:** During the visit, it was delightful to see people working with great enthusiasm. At the entrance gate to Sualkuchi there is a souvenir shop/craft museum where people can witness production of   different products made of 'Golden Silk' Muga. However, there is no separate room as 'Rest Room' for the people who visit Sualkuchi as weaving is done in one's own house. Visitors can avail weavers' hospitality for any need for rest. During the observation, we did not notice any public toilet in the vicinity. We were told about few shops having their own toilets but they were not visible from outside. To talk about the food stalls, this happens to be the main issue for any visitor to Sualkuchi. There are few food stalls where one

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can find something to eat. They serve only Indian dishes and some snacks with tea are also available. Drinking water is available at owner's house or in the shops. Overall, considering the increasing number of visitors to the village, these basic conveniences are not found to be enough. Even the region doesn't have any hotel or guest house to accommodate the visitors. One can stay at 'River Dingle Resort' that is situated at the foothill of Gondhmow. The 'River Dingle' resort is a rural tourism project of Assam Tourism Development Corporation Limited presently being run on lease. Private, hired as well public transportation services are seamlessly available to Sualkuchi from Guwahati and nearby urban areas.

b) *Sidhesware Devalaya***:** It is observed that the basic convenience for the visitors to the temple is not in good shape. There were drinking water arrangements but, it did not seem to be hygienic and functional at all. Even the toilet facility was seen to be in a bad condition. Running water facility was not found to be present. To take rest, people can sit on benches erected around the campus. A huge hall with facilities like fan, lights is available, but no sitting arrangements inside the hall wereseen. Few tea stalls were available near the temple. No souvenir stalls were seen nearby. Siddhesware Devalaya is situated in a remote place and as such only private or hired vehiclesdo ply. One can get off from public transport at the centre and take these hired vehicles. This temple is not yet very popular.

c) *Hayagriva Madhava Mandir*: The campus of the temple was found to be clean during our visit. However, as informed during rush (Hindu scared months like *Magha)* the campus becomes messy. It is informed that the temple committee keeps an eye on maintenance of campus hygiene. There was no separate room as rest room at the site but, some sitting arrangements were available for the visitors. The toilet facility at the attraction site is not so up-to-date. The number of available toilets is also not adequate. Drinking water facility was seen. Stalls selling only prayer items are noticed but no other souvenir was available for sale. One can feed the tortoise and the fish in the ancient pond at the end of the staircase, which is an added attraction for the visitors. Overall, one can form an impression of clean and well maintained big campus.

d) *Kedar Mandir*: The road that leads to Kedar Mandir is one way only. Public transportation is not available to this site. There are only sitting arrangements for the visitors. In the backyard, there is a big pond and just beside it toilets are erected for the visitors. Sadly, the condition of the toilets was seen to be pathetic. There were no running water facilities. The surroundings were clean enough. Local people seem to use the pond for their daily needs. Due to locational disadvantage, probably no shops except for one food stall offering Indian dishes like paratha, some sweets and tea was seen. During our visit, one juice corner was also observed. The parking area is quite good considering the flow of visitors. The temple is lesser known to the visitors and not many pilgrims were seen during the survey period.

e) *Bhimor Charia (Bowl of Bhima):* The site does not have any amenities around it. It neither had any sitting provision nor any food stalls for the visitors. Drinking water facility was also not noticed there. Pilgrims visiting Hayagriva Madhava temple normally visit this and the 'Kedar Mandir' together as they are quite adjacent. No public mode of transportation was available for reaching this site.

f) *Powa Mecca*: The surroundings were found to be clean and neat with regular intervals of cleaning. No wastages were encountered during the visit. Even though large number of people visit the place on a daily basis, no garbage and thrown plastics were seen. The office of the mosque committee had arrangements for people to take rest and an information counter was also seen. Though the toilets in the campus of the mosque were newly constructed considerable deterioration was noticed. It was noticed that considering the number of visitors, toilets and washrooms were not adequate A member from the management committee told us that they had been trying hard to get fund to create enough facilities at least for the rush seen during the festive season. It is informed that large number of visitors chose to spend the night in the campus with inadequate amenities. The drinking water facility at the site seemed to be hygienic. Apart from stalls selling religious stuffs, no food stalls were noticed. Public transportation was not available to Powa Mecca. Only hired and private vehicles from the base point near to the Forest Beat Office were available. However, one can walk to the mosque which takes almost an hour. There is a Forest IB nearer to the Forest Beat Office which was informed to be in an un-used condition for many years now.

The observations are shown objectively in Table 4.11.

4.1.11 Umrangso:

Thedestination is not permanently equipped with basic tourist amenities. However, during the festive times small huts and shops are erected for the visitors and for the local vendors. Apart from that the region is a large open space and no permanent structure was seen during our visit. Umrangso town itself cannot be rated as good for public health provisions. The market place is in much deteriorated condition and has only two public toilets, that too in a very bad condition. Food stalls having Indian, Chinese dishes, and tea, coffee & snacks in their menu list could be seen. No souvenir shops were also encountered during the survey. The Amur Falcon Site/Golf Course is not accessible through all the transportation modes but private car, hired tempo can get the tourists there.

4.1.12 Panimur:

Huge celebrations, loud music, fire-smokes are the normal sights on the bank of Kopili River. Picnic parties use to come there in groups as there are no restrictions on the total number of visitors. No one is allowed to have picnic near to the waterfall. There is a barricade to

separate the sites for sightseeing and for the picnic parties. There is a building in the form of watch tower for the visitors to take rest at the waterfall site. Only sitting arrangements are available there. The toilet facility is not good at all. There is no running water facility and the toilets were found to be in bad conditions. Some temporary vendors were seen running small shops with dishes like roti and other snacks. The most significant observation was made over excessive consumption and selling of alcoholic beverages. The newly constructed Forest Inspection Bungalow of Panimur has not been inaugurated yet. The accommodation unit has two general rooms with King sized beds and two VIP rooms. No drinking water facility was encountered in the site. There was no souvenir shop also. However, there is boating facility with a charge of Rs.50/- per person to cross the river to the other side and back. Most of all, the Panimur Waterfall has been turned into a popular picnic spot only.

The observation scores for these two small destinations are shown in Table 4.12.

Table 4.10 Overall Observation Ratings for HAFLONG

#	Attraction Type	Name	Provision for Rest Room			Provision for Public Toilet			Food			Drinking water	Souvenir Stalls	Transportation	Web presence
			Yes/No	Rate	Overall Rate	Yes/No	Rate	Overall Rate	Availability	Hygiene	Diversity				
1	Natural	Watch Tower	YES	5.8	5.8	YES	6	6	YES	2.9	5	NO	NO	10	10
2	Ethnic Village	Heritage Model Village	YES	4.2	4.2	YES	4.7	4.7	NO	-	-	NO	NO	6	7.059
3	Artificial	Watch Tower	NO	-	0	YES	LOCKED	-	YES	2.9	5	NO	NO	6	5.882
4	Artificial	Botanical Garden	YES	5	5	YES	6.7	6.7	YES	6.5	7.5	NO	NO	6	5.882
5	Heritage	Haflong Old Station	NO	-	0	NO	-	0	YES	1.2	5	NO	NO	6	10
6	Ecotourism	Samparidisa Eco Village	YES	5.8	5.8	YES	6	6	NO	-	-	YES	YES	6	7.059
7	Historical	Maibang Stone House	YES	3.3	3.3	NO	-	0	YES	1.2	5	NO	NO	10	10
	Overall Destination Rating		7.143	4.820	**3.443**	7.143	5.850	**3.900**	7.143	2.940	5.500	1.429	1.429	7.714	**7.983**

Table 4.11 Overall Observation Ratings for SUALKUCHI

#	Attraction Type	Name	Provision for Rest Room			Provision for Public Toilet			Food			Drinking water	Souvenir Stalls	Transportation	Web Presence
			Yes/No	Rate	Overall Rate	Yes/No	Rate	Overall Rate	Availability	Hygiene	Diversity				
1	Craft	Silk Industry	OWN HOUSEHOLD	-	0	NO	-	0	YES	3.5	5	YES	YES	10	8.824
2	Religious	Sidhesware Devalaya	YES	4.2	4.2	YES	2	2	NO	-	-	YES	NO	6	5.294
3	Religious	Hayagriva Madhava Mandir	YES	5	5	YES	4	4	YES	3.5	5	YES	YES	6	7.647
4	Religious	Kedar Mandir	YES	0.8	0.8	YES	2	2	YES	1.8	5	NO	NO	6	4.118
5	Historical	Bhimor Charia	NO	-	0	NO	-	0	NO	-	-	NO	NO	6	3.529
6	Religious	Powa Mecca	YES	4.1	4.1	YES	5.3	5.3	NO	-	-	YES	YES	6	8.235
	Overall Destination Rating		6.667	3.525	**2.350**	6.667	3.325	**2.217**	5.000	2.933	5.000	6.667	5.000	6.667	**6.275**

Table 4.12 Overall Observation Ratings for UMRAGSO and PANIMUR

#	Attraction Type	Name	Provision for Rest Room			Provision for Public Toilet			Food			Drinking water	Souvenir Stalls	Transportation	Web Presence
			Yes/No	Rate	Overall Rate	Yes/No	Rate	Overall Rate	Availability	Hygiene	Diversity				
1	Artificial	Golf Course (Umrangso)	YES	1.7	1.700	NO	-	0.000	NO	0.000	0.000	NO	NO	6	
	Overall Destination Rating		10.000	1.700	1.700	0.000		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	6.000	7.059
2	Natural Site	Waterfall (Panimur)	YES	3.3	3.300	YES	4	4.000	YES	1.800	2.500	NO	NO	6	
	Overall Destination Rating		10.000	3.300	3.300	10.000	4.000	4.000	10.000	1.800	2.500	0.000	0.000	6.000	7.647

4.1.13 Additional Observations:

As a part of the observations, we checked two other variables, which we thought important for calculating convenience index. We have tried to rate convenience of traveling. We also tried to ascertain availability of the training centres for needed human resources. We have arrived at the following table (Table 4.13). The table also includes comprehensive scores on web presence which are compiled from Tables 4.2 through 4.12. The details of scoring for the former two variables are discussed in Table 3.9 in the Methodology Chapter.

Table 4.13: Additional Observation on Destinations

#	Destinations	Convenience of Travelling	Training of Human Resource**	Web presence
1	Sivasagar	6.000	3.000	7.543
2	Guwahati	10.000	10.000	7.299
3	Dibrugarh	10.000	3.000	6.340
4	Tezpur	6.000*	6.000	7.353
5	Majuli	3.000	3.000	7.176
6	Manas	6.000	0	5.686
7	Goalpara	6.000	0	5.126
8	Kaziranga	6.000	0	9.118
9	Haflong	6.000	0	7.983
10	Sualkuchi	3.000	0	6.275
11	Umrangso	3.000	0	7.059
12	Panimur	3.000	0	7.647

Note:

In Tezpur, airport is also there but it does not have daily flights connecting major cities of India unlike Dibrugarh and Guwahati.

In Guwahati, we have identified **9(nine) institutes who have been offering diploma, degree and other certified courses in hospitality, tourism and hotel management courses. Among other destinations, Sivasagar, Dibrugarh, Majuli have **1(one)** institute each and Tezpur has **2(two)** institutes to offer such courses. In other 7 (seven) destinations, no training institutes related to hospitality, tourism and hotel management courses are present.*

4.2 Accommodation:

We have done extensive survey of the accommodation units in the destinations and arrived at consolidated table. The data are presented in Table 4.13A.

	Star					Non Star					
DESTINATION	Number of unit surveyed	Average tariff in Rupees (per day)	S.D. of av. tariff (in Rs)	Max. tariff (Rs) / Min. tariff (Rs)	Final Accommodation Score (A)	Number of unit surveyed	Average tariff in Rupees (per day)	S.D. of av. tariff (in Rs)	Max. tariff (Rs) / Min. tariff (Rs)	Final Accommodation Score (B)	Comprehensive Accommodation Score (Av. of A and B)
DIBRUGARH	2	3,299.08	2,101.90	7,499.00 / 990.00	1.902	32	1,728.38	1,872.14	10,000.00 / 200.00	3.523	2.713
SUALKUCHI	-	-	-	-	-	2	2,937.50	1,399.94	1,000.00 / 5,000.00	2.635	2.635
TEZPUR	5	4,147.93	2,409.67	10,000.00 / 950.00	2.180	37	3,822.57	5,313.35	34,000.00 / 200.00	10.000	6.090
SIVASAGAR	-	-	-	-		16	1,718.72	1,739.73	9,500.00 / 150.00	3.274	3.274
GOALPARA	-	-	-	-	-	7	816.33	498.58	2,200.00 / 150.00	0.938	0.938
GUWAHATI	14*	8,419.09	11,053.47	77,777.00 / 1,430.00	10.000	38*	3,689.57	2,636.25	18,000.00 / 450.00	4.963	7.481
HAFLONG	-	-	-	-		9	1,149.76	946.81	4,500.00 / 200.00	1.782	1.782
KAZIRANGA	2	12,205.00	7,044.90	24,780.00 / 5,500.00	6.374	42	3,594.85	2,822.33	17,943.00 / 200.00	5.312	5.843
MAJULI	-	-	-	-	-	12	1,580.14	890.92	3,200.00 / 100.00	1.677	1.677
MANAS	-	-	-	-	-	14	2,736.33	2,034.20	9,200.00 / 300.00	3.828	3.828
UMRANGSO	-	-	-	-	-	2	525.00	212.13	800.00 / 250.00	0.399	0.375
PANIMUR	-	-	-	--	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Table 4.13A: Calculation of Comprehensive Accommodation Score

Accommodation scores are calculated using the formula

$$\text{Accommodation score for destination } x = \frac{SD \text{ of destination } x}{Maximum\ SD\ (among\ 12\ destinations)} \times 10$$

* For Guwahati, the observation is done in selective but representative hotels only.

We now merge the Tables 4.2 through 4.13 and present the results in a consolidated manner in Table 4.13B, which is presented in the next page.

We offer a detail discussion on in-depth interview in the next section.

Table 4.13B: Comprehensive Scores of Variables Measured Through Field Observation

Variable/Destination	Provision for Rest Room			Provision for Public Toilet			Food			Drinking water	Souvenir Stalls	Transportation Within Destination	Web presence	Convenience of travelling	Training Centre
	Yes/No	Rate	Overall Rate	Yes/No	Rate	Overall Rate	Availability	Hygiene	Diversity						
Dibrugarh	5	3.844	1.922	2.222	6.5	1.444	6.667	5.000	5.625	2.778	3.333	7.111	6.340	10.000	3.000
Sualkuchi	6.667	3.525	2.350	6.667	3.325	2.217	5.000	2.933	5.000	6.667	5.000	6.667	6.275	3.000	0
Tezpur	7.5	3.956	2.967	5.833	5.043	2.942	8.333	4.465	6.275	5.833	4.167	8.000	7.353	6.000	6.000
Sivasagar	6.471	3.609	2.335	4.118	6.014	2.476	8.824	4.593	6.500	3.529	1.765	9.294	7.543	6.000	3.000
Goalpara	3.571	3.66	1.307	4.286	5.967	2.557	4.286	3.250	5.833	2.857	1.429	7.500	5.126	6.000	0
Guwahati	8.182	3.839	3.141	7.727	5.688	4.395	7.727	5.158	7.361	6.364	4.545	8.045	7.299	10.000	10.000
Haflong	7.143	4.82	3.443	7.143	5.85	3.900	7.143	2.940	5.5000	1.429	1.429	7.714	7.983	6.000	0
Kaziranga	7.5	3.4	2.550	7.5	7.567	5.675	10.000	6.325	7.50	2.500	5.000	10.000	9.118	6.000	0
Majuli	3	6.4	1.920	6	3.65	2.190	7.000	4.293	6.071	7.000	5.000	6.800	7.176	3.000	3.000
Manas	0	0	0	0	0	0	3.333	7.600	7.500	0.000	3.333	5.333	5.686	6.000	0
Umrangso	10	1.7	1.700	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	7.059	3.000	0
Panimur	10	3.3	3.300	10	4	4	10	1.8	2.5	0	0	6	7.647	3.000	0

4.3 In-depth Interviews:

As mentioned in Methodology we have conducted extensive in depth interviews among people who are aware of the tourism sector in the respective destinations. We have interviewed entrepreneurs engaged in tourism service (like accommodation units, food and beverage, tour operator, tour guide etc.), forest and tourism officials, local activists, local knowledgeable persons like village headman, naturalist etc. In total we have conducted 85 such interviews in all major destinations (*barring Umrangso and Panimur*).

The list of interviewees is reproduced in Table 4.14 below.

#	DESTINATION	NAME	EXPERTISE ON
	Table 4.14: Experts Contacted for In-Depth Interviews		
1	**TEZPUR** (**5** interviews)	MR. H.K. LAHKAR	Food Business
2		MR. CHETAN SARAF	Accommodation Business
3		MR. AMITAV DAS	Accommodation Business
4		MR. GEDA MILI	Accommodation Business
5		MR. SUSHIL NAGTHE	Tour Guide
6	**SIVASAGAR** (**11** interviews)	MR. MADHAV DAS	Tourism(Govt. Official)
7		MR. RAMEN HATIMURIA	Local Activist
8		MR. SAMIRANHATIMURIA	Tour Guide
9		MR. PRONABJYOTI BORA	Tourism Professional
10		MR. ANUP MOHAN	Tourism Professional
11		MR. RITURAJ CHANGMAI	Tourism Professional
12		MR. DURLOV BORA	Museum Owner
13		MR. MANASH KALITA	Tour Guide
14		MR. LALIT PHUKAN	Local Activist
15		MR. BIKASH DAS	Archaeological Survey of India (Govt. Official)
16		MR. LOHIT PHUKAN	Tai Museum Staff
17	**SUALKUCHI** (**2** interviews)	MR. SAYIDUL ISLAM	Accommodation Business
18		MR. MICHAEL KALITA	Handicrafts
19	**GUWAHATI** (**19** interviews)	MS. BONTI NEOG	Tourism (Govt. Official)
20		MS. PRARTHANA SAIKIA	Tourism Entreprenuer
21		MR. DEEPAK JALAN	Accommodation Business
22		MR. CHANDAN KAKATI	Local Activist
23		MR. HIMANGSHU BARUAH	Travel Agency
24		MR. AMULYA BORA	Local Activist
25		MR. APARUP SAIKIA	Tourism Entreprenuer
26		MR. ARIJIT PUR KAYASTHA	Tourism Entreprenuer
27		MS. JAHNABI PHUKAN	Tourism Entreprenuer
28		MR. BIDYARNAV BORA	Tourism (Govt. Official)
29		MR. HIRAN SAIKIA	Tourism (Govt. Official)
30		MR. PRABHAS SARMA	Tourism (Govt. Official)
31		MR. TAPAN KR. SARMA	Handicraft (Govt. Official)
32		MR. JAYANTA DEVA SARMA	Handicraft (Govt. Official)
33		MS. SUSHMITA HAZARIKA	Accommodation/ Travel agency
34		MR. PROMUD KALITA	Accommodation Business

#	DESTINATION	NAME	EXPERTISE ON
	Table 4.14: Experts Contacted for In-Depth Interviews		
35		MR. ADITYA NAR	Accommodation Business
36		MS. SHANTI DOLEY	Accommodation Business
37		MR. TRIDIB SARMA	Accommodation Business
38		MR. MANOJ JALAN	Entrepreneur
39		MS. BEAUTY BORUAH	Accommodation Business
40		MR. BIJAYA SAIKIA	Local Activist
41		MR. PRANJAL SAIKIA	Food Business
42		MR. JOYNAL ABEDIN	Accommodation Business
43		MR. MOHANDEEP GOGOI	Forest Service (Govt. Official)
44	**DIBRUGARH** (**13** interviews)	MR. DEEPAK DAS	Accommodation Business
45		MR. MAJELA SINGPHO	Accommodation Business
46		MS. SOBITA BISHO	Local Activist
47		MR. HEMANTA HANDIQUE	Handicrafts
48		MR. CHAWKEYPHUSSA	Local Activist
49		MR. SARAT CHANDA NEOG	Forest Service (Govt. Official)
50		MR. SATYAJIT CHETIA	Travel Agency
51		MR. HARENNA RAHA	Accommodation Business
52		MS. MAKON KALITA	Handicrafts
53		MR. PABITRA PAYENG	Accommodation Business
54	**MAJULI** (**7** interviews)	MR. HEM CHANDA GOSWAMI	Handicrafts
55		MR. BEDABRAT DUTTA	Accommodation Business
56		MR. INDUKALPA BHARALI	Accommodation Business
57		MR. DEEPMOINA DOWERAH	Accommodation Business
58		MR. KALEN BASUMATARY	Local Activist
59	**MANAS** (**4** interviews)	MR. ALOKESH DAS	Forest Service (Govt. Official)
60		MR. KAMESWARE BORO	Forest Service(Govt. Official)
61		MR. SUBHAS DAS	Tourism (Govt. Official)
62		MR. TAPANNATH	Local Activist
63		MR. ROVERTH JOHN MOMIN	Local Activist
64	**GOALPARA** (**5** interviews)	MR. TARUN CHANDA	Accommodation Business
65		MR. TAIJUL ISLAM	Local Activist
66		MR. ANGIKAR BORGOHAIN	District Transportation (Govt. Official)
67		MR. PARTH PRATIM HANDIQUE	Others
68		MR. KUSHAL CHANDRA BORUA	Tour Guide
69		MR. SANJAY SIL	Accommodation Business
70		MR. BIJOY BORUAH	Accommodation Business
71		MR. HRIDAYRANJAN DAS	Tourism (Govt. Official)
72	**KAZIRANGA** (**14** interviews)	MR. MANOJ GOGOI	Tour Guide
73		MR. ARICK AH	Accommodation Business
74		MR. AVICK DAS GUPTA	Accommodation Business
75		MR. JIGRASH PRASAD	Member (Kaziranga Development & Jeep Safari Association)
76		MR. DEBASISH GOPE	Accommodation Business
77		MR. PRITAM PRIYANKUSH BORA	Accommodation Business

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Table 4.14: Experts Contacted for In-Depth Interviews			
#	DESTINATION	NAME	EXPERTISE ON
78		MR. BIJU CHETRY	Tourism Professional
79		MR. PANKAJ GOGOI	Food Business
80		MR. PALASH SARMA	Accommodation Business
81		MR. DEBRAJ DEY	Accommodation Business
82		MR. AMIT KAR	Accommodation Business
83	**HAFLONG** (**5** interviews)	MR. B.B. HAGJER	Accommodation Business
84		MR. AJOY DIBRAGEDE	Local Activist
85		MR. DITHOJITPHONGLO	Tour Guide

We have selected the experts on the basis of our judgement regarding his/her involvement in the tourism sector either as an entrepreneur or as a facilitator. We have also taken a few interviews based on his/her expertise in destination specific knowledge. For example, we have talked to Mr Tapan Nath who is an activist, Boguwan Satra of Goalpara based on his expertise on the Satra.

4.3.1 Discussion:

We have calculated the scores for each destination as per the procedure discussed in Section 3.3.1.2. Following the laid down method we have calculated the scores against each of the variables for the individual expert interviewee. The detail of the interviews and justifications of allotting a particular score for a variable is discussed in Annexure 7. Table 4.15 shows the destination wise average of variable scores. The average is arrived at by dividing the total score by the number of interviewees in that particular destination. We have seen blank cells *(total of 3),* where all the interviewees have refused to offer their views due to various reasons. For example, for Manas and Goalpara, the interviewees are not sure if foreign exchange facilities are available, and hence they offer to opt out from that variable. If we offer some diagrammatic representations of the table, it will be easier for us to compare the status of the destinations.

#	Variable/Destination	Table 4.15: Destinations' Average Scores Derived from In-Depth Interviews									
		Sualkuchi	Guwahati	Dibrugarh	Majuli	Manas	Goalpara	Kaziranga	Haflong	Tezpur	Sivasagar
	n (10% trimmed n)→	*2 (Trim: 0)*	*19(Trim: 4)*	*13 (Trim:2)*	*7 (Trim: 0)*	*4 (Trim: 0)*	*5 (Trim: 0)*	*14 (Trim: 2)*	*5 (Trim: 0)*	*5 (Trim: 0)*	*11 (Trim:2)*
1	Business is safe	8.250	8.833	7.778	5.786	7.500	5.000	7.917	8.000	7.500	7.750
2	Tourists are safe	10.000	9.237	9.231	9.143	8.875	8.700	9.071	9.800	8.600	8.700
3	No effect of bandhs	9.000	5.300	3.682	3.714	4.000	4.400	2.958	2.400	5.800	1.889
4	Knowledgeable tour guides	7.000	5.000	4.231	5.714	4.250	2.500	5.571	5.100	2.250	5.000

#	Variable/Destination	Sualkuchi	Guwahati	Dibrugarh	Majuli	Manas	Goalpara	Kaziranga	Haflong	Tezpur	Sivasagar
	Table 4.15: Destinations' Average Scores Derived from In-Depth Interviews										
	n (10% trimmed n) →	2 (Trim: 0)	19(Trim: 4)	13 (Trim:2)	7 (Trim: 0)	4 (Trim: 0)	5 (Trim: 0)	14 (Trim: 2)	5 (Trim: 0)	5 (Trim: 0)	11 (Trim:2)
5	Travel agents' availability	5.500	7.342	4.727	4.400	6.000	1.000	4.769	2.200	4.750	7.500
6	Skilled manpower	10.000	6.368	5.167	6.500	4.000	6.200	6.071	5.000	1.800	2.300
	Unskilled manpower	10.000	7.843	7.545	10.000	8.000	8.600	6.333	7.000	9.000	9.375
8	Destination in internet	9.000	7.289	6.154	7.833	4.500	6.200	6.143	7.200	6.250	8.182
9	Online reviews are available	10.000	7.389	6.231	8.333	6.667	5.000	7.107	5.000	6.500	9.545
10	Govt. supports entrepreneurs	6.750	7.000	4.278	4.500	4.250	5.750	4.900	8.750	5.700	6.000
11	No harassment of tourism entrepreneurs	10.000	8.857	9.700	9.000	9.500	9.800	7.857	9.400	6.400	9.667
12	Food courts are available	3.500	6.842	5.231	3.786	4.500	5.600	7.500	3.800	6.600	7.364
13	No lack of accommodation	1.000	7.556	7.813	2.800	4.500	9.000	8.036	3.333	5.250	7.300
14	Profitable slack season	7.500	6.182	6.071	4.333	8.000	1.000	4.300	1.000	9.250	7.000
15	ATM accessibility	9.000	7.333	3.750	5.000	2.000	4.600	3.750	4.000	6.900	7.091
16	Foreign exchange facility	1.000	4.393	1.950	5.500	-	-	4.917	1.000	3.500	1.375
17	Public toilets	10.000	4.222	2.417	1.286	2.500	5.200	3.714	3.800	2.800	1.727
18	Local people hygienic	9.250	6.806	6.154	5.429	6.250	6.700	6.857	7.000	6.800	3.182
19	Mobile connectivity	10.000	7.737	7.423	5.571	4.500	5.600	7.000	6.000	7.800	7.455
20	Rain water harvesting	1.000	1.833	2.286	1.000	5.000	-	1.700	1.000	4.000	2.143
21	No stinking waste products	5.500	4.526	6.083	9.000	8.250	6.000	7.714	8.600	7.800	1.909
22	No use of plastics	8.000	3.786	4.818	4.857	7.500	6.800	6.542	7.800	2.200	2.287
23	Use of reusable utensils	8.000	8.000	7.875	5.500	5.500	5.500	8.200	8.600	5.800	8.000
24	Enjoyment on activities	10.000	7.500	8.731	8.571	7.500	8.250	8.357	8.600	7.200	8.182
25	Availability of nightlife	1.000	3.464	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.500	1.000	1.000	1.000
26	Regular screening of documentaries	1.000	2.923	3.571	1.857	3.000	1.000	2.417	1.000	3.000	1.000
27	Regular local cultural show	3.000	3.615	3.000	3.571	3.500	1.800	9.167	2.800	7.500	3.000
	COMPREHENSIVE SCORE	6.824	6.192	5.441	5.333	5.425	5.248	5.940	5.155	5.861	5.405
	Coloured cell signifies trimmed mean										

With that aim in mind, we offer line diagram of the scores in the Figures 4.1 A, B, C, and D. In the first diagram we offer the first 9 variables representing the WEF Pillars 1, 2, 4 and 5 (Detail discussion on the Pillars are offered in the Methodology Chapter).

It is seen from the data that all destinations are given very good rating on safety feature (*Tourists are safe*). Majuli and Goalpara score less on Safe Business. We can see diverse opinion on knowledgeable tour guide, travel agents' availability and availability of tour guides. It is seen from the data that Guwahati and Sivasagar got relatively high score on Travel Agents' Availability. Interestingly Goalpara and Haflong have scored almost nil for this variable.

Figure 4.1A: In-Depth Interview Scores for Variables- Group A
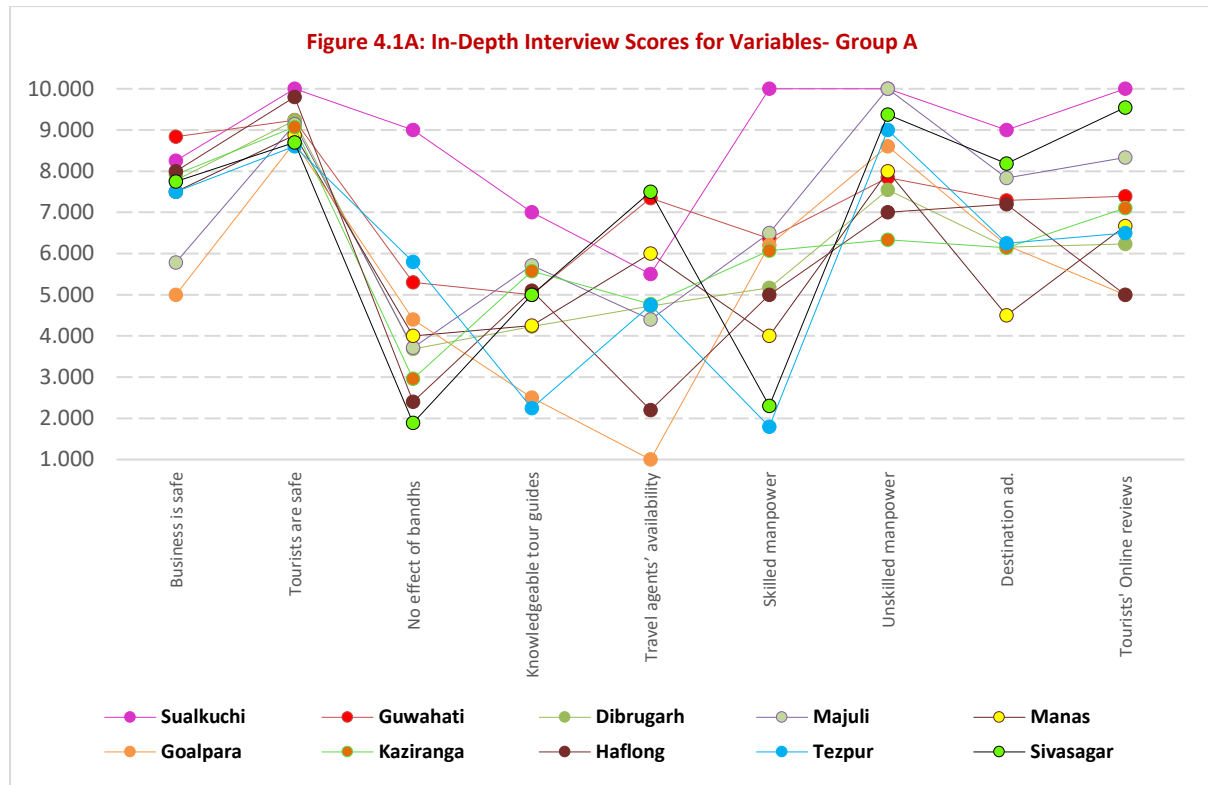
For skilled manpower Sualkuchi is rated high in the in-depth interviews. The nearest rivals (*Majuli, Guwahati, Goalpara and Kaziranga*) are scattered around 6. Unfortunately, the experts in Sivasagar and Tezpur do not think that the destination is getting skilled manpower as per their requirement, and hence a very low score. It can be seen from this group of variables that Sualkuchi is doing good as far as ratings from in-depth interviews are concerned. In reality also Sualkuchiis managing its resources like handloom shops very professionally.

We now offer a diagrammatic representation (Figure 4.1B) of the data generated from the variables measured under WEF's Pillars 6 and 12. We have a total of 7 variables *(from serial number 10 to 16 in the Table 4.14)* in this group (Group B).

Unlike the earlier diagram (Figure 4.1A) where it is outstanding, Sualkuchi *(the pink line)* shows a mixed performance in this cluster of variables. Most striking is the lack of accommodation during peak season. Goalpara scores the highest on no lack of accommodation in peak period. Experts from Goalpara and Haflong think that during slack season the business suffers. Majuli and Kaziranga also gained low scores here. Except for Tezpur all other destinations achieve high score on "no harassment by local authorities". However, Tezpur

scores high on slack season business. Guwahati, Kaziranga, and Majuli report little less problem for foreign exchange.

Figure 4.1B: In-Depth Interview Scores for Variables- Group B
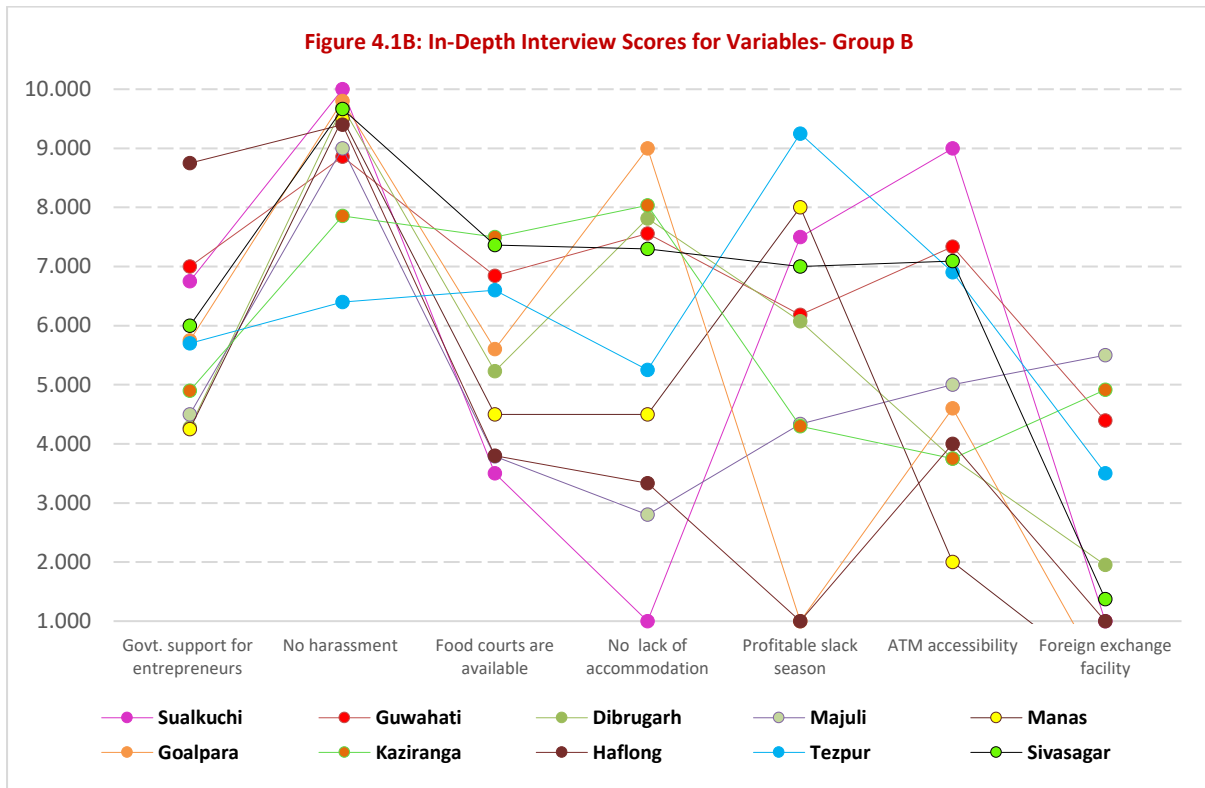
Let us now have a look at the third cluster containing the variables from Pillars 3, 5 and 9 (*Table 4.15: Sl. no. 17 to 23*). The scores are shown in Figure 4.1C below.

Figure 4.1C: In-Depth Interview Scores for Variables- Group C
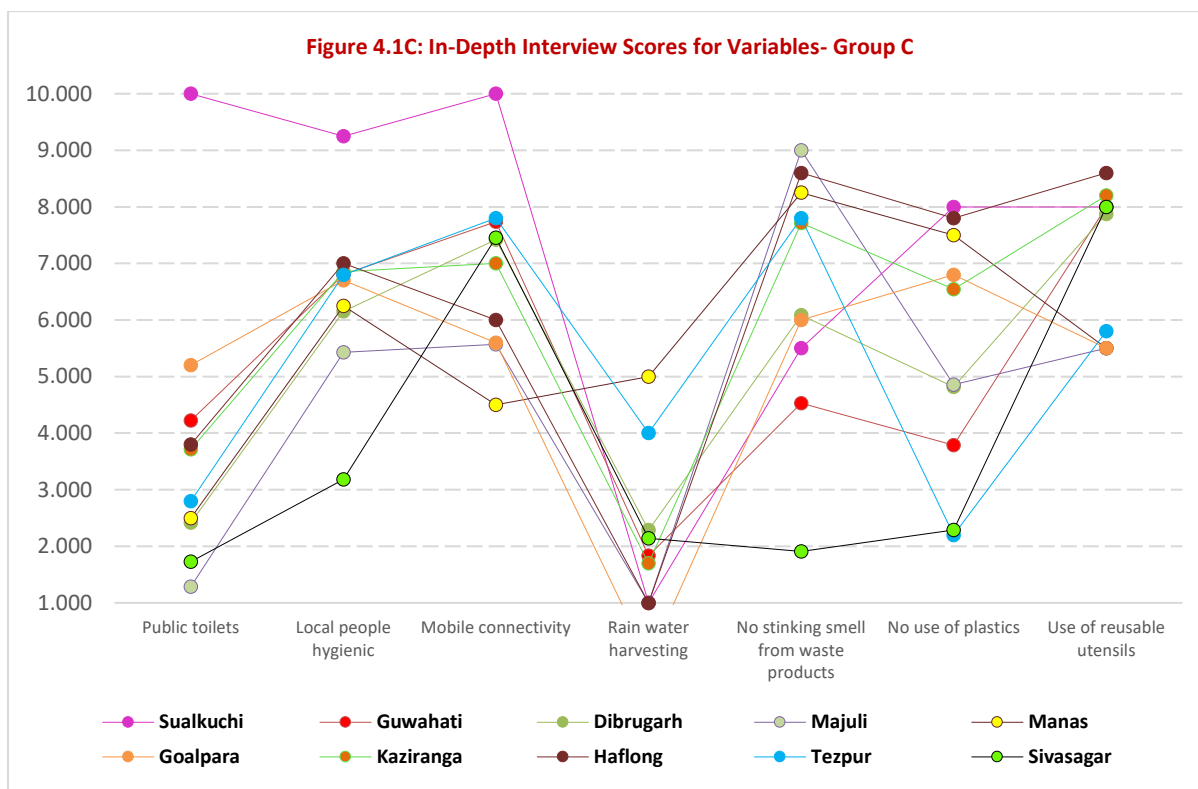
If we do away with the pink line that represents Sualkuchi, we see none of the destinations have decent score on public toilet. In our field observation also we could not locate public toilet in Sualkuchi. During triangulation we hope to sort out this discrepancy. Sivasagar is lagging behind on "local people are hygienic". As expected all destinations have shown very low or no practice of rain water harvesting. Stinks and use of plastic attract varied response. Apart from Sivasagar other destinations have attained a comfortable score on "no stinking smell". Majuli have scored the highest for this variable. For "no use of plastic" Sualkuchi, Haflong and Manasare at top (*but could not score very high*). Guwahati, Sivasagar, Haflong and Kaziranga have done good for "reusable utensils", while Majuli, Goalpara and Tezpurare lagging behind noticeably.

Moving to the last group of variables measured through in-depth interviews we have taken up 4 variables representing the WEF pillars 12 and 14. The graphs are shown in the Figure 4.1D below.

Figure 4.1D: In-Depth Interview Scores for Variables- Group D
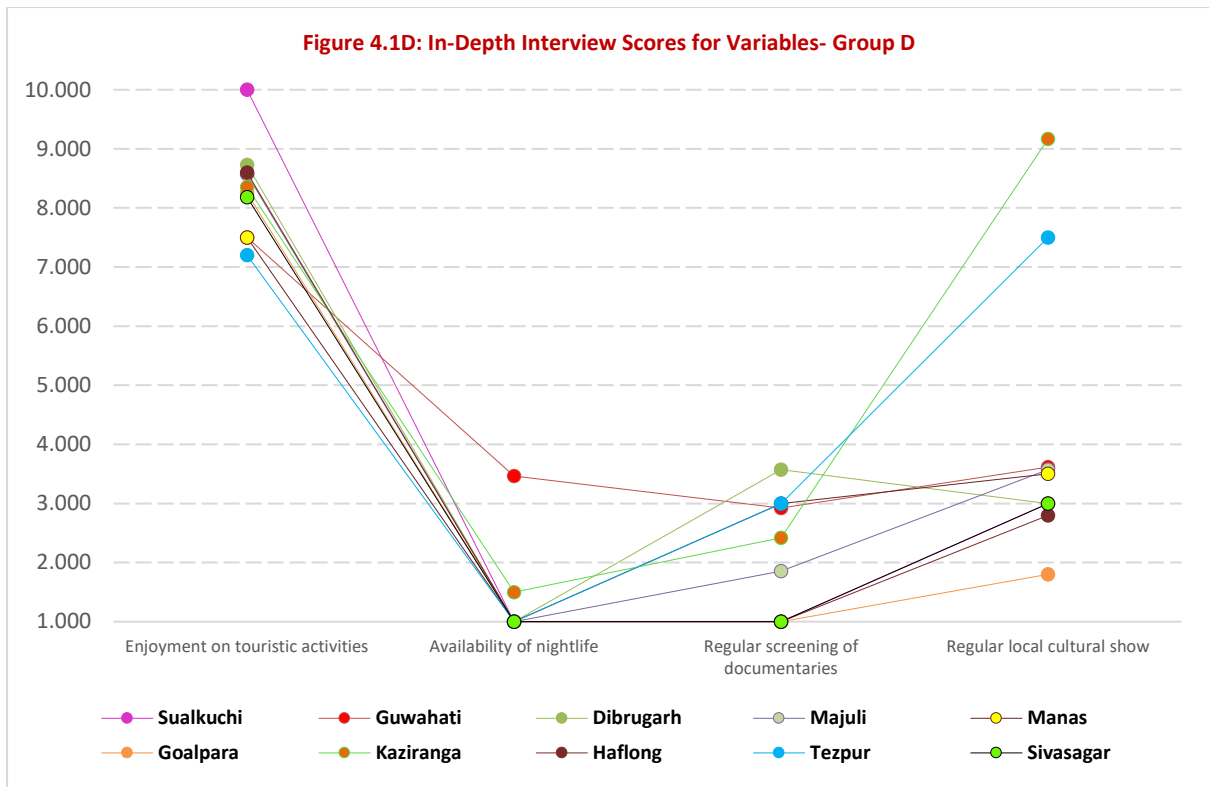
We see almost homogeneous opinion among the experts on these 4 variables. Slight positive opinion is seen on night life at Guwahati, otherwise it is nil everywhere. Whereas, experts from Kaziranga and Tezpur feel that regular cultural shows are held there, which is far above than the rest. Almost all destinations are getting good score on touristic activities.

Armed with this insight we now proceed to compare and triangulate the data generated from different sources in Chapter 6.

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Chapter 5

CONVENIENCE OF TOURISTS

In order to match (triangulate) the results of observation, and in-depth interviews as described in the previous Chapter we had conducted a quick survey to gauge the tourists' perception related to the variables that ultimately lead to their level of convenience. This survey is also helping us in generating the weight on the individual variables measuring convenience, at least from the point of view of the users.

Plate 5.1: A Tourist Being Interviewed at Kaziranga
Questionnaire code- 391

This Chapter offers the highlight of the survey. We start with sample schedule, and sample profile, and then proceed into determining the weight of the variables using Structural Equation Modelling (SEM). Then we shall try to generate the convenience index for each of the 12 destinations covered by this study. With these major tasks in hand we are presenting this Chapter.

5.1. Sampling Period:

Sampling was done based on the tourists' willingness to take part in the survey. We faced major problem when political unrest gripped the region during better part of December, 2019 and throughout January, 2020. The unrest made most of the tourists to cut short the visit abruptly, and most of the upcoming bookings got cancelled. Hence, our plan also got disruppted. Nevertheless, we could complete the rest of the survey within the first week of February, 2020. We had to return to these destinations again after sometime in the lookout of tourists who would willingly take part in the survey. We had conducted surveys in 10 major tourist destinations and 2 destinations with future promises. The time period of the surveys are shown in Table 5.1.

We kept the local officials of the Directorate of Economics and Statistics (DES) abreast of our visit schedule, and we completed our surveys with close monitoring by the designated officials. We also updated the Directorate on the development in a reguular basis. This update was done for the demand side survey as well as supply side survey.

#	DESTINATION	*n*	SURVEY PERIOD
1	TEZPUR	50	17.10.2019 *to* 21.10.2019
2	GUWAHATI	100	01.12.2019 *to* 20.12.2019
3	SIVASAGAR	50	16.11.2019 *to* 24.11.2019
4	KAZIRANGA	100	27.11.2019 *to* 06.12.2019
5	MANAS	50	14.12.2019 *to* 27.12.2019
6	GOALPARA	50	28.12.2019 *to* 07.01.2020
7	MAJULI	50	04.01.2020 *to* 10.01.2020
8	SUALKUCHI	40	15.12.2019 *to* 20.12.2019 07.01.2020 *to* 12.01.2020
9	HAFLONG	40	07.01.2020 *to* 16.01.2020
10	DIBRUGARH	50	05.01.2020 *to* 10.01.2020 31.01.2020 *to* 06.02.2020
11	UMRANGSO	10	07.01.2020 *to* 16.01.2020
12	PANIMUR	10	07.01.2020 *to* 16.01.2020
	TOTAL	**600**	*Approximately* **3 months** (17.10.2019 *to* 06.02.2020)

5.1.1. Incentives for Respondents:

We offered incentives to the respondents in the form of a "magnet" depicting sketches of

Plate 5.2: Happy Respondents on Receipt of Gifts

unique tourists talking points related to Assam to be taken back as memento. We prepared 3 (three) different themes and the respondent was offered one such "magnet" which can serve as an incentive as well as the souvenir of the visit. The market price of such souvenir will be within the range of Rs.70/- and Rs. 100/- depending on the place and vendor. Respondents appreciated our effort and wholeheartedly took part in the interviews, which are completed within an average time of about 15-20 minutes. If the respondent is natural English speaker or had good exposure to the language, she/he would take lesser time, while for others our team had to translate the questions. Each "magnet" was accompanied by a small write-up on the item. The names of the conducting University (Dept. of BA, TU) as well that of the sponsor (DES, GoA) along with the name of the state were depicted on the magnet as well as in the write-up. These pictures of magnets and the write-ups are shown in Annexure 6. Another picture (Phate 5.2) shows the happiness of the respondents on receipt of the gift.

5.2. Sample Size and Profile:

Sample Size and sample selection: Our mendate was to collect limited data (as stated in the title itself), as mere more data collection might not necessarily make the study more robust.

The robustness actually is in its methodology. However, we have decided to collect a sizeable number of tourist sample and successfully interviewed them. In total we have interviewed 600 tourists in different destinations. We used a non probablistic procedure involving mostly convenience of the tourists. Detailed discussions on this is offered in Chapter 3 (sections 3.2.1.1(c) *I and ii*)

A brief discussion is offered here on the profile of the tourists interviewees. As the sampling procedure is a mixure of purposive and convenience sampling, we try to get a mixure of tourists originating from outside the country, outside the NE region and from within the region. We also could interview a sizeable number of local tourists originating from within the state. All these are discussed in detail in the methodology chapter. We present now the profile of the respondents cross tabulating it with various demographic factors.

5.2.1 Sample Demographics:

Table 5.2 depicts the demographic division of the sample tourists based on common criteria like gender, origin of the tourist, educational background, marital status, age range, and income category.

Table 5.2: Sample Demographics

	Demographics	Number	%
1	**Gender**		
	Female	165	*27.5*
	Male	435	*72.5*
2	**Origin**		
	Foreigner	78	*13.0*
	National	306	*51.0*
	NE	216	*36.0*
3	**Educational Background**		
	No formal education	13	*2.2*
	Up to secondary level	71	*11.8*
	Graduate	330	*55.0*
	Post Graduate	179	*29.8*
	Others	7	*1.2*
4	**Marital Status**		
	Single	200	*33.3*
	Married	369	*61.5*
	No response	31	*5.2*
5	**Age Range**		
	below 20 years	12	*2.0*
	within 20 & 40 years	374	*62.3*
	within 41 & 60 years	159	*26.5*
	within 61 & 70 years	48	*8.0*
	71 years *and above*	6	*1.0*
	No response	1	*.2*
6	**Income Category**		
	Not yet earning	91	*15.2*
	below Rs.10K	19	*3.2*
	Within 10K & 30K	112	*18.7*
	Within 31K & 60K	169	*28.2*
	Within 61K & 100K	102	*17.0*
	Within 101K & 150K	32	*5.3*
	Above 150K	50	*8.3*
	No response	25	*4.2*
7	**Occupation**		
	Service	229	*38.2*
	Business	151	*25.2*

Demographics	Number	%
Student	73	*12.2*
Self employed	70	*11.7*
Housewives	32	*5.3*
Others	34	*5.6*
No response	11	*1.8*

The data are showing good representation in each of the major categories. Most noteworthy feature is that the non response rate is below 5% of the total count in each of the categories. In fact, for "Gender", "Origin" and "Educational background" there is no missing value at all.

5.2.2 Origin and Destination:

We have 13% foreinger sample, 51% national tourists, and 36% originated from within the region. We deliberately kept the foreign origin sample the least as the number of foreign travelers visiting the state constitute only less than 1%. We offer a detailed destination-wise division of sample in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3: Origin and Destination

Destination	Foreigner	National	NE	Total
DIBRUGARH	20	11	19	50
GUWAHATI	10	76	14	100
HAFLONG	0	32	8	40
KAZIRANGA	15	82	3	100
MAJULI	13	12	25	50
MANAS	5	30	15	50
SIVASAGAR	6	18	26	50
TEZPUR	9	29	12	50
GOALPARA	0	13	37	50
SUALKUCHI	0	2	38	40
PANIMUR	0	0	10	10
UMRANGSO	0	1	9	10
Total	**78**	**306**	**216**	**600**

It is seen that samples represent fairly all segments of interest. The paucity of foreign tourists in some destinations can be attribted to the fact that these destinations are not within the circuits popular among them. Our endeavour is to collect 10% foreign origin tourists, which is achieved as a whole. We intent to measure the difference in the perceived levels of convenience for these three distinct groups.

5.2.3 Tour Related Characteristics:

Table 5.4 shows the division of sample across prominent tourism related characteristics like subscription to package tour, traveling in group, and motivation for travel.

Table 5.4: Tour Related Characteristics		
Tourist Characteristics	**Number**	**%**
1 Following of Planned Itinerary		
No Planned itinerary	87	*14.5*
Partially follow planned itinerary	218	*36.3*
Follow planned itinerary	291	*48.5*
No response	4	*.7*
2 Subscription to Package Tour		
Independent traveller	491	*81.8*
Travelling with package tour	105	*17.5*
No response	4	*.7*
3 Travelling in Group		
Not in a group	305	*50.8*
Group traveler	294	*49.0*
No response	1	*.2*
4 Motivation for Travel		
Holidaying, Leisure, Recreation	312	*52.0*
Religious	40	*6.7*
Visiting friends and family	52	*8.7*
Education and Training	71	*11.8*
Health and Medical	6	*1.0*
Shopping	30	*5.0*
Business and work related	72	*12.0*
Others	5	*.8*
Multiple motivations	10	*1.7*
No response	2	*.3*
5 Visited all Attractions as Planned		
Yes	561	*93.5*
No	37	*6.2*
No response	2	*0.3*

It is seen from the numbers that less than 1 in 5 travellers purchase a package tour while visiting Assam. Since the percentage of travellers who subscribe package tour (*17.5*) is more than the foreign respondents' proportion it can be deduced that some domestic travellers are also subscribing to package tour. To further investigate the matter, we offer a cross tabulation between origin and subscription of package tour. The results are shown in Table 5.5.

Table 5.5: Package Tour and Origin				
Subscription to Package Tour	**Origin of Respondent Tourist**			
	Foreigner	**National**	**Regional**	**Total**
Independent traveller	49	237	205	**491**
	63.6%	*77.5%*	*96.2%*	*82.4%*
Travelling in package tour	28	69	8	**105**
	36.4%	*22.5%*	*3.8%*	*17.6%*
Total	**77**	**306**	**213**	**596**
	100%	*100%*	*100%*	*100%*

It is seen from Table 5.5 that the domestic travellers (both National and Regional) are not fond of package tour, which is in the expected line. However, it is a new revelation that the foreign travellers are also mostly travelling independently. Striking, however, is to note that the percentage of independent travellers are increasing linearly as the origin transcends from foreign to regional, and the vice versa.

There seems to be another concern as to the composition of the respondents who are travelling in groups. We have conducted a cross tabulation between the variables dealing with group and that of the package tour subscription to unearth such relationship, if any. The results

Table 5.6: Package Tour and Group Travellers			
	Not in group	In group	**Total**
Independent traveller	281	210	**491**
	57.2%	*42.8%*	*100%*
Travelling in package	24	81	**105**
	22.9%	*77.1%*	*100%*
Total	**305**	**291**	**596**
	51.2%	*48.8%*	*100%*

are shown in Table 5.6. It is seen from the table that most of the respondents travelling in package tour are in groups, whereas majority of independent travellers are not in a group. On the contrary to popular belief, it is seen that a sizeable number of inclusive tourists are moving solo.

A look at the motivation for travel reveals that most of the tourists surveyed (*52%*) are visiting for holidaying, recreation or leisure. In contrast 12%, and 11.8% visiting for the purpose of business/work, and education & training respectively. This validates the representativeness of our sample as because holidaying is the most popular purpose of visiting Assam. Interestingly we received all the responses marking "shopping" as their prime motive in Sualkuchi, and it is well known that tourists visit the place mostly for buying hand woven textiles of *muga* and mulberry.

Respondents were also asked about their success in adherence with plan of visit. 93% of them said that they could see what they wished to. 37 *(6.2%)* respondent tourists reported to have some problems. Most of the naysayers reported their personal problems like shortage of time, but a few reported that they could not complete due to bad road conditions. Since number of such respondents is very less, we have not done any in depth analysis of these responses.

5.3 Major Variables Measured:

As mentioned in the Methodology Chapter we have measured 37 major variables in order to gauge the perception and preferences of the respondents about the level of convenience in a particular destination. As evident from the earlier sections we have interviewed the tourists at different destinations, and they were asked about the opinions against each of the variables as per their perception about *that destination only*. As mentioned already we have converted each variable into a statement and the responses were solicited in a 10-point scale 1 being the lowest agreement, and 10 the highest. We now offer an analysis of the responses for the raw variables.

5.3.1 Destination-wise Analysis:

We now offer the destination wise average scores against each of these variables. While presenting the results we are using the initial clusters of variables as described in Section 3.2.1

of the Methodology Chapter. It should be noted that these groups are only based on our initial understanding of the relationship among the raw variables when we had first designed the questionnaire. These clusters are subject to exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses later (which are presented in a different section in this Chapter) to offer any meaningful association with empirical evidence.

We now offer our results from the first cluster. The variable means of different destinations for the first group of variables is presented in Table 5.7

Table 5.7: Destination-wise Variable Means- I							
DESTINATION		Easy Decision	Abundant Recommendation	Fair Image	Effortless Search	Information in Internet	Long Desire
DIBRUGARH	Mean	8.220	7.511	7.760	7.796	7.143	6.510
	N	50	47	50	49	49	49
	SD	1.788	2.677	2.446	2.245	2.264	3.049
SUALKUCHI	Mean	9.125	8.650	8.600	8.925	8.487	8.275
	N	40	40	40	40	39	40
	SD	.883	.736	1.392	.944	1.374	1.176
TEZPUR	Mean	8.260	7.816	7.458	7.878	8.122	7.640
	N	50	49	48	49	49	50
	SD	2.048	2.635	2.287	2.377	2.157	2.472
SIVASAGAR	Mean	8.898	8.208	7.413	8.122	7.727	6.468
	N	49	48	46	49	44	47
	SD	1.447	2.021	2.061	2.137	2.326	2.896
GOALPARA	Mean	8.620	8.367	7.959	8.388	8.120	7.939
	N	50	49	49	49	50	49
	SD	.967	.809	1.136	.862	1.118	1.162
GUWAHATI	Mean	8.910	8.364	7.545	8.378	8.424	7.688
	N	100	99	99	98	99	93
	SD	1.464	1.804	1.955	1.374	1.539	2.137
HAFLONG	Mean	8.100	8.375	6.550	7.725	6.275	7.875
	N	40	40	40	40	40	40
	SD	1.033	.838	.677	.847	.987	1.159
KAZIRANGA	Mean	8.495	8.622	7.439	8.455	8.571	9.051
	N	99	98	98	99	98	98
	SD	2.159	1.847	1.817	2.076	1.668	1.807
MAJULI	Mean	8.240	7.021	6.960	6.980	7.122	6.520
	N	50	48	50	49	49	50
	SD	1.733	2.338	2.665	2.358	2.068	2.697
MANAS	Mean	8.880	8.580	7.980	8.188	7.435	7.760
	N	50	50	50	48	46	50
	SD	1.624	1.527	1.813	1.909	2.296	2.646
PANIMUR	Mean	9.200	7.400	8.000	8.700	8.700	8.000
	N	10	10	10	10	10	10

Table 5.7: Destination-wise Variable Means- I							
DESTINATION		Easy Decision	Abundant Recommendation	Fair Image	Effortless Search	Information in Internet	Long Desire
	SD	1.033	3.239	1.491	2.163	1.703	1.633
UMRANGSO	Mean	*9.000*	*8.400*	*7.300*	*8.100*	*7.000*	*7.800*
	N	10	10	10	10	10	10
	SD	.943	1.430	2.003	.876	.943	1.398
Total *(Excluding non- response)*	Mean	**8.612**	**8.194**	**7.558**	**8.142**	**7.887**	**7.703**
	N	598	588	590	590	583	586
	SD	1.641	1.940	1.964	1.867	1.913	2.335

Figure 5.1: Radar Diagram for Means of Variables -Group 1
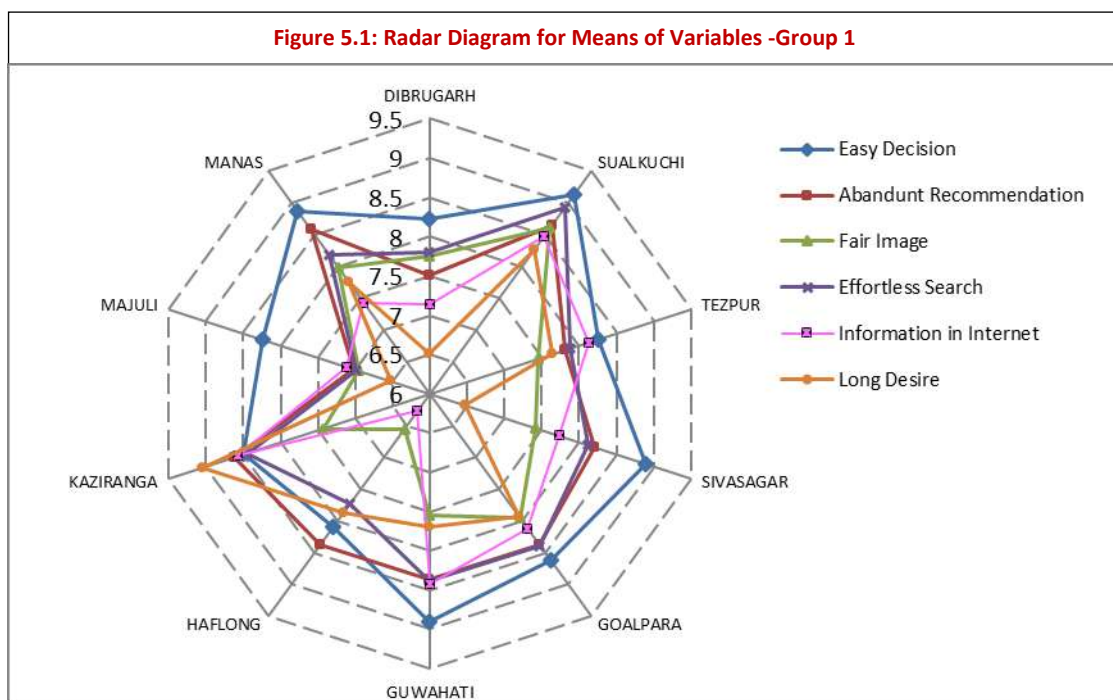
From average tourists' response on the variables concerned (*as depicted in Table 5.7 and Figure 5.1*) it is seen that decision to visit Sualkuchi, Guwahati and Manas National Park was more spontaneous than other destinations of Assam. Visit to Haflong was stated to be the most difficult decision. Recommendation wise, Sualkuchi topped the list with Haflong at the bottom. Topping the table, Sualkuchi again has the highest score of having fair image among the travellers before visiting the region. It was effortless for the people to find information about Sualkuchi as they do not find any difficulty in searching online. Sualkuchi's rise might be due to the fact that most of the respondents were shoppers of textiles. We tend to cross check this fact with the motivation of travel. The results are presented in a separate table below (Table 5.8).

Majuli's responses are conservative, as it is seen from the figure. Kaziranga topped the variable "long desire", which rightly represents the wide awareness generated on Kaziranga over the years. On the contrary, Sivasagar scored the least in this regard.

We have not separately analysed the smaller destinations (Panimur and Umrango- as we found the tourists attracted to these destinations are mostly day time excursionist) and hence not shown in the diagram.

Table 5.8 on motivation for travel and destination shows the division across the destinations on the type of travellers (being attracted). While Sualkuchi attracts most of the *shoppers* Kaziranga and Manas register almost all the travellers as *leisure seekers*.

DESTINATION	Motivation for Travel									Total
	Holidaying, Leisure, Recreation	Religious	Visiting friends and family	Education and Training	Health and Medical	Shopping	Business and work related	Others	Multiple motivations	
DIBRUGARH	21 (42%)	4	2	14	1	1	7	0	0	50
SUALKUCHI	0	10	1	2	0	26 (65%)	0	0	1	40
TEZPUR	28 (56%)	0	7	5	1	1	7	1	0	50
SIVASAGAR	16 (32%)	2	5	16 (32%)	0	1	6	4	0	50
GOALPARA	30 (60%)	0	7	4	0	0	8	0	1	50
GUWAHATI	30 (30%)	21	5	12	4	1	24 (24%)	0	2	99
HAFLONG	10	0	14 (35%)	1	0	0	15 (38%)	0	0	40
KAZIRANGA	91 (91%)	1	5	0	0	0	1	0	2	100
MAJULI	24 (49%)	2	2	17	0	0	3	0	1	49
MANAS	45 (90%)	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	3	50
PANIMUR	10 (100%)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10
UMRANGSO	7 (70%)	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	10
TOTAL	312	40	52	71	6	30	72	5	10	598
Percentage	*52.17*	*6.69*	*8.70*	*11.87*	*1*	*5.02*	*12.04*	*0.84*	*1.67*	*100*

Table 5.8: Destination-wise Motivation for Travel

Motivation(s) for visit is an important indicator of level of convenience sought by the tourists *(but not of the level of supply side amenities)*. It is seen from Table 5.8 that some destinations are showing total bias towards a particular motivation, where some others are distributed across different purposes. For example, Kaziranga and Manas have registered "holidaying, Leisure, Recreation" by 90% of the sample. In Sivasagar, however, the prime motivations are divided between "holidaying, Leisure, Recreation" and "education and training". In Sualkuchi the prime motive is said to be shopping. The diversity needs a little bit of more understanding. Tourists visiting Kaziranga, for example, come here just to have sightseeing and for pure leisure. Thus it is easier for the respondent to identify the motivation as such. However, in Sivasagar, the tourists are diverse, some of them consider seeing the historical monuments (which are the prime attractions) as recreation, and for some other the same may be educational. Moreover, lot of visitors visit Sivasagar as a part of educational tour *per say*. Therefore, there should not be any fear on the representativeness of the sample in a given destination *(at least based on the stated motivation of the sample)*. *The motivation for travel was recorded as reported by the respondents, and their perception was the final say*. We, as researchers, just have tried to select the visitors for interviewing and record their views in a totally unbiased manner. This is also to reiterate that the respondents were interviewed in the attraction (or in the vicinity) itself, and not anywhere else. Thus even if we have employed non probabilistic sampling we have not selected any sample which might not be a part of survey population.

Diversity in travel motivations serves another important purpose. It offers a balanced view of visitors' perceptions on different variables of convenience. Had it been absolutely dominated by one single purpose, their responses (in terms of weight) would have been dramatically skewed towards the variables serving that particular motivation. In such a situation, destinations attracting tourists with multiple motivations would have shown artificial compliances, which would have erroneous.

We present the results of the second cluster in the following table (Table 5.9). This includes the variables Information in Internet, Easy Movement, Satisfactory Mobile, Fast Internet, availability of Field Operator, Knowledgeable Operators, No Power-Cut, Easy Booking, Easy Accommodation, and Suitable Accommodation.

DESTINATION		Easy Movement	Satisfactory Mobile	Fast Internet	Field Operator Available	Knowledgeable Operators	No Power-Cut	Easy Booking	Easy Accommodation	Suitable Accommodation
Table 5.9: Destination Wise Variable Means II										
DIBRUGARH	Mean	7.875	7.681	7.438	5.667	5.930	7.640	7.889	8.021	8.146
	N	48	47	48	45	43	50	45	48	48
	SD	1.985	2.360	2.351	3.668	3.686	2.422	2.197	1.756	1.891
SUALKUCHI	Mean	8.769	8.625	8.342	8.000	7.000	8.875	6.400	8.538	6.429
	N	39	40	38	16	10	8	5	13	7
	SD	1.180	1.125	1.097	2.251	2.494	1.126	3.209	1.266	3.359
TEZPUR	Mean	8.042	6.449	5.878	7.388	7.551	7.204	8.367	8.143	8.140
	N	48	49	49	49	49	49	49	49	50
	SD	1.798	3.554	3.557	2.299	2.292	2.466	1.667	1.893	1.784
SIVASAGAR	Mean	8.340	7.694	7.563	4.955	5.756	6.629	7.974	8.044	7.800
	N	47	49	48	44	45	35	39	45	45
	SD	1.659	2.584	2.517	3.050	3.156	2.250	1.993	1.651	1.727
GOALPARA	Mean	8.208	8.360	7.878	7.761	7.929	7.788	7.706	7.611	7.324
	N	48	50	49	46	42	33	34	36	34
	SD	.967	.985	1.201	1.320	1.351	.893	1.292	1.153	1.296
GUWAHATI	Mean	8.214	6.890	6.890	7.589	7.495	8.204	8.701	8.173	7.879
	N	98	100	100	95	93	98	97	98	99
	SD	1.581	2.526	2.482	1.916	1.804	1.369	1.608	1.533	1.599
HAFLONG	Mean	7.625	5.575	5.600	7.175	7.200	5.975	6.175	7.500	7.175
	N	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40
	SD	1.213	1.010	1.150	.594	.648	1.271	1.196	1.013	.874
KAZIRANGA	Mean	8.404	7.000	6.343	8.255	8.344	8.293	8.663	8.537	8.511
	N	99	97	99	98	96	99	98	95	94
	SD	1.772	2.282	2.508	1.743	1.608	1.939	1.686	1.253	1.293
MAJULI	Mean	8.020	6.220	5.694	7.204	7.500	6.250	7.000	7.891	8.280
	N	49	50	49	49	48	48	49	46	50
	SD	2.222	3.099	2.981	2.061	1.979	2.694	2.345	1.888	1.565
MANAS	Mean	8.304	4.122	3.163	8.271	8.313	7.041	8.383	8.060	8.040
	N	46	49	49	48	48	49	47	50	50
	SD	1.685	2.997	2.703	1.830	1.417	2.491	1.512	1.889	1.829
PANIMUR	Mean	8.500	6.300	6.800	6.800	6.500	7.333	7.600	7.000	8.000
	N	10	10	10	10	10	9	10	10	9
	SD	1.581	3.622	3.225	2.201	2.224	2.449	2.011	2.708	1.803
UMRANGSO	Mean	8.000	6.500	6.100	7.200	7.800	6.000	6.600	7.800	7.200
	N	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
	SD	.816	2.718	2.234	1.751	1.135	2.000	1.350	1.814	1.814
Total	Mean	8.203	6.851	6.477	7.322	7.444	7.443	8.010	8.069	7.966
	N	582	591	589	550	534	528	523	540	536
	SD	1.661	2.702	2.748	2.342	2.231	2.170	1.917	1.617	1.648

As the number of variables is 10 in this group, two radar diagrams are used to present the data.

Figure 5.2A: Radar Diagram for Means of Variables -Group 2(a)
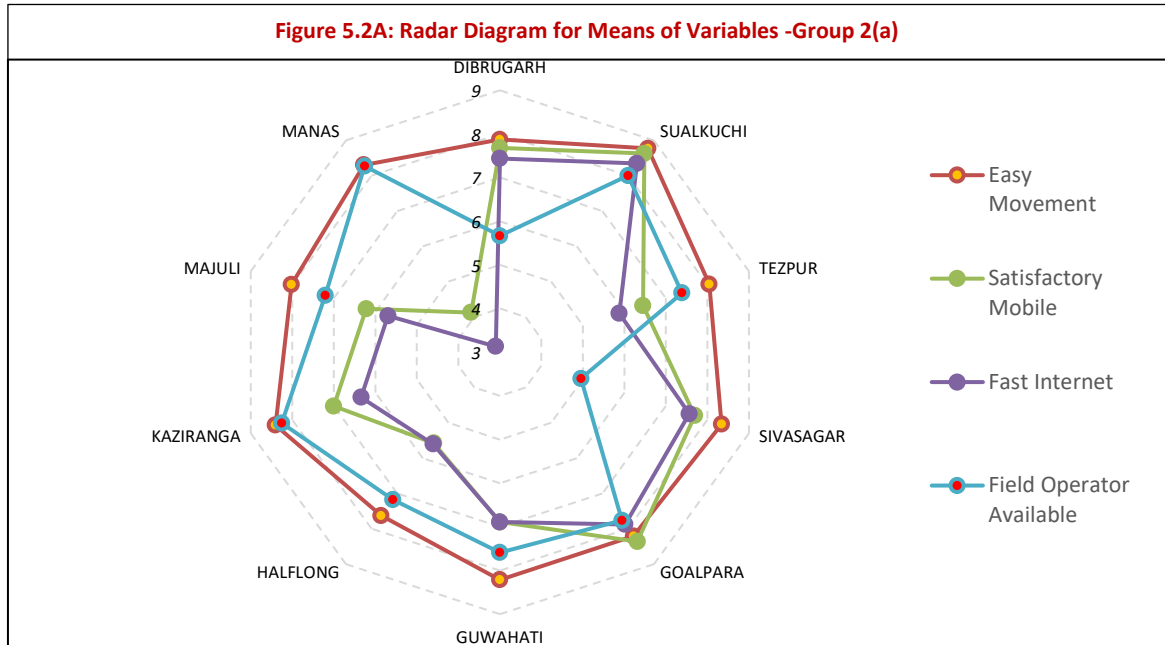
The first diagram (Figure 5.2A) shows higher average for Easy movement, availability of field operators for all destinations, while other two variables are attracting mixed responses across destinations. Kaziranga is showing high score for Easy movement and availability of field level operators. Interestingly, for Easy movement all the destinations are showing high ratings. The ratings on Internet speed are eye catching as it hovers dramatically. We can see a close positive relationship between average ratings on satisfactory mobile and internet speed.

Figure 5.2B: Radar Diagram for means of Variables - Group 2(b)
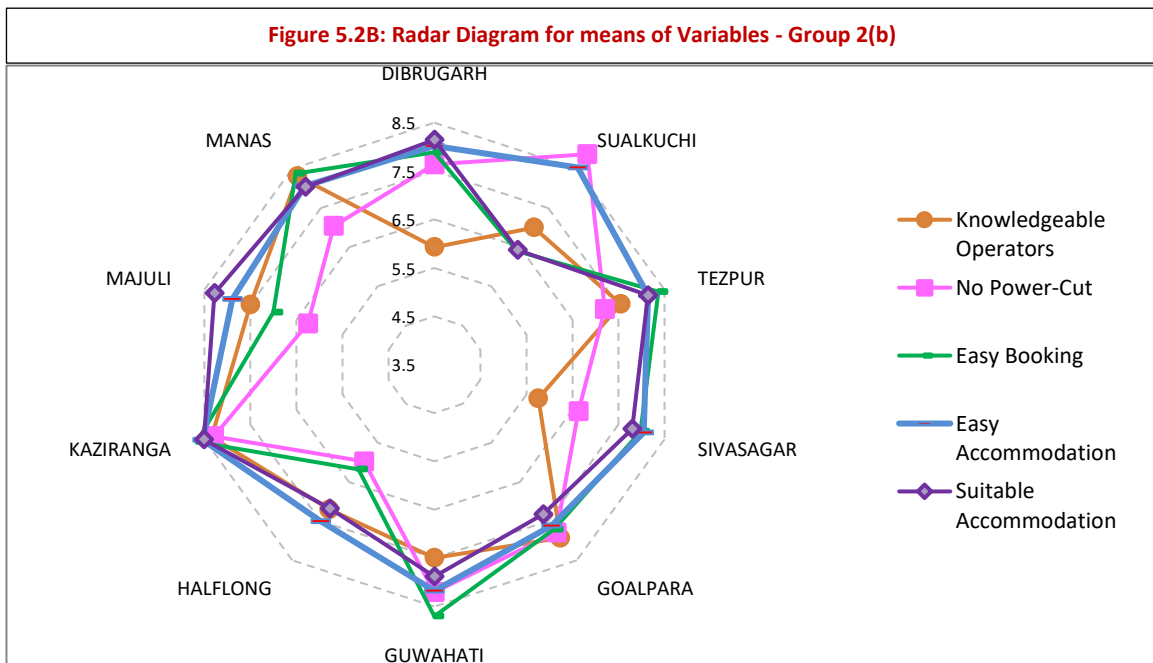
Second part of the variable means is shown in Figure 5.2B comprising of Knowledgeable Operators, No Power-Cut, Easy Booking, Easy Accommodation, and Suitable Accommodation.

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Popular destinations like Guwahati, Kaziranga, Majuli, and Manas are scoring decently in most of the parameters. Among good destinations Dibrugarh and Sivasagar are not rated well on knowledgeable operators, which is in line with the scores on availability of operators (in Figure 5.2A). It is seen from the data that Kaziranga is scoring higher ratings for all variables.

The third set of variables is presented in the following sections. This section deals with the variables Great Connectivity, Reach Time Reasonable, Enjoyable Journey, Clean Public Toilets, and Alright Overall Hygiene. The variables with their means and standard deviation are shown in Table 5.10.

Table 5.10: Destination-wise Variable Means III						
Destination		Great Connectivity	Reach Time Reasonable	Enjoyable Journey	Clean Public Toilets	Hygiene OK
DIBRUGARH	Mean	**7.898**	**7.143**	**7.280**	**5.932**	**7.490**
	N	*49*	*49*	*50*	*44*	*49*
	SD	*2.153*	*2.458*	*2.703*	*3.143*	*2.142*
SUALKUCHI	Mean	**8.590**	**8.615**	**8.667**	**2.600**	**7.571**
	N	*39*	*39*	*39*	*20*	*7*
	SD	*1.044*	*1.206*	*.772*	*2.280*	*2.820*
TEZPUR	Mean	**6.660**	**7.143**	**8.060**	**6.292**	**7.388**
	N	*50*	*49*	*50*	*48*	*49*
	SD	*2.904*	*2.363*	*2.045*	*2.641*	*2.308*
SIVASAGAR	Mean	**7.500**	**8.280**	**8.500**	**6.289**	**6.762**
	N	*46*	*50*	*50*	*45*	*42*
	SD	*2.278*	*1.738*	*1.374*	*2.390*	*2.046*
GOALPARA	Mean	**8.020**	**8.100**	**8.360**	**6.022**	**7.450**
	N	*50*	*50*	*50*	*45*	*40*
	SD	*1.186*	*.931*	*1.139*	*1.994*	*.714*
GUWAHATI	Mean	**8.677**	**7.646**	**8.677**	**6.463**	**7.677**
	N	*99*	*99*	*99*	*95*	*99*
	SD	*1.596*	*2.096*	*1.449*	*2.052*	*1.557*
HAFLONG	Mean	**6.575**	**7.275**	**7.950**	**5.925**	**7.300**
	N	*40*	*40*	*40*	*40*	*40*
	SD	*.958*	*.599*	*.932*	*1.047*	*.883*
KAZIRANGA	Mean	**8.394**	**7.790**	**8.470**	**7.154**	**7.909**
	N	*99*	*100*	*100*	*91*	*99*
	SD	*1.665*	*1.684*	*1.925*	*2.044*	*1.654*
MAJULI	Mean	**6.860**	**6.700**	**7.860**	**4.714**	**6.620**
	N	*50*	*50*	*50*	*49*	*50*
	SD	*2.718*	*2.418*	*2.041*	*2.492*	*2.784*
MANAS	Mean	**7.571**	**7.960**	**8.320**	**5.535**	**7.531**
	N	*49*	*50*	*50*	*43*	*49*
	SD	*2.363*	*2.020*	*2.075*	*3.172*	*2.152*
PANIMUR	Mean	**7.500**	**7.500**	**8.300**	**8.100**	**7.400**

Table 5.10: Destination-wise Variable Means III		Great Connectivity	Reach Time Reasonable	Enjoyable Journey	Clean Public Toilets	Hygiene OK
Destination						
	N	10	10	10	10	10
	SD	2.991	2.014	2.452	2.807	3.026
UMRANGSO	Mean	**6.300**	**6.500**	**8.400**	**7.300**	**7.600**
	N	10	10	10	10	10
	SD	2.003	1.179	.843	1.337	.699
Total *(Excluding non-responses)*	Mean	**7.794**	**7.643**	**8.274**	**6.100**	**7.443**
	N	591	596	598	540	544
	SD	2.108	1.935	1.792	2.521	1.930

The data are depicted in Figure 5.3 below. Some of the *high* points are as follows. It is seen that Kaziranga is doing better than the other destinations for Public Toilets. Sualkuchi is given very low score in this count (*this aspect regarding Sualkuchi was also found during our field observation*). Flags are raised for Majuli and Manas too in this regard. Majuli scores lowest in overall hygiene. Overall response for "enjoyable journey" is found to be almost equal for all

Figure 5.3: Radar Diagram for Means of Variables – Group 3
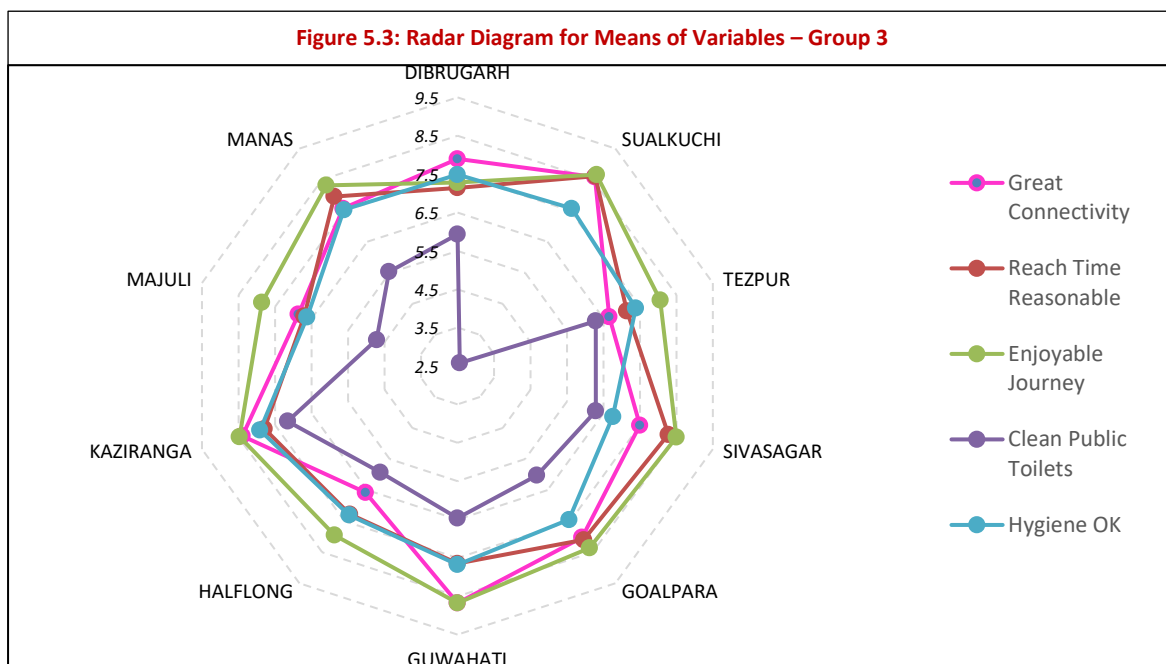
destinations. Guwahati and Kaziranga rightly register the highest with regards to "great connectivity". Since Sualkuchi is very adjacent to Guwahati the same range is found there also.

Let us now see the next group of responses.

Destination		Courteous Local	Choicest Food	Affordable F&B	Excellent Food	Choicest Souvenir	Choicest Activity	Fully Safe	Full Enjoyment	Fun Stay	Destn Made Me Happy
Table 5.11: Destination-wise Variable Means- IV											
DIBRUGARH	Mean	8.837	7.560	8.224	8.200	5.826	6.936	8.438	8.104	8.000	8.360
	N	49	50	49	50	46	47	48	48	50	50
	SD	1.748	2.764	2.153	1.807	2.807	2.591	1.999	2.126	2.185	2.028
SUALKUCHI	Mean	8.750	9.053	8.897	9.075	6.500	8.667	9.222	9.040	8.958	9.125
	N	12	38	39	40	6	9	27	25	24	32
	SD	1.357	1.038	1.142	1.248	2.811	1.323	1.396	.889	.859	1.008
TEZPUR	Mean	8.840	7.120	8.480	8.140	7.149	7.160	8.480	8.460	8.360	8.833
	N	50	50	50	50	47	50	50	50	50	48
	SD	1.570	2.647	1.693	1.906	2.265	2.103	1.961	1.474	1.588	1.358
SIVASAGAR	Mean	8.304	7.400	8.245	8.064	7.538	7.452	8.620	8.630	8.545	8.833
	N	46	50	49	47	39	42	50	46	44	48
	SD	1.685	2.523	1.726	1.258	2.187	2.039	1.665	1.339	1.562	1.602
GOALPARA	Mean	8.419	7.816	7.400	7.792	6.902	7.511	8.133	7.864	8.000	8.064
	N	43	49	50	48	41	45	45	44	44	47
	SD	1.139	1.642	1.750	1.129	1.562	1.502	1.517	.930	1.034	1.071
GUWAHATI	Mean	8.990	7.080	7.370	7.768	7.516	7.663	9.101	8.684	8.333	8.717
	N	100	100	100	99	93	98	99	98	99	99
	SD	1.508	2.286	2.068	1.557	1.508	1.492	1.555	1.001	1.348	.926
HAFLONG	Mean	8.775	5.900	5.500	7.025	6.525	7.025	8.325	7.725	7.700	7.825
	N	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40
	SD	.620	1.499	.961	1.000	1.154	1.143	1.163	.751	1.043	.501
KAZIRANGA	Mean	9.545	7.360	7.850	8.030	8.022	8.010	9.030	8.938	8.863	9.430
	N	99	100	100	99	89	96	99	97	95	100
	SD	.746	2.541	2.262	1.752	1.340	1.780	1.156	.899	.941	.742
MAJULI	Mean	9.160	7.480	7.940	8.020	6.960	7.306	8.680	8.286	8.531	8.780
	N	50	50	50	50	50	49	50	49	49	50
	SD	1.037	2.140	1.867	1.436	2.213	2.104	1.609	1.696	1.371	1.475
MANAS	Mean	9.167	8.102	7.939	8.420	5.524	7.128	8.694	8.729	8.857	9.280
	N	48	49	49	50	42	47	49	48	49	50
	SD	1.260	2.003	2.174	1.617	2.653	1.884	1.372	1.216	1.354	.970
PANIMUR	Mean	7.600	6.300	6.400	7.300	7.333	7.800	8.200	8.667	8.500	9.700
	N	10	10	10	10	9	10	10	9	10	10
	SD	1.713	2.751	2.716	2.359	1.118	2.348	1.619	1.000	2.415	.483
UMRANGSO	Mean	8.000	6.300	5.500	7.300	6.700	7.600	7.800	8.300	8.500	8.700
	N	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
	SD	2.494	2.497	2.068	1.059	2.111	.699	1.398	.675	.707	.823
Total *(Excluding non-response)*	Mean	8.928	7.396	7.710	8.003	7.045	7.479	8.705	8.500	8.436	8.807
	N	557	596	596	593	512	543	577	564	564	584
	SD	1.391	2.337	2.079	1.598	2.077	1.865	1.567	1.304	1.422	1.269

The Table is graphically represented with two radar diagrams which are shown below.

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It is clear from Figure 5.4A that responses against choicest souvenir are varied and Kaziranga has scored the highest average score for this variable with Dibrugarh scoring the least. Against courteous locals almost all destinations are scoring high average response, but

Figure 5.4A: Radar Diagram for Means of Variables – Group 4(a)
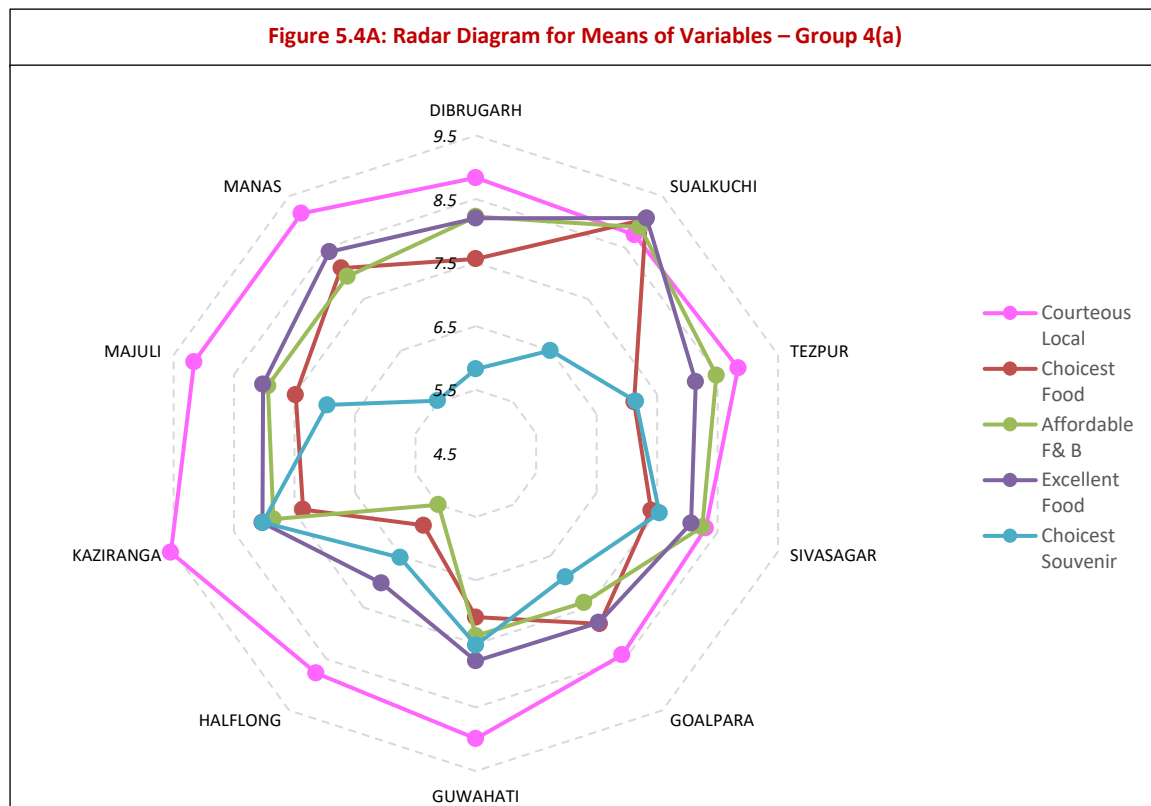
Kaziranga stands out. Food choice has some issues in all destinations except in Sualkuchi, but then Sualkuchi's majority of respondents are regional, and that's why this is not surprising. This indicates towards the need to have better food choices in other destinations, especially where cosmopolitan tourists gather. Haflong being a hilly destination food prices are not as per the wishes of the tourists, and hence it scores the lowest average in this regard. Kaziranga, Tezpur and Sivasagar are also doing better in this front.

From Figure 5.4B (which is depicted below) it is seen that all destinations (except for shopping destination of Sualkuchi) are lacking in choices for activities among the tourists. Kaziranga and Manas are scoring good for the variable "happiness". Goalpara and Haflong scored below average. Kaziranga and Manas are also scoring high on "enjoyment". All destinations except for Goalpara are marked high under "fully safe". The two National Parks have also scored high under "fun stay". We have seen in this cluster also high spike of scores in Sualkuchi. This may also be due to the shoppers' internal contentment.

Figure 5.4B: Radar Diagram for Means of Variables – Group 4(b)
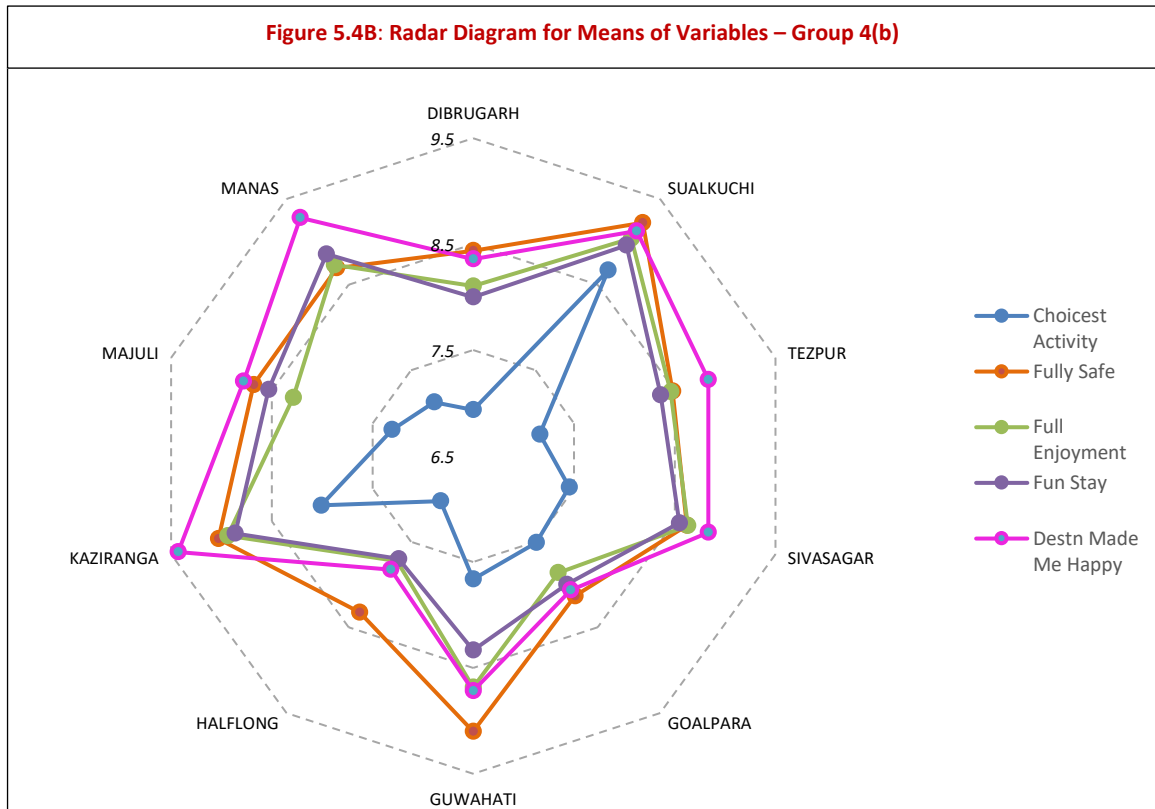
Let us take up the remaining raw variables for destination-wise analysis. These are presented in Table 5.12.

DESTINATION		OK Online Payment	Repeat Visit	Recommend to Others	Off Season Visit	Inflow Will Affect	Cash OK	*Forex Conversion OK
Table 5.12: Destination-wise Variable Means- V								
DIBRUGARH	Mean	**8.000**	**8.180**	**8.320**	**6.417**	**7.040**	**7.244**	**5.176**
	N	42	50	50	48	50	45	17
	SD	1.781	2.379	2.065	2.850	2.626	2.756	3.557
SUALKUCHI	Mean	**3.200**	**9.200**	**9.114**	**8.893**	**9.115**	**9.435**	-
	N	5	35	35	28	26	23	
	SD	2.683	1.079	1.157	1.370	.909	.788	
TEZPUR	Mean	**7.267**	**8.408**	**8.720**	**7.000**	**8.061**	**7.854**	**4.429**
	N	45	49	50	46	49	48	7
	SD	2.871	2.081	1.526	2.683	1.638	2.518	1.512
SIVASAGAR	Mean	**7.194**	**8.347**	**8.780**	**6.388**	**6.711**	**8.674**	**7.500**
	N	36	49	50	49	45	43	4
	SD	2.447	2.127	1.489	2.783	2.920	1.554	1.915
GOALPARA	Mean	**7.313**	**8.085**	**8.413**	**7.447**	**8.149**	**7.766**	-
	N	32	47	46	47	47	47	
	SD	1.424	1.018	1.045	1.348	1.142	1.671	
GUWAHATI	Mean	**8.691**	**8.780**	**9.230**	**6.899**	**8.306**	**8.990**	**5.667**
	N	94	100	100	99	98	100	9

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Table 5.12: Destination-wise Variable Means- V								
DESTINATION		OK Online Payment	Repeat Visit	Recommend to Others	Off Season Visit	Inflow Will Affect	Cash OK	*Forex Conversion OK
	SD	1.820	1.307	.930	2.008	1.589	1.360	3.317
HAFLONG	Mean	4.550	7.800	8.425	3.725	7.550	4.200	-
	N	40	40	40	40	40	40	
	SD	1.280	.853	.931	1.176	1.518	1.556	
KAZIRANGA	Mean	7.575	9.121	9.510	5.784	8.540	7.022	4.700
	N	87	99	100	97	100	90	10
	SD	2.433	1.520	1.168	3.076	1.997	2.313	2.983
MAJULI	Mean	6.224	8.420	8.740	7.327	7.780	5.673	6.538
	N	49	50	50	49	50	49	13
	SD	2.640	1.785	1.575	2.664	2.509	3.165	2.847
MANAS	Mean	6.342	8.560	9.340	6.362	7.531	3.902	4.333
	N	38	50	50	47	49	41	3
	SD	3.257	1.567	1.062	2.649	2.390	3.315	4.933
PANIMUR	Mean	5.900	9.000	9.000	6.200	7.500	5.700	-
	N	10	10	10	10	10	10	
	SD	2.644	1.633	1.563	3.048	2.415	2.669	
UMRANGSO	Mean	6.000	8.700	9.100	5.500	8.500	4.500	-
	N	10	10	10	10	10	10	
	SD	3.055	1.059	.738	2.224	.707	2.991	
Total(Excluding non-response)	Mean	7.162	8.576	8.956	6.509	7.939	7.137	5.476
	N	488	589	591	570	574	546	63
	SD	2.589	1.661	1.355	2.650	2.092	2.801	3.089

We are depicting the means in two diagrams namely, Figure 5.5A and 5.5B below. It is seen that online payment facilities attract widely varied scores. In Haflong and Sualkuchi it is the lowest while, as expected, Guwahati, Kaziranga and Dibrugarh are scoring high in this regard. Interestingly for possibility of Repeat Visit are uniform across all the destinations. The average values hovers around 7.000.

The second rather diagram (Figure 5.5B) is showing the average scores of variables Recommend to Others, Off Season Visit, Inflow Will Affect, Cash OK, and Forex Conversion OK is placed in Figure 5.5B.

Figure 5.5A: Radar Diagram for Means of Variables – Group 5(a)
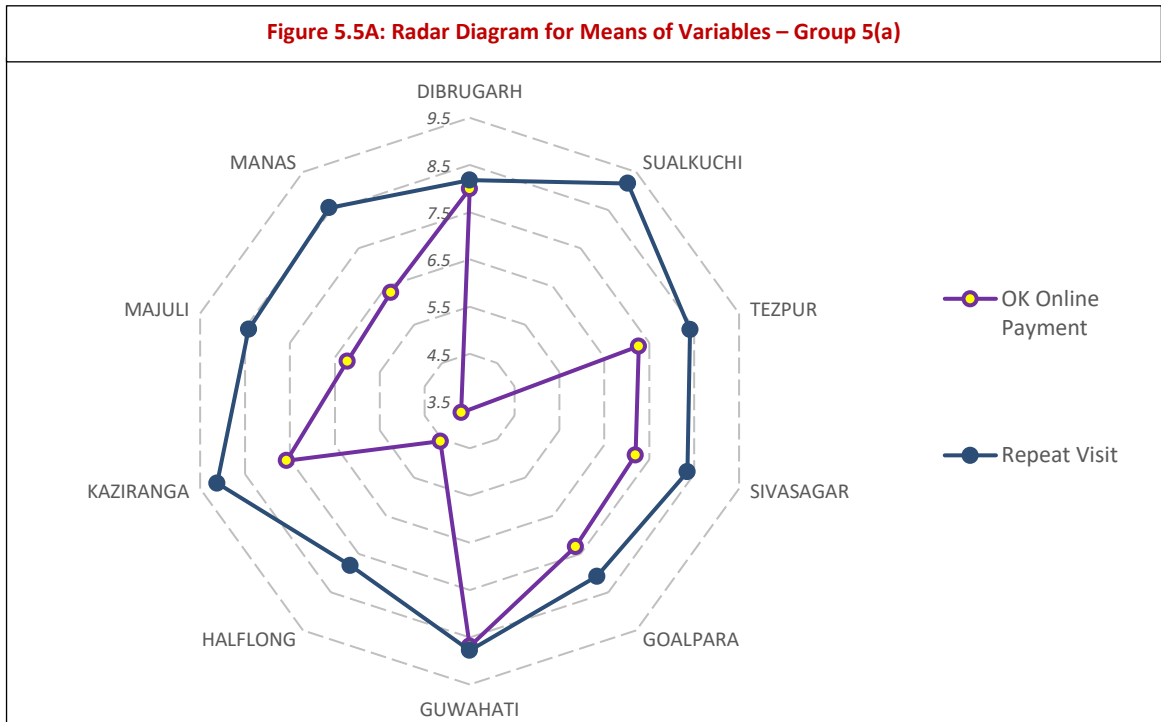
It is seen from the data that Goalpara and Majuli have decent average scores on possibility of off season visit (*apart from Sualkuchi*), while Kaziranga and Haflong scored low for this variable. Foreign tourists visiting Majuli and Sivasagar offer medium average score on availability of foreign exchange in the destination. The same for other destinations (where foreign travellers were interviewed) is low except for Guwahati. On the statement that *tourist's inflow might affect the attractiveness of the destination* Kaziranga, Guwahati, Goalpara and Tezpur are generating high average response. Shoppers of Sualkuchi are also concerned about

Figure 5.5B: Radar Diagram for Means of Variables – Group 5(b)
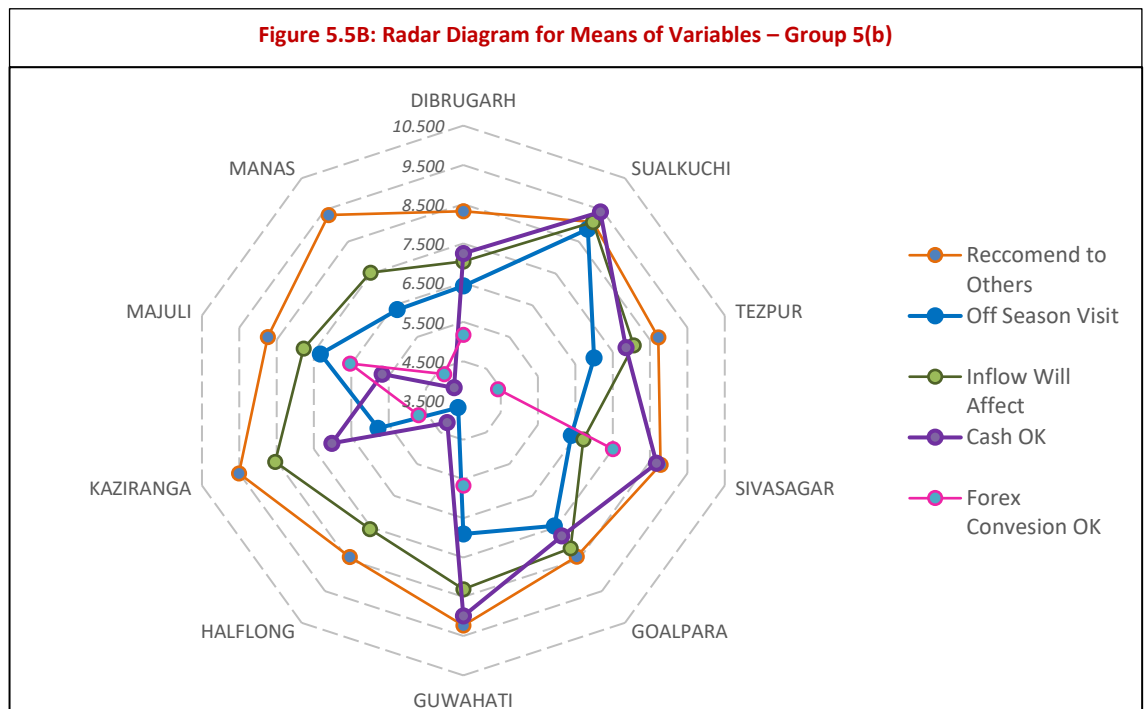
the fact, may be they are worried because a charge in the demand will increase the price of the textiles. Kaziranga, Manas and Guwahati are generating willingness for possible references with high score (more than 9).

5.3.2 Highlight of the Discussion on Variable Wise Average:

Let us now have a comprehensive idea of the level of convenience in each of the destinations as reported by the tourists. The table reproduced below (Table 5.13) shows the average of all the variables together against the destinations. It is to be noted that this is shown only as a preliminary idea of the level of convenience. We have not yet assigned any weight against the variables, which we indent to do at a later stage.

Table 5.13: Destination Wise Comprehensive Mean Scores		
Destination	Comprehensive Mean	Major Motivation
KAZIRANGA	8.109	Leisure
GUWAHATI	8.007	Leisure
GOALPARA	7.861	Leisure
SIVASAGAR	7.680	Leisure
TEZPUR	7.639	Leisure
PANIMUR	7.631	Leisure
MANAS	7.504	Leisure
DIBRUGARH	7.455	Leisure
MAJULI	7.338	Leisure
UMRANGSO	7.331	Leisure
SUALKUCHI	8.204	Shopping
HAFLONG	6.903	Business

5.4 Differentiating the Destination Based on Reported Motivation:

It would be logical to distinguish the destination on the basis of motivation of travel of majority of the visitors. We can arrive at some decisions based on the cross-tabulation (Table 5.8) shown earlier in this Chapter. It is seen that majority of our samples from Dibrugarh, Tezpur, Sivasagar, Goalpara, Guwahati, Kaziranga, Majuli, Manas, Panimur and Umrangso have reported to have visited the respective destinations for leisure tourism. However, out of these 10 places Kaziranga, Manas, and Panimur can be termed as hard-core leisure destination, while Umrangso, Goalpara, Tezpur and Majuli recorded more than or just about 50% leisure travellers. On the other hand, Haflong (Business) and Sualkuchi (shopping) show different inclinations from the travellers. We, therefore, intend to consider these destinations as different groups while discussing relative level of overall convenience.

Figure 5.6: Comprehensive Mean Scores for Destinations

Destination	Score
KAZIRANGA	8.109
GUWAHATI	8.007
GOALPARA	7.861
SIVASAGAR	7.68
TEZPUR	7.639
PANIMUR	7.631
MANAS	7.504
DIBRUGARH	7.455
MAJULI	7.338
UMRANGSO	7.331
SUALKUCHI	8.204
HAFLONG	6.903
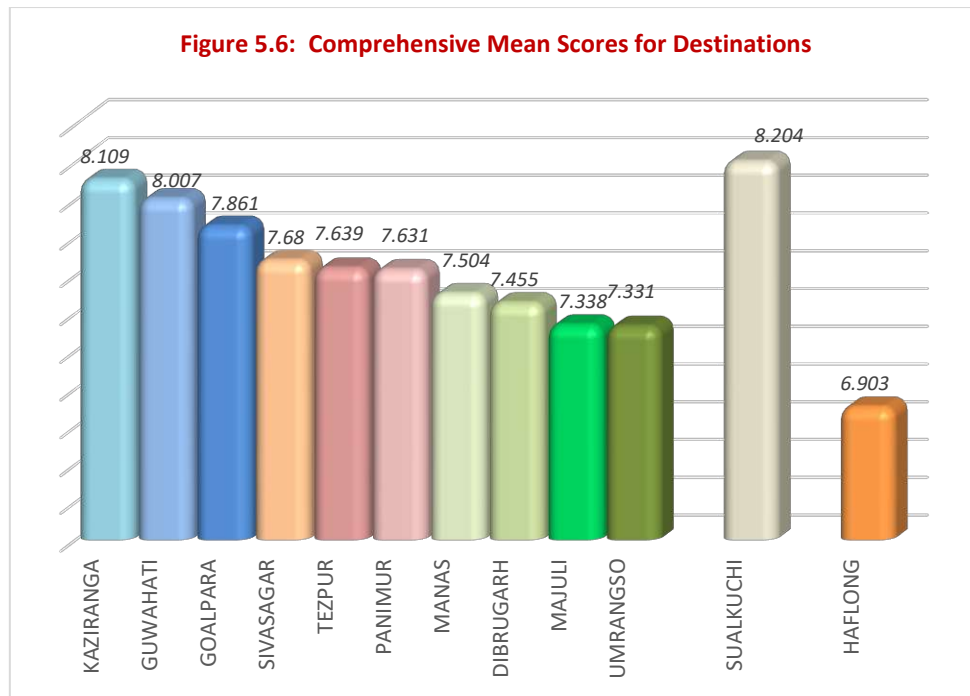
It is clear from the data that Sualkuchi claims the highest average among all the destinations. However, as discussed above since the major motivation of the visitors is shopping it will be unfair for us to compare its score with the leisure destinations. Thus Kaziranga scores the highest comprehensive scores among the leisure destinations closely followed by Guwahati. If we leave aside Panimur and Umrangso *(as small destinations)* Majuli scores the lowest comprehensive score. In any case it is heartening to see that all the averages are coming out towards the higher side.

We might see some changes in the ratings after triangulation with field observation and results of in-depth interviews. The scores might also change as we assign appropriate weights to each of the raw variables.

In the preceding sections we have offered a comprehensive analysis of the ratings (in a 10-point scale) received against the 37 statements. These statements are designed to give us the requisite dimensions for measuring the comprehensive tourism convenience index, which will be taken up in subsequent sections.

5.5 Assigning Weight to the Variables:

As discussed in Methodology one of the major tasks of the work is to assign weight to the raw variables we have tried to measure. We discuss the process in this section.

As mentioned in earlier sections we have collected tourists' data in order to understand their perception and preferences about various convenience related variables. As we have discussed in the Methodology Chapter these variables are generated from extant literature, like

scholarly articles, Reports and also from the Pilot Surveys (Section 3.2.1). Armed with the variables we hope to measure the level of convenience in each of these destinations.

However, before that we need to conduct some preliminary scrutiny through Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), and then through Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The CFA shall also throw light on the validity of the dimensions generated by EFA. Even if we have used literature in order to determine the variables, they are taken from different sources, and hence may not be equally compatible to capture the broad dimensions. Also as mentioned earlier we have generated some more variables during Pilot Surveys. These conditions necessitate the scrutiny through validity analysis too.

For the sake of rigour of the instrument and methodology, we have to test the items through some known and established methods so that they are well identified. This also helps us in reducing the number of variables into some manageable dimensions (or factors), so that the final calculation of the convenience score becomes easier and more transparent. This is also going to serve even a greater purpose – the results of the EFA and CFA will give us the weight for each of the variables through the square of their loadings (as to how much variance each one can explain for respective dimension). Weights determined through this method help us triangulate the findings of supply side survey with the demand side data.

In the following section we are offering the details of exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses.

5.5.1 Assumptions:

Before proceeding we are offering a brief discussion on the basic assumptions related to factor analysis.

(a) _Linearity of Variables_- There is a total of 36 variables that have been used for conducting the analysis. In order to check the linearity of these variables, a bivariate scatter plot is used where each pair of variables are examined graphically to see if 95 % of the data points fall in an ellipsoidal curve (Oppong & Agbedra, 2016). The bivariate scatter plots in case of this data set are seen to follow the pattern.

(b) _Multicollinearity_- The next important assumption checked for in the study is that of multicollinearity. According to Hair, Anderson, Tatham, & Black (2014) the threshold level for the Variation Inflation Factor (VIF) that determines the effect of other independent variables on the standard error corresponding to a regression coefficient to be 10. The factors in our study found to have VIF values less than 5. Thus, there is no multicollinearity amongst the variables.

(c) _Anti–Image Correlation_ – Anti-image correlation matrix is used to measure the sampling adequacy for each of the factors. According to Isa, Saman, Nasir & Jaapar (2014), the

diagonal elements in the anti-image correlation matrix must have a value of more than 0.5 to indicate sampling adequacy. The condition holds true in case of our data and hence this assumption is fulfilled as well.

(d) *Multivariate Normality*- There are several tests in the literature to enquire about normal distribution of data. There are methods both graphical and statistical to determine normality in case of univariate as well as multivariate data. However, according to Oppong & Agbedra (2016), in case of large samples the data is automatically considered to be normal regardless of its underlying distribution. The concept is derived from the observations laid down by the central limit theorem. As our sample size stands at 600 it is safe to assume that the data are holding multivariate normality.

5.5.2 Principal Component Analysis (PCA):

As we already know that a total of 600 responses are collected from tourists interviewed at selected destinations. The respondents offered their views in a 10-point scale against 37 statements. As one statement was specifically targeted towards foreign tourists only, we have kept that statement out of purview of the present discussion (as the number of response is only around 10% of the total sample). A PCA is conducted using Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS) to summarize the data and identify the factors with correlated components.

We begin with testing the adequacy of the data set. Firstly, we get a satisfactory Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) figure, which is the test of sampling adequacy. The KMO value ranges from 0 to 1 and the closer the value is to 1 the better is the data structure. Bartlett's test of Sphericity, which is to determine the suitability of the data to conduct factor analysis, also gives a satisfactory result. A significant value for Bartlett's test i.e., *p*<.05 is acceptable. The initial results generated from the analysis are given in Table 5.14 below.

Table 5.14: KMO and Bartlett's Test Results		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		**.891**
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	**7106.059**
	df	**630**
	Sig.	**.000**

The PCA returns an 8-factor model with total variance explained at 62.89 %, which is considered to be adequate. We have taken the Eigen values above 1 and hence did not restrict the analysis with minimum loading. The Rotated Component Matrix, which gives us the initial solution, is shown in Table 5.15.

Table 5.15: Initial Principal Component Analysis (Rotated Component Matrix) Results								
Variables *(The names of the factors as shown in **bold** are subjective, and manually allotted keeping in mind the consisting variables)*	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**
Convenience of Enjoyment								
Courteous locals in the destination	.427			.265				
The destination is fully safe	.544							
Full enjoyment during the stay	.744							
A fun stay at the destination	.796							
Destination made me happy	.816							
Repeat visit to the destination	.733							
Recommendation to others	.773							
Convenience of Decision								
Easy decision to come to this place		.630						
Abundant recommendation		.674						
Fair image about the destination		.505						
Effortless search		.676						
Long desire to come		.507						
Easy Movement	.335	.348						
Convenience of Infrastructure								
Information on the internet			.505					
Great connectivity to the destination			.519					
No Power-Cut			.406					
Easy to book			.713					
Online Payment			.679					
Easy to find accommodation			.469					
Cash available			.523					
Convenience of Food								
Choice of food				.814				
Affordable Food & Beverages				.776				
Excellent Food				.714				
Suitable accommodation	.466			.475				
Benefit Convenience								
Field operators available					.795			
Knowledgeable operators					.782			
Choice of Souvenir					.542			
Choice of activity					.594			
Tourists inflow will affect the place					.405	.355		
Convenience of Network								
Satisfactory mobile network						.907		
Fast internet						.889		
Convenience of Hygiene								
Clean Public Toilets							.684	
Overall hygiene							.545	
Off-season visit is possible			.237	.335			.517	
Access Convenience								
Reasonable time to reach								.645
Enjoyable journey to the destination								.694

Depending on the indications and hints from allotted raw variables we have renamed the 8 factors as shown in Table 5.15. Renaming of the derived factors is a subjective exercise, and we do not have any robust procedure for such names, except for the fact that these names would somehow represent the consisting variables. We have calculated the Cronbach's Alpha for each of the factors taking the constituting raw variables to check the reliability of each of the 8 dimensions. The reliability scores are reproduced in Table 5.16.

Table 5.16: Cronbach's Alpha Value for Initial Factors		
Factors	**Number of variables allotted**	**Cronbach's Alpha**
Convenience of Enjoyment	7	.876
Convenience of Decision	6	.720
Convenience of Infrastructure	7	.778
Convenience of Food	4	.771
Benefit Convenience	5	.747
Convenience of Network	2	.921
Convenience of Hygiene	3	.567
Access Convenience	2	.655
Total	**36***	**.783**
The variable " Foreign Currency Conversion OK" is not considered for this analysis		

However, while measuring the reliability scores it is seen that when certain items are deleted from their respective factor, the reliability score goes up. For example, if the item "suitable accommodation" from Convenience of Food is added to Convenience of Enjoyment factor, the Cronbach's Alpha value rises from .876 to .879, and the same for Convenience of Food goes up to .812 from .771. Similarly, the reliability score for Convenience of Hygiene jumps up to .723 from .567 if the item "off-season visit" is added to the Convenience of Infrastructure (the score for which goes marginally down from .778 to .777). Therefore, we have decided to reallocate these few variables with the sole aim of generating a higher reliability score. The final factors with the revised Cronbach's Alpha values are shown in Table 5.17.

Table 5.17: Final Principal Component Analysis Results with Improved Cronbach's Alpha Scores									
Variables *(The names of the factors as shown in **bold** are subjective, and manually allotted keeping in mind the consisting variables)*	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**Cronbach's Alpha**
Convenience of Enjoyment *(8 variables)*									
Courteous locals in the destination	.427								.879
The destination is fully safe	.544								
Full enjoyment during the stay	.744								
A fun stay at the destination	.796								
Destination made me happy	.816								
Repeat visit to the destination	.733								
Recommendation to others	.773								
Suitable Accommodation	.466								
Convenience of Decision *(6 variables)*									
Easy decision to come to this place		.630							.720
Abundant recommendation		.674							
Fair image about the destination		.505							
Effortless search		.676							
Long desire to come		.507							
Easy Movement		.348							
Convenience of Infrastructure *(8 variables)*									
Information on the internet			.505						.777
Great connectivity to the destination			.519						
No Power-Cut			.406						
Easy to book			.713						
Online Payment			.679						
Easy to find accommodation			.469						
Cash available			.523						
Off-season visit is possible			.237						

Table 5.17: Final Principal Component Analysis Results with Improved Cronbach's Alpha Scores									
Variables (The names of the factors as shown in **bold** are subjective, and manually allotted keeping in mind the consisting variables)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	**Cronbach's Alpha**
Convenience of Food (3 variables)									
Choice of food				.814					
Affordable Food & Beverages				.776					**.812**
Excellent Food				.714					
Benefit Convenience (5 variables)									
Field operators available					.795				
Knowledgeable operators					.782				
Choice of Souvenir					.542				**.747**
Choice of activity					.594				
Tourists inflow will affect the place					.405				
Convenience of Network (2 variables)									
Satisfactory mobile network						.907			**.921**
Fast internet						.889			
Convenience of Hygiene (2 variables)									
Clean Public Toilets							.684		**.723**
Overall hygiene							.545		
Access Convenience (2 variables)									
Reasonable **t**ime to reach								.645	**.655**
Enjoyable journey to the destination								.694	
Green shaded box indicates improved reliability score								**Total**	**.753**

We have seen that all the factors have a reliability score of more than 0.7, which is considered to be good;even when according to Taber (2018) researchers consider as low as .58 as satisfactory. The individual factors as well as the overall reliability scores are found within the acceptable range indicating the successful completion of the exploratory factor analysis (EFA) stage. It is noticed that in a few cases we have taken loadings less than 0.5 into considertion, which many researchers feel inappropriate. Here we want to submit that the job of this analysis is *not* to reduce the number of dimensions or variables as such, but the major aim is to generate acceptable weight for each of these factors. Therefore, we cannot afford to leave out even a single factor for want of acceptable value of loading.

5.5.3 Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA):

After conducting the EFA, the model fit for the data is tested using CFA with Analysis of a Moment Structures (AMOS). The standardized regression weights or the factor loadings of each of the items on the factors generated are shown in Table 5.18.

Table 5.18: Estimates from Confirmatory Factor Analysis		
Variables	**Factor Loadings**	**Squared Factor Loadings**
Convenience of Enjoyment		
Courteous locals in the destination	.567	**.322**
The destination is fully safe	.650	**.423**
Full enjoyment during the stay	.797	**.635**
A fun stay at the destination	.754	**.569**
Destination made me happy	.701	**.492**
Repeat visit to the destination	.701	**.491**
Recommendation to others	.764	**.584**

Table 5.18: Estimates from Confirmatory Factor Analysis		
Variables	**Factor Loadings**	**Squared Factor Loadings**
Suitable Accommodation	.612	**.375**
Convenience of Decision		
Easy decision to come to this place	.533	**.284**
Abundant recommendation	.659	**.434**
Fair image about the destination	**.389**	.151
Effortless search	.559	**.312**
Long desire to come	.554	**.307**
Easy Movement	.623	**.388**
Convenience of Infrastructure		
Information on the internet	.560	**.313**
Great connectivity to the destination	**.483**	.234
No Power-Cut	.550	**.303**
Easy to book	.706	**.499**
Online Payment	.578	**.334**
Easy to find accommodation	.672	**.452**
Cash available	.550	**.303**
Off-season visit is possible	**.418**	.175
Convenience of Food		
Choice of food	.734	**.632**
Affordable Food & Beverages	.800	**.639**
Excellent Food	.734	**.538**
Benefit Convenience		
Field operators available	.646	**.418**
Knowledgeable operators	.656	**.430**
Choice of Souvenir	.700	**.490**
Choice of activity	.771	**.595**
Tourists inflow will affect the place	**.397**	.158
Convenience of Network		
Satisfactory mobile network	.898	**.806**
Fast internet	.967	**.936**
Convenience of Hygiene		
Clean Public Toilets	.707	**.499**
Overall hygiene	.884	**.782**
Access Convenience		
Reasonable time to reach	.711	**.506**
Enjoyable journey to the destination	.759	**.577**

According to Awang (2014), for scale items that have already been tested in the past literature should exhibit factor loadings 0.6 or more. However, for items that are newly developed for a study they should be 0.5 or greater. Here four items are seen to have factor loadings less than 0.5 – one each from benefit and decision convenience factor while two from the convenience of infrastructure factors. However, even in the presence of these factors the model fit indices generated from the data show a relatively good fit. The parameters that are most importantly used to determine the model fit are-

1. CMIN/DF- χ^2/df ratio or CMIN/DF indicates the difference between the expected and observed covariance matrices.

2. Goodness-of-Fit Index (GFI) – It is the amount of variance and covariance explained by the hypothesized model with a value ranging from 0 to 1 (Byrne, 2010).

3. Comparative-Fit-Index (CFI) - The CFI represents the overall improvement of the proposed model over the independent model where the observed variables are not correlated (Byrne, 2006).

4. Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) - This measures the error of approximation in the sample and is associated with the residuals in the model.

5. The Root Mean Square Residual (RMR) - Another index is the RMR representing the value of the average residual that is derived from the fitting of the variance-covariance matrix for the model.

The accepted values of these indices and the ones calculated from the analysis are given in Table 5.19 below.

Table 5.19: Model Fit Indices from Confirmatory Factor Analysis		
Model Fit Indices	Generally Accepted Value	Calculated Value
CMIN/DF	<3	2.892
GFI	>0.9	.807
CFI	>0.9	.844
RMSEA	<0.06	.072
RMR	<0.05	.245

It is seen that the CMIN/DF is in the range of accepted values and indicates a good fit. The RMSEA is also seen to be slightly above the range, and as per Kim et al. (2016) it can be considered an acceptable fit. Now for the GFI and CFI values, it is seen that they are below the accepted value of 0.9 and above 0.8, but according to Baumgartner & Homburg (1996) a value of GFI above 0.8 is acceptable. Also, the closer the value of CFI to 1 better it is, and hence it is thought that a score of .844 is acceptable. Overall, the measurement model can be considered to have a good fit. Figure 5.7 shows the model created during the CFA.

5.5.4 Validity:

The reliability of each item has been checked in the previous section and is found to have acceptable values for them. However, Creswell (2009) stated that reliability is a necessary condition but not a sufficient condition to determine the goodness of measure. Ensuring the validity of the items is equally important. In this section we are checking the construct validity of the scales developed using widely accepted method given by Fornell & Lacker (1981). The measurement of construct validity consists of two stages- measuring convergent validity using the method of Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and Composite Reliability (CR). Discriminant

validity is measured by using the square root value of the AVE for each factor (Ugwu & Ekere, 2018). Table 5.20 shows the values of AVE and CR for each factor. The formula for calculating the two are-

$$AVE = \Sigma \lambda^2/n$$

where, λ= standardized factor loading

n= total number of items

and,

$$CR = (\sum_{i=1}^{n} \lambda i)^2/(\sum_{i=1}^{n} \lambda i)^2 + (\sum_{i=1}^{n} \in i)$$

Where, λ_i= standardized factor loading for the ith term

$\in_i$= variance of the error term for the ith item

Table 5.20: Average Variance Extracted and Composite Reliability Scores for the Factors			
Variables	**N**	**AVE**	**CR**
Convenience of Enjoyment	8	0.48	0.88
Convenience of Decision	6	0.31	0.72
Convenience of Infrastructure	8	0.32	0.79
Convenience of Food	3	0.57	0.80
Benefit Convenience	5	0.41	0.77
Convenience of Network	2	0.87	0.93
Convenience of Hygiene	2	0.64	0.77
Access Convenience	2	0.54	0.70

Though generally it is believed that AVE scores above 0.5 are accepted, Fornell & Larcker (1981) suggested that a value of less than 0.5 can also be accepted if the CR score for the same is more than 0.6. Here it is seen that the AVE scores are less than 0.5 for four factors - Convenience of Enjoyment, Convenience of Decision, Convenience of Infrastructure, and Benefit Convenience; but for all of these values of CR in the adjacent column are more than 0.6. Thus, it can be concluded that the construct validity holds good for the factors.
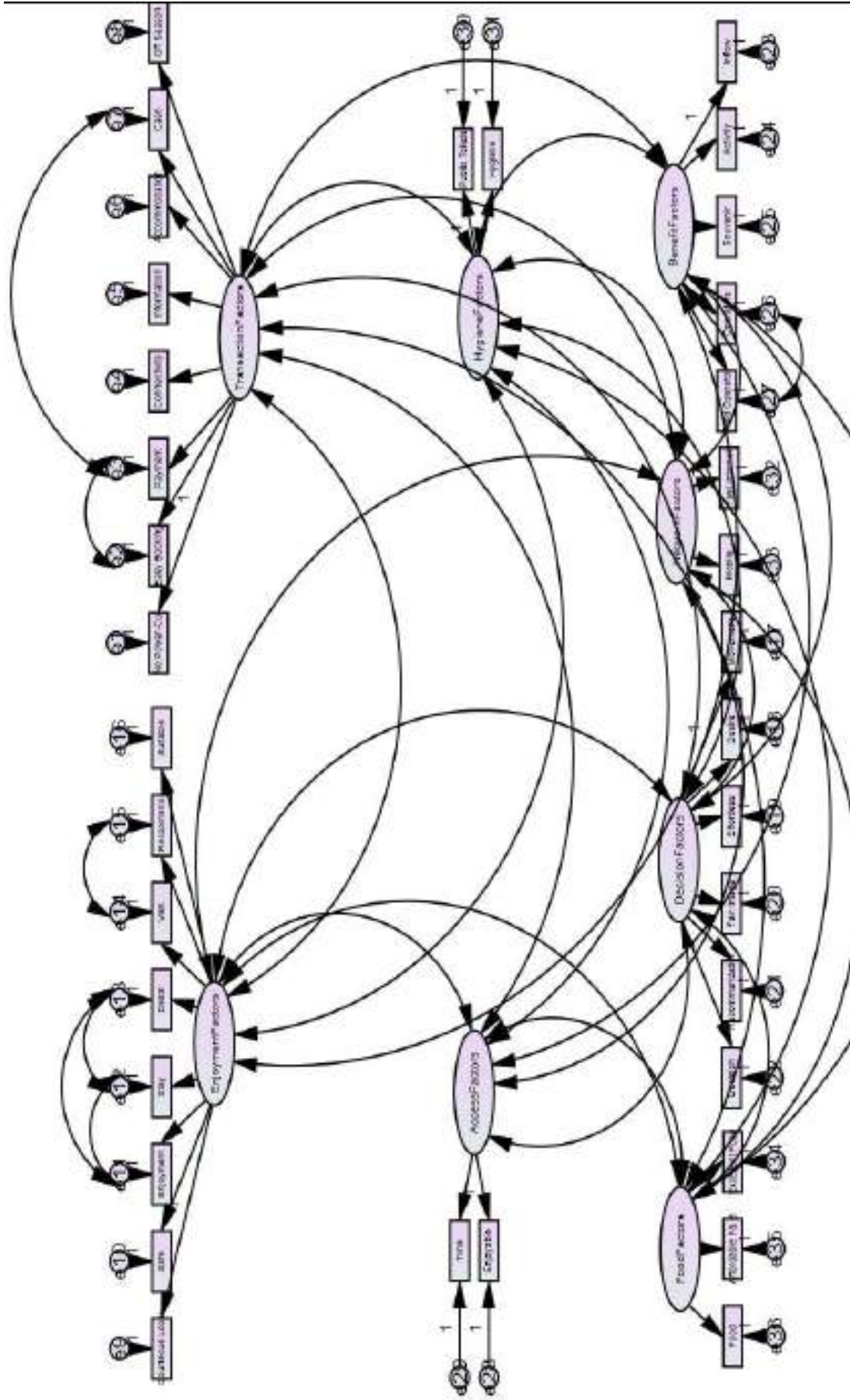
Figure 5.7: The Measurement Model

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In order to determine discriminant validity, the squared AVE values are required to be calculated. If the square root value of the AVE of a particular variable is greater than the correlation that it holds with the rest of the variables of the scale then it can be inferred that the discriminant validity holds (Fornell & Lacker (1981). These values for the factors are given in Table 5.21 below.

The comparison is offered in Table 5.21. It is seen the squared AVE value for each of the factors is greater than it is correlation value with the others. Hence, discriminant validity holds and it can thus be concluded that the factors and data structure complete the stages of reliability and validity. The study can thus proceed with using the resultant data for achieving the objectives as required.

Table 5.21: Correlations and Square Root Average Variance Extracted Scores									
Factors	Convenience of				Benefit Convenience	Convenience of		Access Convenience	Square root AVE
	Enjoyment	Decision	Infrastructure	Food		Network	Hygiene		
Convenience of Enjoyment	1								*0.69*
Convenience of Decision	.428	1							*0.55*
Convenience of Infrastructure	.512	.535	1						*0.56*
Convenience of Food	.473	.265	.432	1					*0.75*
Benefit Convenience	.581	.425	.514	.375	1				*0.64*
Convenience of Network	.171	.189	.416	.199	.173	1			*0.93*
Convenience of Hygiene	.415	.247	.325	.162	.327	.138	1		*0.80*
Access Convenience	.371	.483	.395	.233	.339	.148	.252	1	*0.73*

From the above discussion we can safely assign individual weight to the variables measured through the Tourists Survey. We have discussed the rationale of doing so in the Methodology Chapter (Section 4.4.2).

With the data from Table 5.18 we have generated a new table (Table 5.22) that provides us the individual weight for the raw variables.

#	Factor name	Variables	Weight assigned (Squared Factor Loadings)
		Table 5.22: Assigning Weight to Variables	
1.	**Convenience of Enjoyment**	Courteous locals in the destination	.322
2.		The destination is fully safe	.423
3.		Full enjoyment during the stay	.635
4.		A fun stay at the destination	.569
5.		Destination made me happy	.492
6.		Repeat visit to the destination	.491
7.		Recommendation to others	.584
8.		Suitable Accommodation	.375
9.	**Convenience of Decision**	Easy decision to come to this place	.284
10.		Abundant recommendation	.434
11.		Fair image about the destination	.151
12.		Effortless search	.312
13.		Long desire to come	.307
14.		Easy Movement	.388
15.	**Convenience of Infrastructure**	Information on the internet	.313
16.		Great connectivity to the destination	.234
17.		No Power-Cut	.303
18.		Easy to book	.499
19.		Online Payment	.334
20.		Easy to find accommodation	.452
21.		Cash available	.303
22.		Off-season visit is possible	.175
23.	**Convenience of Food**	Choice of food	.632
24.		Affordable Food & Beverages	.639
25.		Excellent Food	.538
26.	**Benefit Convenience**	Field operators available	.418
27.		Knowledgeable operators	.430
28.		Choice of Souvenir	.490
29.		Choice of activity	.595
30.		Tourists inflow will affect the place	.158
31.	**Convenience of Network**	Satisfactory mobile network	.806
32.		Fast internet	.936
33.	**Convenience of Hygiene**	Clean Public Toilets	.499
34.		Overall hygiene	.782
35.	**Access Convenience**	Reasonable time to reach	.506
36.		Enjoyable journey to the destination	.577

The 37th variable, that deals with foreign exchange convesion, which is kept away from the purview of the above analysis due to low response rate will be weighted *as it is* after getting triangulated as per Mapping 13 shown in Figure3.7D.

5.6 Next Course of Action:

We use these weight in order to merge the variable scores for creation of factor wise comprehensive scores. As discussed in Methodology we first go for triangulation of the scores generated from the tourist survey (with the supply side scores), whenever necessary. After that the resultant scores are assigned weight as per Table 5.22. The weighted scores are then put in the formula given in Equation 1 (of Section 3.4.2) to calculate destination-wise

Comprehensive Scores of each of the 8 factors. Then we determine the destination-wise Final Comprehensive Score for all factors using the formula given in Equation 2. After that we derive the Comprehensive Score for the Unmapped Variables (12 in number) using Equation 3 for each destination. Finally, we calculate the Tourism Convenience Index for each of the destinations using Equation 4.

We are offering the above in Chapter 6, which is the next chapter.

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Chapter 6

THE FINAL INDEX

We have collected data from three different sources – field visits to the destinations, in-depth interviews, and tourist survey. The respective data are analysed in Chapters 4 and 5. We have broadly determined the following till now.

1. The scores for each destination on 6 broad variables from observations carried out in the field.

2. The destination wise scores for 27 variables generated from in-depth interviews conducted in respective destinations.

3. Scores for each destination on 37 variables measured through the tourist survey.

4. Weight for 36 tourist variables with respect to their allotted factors after arriving at 8 broad factors.

Now in order to arrive at the comprehensive Tourism Convenience Index as the first step, we need to triangulate the collected data following the procedure described in Methodology Chapter. This gives us a triangulated score. Then we need to allot the individual weight (wherever available) to the resultant variable score to generate the factor wise comprehensive scores. We then merge the factor wise comprehensive scores and the scores of the un-weighted variables (weight for which are not determined). Thus, we arrive at our desired destination wise Tourism Convenience Index. The whole process is described in this chapter.

6.1 Triangulation:

As the first step we now discuss the triangulation process. Triangulation is expected to give us a "balanced" score for the variables that are measured through multiple sources. We have already discussed the detail procedure of doing so in Section 3.4 in Methodology. Let us now proceed using the triangulation mapping shown in Figures 3.7A, 3.7B, 3.7C, and 3.7D.

The numbers that follow the variable names *within brackets* indicate Questionnaire *or* Schedule A number as the case may be.

6.1.1 Mapping 1:

Let us take the variables depicted Mapping 1, which is reproduced below.
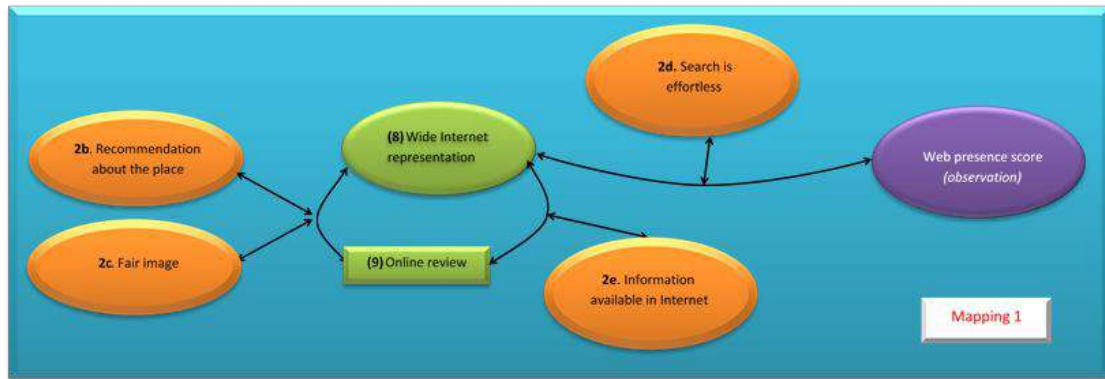
Since our aim is to allot weight wherever possible, we need to keep the tourist survey variables anchored. Thus, we try to generate the triangulated scores for the following 4 variables *(shown in orange colour in the diagram above)* from this mapping.

1. Recommendation about the place (2b).

2. Fair image (2c).

3. Search is effortless (2d).

4. Information available in internet (2e).

6.1.1.1 *Recommendation About the Place*: We get the triangulated score for this variable by merging it with the average score of *wide internet representation* (8), and *online review* (9) from the in-depth interviews. Table 6.1 shows the raw and triangulated scores. The table is compiled from Tables 5.7 and 4.15 shown in earlier chapters.

DESTINATION	Tourist Survey	In Depth Interview		D (Av. of B and C)	Final Triangulated Score
	Abundant Recommendation	Destination in internet	Available Online reviews		
	A	B	C		Av. ofA and D
DIBRUGARH	7.511	6.154	6.231	6.192	6.852
SUALKUCHI	8.65	9.000	10.000	9.500	9.075
TEZPUR	7.816	6.250	6.500	6.375	7.096
SIVASAGAR	8.208	8.182	9.545	8.864	8.536
GOALPARA	8.367	6.200	5.000	5.600	6.984
GUWAHATI	8.364	7.289	7.389	7.339	7.852
HAFLONG	8.375	7.200	5.000	6.100	7.238
KAZIRANGA	8.622	6.143	7.107	6.625	7.624
MAJULI	7.021	7.833	8.333	8.083	7.552
MANAS	8.58	4.500	6.667	5.584	7.082

Table: 6.1: Triangulated Score of Abundant Recommendation(2b)

6.1.1.2 *Fair Image*: Fair image is also triangulated with the two variables namely, *wide internet representation* (8), and *online review* (9) measured through in-depth interviews. The triangulation is shown in Table 6.2. This table is also collated from Table 5.7, and Table 4.15.

Table 6.2: Triangulated Score of Fair Image (2c)					
DESTINATION	**Tourist Survey**	**In Depth Interview**		*D* (Av. of B and C)	**Final Triangulated Score**
	Fair image	Destination in internet	Available Online reviews		
	A	*B*	*C*		*Av. ofA and D*
DIBRUGARH	7.760	6.154	6.231	6.193	**6.976**
SUALKUCHI	8.600	9.000	10.000	9.500	**9.050**
TEZPUR	7.458	6.250	6.500	6.375	**6.917**
SIVASAGAR	7.413	8.182	9.545	8.864	**8.138**
GOALPARA	7.959	6.200	5.000	5.600	**6.780**
GUWAHATI	7.545	7.289	7.389	7.339	**7.442**
HAFLONG	6.550	7.200	5.000	6.100	**6.325**
KAZIRANGA	7.439	6.143	7.107	6.625	**7.032**
MAJULI	6.960	7.833	8.333	8.083	**7.522**
MANAS	7.980	4.500	6.667	5.584	**6.782**

6.1.1.3 *Effortless Search:* As depicted in Mapping 1 of Figure 3.7A, *effortless search* is measured through *wide representation in the Internet* (# 8 in in-depth interviews) and *web presence* score (measured through observation) also. In order to arrive at the triangulated score for *effortless search* we have compiled Table 6.3 with data from Table 5.7, Table 4.15 and 4.13B.

Table 6.3: Triangulated Score of Effortless Search (2d)				
DESTINATION	**Tourist Survey**	**In Depth Interview**	**Observation**	**Final Triangulated Score**
	Effortless Search	Destination in internet	Web presence	Av. of A, B and C
	A	*B*	*C*	
DIBRUGARH	7.796	6.154	6.340	**6.763**
SUALKUCHI	8.925	9	6.275	**8.067**
TEZPUR	7.878	6.25	7.353	**7.160**
SIVASAGAR	8.122	8.182	7.543	**7.949**
GOALPARA	8.388	6.2	5.126	**6.571**
GUWAHATI	8.378	7.289	7.299	**7.655**
HAFLONG	7.725	7.2	7.983	**7.636**
KAZIRANGA	8.455	6.143	8.823	7.807
MAJULI	6.98	7.833	7.176	**7.330**
MANAS	8.188	4.5	5.686	**6.125**

6.1.1.4 *Information Available in the Internet:* This variable of tourist survey is to be triangulated with *Wide internet representation* (8), and *Online review* (9). A new table (Table 6.4) is compiled in order to calculate the triangulated scores. Table 6.4 is generated from the data presented in Table 5.7 and 4.15.

Table 6.4: Triangulated Score of Information in Internet (2e)					
	Tourist Survey	In Depth Interview		Av. Of B and C	Final Triangulated Score
DESTINATION	Information in Internet	Destination in internet	AvailableOnline reviews		
	A	B	C	D	Av. ofA and D
DIBRUGARH	7.143	6.154	6.231	6.192	**6.668**
SUALKUCHI	8.487	9	10	9.500	**8.994**
TEZPUR	8.122	6.25	6.5	6.375	**7.249**
SIVASAGAR	7.727	8.182	9.545	8.864	**8.295**
GOALPARA	8.12	6.2	5	5.600	**6.860**
GUWAHATI	8.424	7.289	7.389	7.339	**7.882**
HAFLONG	6.275	7.2	5	6.100	**6.188**
KAZIRANGA	8.571	6.143	7.107	6.625	**7.598**
MAJULI	7.122	7.833	8.333	8.083	**7.603**
MANAS	7.435	4.5	6.667	5.584	**6.509**

6.1.2 Mapping 2:

Here we take the triangulation Mapping 2 (Figure 3.7A). The same is reproduced below.
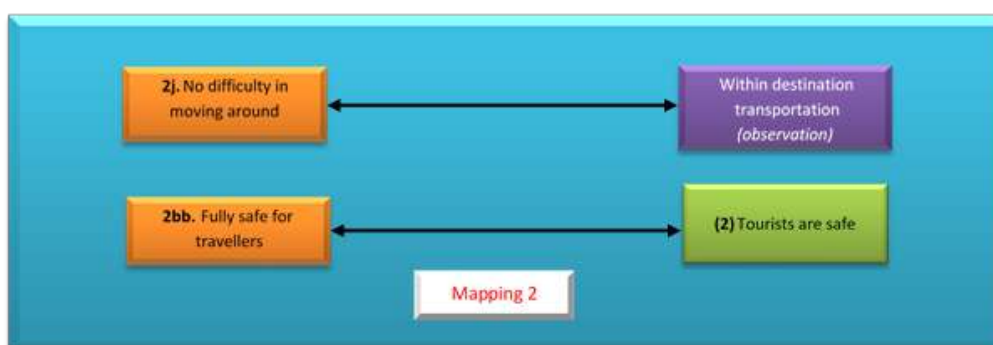
The tourist survey variable *no difficulty in moving around* (2j) and *fully safe for travellers* are linked to *within destination transportation* (observation) and *tourists are safe* (in-depth interview-2) respectively. We have calculated the triangulated scores for the tourist survey variables as shown below.

6.1.2.1 *Easy Movement*: This variable from tourist survey (#2j) is to be triangulated with *within destination transportation* (measured through observation). We have used the data from Tables 5.9, and Table 4.13B. The resultant Table 6.5 is shown below.

Table 6.5: Triangulated Score of Easy Movement (2j)			
	Tourist Survey	Observation	Final Triangulated Score
DESTINATION	Easy Movement	Transportation within	
	A	B	Av. of A and B
DIBRUGARH	7.875	7.111	**7.493**
SUALKUCHI	8.769	6.667	**7.718**
TEZPUR	8.042	8	**8.021**
SIVASAGAR	8.34	9.294	**8.817**

Table 6.5: Triangulated Score of Easy Movement (2j)			
DESTINATION	**Tourist Survey**	**Observation**	**Final Triangulated Score**
	Easy Movement	Transportation within	
	A	*B*	*Av. of A and B*
GOALPARA	8.208	7.500	**7.854**
GUWAHATI	8.214	8.045	**8.130**
HAFLONG	7.625	7.714	**7.670**
KAZIRANGA	8.404	10	**9.202**
MAJULI	8.02	6.8	**7.410**
MANAS	8.304	5.333	**6.819**

6.1.2.2 *Safe for Travellers*: In order to cross check *safety of travellers* we triangulate this variable with in-depth interview variable *tourist are safe*. The Table 6.6 is produced from data generated from Tables 5.11 and 4.15.

Table 6.6: Triangulated Score of Safe for Travellers (2bb)			
DESTINATION	**Tourist Survey**	**In Depth Interview**	**Final Triangulated Score**
	Fully Safe	Tourists are safe	
	A	*B*	*Av. of A and B*
DIBRUGARH	8.438	9.231	**8.835**
SUALKUCHI	9.222	10	**9.611**
TEZPUR	8.48	8.6	**8.540**
SIVASAGAR	8.62	8.7	**8.660**
GOALPARA	8.133	8.7	**8.417**
GUWAHATI	9.101	9.237	**9.169**
HAFLONG	8.325	9.8	**9.063**
KAZIRANGA	9.03	9.071	**9.051**
MAJULI	8.68	9.143	**8.912**
MANAS	8.694	8.875	**8.785**

6.1.3 Mapping 3:

The next triangulation is to be done on variables *satisfactory mobile network* (2k) and *fast internet access* (2l) which are measured through tourist survey. The triangulations are done as per the diagram (Mapping 3) reproduced below from Figure 3.7B.
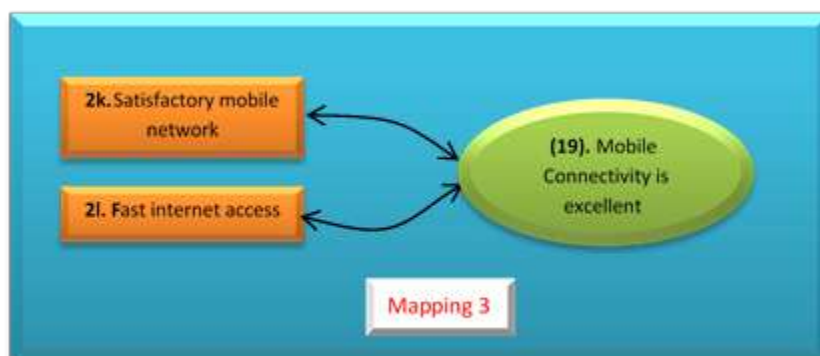
Here we need to merge both the variables independently with *excellent mobile connectivity* from in-depth interview. The results are shown in Tables 6.7 and 6.8. For both the tables input is taken from Tables 5.9 and 4.15.

Table 6.7: Triangulated Score of Satisfactory Mobile (2k)			
DESTINATION	**Tourist Survey**	**In Depth Interview**	**Final Triangulated Score**
	Satisfactory Mobile	Mobile connectivity	
	A	*B*	*Av of A &B*
DIBRUGARH	7.681	7.423	**7.552**
SUALKUCHI	8.625	10	**9.313**
TEZPUR	6.449	7.8	**7.125**
SIVASAGAR	7.694	7.455	**7.575**
GOALPARA	8.36	5.6	**6.980**
GUWAHATI	6.89	7.737	**7.314**
HAFLONG	5.575	6	**5.788**
KAZIRANGA	7	7	**7.000**
MAJULI	6.22	5.571	**5.896**
MANAS	4.122	4.5	**4.311**

Table 6.8: Triangulated Score of Fast Internet (2l)			
DESTINATION	**Tourist Survey**	**In Depth Interview**	**Final Triangulated Score**
	Fast Internet	Mobile connectivity	
	A	*B*	*Av. of A and B*
DIBRUGARH	7.438	7.423	**7.431**
SUALKUCHI	8.342	10	**9.171**
TEZPUR	5.878	7.8	**6.839**
SIVASAGAR	7.563	7.455	**7.509**
GOALPARA	7.878	5.6	**6.739**
GUWAHATI	6.89	7.737	**7.314**
HAFLONG	5.6	6	**5.800**
KAZIRANGA	6.343	7	**6.672**
MAJULI	5.694	5.571	**5.633**
MANAS	3.163	4.5	**3.832**

6.1.4 Mapping 4- Connectivity to Destination:

We now proceed to the next triangulation (Mapping 4) where tourist variable *connectivity to the destination* (2g) is compared to observation variable *convenience of travelling*. Input from the two variables is taken from Tables 4.13B and 5.10.

Table 6.9: Triangulated Score of Connectivity to Destination (2g)			
DESTINATION	**Tourist Survey**	**Observation**	**Final Triangulated Score**
	Great Connectivity	Convenience of travelling	
	A	*B*	*Av. of A and B*
DIBRUGARH	7.898	10	**8.949**
SUALKUCHI	8.59	3	**5.795**
TEZPUR	6.66	6	**6.330**
SIVASAGAR	7.5	6	**6.750**

GOALPARA	8.02	6	**7.010**
GUWAHATI	8.677	10	**9.339**
HAFLONG	6.575	6	**6.288**
KAZIRANGA	8.394	6	**7.197**
MAJULI	6.86	3	**4.930**
MANAS	7.571	6	**6.786**

6.1.5 Mapping 5:

Here we take up 2 tourist variables – *availability of field level operators* (2m) and *knowledgeable field level operators* (2n) as per Mapping 5 (in Figure 3.7B).

6.1.5.1 *Availability of Field Level Operators*: This tourist variable is triangulated with 4 other variables namely, *availability of knowledgeable guides, availability of travel agents,* and *availability of skilled manpower* from in-depth interview and *availability of training centre* from observation. We take the tourist survey data from Table 5.9, in-depth interview input from Table 4.15 and observation data from Table 4.13B. With these data we prepare Table 6.10.

	Tourist Survey	In-depth Interview				Observation	Final Triangulated Score
DESTINATION	Field Operator Available	Knowledgeable tour guides	Travel agents' availability	Skilled manpower	Av. of B,C and D	Training Centre	
	A	B	C	D	E	F	*Av. of A, E and F*
DIBRUGARH	**5.667**	4.231	4.727	5.167	4.708	3	**4.458**
SUALKUCHI	**8**	7	5.5	10	7.500	0	**5.167**
TEZPUR	**7.388**	2.25	4.75	1.8	2.933	6	**5.440**
SIVASAGAR	**4.955**	5	7.5	2.3	4.933	3	**4.296**
GOALPARA	**7.761**	2.5	1	6.2	3.233	0	**3.665**
GUWAHATI	**7.589**	5	7.342	6.368	6.237	10	**7.942**
HAFLONG	**7.175**	5.1	2.2	5	4.100	0	**3.758**
KAZIRANGA	**8.255**	5.571	4.769	6.071	5.470	0	**4.575**
MAJULI	**7.204**	5.714	4.4	6.5	5.538	3	**5.247**
MANAS	**8.271**	4.25	6	4	4.750	0	**4.340**

Table 6.10: Triangulated Score of Availability of Field Operator (2m)

6.1.5.2 *Knowledgeable Operator:* We seek to compare and triangulate the variables *knowledgeable operator* (2n) and in-depth interview variable *knowledgeable tour guides* (4) in

this mapping. Table 6.11, which is shown below, is produced with data from Table 5.9 and Table 4.15.

Table 6.11: Triangulated Score of Knowledgeable Operator (2n)			
DESTINATION	**Tourist Survey**	**In Depth Interview**	**Final Triangulated Score**
	Knowledgeable operators	Knowledgeable tour guides	
	A	*B*	*Av. of A and B*
DIBRUGARH	**5.93**	4.231	**5.081**
SUALKUCHI	**7**	7	**7.000**
TEZPUR	**7.551**	2.25	**4.901**
SIVASAGAR	**5.756**	5	**5.378**
GOALPARA	**7.929**	2.5	**5.215**
GUWAHATI	**7.495**	5	**6.248**
HAFLONG	**7.2**	5.1	**6.150**
KAZIRANGA	**8.344**	5.571	**6.958**
MAJULI	**7.5**	5.714	**6.607**
MANAS	**8.313**	4.25	**6.282**

6.1.6 Mapping 6- Availability of Cash:

We now move on to the next triangulation, where two variables *no problem with cash* (tourist survey -2jj) and *ATMs are easily available* (in-depth interview) are triangulated as shown in Mapping 6 of Figure 3.7C. We have produced Table 6.12 with data from Tables 5.12 and 4.15.

Table 6.12: Triangulated Score of Cash OK (2jj)			
DESTINATION	**Tourist Survey**	**In Depth Interview**	**Final Triangulated Score**
	Cash OK	ATM accessibility	
	A	*B*	*Av. of A and B*
DIBRUGARH	**7.244**	3.75	**5.497**
SUALKUCHI	**9.435**	9	**9.218**
TEZPUR	**7.854**	6.9	**7.377**
SIVASAGAR	**8.674**	7.091	**7.883**
GOALPARA	**7.766**	4.6	**6.183**
GUWAHATI	**8.99**	7.333	**8.162**
HAFLONG	**4.2**	4	**4.100**
KAZIRANGA	**7.022**	3.75	**5.386**
MAJULI	**5.673**	5	**5.337**
MANAS	**3.902**	2	**2.951**

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6.1.7 Mapping 7- Choicest Activity:

Here we use Mapping 7 (of Figure 3.7C) to triangulate the tourist survey variable *activities of choice* (2aa) with *enjoyment of fulfilling activities* measured through in-depth interviews. Table 6.13 shows the calculation derived from input of Tables 4.15 and 5.11.

DESTINATION	Tourist Survey	In Depth Interview	Final Triangulated Score
	Choicest Activity	Enjoyment on activities	
	A	B	Av. of A and B
DIBRUGARH	6.936	8.731	**7.834**
SUALKUCHI	8.667	10	**9.334**
TEZPUR	7.16	7.2	**7.180**
SIVASAGAR	7.452	8.182	**7.817**
GOALPARA	7.511	8.25	**7.881**
GUWAHATI	7.663	7.5	**7.582**
HAFLONG	7.025	8.6	**7.813**
KAZIRANGA	8.01	8.357	**8.184**
MAJULI	7.306	8.571	**7.939**
MANAS	7.128	7.5	**7.314**

Table 6.13: Triangulated Score of Choicest Activities (2aa)

6.1.8 Mapping 8- Choicest Food:

Tourist survey variable *choicest food*(2s) is merged with *available food courts* and *availability of food stalls* measured through in-depth interviews and field observations, respectively.

Table 6.14 is compiled with the data from Tables 5.11, 4.13, and 4.13B.

DESTINATION	Tourist Survey	In Depth Interview	Observation	Final Triangulated Score
	Choicest Food	Food courts are available	Availability of food stalls	
	A	B	C	Av. of A, B and C
DIBRUGARH	7.56	5.231	6.667	**6.486**
SUALKUCHI	9.053	3.5	5	**5.851**
TEZPUR	7.12	6.6	8.333	**7.351**
SIVASAGAR	7.4	7.364	8.824	**7.863**

Table 6.14: Triangulated Score of Choicest Food (2s)

Table 6.14: Triangulated Score of Choicest Food (2s)				
DESTINATION	**Tourist Survey**	**In Depth Interview**	**Observation**	**Final Triangulated Score**
	Choicest Food	Food courts are available	Availability of food stalls	
	A	*B*	*C*	*Av. of A, B and C*
GOALPARA	7.816	5.6	4.286	**5.901**
GUWAHATI	7.08	6.842	7.727	**7.216**
HAFLONG	5.9	3.8	7.143	**5.614**
KAZIRANGA	7.36	7.5	8	**7.620**
MAJULI	7.48	3.786	7	**6.089**
MANAS	8.102	4.5	3.333	**5.312**

6.1.9 Mapping 9

6.1.9.1*Easy Accommodation*: We now take up another variable – *easy accommodation* (2v), which is measured through tourist survey to be triangulated with *no scarcity of accommodation* (In-depth interviews) and a*ccommodation diversity* (observation). This relationship is shown in Mapping 9 in Figure 3.7C which is reproduced below.
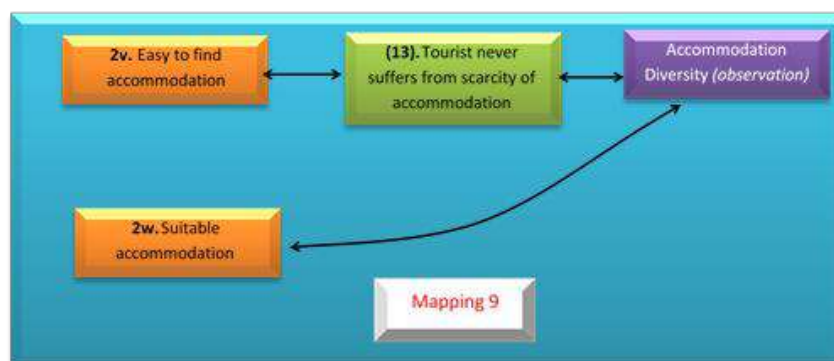
The inputs are taken from Tables 5.9, 4.13A and 4.15, and a new table (6.15) is prepared.

Table 6.15: Triangulated Score of Easy Accommodation (2v)				
DESTINATION	**Tourist Survey**	**In Depth Interview**	**Observation**	**Final Triangulated Score**
	Easy Accommodation	No lack of accommodation	Accommodation diversity	
	A	*B*	*C*	*Av. of A, B and C*
DIBRUGARH	8.021	7.813	2.713	**6.182**
SUALKUCHI	8.538	1	2.635	**4.058**
TEZPUR	8.143	5.25	6.090	**6.494**
SIVASAGAR	8.044	7.3	3.274	**6.206**
GOALPARA	7.611	9	0.938	**5.850**
GUWAHATI	8.173	7.556	7.481	**7.737**
HAFLONG	7.5	3.333	1.782	**4.205**
KAZIRANGA	8.537	8.036	5.843	**7.472**
MAJULI	7.891	2.8	1.677	**4.123**
MANAS	8.06	4.5	3.828	**5.463**

6.1.9.2 *Suitable Accommodation*: This variable (2w) of the tourist survey is linked to *accommodation diversity* (observation). We collected the data from Tables 5.9 and 4.13A and compiled the Table 6.16, which is given below.

DESTINATION	Tourist Survey	Observation	Final Triangulated Score
	Suitable Accommodation	Accommodation diversity	
	A	B	Av. of A and B
DIBRUGARH	8.146	2.713	5.430
SUALKUCHI	6.429	2.635	4.532
TEZPUR	8.14	6.090	7.115
SIVASAGAR	7.8	3.274	5.537
GOALPARA	7.324	0.938	4.131
GUWAHATI	7.879	7.481	7.680
HAFLONG	7.175	1.782	4.479
KAZIRANGA	8.511	5.843	7.177
MAJULI	8.28	1.677	4.979
MANAS	8.04	3.828	5.934

Table 6.16: Triangulated Score of Suitable Accommodation (2w)

6.1.10 Mapping 10- Public Toilets:

The next triangulation is among 3 variables –*clean public toilets* (tourist variable, 2x), *available public toilet* (in-depth interviews) and on site *rating of public toilets* (from observation). We produce Table 6.17 from inputs from Tables 5.10, 4.13B and 4.15.

DESTINATION	Tourist Survey	In Depth Interview	Observation	Final Triangulated Score
	Clean Public Toilets	Public toilets	Public toilet rating	
	A	B	C	Av. of A B and C
DIBRUGARH	5.932	2.417	1.444	3.264
SUALKUCHI	2.6	10	2.217	4.939
TEZPUR	6.292	2.8	2.942	4.011
SIVASAGAR	6.289	1.727	2.476	3.497
GOALPARA	6.022	5.2	2.557	4.593
GUWAHATI	6.463	4.222	4.395	5.027
HAFLONG	5.925	3.8	3.9	4.542
KAZIRANGA	7.154	3.714	5.340	5.403
-MAJULI	4.714	1.286	2.19	2.730
MANAS	5.535	2.5	0	2.678

Table 6.17: Triangulated Score of Public Toilet (2x)

6.1.11 Mapping 11- Off Season Visit:

We now take up mapping 11 from Figure 3.7D for triangulation. Here we have taken two variables- *off season visit* (from tourist survey, 2hh) and *slack season use of infrastructure* (in-depth interviews). A table (6.18) is prepared with inputs from Table 4.15 and 5.12.

Table 6.18: Triangulated Score of Off Season Visit (2hh)			
DESTINATION	**Tourist Survey**	**In Depth Interview**	**Final Triangulated Score**
	Off Season Visit	Profitable slack season	
	A	**B**	*Av. of A and B*
DIBRUGARH	6.417	6.071	**6.244**
SUALKUCHI	8.893	7.5	**8.197**
TEZPUR	7	9.25	**8.125**
SIVASAGAR	6.388	7	**6.694**
GOALPARA	7.447	1	**4.224**
GUWAHATI	6.899	6.182	**6.541**
HAFLONG	3.725	1	**2.363**
KAZIRANGA	5.784	4.3	**5.042**
MAJULI	7.327	4.333	**5.830**
MANAS	6.362	8	**7.181**

6.1.12 Mapping 12- Overall Hygiene:

Now we take up mapping 12, which is reproduced below.

Mapping 12
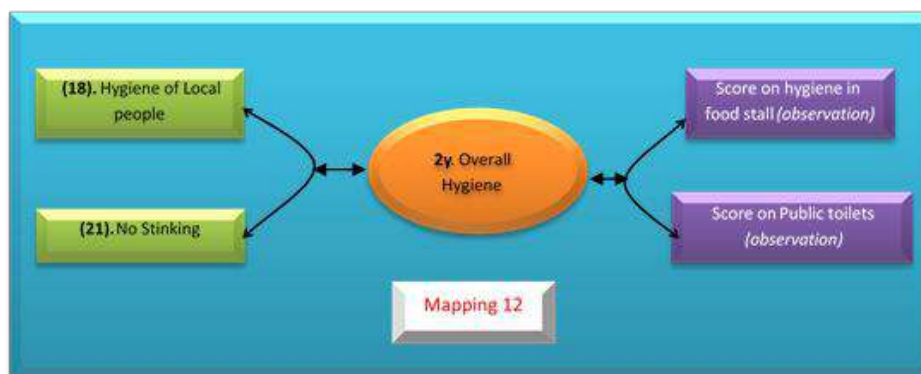
Here we take up 5 variables together. The calculation table is prepared with data from Tables 5.10 (*overall hygiene ok,* 2y), 4.13B (observation - *hygiene in food stalls, public toilet rating*), and 4.15 (in depth interviews-*hygiene of local people, no stinking smell)*. A new table (6.19) is prepared, which is given below.

Table 6.19: Triangulated Score of Overall Hygiene (2y)							
DESTINATION	**Tourist Survey**	**In Depth Interview**			**Observation**		**Final Triangulated Score**
	Hygiene OK	Local people hygienic	No stinking waste products	Av. of B and C	Food stall Hygiene	Public Toilet Rate	Av. of E and F	
	A	B	C	**D**	E	F	**G**	*Av. of A, D and G*
DIBRUGARH	7.49	6.154	6.083	*6.119*	5	1.444	*3.222*	**5.610**
SUALKUCHI	7.571	9.25	5.5	*7.375*	2.933	2.217	*2.575*	**5.840**
TEZPUR	7.388	6.8	7.8	*7.300*	4.465	2.942	*3.704*	**6.131**
SIVASAGAR	6.762	3.182	1.909	*2.546*	4.593	2.476	*3.535*	**4.281**
GOALPARA	7.45	6.7	6	*6.350*	3.25	2.557	*2.904*	**5.568**

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Table 6.19: Triangulated Score of Overall Hygiene (2y)							
DESTINATION	Tourist Survey	In Depth Interview			Observation			Final Triangulated Score
	Hygiene OK	Local people hygienic	No stinking waste products	Av. of B and C	Food stall Hygiene	Public Toilet Rate	Av. of E and F	
	A	B	C	*D*	E	F	*G*	Av. of A, D and G
GUWAHATI	7.677	6.806	4.526	5.666	5.158	4.395	4.777	6.040
HAFLONG	7.3	7	8.6	7.800	2.94	3.9	3.420	6.173
KAZIRANGA	7.909	6.857	7.714	7.286	6.325	5.34	5.833	7.009
MAJULI	6.62	5.429	9	7.215	4.293	2.19	3.242	5.692
MANAS	7.531	6.25	8.25	7.250	7.6	0	3.800	6.194

6.1.13 Mapping 13- Forex Conversion:

Now we take up the tourist survey variable *foreign currency conversion OK*, which is triangulated with in-depth interview variable *foreign exchange facility*. We could not get enough response on this variable in two destinations namely, Goalpara and Manas. We collated the data from Tables 5.12 and 4.15 to make a new table (6.20), which is presented below.

Table 6.20: Triangulated Score of Foreign Currency Conversion (2kk)			
DESTINATION	Tourist Survey	In Depth Interview	Final Triangulated Score
	Forex Conversion OK	Foreign exchange facility	
	A	B	Av. ofA and B
DIBRUGARH	5.176	1.95	3.563
SUALKUCHI	-	1	1.000
TEZPUR	4.429	3.5	3.965
SIVASAGAR	7.5	1.375	4.438
GOALPARA	-	-	-
GUWAHATI	5.667	4.393	5.030
HAFLONG	-	1	1.000
KAZIRANGA	4.7	4.917	4.809
MAJULI	6.538	5.5	6.019
MANAS	4.333	-	4.333

6.1.14 Mapping 14- Choicest Souvenir:

The final triangulation is to be done between tourist survey variable *choicest souvenir* and observation variable *availability of souvenir stalls*. We have taken the data from Tables 5.11 and 4.13B. The resultant table (6.21) is shown below.

Table 6.21: Triangulated Score of Souvenir Stalls (2z)			
DESTINATION	**Tourist Survey**	**Observation**	**Final Triangulated Score**
	Choicest Souvenir	Availability of souvenir stalls	
	A	*B*	*Av. of A and B*
DIBRUGARH	5.826	3.333	**4.580**
SUALKUCHI	6.5	5	**5.750**
TEZPUR	7.149	4.167	**5.658**
SIVASAGAR	7.538	1.765	**4.652**
GOALPARA	6.902	1.429	**4.166**
GUWAHATI	7.516	4.545	**6.031**
HAFLONG	6.525	1.429	**3.977**
KAZIRANGA	8.022	4	**6.011**
MAJULI	6.96	5	**5.980**
MANAS	5.524	3.333	**4.429**

In the preceding section we have conducted 21 triangulations among 46 variables that are measured through three different methods. Table 6.21A lists all the variables taken for triangulationand the sources.

Table 6.21A: List of Triangulated Variables							
#	**Tourist Interview Variables**		**#**	**In-depth Interview Variables**		**#**	**Observation Variables**
1	Abundant Recommendation		1	Destination in internet		1	Web presence
2	Fair image		2	Available Online reviews		2	Transportation within
3	Effortless Search		3	Tourists are safe		3	Convenience of travelling
4	Information in Internet		4	Mobile connectivity		4	Training Centre
5	Easy Movement		5	Knowledgeable tour guides		5	Availability of food stalls
6	Fully Safe		6	Travel agents' availability		6	Accommodation diversity
7	Satisfactory Mobile		7	Skilled manpower		7	Public toilet rating
8	Fast Internet		8	ATM accessibility		8	Food stall Hygiene
9	Great Connectivity		9	Enjoyment on activities		9	Availability of souvenir stalls
10	Field Operator Available		10	Food courts are available			
11	Knowledgeable Operators		11	No lack of accommodation			
12	Cash OK		12	Public toilets			
13	Choicest Activity		13	Profitable slack season			
14	Choicest Food		14	Local people hygienic			
15	Easy Accommodation		15	No stinking waste products			
16	Suitable Accommodation		16	Foreign exchange facility			
17	Clean Public Toilets						
18	Off Season Visit						
19	Hygiene OK						
20	Forex Conversion OK*						
21	Choicest Souvenir						

In the following section the process of generating the factor-wise comprehensive scores is presented. The same is done following the methods discussed in Section 3.4.3 of the Methodology Chapter.

6.2 Calculation of Factor Wise Comprehensive Scores:

Out of 37 variables measured through the tourist survey 21 have been triangulated with data gathered through field level in-depth interviews and on-site observations. This has validated the data, and should be able to reduce inherent biasness, if any.

In Chapter 5 (Convenience of Tourist) we have generated weight for 36 tourist variables (barring Foreign Exchange), and allocated them to respective factors. Now that some scores are refined through triangulations, we are in a position to compile the factor scores with these 36 variables. 14 variables, which could not be assigned any weight are dealt with differently; and shall be taken up in a later section in this chapter. Our basic objective is to merge all variables in order to arrive at one comprehensive score. The formula (*Equation-1*) that is used for generating the factor wise scores for each destination is reproduced below.

$$\textit{Comprehensive Score for Factor } j = \frac{\sum(\bar{x}_{v_{ij}} \times L_{v_{ij}})}{\sum L_{v_{ij}}} \quad -- \quad Equation\ 1$$

Where,
$\bar{x}_{v_{ij}}$ = Triangulated/Average score of variable i for factor j
$L_{v_{ij}}$ = Squared Factor Loading of variable i of factor j
j = Number of Factors arrived at after CFA
i = Number of variables within Factor j

We are clear from the findings of Chapter 5 that 8 factors are generated from the data, and thus we need to arrive at 8 such comprehensive scores for each of the destinations.

6.2.1 Comprehensive Score for Factors:

The first task is to rearrange the average scores for each of the tourist survey variables using the triangulated scores, wherever available for each of the factors. Table 5.18 delineates the composition of the resultant factors and the individual weight for each variable within each factor. We are using this information for proceeding with the calculation of comprehensive scores.

6.2.1.1 *Convenience of Enjoyment (Factor 1):*

We have 8 variables allotted to the first factor- Convenience of Enjoyment. Out of these 2 variables are triangulated (Fully Safe *and* Suitable Accommodation). As discussed in Chapter 5, we have respective weight assigned (squared factor loading) against these 8 variables. Weighted average of the factor scores with the loading squares is calculated using Equation 1 as mentioned above. Table 6.22 shows the calculation.

DESTINATION	Courteous Local (2o)	Fully Safe (2bb)*	Full Enjoyment (2cc)	Fun Stay (2dd)	Destn Made Me Happy(2ee)	Repeat Visit (2ff)	Recommend to Others (2gg)	Suitable Accommodation (2w)*	Comprehensive Score 1**
Squared factor Loading	*0.322*	*0.423*	*0.635*	*0.569*	*0.492*	*0.491*	*0.584*	*0.375*	*Total Weight=3.891*
DIBRUGARH	2.846	3.737	5.146	4.552	4.113	4.016	4.859	2.036	**8.045**
SUALKUCHI	2.818	4.065	5.740	5.097	4.490	4.517	5.323	1.700	**8.674**
TEZPUR	2.846	3.612	5.372	4.757	4.346	4.128	5.092	2.668	**8.436**
SIVASAGAR	2.674	3.663	5.480	4.862	4.346	4.098	5.128	2.076	**8.308**
GOALPARA	2.711	3.560	4.994	4.552	3.967	3.970	4.913	1.549	**7.766**
GUWAHATI	2.895	3.878	5.514	4.741	4.289	4.311	5.390	2.880	**8.712**
HAFLONG	2.826	3.833	4.905	4.381	3.850	3.830	4.920	1.679	**7.768**
KAZIRANGA	3.073	3.828	5.676	5.043	4.640	4.478	5.554	2.691	**8.991**
MAJULI	2.950	3.770	5.262	4.854	4.320	4.134	5.104	1.867	**8.291**
MANAS	2.952	3.716	5.543	5.040	4.566	4.203	5.455	2.225	**8.661**
PANIMUR	2.447	3.469	5.504	4.837	4.772	4.419	5.256	3.000	**8.662**
UMRANGSO	2.576	3.299	5.271	4.837	4.280	4.272	5.314	2.700	**8.365**

Table 6.22: Comprehensive Score for Factor 1 -Convenience of Enjoyment

*All individual variable scores are already weighted. *Triangulated, ** Weighted average of variable scores*

Thus these 8 variables are merged as per the assigned weight and we arrive at a new comprehensive score (1) for Factor 1.

6.2.1.2 *Convenience of Decision (Factor 2):*

The second factor is Convenience of Decision, which consists of 6 variables. Out of these 4 variables (Abundant Recommendation, Fair Image, Effortless Search, *and* Easy Movement) are triangulated. We have used the same method for calculation of the comprehensive score. The calculations are shown in Table 6.23.

DESTINATION	Easy Decision (2d)	Abundant Recommendation* (2b)	Fair Image* (2c)	Effortless Search* (2d)	Long Desire (2f)	Easy Movement* (2j)	Comprehensive Score 2 **
Squared factorLoading	*0.284*	*0.434*	*0.151*	*0.312*	*0.307*	*0.388*	*Total Weight=1.876*
DIBRUGARH	2.334	2.974	1.053	2.110	1.999	2.907	**7.131**
SUALKUCHI	2.592	3.939	1.367	2.517	2.540	2.995	**8.501**
TEZPUR	2.346	3.079	1.044	2.234	2.345	3.112	**7.549**
SIVASAGAR	2.527	3.705	1.229	2.480	1.986	3.421	**8.181**
GOALPARA	2.448	3.031	1.024	2.050	2.437	3.047	**7.483**

Table 6.23: Comprehensive Score for Factor 2 -Convenience of Decision

Table 6.23: Comprehensive Score for Factor 2 -*Convenience of Decision*							
DESTINATION	**Easy Decision** (2a)	**Abundant Recommendation*** (2b)	**Fair Image*** (2c)	**Effortless Search*** (2d)	**Long Desire** (2f)	**Easy Movement*** (2j)	**Comprehensive Score 2 ****
Squared factorLoading	*0.284*	*0.434*	*0.151*	*0.312*	*0.307*	*0.388*	*Total Weight=***1.876**
GUWAHATI	2.530	3.408	1.124	2.388	2.360	3.154	**7.977**
HAFLONG	2.300	3.141	0.955	2.382	2.418	2.976	**7.555**
KAZIRANGA	2.413	3.309	1.062	2.436	2.779	3.570	**8.298**
MAJULI	2.340	3.278	1.136	2.287	2.002	2.875	**7.418**
MANAS	2.522	3.073	1.024	1.911	2.382	2.646	**7.227**
PANIMUR	2.613	3.212	1.208	2.714	2.456	3.298	**8.263**
UMRANGSO	2.556	3.646	1.102	2.527	2.395	3.104	**8.171**
All individual variable scores are already weighted. *Triangulated, ** Weighted average of variable scores							

6.2.1.3 *Convenience of Infrastructure (Factor 3):*

The next task is to merge the variables under Factor 3 – Convenience of Infrastructure that contains 8 individual variables. Out of these 5 (Information in Internet, Great Connectivity, Easy Accommodation, Cash OK, *and* Off-Season Visit) are triangulated. The results of the calculation are shown in Table 6.24 below.

Table 6.24: Comprehensive Score for Factor 3-*Convenience of Infrastructure*									
DESTINATION	**Information in Internet (2e)***	**Great Connectivity (2g)***	**No Power-Cut (2p)**	**Easy Booking (2q)**	**OK Online Payment (2r)**	**Easy Accommodation (2v)***	**Cash OK (2jj)***	**Off Season Visit (2hh)***	**Comprehensive score 3****
Squared factor Loading	*0.313*	*0.234*	*0.303*	*0.499*	*0.334*	*0.452*	*0.303*	*0.175*	*Total Weight=***2.613**
DIBRUGARH	2.087	2.094	2.315	3.937	2.672	2.794	1.666	1.093	**7.140**
SUALKUCHI	2.815	1.356	2.689	3.194	1.069	1.834	2.793	1.434	**6.576**
TEZPUR	2.269	1.481	2.183	4.175	2.427	2.935	2.235	1.422	**7.320**
SIVASAGAR	2.596	1.580	2.009	3.979	2.403	2.805	2.388	1.171	**7.245**
GOALPARA	2.147	1.640	2.360	3.845	2.443	2.644	1.873	0.739	**6.771**
GUWAHATI	2.467	2.185	2.486	4.342	2.903	3.497	2.473	1.145	**8.227**
HAFLONG	1.937	1.471	1.810	3.081	1.520	1.901	1.242	0.413	**5.119**
KAZIRANGA	2.378	1.684	2.513	4.323	2.530	3.377	1.632	0.882	**7.394**
MAJULI	2.380	1.154	1.894	3.493	2.079	1.863	1.617	1.020	**5.932**
MANAS	2.037	1.588	2.133	4.183	2.118	2.469	0.894	1.257	**6.383**
PANIMUR	2.723	1.755	2.222	3.792	1.971	3.164	1.727	1.085	**7.057**
UMRANGSO	2.191	1.474	1.818	3.293	2.004	3.526	1.364	0.963	**6.365**
All individual variable scores are already weighted. *Triangulated, ** Weighted average of variable scores									

6.2.1.4 *Convenience of Food (Factor 4):*

We have 3 variables under Convenience of Food, out of which one variable (Choicest Food) is triangulated. We have calculated the weighted average of these 3 variables in order to arrive at the Comprehensive Score. Table 6.25 shows the calculations.

Table 6.25: Comprehensive Score for Factor 4-*Convenience of Food*			
DESTINATION	Choicest Food *(2s)**	Affordable F& B*(2t)*	Excellent Food*(2u)*	**Comprehensive Score 4****
Squared factor Loading	*0.632*	*0.639*	*0.583*	*Total Weight=**1.854***
DIBRUGARH	4.099	5.255	4.781	**7.624**
SUALKUCHI	3.698	5.685	5.291	**7.915**
TEZPUR	4.646	5.419	4.746	**7.988**
SIVASAGAR	4.969	5.269	4.701	**8.058**
GOALPARA	3.729	4.729	4.543	**7.012**
GUWAHATI	4.561	4.709	4.529	**7.443**
HAFLONG	3.548	3.515	4.096	**6.019**
KAZIRANGA	4.816	5.016	4.681	**7.828**
MAJULI	3.848	5.074	4.676	**7.334**
MANAS	3.357	5.073	4.909	**7.195**
PANIMUR	3.982	4.090	4.256	**6.649**
UMRANGSO	3.982	3.515	4.256	**6.339**
*All individual variable scores are already weighted. *Triangulated* ** Weighted average of variable scores multiplied by respective loading square*			

6.2.1.5 *Benefit Convenience (Factor 5):*

Next step is to merge 5 variables put under Benefit Convenience, out of which only one variable (Inflow will Affect) is *not* triangulated. The calculation is shown in Table 6.26.

Table 6.26: Comprehensive Score for Factor5- *Benefit Convenience*					
DESTINATION	Field Operator Available (2m)*	Knowledgeable Operators (2n)*	Choicest Souvenir (2z)*	Choicest Activity (2aa)*	Inflow Will Affect (2ii)	**Comprehensive Score 5****
Squared factor loading	*0.418*	*0.43*	*0.49*	*0.595*	*0.158*	*Total Weight=**2.091***
DIBRUGARH	1.864	2.185	2.244	4.661	1.112	5.770
SUALKUCHI	2.160	3.010	2.818	5.553	1.440	7.164
TEZPUR	2.274	2.107	2.772	4.272	1.274	6.073
SIVASAGAR	1.796	2.313	2.279	4.651	1.060	5.786
GOALPARA	1.532	2.242	2.041	4.689	1.288	5.639
GUWAHATI	3.320	2.686	2.955	4.511	1.312	7.071
HAFLONG	1.571	2.645	1.949	4.648	1.193	5.742
KAZIRANGA	1.912	2.992	2.945	4.869	1.349	6.728
MAJULI	2.193	2.841	2.930	4.723	1.229	6.656
MANAS	1.814	2.701	2.170	4.352	1.190	5.847
PANIMUR	2.842	2.795	3.593	4.641	1.185	7.201
UMRANGSO	3.010	3.354	3.283	4.522	1.343	7.418
*All individual variable scores are already weighted. *Triangulated , ** Weighted average of variable scores*					

6.2.1.6 _Convenience of Network, and Convenience of Hygiene (Factor 6 &7):_

We are producing two tables below showing the calculations for factors 6 and 7. All 4 variables taken to arrive at the weighted averages are already triangulated.

	Table 6.27A: *Convenience of Network*			Table 6.27B: *Convenience of Hygiene*		
DESTINATION	Satisfactory Mobile*(2k)**	Fast Internet*(2l)**	**Comprehensive Score 6****	Clean Public Toilets*(2x)**	Hygiene OK*(2y)**	**Comprehensive Score 7****
Squared factor loading	0.806	0.936	*Total Weight=**1.742***	0.499	0.782	*Total Weight=**1.281***
DIBRUGARH	6.087	6.955	**7.487**	1.629	4.387	**4.696**
SUALKUCHI	7.506	8.584	**9.236**	2.465	4.567	**5.489**
TEZPUR	5.742	6.401	**6.971**	2.002	4.794	**5.305**
SIVASAGAR	6.105	7.028	**7.539**	1.745	3.347	**3.976**
GOALPARA	5.626	6.308	**6.851**	2.292	4.354	**5.188**
GUWAHATI	5.895	6.845	**7.314**	2.508	4.723	**5.645**
HAFLONG	4.665	5.429	**5.794**	2.266	4.828	**5.538**
KAZIRANGA	5.642	6.245	**6.823**	2.696	5.481	**6.383**
MAJULI	4.752	5.272	**5.754**	1.362	4.451	**4.538**
MANAS	3.475	3.586	**4.053**	1.336	4.843	**4.824**
PANIMUR	5.078	6.365	**6.569**	4.042	5.787	**7.673**
UMRANGSO	5.239	5.710	**6.285**	3.643	5.943	**7.483**
*All individual variable scores are already weighted. *Triangulated , ** Weighted average of variable scores*						

6.2.1.7 _Access Convenience (Factor 8):_

We finally present Table 6.28 with the calculation of comprehensive factor score for access convenience. Both the variables are related to accessibility of the destinations, and none are triangulated.

Table 6.28: Comprehensive Score for Factor 8-*Access Convenience*			
DESTINATION	Reach Time Reasonable *(2h)*	Enjoyable Journey *(2i)*	**Comprehensive Score 8****
Squared factor loading	0.506	0.577	*Total Weight=**1.083***
DIBRUGARH	3.614	4.201	**7.216**
SUALKUCHI	4.359	5.001	**8.643**
TEZPUR	3.614	4.651	**7.632**
SIVASAGAR	4.190	4.905	**8.397**
GOALPARA	4.099	4.824	**8.239**
GUWAHATI	3.869	5.007	**8.195**
HAFLONG	3.681	4.587	**7.635**
KAZIRANGA	3.942	4.887	**8.152**
MAJULI	3.390	4.535	**7.318**
MANAS	4.028	4.801	**8.152**
PANIMUR	3.795	4.789	**7.926**
UMRANGSO	3.289	4.847	**7.512**
*All individual variable scores are already weighted. *Triangulated , ** Weighted average of variable scores*			

6.3 Calculation of Final Comprehensive Factor Score:

We are now ready to find out the comprehensive score of all the eight factors together. In doing so we have used the formula shown in Equation- 2 in the Methodology Chapter, which is reproduced below.

$$\textbf{Final Comprehensive Factor Score (FCFS)} = \frac{\sum_{j=1}^{8} CFS_j \times TL_j}{\sum_{j=1}^{8} TL_j} \quad \text{--- } Equation\ 2$$

Where,

CFS_j= Comprehensive Factor Score for Factor j

TL_j= Total of squared factor loading within factor j

We have all the 8 factor wise comprehensive scores calculated in the above tables. All these 8 values for each of the destinations are shown in the table given below (Table 6.29) after been *multiplied* by the *total weight for the respective factor*. The right most column shows the weighted average for each of the destinations, and that gives us the final comprehensive factor score for each destination.

Table 6.29: Final Comprehensive Factor Scores									
DESTINATION	Convenience of Enjoyment	Convenience of Decision	Convenience of Infrastructure	Convenience of Food	Benefit Convenience	Convenience of Network	Convenience of Hygiene	Access Convenience	Final Comprehensive Factor Score (Weighted Average)
Total Squared Loadings per Factor →	*3.891*	*1.876*	*2.613*	*1.854*	*2.091*	*1.742*	*1.281*	*1.083*	*Total weighs of all factors= 16.431*
DIBRUGARH	31.305	13.378	18.657	14.135	12.065	13.042	6.016	7.815	**7.085**
SUALKUCHI	33.749	15.948	17.184	14.674	14.981	16.090	7.032	9.360	**7.852**
TEZPUR	32.823	14.161	19.128	14.810	12.699	12.144	6.796	8.265	**7.354**
SIVASAGAR	32.327	15.347	18.931	14.939	12.099	13.133	5.093	9.094	**7.362**
GOALPARA	30.216	14.038	17.692	13.001	11.792	11.934	6.646	8.922	**6.953**
GUWAHATI	33.899	14.965	21.497	13.799	14.784	12.740	7.231	8.876	**7.777**
HAFLONG	30.225	14.172	13.376	11.158	12.006	10.094	7.094	8.268	**6.475**
KAZIRANGA	34.984	15.568	19.320	14.513	14.068	11.887	8.177	8.829	**7.750**
MAJULI	32.260	13.917	15.499	13.597	13.917	10.024	5.813	7.925	**6.874**
MANAS	33.699	13.558	16.680	13.339	12.227	7.061	6.180	8.828	**6.790**
PANIMUR	33.703	15.501	18.439	12.327	15.057	11.443	9.829	8.584	**7.600**
UMRANGSO	32.549	15.330	16.632	11.752	15.512	10.949	9.586	8.136	**7.330**

6.4 Comprehensive Scores for Unmapped Variables:

In order to compile the comprehensive scores for the unmapped and unweighted variables we have used the same principle as above. We have 13 variables, measured through in-depth interview and observations which are *neither* triangulated *nor* weighted. We also have another triangulated variable (*foreign exchange conversion*) which is *not* weighted and merged with any factor. We take the arithmetic mean of these 14 variables' scores as described in different sections of Chapter 4 and Chapter 5. We have compiled Table 6.30 with this purpose.

It is to be noted here that we have compiled the comprehensive score only for the 10 major destinations. We could not do it for the 2 smaller destinations for want of enough in-depth interviews, as the destinations are only in the introduction stage. We could not generate credible data for Panimur and Umrangso through observations also. So, we have decided to keep these two destinations out of this analysis.

Relevant information and the calculation is offered in Table 6.30, which is given below.

	In-Depth Interviews											Tourist Survey	Observation		Comprehensive Score (Average)
DESTINATION	Safety of Business (1)	Effects of Bandhs and strikes on the tourism business (3)	Availability of unskilled manpower (7)	Availability of government support to entrepreneurs (10)	Support by Local authorities (11)	Rain water harvesting (20)	No use of plastic materials (22)	Use of reusable utensils throughout (23)	Nightlife is available (25)	Regular screening of documentaries (26)	Performance by local artists for tourists (27)	Foreign exchange conversion (triangulated) (37)	Rating on Room for Rest	Rating on Provision for Drinking Water	
DIBRUGARH	7.778	3.682	7.545	4.278	9.7	2.286	4.818	7.875	1	3.571	3	3.563	1.922	2.778	**4.557**
SUALKUCHI	8.25	9	10	6.75	10	1	8	8	1	1	3	1	2.35	6.667	**5.430**
TEZPUR	7.5	5.8	9	5.7	6.4	4	2.2	5.8	1	3	7.5	3.965	2.967	5.833	**5.047**
SIVASAGAR	7.75	1.889	9.375	6	9.667	2.143	2.287	8	1	1	3	4.438	2.335	3.529	**4.458**
GOALPARA	5	4.4	8.6	5.75	9.8	-	6.8	5.5	1	1	1.8	-	1.307	2.857	**4.485**
GUWAHATI	8.833	5.3	7.843	7	8.857	1.833	3.786	8	3.464	2.923	3.615	5.030	3.141	6.364	**5.428**
HAFLONG	8	2.4	7	8.75	9.4	1	7.8	8.6	1	1	2.8	1	3.443	1.429	**4.544**
KAZIRANGA	7.917	2.958	6.333	4.9	7.857	1.7	6.542	8.2	1.5	2.417	9.167	4.809	2.55	2.5	**4.954**
MAJULI	5.786	3.714	10	4.5	9	1	4.857	5.5	1	1.857	3.571	6.019	1.92	7	**4.695**
MANAS	7.5	4	8	4.25	9.5	5	7.5	5.5	1	3	3.5	4.333	0	0	**4.506**

Table 6.30: Comprehensive Score for Unweighted Variables

6.5 The Final Tourism Convenience Index:

We now merge the results from Table 6.29 and 6.30 by taking average and arrive at the Final Tourism Convenience Index for each of the major 10 tourist destinations of the state of Assam. We have compiled the available data (which are partial and encompassing only the tourist survey) to offer an indicative index for the remaining two emerging destinations (Umrangso and Panimur). The final index is shown in the extreme right column of Table 6.31.

	DESTINATION	Final Comprehensive Factor Score	Comprehensive Score for unweighted Variables	Final Tourism Convenience Index
	6.31: The Final Scores			
1	DIBRUGARH	7.085	4.557	**5.821**
2	SUALKUCHI	7.852	5.430	**6.641**
3	TEZPUR	7.354	5.047	**6.200**
4	SIVASAGAR	7.362	4.458	**5.910**
5	GOALPARA	6.953	4.485	**5.719**
6	GUWAHATI	7.777	5.428	**6.603**
7	HAFLONG	6.475	4.544	**5.510**
8	KAZIRANGA	7.750	4.954	**6.352**
9	MAJULI	6.874	4.695	**5.784**
10	MANAS	6.790	4.506	**5.648**
11	PANIMUR*	7.600	-	**7.600***
12	UMRANGSO*	7.330	-	**7.330***

We now present the Table in graphical form in Figure 6.1. Panimur and Umrangso are not seen in the diagram, as it will be unfair to compare them with major destinations. We have kept Sualkuchi and Haflong away from the bunch due to the fact that we consider these destinations mostly favourite among shoppers and business travellers (from the motive of visit). Therefore, its place should not be along with the other destinations popular among leisure travellers.

Figure 6.1: Final Tourism Convenience Index
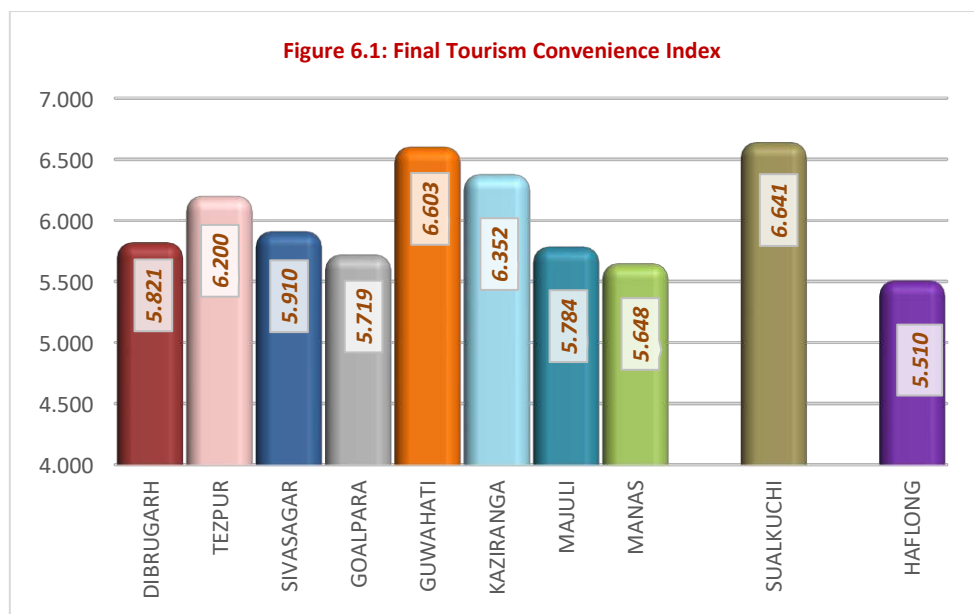
We are happy to report that the destinations have scored a decent index, which is above average (i.e., 5.00). But then famous destinations like Kaziranga and Sivasagar are yet to come up to an excellent level. Sualkuchi scores highest, but then we could not locate, and interview many leisure travellers there. Had there been some more leisure travellers, its score might have been little different. But since this place is the nearest destination from Guwahati, all the amenities of Guwahati are available for the tourists there also. This could also be a possible reason for high score of Sualkuchi, which is surprising, but not unexpected. We have shown Haflong not within the cluster as there also we could not interview many leisure travellers. Majority of the travellers in Haflong declared that they are business tourists.

6.5.1 Delicate Balance Achieved

We have noticed that the index allotted to the destinations have taken mid values as such. This is all but natural as we have taken the triangulated scores, dully weighted on the basis of the tourists' perceptions on the variables. Had we taken *any* of the three sets of raw data (tourist survey data, observation data or expert opinion data) the differences across the scores would have been artificially *(read biased as per a particular group's perception)* magnified. The observation scores have shown huge disparity across different destinations as we have discussed in Chapter 4 in detail. The effects of our method of triangulation and weighing are shown in Table 7.8 in the next Chapter. There we have shown the differences between final index and the raw tourist survey data. The raw tourists' data are seen to be **inflated by as much as 24.73%** *for Manas* (minimum being 17.53% *for Guwahati*). It is also true that had we considered only observation scores it would have been deflated than the deserving score by huge margin. The stakeholders' survey scores might also get biased by many other factors (like individual profit motive, his/her place of work and residence, relationship with Government

bodies at local and state level etc.) which may not be directly related to the variables measured, and as such reliance only on such data would have been erroneous.

As we have already discussed in great detail (refer to Introduction chapter) that the concept of *tourism convenience* is *not* only dependent on physical facilities and amenities, but also perception of the users and service providers on the presence and absence of the same. We also know that the perception varies from person to person even to the identical physical/psychological stimuli.

Thus while merging the scores (with adequate weight derived from tourists' perspective) we have achieved a delicate balance among perception, actual presence of convenience and amenities, and stakeholders' opinions.

It is also seen that the final Index for the destinations are within a small range. **This does show with adequate scientific evidence that the destinations are really competitive with each other.** This will augur well for Assam Tourism as the policy makers may use the scores for further betterment of the same.

The Index will help the destination managers in shaping the physical facilities in the attractions, manage stakeholders' perception and thereby creating a positive and upwards push for the index in a particular destination for a future point of time. Repeating the exercise after a gap of some years (allowing adequate time for positive changes) will definitely give a fillip in generating the most coveted and prized score of 10 as the index.

6.5.2 Special Treatment of Sualkuchi and Halflong

As mentioned earlier we decided to treat 2 destinations – Sualkuchi and Halflong separately from the rest of the cluster. This is done due to the fact that both the destinations are *not* leisure tourism destinations, per say, as found from the prime motivation for travellers visiting them.

Sualkuchi is found to be popular as a shopping destination (Hajo being visited mostly for pilgrimage), and hence not treated at per with the other 8 destinations. Moreover, it is seen that most of the visitors to Sualkuchi/Hajo are same day visitors and hence their perception regarding some of the convenience variables logically cannot be compared with the rest of the bunch.

We could have merged Sualkuchi/Hajo with Guwahati (as we did in case of Chanddubi etc.) as unique attractions, but decided to leave it alone as Sualkuchi is being promoted as a special rural tourism destination, and this has some sentimental value associated with the people of the state due to the presence of the very successful GI tagged Muga culture.

However, concerned authorities might like to combine these two destinations (Guwahati and Sualkuchi) they may do so in future in order to bring in uniformity to the destinations measured.

Halflong, as seen from the motivations for visit is more popular among the business travellers than the leisure seekers. And hence we have decided to keep it separate from the rest. However, it is different from Sualkuchi in the sense that the visitors prefer to stay overnight, and hence we did not see any problem of recording the actual perception by the travellers in Halflong. Therefore, we suggest that the destination remains as a separate one. Moreover, there is no scope for merging it with any bigger destination nearby.

6.6 Perception of Convenience Across Origin:

The level of convenience may vary across the origin of the tourists. We may use the same method while filtering the tourist survey scores based on the three origin groups namely, Regional, National and Foreign. We have recalculated the tourists scores *before* triangulation differently for these three segments, then triangulated based on the specific variables (as we have done for the comprehensive scores explained above), assign the weights (as used in the above analysis), and finally merge it with the other unweighted variables. We present the findings in the following sections. We have avoided the detail discussions for fear of repetition, and thus offer the findings of the analysis only.

Table 6.32, which is presented below shows the origin-wise convenience index for each of the destinations. The comparative scores are shown also in Figure 6.2.

Table 6.32: Tourism Convenience Index Based on Origin of Tourists				
#	DESTINATION	Regional	National	Foreign
1	DIBRUGARH	5.898	5.732	5.894
2	SUALKUCHI	6.851	6.355	-
3	TEZPUR	6.559	6.065	5.838
4	SIVASAGAR	6.030	5.834	5.614
5	GOALPARA	5.728	5.712	-
6	GUWAHATI	6.768	6.588	6.020
7	HAFLONG	5.595	5.660	-
8	KAZIRANGA	6.481	6.362	6.313
9	MAJULI	5.663	5.891	5.747
10	MANAS	5.649	5.662	5.592
11	PANIMUR*	7.600	-	-
12	UMRANGSO*	7.184	-	-

Figure 6.2: Tourism Convenince Index (Across Origin of Tourists)
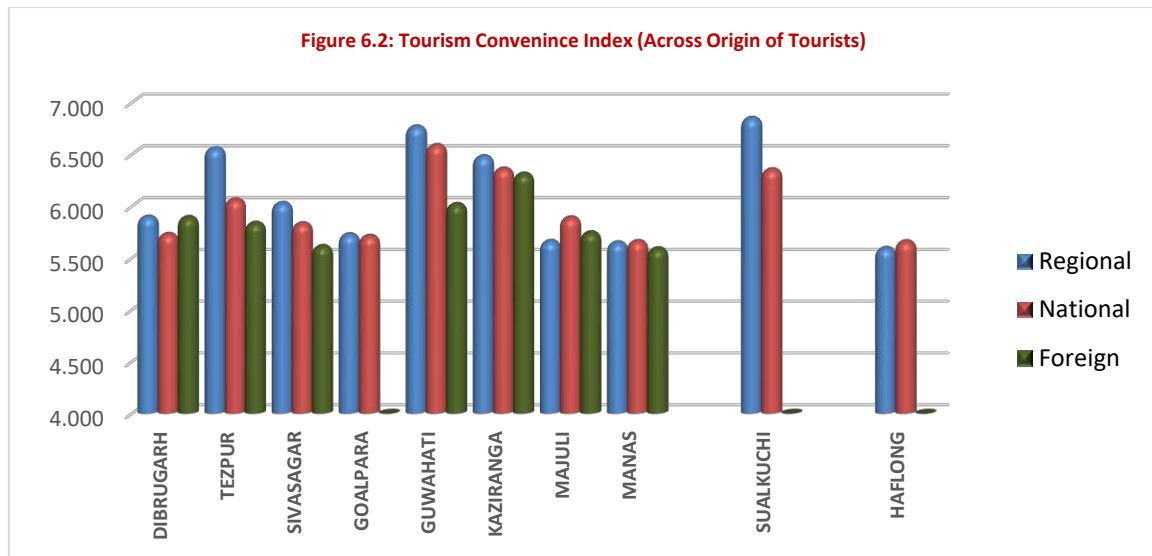
The scores offer us a rough idea about the perception of convenience across the origin of tourists. It is seen that barring Majuli and Manas, regional convenience index is higher than the other two. Foreign and National convenience index are marginally higher in case of Majuli, and almost same for Manas. In Tezpur and Sualkuchi, the perception of convenience is much more in case of regional tourists than that of National tourists. For Tezpur, Sivasagar, and Guwahati Foreign tourists' convenience is found to be less than the other two groups. For Kaziranga, the index across the 3 catagories are seen to be almost equal, foreing score being *marginally* less. In Dibrugarh, it is more than the National and almost same with the Regional.

Even though grouping tourism convenience index does not help much in understanding the index itself, some idea might be formed on how the level of convenience might vary based on the origin of the tourists.

This chapter offers the ultimate tourism convenience index of the 12 destinations taken up for the study. We have successfully triangulated the scores generated from different sources and merged them into one score – the **Tourism Convenience Index**.

In the next chapter we are concluding the study by offering some smaller details that evolved during the surveys. We shall also discuss the replicability of the index in other places and in different time period.

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Chapter 7
CONCLUSION

In this Chapter we plan to conclude the study. The first section deals with some qualitative spotlights of the tourist survey, which are interesting from the point of view of tourism infrastructure in general. The second section concludes the study.

7.1 Journey Attributes:

In an attempt to explore some more information related to the destinations, we have collected responses related to a few attributes such as overall journey, road conditions, traffic congestion and travellers' experience related to night travel.

Table 7.1: Journey Attributes

Journey Attributes		Number	%
1	**Rating of the Journey**		
	Very Stressful	6	1.0
	Stressful	10	1.7
	Just ok	189	31.5
	Comfortable	320	53.3
	Very Comfortable	74	12.3
2	**Traffic Congestion**		
	Slow movement	132	22.0
	Just OK	290	48.3
	Smooth movement	176	29.3
3	**Road Conditions**		
	Very bad	13	2.2
	Bad	105	17.5
	Just OK	211	35.2
	Good	247	41.2
	Very Good	23	3.8
4	**Experience of Night Travel**		
	Very Scary	11	1.8
	Scary	42	7.0
	It is just alright	231	38.5
	Pleasant	125	20.8
	Very Pleasant	15	2.5

It is seen from the above table that around 2/3rd of the travellers consider the journey as comfortable or very comfortable. Responses related to overall traffic congestion of the destination reveal that majority of the respondents (48.3%) reported it as "just ok". Only 22% reported higher traffic congestion and 29.3% mentioned about lower traffic congestion. We want to explore the responses towards road conditions of the selected destinations. Majority (45%) of the respondents reported the road conditions as good or very good. 35.2% respondents reported the roads are neither good or bad. It is very important that 17.5% tourist reported roads are bad. Night travel is another attribute to understand the smoothness of the journey. As in a state like Assam, it is perceived that night travel may be creating lot of problem, yet we are happy that only 12% respondents feel that it is scary (combining both scary and very scary). Accordingly, we found majority (38.5%) of the respondents consider it as just alright.

Only 2.5% cases reflected a very pleasant night travel and 20.8% of the respondents consider it as pleasant.

7.1.1 Origin and Journey Attributes:

We try to explore further with respect to the attributes mentioned in the previous section. There might be difference of opinion of the respondents as per their origin. We use a cross tabulation between origin of the traveller and the attributes such as the overall rating of the journey, traffic congestion, road condition and experience of night travel.

Table 7.2: Journey Rating and Origin of the Tourist						
Origin of the tourist	Journey Rating					Total
	Very Stressful	Stressful	Just OK	Comfortable	Very comfortable	
Foreigner	3	3	23	38	11	78
National	2	6	88	173	37	306
Regional	1	1	78	109	26	215
Total	6	10	189	320	74	599

It is seen from Table 7.2 that domestic travellers (both national and regional) found the journey to be more stressful as compared to foreign national. However, as compared to regional tourists, national tourists consider the journey as comfortable. Table 7.3 represents the traffic conditions experienced by the respondents. It is observed that majority of the foreign tourist (15%) reported a slow movement of traffic and most of the domestic tourist (92%) reported a smooth movement of traffic.

Table 7.3: Traffic Congestions and Origin of the Tourist				
Origin of the tourist	Traffic Congestions			Total
	Slow movement	Just OK	Smooth movement	
Foreigner	20	43	14	77
National	76	140	90	306
Regional	36	107	72	215
Total	132	290	176	598

In an attempt to know the view on road conditions, we have used cross tabulation between origin of the respondents and road condition (Table 7.4). It is seen that majority of

domestic tourists considers road condition as good; however, foreign tourists consider road conditions as just ok. Table 7.5 represents the experience of the respondents in case of night travel with respect to origin. It is seen that both foreign tourists and domestic tourists feel that night travel is neither very scary nor very pleasant. This left us with ample scope for improvement of infrastructure to aid night travel in the selected destinations.

Table 7.4: Road Condition and Origin of the Tourist						
Origin of the tourist	Road Condition					Total
	Very Bad	Bad	Just OK	Good	Very Good	
Foreigner	7	21	28	17	5	78
National	4	53	104	135	10	306
Regional	2	31	79	95	8	215
Total	13	105	211	247	23	599

Table 7.5: Night Travel and Origin of the Tourist						
Origin of the tourist	Night Travel					Total
	Very Scary	Scary	It is Just Alright	Pleasant	Very Pleasant	
Foreigner	7	10	27	15	2	61
National	3	23	152	62	7	247
Regional	1	9	52	48	6	35
Total	11	42	231	125	15	424

7.1.2 Destination and Journey Attributes:

We now offer the responses with respect to various attributes mentioned above across the destinations. We have conducted cross tabulations between destination and the attributes. It has been presented in Table 7.6.

With respect to the rate of the journey and destinations, it is seen that Dibrugarh, Sualkuchi, Tezpur, Goalpara, Guwahati, Kaziranga, Majuli and Manas are rated as comfortable by the respondents. Sivasagar, Panimur, Haflong and Umrangso are rated as neither comfortable nor stressful.

In an attempt to understand the traffic condition in the selected destination in Assam, it is seen that Guwahati reflects slow movement of traffic and which is very obvious. An interesting fact we have uncovered is that Haflong and Umrangso also revealed a slow movement of traffic. A wide exploration into slow movement of traffic in Haflong and Umrangso may be because of bad road condition which is reflected through the responses related to road condition. Out of the twelve destinations, Majuli and Sualkuchi enjoyed smooth movement or better traffic conditions.

Analysis with respect to road conditions and destinations reveals that Sualkuchi, Tezpur, Guwahati, and Kaziranga perceived to have good road conditions. Except Majuli all other destinations reflect a moderate level of comfort with respect to night journey.

Table 7.6 Destination-wise Rating

Destinations	Rate of Journey						Traffic Congestion				Road conditions						Night Travel					
	Very Stressful	Stressful	Just OK	Comfortable	Very comfortable	Total	Slow movement	Just OK	Smooth movement	Total	Very Bad	Bad	Just OK	Good	Very Good	Total	Very Scary	Scary	It is Just Alright	Pleasant	Very Pleasant	Total
DIBRUGARH	1	1	18	23	7	50	7	24	19	50	0	12	21	15	2	50	1	2	24	15	1	43
SUALKUCHI	0	0	6	24	10	40	0	13	27	40	0	0	5	29	6	40	0	0	5	0	0	5
TEZPUR	1	0	15	27	7	50	3	25	21	49	4	3	15	28	0	50	4	0	22	12	2	40
SIVASAGAR	1	0	23	21	4	49	11	34	4	49	1	7	25	16	0	49	1	2	17	11	0	31
GOALPARA	0	0	23	24	3	50	1	41	8	50	0	0	27	23	0	50	0	0	2	0	0	2
GUWAHATI	1	1	12	76	10	100	51	41	8	100	0	4	29	60	7	100	0	5	49	39	3	96
HAFLONG	0	5	35	0	0	40	29	11	0	40	0	39	1	0	0	40	0	3	32	0	0	35
KAZIRANGA	0	1	14	64	21	100	8	47	45	100	1	13	30	52	4	100	1	11	50	21	2	85
MAJULI	1	2	19	24	4	50	10	19	21	50	4	5	29	9	3	50	2	11	15	16	4	48
MANAS	1	0	10	33	6	50	3	27	20	50	3	8	25	13	1	50	1	5	8	9	3	26
PANIMUR	0	0	5	3	2	10	1	7	2	10	0	5	3	2	0	10	1	1	5	2	0	9
UMRANGSO	0	0	9	1	0	10	8	1	1	10	0	9	1	0	0	10	0	2	2	0	0	4
Total	6	10	189	320	74	599	132	290	176	598	13	105	211	247	23	599	11	42	231	125	15	424

7.2 Conclusion:

Our basic task is to develop a Tourism Convenience Index (TCI), which we have done successfully. **This is a 2-digit Index with 3 decimal places**. The lowest point of the Index is **1.000**, and maximum possible score is **10.000**. A destination cannot score beyond this range. As in any 10-point scale a score of 8 and above is considered to be *very good*, and below 3 may be treated as *dismal*. A score around 5 is *mediocre* in nature. Scores between 6 and 8 may be termed as *good*.

We have taken 10 major destinations of the state and 2 small but growing destinations in order to develop the TCI. We have measured relevant variables from two perspectives- Demand Side and Supply Side.

We have conducted a tourist survey with 600 respondents proportionately divided across the destinations based on their popularity (footfalls) among visitors.

For supply side data we have conducted in-depth interviews among 85 personalities engaged in tourism service (like entrepreneurs, tour operators, tour guides etc.), Government tourism and forest officials, local activists, and local knowledgeable persons. We have conducted these interviews in the 10 major destinations.

We have conducted extensive field observations also to measure the real state of affairs, especially related to tourist's amenities like accommodation, food, hygiene etc.

We have processed the tourist data by first conducting exploratory factor analysis, and validating the same through confirmatory factor analysis in order to generate weight for each of the 36 variables measured through the survey. We have thus generated eight factors accommodating 36 variables. 1 variable was only for foreign tourists, and hence we have kept that alone.

Later we have triangulated the variables which are measured through multiple sources. 21 (out of a total 37) tourist variables, 16 in-depth interview variables and 9 observation variables are triangulated with each other. As we assigned weight to the tourist variables only we have merged the other variables into the tourist variables after the triangulation with new values.

Then we have calculated the Comprehensive Factor Scores for each of the 8 factors. While doing so we have used the squared loading generated from the CFA as the weight for each of the variables and calculated the weighted average. Finally, we have merged all these 8 comprehensive scores to arrive at the Final Comprehensive Factor Score (FCFS). This score is with proper weight and any biasness in the data is assumed to be neutralised by this.

This FCFS and the average of the 14 unweighted variables are then merged to arrive at the final Tourism Convenience Index. We are confident that this final TCI is not the measure of tourists' convenience only, but also the convenience of major stakeholders of the tourism sector.

Even though the perceptions of the tourists are important, we have taken enough care to see that the Index represents the reality of the field as well.

The TCI scores are shown in the Table 7.7, which is replication of Table 6.31 of the last Chapter.

Table 7.7: Tourism Convenience Index		
#	DESTINATION	Final Tourism Convenience Index
1	DIBRUGARH	5.821
2	SUALKUCHI	6.641
3	TEZPUR	6.200
4	SIVASAGAR	5.910
5	GOALPARA	5.719
6	GUWAHATI	6.603
7	HAFLONG	5.510
8	KAZIRANGA	6.352
9	MAJULI	5.784
10	MANAS	5.648
11	PANIMUR*	7.600*
12	UMRANGSO*	7.330*
Panimur and Umrangso scores are based on weighted tourist data only, and are not triangulated		

The graphical representation of the TCI of major 10 destinations is shown in Figure 7.1.

Figure 7.1: Final Tourism Convenince Index
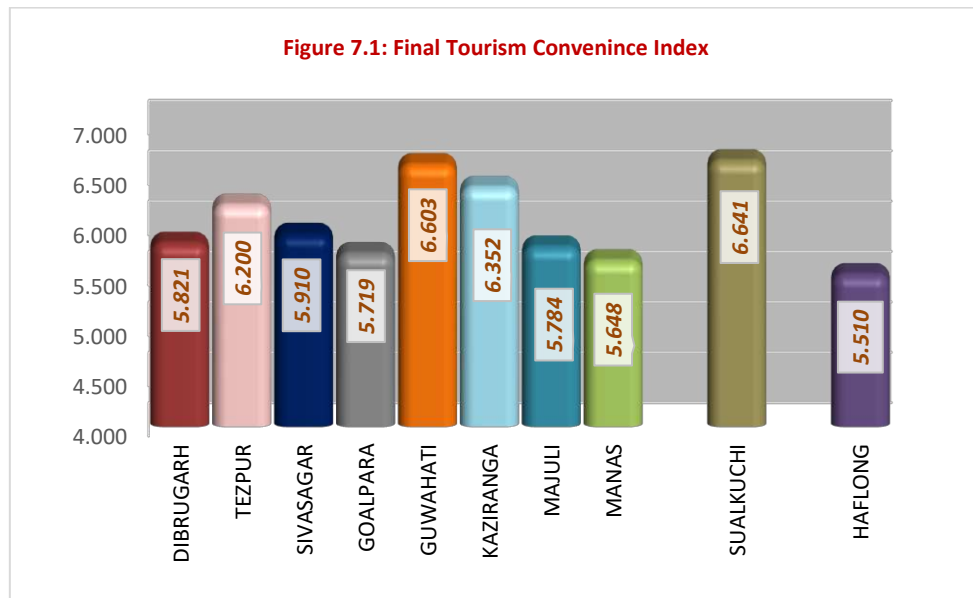
7.2.1 Triangulation and Weighing of the Variables at Work:

If the final TCI is noticed carefully, we see a change from the scores calculated (Table 5.13) based on the raw tourists' responses (*before triangulation and weighting*). It validates the

procedure related to triangulation and weighing that is followed in this study. The following table (Table 7.8) shows the differences between the raw scores and final TCI scores.

#	DESTINATION	Score based on Raw Tourist Data	Final Tourism Convenience Index	Percentage of Change *over raw score*
	Table 7.8: Effects of Triangulation and Weighing			
1	DIBRUGARH	7.455	**5.821**	*-21.92*
2	SUALKUCHI	8.204	**6.641**	*-19.05*
3	TEZPUR	7.639	**6.200**	*-18.84*
4	SIVASAGAR	7.680	**5.910**	*-23.05*
5	GOALPARA	7.861	**5.719**	*-27.25*
6	GUWAHATI	8.007	**6.603**	*-17.53*
7	HAFLONG	6.903	**5.510**	*-20.18*
8	KAZIRANGA	8.109	**6.352**	*-21.67*
9	MAJULI	7.338	**5.784**	*-21.18*
10	MANAS	7.504	**5.648**	*-24.73*
11	PANIMUR*	7.631	**7.600***	*-0.41*
12	UMRANGSO*	7.331	**7.330***	*-0.01*
	For Panimur and Umrangso only weighted data are used. Triangulation is not done.			

We see the highest negative change in case of Goalpara, followed by Manas and Sivasagar. Tourists' understanding of variables related to convenience is basically associated with their experience during the staying period, though responses against some of the varaibles normally remain same. For example, if the tourist booked the accommodation and the tour itinerary through an experience travel agent, she/he would not realise any problem related to scarcity of accommodation or transportation. The same experience may not be same for an independent tourist. However, impressions related to certain variables like hygiene would remain same for the tourists irrespective of her/his mode of tour. We see the changes basically due to this. The lowest change among the major destinations is registered by Guwahati (17.53%) followed by Tezpur (18.84%) and Sualkuchi. Panimur and Umrangso have scored almost negligible change. This is mainly because the scores for both the destinations are not triangulated. However, the sample size of both the destinations is too small to draw any meaningful conclusion regarding the effectiveness of triangulation.

7.2.2 Replication of TCI:

We think that the Index is robust enough to be replicated at different points of time, and in different geographical region. We have checked the validity assigning the weights through CFA, which is satisfactory enough. However, we need to take precaution while conducting the

field level observations as this is one of the crucial steps in deciding the convenience of the tourists in reality.

If the destinations can improve in field level and the tourists also *perceive* the same (*which is very crucial, and marketing plays an important role in creating the level of expectation for a destination*) a destination shall be able to improve in the Index. For example, a hype in convenience would naturally heighten the pre visit expectation among the tourists, and then they shall expect the same. This will ultimately effect the perception on these 37 tourist variables and might change the Index. Thus, if a destination needs to improve the Index the destination managers must try to shape the perception in the right way keeping it synchronised with the ground level situation. We may study the impact of destination management in perception of tourists in a separate work.

It is suggested that this index be replicated as it is in Assam itself over some years, say for 3 years and necessary changes in variable might be brought in to measure it more objectively and exhaustively, depending on the future expectations of the tourists. **This is more crucial now that "*post-Covid 19*", the tourists' preferences are expected to change significantly**. To remain effective as an Index, TCI should also change its variables accordingly.

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ANNEXURE 1

Pilot Questionnaire 1- Tourist Survey

	Code	Place	Date
M	Pilot		
F			

Department of Business Administration
Tezpur University, Assam

Dear Traveller,

It is wonderful to meet you here. Please accept our warm greetings. We are conducting a survey as a part of Government initiative, to collect your perception about this destination in order to develop <u>a tourism convenience index</u>.

We seek your kind cooperation in filling up the questionnaire, which is **fast** and **easy.** It will take just **few minutes.**

If you are interested in knowing the outcome of this survey, please leave your detail address for correspondence or email id so that we can dispatch a summary of the outcome to you.

We remain in great anticipation…

---

1. Would you mind telling us about your place of origin?

- -

2. How do you rate the present destination from the parameters given below?

Please indicate your rating for the parameters (statements) mentioned below by ticking at the appropriate point of scale. In the scale, **1 represents the lowest** *(or you agree* **the least***) and* **10 represents highest rating** *(or your* **highest agreement***). If a statement is* <u>not relevant</u> *to you or you are* <u>not sure</u> *about it, please leave it* **blank***.*

#	Your RATING → Parameters	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
a.	It was easy for me to **decide to come to this place**										
b.	**Recommendations** for visiting this place are abundant.										
c.	I had a **fair image** about this destination before reaching.										
d.	**Search** for the destination was effortless.										
e.	Relevant **information** about the destination is available in the internet.										
f.	**Someone referred** this place to me.										
g.	I had a long pending **desire** to come here.										
h.	The surface and air **connectivity** to this place is great.										
i.	According to me the **time taken to reach** this place from my origin is reasonable.										
j.	The **journey** *(up to this place)* was very enjoyable.										
k.	I have not found it difficult to **move around** within this destination.										
l.	My **mobile network** works here fine.										
m.	I could access **internet** as fast as in my place.										
n.	Local **field level operators** are available to make my sightseeing very comfortable.										
o.	**These people** are knowledgeable.										

I

# Parameters	Your RATING →	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
p.	**Local people** are courteous, and helpful										
q.	I have not faced any **power cut** during my stay here.										
r.	I found it very **difficult to book** *(in advance)* accommodation or travel tickets or local field level operators *(or any service provider)* here.										
s.	Have not faced any technical hassle in **payment** to the service providers.										
t.	I could **convert my currency** to Indian Rupee here comfortably.										
u.	I could purchase **souvenir** of my choice here.										
v.	**Activities** of my choice are available here.										
w.	I feel that this destination is **fully safe** for travellers										
x.	I could **enjoy** to the fullest during my stay in the destination.										
y.	Staying in the destination is **full of fun**.										
z.	Visiting the destination **made me happy**.										
aa.	I would like to visit the destination **again**.										
bb.	I am so happy visiting the place that **I would surely recommend** the destination to others.										
cc.	I would not mind to visit this place in **off-season** also.										
dd.	I feel that **tourists inflow might affect** the attractiveness of this place in the long run										

3. Did you follow a planned itinerary while visiting this destination?

   Yes ☐   *Partially* ☐   *No* ☐

4. You are taking a package tour?   *Yes* ☐   *No* ☐

5. Are you coming in a group?   *Yes* ☐   *No* ☐

6. If you do not mind, your age range *please*
  a) Below 20 years ☐   **b)** Within 20 and 40 years ☐
  c) Within 40 and 60 years ☐   **d)** Within 60 and 70 years ☐   **e)** 70 years & above ☐

7. Will you please let us know about your marital status?
  a) Single ☐   **b)** Married ☐   **c)** Not bothered to tell ☐

8. If you do not mind, your Income category (*in Rupees per month*) *please*
  a) Not yet earning ☐   **b)** Below 10,000 ☐   **c)** 10,000-30,000 ☐
  d) 30,000-60,000 ☐   **e)** 60,000-1,00,000 ☐   **f)** 1,00,000-1,50,000 ☐   **g)** Above 1,50,000 ☐

Thank You! *If you are interested to know the outcome of the survey, please leave your address or email below. We shall never spam you.*

- -

- -

ANNEXURE 2

Pilot Questionnaire 2 - Tourist Survey

	Code	Place	Date
M	**Pilot 2**		
F			

Department of Business Administration
Tezpur University, Assam

Dear Traveller,

It is wonderful to meet you here. Please accept our warm greetings. We are conducting a survey as a part of Government initiative, to collect your perception about this destination in order to develop a tourism convenience index.

We seek your kind cooperation in filling up the questionnaire, which is **fast** and **easy.** It will take just **few minutes.**

If you are interested in knowing the outcome of this survey, please leave your detail address for correspondence or email id so that we can dispatch a summary of the outcome to you.

We remain in great anticipation…

1. Would you mind telling us about your place of origin?

- -

2. How do you rate the present destination from the parameters given below?

*Please indicate your rating for the parameters (statements) mentioned below by ticking at the appropriate point of scale. In the scale, **1 represents the lowest** (or you agree **the least**) and **10 represents highest rating** (or your **highest agreement**). If a statement is <u>not relevant</u> to you or you are <u>not sure</u> about it, please leave it **blank**.*

#	Your RATING → / Parameters	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
a.	It was easy for me to **decide to come to this place.**										
b.	**Recommendations** for visiting this place are abundant. *(Say referrals by your friends/Family, by travel agents, or recommendation from some online portals etc.)*										
c.	I had a **fair image** about this destination before reaching.										
d.	**Search** for the destination was effortless.										
e.	Relevant **information** about the destination is available in the internet.										
f.	I had a long pending **desire** to come here.										
g.	The surface and air **connectivity** to this place is great.										
h.	According to me the **time taken to reach** this place from my origin is reasonable.										
i.	The **journey** *(up to this place)* was very enjoyable.										
j.	I have not found it difficult to **move around** within this destination.										
k.	My **mobile network** works here satisfactorily.										
l.	I could access **internet** as fast as in my place.										
m.	Local **field level operators** are available to make my sightseeing very comfortable.										
n.	Field level operators are **knowledgeable.**										
o.	**Local people** are courteous, and helpful.										
p.	I have not faced any **power cut** during my stay here.										
q.	It is very **easy to book** *(in advance)* accommodation or travel tickets or local field level operators *(or any service provider)* here.										
r.	Have not faced any technical hassle while **paying online** to the service providers.										

III

# / Parameters	Your RATING →	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
s.	**Food of my choice** is available here.										
t.	**Food and beverages** are really **affordable** for me.										
u.	**Quality of the food** here is excellent.										
v.	It is easy to **find accommodation** here.										
w.	**Accommodation** available is suitable for me.										
x.	Clean **public toilets** are available here.										
y.	I did not find any problem with **overall hygiene** while staying, eating and travelling here.										
z.	I could purchase **souvenir** of my choice here.										
aa.	**Activities** of my choice are available here.										
bb.	I feel that this destination is **fully safe** for travellers.										
cc.	I could **enjoy** to the fullest during my stay in the destination.										
dd.	Staying here is **full of fun**.										
ee.	Visiting this destination **made me happy**.										
ff.	I would like to visit the destination **again**.										
gg.	I am so happy visiting the place that **I would surely recommend** the destination to others.										
hh.	I would not mind to visit this place in **off-season** also.										
ii.	I feel that **tourists inflow might affect** the attractiveness of this place in the long run										
Applicable only to Foreign Tourist											
jj.	I could **convert my currency** to Indian Rupee here comfortably.										

3. Did you follow a planned itinerary while visiting this destination?

Yes ☐ *Partially* ☐ *No* ☐

4. You are taking a package tour? *Yes* ☐ *No* ☐

5. Are you coming in a group? *Yes* ☐ *No* ☐

6. If you do not mind, your age range *please*
   a) Below 20 years ☐   b) Within 20 and 40 years ☐
   c) Within 40 and 60 years ☐   d) Within 60 and 70 years ☐   e) 70 years & above ☐

7. Will you please let us know about your marital status?
   a) Single ☐   b) Married ☐   c) Not bothered to tell ☐

8. If you do not mind, your Income category (*in Rupees per month*) *please*
   a) Not yet earning ☐   b) Below 10,000 ☐   c) 10,000-30,000 ☐
   d) 30,000-60,000 ☐   e) 60,000-1,00,000 ☐   f) 1,00,000-1,50,000 ☐   g) Above 1,50,000 ☐

Thank You! *If you are interested to know the outcome of the survey, please leave your address or email below. We shall never spam you.*

IV

| *Time taken to fill this form is*: |

ANNEXURE 3

Final Questionnaire - Tourist Survey

	Code	Number	Place	Date
M				
F				

Department of Business Administration
Tezpur University, Assam

Dear Traveller,

It is wonderful to meet you here. Please accept our warm greetings. We are conducting a survey as a part of Government initiative, to collect your perception about this destination in order to develop a tourism convenience index.

We seek your kind cooperation in filling up the questionnaire, which is **fast** and **easy.** It will take just **four minutes.**

If you are interested in knowing the outcome of this survey, please leave your detail address for correspondence or email id so that we can dispatch a summary of the outcome to you.

We remain in great anticipation … - -

1. Would you mind telling us about your place of origin?

----

2. How do you rate the present destination on the parameters given below?

Please indicate your rating for the parameters (statements) mentioned below by ticking at the appropriate point of scale. In the scale, ***1 represents the lowest** (or you agree **the least**) and **10 represents highest rating** (or your **highest agreement**). If a statement is not relevant to you or you are not sure about it, please leave it **blank**.*

#	**Your RATING →** **Parameters**	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
a.	It was easy for me to **decide to come to this place.**										
b.	**Recommendations** for visiting this place are abundant. *(Say, referrals by your friends/Family, by travel agents, or recommendation from some online portals etc.)*										
c.	I had a **fair image** about this destination before reaching.										
d.	**Search** for the destination was effortless.										
e.	Relevant **information** about the destination is available in the internet.										
f.	I had a long pending **desire** to come here.										
g.	The surface and air **connectivity** to this place is great.										
h.	According to me the **time taken to reach** this place from my origin is reasonable.										
i.	The **journey** *(up to this place)* was very enjoyable.										
j.	I have not found it difficult to **move around** within this destination.										
k.	My **mobile network** works here satisfactorily.										
l.	I could access **internet** as fast as in my place.										
m.	Local **field level operators** are available to make my sightseeing very comfortable.										
n.	Field level operators are **knowledgeable.**										
o.	**Local people** are courteous, and helpful.										
p.	I have not faced any **power cut** (electricity failure) during my stay here.										
q.	It is very **easy to book** *(in advance)* accommodation or travel tickets or local field level operators *(or any service provider)* here.										
r.	Have not faced any technical hassle while **paying online** to the service providers.										
s.	**Food of my choice** is available here.										
t.	**Food and beverages** are really **affordable** for me.										

V

# / Parameters	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
u. **Quality of the food** here is excellent.										
v. It is easy to **find accommodation** here.										
w. **Accommodation** available is suitable for me.										
x. Clean **public toilets** are available here.										
y. I did not find any problem with **overall hygiene** while staying, eating and travelling here.										
z. I could purchase **souvenir** of my choice here.										
aa. **Activities** of my choice are available here.										
bb. I feel that this destination is **fully safe** for travellers.										
cc. I could **enjoy** to the fullest during my stay in the destination.										
dd. Staying here is **full of fun**.										
ee. Visiting this destination **made me happy**.										
ff. I would like to visit the destination **again**.										
gg. I am so happy visiting the place that **I would surely recommend** the destination to others.										
hh. I would not mind to visit this place in **off-season** also.										
ii. I feel that **tourists inflow might affect** the attractiveness of this place in the long run										
jj. I find no problem arranging cash here										
Applicable only to Foreign Tourist										
kk. **Foreign currency** conversion is not a problem here.										

3. Did you follow a planned itinerary while visiting this destination?

Yes ☐   *Partially* ☐   *No* ☐

4. **You are taking a package tour?**   *Yes* ☐   *No* ☐

5. **Are you coming in a group?**   *Yes* ☐   *No* ☐

6. **If you do not mind, your age range** *please*
a) Below 20 years ☐   **b)** Within 20 and 40 years ☐
c) Within 40 and 60 years ☐   **d)** Within 60 and 70 years ☐   **e)** 70 years & above ☐

7. **Will you please let us know about your marital status?**
a) Single ☐   **b)** Married ☐   **c)** Not bothered to tell ☐

8. **If you do not mind, your Income category** (*in Rupees per month*) *please*
a) Not yet earning ☐   **b)** Below 10,000 ☐   **c)** 10,000-30,000 ☐
d) 30,000-60,000 ☐   **e)** 60,000-1,00,000 ☐   **f)** 1,00,000-1,50,000 ☐   **g)** Above 1,50,000 ☐

Thank You! *If you are interested to know the outcome of the survey, please leave your address or email below. We shall never spam you.*

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, PLEASE!

1. Would you please let us know about the prime motive of this visit?

   a) Personal :

   i. Holidaying, Leisure & Recreation ☐   ii. Religious & Pilgrimage ☐   iii. Visiting friends & relatives ☐

   iv. Education & Training ☐   v. Health & Medical ☐   vi. Shopping ☐

   b) Business (related to your work/profession) ☐   **c) others** ☐ ………………………………
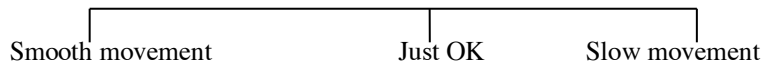
2. If you do not mind, may we know your level of education?

   a) No formal education ☐   b) Up to Secondary ☐   c) Graduate ☐
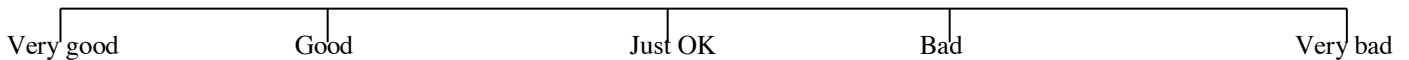
   d) Post Graduate ☐   e) others (please specify): …………………….

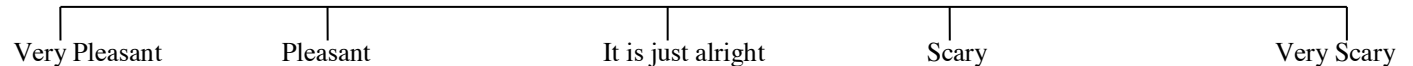**3. How would you rate your journey to this destination?**

Very Comfortable   Comfortable   Just OK   Stressful   Very Stressful
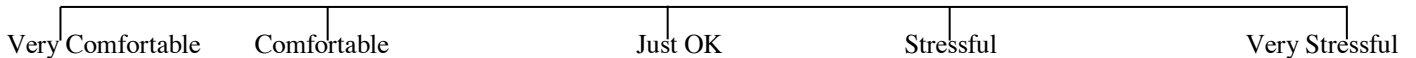
4. How do you feel about traffic congestion on the road?

Smooth movement   Just OK   Slow movement

5. How did you find the condition of roads while travelling?

Very good   Good   Just OK   Bad   Very bad

6. If you have experienced night travel here, how would you rate it?

Very Pleasant   Pleasant   It is just alright   Scary   Very Scary

7. Would you mind to tell your occupation?

……

8. Could you manage time to visit all the attractions of your choice as per plan?

Yes ☐   No ☐

If not, would you mind telling us the reasons?

……

……

………………………………………………………………………………………………

Thank you once again!

ANNEXURE 4

Schedule A – In Depth Interview

ANNEXURE 4

Department of Business Administration
TEZPUR UNIVERSITY
Project on
Development of Tourism Convenience Index for Major Tourism Destinations in the State of Assam
(with limited data collection)

DESTINATION:

"SCHEDULE A"
IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW

PLACE:		DATE:
Name:		
Affiliation:		
Address		
Phone		
Email		
Website		

Supply Side Dimensions		**Score (1-10)**	**Remarks,** *if any*
Sl. No.	**Statements**		
1	Business is safe here		
2	Tourists are safe		
3	Bandhas and strikes do not affect the tourism business at all		
4	Knowledgeable tour guides are available		
5	Travel agents are available		
6	Skilled manpower is available here		
7	Unskilled manpower is available here		
8	This destination and its attractions are widely represented in the Internet		

	Supply Side Dimensions	Score (1-10)	Remarks, *if any*
Sl. No.	Statements		
9	Online reviews (*positive or negative*) by the past tourists are available on the destination		
10	Government support is available for the entrepreneurs		
11	Local authorities do not harass the tourism entrepreneurs		
12	Food joints/courts are available for tourists		
13	Tourists never suffer from lack of accommodation (*during peak season also*)		
14	Entrepreneurs can use the infrastructure during slack season also profitably		
15	ATMs are easily accessible by the tourists		
16	Foreign Exchange facility (or cards with foreign currency are accepted) is available here or nearby		*Specify here:*
17	Public toilets are available		
18	Local people are hygienic in general		
19	Mobile connectivity is excellent		
20	Rain water harvesting is popular among entrepreneurs		
21	Waste products do not create stinking smell anywhere		
22	Plastic materials are not used in the destination at all		
23	The entrepreneurs use reusable utensils throughout		
24	Tourists can enjoy fulfilling activities while staying in the destination		
25	Some form of nightlife is available		
26	Screening of documentaries done always in the popular tourists accommodation or activity centres		
27	Performance by local artists are arranged regularly for the benefit of tourists		

Any Remark: ……

In-depth Interview Conducted by:

ANNEXURE 5

Schedule B – Variables for Observation

CODE

Department of Business Administration
TEZPUR UNIVERSITY

Project on

Development of Tourism Convenience Index for Major Tourism Destinations in the State of Assam *(with limited data collection)*

DESTINATION:

"SCHEDULE B"

VARIABLES FOR OBSERVATION

DESTINATION:

1.

Supply side dimensions measured through observation *(Checklist)*		Supply side dimensions measured through observation *(Checklist)*	
Accommodation	**Types** *(more choices more convenient)* **Tariff** *(lower is the average tariff more convenient)*	**Cost of travelling within the destination** *(Determine average cost)*	**Public transportation** **Hired transportation**
Attractions	**Natural** **Manmade** **Heritage sites**	**Availability of conference hall**	**Availability** **Cost**
Souvenirs	**Availability of local crafts as souvenir** **Modern souvenirs**	**Availability of training centre** *(for Human resource)*	**Availability**
Convenience of travelling (top rank if all modes are available)		**OTHER Important observation**	
Availability of modes of travels within destination (top rank if multiple modes are available)	**Public transport** **Hired transport**	*REMARKS:*	

x

ACCOMMODATION

Type	Lowest		Description	Medium 1		Description	Medium 2		Description	Top		Description	More categories	Availability of Conference hall
	#	Tariff (Rs)		#	Tariff (Rs)		#	Tariff (Rs)		#	Tariff (Rs)			
Describe in the blank space if necessary 5*, 4*, 3*, No Star, Lodges, Homestay (licensed and unlicensed)														
1														
2														
3														
4														
5														
6														
7														
8														
9														
10														

2. ATTRACTION

#	TYPE (artificial, heritage, natural, special, like craft village)	DESCRIPTION (in brief, Enclose photo, or video) *Add more row, if needed*	AMENITIES ON SITE									POPULARITY Y (# of tourists visit last season) Get data from reliable sources like tourist office, ticket sold etc.	Rate web presence * (1-10 scale)	Transportation Type (Public/Hired)
			Public Place to rest		Restroom with Toilet		Food stall			Drinking Water	Souvenir				
			Yes/No	If yes, rate	Yes/No	If yes, rate	Yes/No	Rate on		Yes/No	Yes/No	Local/Imported			
								Hygiene	Food Diversity						

ANNEXURE 6

Respondent's Incentives

ASSAM HANDLOOM

"Assamese Women weave fairy tales in their cloths!"
– Mahatma Gandhi

Here a young woman is seen preparing the threads for fitting it in a loom, which is found in almost all households of rural Assam. Assam is also famous for its cloths, hand woven from natural fabrics like Muga, Eri, Pat (Mulberry) and Tsar.

Courtesy
Department of Business Administration
Tezpur University

Sponsor
Directorate of Economics & Statistics
Govt. of Assam

MASK OF MAJULI

It is said that mask making is in practice in Majuli from long before, especially from the mid-17th century in Natun Samaguri Satra.

The mask is hand made from bamboo, cloth, clay and cow-dung and used extensively in Bhaonas (traditional to mythological plays).

Courtesy
Department of Business Administration
Tezpur University

Sponsor
Directorate of Economics & Statistics
Govt. of Assam

RHINOCEROS

One-horned Rhinoceros is the pride of Assam. Though Kaziranga is considered as the home of this beautiful animal, it is also available in other National Parks and Sanctuaries of Assam like Pobitora, Orang and Manas. According to the IUCN Red List, out of a world population of just above 2,500 around 80% of this species can be found in the wild of Assam. This species has been declared as 'Vulnerable' by IUCN.

Courtesy
Department of Business Administration
Tezpur University

Sponsor
Directorate of Economics & Statistics
Govt. of Assam

Gifts for the Respondents

ANNEXURE 7

Summary of In Depth Interviews

IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

For the fulfillment of supply side survey, in-depth interview sessions were done on various personalities from various backgrounds. A total of 27statements based on Schedule-A was put up and the responses were collected in a detailed manner with a scoring provided by them on a scale from 1 to 10.

TEZPUR

In-depth interview session for Tezpur as the destination has been conducted with **five (5)** personalities. The participants namely **Mr. H.K Lahkar**, owner, Spring Valley Restaurant, Tezpur; **Mr. Amitav Das**, owner, Hotel Centre Point, Tezpur; **Mr. Chetan Saraf**, Managing Director, Hotel KRC Palace, Tezpur; **Mr. Goda Mili**, owner, Okum Guest House, Nameri; **Mr. Sushil Nagthe**, Tourist Guide, Nameri National Park are esteemed personalities from Tezpur and Nameri National Park.

1. **Mr. HK Lahkar:**

Mr. H.K. Lahkar is a prominent personality in the region of Tezpur who is known for his popular venture the Spring Valley Bakery and Restaurant. Mr. Lahkar owns the 'Lahkar Group of Enterprises' and has been established as a successful business tycoon in the vicinity. The Lahkar Group of Enterprises deals with production of items like wheat, dairy, Assam Tea and bakery products. During the interaction with Mr. Lahkar, in a question about availability of skilled manpower in Tezpur he replied that the town lacks training centers on manpower. He added that according to him it thus becomes difficult to employ a skilled person who fits in a particular position. However, he is quite optimistic about recent business scenarios of the region especially in the food and beverages sector.

2. **Mr. Amitav Das:**

Known as a versatile businessman, Mr. Amitav Das owns a hotel property named Hotel Centre Point. Mr. Amitav Das is a socially active personality with a variety of firms under his proprietorship. He mentioned that he aware of every issue or customer complaint made while dealing with tourists and takes much interest in dealing with the tourists himself. During the interview he gave some valuable remarks about the parameters in question. According to Mr. Das, for the ongoing and future business environments in the region, infrastructure barriers along with riskier investment mechanism need to be adapted with customer's demands. However, as the customer demands are dynamic in nature it leads to difficulties in handling the businesses.

3. Mr. Chetan Saraf:

Mr. Chetan Saraf is a young entrepreneur who owns one of the most acknowledged 3 star property in Tezpur - Hotel KRC Palace. Hotel KRC Palace has been receiving a heavy footfall of tourists from every background and Mr. Saraf is highly determined in uplifting Tezpur as one of the fastest growing destinations. Recently, Mr. Saraf opened a homestay near to his hotel itself named as 'KRC Homestay'. The homestay being a relatively new concept in the region is indeed creating a new dimension in the area. When asked about skilled manpower, Mr. Saraf said that he couldn't find skilled man force for his business at all. He has to provide his staff proper training before employing them into the different positions of the hotel. He even mentioned that a trainer from New Delhi was invited to provide necessary training to the hospitality staff. While quoting Tezpur as one of the fastest growing destinations, Mr. Saraf said that it is profitable to invest in businesses like hotel.

4. Mr. Geda Mili:

Mr. Geda Mili established his property named 'Okum Guest House' quite a long time ago. The property is situated in a beautiful rural area full of greeneries known as the Dharikati village. Characterized as polite and gentle nature, Mr. Mili is also known for his great hospitality is also a social worker. In a question involving the availability of skilled manpower, Mr. Mili spoke about the seasonal nature of tourists in the property and his inability to pay the required salary to qualified persons all throughout the year. In this very case, he compared the state of Kerala with that of Tezpur where a skilled person could get Rs 20,000 there it can only reach the mark of Rs. 10,000 here. Hence, there is a huge record of skilled employees quitting the job. Talking about handling his business in the off season, Mr. Mili advocates in properly utilizing the infrastructure. He also let us know that currently his guest house is being used for purpose of an on-going weaving project in the village.

5. Mr. Sushil Nagthe:

Mr. Sushil Nagthe is known for his excellent service quality as a tourist guide. He is a specialist in birds and has been actively working for Nameri as well as Kaziranga National Park. He shares good relationship with many of his contemporary travel agents around the state and outside even outside of it. In a question about dealing with the bandh culture in the region, Mr. Nagthe told us about an incident related to the topic. Once he went off to see a group of tourists in Guwahati Airport during an 'Assam Bandh' and had faced a lot of difficulties. While managing accommodation for tourists in the peak seasons he said that almost four to five times a month the

visitors have to be returned. Sometimes it so happens that they have to manage accommodation for sleeping in the dining hall itself.

The entire in-depth session in Tezpur proved to be a productive one with each one of them participating actively in it. These businessmen are quite optimistic about the future trending possibilities of Tezpur becoming one of the fastest growing destinations. But as mentioned by the esteemed personalities, the public health provision is not up to the mark however awareness has been growing with time. The people operating near the Nameri National Park are quite confident about their part on shaping Nameri as one of the promising and safe destinations in the region.

SIVASAGAR

The in-depth interview sessions for the destination of Sivasagar eleven (11) personalities have been contacted. Esteemed personalities who joined in our course of work are - **Mr. Madhav Das**, Asst. Tourist Information Officer, Assam Tourism (Sivasagar); **Mr. Ramen Hatimuria**, Wildlife Conservationist; **Mr. Samiran Hatimuria**, Wildlife Conservationist; **Mr. Pronabjyoti Bora**, Marketing Head, Patkai Tour & Excursion Agency; **Mr. Anup Mohan**, Founder, Patkai Tour & Excursion Agency; **Mr. Rituporna Changmai**, Tour Executive, Patkai Tour &Excursion Agency; **Mr. Durlov Bora**, Uttaran Museum; **Mr. Manas Kalita**, Tour Guide; **Mr. Lalit Phukan**, Local Activist; **Mr. Bikash Das**, Assam State Archeology; **Mr. Lohit Phukan**, Tai Museum.

1. Mr. Madhav Das:

Mr. Madhav Das is presently working as an Assistant Tourist Information Officer in Sivasagar after rendering his services as the same in the Tezpur division. He is an enthusiastic photographer and an energetic traveler. Recently his active participation and contribution led to the start of 'Soulful Sivasagar' from District Administration flagship. In a question where he was asked about the promotion of Sivasagar as a destination in internet, Mr. Das said that the Tourist Information Office has done its part on a high note by making advertisements be it on YouTube or any other social platform. Nevertheless, Mr. Das did feel that the rate of advertisements in English is less than the regional languages. Talking about a tourist who was about to leave Sivasagar after staying for only a day but ended up staying more than 2 weeks; he mentioned that tourist activities in and around Sivasagar has in fact improved.

2. Mr. Ramen Hatimuria &3. Mr. Samiran Hatimuria:

Mr. Ramen Hatimuria and his son Mr. Samiran Hatimuria are well known personalities in the region for their home-based zoo 'Aranyak'. Both of them are quite conscious about wildlife preservation and remedial measures for captivated animals. A zoo including diverse flora and fauna was started around their home premises itself. They have been constantly preserving various animals imported from

outside of India like horses, Emu, Guinea pigs etc. are to name a few. Apart from maintaining this zoo, Mr. Samiran Hatimuria works as a Tour Guide too.

When asked about the availability of tourist guides in the region, Mr. Ramen Hatimuria said that training provisions are provided to the tourist guides batch by batch where his son has also been a trainee. However, he mentioned that there is vacancy in this profession around the division which needs to be filled up soon. Answering the question about government's support to entrepreneurs, Mr. Samiran Hatimuria said that though government has been active in providing assistance he is not quite interested in it. According to him, it feels like being trapped under someone's feet and thus doesn't consider such benefit for his own.

3. **Mr. Pronabjyoti Bora:**

Mr. Pronabjyoti Bora has been working as a market head for the Patkai Tour and Excursion agency for almost 10 years. Apart from working in the travel agency Mr. Pronabjyoti Bora also teaches History in a junior college. Mr. Bora in a question about the future of tourism as a business perspective in Sivasagar, he said that seasonality plays a vital role in this sector here. Along with seasonality, some sections of people are not interested in visiting these places. While asking him about the presence of skilled manpower, Mr. Borah said that skilled manpower of the desired quality in the hospitality sector is no more available in the region. The reason behind the same as suggested by Mr. Bora is the inclination of the workers towards money and not the quality of services.

4. **Mr. Anup Mohan:**

Chasing his dreams of organizing tours for others, Mr. Anup Mohan started his initiative 'Patkai tour & Excursion Agency'. Being a founder, Anup Mohan is enthusiastic and has great quality of customer interactions to his credibility. Apart from running the travel agency, Mr. Mohan works in a pharmaceutical company in the town of Sonari in the Charaideo District. While asking him about future prospect of tourism business in the area, Mr. Anup Mohan indicated the

communication gap existing between travel agencies and district level tourism authority. This lack of communication is now harming both sides of ongoing tourism business i.e., travel agencies and the developmental activities throughout the district.

5. Mr. Rituporno Changmai:

Mr. Rituporno Changmai is an active youth worker of the society with his leadership and good organizing quality awarding him the position of Tour Executive. He travels as a guide with every our group and directs troubleshoot problems whenever necessary. In a question enquiring the promotion of Sivasagar as a destination, Mr. Changmai said that he is happy with the private efforts of the localites and other agencies in making Sivasagar accessible online. But, when it comes to the part of government and its concerned department to do the same he complains about their failures in web promotion.

6. Mr. Durlov Bora:

Mr. Durlov Bora is an eminent personality of Sivasagar. From an early age, he has been fond of collecting various post cards, coins etc. and keeping them in a safe place. Currently Mr. Bora has started his own museum preserving many artifacts which are related to the day to day activities of the Assamese society. He proudly stated that the entire museum is constructed with his own hands. A multipurpose museum named as 'Uttaran' showcases different types of living and non-living objects as well as objects used both by man and nature. In a question of availability of accommodation units for tourists in the region, Mr. Bora feels that sometimes people coming from economically weak background don't find appropriate shelter to pass the night because of which they have to sleep in the buses only.

7. Mr. Manas Kalita:

Another familiar face of Sivasagar, Mr. Manas Kalita is a state awarded Tourist Guide of Assam. He grabbed the award for the Best Tourist Guide in the year 2018. Mr. Kalita is a very soft-spoken person with a vast knowledge on historical facts about Assam. Usually, he sits in front of Talatal Ghar and guides people about the history of the monument. In a question asking about promoting Sivasagar as a destination, he said that although all the destinations are advertised in a great manner, it is limited to the state level with only a few reaching into the national level. National media platform don't put

much of their effort on promoting the attractions in web-portals. With respect to this very case, Mr. Kalita did talk about 'Awesome Assam' campaign where he complained about not having a single scene on promoting Sivasagar. According to Mr. Manas Kalita, Sivasagar is the region that can be sold out for the entire year. Mr. Kalita has been offering his services since 2014 and mentioned that people haven't got the related tactics that are required to be followed while operating a business. For example, he talked about how related fields like selling out brochures and traditional attires should be exercised by the guides as a bonus option.

8. **Mr. Lalit Phukan:**

Mr. Lalit Phukan is the initiator of Skill Development Project around Charaideo District on Tourism and Hospitality provisions. He is trying hard to make young people provide good customer services and behavior to the tourists. He has already started a rural tourism project in Patsaku sponsored by Assam Tourism which is now under-construction. As a response to the question of on-going and future tourism businesses in the region, Mr. Phukan said

that there are opportunities available but people are not taking it up. As marked by him running after money isn't everything. According to Mr. Phukan, in order to create awareness on rural tourism and its related fields in Charaideo, he has been advocating the NSDP project in Charaideo for young ones to take up business projects like these.

9. **Mr. Bikash Das:**

Mr. Bikash Das is the senior conservation officer in Assam State Archeology Department. He has been working in the department for almost 9 years now and has been constantly working for the betterment of the monuments supporting Assam Tourism in every possible way. Preparation of signage, beautification of the monuments etc. have been going on in the recent times under his supervision. Regarding tourist's touristy stuff in the region, he said that tourists do

enjoy here in Sivasagar but due to infrastructural challenges their satisfaction level decreases. It becomes difficult for them to complete their sightseeing in the allotted time. However, he also mentioned that the problem with the lack of proper signage has been taken care of by ASI.

10. Mr. Lohit Phukan:

Currently working in Tai Museum, Mr. Phukan is a culturally active man in the area who is also a radio artist. He has been constantly working as an organizer of many cultural events related to the Tai Community for the tourists. In a question about the availability of 'knowledgeable' tour guides, Mr. Phukan contrastingly mentioned about non-availability of 'knowledgeable' tourist guide in the region. He mentioned that the tourists coming from Guwahati and other places bring along tourist guides with them when visiting Sivasagar. The region is

also as reported by Mr. Phukan deprived of skilled man force because of human resources moving on to other places in search of better prospects. Perhaps they are not confident about their future in Sivasagar, Mr. Phukan added more.

GUWAHATI-SUALKUCHI-HAJO

A total of twenty-one (21) personalities have been interviewed in the in-depth session for Guwahati and Sualkuchi destination. Esteemed personalities approached for the same are **Mr. Sayidul Islam**, River Dingle Resort; **Mr. Michael Kalita,** owner of a Silk firm from Sualkuchi; **Mrs. Bonti Neog**, Deputy Director, Assam Tourism; **Mrs. Jahnabi Phukan**, Jungle Travels India; **Mr. Deepak Jalan**, Hotel Prag Continental and 16 other personalities from various backgrounds.

1. **Mr. Sayidul Islam:**

Mr. Sayidul Islam is a familiar face in the Sualkuchi region who is addressed as 'Mukul Da'. Professionally a contractor, Mr. Islam is a friendly face for all tourism personalities. The rural tourism project of Gondhmou which is passed by the department on lease since then has been supervised by him. In a question asking about the future prospects of Sualkuchi, he replied that Sualkuchi has been growing with its pride Paat-Muga. However, sometimes it is the communication and

transportation sector that requires more development. Regarding the bandh culture in Sualkuchi he did mention an important fact - irrelevant bandhs and strikes don't affect Sualkuchi easily. The effect depends on the cause of calling the bandh as local people are more knowledgeable and understandable about their own region and its activities.

2. Mr. Michael Kalita:

Mr. Michael Kalita is a young entrepreneur dealing with the handloom industry. He owns more than 20 looms engaging over 50 women of the locality which is operated from his home itself. Mr. Kalita is a commerce graduate and is currently shaping his dreams through these silk firms. In a question about the role of the government in supporting entrepreneurs, he said that though govt. policies are there he hasn't taken a single penny from them. He has his own capital and advices others to follow this path only.

3. Mrs. Bonti Neog:

Mrs. Bonti Neog is the Deputy Director of Assam Tourism. A lady with a beautiful mind Mrs. Neog has been rendering her services for a very long time in the tourism sector. In a question about tourism business scenario in Guwahati, she said that the city is the central hub for entire north east and thus businesses around it have greater prospects than the other parts of the state. Regarding handling tourism businesses in off season, she added that everyone uses their infrastructure wisely as Guwahati is the gateway of north east and the tourist flow would never end. The region moreover is also used as a transit halt for travelers who are travelling to Shillong as well.

4. Ms. Prarthana Saikia:

Ms. Prarthana Saikia has been working as a 'Tour Executive' in the prominent travel agency of Assam-Network Travels. Hailing from Jorhat, she has been receiving tourists from all over the world. In a question about the promotion of tourist attraction sights in Guwahati she said that comparing it to other parts of the states promotions are indeed happening for the ones in Guwahati. Another question about the ease of doing businesses around the region, she said that though govt. has been dispersing schemes to agencies but people don't tend to grab the opportunities as they are afraid of risking it.

5. Mr. Deepak Jalan:

Mr. Deepak Jalan was an executive member of the Hotel and Restaurant Association of Assam in the year 2012-13. Currently, Mr. Jalan runs the popular Prag Continental Hotel located in the Panbazar area. From his 34 years of experience, Mr. Jalan said that with this growing trend of competition among the hotel businesses there isn't 100% opportunity for them to grow but tourists would continue coming to Guwahati as it has been globally acclaimed as the gateway to the North east of India. In the question about skilled manpower in Guwahati, he added that sometimes man-force available doesn't possess the proper background of what the job requires. While some of them are not interested because of the salary structures.

6. Mr. Chandan Kakoti:

Mr. Chandan Kakoti is a local activist from North Guwahati. He has been actively working for betterment of the tourist attraction sites in North Guwahati. Professionally being a reporter, he is much conscious about the recent happenings in the region. In a question about the investment environment for tourism business in the region, he mentioned that without basic infrastructure the safety of the business is not sound. However, the region shows great prospects in dealing with it as a tourist destination. According to Mr. Kakoti as of today there are no any skilled forces available who can contribute especially to the tourism business.

7. Mr. Himangshu Boruah:

Mr. Himangshu Boruah owns the only travel agency operating from North Guwahati. This young entrepreneur has been receiving compliments from all over for his quality of service. In a question asking about North Guwahati and its future prospects in tourism businesses, he said that the tourism business around region will flourish with time as it has a lot more to offer. Many attractions are yet to be explored and promoted; hence the region is full of resources for the future. As a travel agency, while tackling the off season he admits that as tourism business is seasonal, one can't rely only on tourist's packages. Allied transportation business should also be flourished to survive the competition.

8. Mr. Amulya Bora:

Mr. Amulya Bora is the counselor of ward no. 4 in North Guwahati. Mr. Bora is a person with an in-depth knowledge about the region and posses great interest to make North Guwahati a popular tourist destination. Mr. Bora is hopeful to see the proposed 6 lane bridge Ropeway which will lead to great business opportunities for the people intended to enter the tourism business. Sometimes,

he added further, when there is a good flow of tourists   they have to go back without staying as there is very less accommodation units to cover the demand in his region of operation.

9. Mr. Aparup Saikia:

Mr. Aparup Saikia is the Managing Director of 'My Voyage' travel agency. He is one of the leaders who are creating huge dimensions for Assam Tourism to grow with time. Regarding availability of tour guides, Mr. Saikia said that if we consider only the well knowledgeable and regional license holder tourist guides in the region the amount is very less. According to him, running a travel agency one cannot run away from the issue of seasonality. Usually, during the slack season, hotels and travel agencies cannot continue their services as mostly it remains empty.

10. Mr. Arijit Purukayastha:

Mr. Arijit Purukayastha is running the famous travel agency of Assam- 'Koyeli Tours & Travels'. He is one of the faces who started businesses related to the travel and tourism sector long ago. He has been the 'Chapter Chairman-North East' of Association of Domestic Tour Operators of India (ADTOI). He has been actively working for the betterment of tourism sector of Assam with ATDC and Directorate of Assam Tourism. During the session, Mr. Purukayastha was very busy to elaborate his points so he intended to give the scores against of each statement.

11. Mrs. Jahnabi Phukan:

Mrs. Jahnabi Phukan is co-founder of 'Jungle Travels India', a renowned travel agency of the country. The travel agency has been receiving many compliments for its outstanding services to the customers. Mrs. Phukan started the entrepreneurship jointly with her husband and is the Senior Vice President of 'FICCI Ladies Organization' which leads women entrepreneurship to a new height. In the question about travel agency and its strategy for dealing with seasonality in Guwahati, she mentioned that there are minimal options for a travel agency to operate in slack season but in a place like Guwahati there is not really a season called the slack season. Mrs.

Phukan said that there hasn't been so trouble so far and hence it is quite safe in Guwahati to create a tourism business environment. Mr. Phukan had a negative opinion about the number of young individuals who come out as a skilled person after every training program or institute as they are not really beneficial for the industries.

12. Mr. Bidyarnav Bora:

Mr. Bidyarnav Bora is the Deputy Director of Assam Tourism. He manages budget and finance division of the department. Mr. Bora is the person who had uplifted the tourism sector of Sivasagar when he was in charge of the department in the district. A person of amiable nature, the session with Mr. Bora turned to be a productive one. In a question about the future possibilities of tourism business in Guwahati, he said that considering the Awesome Assam movement, with investment in destinations, Guwahati also holds scope for better opportunity to its business dwellers. While supporting govt. initiatives for business person in tourism, he said that there is support from the part of govt. to conduct road-shows that'll enable the business mindset of the persons.

13. Mr. Hiran Saikia:

Mr. Hiran Saikia is the Tourist Information Officer of Assam Tourism Department. He holds the position of PA to ATDC Chairperson- Mr. Jayantamalla Boruah. In a question about the safety of businesses in Guwahati, Mr. Saikia said that as Guwahati is considered the Gateway of NE India it has immense business opportunities. Projects like conducting road shows will create interest among the tour operators. While concerning about the currency conversion facilities, Mr. Saikia added that the provision

has a long way to go as only in some star hotels the tourists feel comfortable converting their currency. He stated that the region needs to have some booths in the city itself to do the work.

14. Mr. Prabhas Sarma:

Mr. Prabhas Sarma is the Additional GM of Assam Tourism Development Corporation. A man of few words, Mr. Sarma mentioned in a question that though Guwahati has been safe compared to other places but during festivals like Ambobachi the safety concept doesn't go to a secure position. While talking about the ease of doing business in the region, he mentioned about the new Tourism Policy which has introduced so many provisions that'll surely create opportunities and easiness for the entrepreneurs to grow more.

15. Mr. Tapan Kr. Sarma:

Mr. Tapan Kr. Sarma is the Deputy Director of North Eastern Handloom & Handicraft Development Corporation. He has been actively working for handloom development around the self help groups and local embodies. During the session he was quite comfortable with the questions and gave pin pointed answers as well. Due to the shortage of time he intended to give only the scores against of the statements. He is however not happy with the availability of tourist guides in the region. While regarding the business opportunities in the area of handloom and handicrafts he is seen to be quite optimistic.

16. Mr. Jayanta Deva Sarma:

Mr. Jayanta Deva Sarma is the officer-in-charge for the Handloom Research and Design Centre of Govt. of Assam. Performing his responsibility as a writer, Mr. Sarma has written certain number of books on the handlooms of Assam. In a question about the future prospects of the tourism sector, Mr. Sarma mentioned that the business of handicrafts and handloom will create a new path for the tourism. In a place like Guwahati, people coming from different regions want to take something with them but the options here are not enough. Regarding proper promotion of the tourist attractions in Guwahati, Mr. Sarma said that not all attractions are advertised well while Guwahati being home to huge

artifacts, monuments and sites. However, social media has a long way to promote all of them on a larger scale.

17. Ms. Sushmita Hazarika:

Ms. Sushmita Hazarika has been working as the Manager of Inbound Tourism section for 'Landmark Tours & Travels'. Ms. Hazarika is an alumnus of Tezpur University as well. In a note, regarding the future of travel agency business in Guwahati, Ms. Hazarika said that as tourism is a seasonal business therefore, the travel agency business has numerous risks involved. Hence, it cannot be said that it is 100% safe for travel agencies in the long-run. Regarding the seasonality issue in travel agencies, she said that it depends on the options that the travel agency and hotel has to offer. During off season what kind of programs can be installed should be determined by them earlier.

18. Mr. Promud Kalita:

Mr. Promud Kalita is a young entrepreneur and has an active social image in Deepor Beel area. His 'Rongmong Eco-Tourism Society' has been actively working for the goodwill of Deepor Beel for a long time. In a question about Deepor beel and the development of tourism business around the site, he said that urbanization has created many threats for Deepor beel right now. The site is used as a dump-yard for all metro-garbage and has affected the number of migratory birds. Again, the proposed railway line project will surely deteriorate the animal corridor especially that are nearer to the beel. If such projects continue to take place, there isn't any future for Deepor Beel and businesses taking place around it. Regarding government schemes and policies for entrepreneurs, he complained that there is lack of equal chances to everyone and in the implementation policies of govt. schemes.

19. Mr. Aditya Nar:

Mr. Aditya Nar is an entrepreneur in the Chandubi area and is an active youth. He has started his eco camp known as Chandubi Jungle Camp. Regarding Chandubi area and the safety of its businesses, Mr. Nar mentioned that the eco camp business is safe here for the present dwellers because the region has gone to the maximum limit of business holdings. Hence, no new business will be allowed due to the chances of distorting the carrying capacity of the area. As Chandubi Lake is on top of the list as a growing attraction, when asked about its increasing demand amongst tourists, Mr. Nar said that as eco camps are now limited every season the problem of over-booking arises at a higher frequency.

20. Mrs. Santi Doley:

Mrs. Santi Doley with her husband has introduced a unique approach known as the 'Alfresco Grand' in Guwahati. They provide cruise rides for tourists during the evening hours which are customized with cultural evenings and a sun-set ride. Being the first one in this category, 'The Brahmaputra Cruise Private Limited' has been remarkably getting success all its way. In a question of investment friendly environment for tourism businesses in the city, Mrs. Doley said that the business is itself seasonal in nature and the same environment is never in the line for business aspirants. Therefore, one cannot fully agree to its 100% safety. Regarding the availability of tourist guides, Ms. Doley has said that the number is very limited if we take into considerations the factors of professionalism and knowledge.

21. Mr. Tridib Sarma:

Mr. Tridib Sarma is the current member of Tour Operators Association of Assam. He is also the Vice President of 'North East India Tourism Confederation' and an Advisor in the 'Hotel and Restaurant Association of Assam'. Mr. Tridib Sarma manages the only 3star resort in and around Guwahati i.e. 'Brahmaputra Jungle Resort'. Mr. Sarma was in hurry when the session took place because of which he intended to give the required scores against the statements.

MAJULI

The in-depth session of Majuli destination has been done with **seven (7)** personalities. Esteemed personalities involved were **Mr. Haren Naraha**, Me:po Okum; **Mrs. Makon Kalita**, Pottery practitioner; **Mr. Pabitra Payeng**, Dekasang Eco Camp; **Mr. Hemchandra Goswami**, Mask making practitioner; **Mr. Bedabrat Dutta**, Ygdrassil Eco Camp; **Mr. Indukalpa Bharali**, Niribili Homestay; **Mr. Deepmoina Dowerah**, Okegiga Homes.

1. **Mr. Haren Naraha:**

Mr. Haren Naraha is often known for his initiative as first entrepreneur to start the eco camp business. He has started his eco camp known as 'Me:po Okum' quite a long time ago and has also started some other developmental work for his community as well. In a question asking about eco camp business and its future in Majuli, Mr. Naraha said that he opposes the positive business opportunities in Majuli as he thinks

the local people of Majuli haven't yet understood the benefits of such businesses. Mr. Naraha complaints about excessive number of promotional videos which sometimes leads to over-depiction of Majuli. Uses of technology too create vagueness in the real picture whereas in reality they never meet up to the tourist's expectation.

2. Mrs. Makon Kalita:

Mrs. Makon Kalita is a local pottery practitioner of Salmora village. During the session, the actual picture of pottery workers and their struggles have come to life clearly. As mentioned by Mrs. Kalita, As the extraction of required soil has been restricted by the government because of construction of embankments and within 4 years the business/art will go down. The government hasn't given a single penny in the name of the pottery culture as per Mrs. Makon Kalita. The region of Salmora is also deprived of basic infrastructure and facilities as it is situated near to the riverbank where the situation gets worsened during flood.

3. Mr. Pabitra Payeng:

Mr. Pabitra Payeng holds the position of a manager in one of the most popular eco camps of the region 'Deka Sang'. During the session, he mentioned that the accommodation business will be safe and sound until and unless the proposed bridge is constructed. It'll transform the tourists to visitors who would come spend the day and go back. Regarding the problem of accommodation in peak season, he said tourists have to suffer a lot because of this issue as in peak season as well as in the season of festivals like Hornbil in neighboring state.

4. Mr. Hemchanda Goswami:

Mr. Hemchanda Goswami is a renowned mask making practitioner of Majuli. He has received many awards for his contribution towards keeping the art alive in this century. Mr. Goswami is also the Satradhikar of Notun Samaguri Satra where the art has evolved as a new dimension even among young generations. In a question of how to keep this business safe in Majuli, he mentioned that if young generation continues learn about the culture then it has a great prospect to

grow with time. Regarding govt. steps towards such entrepreneurship development, he added that there is help from the government for uplifting the resources available here but all depends on the implementation of the same where the system fails.

5. Mr. Bedabrat Dutta:

Mr. Bedabrat Dutta is the proprietor of a famous eco camp of Majuli - 'Ygdrassil Eco camp'. Mr. Dutta is also an active member of a non-profit organization called 'Amar Majuli' which works for tourism development in and around Majuli and its attractions. Regarding the eco-tourism business environment in Majuli, he said that with emerging trend for constructing accommodation units with concrete walls and cements the future of eco camp business is not so bright. Again on the part of community involvement, the prospect is losing significance. Thirdly, he mentioned about the proposed bridge over Brahmaputra to connect Majuli might affect the accommodation business heavily. On availability of tourist guides, there are no such travel agents here in Majuli but the accommodation units do have good contacts with agents from Guwahati, Jorhat and other nearby areas. But Mr. Dutta approves of bookings that are directly done rather than depending upon the travel agents. About the availability of skilled person, Mr. Dutta said that there are raw human resources available here but to utilize them efficiently one has to guide them through the goal that they are seeking. Training provision is needed for their advancement.

6. Mr. Indukalpa Bharali:

Mr. Indukalpa Bharali is the man behind of famous brand- 'Bhim-vita' and 'Luit-mustard oil'. Mr. Bharali is an all rounder as he also practices bamboo works and have been producing many beautiful furniture, bottles and other stuffs to export them. Being an entrepreneur in true sense,

now Mr. Bharali has been concentrating on home-stay business along with his other firms. The homestay business in and around Majuli has a very larger prospects as the foreigners travelling to the region want to stay with locals. Again, the service

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quality of homestay is good compared to eco camps, as marked by him. Regarding skilled manpower, Mr. Bharali said that though there are manpower that can do multiple works and are eligible but the interest is seemed to be very low amongst our Assamese brothers.

7. Mr. Deepmoina Dowerah:

Mr. Deepmoina Dowerah is a young entrepreneur from Jorhat. He participated in Assam Govt. 'Start-Up Nest' in 2017. Right now, Mr. Dowerah has been looking after his property - 'Okegiga Homes' – an eco camp near Luitpar, Majuli. Mr. Dowerah isn't happy with the available human resources in Majuli as he said that there is much skilled manpower available but maximum of them after getting employed leave after working minimum of one week. This becomes very challenging for the hospitality sector. In a question about proper promotional strategies for Majuli, he said attractions are being advertised on a good number but there is excess promotion when it comes to Majuli which is not healthy for the destination. About a tourist's satisfaction on visiting the destination, Mr. Dowerah did mentioned a point, which is, according to him-sometimes some misunderstandings and absence of knowledge have led to some incidents which might degrade the tourist's satisfaction level.

MANAS NATIONAL PARK

The in-depth session of Majuli as the destination has been conducted with **four (4)** personalities. Esteemed personalities were **Mr. Subhas Das**, Office Staff of Tourist Information Office, Barpeta Road; **Mr. Alokesh Das**, Forester 1, Bansbari range, Manas National Park; **Mr. Kamesware Boro**, Range Officer, Bhunyapara Range, Manas National Park and **Mr. Kalen Basumatary**, Manas Maozigendri Eco-tourism Society.

1. Mr. Subhas Das:

Mr. Subhas Das has been looking after the Govt. Tourist Lodge maintained by Tourism Department of Assam situated in Barpeta Road. A very dynamic person, Mr. Das has good connection with the service

providers of the area. He even prepares customized tour packages for the guests of the lodge around Manas National Park. The session with him was a shorter one, as he was in hurry to leave for Guwahati in office work. He mentioned that basic facilities like ATMs, Public

Toilets etc. are not in a good condition. But, he did praise the available food outlets around Bansbari range.

2. Mr. Alokesh Das:

Mr. Alokesh Das the acting Forester 1 of Bansbari range, Manas National Park. A person of greater interest about Manas National Park and its tourism prospects, he said that considering the importance of Manas, the Bansbari range has seen a lot of improvement and this will go beyond as well. Even the jeep drivers work as guides at times because there are minimum tour-escorts to help the needy one. Regarding accommodation problems near to the park, he added that accommodation units do have the problem as apart from the Eco Camps there are not many lodges or hotels around the region. Even the price factor gets in the way.

3. Mr. Kamesware Boro:

Mr. Kamesware Boro is the ranger officer of Bhunyapara Range, Manas National Park. It's been almost more than 9 years since he started his service. In a question about how the bandhs and strikes hamper the range, he said that as the region falls under BTAD Council and any bandhs or strikes related to the council leads to entire shut down of the region hampering the inflow of tourists. At

times an NGO named 'Aranyak' started giving training to tour guides in Manas National Park, realizing that the demand is not enough. Hence, there is a lot to be done in this field yet.

4. Mr. Kalen Basumatary:

Mr. Kalen Basumatary is related to the esteemed eco tourism society of Manas- the Manas

Maozigendri Eco-tourism society. The Manas Maozigendri Ecotourism Society (MMES) was founded in December 2003 with the objective for sustainable conservation of the Manas National Park along with the promotion of ecotourism, peace and community development. Mr. Kalen Basumatary is currently handling the position of 'president' in eco-tourism society. Regarding the future possibilities of tourism business in Manas, Mr. Basumatary said that as Manas is home to some

much endangered animals and species there is a huge probability to grow tourism business around the park. In a question of slack season and its impact on tourism-business as per Mr.

Basumatary their business doesn't has any slack season as they deal with their community based tourism activities. Though at times inflow of visitors impacts them but by organizing certain social & welfare programs they are tackling the system. Mr. Basumatary did sense of having low scale of skilled manpower in the region, as skilled persons don't usually want to get into tourism businesses. Along with that skills which are needed for a tourism business to flourish are absent in a large scale.

GOALPARA

The in-depth session of Goalpara destination has been on **five (5)** personalities. Esteemed personalities were **Mr. Tapan Nath**, Local Activist, Boguan Satra; **Mr. Roverth John Momin**, Village Headman, Rangchaipara Village; **Mr. Tarun Chanda**, Brindavan Lodge; **Mr. Taijul Islam**, Local Activist; **Mr. Angikar Borgohain**, District Transport Officer, Goalpara.

1. **Mr. Tapan Nath:**

Mr. Tapan Nath is an active social worker of Boguan region. Professionally being a teacher, he has been vocal towards various issues related to the region. Mr. Nath is also actively in touch with an age-old satra in Goalpara- Boguan Satra. Regarding tourism business in Goalpara, Mr. Nath mentioned that the region isn't blessed with many visitors; hence it is not so profitable with the hotel business. The region is lagging behind in-terms of promotions as well. According to him, the region has many attractions but the information gatherings and advertisement are not up the mark. There are many opportunities for the business dwellers but

better communication as an infrastructural provision is needed.

2. **Mr. Roverth John Momin:**

Mr. Roverth John Momin is the village headman of Rangsapara village also acknowledged as the cleanest village of Assam. The village has got the award under 'Swacch Bharat Mission' for the year 2016-17. Mr. Momin said that to support the future tourism business possibilities, eco-tourism project has been proposed centering the cleanest village of Assam. The young generation of Rangsapara village is skilled enough and they do maintain their work and academic life

simultaneously. On demand cultural programs are organized in the village by the inhabitant Rabha community.

3. Mr. Tarun Chanda:

Mr. Tarun Chanda owns a lodge near to college road in Goalpara. He started his property named 'Brindavan Lodge' a long time ago and has vast experience of accommodation business in Goalpara. In a statement regarding tourism businesses in Goalpara, he mentioned that Goalpara is not a central place nor it has many tourist attractions hence hotel business is

not so profitable for them. Many a times the rooms are not at all sold out. Only people visiting for official purposes stay for a one-night. Because of this reason, the problem of accommodation for people who come there never arises. For tackling such issues, Mr. Chanda has resorted to restaurant business within the premises.

4. Mr. Taijul Islam:

Mr. Taijul Islam is an active social worker of the region who is also related to Motor Association

of Goalpara. The session was too short with Mr. Islam as he had to go to another place due to an emergency. In a question about car rental business in Goalpara, he said that not a single vehicle has been commercialized in these years. Because of very bad demand for car services the owners have to incur losses many a times. Goalpara doesn't have good railway network or anything in the form of a central hub to attract people from other parts. Therefore, the business will not work until and unless

something extra has been introduced to the region, he added. The region also lacks in-terms of tourist guides, travel agents as attractions are not yet fully reached out the tourists.

5. Mr. Angikar Borgohain:

Mr. Angikar Borgohain has been working as the District Transport Officer in Goalpara district. However, it is noteworthy to say that he is an alumnus of Tezpur University too. The session with him was also too short as it had to take place during his office hours. Mr. Borgohain was quite interested to answer the questions but due to office related works he could give out only the scores to the statements. He did say that Goalpara hasn't grown as a tourist

destination yet. There isn't a Tourist Information Office or any developmental bodies to take the sector to new heights in the region. Even some basic infrastructures are not available here to give it a boost. There are no tourist guides, travel agents, qualitative food outlets in the region. Hence, according to him a lot has to be done in future.

KAZIRANAGA:

The in-depth session of Kaziranga destination has been done on **fourteen (14)** personalities. Esteemed personalities are **Mr. Arich Ah**, Borgos Retreat, **Mr. Aovich Das**, Nature Hunt Eco-cap, **Mr. Hriday ranjan Das**, Deputy Director, Assam Tourism; **Mr. Bijoy Boruah**, Diphlu River Lodge; **Mr. Manoj Gogoi**, Naturalist; **Mr. Pankaj Gogoi**, Hotel & Restaurant Association of Kaziranga and

8 others.

1. Mr. Arich Ah:

Mr. Arich Ah is the front-office manager of Borgos Retreat, a 4star resort around Kaziranga. Mr. Ah is local to Kaziranga and has fluent communication skills. While talking about tourism businesses in Kaziranga, he said that being situated around the premises of Kaziranga, the accommodation business do have many opportunities to grow in time. But, to tackle seasonalities, the options are very few. For example, Borgos resort to organizing MICE

when there is slack season. In a resort like Borgos, the question of having accommodation problems doesn't arise because, everything goes through pre-booking procedure. If anything happens, the authorities do organize other provisions for them to stay.

2. Mr. Aovick Das Gupta:

Mr. Aovick Das Gupta has been practicing tourism related activities when he was in Tinsukia. He grew up learning from a famous person of Dibru Saikhowa Mr. Joynal Abedin, popularly known as 'Benu Da'. Right now, Mr. Das has been acting as manager of another popular eco-camp of Kaziranga National Park- 'Nature Hunt Eco Camp'. Mr. Das could give us only a short duration of time, as he had some guests' in-between. Mr. Das has been quite energetic during the session and gave his responses in the form of scores towards each statement.

3. Mr. Jigrash Prasad:

Mr. Jigrash Prasad popularly known as 'Babu Da' in the region is an active member of 'Kaziranga Development and Jeep safari association. Mr. Prasad has been offering his services for a long time now. During the session, Mr. Prasad has informed us that the tourist inflow has been not so good for the last 2 years. Due to massive strikes and protests from the last two years against 'Citizenship Amendment Act-2019', all businesses relating to the national park has been gone into loss. Last year, around 80% booking has been cancelled leading to heavy loss of the businesses around. If this continues, the business environment will not be good in future.

4. Mr. Sanjay Sil:

Mr. Sanjay Sil is a young entrepreneur of Kaziranga. He owns two accommodation units known as- 'T.G Resort' and 'Ekora Resort' near to the Kohora market place. In a question about tourism business scenario in the region, Mr. Sil said that being a famous national park of Assam, Kaziranga National Park has created a new dimension for accommodation business. While talking about tackling the off season, Mr. Sil said that it is not so easy for resorts and hotels as they are targeted for

budget-travelers only. Such accommodation units don't have other options for running their business.

5. Mr. Hriday Ranjan Das:

Mr. Hriday Ranjan Das is the Deputy Director of Tourism Department of Assam and has been working enthusiastically for the Kaziranga Division for some time now. Mr. Das is a person of a young heart. He has claimed numerous awards for his un-ending contribution towards the literary world of Assam and the nation. As he has been posted in a respectable position for development of tourism sector around Kaziranga National Park, he has mentioned that when about knowledgeable tourist guides and the lack of it in the region. He mentioned that out of all, only 30% are qualified to provide service to any tourists. Regarding the quality and quantity of accommodation units, he said that to tackle the peak season they are not enough.

6. Mr. Bijoy Baruah:

Mr. Bijoy Baruah is from Assam's one of the best accommodation units- 'Diphlu River Lodge' situated in Kuthori, near to Kaziranga National Park. He has been managing the lodge well enough that, guests are quite satisfied with the lodge's service. A huge percentage of foreign nationals decide to reside here because of its quality in service. In a question of future business opportunities around Kaziranga, he said that carrying capacity plays a role here. When the business-holding capacity of Kaziranga reaches the limit the cycle will go down. About the availability of tourist guides, Mr. Baruah said that local guides are best for tourists to hire. They are the best one to give every details of Kaziranga wildlife. Even, Diphlu River Lodge employs local people and trains them further.

7. Manoj Gogoi:

Mr. Manoj Gogoi is a renowned and awarded Naturalist of Assam. He has dedicated his life for animal conservation and has been actively acting with Corbett Foundation. In 2014, the foundation bestowed on him the award of 'Wildlife Warrior" for his dedicated and proactive work. With other 11 like-minded people, Mr. Gogoi also has his own organization as, 'Naturalists for Rehabilitation of Snakes and Birds' (NRSB) in 2007. Regarding tourism businesses around the park, Mr. Gogoi said that still local people don't get their share out of revenue collected from the park. Outsiders have started and have been collecting huge amount of money out of their services but local embodies haven't been benefited from them. It has become a real concern for the region. Regarding Kaziranga and its required amount of advertisement, Mr. Gogoi said that the facts and figures are not updated till date. The figures available on the internet are outdated now and need to be checked.

8. Mr. Debasish Gope:

Mr. Debasish Gope is an alumnus of Tezpur University and a Master of Tourism & Travel Management. Being a young entrepreneur, Mr. Debasish Gope has been running a successful accommodation business, named 'Sneha Bhawan' and has been receiving praises from the visitors for their great service. Even his business received 'Certificate of Excellence' from Trip Advisor India. In a question about future investments in tourism business around the park, Mr. Gope said that entire business around Kaziranga is risk-free. One can easily establish their business as it attracts too many visitors and anyone could be successful if he enters into this sector. Mr. Gope also said that advertisement of Kaziranga should not be limited to Jeep Safari and Elephant Safari. Instead other attractions like Hatikhuli Organic Tea Estate, Orchid Park etc. should also be advertised and promoted simultaneously.

9. Mr. Pritam Priyankush Borah:

Mr. Pritam Priyankush Borah is another entrepreneur who has his property named 'Kaziranga Resort' and is the Co-founder of 'Wanderer's Halt'- a travel agency running from Kaziranga. In a question of availability of proper knowledgeable tour guides, Mr. Borah said that if we consider the number of visitors coming to Kaziranga and its number of tourist guides then the ratio falls miserably. It needs more qualified person to render such services. Again in another question about the effect of Bandhs and strikes on Kaziranga, Mr. Borah mentioned that it doesn't affect Kaziranga entirely but yes in some parts and on tourist's movements it has negative impact.

10. Mr. Biju Chetry:

Mr. Biju Chetry is a post-graduate from TISS, Mumbai. Being an entrepreneur, Mr. Chetry is currently running Enajori Travels, a travel agency mostly leading by young generations. They provide customized tour to visitors intending to go outside Assam, India and visitors intending to come to Assam and India. Above all, they have been doing it as a start-up and looking forward to create more activities in and around Kaziranga. Regarding future of tourism businesses and

assistance from the government, Mr. Chetry said that options are there but if anyone want to take their chances through government measures then he/she need to have good political connection/network around him/her. Again mentioning something extra on availability of food courts/restaurants, Mr. Chetry said that the region lacks outlets like Café, high end restaurants etc. He has negative response towards using of re-usable utensils and hygienic factor of local people. According to him the region lacks the required number of dustbins and people are not aware about tourist's perception towards their cleanliness.

11. Mr. Kushal Chandra Borua

Mr. Kushal Chanda Borua is related to Kaziranga Guide Association- a newly formed organization of tourist guides. Mr. Borua works as a Naturalist in IORA Resort. Mr. Borua in a question said that Kaziranga National Park is more than a national park; the eco-camps provide another level of expectation to the tourists. While talking about tourist guide's alternative source of income during the off season Mr. Borua pointed out agriculture as their secondary sources of income.

12. Mr. Pankaj Gogoi:

Mr. Pankaj Gogoi is related to the newly formed Hotel and Restaurant Association of Kaziranga. Mr. Pankaj Gogoi holds a restaurant nearer to Kohora market. A man of few words, Mr. Gogoi said that Kaziranga National Park lacks adequate number of full time professional tourist guides. According to him, 30% of Jeep Safari drivers work as a guide during the safaris. Regarding skilled and unskilled persons available in the region Mr. Gogoi gave negative response. Along with this Mr. Gogoi also complains about the relation between forest department and the tour operators. There is less-coordination between these two sides, according to him.

13. Mr. Partha Pratim Handique:

Mr. Partha Pratim Handique is an employee of Kaziranga National Orchid and Bio-diversity Park. As Mr. Handique is related to the Orchid Park, when asked about future business prosperity around the Park and Kaziranga National Park, he said that the limit has been reached. The entire region is now fully grown to its capacity. It would hamper the nature as well the local environment if it grows further more. Though government support is available for the entrepreneurs yet nobody wishes to take it believing it as a very complex procedure.

14. Mr. Palash Sarma:

Mr. Palash Sarma is the Guest Relation Manager of IORA Resort. The session with him was a fruitful one as he pointed out many aspects. According to Sarma, success of a newly started business near to Kaziranga National falls on a good start. The business should have their norms then only it will be able to reach the desired height at any point of time. Regarding skilled and unskilled manpower availability, Mr. Sarma talked about greater need for training to both the categories. In relation to it he further added that 95% of the human resources around Kaziranga are now employed in many business units. While talking about the relation of forest department and the business dwellers, Mr. Sarma mentioned about the on-going conflicts between the sides regarding hike in 'Jeep Safari' charges. Mr. Sarma also mentioned that to tackle the seasonality constraint, IORA resorts organizes Corporate-bookings, Marriages and other events during the off season.

DIBRUGARH:

The in-depth session of Dibrugarh destination has been done with **thirteen (13)** personalities. Esteemed personalities were **Mr. Manoj Jalan,** Purvi Discovery; **Mrs. Bijoya Saikia,** Jokai Botanical Garden; **Mr. Pranjal Saikia,** F3 Akhaj Restaurant; **Mr. Joyal Abedin**, Bonoshree Eco Camp; **Mr. Mohandeep Gogoi**, Forester, Dibru Saikhowa and eight others.

1. Mr. Manoj Jalan:

Mr. Manoj Jalan is the managing director of Purvi Discovery, a leading travel agency of Upper Assam. Mr. Jalan comes from an old business family of Dibrugarh. Their company Purvi Discovery Private Limited has three tea-bungalows amidst perfect greenery of the region. Regarding attractions around Dibrugarh, Mr. Jalan said that the region lacks in preparing more activities for the tourists. If a business only centers on Dibrugarh then it will be doomed as per him and hence all tourism business dwellers deal around Dibru Saikhowa National Park. Mr. Jalan also added that skilled force is very less in this region. Only 30% among total manpower are skilled enough to pursue hospitality and tourism business as a career. Government support is

there for the people who want to establish their own business but many of them are not interested to take it, Mr. Jalan stated.

2. Mrs. Bijoya Saikia:

Mr. Bijoya Saikia is the President of Milandeep Self-help Group who currently looks after Jokai Botanical Garden in Dibrugarh. The Milandeep Self-Help group offers souvenir shops and food outlet (operates on demand) for the visitors. They have been employing human resources and maintaining the beauty and importance of Jokai Botanical Garden in every possible way. Mr. Bijoya Saikia said that Jokai Botanical garden now needs improvement as it is going down because of low promotional activities. The region where the park resides has no significant amount of skilled and unskilled man-force to re-shape the park. All basic services that are needed to be there in any interior place are missing here creating challenges for businesses operators and tourists as well, she added.

3. Mr. Pranjal Saikia:

Mr. Pranjal Saikia is a cuisine specialist. He has done his training course on 'Continental Dish' from Institute of Hotel Management, Delhi and started his professional life in London. After coming to Assam he started the 'Food Truck' business in the Dibrugarh town for the first time. He provides training to Self-Help Groups. Mr. Saikia said that there are huge chances for food businesses/restaurant businesses around the town and in the state; but due unauthentic knowledge on food varieties/menus, dishes it hasn't flourished yet. While giving negative responses towards availability of tourist guides, Mr. Saikia said that no packaged circuit, no tourist information centre in the region creates a slow growth in the tourism businesses around it. Regarding the available accommodation units around the town, Mr. Saikia said that the management body of the hotel doesn't give 100% to its guests. The services provided to the visitors isn't professional, as per him.

4. Mr. Joynal Abedin:

Mr. Joynal Abedin, popularly known as 'Benu Da' is the most experienced, successful and respected person in the tourism industry. Mr. Abedin runs his Eco camp - 'Bonoshree Eco Camp'

in Guijan Ghat (nearer to Dibru Saikhowa National Park). The eco camp is the first one of its type in that area and from then Mr. Abedin has been constantly working to betterment f Dibru Saikhowa. Secretary of Dibru-Saikhowa Conservation Society, Joynal Abedin mentioned that the traditional seasonality thing doesn't work in case of Dibru Saikhowa. The region has a lot offer in every month to the tourists but the only

challenge they have encountering is the intensity of flood in the month of July. Mr. Abedin mentions that to the entrepreneurs there is no help, no assistance from the government in the region. He has been providing training as well as financial help to the youths who are willing to pursue their dreams in the sector.

5. Mr. Mohandeep Gogoi:

Mr. Mohandeep Gogoi is the forester of Dibru Saikhowa National Park. A person of few words, Mr. Gogoi is an enthusiastic person and has great understanding about the tourism sector. Mr. Gogoi said that the environment of Dibru Saikhowa is suitable for any person who is willing to work or pursue his/her professional life in establishing Eco Camps. But the tourist guides nearer to the region needs to be more in numbers. The same goes with the travel agents, the accommodation units, the house-boats; that they offer their services in a package. There is no business where they work as travel agents only, as per him.

6. Mr. Deepak Das: Mr. Deepak Das and his 'Om Houseboat' is the first of its type in the region. Crossing every hurdle in a real manner, Mr. Das after starting his journey in his business has been receiving recognition from all over. Mr. Das has mentioned that the house-boat service has been great from the last year. The flood took devastating turn that has wiped out two houseboats completely in the region. Availability of tourist guide has been also a real problem for the business dwellers. Mr. Das mentioned that sometimes he himself goes out with the tourists as guide in their ride. Government's policies

for entrepreneurs related to the sector are complicated enough for the ones who want to have, as per him. It is not so easy for house-boat owners to stick only tourism businesses in the off season. He resorts to fishing when there comes the seasonality constraint in tourism business. His Houseboat 'Om Houseboat' has the provision of bio-toilet which adds value to his service also.

7. Miss Beauty Boruah:

Miss Beauty Boruah is the tour executive of the leading travel agency of Assam- 'Purvi Discovery'. Miss Boruah is also an alumnus of Tezpur University. She handles the tea-bungalow in Chowkidingee and its guests. In relation to the tourist guides available in the town, Miss Boruah said that locally tourist guides are not available in the region. Fewer investments in tourism sector around the region might be the reason behind such disinterest among young generation to take it as a profession. During off season, a travel agency can't operate its things as visitors become less. Hence, it remains under-utilized for months. The region also lacks in high-end and food courts to cater all type of tourists.

8. Mr. Majela Singpho:

Mr. Majela Singpho is the one who has uplifted the Singpho community in the tourism world. Ketetong, a Singpho village in Margherita, Assam has been a centre of attraction for many travelers because of his eco lodge. His Singpho Eco Lodge which is now 12 years old has been visited by many popular travelers. One of such is, 'Visa2Explore', a famous YouTuber. The lodge offers the proper style of accommodation and its cuisine that carries cultural significance of the community. In a question of future tourism businesses around it, Mr. Singpho has blamed the poor infrastructure and communication system to the village. Being situated nearer to Dihing river and amidst tea gardens, the place is heavenly beautiful. Mr. Singpho also accused government for not taking proper

investment measures in potential sites. Regarding tourist's satisfaction level while coming to the region, Mr. Singpho said that it depends on the type of tourists and the type of activities and experiences they are seeking.

9. Ms. Sobita Bisho:

Sobita Bisho is the 'Bhante' of Dibong Monastery, Margherita. Being a religious leader at younger age, Sobita Bisho is quite hospitable to every visitor. During the session, he mentioned that some of the visitors who enter the monastery should have some respect towards other culture and its rules and regulations. It is very disheartening to see people misbehaving towards the property of the monastery. According to him, tourist's safety depends upon tourist's approach towards the visiting place which is very crucial.

10. Mr. Hemanta Handique:

Mr. Hemanta Handique is a member and employee of 'Sasoni Merbil Eco Tourism Project' at

Dibrugarh. Residing in a remote place, the eco-tourism project is a promising attraction for Upper Assam. Sasoni Merbeel region of Dibrugarh district which has a total are of 1550 bighas. The Sasoni Merbeel Eco Tourism project was established in 2010 with an over-whelming crowd more than twenty-five thousand. The region is the habitat of about 250 species of plants, 200 species of birds both local and migratory and many more.

According to Mr. Handique, the home-stay business around the eco-tourism project has greater chances of being successful in time and people have already started to give it a shot. Knowledgeable tourist guides, skilled man-force, travel agents are not available in a desired number; hence it is crucial for the administration to look after it once, the project hits the success road.

11. Chawkey Phussa:

Chawkey Phussa is a monk at the Namphake Monastery. Residing at the centre of Namphake Village, the monastery is the most respected institution for Tai-Phakials. Chawkey Phussa is young in age but has tremendous knowledge on eco-tourism and cultural tourism. He has been studying and assisting some researchers on researching about the Buddhism and its influence on

Assamese culture for months. According to him, Namphake as a tourist attraction has potential growth in the area of research and its culture. But regarding its promotional agendas, he did not seem much happy with the growth. Information is not there in a detailed form, he added. Young generation is yet to be skilled enough to take and increase businesses centering on tourism potentiality of the area.

12. Sri Sarat Chanda Neog:

Mr. Sarat Chanda Neog is the range officer of Jeypore Rain Forest. Mr. Neog has cleared Assam

Forest Service on the run to be the Range Officer. Mr. Neog has said that, Jeypore rain forest has been in the bucket list of wildlife tourists. But bad infrastructure has been creating obstacles for travelers to pick it up as a top destination. Mr. Neog also added that the region doesn't have any good food outlets or any tourist guides to provide qualitative service for the visitors. The region also doesn't have any accommodation units for the travelers to stay nearer to the rain forest. Even the government doesn't consider developments around potential tourism businesses. The forest department has been organizing Jeypore Rain Forest Festival from years now but is not enough, according to him.

13. Mr. Satyajit Chetia:

Mr. Satyajit Chetia is the operation manager of JIT Communication, a leading travel solution agency of Dibrugarh. Mr. Chetia has done his Bachelors in Commerce and is currently engaged in his business. He looks after a budget hotel too called- 'Juti' nearer to 'Deputy Commissioner Office'. Mr. Chetia was not in the position to give enough time as he got busy with his customers; but he did give the required scores against of each parameters. However, one thing that he had mentioned is - Dibrugarh still has the potential to grow

as an attraction, but it needs proper planning and more tourism activities to make the tourists stay for another night. Tour guides are not available in the region, hence cab drivers take the responsibility for the tourists, he said.

The in-depth session of the destination of Haflong have been conducted on **five (5)** personalities. Esteemed personalities were **Mr. Debraj Dey,** Elite Hotel; **Mr. Amit Kar,** Haflong Hotel; **Mr .Bibi Hagjer**, Nhoshring Guest House; **Mr. Dithojit Phonglo** & **Mr. Ajoy Dibragede**, Samparidisha Village Eco-tourism committee.

   1. **Mr. Debraj Dey:**

Mr. Debraj Dey has been managing the popular hotel- 'Elite Hotel' for the last 3 years. The Elite

hotel in Haflong has been operating for a long time now. Mr. Dey said that though Haflong is a hilly destination most of the times the rooms are taken by the people who come here for business purposes. Leisure tourists are very few in number. However, in the month of November and December, all rooms remain full. It is during these months that people often find it difficult to get accommodation in the region. But, in extreme calls like bandhs and strikes the entire town shuts down

which adversely affects the hotel business.

   2. **Mr. Amit Kar:**

Mr. Amit Kar is the current manager of a budget hotel -'Haflong Hotel' which resides at the mid of the Haflong Town. He has been in this position for many years now and is very hospitable and soft spoken. Mr. Kar in a question said that the availability of tourist guides in the Haflong town is limited to High-end hotels only mostly in accommodation units like Nhoshring Guest House, Landmark Hotel and the

Nothao Lodge. Guests are often accompanied by limited number of tourist guides for their sightseeing. Budget and Lower-end hotel cannot provide the required facilities to the guests due to a number of factors.
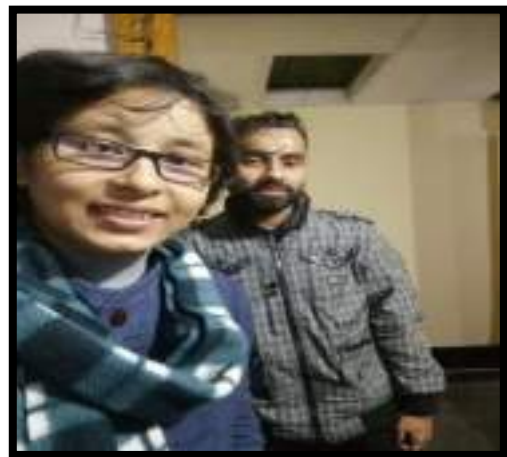
   3. **Mr. B.B. Hagjer:**

Mr. B.B. Hagjer is the owner of luxurious 'Nhoshring Guest House'. It is noteworthy to mention here that, Mr. Hagjer has been elected in Assam Legislative Assembly election in 2016 from Haflong constituency and is a retired IAS officer. However, we could not meet him personally and the discussion was done over the telephone. During the discussion, Mr. Hagjer had said that the profitability factor of a hotel in a region like Haflong depends on its location. As Mr. Hagjer's hotel

is situated in the outskirts of town he doesn't have many visitors like the hotels in the town area do. However, according to him there are not many food joints available to cater the tourists and the qualitative standards of the outlets are not so good as well. Very few do provide continental dishes as stated by him.

4. Mr. Dithojit Phonglo:

Mr. Dithojit Phonglo is an active member of Samparidisha Eco Tourism Village Committee and a local guide to Bendao Baglai Waterfall. During the session Mr. Phonglo mentioned that the village had started the trekking activity to Bendao Baglai Waterfalls in 2016. Since then tourist inflow has been growing with around 3000 visitors reported in 2019 per their record book. He admitted that food joints are not available in the village or in its nearest areas; but anyone who wants to have variety of ethnic food of the Dimasa community they can pre-order the same.

5. Mr. Ajoy Dibragede:

Mr. Ajoy Dibragede is an active member of the Samparidisha Eco Tourism Village Committee. Mr. Dibragede agrees to the ideas of Mr. Phonglo while he also added that there aren't many travel agents to facilitate tourists and services to the village. The committee however has good connection with some other travel agents which can be considered to have a bright future for the village and trekking lovers. As the Samparidisha village is recognised under Swacch Bharat Abhiyan entire village is well-equipped with a hygienic environment with use of plastics being completely restricted for locals as well as for visitors.